Re-sounding Radicalism: Echo in William Blake and the Chartist Poets Ernest Jones and Gerald Massey

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Contents

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Abbreviations and Standard Editions

Standard Editions

All references to Blake and Shelley are taken from these editions unless noted, and cited by surname and title of poem:

Blake = William Blake, *The Complete Illuminated Books*, ed. by David Bindman
(Thames and Hudson, 2001)

Shelley = Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Shelley: Poetical Works*, ed. by Thomas Hutchinson
(London: OUP, 1968)

All citations from the bible are taken from the *King James Version* accessed through www.biblegateway.com.

Abbreviations

CS = Ernest Jones, *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces* (MacGowan, 1846)

EB = *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed at www.britannica.com

ELH = *English Literary History*

MHH = Blake, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

OED = *Oxford English Dictionary*, accessed at www.oed.com

PMLA = *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*

SE = Blake, *Songs of Experience*

SI = Blake, *Songs of Innocence*

VF = Gerald Massey, *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* (J. Watson, 1851)

CUP = Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

OUP = Oxford: Oxford University Press

UP = University Press

The University of Manchester: Abstract of Thesis submitted by Nichola L. McCawley for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, entitled 'Re-sounding Radicalism: Echo in William Blake and the Chartist Poets Ernest Jones and Gerald Massey'. August 2012

This thesis argues that William Blake's poetry creates meaning through internal poetic echoes, and that these Blakean echoes re-sound in Ernest Jones and Gerald Massey's Poetry. There is no demonstrable link between Blake and Chartism; this raises the question of how to account for poetic echoes that occur in the absence of a direct link. The thesis uses two complementary methodological strategies. The significance of the Blakean echoes in Jones and Massey's work will be demonstrated through extensive close textual analysis. This is accompanied by the historically focused argument that the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry can be explained by a shared underlying cultural matrix of radical politics and radical Christianity.

Chapter 1 opens by presenting the evidence against a demonstrable link between Blake and the Chartists. It outlines how the lack of a direct link impacts upon our understanding of the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry. Existing theories of influence insufficiently describe these textual effects; this chapter draws upon aspects of Intertextuality and New Historicist theory to propose that Blake, Jones and Massey's poetry is best considered in terms of echo, re-sounding and correspondence.

Chapter 2 addresses the question of how Blakean echoes can occur in the absence of a direct link. Using recent Blake scholarship as a methodological model, this chapter outlines the 'cultural matrix' theory, suggesting that Blake and the Chartists engaged with many of the same radical historical 'threads'.

Chapter 3 explores key examples of Shelleyan influence in Jones and Massey's poetry. This chapter highlights the direct intertextual link between Shelley and the Chartists and demonstrates how Chartist poetry might be discussed in terms of influence and allusion.

Chapter 4 outlines the most notable Blakean echoes in the poetry of Jones. Jones' poetry resonates with images of Priestcraft and Kingcraft, as well as chains and binding; similar images play a central role in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. The chapter contains significant engagement with Blake studies; it presents Blake's imagery as echoingly interconnected both within and across poems and collections.

Chapter 5 extends this close textual exploration to the work of Massey. Massey's poetry contains many of the key Blakean images identified in the work of Jones. However, 'The Three Voices' contains an uncanny resonance of Blake; echo occurs as mis-hearing and trace. 'Echo' is not being used as a simple substitute for 'allusion', 'influence' or 'intertext', but here denotes an entirely different textual effect that must be judged in new terms.

The conclusion summarises the thesis and asks whether the radical nature of Blake, Jones and Massey's shared culture may have affected not only their vocabulary of imagery, but also the way in which these images were deployed.

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Declaration

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I have been fortunate throughout my academic career to have received the guidance of several exceptional teachers; amongst these my PhD supervisor Dr Mike Sanders has been a true inspiration. The enquiries that have driven this thesis originated eight years ago in his third year seminar on Chartist Poetry at Lancaster University. Mike's continued encouragement and enthusiasm since that time has enabled me to develop the skills and confidence required to complete this project successfully.

My thanks are also due to Dr Alan Rawes and Dr David Alderson for their detailed advice and feedback in the early stages of this project; Dr Jeremy Tambling with whom I discussed the theory of 'echo'; Dr Martin Hoyles for sharing his discovery of 'Laughing Song', in the *Northern Star*; and Dr Daniela Caselli whose perceptive critique helped to clarify my conception of poetic 'trace'.

Without the funding of the Art and Humanities Research Council this project would not have been possible; I am very grateful to have received this support. I would also like to thank the staff at the John Rylands, Staffordshire University and the Working-Class Movement libraries for their help and expertise.

I have been fortunate to complete this thesis as part of an exceptionally supportive and inspiring postgraduate community. I will always value the friendship, sense of fun, and stimulating academic exchange I have shared with Iain Bailey, Jennie Chapman, Michael Durrant, Matt Helmers, Maysa Jaber, Lucia Nigri, Rebecca Pohl, Muzna Rahman, James Smith, Naya Tsentourou, and JT Welsh.

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Without Liam Haydon this would be a very different thesis. Quite apart from having read the entire manuscript several times, his insight and patience have enabled me to clarify ideas that previously only made sense within my own head. It is a privilege to have met such a generous and inspiring person through the course of the PhD and my thanks are due not only for the improvement he has brought to my work, but for the happiness that he has brought to my life in general.

The importance of emotional support cannot be overstated; for believing in me every day that I didn't believe in myself, enormous thanks go to: Caroline Herrick, Ellie Sang, Hannah Kombe, Lex Donovan, Tim Dissen, Lisa McDonagh and Vikki Rose (with whom this project was first 'imagin'd', back in 2004, over tea and carrot cake in Cartmel coffee shop).

Finally, more than thanks are due to my family who have provided tireless encouragement throughout my PhD. In particular my parents Chris and Greg McCawley have consistently offered me unconditional love and support of every kind; I simply could not have completed this project without them and, really, I'd like to be able to award them both a PhD.

We lost my brother Alistair long before I embarked upon this thesis; the joy and energy with which he filled his ten short years, and his truly exceptional writing, continues to motivate me as I move forward in my life.

To Val Harding Davies

Introduction

> Like a sound from the Dead Sea, all shrouded in glooms,
>   With breaking of hearts, chains clanking, men groaning,
> Or chorus of ravens, that croak among tombs,
>   It comes like a mournful moaning:
>   "Weep, weep, weep!"
>   Yoke-fellows listen,
>   Till tearful eyes glisten,
> 'Tis the voice of the Past: the dark, grim-featured Past,
> All sad as the shriek of the midnight blast.
>   Weep, weep, weep!

These lines, taken from the poem 'The Three Voices', were published by the Chartist poet Gerald Massey as part of his 1851 collection *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*. 'The Three Voices' contains some of the most striking echoes of William Blake re-sounding in Chartist poetry. The repeated cry of 'weep' is rare within English poetry. Whilst 'weep' is a common term, appearing almost nine thousand times in poetry from 1100 to 1953, the poetic repetition of weep is far less typical. The two-fold repetition appears seventy times, whilst there are only eight poems in which weep is repeated more than twice in succession.[1] When Massey published 'The Three Voices', a repeated cry of weep had appeared in print on three previous occasions: most recently in Charles Kingsley's 1848 drama *A Saint's Tragedy* and 1850 novel *Alton Locke*, but also in Blake's 'The Chimney Sweeper' poems, where the child chimney-sweepers' four-fold cry of 'weep' in *Songs of Innocence* re-sounded in a two-fold cry in *Songs of Experience*.

Massey's use of weep is closer to Blake's than Kingsley's; both Massey and Blake draw upon the aural quality of this term, using it not just to signify the act of

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[1] These results were obtained using the English Poetry database; this searchable archive contains poetry by English authors born between 1100 and 1953.

crying, but to evoke the sound. Conversely, Kingsley (and indeed Phillip Marston, Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton and Charles Harpur, whose usage post-dated the Chartist period) employs this term in a more straightforward fashion and without an emphasis on aural experience.[2] In Act IV Scene IV of *A Saint's Tragedy* Elizabeth says: '[…] Jesus wept! / I'll weep, weep, weep!', using this repetition to emphasise her distress and describe its physical manifestation.[3] Chapter five of this thesis will explore the context of Kingsley's work and suggest that his use of 'weep, weep, weep' indicates the availability of this poetic pattern within Chartist and working class culture. However, Massey's image is of interest at the outset of this thesis because of its aural connection with Blake's poetry, and the placement of this image amongst a succession of Blakean echoes.

The sense of correspondence between Blake and Massey that is created by the repetition of 'weep' is strengthened in the third stanza of 'The Three Voices' where the 'call' 'Merrily, merrily, merrily! / It comes like the touch of the soft Spring unwarping' recalls Blake's chorus 'Merrily / Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year' from the poem 'Spring'. The adjective 'merrily' is commonly used in English poetry, appearing in over one thousand poems between 1100 and 1953, but the repetition of 'merrily' is even less frequent that that of 'weep'. A two-fold 'merrily, merrily' occurs forty-three times, but the repeated poetic pattern found in Massey, is one of only three occasions upon which 'merrily' is repeated three times.[4]

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[2] 'Weep' was also repeated more than twice in sucssesion in Marston's 'From Far' (Marston was born in 1850 and the Chartist movement was active between 1838 and 1855); in Lytton's 'Semper Eadem' and 'Clytemnestra' (Lytton's first poetic publications did not appear until 1855); and in Harpur's 'The Tower of The Dream' (which was not published until 1862).
[3] Kingsley, *The Saint's Tragedy*, (John W. Parker, 1848), Act IV, Scence IV, lines 59-60.
[4] 'Merrily merrily merrily' is also found in John Stanyan's 'The Sea King', which was published in 1848, and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The significance of Shakespeare's usage will be discussed in detail in Chapter five.

However, it is Massey's use of merrily in connection with, and welcome of, the Spring season that draws a parallel between his poem and Blake's. There are four poems in which merrily is repeated twice or more and used in connection with the season of Spring, and only Blake's usage precedes Massey's. George McDonald and Charles Swain also use this combination of words, but their poems were not published until after the Chartist period; in Swain the word 'spring' describes a spring of water and not a seasonal renewal.[5]

Taken alone these Blakean echoes might be easily dismissed or overlooked, but these repeated poetic patterns draw attention to an accretion of similarities between Massey's 'The Three Voices' and Blake's *Songs*. These echoes are by no means isolated examples. As chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis will show, Blake's poetry, and *Songs of Innocence and Experience* in particular, re-sounds throughout the early work of both Gerald Massey and Ernest Jones.

It may appear, when reading Massey's 'The Three Voices', that this Chartist poet was familiar with Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* and was alluding to the poems 'The Chimney Sweeper' and 'Spring'. Although Chartism's engagement with Romantic poets such as Shelley, Byron and Burns can be clearly demonstrated, there is no demonstrable link between Blake and the Chartist movement. The Chartists reproduced the work of Shelley, Byron and Burns (and to a lesser extent Wordsworth and Coleridge) in their newspapers and periodicals; they prefaced articles of political report or commentary with extracts from the poetry of these Romantic predecessors; and they wrote key phrases from the most popular Romantic poems on banners to be

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[5] George McDonald 'If I Wert A Monk, And Thou Wert A Nun', *Violin Songs* (Strathan, 1871) and Charles Swain, 'The Sea-Nymph's Reply', *Songs and Ballads* (Simpkin Marshall, 1867).

displayed at public meetings.[6] The Chartists' clear engagement with these Romantic poets readily invites close textual exploration. However, there is no evidence that the Chartists had any knowledge of Blake. Chapter 1 will show that there was no mention made of Blake or his poetry in the Chartist press, and there is no known vector through which his poetic works could have become available to Chartist poets during the period that the movement was active. Therefore the investigation of the correspondence between Blake and Chartism immediately presents major theoretical and methodological difficulties.

This thesis argues that it is profitable to explore the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry despite the lack of a direct link between the texts. It will demonstrate that our understanding of these textual moments, and of Chartist poetry in general, is enriched by comparison with Blake. A significant proportion of the thesis will be dedicated to the close textual analysis of Jones and Massey's poetry. This textually focused work will demonstrate the significance of the correspondence between Blake and Chartism and the ways that similar imagery operates in the poetry of Blake, Jones and Massey. However, as will be shown in Chapter 1, existing theoretical models of influence and intertextuality are not sufficient to support this investigation. Therefore, before an analysis can be conducted, the thesis must consider how these textual moments are best discussed – through what terminology can this relationship be described? The presence of these images raises a further question – in the absence of a direct intertextual link, how can we account for Blakean echoes that re-sound in Chartist poetry?

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[6] 'The works of Byron and Shelley were continually printed in the most popular Chartist newspapers and lines of their revolutionary verse were written out on banners and placards carried by the Chartists during mass demonstrations and meetings.' Y.K. Kovalev, 'The Literature of Chartism', *Victorian Studies*, trans. by J.C. Dumbreck and Michael Beresford, 2 (1958), 117-138 (p. 126).

This thesis will strive to answer these central questions by adopting two complementary methodological strategies. It will explain the connections that exist between Blake and Chartism through the terms: echo, re-sound, resonance and correspondence. This terminology focuses attention on oral and aural aspects of the texts, encouraging the close analysis of repeated patterns both within and across poems. In addition the thesis will address the problem of transmission in the absence of a demonstrable intertextual link. It will argue that the similarities between Blake and the Chartists' poetic expression can be explained by a shared underlying 'cultural matrix' of radical politics and radical Christianity which informs the work of all three poets. This is a historically focused argument that will draw parallels between the specific cultural situations in which Blake, Jones and Massey were writing, to explore how a poets' cultural matrix' might impact on the representation of their poetic imagination through the use of symbols, images and tropes.

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Whilst undertaking these key intellectual enquiries this thesis makes additional contributions to scholarship. The connection between Blake and Chartism has not previously been discussed. This can be attributed to two key factors. Firstly, the literary value of Chartist poetry in general has been significantly overlooked by modern criticism, with only a handful of dedicated studies having been carried out. For this reason, little literary analysis of Chartist poetry has taken place. Clear connections can be made between Chartism and Romantic poets such as Shelley, Byron and Burns and yet the close textual analysis of their influence on Chartist poetry is extremely

limited.[7] It is therefore unsurprising that the connections between Chartist poetry and Blake have not been explored previously.

In 1956 Yuri Kovalev introduced his ground-breaking *Anthology of Chartist Literature* with the assertion that 'The Chartist movement and Chartist literature enriched English Literature with new themes', occupying 'a firm place in the history of nineteenth-century literature'.[8] However, more than fifty years later Chartist literature remains a marginal field of study that has been significantly undertheorised by literary critics.

Both Brian Maidment and Timothy Randall have 'deliberately stress[ed] the literariness, the linguistic and formal self-consciousness' of Chartist poetry, each stating that these texts have frequently been approached from a historical or political perspective as an example of a useful biographical source, but have been overlooked as works of literature.[9] Mike Sanders and Anne Janowitz's work has highlighted the value of the literary analysis of Chartist poetry, outlining Chartism's contribution to the Victorian poetic tradition. Sanders demonstrates that the poems written by Chartists and published in the Chartist press were amongst the most widely read of the Victorian era.[10] In *Lyric and Labour in the Romantic Tradition* Janowitz has shown how Chartist poetry 're-complicates' and 'redeployed' the binaries of 'individual/communitarian, print/oral, custom/reason' that had characterised Romantic poetry, developing these traditions throughout the 1830s and 1840s.[11]

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[7] In *Lyric and Labour in the Romantic Tradition* (CUP, 1998), Anne Janowitz does use textual evidence to futher her investigation of the ways that the Chartists developed their Romantic inheritance.
[8] Kovalev, 'The Literature of Chartism', p. 120.
[9] Brian Maidment, *The Poorhouse Fugitives* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1992) p. 13 and pp. 16-17. Timothy Randall, 'Chartist Poetry and Song', in *The Chartist Legacy*, ed. by Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson and Stephen Roberts (Suffolk: Merlin Press, 1999) pp. 171-195 (p. 171).
[10] Mike Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism* (CUP, 2009).
[11] Janowitz, p. 136.

These studies, together with the work of Martha Vicinus and P. M. Ashraf, lay vital foundations for future research. This thesis will present an extended close textual engagement with Chartist poetry exploring not only the Blakean echoes but also the Shelleyan influence that can be detected in Jones and Massey's texts. Chapter 3 will examine Jones and Massey's allusions to Shelley, demonstrating how these Chartists developed their Romantic inheritance. In chapters 4 and 5 a comparison with Blake will illuminate patterns and structures at work within Jones and Massey's texts, illustrating the literary nature of their poetry and exploring the ways in which they repeat and adapt imagery to create meaning. Therefore, this thesis contributes to our understanding of an undertheorised area of Victorian poetry.

The thesis also makes significant engagement with Blake scholarship. Over the last century there have emerged almost as many interpretations of Blake as there have been readers of his poetry. This thesis follows the perspective of critics such as Andrew Lincoln in seeing Blake's poetry as deliberately complex and ambiguous:

> Some poems contain contradictory views within them [...] Blake's technique generates ambiguities that repeatedly complicate interpretation. Few books offer such challenges with such a disarming appearance of simplicity.[12]

Furthermore, the thesis will extend Heather Glen's concept of echoing interconnectivity to demonstrate that no single image in Blake's *Songs* can be understood in isolation, but rather that Blake creates meaning through interconnected networks of imagery that operate both within and across texts.[13] It will therefore be

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[12] Andrew Lincoln, 'Introduction', in *Songs of Innocence and Experience: Princeton Illuminated Edition*, ed. by David Bindman (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1998), pp. 9-24 (p. 10).
[13] Heather Glen, *Vision and Disenchantment: Blake's Songs and Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads* (CUP, 1983), p. 137.

essential to explore the complexity of Blake's imagery in order to demonstrate the ways in which it is re-sounding in Jones and Massey's texts.

Unlike critics such as Northrop Frye or S. Foster Damon who have sought to uncover the 'system' around which Blake organised his poetic thought, this thesis is written from the perspective that Blake's work exists in opposition to such systematizing tendencies. Los' memorable statement 'I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Man's. / I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to Create' has been appropriated to suggest that Blake was attempting, though his poetry, to create a system that could rival that of the established church and state. [14] In contrast to this interpretation this thesis will argue that Blake deliberately created complex imagery that was intended to contain many different possible interpretations so that it might inspire the reader's imagination, encouraging each individual to create their own system. Blake's poetry can therefore be conceived as an open or multivalent text.

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This thesis will focus on the poetry of Jones and Massey because the work of these poets is rich with Blakean imagery; it will not discuss in detail the poetry of the Chartist rank and file, W. J. Linton or Thomas Cooper, because the work of these poets does not contain resonances of Blake. In researching this thesis I accessed poetry written by ordinary members of the Chartist movement, through Kovalev's *Anthology*, and through the poetry column of the *Northern Star* newspaper. In his recent study *The Poetry of Chartism* Mike Sanders has documented the verses presented in the

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[14] William Blake, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*, plate 10. On the use of this quote to argue for Blake's system, see Northrop Frye and David Cayley, Northrop Frye in Conversation (Concord, Ontario: Anansi Press, 1992), p. 74; L. J. Swingle, 'The Romantic Emergence: Multiplication of Alternatives and the Problem of Systematic Entrapment', in *Romantic Poetry: Recent Revisionary Criticism*, ed. by Karl Kroeber and Gene W. Ruoff (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1993), pp. 44-62 (p.57); and S. Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake*, rev. by Morris Eaves (Brown University: University of New England Press, 1988), p. xxvi.

Northern Star, stating: 'During its lifetime, this column published almost 1,500 poems (or excerpts from poems). These poems were the work of at least 390 Chartist poets, the vast majority of whom were working men.'[15] Sanders' research indicates the most prolific year for 'Chartist produced' poetry in the *Star* was 1840; therefore, I have accessed and studied each of the poetry columns published in the *Star* in 1840, but have not found any significant resonances of Blake within these poems. A handful of poems published in this year do contain images of chains and binding and of priestcraft and kingcraft that are comparable to those used by Jones and Massey; these will be referenced in the thesis to strengthen discussions of the Chartist's use of these images. However, as was outlined above, Jones and Massey's poems appear Blakean because they contain combinations of images, each of which recall Blake, whereas in Chartist rank and file poetry these images appear in isolation.

Alongside Jones and Massey, Janowitz identifies Thomas Cooper and W. J. Linton as Chartist 'labour laureates', who, distinct from the rank and file, wrote poetry that represented the movement and became 'central within the Chartist press':

> By 1850, the ratified 'Chartist Poets' comprised most crucially Cooper and Jones, alongside Gerald Massey […] and something of a fellow-traveller, W. J. Linton, who had begun his literary-agitational work in 1839 with his journal, *The National*.[16]

Although these poets share in the same traditions as Jones and Massey, and make use of similar imagery, they do not employ it in a way that appears Blakean. Cooper has one very strong and obvious precursor: John Milton. Cooper's seminal work *The Purgatory of Suicides*, was written as an explicit attempt to produce a Chartist epic and

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[15] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism*, p.70.
[16] Anne Janowitz, *Lyric and Labour in the Romantic Tradition* (CUP, 1998), p. 159.

makes significant engagement with the English epic *Paradise Lost*.[17] Cooper invokes

Milton in the second book of his poem, honouring him as the 'patriot bard!':

> Poet of Paradise, whose glory' illumed
> My path of youthful penury, till grew
> The desert to a garden, and Life bloomed
> With hope and joy, 'midst suffering, - 'honour due'
> I cannot render thee; but reverence true
> This heart shall give thee, till it reach the verge
> Where human splendours lose their lustrous hue;
> And, when, in death, my moral joys all merge –
> Thy grand and gorgeous music, Milton, be my dirge! –[18]

Having observed Blakean echoes in the poetry of Jones and Massey, Linton's poetry

appeared a natural place in which further resonances might be found. Linton is known

to have engaged directly with Blake's poetry. In 1861, 6 years after the demise of

Chartism as an active movement, he was commissioned by Dante Gabriel and William

Rossetti, on behalf of Mrs Gilchrist, to illustrate Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of William

Blake*.[19] The biographer F. B Smith observes the many similarities between Blake and

Linton as radical engravers when drawing his reluctant conclusion that Linton had

been unaffected by Blake's poetry:

> It would be pleasant to be able to add that Linton recognized in Blake
> a fellow engraver, poet, patriot, and visionary Londoner, a republican
> sprung of the people: indeed, a spirit more akin to his own than any
> other in English history. But he disregarded Blake's rich, exhilarating
> wood-engravings for Thornton's *Virgil* and excluded him from his
> later *Masters of Wood-Engravings*. Blake's poetry he dismissed as
> 'incoherences'(sic). […] Linton also appears to have been totally

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[17] For a discussion of Cooper's epic style, see Sephanie Kuduk, 'Sedition, Chartism, and Epic Poetry in Thomas Cooper's *The Purgatory of Suicides*', *Victorian Poetry*, 39 (2001), 165-186.

[18] Thomas Cooper, *The Purgatory of Suicides: A Prison Rhyme in Ten Books* (J. Watson, 1847), II.xiv and II.xv.

[19] F.B. Smith, *Radical Artisan: William James Linton 1812-1897* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), p.147.

uninterested in Blake's radicalism. He worked wholeheartedly at the Gilchrist book, but its message seems to have escaped him. His very talent blinded him to Blake's genius.[20]

As Kovalev observes, Linton's Chartist poetry might profitably be explored in relation to Shelley; however, due to the absence of Blakean echoes it will not be discussed in detail in this thesis.[21]

When discussing the poetry of Jones and Massey the thesis will not approach poems in a biographical way, but rather approach them for their aesthetic effects. Existing scholarship on Chartist poetry tends to handle these texts as works of biographical or historical interest; this study will examine Jones and Massey's poetry as part of a literary tradition, focusing on these poets' use of imagery, their adaptation of poetic form, and the creation of oral and aural resonance.

Throughout this thesis I am employing the terms 'close reading' and 'close textual analysis' to describe this aesthetic engagement with the poetic text. These terms can also be used to indicate the kind of textually focused work that was found in the scholarship of critics such as F. R. Leavis and I. A. Richards. 'Practical' and 'New' criticism presented the text as self-sufficient in producing meaning; it did not look to the reader or to history as a creator of meaning, but rather aimed to uncover the truth of the text. In 'The Function of Criticism' Leavis states that the critic 'is concerned with the work in front of him as something that should contain within itself the reason why it is so and not otherwise.'[22] This approach has been challenged by critics such as Terry Eagleton who summarises:

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[20] F. B. Smith, p.148.
[21] Kovalev, 'The Literature of Chartism', p. 130.
[22] F. R. Leavis, 'The Function of Criticism', *The Common Pursuit*, (Faber and Faber, 2008).

there was no need to examine the work in its historical context, or
even discuss the structure of ideas on which it drew. It was a matter
of assessing the tone and sensibility of a particular passage,
"placing" it definitively and then moving on to the next.[23]

In using the term close reading, I intend to indicate a critical practice that considers the formal elements of poetic texts, but does not view texts in isolation. Conversely, this thesis not only argues that the connections between Blake and Chartists texts occur because of parallels in their cultural situations, but acknowledges the close readings presented as necessarily partial and individual observations.

In presenting this type of close reading my thesis is closer to the criticism of scholars such as Paul Muldoon, who as both a poet and a critic, has frequently highlighted the personal nature of the critic's engagement with the poetic text. For example, Muldoon's lecture 'Getting Round: Notes Towards an *Ars Poetica*' demonstrates ways in which a poet might draw upon the images presented to him within his specific cultural situation. Moreover, through an exploration of Robert Frost's 'The Silken Tent' this lecture emphasises the fact that close reading must, by its very nature, reflect the personal experience and ideas of the reader, who draws connections and recognises meanings in relation to his own particular context.[24] In this way Muldoon demonstrates the compatibility of a methodology that undertakes a historical recovery in order to situate the poems it presents, whilst also offering an analysis of these poems that is necessarily individual.

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[23] Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), pp. 37-38.
[24] Paul Muldoon, 'Getting Round: Notes Towards an *Ars Poetica*', *Essays in Criticism*, 48 (1998), 107-128.

Chapter 1 will open by presenting the evidence against a demonstrable link between Blake and the Chartists. It will outline how the lack of a direct link impacts upon our understanding of the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry. The chapter will go on to discuss why existing theories of Traditional and Bloomian Influence insufficiently describe these textual effects and to indicate how the methodology employed in this thesis will draw upon some aspects of Intertextuality and New Historicist theory. There is not an existing critical vocabulary through which the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry can be discussed. Therefore, in its final section Chapter 1 will address this methodological obstacle by proposing that Blake, Jones and Massey's poetry is best considered in terms of 'echo', 're-sounding' and 'correspondence'.

Chapter 2 will address the issue of how Blakean echoes can occur in the absence of a direct link. It will open with a discussion of how recent historicist Blake scholarship has moved away from the approach of broad historical survey, to argue that the poetic texts were informed by the specific cultural situation in which they were written. The methodological approach, found in Mee, Worral, E. P. Thompson and McCalman's work, will be extended to produce the theory of the 'cultural matrix'. The 'cultural matrix' will be presented as a conceptual model, rather than a fully evidenced argument, because such an undertaking is beyond the scope of this thesis. The metaphor of threads will be used to explain the key components of this model. It will be argued that Blake and the Chartists' shared radical culture informed the structure of their poetic thought, and can therefore explain the occurrence of similar imagery in their poetic texts. This theory will inform the close readings of Jones and Massey's poetry that follow.

Chapter 3 will explore key examples of Shelleyan influence in Jones and Massey's poetry. This chapter will highlight the direct intertextual link between Shelley and the Chartists and demonstrate how Chartist poetry might be discussed in terms of influence and allusion. The chapter will provide an overview of the publication history of Shelley's work at the outset, drawing upon the research of Bouthaina Shaaban to discuss the reproduction of Shelley's poetry within the Chartist press. This bibliographical overview will establish which works were available to the Chartist movement and with which poems they particularly engaged. The relationship between Chartism and Blake has not been discussed in previous criticism; however, the connection between Shelley and the Chartists is well established. Therefore, a critical analysis of the Chartists' response to Shelley will provide useful insight into existing debates about Jones and Massey's engagement with their literary inheritance. Whereas Vicinus has described the Chartists' use of Shelley as derivative, Kovalev and Janowitz argue that it is developmental. The chapter will close with a demonstration of the way that Jones and Massey have engaged with Shelley's 'Song to the Men and England' and 'The Mask of Anarchy', developing key images from these poems.

The fourth and fifth chapters will present an extended close textual analysis of the Blakean echoes that re-sound in Chartist poetry. Chapter 4 will identify the most notable Blakean echoes in the poetry of Ernest Jones. Jones' poetry resonates with images of Priestcraft and Kingcraft, as well as chains and binding; similar images play a central role in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. The chapter will make significant engagement with Blake studies; presenting Blake's imagery as echoingly interconnected both within and across poems and collections. It will show how Jones'

'Labour's History' and 'A Chartist Chorus' recall Blake's multivalent imagery, corresponding with not one, but several of Blake's *Songs*.

Chapter 5 will extend this close textual exploration of Chartist poetry to the work of Massey. Massey's poetry contains many of the key Blakean images identified in the work of Jones. However, 'The Three Voices' will be shown to contain an uncanny resonance of Blake;[25] echo occurs as mis-hearing and trace. This will demonstrate that the theory of 'echo' is not being used as a simple substitute for 'allusion', 'influence' or 'intertext', but here denotes an entirely different textual effect that must be judged in new terms.

The thesis will conclude with a discussion of how an involvement in radical cultures may affect, not just the symbols and images that are available to a poet, but the way in which he employs these poetically.[26] It will highlight occasions when the poets discussed throughout the thesis turn and subvert the common images made available to them by their cultural situation.

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[25] Where the term 'uncanny' is used in this thesis it follows Freud's use to denote an apparently familiar figure or image which is nonetheless altered or strange. See Sigmund Freud, 'The Uncanny' in *The Standard Edition*, trans. by James Strachey (Hogarth, 2002), 17:217-52, for the definition of *Unheimlich* [uncanny] as a disturbing image which can be traced back to the homely or familiar. Stephen Greenblatt makes similar use of the term uncannily when discussing intertextual connections: 'What had impressed me as uncannily contemporary then was a wily courtier's attempt to sound unstrung.' *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), p.xii.
[26] Throughout the thesis multiple poets will be identified with the personal pronoun 'he'. This is not employed in ignorance of the term's potentially sexist and exclusionary connotations, but because all the major poets discussed in this thesis happen to be male. Randall indicates the methodological difficulties inherent in attributing Chartist rank and file poetry to female Chartist authors on p. 176 of 'Chartist Poetry and Song'. For further information about female involvement in Chartism see Malcolm Chase, *Chartism: A New History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), especially p. 43.

Chapter 1 – Theories of Influence and Intertextuality

This thesis is founded on an apparent paradox. It explores the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry whilst also engaging with the question of how Jones and Massey's poetry could be echoing the work of a poet they had never read. This chapter begins by presenting the evidence against a direct link between Blake and the Chartists. It then shows that existing theories of influence do not provide a theoretical framework capable of explaining the presence of Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry, and identifies the ways in which theories of intertextuality and New Historicism will inform the methodologies of echo and cultural matrix.

Traditional influence study dates back to the eighteenth century and is predicated upon the later poet having admired, read and actively engaged with his predecessor.[1] Christopher Ricks' modern application of traditional ideas in *Allusion to the Poets* (2004) will be shown to contain useful models that illuminate the study of directly related poetry such as that of Shelley and the Chartist movement; however, this approach is inappropriate when exploring the Chartists' echoes of Blake due to the lack of a direct link between authors.

Harold Bloom's theory of influence, first outlined in *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973) and re-visited in later works such as *Kabbalah and Criticism* (1975), has often been confused or conflated with traditional influence. In fact Bloom's theory makes several significant departures from traditional influence. In the context of this thesis

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[1] For a historical overview of traditional influence see Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein, 'Figures in the Corpus: Theories of Influence and Intertextuality', in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. by Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), pp. 3-29 (p. 5).

the most interesting aspect of Bloom's theory is that it does not require an 'ephebe' to have read his 'precursor's' work. This suggests that Bloom's method might help to explicate the connection between Blake and Chartism. However, as the chapter will demonstrate, Bloom's theory does not engage with close textual interconnections and is therefore not applicable to this study: as Peter De Bolla states, Bloomian influence 'in spite of the fact that it seems to be understood in terms of source study, has nothing to do with style or verbal echoes or any other surface quality of poetic texts'.[2]

The chapter will go on to consider the theories of intertextuality that have developed out of the work of Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva. Unlike theories of traditional influence, which centre on the notion of authorial intention, intertextuality seeks to free the text from this determining authority. Meaning is no longer created by the author, as is described by Graham Allen:

> Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the
> other texts to which it refers and relates, moving out from the
> independent text into a network of textual relations. The text becomes
> the intertext.[3]

In this respect it seems appropriate to consider the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry in terms of intertextuality because the theory facilitates a focus on close textual analysis but is unconcerned with the direct connection of texts through their authors. However, as the discussion in this chapter will demonstrate, intertextuality views the text as 'lacking in any kind of independent meaning';[4] it cannot therefore be deployed in the investigation of how or why Chartist poetry appears to be echoing Blake. The suggestion that the Blakean echoes in Chartists poetry re-sound because Blake, Jones

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[2] Peter De Bolla, *Harold Bloom: Towards Historical Rhetorics* (Routledge, 1988), p. 17.
[3] Graham Allen, *Intertextuality*, (Routledge, 2000), p. 1.
[4] ibid.

and Massey were writing within a shared underlying cultural matrix is incompatible with the theoretical standpoint of intertextuality. This thesis asserts the significance of both specific historical context and the agency of the poet, neither of which are supported by an intertextual approach.

In theorising the placement of literature within historical context this thesis draws upon New Historicist methodologies. New Historicism places literature as one part of a larger social text, both demanding that poetic texts are understood in relation to their specific historical context, and facilitating discussions of reader response in drawing intertextual connections and designating meaning.

Finally the chapter proposes an alternative model that is capable of defining the textual effects produced by Blakean echoes. The chapter then defines the key components of this model through the terms echo, re-sound, resonance and correspondence. This terminology will be used to facilitate close textual analysis in the absence of a direct link, whilst maintaining a focus on the way that poetic expression relates to the cultural matrix in which it was produced.

The Historical Connection between Blake and Chartism

One of the central tenets of this thesis is that the Chartist poets, and in particular Jones and Massey, did not engage directly with the poetry of Blake during the period that the Chartist movement was active. Whilst it is not possible to state with certainty that any given poet definitely did not read a particular text, it is possible to gauge the likelihood of a direct connection between texts. It can be shown that it is highly improbable that the Chartists read Blake.

The following discussion will explore three vectors through which Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* might conceivably have become available to the

Chartists. This thesis asserts that the Chartists did not have access to Blake because there is no mention in the Chartist press of either William Blake the poet or of Tulk, Wilkinson or Cunningham's early nineteenth century reproductions of Blake's poetry. This absence of Blake stands in contrast to the extensive discussions and reproductions of the Chartists' other Romantic predecessors.

Tulk and Wilkinson

Blake's poetry was in obscurity in the first half of the nineteenth century; it was not until Alexander Gilchrist's biography of Blake was published in 1863 that the poet's work became popular, by which time the Chartist movement had been inactive for almost a decade.[5] However, there were some limited opportunities through which a Chartist poet might have encountered Blake's poetry whilst the movement was active. Bentley and Nurmi's *A Blake Bibliography*, records that *Songs of Innocence and Experience* was reprinted in 1839 by J.J. Garth Wilkinson and in 1843 by Charles Augustus Tulk.[6] Additionally, Alan Cunningham published a biography of Blake in his 1830 study *Eminent British Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, which continued to be reprinted throughout the Chartist period.[7]

An investigation of the early nineteenth century reproductions of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* reveals that they were edited by enthusiasts of Blake and

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[5] Bentley, *William Blake: The Critical Heritage* (Routledge, 1975), p. 10. These aspects of the research undertaken by Bentley in the 1970s continue to be accepted and reiterated in Blake scholarship, see the opening paragraphs of Aileen Ward's essay 'William Blake and his circle', in *The Cambridge Companion To William Blake*, ed. by Eaves, pp. 19-36 (p. 19).

[6] G. E. Jr. Bentley and Martin K. Nurmi, *A Blake Bibliography – Annotated Lists of Works, Studies, and Blakeana*, (Minneapolis: The Lund Press, 1964), p. 59.

[7] Allan Cunningham's *The Lives of The Most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors And Architects*, 2nd edn, vol 2 (London: John Murray, 1830). Alexander Gilchrist discusses Alan Cunningham alongside Blake, as a fellow 'protégé' of Robert Cromek in the *Life of William Blake* [1863], ed. by Ruthven Todd (London: J. M Dent & Sons Ltd, 1942), p. 252.

distributed within a discrete community.[8] Both Wilkinson and Tulk were connected to Blake through Swedenborgianism and their editions of *Songs* had a limited distribution within the Swedenborgian community.

In *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity*, Robert Rix identifies Charles Augustus Tulk as a patron of Blake's work. Drawing upon Bentley's *Blake Records*, Rix states that the 'earliest documentation we have of C.A. Tulk's patronage is from 1816'. However, he suggests 'Blake's positive reference to Swedenborg in his *Descriptive Catalogue* of 1810 (E546) could indicate a possible earlier date for Tulk's patronage'.[9] Rix also identifies a connection between Tulk and Wilkinson's engagement with Blake's poetry, explaining that 'Tulk's membership of the Swedenborgian Society brought him into contact with James John Garth Wilkinson, who joined in 1837'. Rix states:

> It was undoubtedly Tulk who introduced Wilkinson to Blake's *Songs*,
> which Wilkinson would subsequently publish in an edition of 1839'.
> In the 'Introduction', he laboured to present Blake's poems within a
> Swedenborgian framework.[10]

In *A Blake Bibliography* Bentley and Nurmi record that Wilkinson's publication of *Songs* ran to two editions. Whilst we have no indication of the distribution numbers of Wilkinson's editions, the nature of his 'Introduction' would suggest that the volume was intended for distribution among a specific group of readers who were either members of the Swedenborgian church, or had expressed an interest in the radical Christian group.

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[8] Whilst some members of the Chartist movement were also Swedenborgians, there was very little crossover between the two movements (the connection between William Hill and Swedenborgianism will be discussed when the possibility that the *Northern Star* contained reference to Blake is considered later in the section).

[9] Robert Rix, *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity* (Cornwall: MPG Books Ltd, 2007), p. 115.

[10] Rix, p. 117.

The distribution of Charles Augustus Tulk's 1843 edition of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* can be more confidently discerned, as the volume ran to only 12 copies, which were 'made to give to friends who were interested in Blake'.[11] The personal nature of Tulk's distribution is emphasised by Bentley and Nurmi, who note that Tulk left space 'so that friends to whom he distributed' *Songs of Innocence and Experience* 'could copy in the designs if they chose.'[12] Rix asserts that 'Tulk's interest in Blake was not only theological but also political; the two appearing to go hand in hand.'[13] This assertion is evidenced through an account of the occasions upon which Tulk introduced others to Blake's poetry. Rix states that 'Tulk undoubtedly introduced Blake as a Swedenborgian', adding that:

> Tulk showed Blake's *Songs* to S.T. Coleridge in 1818. This seems to have been in connection with seeking passage of a "Bill for the Relief of the Children employed in Cotton Factories", which was petitioned to Parliament in early 1818.[14]

Tulk had been a patron of Blake's at least eleven years prior to the poet's death in 1827, and Wilkinson's later publication history evidences the Swedenborgian's enduring and particular interest in Blake. Tulk's 1843 edition of *Songs* was actually reproduced in 1886, by Wilkinson.[15]

This evidence demonstrates that Tulk and Wilkinson are examples of the small number of friends, patrons and individuals with particular interest, who were familiar with Blake's poetry and designs prior to the publication of Gilchrist's biography in

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[11] Rix, p. 116.
[12] Bentley and Nurmi, p. 12.
[13] Rix, p. 116.
[14] Rix, p. 116-117.
[15] Bentley and Nurmi, p. 59.

1863, after which 'Blake's name [became] known almost overnight throughout the English-speaking world.'[16]

Allan Cunningham

G. E. Bentley has argued in *William Blake: The Critical Heritage* that Blake's contemporaries thought of him primarily as 'an engraver who might do tolerably well, if he was not mad.'[17] Bentley states:

> Blake was scarcely known as an author during his lifetime, and much of what is today thought of as his greatest and most characteristic work was then dismissed as incomprehensible.[18]

Cunningham's reproduction of Blake's poetry could potentially have made Blake's poetry available to a broader readership during the early nineteenth century. However, just as Bentley has said of Blake's contemporaries, the poet was initially misunderstood and disliked by critics who were baffled as to why he would be included in Cunningham's edition.

Cunningham's biography of Blake in *Eminent British Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, was first published in 1830. In his 46 page biography, Cunningham reproduced 'Introduction', 'The Chimney Sweeper', 'Holy Thursday' and 'Laughing Song' from *Songs of Innocence*; 'The Tyger' from *Songs of Experience*; and 'I love the jocund dance' and extracts from 'King Edward the Third' from *Poetical*

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[16] Bentley, *Blake: The Critical Heritage*, p. 10. In 1886 J. J. Garth Wilkinson, who suffixed his name with: 'member of the royal college of surgeons of England', published two editions of the medical book *The Human Body and its Connections with Man Illustrated by the Principle Organs*. Within this volume Wilkinson included a copy of Blake's 'The Divine Abstract' as illustrative of his broader discussion.

[17] B. H. Malkin, *A Father's Memoirs of his Child* (1806), op. cit. Bentley, *Blake: The Critical Heritage*, p. xvii; see *Blake Records* (1969), p. 424.

[18] Bentley, *Blake: The Critical Heritage*, p. 6.

Sketches.[19] Alexander Gilchrist comments on the contemporary reception of

Cunningham's volume, when demonstrating the way in which Blake's name had 'been

hitherto perseveringly exiled':

> The *Edinburgh Review* specified as a characteristic sin of "partiality"
> in Allan Cunningham's pleasant *Lives of the Most Eminent British
> Painters*, that he should have ventured to include this name, since its
> possessor could (it seems) "scarcely be considered a painter" at all.[20]

Despite this hostility to his discussion of Blake's life and work among a study of

Britain's 'most eminent' craftsmen, Cunningham's volume, which focuses as much on

Blake's poetry as it does his designs, succeeded and was republished in 1831, 1837,

1839, 1842, 1844 and 1846. Cunningham was also well known as an editor of Robert

Burns' poetry. As critics such as Janowitz and Maidment have identified, Burns was a

favourite poet of the Chartist movement. Therefore, despite the negative critical

reception to Cunningham's reproduction of Blake, the possibility that the Chartists had

access to a limited selection of Blake's early poetry through Allan Cunningham's

biography is worth considering.

Evidence from the Chartist Press

The clearest way to establish whether the Chartists were aware of an author or

publication is to consult Chartist periodicals and newspapers. The Chartist press

played a crucial role in both establishing and maintaining the movement. In her

ground-breaking 1984 study *The Chartists*, Dorothy Thompson states:

> What was new and powerful about the movement […] was its
> national character and the speed with which ideas and proposals

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[19] Allan Cunningham, pp. 143-189.
[20] Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake*, p. 1.

were disseminated. This speed and this national dimension were
achieved largely through the press. [21]

Thompson emphasises the importance of the *Northern Star*, arguing: 'The success of
the *Northern Star* would have been impossible without the Chartist movement, but it is
equally impossible to imagine Chartism without the *Star*.'[22] Thompson credits the
central position of the *Northern Star* to its skill in producing well-edited news pieces,
whilst also representing a wide variety of Chartist perspectives and concerns. As
Malcolm Chase has more recently summarised:

> The *Northern Star* gathered up news of local and regional
> activities, and steadily promoted the idea that all were part of
> a coherent and vital whole. And so in time they became.[23]

The *Northern Star* 'was taken in every part of Britain. Every kind of organisation,
from the collection of funds to the organisation of rallies and lecture tours, was
recorded in the *Star*', and at the paper's height in 1839 it can be estimated to have had
weekly readership that exceeded one million.[24] In *The Poetry of Chartism*, Sanders
highlights the central position that the production, consumption and aesthetic
discussion of poetry held in the *Northern Star*. Sanders' detailed study of the *Northern
Star*'s poetry column demonstrates that the newspaper hosted the work of 'at least
390' Chartist poets, the majority of whom were members of the rank and file,
alongside:

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[21] Dorothy Thompson, *The Chartists* (London: Temple Smith, 1984), p. 37.
[22] Dorothy Thompson, p. 49.
[23] Chase, p. 17.
[24] Dorothy Thompson, p. 46; Sanders states that: 'At its peak in 1839 the *Northern Star* enjoyed a
weekly circulation of 50,000. It is generally assumed that a reasonable estimate of a working-class
journal's readership in this period may be obtained by multiplying the circulation figures by a factor of
between twenty and thirty', *The Poetry Of Chartism*, p. 70.

poetry reprinted from non-Chartist journals, poetry by canonical'
poets such as Shelley, Byron, and Shakespeare, and poetry by
contemporary poets who were not expressly affiliated with
Chartism.[25]

With its comprehensive coverage of Chartist concerns, nationwide distribution and
weekly instalment of poetry, the *Northern Star* provides an authoritative resource
through which the Chartists' possible awareness of, and interest in, Blake might be
discerned. However, in order to ensure a thorough enquiry, and in an attempt to find a
definitive answer to the question of the Chartists' knowledge of Blake, three additional
Chartist publications, The *Chartist Circular*, *The Labourer* and *The Red Republican*
have been selected. These were the three most literary Chartist publications and they
also cover the early, mid and late Chartist period. Therefore, in conjunction with the
Northern Star they not only constitute a representative sample of Chartist periodicals,
but also the most likely place for a sighting of Blake.

The *Chartist Circular* was published in Glasgow on a weekly basis from
September 1839 until July 1842 and was the most literary minded Chartist periodical.
W. Hamish Fraser explains that: 'The *Circular* was not a newspaper, but an
educational journal intended to bring a greater understanding to the aims of
Chartism'.[26] The *Circular* presented literacy as central to the movement's political
campaign:

> The paper regularly returned to the theme that intelligence also
> resided within the working class. Writers like Shakespeare, Milton
> and Johnson were all claimed to have sprung from humble origins.
> The *Circular*'s argument was that the working class were *already*
> morally and intellectually worthy of the vote.[27]

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[25] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism*, p. 70.
[26] W. Hamish Fraser, 'The Chartist Press in Scotland', in *Papers for the People – A Study of the
Chartist Press*, ed. by Joan Allen and Owen Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2005), pp. 82-105 (p.91).
[27] Fraser, p. 98.

Works of Romantic poetry were regularly reproduced. Extracts of poetry by Byron,

Coleridge, Shelley and Wordsworth prefaced articles of literary criticism and political

commentary alike, and the paper often extolled the skill of Romantic poets, especially

Byron and Shelley.[28] The *Chartist Circular* valued poetry and reprinted at length, but

contains no mention of Blake.

The monthly periodical *The Labourer* ran from 1847 to 1848 and was edited by

Fergus O'Connor and Ernest Jones. *The Labourer* describes itself as 'a magazine of

Literature and Politics'. Before his imprisonment in 1848, many of Jones' own poems

were published in *The Labourer*. In the first volume of the journal Jones discussion of

T. Powell reveals his admiration of Byron and Shelley's poetry, providing a direct link

between their work and the allusions that appear in Jones' own poetry:

> Most of our modern poets commit the fault of writing for a class.
> They are class-poets, the same as we have class-legislators […] Oh!
> For the fresh vigour and practical philosophy of a Byron, Scott, or
> Moore. – Ay! and of a Shelley too, who had the happy power of
> never swerving from a practical aim in his most ideal productions.[29]

Blake is a notable absence from this list of poets.

Twenty-four issues of *The Red Republican* were published by the editor George

Julian Harney, between June and November 1850. In December 1850, the paper

changed its name to the less politically dangerous *The People's Friend*, and continued

to be published until December 1852. Harney published a number of poems by

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[28] Bouthaina Shaaban records that in "The Politics of Poets No. II", *The Chartist Circular*, 44 (25 July 1840), 178, 'The author's argument against monarchy is sustained by Shelley's description of the monarchy in *Queen Mab* (III, 22-213)', 'The Romantics in the Chartist Press' *Keats-Shelley Journal,* 39 (1989), 25-46 (p.27). On 1st August 1840 in the next instalment of "The Politics of Poets," the epigraph from Shelley's 'To Wordsworth' opens a discussion of 'Wordsworth's "Tyrtacus of England" and of Ebenezer Elliot's poem on kings and despots' (Shaaban, p. 27).
[29] Ernest Jones, 'Poems, by T. Powell', *The Labourer*, 1847, v.I, p.284. This extract is highlighted in Kovalev, p.310.

Massey. This Chartist publication makes reference to Keats' work in issue 3, and

Byron and Southey are quoted in issue 19.[30] Again, there is no mention of Blake.

Archival Results

Detailed searches of *The Chartist Circular*, *The Labourer* and *The Red*

Republican reveal no evidence of a Chartist knowledge of, or connection to, Blake.

These periodicals make no mention of anyone with the surname Blake, they reproduce

none of Blake's poetry, and no significant titles or phrases from Blake can be

identified. Nor do *The Chartist Circular*, *The Labourer* and *The Red Republican* make

reference to Wilkinson, Tulk or Cunningham.

The *Northern Star* similarly provides no evidence of a connection between

Chartism and Blake. The digitalisation of the *Northern Star* by the Nineteenth Century

Serials Edition online resource allows all 755 issues to be comprehensively searched.

Whilst three articles do include information about people with the surname Blake,

none refer to William Blake the poet.[31] Although William Hill, who edited the

Northern Star from 1837 until 1843, was a Swedenborgian minister, no reference is

made in the *Star* to either Tulk or Wilkinson.[32] Evidently the religious connection

between Tulk, Wilkinson and Hill was not sufficient to transmit a knowledge of Blake

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[30] *The People's Friend,* 3, p.19; 19, p. 152 Keats quote: p.19, no.3 vol.

[31] The *Northern Star*, January 3rd 1846, p.7 (Benjamin William Blake is listed as a bankrupt); *The Northern Star*, January 8th 1948, p.2 (Armenia Blake and Robert Henry Blake are named as two children who having been 'frightful[ly] murdered'); *The Northern Star*, June 19th 1852, p.3 (An article about the Admiral Robert Blake).

[32] Yeo, Eileen, 'Chartist religious belief and the theology of liberation', in *Disciplines Of Faith: Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy*, ed. by Jim Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper and Raphael Samuel (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987): 'For Chartist belief, I shall focus on the Rev. William Hill, the Swedenborgian minister who was once a handloom weaver and also active in the Factory Movement, who looked after his congregation in Hull while at the same time editing the main Chartist newspaper, the *Northern Star*.' (p.410).

onto the pages of the *Northern Star*; even within the Swedenborgian community the distribution of Blake's *Songs* was limited.

Allan Cunningham is mentioned in the *Northern Star*, but the paper never refers to his *Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors and Architects*. Cunningham is almost exclusively referred to in his capacity as the editor of *The Works of Robert Burns*.[33] The discussions of this collection in the *Star* suggest that it was of great importance to the Chartist movement; for example, a report on the 'Trades Movement' on 29th May 1847 describes how the volume was presented as a gift, 'being the people's edition of the works of their own immortal bard, "Robert Burns", with notes from Allan Cunningham.'[34] On the occasion of his death in November 1842, the *Star* published an obituary; this piece describes Cunningham as a poet in his own right and makes no mention of his connection to Burns.[35] However, the *Northern Star* never reproduced any of Cunningham's original poetry. Although the publication figures indicate that Cunningham's *Eminent British Painters* may have been available to members of the Chartist movement, there is simply no evidence that the Chartists ever engaged with this book, or with the poems by Blake reproduced therein.

Intriguingly, the *Northern Star* does contain a single indication that some Chartists possibly knew of Blake's *Songs of Innocence*. On page 8 of issue 313 of the *Star* (published on the 11th November 1843), it is recorded that William Cuffay was to recite 'Laughing Song' at a Chartist benefit.[36] Further investigation reveals little evidence to support the possibility that this title referred to Blake's 'Laughing Song'

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[33] Allan Cunningham, ed., *The Works of Robert Burns* (Cochrand and McCrone, 1834).
[34] *Northern Star*, May 29th 1847, p.5.
[35] *Northern Star*, November 5th 1842, p.3.
[36] I am grateful to Dr Martin Hoyles who encountered this mention of 'Laughing Song' whilst conducting his own research and brought the reference to my attention.

from *Songs of Innocence*. The article in which this information appears contains no further details that might identify the contents of the song or its author. This is a single, isolated reference; neither the title 'Laughing Song', Blake's poem itself, nor any notable phrases from the song, appear anywhere else in the *Northern Star*. Whilst the possibility that William Cuffay did indeed recite Blake's 'Laughing Song' cannot be categorically refuted, such a possibility is highly unlikely given the absence of any further reference to Blake in the Chartist Press.

The findings of my research are corroborated by consulting the work of Bouthaina Shaaban. Shaaban's bibliography of references to Romantic literature in the Chartist press will be discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis in relation to the Chartists' engagement with Shelley. Although Shelley's poetry forms the focus of Shaaban's own research, and is the exclusive focus of an earlier bibliographical article, this later publication also documents every reference to Keats, Coleridge, Byron and Wordsworth in a selection of ten different Chartist publications. As the fifth major canonical Romantic poet, Blake is conspicuously absent from Shaaban's discussion. Shaaban 'spent months trying to trace Shelley [and evidently Keats, Coleridge, Byron and Wordsworth] in the Chartist press by having literally to go through all journal and newspapers page by page';[37] it would be reasonable to assume that had any reference to Blake existed, Shaaban would have encountered it.

There is, therefore, no evidence that the Chartist movement, including two of its leading poets Jones and Massey, had any knowledge of or access to Blake's poetry during the period that the Chartist movement was active. However, this thesis argues that a textual correspondence exists between Blake, Jones and Massey's despite the absence of a direct historical connection.

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[37] Shaaban, pp. 25-26.

<u>Existing Theoretical Approaches</u>

As was outlined in the introduction to this chapter, existing theories of influence are insufficient when addressing the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry. This section will consider Traditional Influence and Bloomian Influence explaining why these theories are inappropriate to our discussion of Blake and Chartism. It will also discuss Intertextuality identifying aspects that may be useful to the development of the theory of Echo. On its own Intertextuality precludes the consideration of a text's historical context; however, New Historicism places literature as one element of a much larger social text, providing a model from which the concept of the cultural matrix can be drawn.

Traditional Influence

Since Harold Bloom's publication of *The Anxiety of Influence* in 1973, Bloomian and Traditional influence have often been confused, and the earlier theory has largely been defined and discussed in relation to Bloom's ideas.[38] Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein point out the difficulties inherent in treating Traditional Influence as a unified 'theory'. Instead they present influence study prior to Bloom as a ubiquitous and largely unchallenged methodology that cannot be easily attributed to the practice of particular critics:

> over the years the fact of influence was so universally assumed that
> most discussion centred upon validation claims: what a belief in
> influence might entail rarely came up while scholars looked at a
> question logically subsequent to it, whether Professor X could justly

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[38] See for example: Louis A. Orr, 'Influence', in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. by Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, 2nd edn (University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp.186-202; Mary Orr, *Intertextuality: Debates and Contexts* (Cambridge: Policy Press, 2003), pp.60-61; Allen, *Interetextuality*, p.135.

say that Plotinus, Milton or Godwin influenced Shelley. […] the study of influence, because so tied to particular cases, has largely proceeded anonymously.[39]

Traditional Influence study is characterised by a desire to investigate the source of poetic images or expressions and a focus on authorial intention. This approach can produce a restrictive understanding of poetic texts; it is possible to identify a source but fail to consider a plurality of possible meanings or sufficiently explore the aesthetic impact of textual correspondences.

However, the suggestion that all research which employs the tools of Traditional Influence is reductive is both inaccurate and dismissive. Traditional Influence is often negatively described as source-study and presented as an outdated approach to the text that has been superseded by Bloomian and Intertextual theory, but an interest in poetic allusion continues in modern criticism.[40] More recently Christopher Ricks and William Irwin have produced work on allusion; this section will also consider the work of John Hollander whose 1981 study *The Figure of Echo* is of interest both for its discussion of allusive practice, and the broader investigation of echo as a critical term and poetic effect.

Ricks addresses the negative implications of source-study in relation to his work on allusion stating: 'An allusion predicates a source (no coincidence), but identifying a source is not the same as postulating an allusion, for a source is not necessarily called

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[39] Clayton and Rothstein, p.4.

[40] Mary Orr contrasts negative and positive applications of Traditional Influence. When explaining her understanding of 'Influence study in this positive sense' she states: 'While such nebulousness has been the bane of source studies – did author x actually read text y – influence here is not subjective or impressionistic.' (p.84-85). When distinguishing Traditional and Bloomian Influence, Graham Allen comments: 'Bloom refers to "source study" in order to distance his use of the word "influence" from traditional uses of the word', *Intertextuality*, p.135. The implications of this statement are not explored by Allen, but his expression highlights how Bloom not only demarks his theoretical approach, but simultaneously undermines the usefulness of this previous model. Bloom limits his definition of Traditional Influence to the identification of sources and avoids engaging with the full implications of the study of allusion.

into play by its beneficiary'.[41] Ricks uses his observations of allusive practice as a vehicle through which he presents some truly insightful close textual analysis that informs our conception of both former and later texts. However, the model of theoretical practice provided in *Allusion to the Poets* cannot be applied to the study of Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry because evidence of authorial intention is central to the concept of allusion. Ricks states:

> The question of intention bears upon allusion as it bears upon everything not only in literature but in every form of communication; suffice it (not) to say here that the present writer believes that it is not only proper but often obligatory to invoke authorial intention, while maintaining that there is (as Wittgenstein proposed) nothing self-contradictory or sly about positing the existence of unconscious or subconscious intentions – as in the case of a Freudian slip, where some part of you may wish to intimate something that another part of you would disavow.[42]

The importance of intention is affirmed by both Irwin and Hollander's work. For example, when defining allusion Irwin states 'An author must intend the indirect reference, and it must be in principle possible that the intended audience could detect it.'[43] Whilst Hollander argues:

> Intention to allude recognizably is essential to the concept, I think, and that concept is circumscribed genetically by earlier sixteenth-century uses of the word *alluding* that are closer to the etymon *ludus* – the senses of "punning" and "troping". Again it should be stated that one cannot in this sense allude unintentionally – an inadvertent allusion is a kind of solecism.[44]

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[41] Christopher Ricks, *Allusion to the Poets* (OUP, 2002), p.157.
[42] Ricks, p. 314.
[43] Irwin, 'The Aesthetics of Allusion', *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, 36 (2002), 521–32 (p.521).
[44] Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (University of California Press, 1981), p.64.

Ricks' assertion that a poet may not always be aware of the connection between his expression and that of a previous poet is contradicted by Hollander; however, the concept of a 'Freudian slip' nonetheless requires the later poet to be aware of his predecessor's work. By recognising this, Ricks prevents his observations from becoming deterministic – he is not stating that the interpretations he provides are definitive or intending to close down the other potential meanings.

Ricks' study of allusion exemplifies what Mary Orr describes as the positive application of Traditional Influence. This approach presents a collaborative view of influence where the later poet uses the ideas and expressions of several predecessors creatively:

> As opposed to the hierarchical, astral, Bloomian paradigm, the pertinent model of influence here is "that which flows into", a tributary that forms a mightier river by its confluences, or the main stream that comprises many contributors.[45]

Although the relationship between Blake and Chartist poetry cannot be explored in terms of allusion, Chapter 3 of this thesis will present a close textual analysis of P.B. Shelley's influence on Jones and Massey. Ricks' model of allusion will helpfully inform this discussion.

As Chapter 3 will demonstrate, the question of the aestheticisation of Chartist poetry has been a vexed one. Critics such as Kovalev and Janowitz argue that Chartist poetry developed Romantic traditions, whilst Peter Scheckner and Vicinus describe the verse as imitative. In general Chartist poetry has been most positively presented where it has been seen as developmental rather than derivative. Similar aesthetic judgements

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[45] Orr, p.84. Ricks confirms this difference between Bloom's theory and his own in his discussion of Keats: 'What Keats most valued in the English poets, irrespective of anything with which they could furnish his art, was a sense of brotherhood with his peers. He declines the invitation to figure in the dark melodrama of *The Anxiety of Influence*.' (p.159).

characterise the theoretical discussion of allusion. Ricks, Irwin and Hollander each

explore techniques that constitute an accomplished allusive moment. In *Allusion to the*

Poets a contrast is drawn between 'stagnant' and powerful allusion. Ricks' analysis of

Robert Burns' poetry illustrates how allusion can bring old and new lines into a

conversation and create new meanings through the contrast of these textual moments.

However he also notes that

> Burns is stagnant when there is no crepitating discrepancy between
> what he takes and what he makes, or between the two things that he is
> taking. The meeting of Burns and Pope, and of Pope and Pope, can be
> too much the meeting of a willed 'likemindedness'.[46]

Just as Ricks' study of poetry goes beyond the identification of a source and explores

allusion as an active correspondence between two poets' work, the critic argues that

allusive practice should call a source 'into play'; allusion should not be derivative.

This is reinforced in Ricks' discussion of the words 'half-create' as they appear in

Wordsworth, Young and Milton:

> Young's lines themselves allude, most powerfully to Milton; they
> don't just acknowledge a source. And the lines themselves, in
> alluding, point to allusiveness […] 'And half create the wondrous
> world, they see;" Young's passage is itself half-created from
> *Paradise Lost*.

Hollander identifies similar aesthetic differences between the allusive work of 'great'

and 'minor' writers:

> What a great writer does with direct citation of another's language is
> quite different from what a minor one may be doing. Similarly his
> handling of a commonplace will be radically interpretive of it, while
> the minor writers contribution will be more one of handing on the

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[46] Ricks, p.53.

baton, so to speak, of cultivating the topos rather than replanting or
even rebuilding there.[47]

William Irwin corroborates these critical judgements, stating that '[t]he art of allusion requires an author to breathe new life into something old, creating a new synthesis, and this is not altogether easy.'[48]

This thesis argues that the poetry of Jones and Massey, taken as key representatives of Chartist poetics, is aesthetically valuable and that it made a notable contribution to Victorian literary heritage, developing and adapting aspects of Romantic poetry within the context of nineteenth-century radicalism. Chapter 3 will present an analysis of Shelley's influence on Jones and Massey's poetry and, following Kovalev and Janowitz's scholarship, will provide close textual examples of the Chartists' development of this predecessor. The criteria presented in the work of Irwin, Hollander and in particular Ricks will inform the arguments made about Shelleyan influence in Chartist Poetry.

The theory of Traditional Influence places a focus on authorial intention and requires the poet to be alluding deliberately to a text with which he or she is familiar; Chartist poets could not have been familiar with Blake. Therefore this approach does not help to explain the presence of Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry and cannot support the close analysis of these textual correspondences. Bloomian Influence differs from Traditional Influence in this crucial respect: it does not require the later poet to have known or read his predecessor's work. However, as the following section will demonstrate, Bloom's theory was not intended to facilitate the analysis of poetic

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[47] Hollander, p.73.
[48] Irwin, 'Aesthetics of Allusion' (p.530).

imagery or expression, and cannot therefore illuminate the discussions held in this thesis.

Bloomian Influence

Harold Bloom defines poetry as the 'misinterpretation' of previous poems.[49] He argues that the poetic imagination is 'inhibit[ed]' or 'strangled' by anxiety towards 'major poetic influences' (or precursor poets), who threaten the identity of the later poet (or ephebe).[50] According to Bloom, the poet must misread his precursor in order to 'clear imaginative space for himself': 'major figures […] wrestle with their strong precursors, even to the death. Weaker talents idealize; figures of capable imagination appropriate for themselves.'[51] In *The Anxiety of Influence* Bloom outlines six 'revisionary ratios' through which this mis-reading can take place.[52]

Studies of Harold Bloom's work on influence address the numerous ways in which Bloomian Influence has been critically misunderstood.[53] However, I argue that these repeated misunderstanding and misappropriations of Bloom are encouraged by internal contradictions in the critic's conception and exposition of 'antithetical' criticism. It is necessary to address Bloomian Influence here because of Harold Bloom's claim that there can be an 'intra-poetic relationship' in the absence of a direct link.[54] This tenet of Bloom's theory suggests that it might provide a useful model for the exploration of Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry. However, the contradictions that

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[49] 'Poetry is the anxiety of influence, is misprision, is a disciplined perverseness. Poetry is misunderstanding, misinterpretation, misalliance.' Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (OUP, 1997), p.95.
[50] Bloom, p.34.
[51] Bloom, p.5.
[52] See Bloom, pp.14-16.
[53] See Orr, pp.60-61, Allen, *Harold Bloom*, pp.17-18. and Peter De Bolla, *Harold Bloom: Towards Historical Rhetorics* (Routledge, 1988), p.15.
[54] Bloom, p.5.

undermine the applicability of Bloom's theory are evident in the critic's exposition of this concept:

> Antithetical criticism must begin by denying both tautology and reduction, a denial best delivered by the assertion that the meaning of a poem can only be a poem, but *another poem – a poem not itself.* And not a poem chosen with total arbitrariness, but any central poem by an indubitable precursor, even if the ephebe *never read* that poem. Source study is wholly irrelevant here; we are dealing with primal words, but antithetical meanings, and an ephebe's best misinterpretations may well be of poems he has never read.[55]

In asserting that 'the meaning of a poem can only be a poem' Bloom is suggesting that poetic texts hold meaning that is separate from, and might contradict, the intentions of the author. Therefore, according to Bloom, a relationship of influence can be posited between two poems 'even if the ephebe *never read*' the precursor's text.

There is a contradiction between this definition of influence and Bloom's exposition of influence theory. Bloom's six revisionary ratios describe the anxious relationship occurring in the poetic imagination; throughout *The Anxiety of Influence* Bloom's explanation focuses on the poetic psyche. However, in his attempts to extricate Influence from source study, the critic argues that anxiety occurs in the text and not necessarily in the poetic imagination of the author. In the above quotation Bloom actually places the authority to create meaning not 'only' in the poem, but rather in the critic who chooses the poems that are involved in an intra-poetic relationship through the correct identification of the 'indubitable precursor'. By arguing that connections between texts are indubitably identified by the critic, whilst simultaneously asserting that the meaning of the intra-connected poetic text can be separate from the individual psyche, Bloom only serves to further complicate this critical precedence and

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[55] Bloom, p.70.

elevate the status of himself as critic whilst undermining his theory's useful application.[56]

Sally West also questions 'the future critic's potential to apply [Bloom] in valid practical criticism', due to a further contradiction in his work.[57] West highlights Bloom's 'refusal to entertain the idea that locating sources for images and tracing allusions between poems may be a legitimate basis for the study of influence', but states:

> for all his derision, Bloom's work is unquestionably at its most convincing and enlightening when he approaches a specific engagement with just the sort of verbal echoes and appropriated images between poems which elsewhere he claims are irrelevant.[58]

Harold Bloom rejects the study of sources, 'the history of ideas', and of 'the patterning of images'.[59] He also argues that '[t]he meaning of a poem can only be another poem'; as Graham Allen explains: '[f]or Bloom, a proper study of influence means that we can no longer retain the belief that an individual text exists', 'there are not texts but only relations between texts'.[60] Therefore, Bloomian Influence is not applicable to either to the study of Shelleyan influence in Chartist poetry or the close textual exploration of

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[56] The aspect of Bloomian theory that is most frequently applied in modern criticism is the concept of the anxious poetic psyche. Jane Gallop's exploration of her own critical anxiety exemplifies this. Jane Gallop, 'Precursor Critics and the Anxiety of Influence', *Profession* (2003), 105-09. See also Lucy Newlyn, *Reading, Writing and Romanticism: The Anxiety of Reception* (OUP, 2000); Geoff Klock, 'Harold Bloom's Pal, Donnie Darko', *Post-Scriptum.org: Revue de Recherche Interdisciplinaire en Textes et Médias*, 2 (2003); and David Kaufmann, 'Harold's Complaint, or Assimilation in Full Bloom', in *British Romanticism and the Jews: History, Culture, Literature*, ed. by Sheila Spector (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2002), pp.249-63, where Kaufmann explores the influences that may have affected Bloom himself.
[57] Sally West, 'The limits of "perfect solipsism": Bloom's map and the origins of Shelley's dejection', in *Reading, Writing and the Influence of Harold Bloom*, ed. by Alan Rawes and Jonathon Shears (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2010), p.112.
[58] Sally West, p.112 and 113.
[59] Boom, p.7.
[60] Bloom, p.94; Allen, *Harold Bloom*, p.18 and p.48.

Blakean echoes, because the key enquiries of this thesis are incompatible with Bloom's project.

Harold Bloom's criticism invites us to become engaged in critical arguments, it encourages disagreement and future mis-reading by other critics. The work's internal contradictions are both defensive and self-protective; for example, in his Preface to the second edition of *The Anxiety of Influence* (1997), Bloom is able to argue against the reductive misunderstanding of his work as a 'Freudian Oedipal rivalry',[61] and yet these Freudian inflections remain. Bloom does not invite the application of his theory by others in the useful analysis of poetry. No working model is provided for the way that an ephebe's poem might misread the work of a precursor whom the poet had never read, and to replicate the critic's approach in practice must always entail the contradiction of some aspect of his theory.

Intertextuality

Whereas Traditional Influence focuses on authorial intention, exploring the later poet's creation of meaning through deliberate engagement with and development of the predecessor's text, Intertextual theorists argue that texts do not have an independent meaning created by the author. Intertextuality views texts as engaged in an infinite web of potential interconnections; therefore, it is the relationships between texts and not the texts themselves that produce meaning. This argument is similar to Harold Bloom's concept that the '[t]he meaning of a poem can only be another poem'; however, intertextual theory is not confused by a theoretical framework that focuses

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[61] Bloom, p.xxii.

on the poetic psyche.[62] Roland Barthes' clearest expression of intertextuality was presented in the 1971 essay 'From Work to Text', which appeared 3 years after he announced 'The Death of the Author':

> The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the 'sources', the 'influences' of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*: they are quotations without inverted commas.[63]

What is particularly relevant in the context of this thesis is Barthes' focus on the role of the reader. Barthes' emphasis that a text is made of citations '*already read*' suggests that meaning is subjective and cannot be fixed to 'some origin'; connections between texts are activated, and meaning formed, in the mind of the reader. The implications of this focus will be discussed below.

The term 'intertextualité' was coined by Julia Kristeva in her 1969 essays 'The Bounded Text' and 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel'. The role of the reader remains implicit in Kristeva's original expositions, with intertextuality denoting a concept similar to Bakhtin's dialogism.[64] However, where Bakhtin sees a distinction between text and context, finding dialogism primarily within the novel, for Kristeva it extends across all texts:

> the *text* is defined as a trans-linguistic apparatus that redistributes the order of language by relating communicative speech, which aims to inform directly, to different kinds of anterior or synchronic

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[62] Bloom, p.94. As Mary Orr explains, Intertextuality provides a 'Non-hierarchical and democratically inclusive notions of text' which challenges 'hierarchical structures of knowledge and power' (p.1.) This contrasts with Bloom's conception of a literary Tradition created by the interaction of 'strong' poets.

[63] Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text', in *Image Music Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (Fontana, 1977), pp. 155-164 (p.160).

[64] See: M. M. Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination*: *Four Essays,* trans. by Michael Holquist and ed. by Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press), pp. 259-422.

utterances. […] it is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another.[65]

Kristeva here asserts that no single utterance has the authority to 'inform directly' or designate meaning in and of itself, rather a intersection of textual moments make available a plurality of meanings.

In arguing that the author does not solely create meaning, intertextuality removes the need for a direct link to exist between Blake and Chartism. It usefully informs the exploration of interconnected poetic echoes that will take place in this thesis. Chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate how images in Blake's poetry echoingly interconnect within individual poems, across different poems in the same collection, and through interconnections that extend across the *oeuvre*. I will argue that Blakean echoes can be heard in Chartist poetry and that single textual moments in Jones and Massey's work recall not just one instance in Blake, but necessarily engage with a web of interconnected Blakean echoes. This model will be extended to Chartist poetry where it will enrich our understanding of Jones and Massey's poetic expression by exploring their use of echo in their respective collections *Chartist Songs* and *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*. As will be discussed in the final section of this chapter, these interconnected echoes do not operate exactly as intertextual connections, but intertextuality provides a parallel to the effect that will be described as echo throughout this thesis.

Intertextuality is also useful to the theoretical conception of the echo because of the focus it places on the reader. Some of the most complex Blakean echoes discussed

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[65] Julia Kristeva, 'The Bounded Text', in *Desire in Language*, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez and ed. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1980), pp.36-63 (p.36). See also: Kristeva, 'Word, Dialogue and Novel', in *Desire in Language*, pp.64-91 (p.66).

in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis will be described as 'uncanny'; they will be said to carry a 'trace' of Blakean images, and will be discussed in terms of 'mis-hearing'. The sense that an image uncannily recalls a previous textual moment, or that a line of poetry has been mis-heard, can only occur because the text has been read in a particular way: whilst the Chartists were unaware of Blake, these observations can only be made by a reader familiar with his poetry.

However, there is a limit to the extent that a focus on the reader usefully informs the discussions held in this thesis. In her work on parody Linda Hutcheon identifies a common aspect of Roland Barthes and Michael Riffaterre's intertextual practice. She states that for Barthes: 'the reader is free to associate texts more or less at random, limited only by individual idiosyncrasy and personal culture'; similarly Michael Riffaterre 'acknowledges the fact that only a reader (or, more generally, a decoder) can activate the intertext.'[66] This understanding is corroborated by William Irwin who states that intertextual theory enacts a 'transfer of power' from author to reader, which results in a situation where '[e]very text is potentially the intertext of every other text'.[67]

Intertextuality insufficiently addresses the key concerns of this thesis because, whilst it does provide a model through which close textual interconnections can be explored, it does not support the question of how Blakean echoes can re-sound in Chartist poetry. From a strictly intertextual perspective this enquiry is redundant; intertextual meaning is created by the reader and therefore social and historical vectors of transmission are unnecessary. The identification of Blakean echoes in Jones and Massey's poetry does depend upon a reader familiar with both poetic traditions. This

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[66] Hutcheon, p.37.
[67] Irwin, 'Against Intertextuality', p.234 and p.236.

thesis acknowledges the *observatory* role of the reader but argues that the textual interconnections between Blake and Chartism occur because a shared underlying cultural matrix of political and religious radicalism made a similar vocabulary of images and tropes available to the authors. As the next chapter will outline in more detail, the cultural matrix theory proposes that specific historical context, rather than the author or the reader, provides the vector through which Blakean echoes are transmitted into Chartist Poetry.

William Irwin argues strongly against the arbitrary connection of texts and stresses the importance of authorial intention:

> Authorial intention is unavoidable; intertextual connections are not somehow magically made between inanimate texts but are the products of authorial design. To think otherwise is to commit the Referential Fallacy. […] Unintended connections between texts are […] better called "accidental associations".[68]

What Irwin fails to consider is that neither the author nor the reader need provide the connections between texts. This thesis will use the term echo to describe associations which are *created* by shared cultural context, developed in the poetic imagination and *expressed* by the author, and *observed* by a reader engaged in the close textual analysis of Blake, Jones and Massey's poetry.

New Historicism

> The world is full of texts, most of which are virtually incomprehensible when we remove them from their immediate surroundings. To recover the meaning of such texts, to make any sense of them at all, we need to reconstruct the situation in which they were produced. Works of art by contrast contain directly or by implication much of this sustained absorption that enables many

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[68] Irwin, *Against Intertextuality*, pp.240-241.

literary works to survive the collapse of the conditions that led to their production.[69]

This quotation is taken from Greenblatt's 'Culture', which was originally published in 1990, allowing the critic a chance to reflect upon the impact of his work since *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*.[70] Here Greenblatt highlights the main point of contention between New Historicism and Intertextual theory: the vital importance of historical context to the production of textual meaning. New Historicism argues against the perspective that a text can be understood purely in relation to the experience of the reader. Additionally, rather than understanding Literature as a reflection of history, or history as a unified or knowable field which might be called upon to explain the Literary text, New Historicism views Literature as just one of many kinds of text that interact in the production of social meaning:

> Literature is *part* of history, the literary texts as much a context for other aspects of culture and material life as they are for it. Rather than erasing the problem of textuality, one must enlarge it in order to see that *both* social and literary texts are opaque, self-divided, and porous, that is, open to the mutual intertextual influences of one another.[71]

In this way, New Historicism continues to employ an Intertextual approach, but one in which history is considered as a text alongside Literature and other works of art; therefore 'careful reading of a work of literature will lead to a heightened understanding of the culture within which it was produced', and furthermore Literature

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[69] Greenblatt, 'Culture', *The Greenblatt Reader*, *The Greenblatt Reader*, ed. by Michael Payne (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), pp.11-18 (p.13).
[70] This essay originally appeared in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. by McLaughlin and Lentricchia (University of Chicago Press,1990), pp. 225-32.
[71] Jean E. Howard, 'The New Historicism and Renaissance Studies', *English Literary Renaissance*, 16 (1985), 13-43 (p.25).

can be seen to intervene in 'history in its very act of representing it'.[72] This intertextual

methodology is explicitly recognised, for example, by Louis Montrose, who describes

his article 'Shaping Fantasies: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan

Culture' as '[m]y intertextual study of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*'.[73]

Montrose is intertextual in the sense that he sees Shakespeare's play as part of a web

of cultural texts from the late sixteenth century. He uses private journal accounts of

dreams about Queen Elizabeth I, alongside official historical accounts of Amazon

communities that were coming to be known in the 16th century, to underpin his

interpretation of Shakespeare's dramatic text.

Greenblatt's New Historicist criticism in particular brings out the elements of

Intertextual theory that focus on the observations and perspectives of an individual

reader. Greenblatt is deeply concerned with situating literary texts alongside those of

history and art as significant components of a culture; however, his criticism asserts

that the very links he observes as a reader of these texts provide evidence of their

historical connection. The connections Greenblatt draws are not arbitrary, but rather

occur because of, and are indicative of, 'the complex interactions of meaning in a

given culture'.[74] We can see this methodology in practice throughout Greenblatt's

work, for example in the introduction to his ground-breaking study *Renaissance Self-*

Fashioning he states:

> Inevitably, the resonance and centrality we find in our small group
> of texts and their authors is our invention and the similar,
> cumulative inventions of others. It is we who enlist them in a kind
> of historical drama. […] So from the thousands, we seize upon a

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[72] Greenblatt, 'Culture', p.13 and Jonathan Dollimore, 'Introduction: Shakespeare, cultural materialism and the new historicism', in *Political Shakespeare*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, 2nd ed. (Manchester UP, 2004), pp.2-17 (p.10)

[73] Montrose, Louis A., 'Shaping Fantasies: Figurations of Gender and Power in Elizabethan Culture', *Representations*, 2 (1983), 61-94 (p.61).

[74] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (University of Chicago Press, 2005), p.3.

> handful of arresting figures who seem to contain within themselves
> much of what we need, who both reward intense, individual
> attention and promise access to larger cultural patterns. [75]

This perspective informs the close readings presented within the volume. For example, in Chapter Six, motivated by the observation of a striking intertextual moment, Greenblatt re-visits the connection between Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* to ask: 'even as we are struck by the radical difference, we are haunted by the vertiginous possibility of underlying sameness. What if Arthur and Tamburlaine are not separate and opposed?'[76] This methodology continues through his seminal essay 'Invisible Bullets', where Greenblatt discusses *1 Henry IV* in relation to Harriot's *Brief and True Report*. This was a text that Shakespeare had never read, but which Greenblatt uses to illuminate his understanding of power as it functions within Shakespeare's play:

> I have tried to isolate and identify in colonial discourse at the
> margins of Tudor society. Shakespeare evidently grasped such
> strategies not by brooding on the impact of English culture on far-
> off Virginia but by looking intently at the world directly around
> him.[77]

Throughout this thesis I will be providing evidence that there are Blakean echoes in Jones and Massey's poetry, and suggesting that these echoes occur because the poets were engaged in similar radical cultures. This is an argument that cannot be made without extensive close reading. This close reading will articulate my individual engagement with, and personal observation of a connection between, these poetic texts. However, the individual response through which Blakean echoes are observed,

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[75] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, p. 6.

[76] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, p. 224.

[77] Stephen Greenblatt, 'Invisible Bullets', in *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 21- 65 (p. 35).

does not preclude a historical explanation for their presence. In a similar way to Greenblatt, I argue that my observation of an intertextual connection is not arbitrary, but actually reveals a cultural interconnection between Blake and Chartism.

In the following chapter the cultural matrix methodology with be explained in full. This concept is a development of the critical work undertaken by Blakean scholars such as Mee, Worral, E. P. Thompson, McCalman and Rix. These critics do not announce their work as New Historicist, but it shares many methodological features with New Historicism and Cultural Materialism. Although their work will be read for its methodology rather than for specific arguments being made about Blake, the subject matter covered in these studies is more appropriate to this thesis than much New Historicist scholarship, which focuses heavily on the Renaissance period. Additionally, whilst New Historicism tends to consider how ruling ideologies perpetuate themselves (Greenblatt, for example, examines the reign of Queen Elizabeth, colonial power in Ireland and New World conquest), my thesis has a particular interest in the ways that marginalised or radical groups challenge or subvert the dominant.

Echo

This chapter has shown that existing models of Influence are not sufficient for exploring the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry on a textual level. Although the methodology employed in this thesis will draw upon theories of Intertextuality and New Historicism, neither of these approaches alone provides an explanation for how Blake can re-sound in Chartism. Christopher Rick's allusive methodology and terminology will usefully inform the examples of Shelleyan influence outlined in Chapter 3, but the discussion of Blake and Chartism will require a new critical

vocabulary. This thesis will explain the connections that exist between Blake and Chartism through the terms: echo, re-sound, resonance and correspondence. These terms are deliberately chosen to facilitate the discussions taking place, without contradicting the central tenets of this study, that there is no provable direct link through which the Chartists could have had access to Blake's poetry and that the similarities between these texts occur because of a shared underlying cultural matrix.

To think of poetry in terms of echoes places a focus on singing and sound. This is particularly appropriate because the Blakean images being discussed largely originate from *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Blake's *Songs* have oral and aural aspects and some of the most significant links between poems occur through a network of children's vocal cries that punctuate the collection.[78] Similarly, the collections of Jones and Massey's poetry that contain Blakean echoes announce the importance of oral transmission in their titles. Jones' *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces* contains several poems that capture the oral nature of the Chartist ballad tradition. Exclamations such as 'Up ye gentlemen of England' and 'Labour! Labour! Labour! – Toil! Toil! Toil!' encourage communal participation, while the use of rhyming couplets acts as a mnemonic to facilitate transmission between autodidact and non-literate members of the Chartist movement.[79] Likewise, in *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* Massey often begins poems with exclamations such as 'Fling out the red Banner!' and 'Aye, Tyrants, build your Babels! forge your fetters! link your chains!'; whilst poems such

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[78] These cries are addressed in more detail in chapters 3 and 4.
[79] Ernest Jones, 'The Two Races – Part 1', line 1; Jones, 'Our Destiny', line 1.
Vicinus' analysis of the distribution of broadside ballads through the oral networks of the labouring classes is relevant here: 'sung or read aloud, broadsides gave a very large number of people access to current events, trade customs, local legends and the cultural life around them.' (*The Industrial Muse* (Croom Helm, 1974), p.9); Randall argues that Chartist poetry 'existed not only on the page as a literary texts, but also as a social event and public demonstration' (p.173).

as 'Kings are but Giants because we Kneel' and 'Hope On, Hope Ever' are structured around repeated choruses.[80]

The *OED* defines the verb 'to echo' as 'to be repeated by echoes, give rise to echoes, reverberate, resound'. 'Resound' is defined as that which 'resounds or re-echoes' and is 'sonorous' or 'resonant'. These terms are interconnected and provide a suggestive terminology through which to explore poetry – 'correspondence' will be used as a variation of 'echo' and 'resonance' as a noun version of 're-sound'. The precise usage and implications of 'echo' will be exemplified and actively interrogated throughout its application in Chapters 4 and 5. The term 'correspondence' has been chosen because it carefully balances meanings such as a '[r]elation of agreement, similarity, or analogy', or, in mathematics a 'relation between two sets in which each element of one set is associated with a constant number' with the nuanced definition '[t]he action or fact of corresponding, or answering to each other in fitness or mutual adaptation.'[81] This thesis does not intend to suggest that Blake and the Chartists were corresponding in the sense that they engaged in a dialogue with one another, and yet it is an advantage that this connotation remains implicit in the term. Correspondence is a technically correct way to discuss the similarities between two distinct poetic traditions, but the term recognises that when we encounter the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry, it is very often with a sense that the Chartists must in fact be alluding to Blake.

Hollander's *The Figure of Echo*, discussed above, consists of an extended engagement with how echoes operate, how the character Echo has been invoked throughout literature, and how the term echo can act as a metaphor for poetic allusion.

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[80] Gerald Massey, 'Our Symbol', line 1 and 'The Song of the Red Republican', *VF*, line 1.
[81] *OED* 'correspondence'.

Whilst this theoretical usage is different from my own, Hollander presents many

insightful discussions of echo appearing within poetry. For example:

> In a later poem on "The Mountain Echo" (1814) Wordsworth
> suggests that poems themselves, like the voice of the bird in the
> opening stanza, raise questions in, and of, the surrounding hills. He
> concludes that
>
> >   Yes, we have
> > Answers and we know not whence;
> > Echoes from beyond the grave,
> > Recognised intelligence!
> > Such rebounds our inward ear
> > Catches sometimes from afar…
>
> It is as if the ordinary, or outward, ear may hear histories, accounts,
> quotations or even allusions from the poetry of the past. But the
> oracular function of the higher versions of the mythologized echo
> occur in texts where more is heard than meets the eye.[82]

Wordsworth's observation that we often 'know not whence' an echo came, but that the

experience of echo '[c]atches' in the ear as it 'rebounds', captures an important feature

of the experience of echo. 'Echo', 'resonance', and 're-sound' are ideal terms to use in

this thesis because whilst they point to a source or origin, the conception of this

original is deliberately unstable and to some extent unknowable.

In her study *Beckett's Dantes: Intertextuality in the Fiction and Criticism*, Daniela

Caselli similarly interrogates the concept of stable meaning in relation to source and

origin:

> 'Quotation', 'Source' and 'Origin' are notions which are commonly
> read as positing the authority of a previous text, which supplies a later
> text with meanings while remaining autonomous and stable. […]
> there is in Beckett no stable Dante […] my study does not follow
> Bloom's tradition of replacing a Beckettian 'reading' of Dante with a
> 'misreading' of Dante, thus leaving firmly in place authorial
> intentionality (what Bloom calls 'wilful revisionism') and textual

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[82] Hollander, pp. 21-22.

> stability (against which a misreading can be measured). Having rejected the idea that there is only one Dante and only one Beckett whose relationship can be analysed, I work with a multiple and changeable notion of textuality which nevertheless configures itself in specific ways.[83]

As was discussed in the Introduction, this thesis does not posit the existence of a stable Blake, but rather argues that Blake's imagery is complex and ambiguous, inspiring multiple different readings rather than containing any one stable meaning. Echoes are described as Blakean because they carry a resonance of Blake's poetic expression; these sounds need not have originated in Blake's work.

This thesis does not intend to identify any one source or origin for particular images or tropes; it does not believe that poetry is 'de-codable' and cannot therefore seek to uncover the 'correct' interpretation of either Blake, Jones or Massey's work. Jones and Massey's poetry certainly corresponds with poets other than Blake. As Chapter 3 will demonstrate, many of these same poems actively allude to Shelley, yet as Chapters 4 and 5 will argue, there are compelling reasons to describe particular moments as Blakean. Rather than providing any definitive understanding of the poetry discussed, this thesis intends to draw suggestive links within and between poems, and enrich our understanding of the poetic expression of both Blake and the Chartists. Before embarking on these close textual analyses, the following chapter will explain how a shared underlying cultural matrix might produce similar imagery in the poetry of Blake and the Chartists; this model will suggest that the 'original' sounds which resonate through Blake, Jones and Massey's poetry were actually produced within the radical political and religious cultures in which their work was situated. However, it will be argued even here there can be no definitive origins for an idea or expression,

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[83] Daniela Caselli, *Beckett's Dantes: Intertextuality in the Fiction and Criticism* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005), pp.1-4.

concepts and symbols belong to a movement or culture rather than finding authority

only in a single source.

Chapter 2 – The Cultural Matrix

Blake and the Chartists shared two predominant cultural influences: they were politically radical and challenged the authority of the Anglican church by engaging with radical or dissenting Christian beliefs and practices. Scholarship on both Blake and Chartism recognises the vital interrelation of religious and political radicalism. Rix draws upon historian Robert Hales' analysis that 'the ruling classes came to rely on the "centrality of the role of religion as a restraining and reconciling agent in society"', to argue:

> In this context, no belief or dogma was politically neutral … The believers which we now refer to as "radical Christians" were attacked as antisocial and disruptive influences […] none of Blake's "political" poems are about constitutional changes. They deal principally with the freeing of the people from *religious* falsehood, something which Blake sees as the root of all civil tyranny.[1]

Similarly, Malcolm Chase has stated that:

> Very few Chartist localities completely separated political ideals from a radical social gospel. The "genius of Christianity" propels Chartism, declared the *True Scotsman*, "The Charter springs from Zion's hill" sung South Yorkshire Chartists.'[2]

This chapter will present the argument that Blake and the Chartists' shared involvement in these radical cultures can explain the appearance of Blakean echoes in the work of poets who had never read Blake.

The chapter will open by drawing upon a critical model within Blake studies. It will discuss the move in historicist Blake scholarship, away from a broad historical

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[1] Rix, p.4.
[2] Chase, p.141.

survey, and towards the focused historical recovery of the specific cultures that surrounded Blake's poetic production. The chapter will highlight the key elements of Jon Mee, David Worral, E.P. Thompson and Iain McCalman's methodological approaches. The focused historical recovery presented by these scholars has significant parallels with New Historicism. However, rather than focusing on dominant ideologies these accounts highlight Blake's engagement with radical subcultures, exploring the ways in which such discourses operate within, and radically subvert, the dominant. The chapter will draw upon central aspects of these methodologies in the development of the 'cultural matrix' theory.

The second half of this chapter will present a conceptual overview of the cultural matrix theory, which will be explained through the metaphor of threads. This thesis will not contain an investigation of how each of the Blakean echoes identified in Chartist poetry might be explained by the poet's engagement in radical cultures. However, the ways in which Blake, Jones and Massey were engaging with radical culture and adapting established images will be indicated throughout the close readings presented in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Specific Cultural Context

The suggestion that the similarities in Blake, Jones and Massey's poetic expression can be explained by a shared underlying cultural matrix arises from the observation that both Blake and the Chartists were political radicals, and both were writing within a culture of radical Christianity. Such parallels can only be drawn as the result of the extensive historical recoveries that have been undertaken by previous Blakean and Chartist scholars. In recent years there has been a move in Blake studies

away from the consideration of general historical context or broad historical overview, towards a focus on the specific cultural moment in which Blake was writing. Critics such as Mee, Worall, E.P. Thompson, Makdisi and Rix have argued that Blake's work is most profitably situated not within a general history of his time, but among the sub-cultural discourses of radical politics and radical Christianity. The methodology used in this scholarship provides a useful model from which the theory of the cultural matrix can be developed.

A 'bold survey'

First published in 1954 David Erdman's *Blake – Prophet Against Empire* is the pre-eminent work of historicist Blake scholarship: it has informed critics for more than five decades and continues to provide an invaluable context to Blake's work.[3] Erdman prefaced his detailed, 500 page volume with the concern that 'many of [Blake's] shrewdest observations upon modern life [had been] misconstrued' due to an ignorance of their historical resonance; and called for 'for a methodical study of [Blake's] thought and art in relation to the history of his own times'.[4] Erdman describes his study as:

> a bold survey of the history of Blake's time as it swirls about and
> enters into the texture of his emblematic painting and poetry.[5]

Erdman's study successfully places Blake's poetic composition in the context of national and international events. This general historical overview provides a useful

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[3] Steve Clark and David Worral note that 'David V. Erdman's *Blake: Prophet Against Empire* remains the most highly regarded historically contextualised study of the poet and his times', *Historicizing Blake* (Macmillan, 1994), p. 11. Similarly, Jon Mee states in *Dangerous Enthusiasm: William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) that 'Subsequent historical scholarship has generally been involved in following up leads offered by Erdman' (p. 1).
[4] David Erdman, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, 3rd edn (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1977) p. viii.
[5] Erdman, p. xv.

foundation from which detailed information about the poet's cultural involvement in historical events can be investigated. However, it does not consider Blake's specific cultural situation within these events, or bring out the marginalised histories of radicalism and dissent. The similarities between Blake and the Chartists' radical political and religious involvement would not be evident from Erdman's broad survey. Therefore, as this chapter will argue, the poet's cultural matrix can only be ascertained through a more focused historical recovery.

There are also limitations to Erdman's interpretative methodology. Within this 'bold survey' Blake's poetry is understood as an expression of historical events; poetic content is presented as an allegory of historical context. For example, Erdman simultaneously offers both a discussion of the political developments in the 1780s, and their reflection in Blake's work via a succession of poetic quotations:

> Twice King George actually drafted a message of abdication. Twice in two years Opposition ministries were forced upon him. "One hour" the King's Friends, "smitten Angels," lay "buried beneath the ruins of that hall" (E.9). But then they rallied under angelic young William Pitt; a cold and leprous tyranny (Urizen) was able to damp down the fires of revolt, "Hiding the Demon red with clouds & cold mists from the earth" and permitting "Angels & weak men" to govern once more "o'er the strong" (A.16).[6]

This presentation confidently asserts the primacy of historical events to the development of Blake's thinking and the creation of meaning in his poetry. Erdman ties political and poetic event together in a direct relationship, with his central interpretive strategy being the identification of references to, or commentary on, politics within Blake's poetic expression.

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[6] Erdman, p. 89.

Similarly, Erdman's discussion of Blake's later prophetic works becomes prescriptive, with each character being presented as an allegory of a historical figure. In his discussion 'What Mov'd Milton' Erdman suggests that Blake's Satan represents Napoleon, and Rintrah represents Pitt; he goes on to state: 'The point is reinforced by the story of Leutha, who offers "herself as a Ransom for Satan." She and Satan together constitute "the Spectre of Luvah" (France) and we may think of her as the spiritual form of Marie Antoinette'.[7] Whilst the historical recovery undertaken by Erdman has been invaluable to the progression of Blake scholarship, the application of historical context as the principle interpretative methodology restricts the ways in which Blake's poetry can be understood. This approach denies the autonomy of artistic expression and risks valuing Blake's poetry only as political commentary rather than as an active political intervention.

Erdman implies that the historical context of Blake's poetic production reveals its meaning; he offers an explanation for symbols, characters and images by relating them to historical reference points that are presented as fixed and knowable. In this respect Erdman's methodology is similar to that of critics such as S. Foster Damon and Kathleen Raine who approach the complexity in Blake's work as an intellectual challenge which might be 'resolved' through the correct identification of an interpretive code or 'key'.[8] Recent criticism challenges the *type* of history that Blake is considered in relation to, and questions how this historical context contributes to our interpretation of the text.

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[7] Erdman, pp. 425-6.

[8] S. Foster Damon, p. xxvi; Kathleen Raine, *Blake and Tradition*, rev. ed (Routledge, 2002), p. 305.

Historicizing Blake

In 1990 the 'Historicizing Blake' conference was held at St Mary's College, Twickenham. Mee, Worral and McCalman each presented papers that discussed Blake in relation to a context of political and religious radicalism. Additionally, it is clear from Clark and Worral's introduction to the 1994 collection *Historicizing Blake*, which contains essays that were presented in an earlier form at the conference, that E.P. Thompson's work had a collective influence on the delegates, and later became part of an ongoing discussion within the group.

Both Mee's *Dangerous Enthusiasm* and Worral's *Radical Culture – Discourse, Resistance and Surveillance 1790-1820* were published in 1992, two years after the 'Historicizing Blake' conference and one year prior to the publication of E.P. Thompson's *Witness Against the Beast* in 1993. McCalman's *Radical Underworld* was originally published in 1988, but McCalman brought out a second edition of this volume in 1998. McCalman notes in his preface to this second edition that he had been unaware of the study's relevance to Blake scholarship when it was originally produced. It is the perspective given in this 1998 preface, written after McCalman had entered into dialogue with Mee, Worral and Thompson, rather than the detailed historical work of the study as a whole, that is of interest to the formation of a cultural matrix theory.

In their introduction to the *Historicizing Blake* essay collection, Clark and Worral discuss the impact of both Thompson's 1965 work *The Making of the English Working Class*, and his last book *Witness Against the Beast* (which was published shortly after Thompson's death in 1993 and whose ideas were not therefore available in print at the

time of the original conference).[9] The attention that Clark and Worrall give this work

in their 1994 introduction demonstrates the relevance of *Witness Against the Beast* to

the community of Blake scholars and indicates that Thompson was part of a key

development in Blake criticism in the 1990s.

In *Witness Against the Beast* Thompson undertakes a focused historical recovery

of the culture surrounding Blake's poetic production, arguing that the 'particular attack

of Blake's thought and feeling is unique, and it cannot be understood without

reference to adjacent ideas and symbols.'[10] Thompson states that the language of

radical Christianity has been excluded from the dominant historical account of the

1790s, affecting the later understanding of Blake's poetry:

> The tradition behind Blake had become obscure by the 1790s. Most
> educated men and women had long been engaged in rational
> theological exegetics […] By 1810 Blake's views had become so
> strange in the polite culture that Henry Crabb Robinson could
> comment that "his religious convictions had brought on him the
> credit of being an absolute lunatic." […] But at any point between
> the 1640s and the 1790s there were men and women in London who
> would have instantly understood (and shared) Blake's reference and
> stance.[11]

Mee and Worral's studies were undertaken to address similar inaccuracies and

limitations in the critical understanding of Blake's cultural context. Mee argues that

because many aspects of Blake's language and ideas were politically subversive, they

cannot be sufficiently explained through reference to a hegemonic retelling of history,

but require careful attention to be given to the nuances of the historical recovery of

marginal discourses:

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[9] See Clark and Worral, *Historicizing Blake*, p. 1 and p. 4.
[10] E. P. Thompson, *Witness Against The Beast: William Blake And The Moral Law* (New York: The New Press, 1993), p. 20.
[11] E. P. Thompson, *Witness*, pp. 62-63.

> If the modern reader finds little like Blake's illuminated books and in the other literature of the time, it is because our knowledge is filtered through the canonical construction of Romanticism.[12]

Similarly, Worral states that canonical Romanticism is 'restrictive' in its 'selection of texts', ignoring discourses 'which might be considered marginal to the dominant cultural formations of the time', his study examines these marginalised discourses and places Blake in the context of political radicalism from 1790-1820.[13]

Worral uses the term discourse not simply to denote a language that is specific to a discernable cultural group, but to emphasize the political marginalization of radical cultures and the power struggles at work in the production and circulation of ideas through language:

> What is at issue […] is the very means and conditions under which texts circulate. In London in the early 1790s and for the next thirty years, the act of writing and speaking was squeezed, shaped and misshaped by the immediate agency of the State. Outlaw discourses, oral or written, could originate the operation of other powerful sets of discourses. The discourses of low culture, which were produced and consumed within those who were economically and socially marginal, had a low investment in capital and therefore a low ability to capitalize its discourses by protective laws, were thoroughly scrutinized by the State.[14]

Worral's specific use of 'discourse' emphasises his argument that the power held by the dominant culture operates on the level of language. This terminology highlights

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[12] Mee, *Dangerous Enthusiasm*, p. 19.

[13] Worral, *Radical Culture – Discourse, Resistance and Surveillance 1790-1820* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), p. 4. Both Mee and Worral use the term 'discourse' throughout their studies. Discourse is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'a written or spoken communication or debate', however the term carries specific resonances in cultural studies due to its nuanced application by theorists such as Bakhtin, Foucault and Derrida. Both Mee and Worral draw upon the critical implications of this term, but apply it without explicit definition. 'Discourse' is used by Mee to express not just to an occurrence of speech or writing, but to the speech or writing specific to a distinct cultural group. The speech and writing identified by Mee as a discourse is defined and created by a specific cultural space within a historical moment, and as such the critic's employment of this term maintains the focus of his study, avoiding the generalities of a broad historical overview.

[14] Worral, p. 12.

and maintains the critic's focus on the ways that cultural factors affect poetic expression.[15]

Thompson, Mee and Worral collectively make the argument that a focused recovery of the culture surrounding Blake's work is necessary. They state that broad historical overviews of Blake's time do not represent the radical elements of culture or society, within which they believe Blake can be most accurately situated. In his theory of the 'Dominant, Residual and Emergent' (which precedes but is not referenced in Mee, Worral or Thompson's work) Raymond Williams makes similar observations about the dominant culture. Williams' discussion of the dominant culture corroborates and clarifies Mee, Worral and Thompson's argument that radical discourses have been historically marginalised:

> since what the dominant have effectively seized is indeed the ruling definition of the social. […] There can be areas of experience it is willing to ignore or dispense with: to assign as private or specialize as aesthetic or to generalize as natural.[16]

Williams' discussion does not focus on particular cultural movements or explore the effect that cultural formations had upon individual poets or authors, rather his account

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[15] This use of 'discourse' draws upon Foucault's argument that power acts discursively, controlling and determining the available language and securing the language of power within a select group: 'This authority also involves *the rules and processes of appropriation* of discourse: for in our societies (and no doubt in many others) the property of discourse – in the sense of the right to speak, ability to understand, licit and immediate access to the corpus of already formulated statements, and the capacity to invest this discourse in decisions, institutions, or practices – is in fact confined (sometimes with the addition of legal sanctions) to a particular group of individual', *The Archeology of Knowledge* (Routledge, 2002), pp. 75-76. In the *History of Sexuality: Volume I*, Foucault indicates that within a polyvalence of discourse there are discourses that pose a challenge to power. Mee's discussion of '[o]utlaw discourses' and 'discourses of low culture' draws upon this Foucauldian usage: 'discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more that silences are. We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it', Michel Foucault, *The Will To Knowledge - The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*, trans. by Robert Hurley (Penguin, 1998), pp. 100-101.
[16] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (OUP, 1977), p. 125.

of the 'Dominant' forms part of a theory that provides insight into cultural and literary movements throughout history. This critical parallel between Raymond Williams and Blake scholarship demonstrates how Mee, Worral and Thompson's methodology could be applied to the work of other poets and authors. All these critics recognise that a broad historical overview of any given period will privilege the dominant culture of that time whist including only limited details of artisan, radical or sub-cultural discourses. Therefore, Mee, Worral and Thompson take account of both dominant and alternative cultures and provide a methodology through which the specific cultural formations surrounding the poet might be recovered

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Contemporary Blake scholars continue to work to better illuminate the specific cultural context of Blake's poetic production. In the last decade both Saree Makdisi and Robert Rix have produced focused studies that attend to Blake's radical involvement. Makdisi introduces *William Blake and the Impossible History of the 1790s* with the concern that 'we have been trying to make Blake conform to a political culture which his work disrupts', he identifies a 'gap between historical experience and history itself.'[17] The 'main argument' of Rix's *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity* is that 'Blake's art is best understood when seen in relation to particular cultures of dissenting or radical Christianity'.[18] Rix's work strengthens the

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[17] Saree Makdisi, *William Blake and the Impossible History of the 1790s* (The University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 8 and p. 1. Mee, Worral and Thompson's studies all indicate that the marginalisation of radical discourses takes place both at the time of production, and retrospectively throughout history as the dominant culture continues to subsume radical elements of past cultures into a 'ruling definition of the social'. Makdisi argues that movements and discourses which were radical and challenging to the dominant culture in the 1790s actually supported and allowed a modern consumerist culture to develop. It is Makdisi's contention that the ways in which Blake challenged and questioned the 'political and cultural assumption of the best-known radicals (most famously Tom Paine)' has been suppressed because it poses a challenge to the dominant culture of the present day. See 'Introduction', pp. 1-15.

[18] Rix, p. 155.

critical practice of excavation and demonstrates the continued relevance of the

argument that

> Blake's ideas belonged to certain cultural traditions and religious strands which have not survived well into modern times. […] It is the removal of relevant parallels and comparisons to his contemporaries that have shaped the distorted image of Blake as either an isolated genius or as a poor madman.[19]

Polysemic Language

Erdman's 'bold survey of the history of Blake's time' proposed a deterministic

relationship between history and imagery, in which Blake's poetry was presented as

an allegory of key historical events. The movement in Blake scholarship towards a

focused recovery of the poet's specific cultural moment also marks a departure from

the idea of history as an explanatory device that can have a fixed or knowable

relationship to poetic expression. Iain McCalman's *Radical Underworld* is written

from a theoretical standpoint that has much in common with Mee, Worral and

Thompson. Whilst the study did not originally mention Blake, McCalman recognises

the methodological crossover between his own research and that of Mee, Worral and

Thompson:

> All these works share with *Radical Underworld* a concern with mapping historical contexts during the age of revolution; not necessarily – *pace* La Capra – historical context as a fixed and determining bedrock of reality independent of discursive practice, but context as a repertory of contagious cultural representations which can provoke fresh insight.[20]

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[19] Rix, p. 155.
[20] Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), p. ix.

The language through which Mee, Thompson, Makdisi and Rix discuss significant words in the writing of Blake and other political or religious radicals, is deliberately selected to draw attention to their polysemic nature. These critics convey the idea that a word or phrase carries multiple meanings partly by referring to it as a symbol or image, indicating that it may draw on several divergent sites. Iain McCalman's 1998 preface expresses this with particular clarity. Indeed, the recognition of the polysemic nature of the expressions and images is crucial to McCalman, who argues:

> We cannot hope to grasp the fluid and volatile meanings of cultural texts and symbols without immersing ourselves in the idioms within which they were produced.[21]

With its etymological root in the Greek for 'private property' and 'one's own', idiom denotes 'an expression, word or phrase that has a figurative meaning' which can only be deduced through reference to its common usage by a 'person or group'.[22] Idiomatic words are necessarily polysemic, they carry multiple, coexistent meanings: a literal meaning as defined by the dominant language, and one or more figurative meanings, each pertaining to their private resonance. For McCalman, Blake's potential resonances must be recovered in order for his language to be understood. Therefore McCalman's approach further problematises our understanding of the cultural matrix.

The Vectors of Transmission

Related to the recognition of Blake's imagery as polysemic, and of poetic language as fluid and volatile in its meaning, is the question of poetic transmission. An enquiry into how particular images and tropes came to be in Chartist poetry is central

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[21] McCalman, p. ix.
[22] *OED* 'idiom'.

to this thesis. Blake scholars working to recover the poet's specific cultural situation place a re-evaluation of the way in which ideas are transmitted at the centre of their enquiries. Mee argues that due to the plurality of possible meanings of and origins for a word or phrase within Blake's language, 'simplistic notions of sources and influence have to be abandoned', whilst E. P. Thompson's questions 'Who was Blake? Where do we place him in the intellectual and social life of London between 1780 and 1820?' lead into a crucial third question: 'What particular traditions were at work within his mind?'[23]

This section will explore the ways in which Blake scholarship has theorised the transmission of ideas from the specific cultural moment surrounding Blake's poetic production, into symbols and imagery within his poetic expression. These methodological approaches will provide a framework from which the theory of the cultural matrix will be developed later in this chapter. Blake scholarship is being studied here, not for its arguments about the specific traditions to which Blake was related, but because it provides a template for how we might approach the transmission of ideas within culture.

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As a participant in the *Historicising Blake* conference and editor of the essay collection of the same name, David Worral was crucial to the focus on Blake's radical cultural situation that emerged in the 1990s. However, Worral's work differs from Mee, Thompson and McCalman's in the way it relates Blake's cultural context to his poetry. The specific discussion of Blake takes place in the second chapter of *Radical Culture*, where Worral argues that 'William Blake's discourse is filled with that

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[23] Mee, *Dangerous Enthusiasm*, p. 8; E. P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. xii.

week's ultra-radical rhetoric.'[24] Worral investigates the radical discourses surrounding Blake's poetic production, demonstrating how the 'language of Blake was the language of the seditious handbill and the articulation of one was the register for the articulation of the other.'[25]

Worral builds his argument around a collection of recovered handbills that were originally distributed on 16th, 17th and 18th September 1800. He compares these documents to extracts from the *Four Zoas* and from a 'poetic tribute' that 'appended' a letter from Catherine Blake to Anna Flaxman, on 14th September 1800, the Sunday before the Blakes left London.[26] The textual correspondences Worral draws are very compelling, but a limitation of his argument is that it does not address the vectors through which Blake's poetic language and the political handbill; come into contact. Worral states that

> Blake's poetic language during the riotous days of mid-September
> 1800 uses the exact language of the insurrectionary handbill
> transposed up into the register of the effusively grateful artist.[27]

The critic identifies this cultural source as a linguistic parallel to Blake, and strengthens his assertion of a connection with the evidence that the particular handbill being considered for comparison was 'found on the day of the [Blakes'] departure for Felpham'.[28] Worral does not state that Blake read this handbill, his argument is that the *parole* of the insurrectionary handbill was available to Blake because it formed part of the *langue* of the 1790s.[29] However, whilst his methodology explains the

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[24] Worral, p. 44.
[25] Worral, p. 46.
[26] Worral, p. 43.
[27] Worral, p. 46.
[28] Worral, p. 46.
[29] Worral employs Saussurean theory to argue that, whilst he is discussing the discourse of historically marginalised, radical groups, 'none of the discursive activities [he] comment[s] on are marginal in

availability of radical discourses, it does not explicitly acknowledge the intertextual gap between the insurrectionary handbill and Blake's poetic expression. Conversely, an exploration of this intertextual gap is central to E. P. Thompson's methodology.

The Intertextual Gap

Thompson's approach is different to Worral's, as he recognises that certain ideas and symbols were available in Blake's surrounding culture (in the *langue* of the 1790s), but questions the extent to which Blake's engagement with these sources can be proven: 'We have no proof that Blake read any of them, although we can show the probability in certain cases.'[30] Nonetheless, Thompson argues that we must consider the vectors through which images and ideas might have been transmitted into Blake's work. He balances the assertion that we cannot be certain about what Blake read with a belief in the importance of historical context, and seeks to assess how likely the connection between Blake's poetry and other texts might be – Thompson's recognition that no connection can be certain does not amount to the statement that any connection is equally possible.

In *Witness Against the Beast* Thompson presents his investigation into the libraries and literary works available in London in the 1790s. This historical research allows Thompson, who is unable to state that Blake *had* read certain sources, to counter the claims of literary critics with rival perspectives on Blake's cultural influences. Thompson states that, based on his archival research:

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terms of their place in the language system': 'Saussure's structuralist inquiries into language in the *Course* suggest that the signs which go to make up *parole* (an act of speech or utterance) can only be taken, ready made, from out of the available *langue* (the available and constituted language). […] One utterance or *parole* ideologically marked, proves the availability of the system of *langue* which, in turn, enables it to be infinitely articulated.' (p. 4).

[30] E. P. Thomspon, p. 37.

> Blake *could* have found in London, in the 1790s, copies of almost
> every work that we have discussed. The scarcest and most
> inaccessible works will have been those which Miss Raine cites as
> central to her notion of The Tradition.[31]

Therefore, Thompson is not suggesting that the historical context of Blake's poetic production is unimportant; he emphasises the value of precise historical recovery but argues that we cannot relate ideas or symbols in Blake's surrounding culture unproblematically to their appearance and meaning in his poetry.

In his introduction to *Witness against the Beast*, Thompson states that his aim is not to add '"background" or social and political context', or to produce 'a sketch of the "historical" Blake'. He describes the study as 'an intervention of a different kind', stating:

> I am pursuing an enquiry into the structure of Blake's thought and
> the character of his sensibility […] To do this involves some
> historical recovery, and attention to sources external to Blake –
> sources which, very often, he may not have been aware of himself.'[32]

The very language with which Thompson conveys his methodology emphasises the intangible. Expressions such as 'structure of […] thought' and 'character of sensibility' convey a marked departure from confident assertions of influence.

Moving beyond the idea that a poet is influenced by texts with which he knowingly engages, Thompson conceives of both cultural transmission and poetic production in a different way. He suggests that the generation and transmission of ideas is both collaborative and non-selective – ideas are generated throughout the areas of a poet's experience rather than being deliberately developed through selective reading. In contrast to the theories of poetic production and interpretation outlined in

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[31] E. P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. 41.
[32] E. P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. xix.

Chapter 1 of this thesis, Thompson privileges neither the author nor reader as the creator of meaning, rejecting the significance of any one particular text and questioning the extent to which the poet actively selects the ideas that influence his thinking and expression. McCalman expressed a similar conception of cultural transmission when he described context as 'a repertory of contagious cultural representations which can provoke fresh insight.'[33] However, Thompson's enquiry into 'the structure of Blake's thought and the character of his sensibility' indicates a particular focus, not just on cultural transmission, but on poetic production; he is attempting to recover the constituent parts of the poetic imagination, to re-capture the creative process. Thompson's concept is similar to Raymond Williams' 'Structure of Feeling' and gains clarity through comparison with this theory.

'Structures of Feeling' is presented directly before Raymond Williams' discussion of the 'Dominant, Residual and Emergent', to which it is closely related. Williams' conception of this term is clarified by a detailed discussion, which is useful to our understanding of Thompson:

> The term is difficult, but 'feeling' is chosen to emphasize a distinction from more formal concepts of 'world-view' or 'ideology'. It is not only that we must go beyond formally held and systematic beliefs, though of course we have always to include them. It is that we are concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations between these and formal or systematic beliefs are in practice variable (including historically variable), over a range from formal assent with private dissent to the more nuanced interaction between selected and interpreted beliefs and acted and justified experiences.[34]

The investigation of 'meanings and values as they are actually lived and felt' requires a focused recovery of the situation in which a poet was writing within his or her

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[33] McCalman, p. xi.
[34] Raymond Williams, p. 132.

historical moment, but such an investigation does not aim to recover any one particular source to which meaning can be attributed. This distinction is explained by the critics Nicholas Williams and Heather Glen, who use similar terminology in their discussions of Blake.

In *Ideology and Utopia in the Poetry of William Blake*, Williams addresses the concerns of readers who might think he intends to '"explain" Blake's genius by referring it to patterns of thought prevalent in his time' by clarifying that his 'concern is much more with providing analogues to Blake's manner of thought that with providing literal sources for that thought.'[35] Similarly, in *Vision and Disenchantment* Glen identifies Blake's 'real originality' as 'the way in which he drew upon and followed through the imaginative logic of modes of thinking and feeling that were being expressed around him, in order to articulate his own distinctive vision.'[36] Glen goes on later in this study to compare Blake's expression in *Songs of Experience* to that of radical pamphlets that were distributed at the time he was writing: '[i]t is in such publications as these that we find similar scorn for established pieties, a similar vocabulary of imagery, and a similar subversive energy, to that of Blake's notebook'.[37] Glen argues that this comparitive methodology does not seek to identify specific sources or origins for Blake's ideas:

> The question is not one of 'influence': many of these pamphlets may have been published after the notebook drafts to which they seem related. But they do suggest something of the ambience within which Blake was framing the questions with which *Songs of Experience* engage.[38]

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[35] Nicholas M. Williams, *Ideology and Utopia in the Poetry of William Blake* (CUP, 1998), p. xiv.
[36] Glen, pp. 28-29.
[37] Glen, p. 167.
[38] Glen, p. 169.

This methodological approach can be extended beyond the interpretation of Blake's poetry. Thompson's focus on the way poetry is produced in the poetic imagination (his suggestion that cultural context inflects 'the structure of Blake's thought') can inform the development of a theory through which the appearance of Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry can be explained.

The Cultural Matrix

The previous section has shown how critics such as Mee, Worral and Thompson highlight the importance of an understanding of history as a collection of radical subcultures alongside the hegemonic. In undertaking this work their studies uncover a range of possible 'cultures' in which to position Blake's. This methodological strategy can be applied to Chartist poetry to reveal that similar radical strands characterised both Blake and the Chartists' cultural situation. E.P. Thompson argues that poetic production is informed by the 'structure of a poet's thought' and the 'character of his sensibility'; he suggests that significant aspects of this poetic imaginary can be re-captured through a focused historical recovery of a poet's culture. Therefore, a poet's context impacts upon the structure of his thought and ultimately affects the way in which the poet expresses himself in verse.

Within the Blake scholarship discussed above, numerous terms and concepts describe the poet's historical and social milieu, and relate this to his poetic expression. In addition to Thompson's 'structure of thought' (which has been compared to Raymond Williams' 'structure of feeling') and Glen and Thompson's 'vocabulary of symbolism' or 'imagery'; McCalman's 'idiom' and Mee and Worral's specific use of 'discourse' have been analysed. These terms and concepts can be developed to present

an understanding of the poet as situated within a cultural matrix. The model of the

cultural matrix differs from, but is informed by, these concepts. Recent historicist

Blake scholarship focuses on the poet's specific cultural situation, effectively drawing

references in to this one point in time and space: this is, in many ways, a synchronic

process. Conversely, the cultural matrix model makes explicit the diachronic nature of

the 'discourse' and 'vocabulary' that characterise an 'idiom' or 'structure of

thought'.[39] Mee, Worral, Thompson and McCalman's methodology can be used to

uncover the historical moments in which Blake and the Chartists' were situated,

revealing similarities in the poets' culture; the cultural matrix model explains how

these cultural similarities might create the Blakean echoes that appear in Chartist

poetry.

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A matrix is the 'place or medium in which something is originated, produced, or

developed; the environment in which a particular activity or process begins; a point of

origin and growth'; however, the term also denotes the 'elements which make up a

particular system, regarded as an interconnecting network'.[40] Informed by these

definitions of 'matrix', the term cultural matrix describes a space of origin, generation

and development within which an interconnecting network operates. The

interconnections within the cultural matrix can best be explained through the metaphor

of threads.

In the cultural matrix model every individual cultural group, idea or movement,

can be visualised, not as a single event focused in one historical moment, but as a

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[39] *OED* 'Synchronic': 'Pertaining to or designating a method of linguistic study concerned with the state of a language at one time, past or present'. *OED* 'Diachronic': 'Pertaining to or designating a method of linguistic study concerned with the historical development of a language; historical, as opposed to descriptive or synchronic'.
[40] *OED* 'Matrix'.

thread running through history. The cultural matrix is comprised of a potentially infinite number of different threads; these threads intersect or merge to form many thousands of larger strands. For example, radical Christian movements such as Moravianism, Muggletonianism, Swedenborgianism and Antinomianism are each represented by an individual thread, but these threads converge to form part of the general strand of radical Christianity. When the cultural matrix is viewed as a whole it can be seen to contain the threads of all the cultural movements and significant ideas throughout history; these threads cross and merge as the movements or ideas they represent interact. The strands of the cultural matrix are not uniform or symmetrical; the threads of which they are comprised do not have the same point of origin; rather, threads join and leave a strand at various points and converge with threads in other strands in an organic rather than uniform manner.

This model can be used to depict the multiple interconnected aspects that constitute an individual's cultural situation. If we focus in on Blake, Jones or Massey's individual situation at a particular time, the cultural matrix model reveals, not only the various movements and ideas that characterise these poets' underlying cultural matrices, but also the development of each of these threads and strands as they precede the poets' individual engagement, and continue onwards beyond the specific points in time and space under consideration.

This concept can be clarified through the example of the thread of Swedenborgianism. Blake's engagement with Swedenborg can be identified through 'his signature on a document circulated at a General Conference of Swedenborgians during Easter week 1789', and through his annotation of Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell*, *Divine Love and Divine Wisdom* and *Divine Providence*, which Thompson

calculates took place 'probably in 1788-90'.[41] However, the thread of

Swedenborgianism can be seen to have originated between 1743 and 1744 when

Emanuel Swedenborg experienced a religious crisis and wrote the *Journal of*

Dreams.[42] It can be traced through the Swedenborgian societies of the 1780s, which

were inspired by theological volumes written by Swedenborg before his death in

1772.[43] The thread can be seen to change and develop through the 1780s:

Swedenborg's conception of a 'New Church' was realised fifteen years after his death

in May 1787, when 'The New Jerusalem Church' was established in England.[44] Clarke

Garrett reports, 'Swedenborgianism did not in fact prevail' and 'growth was slow after

1800', although, he states that the group's 'ideas and activities' had a 'very real impact

[…] in the late eighteenth century'.[45] The Swedenborgian thread nonetheless

continued to progress post 1800. Swedenborg's writings influenced writers and

philosophers throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century and the

Swedenborgian Church still exists across the world in the modern day;[46] there were

around 30,000 registered members at the turn of the twenty-first century.[47]

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[41] Jon Mee, 'Blake's politics in history', *The Cambridge Companion to Blake*, ed. by Morris Eaves (CUP, 2003), pp. 133-149 (p. 137). See also: E.P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. 129-131; Jonathan Roberts, *William Blake's Poetry: A Reader's Guide* (Continuum, 2007), p. 17; Gardner, p. 118; Glen, p. 127.

[42] *EB*.

[43] *EB*. See also Clarke Garrett who confirms that Swedenborg's 'influence was slight during his lifetime, but in the decades after his death his ideas excited considerable interest, especially in England', 'Swedenborg and the Mystical Enlightenment in Late Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 45 (1984) 67-81, (p. 68).

[44] The *Encyclopedia Britannica* states that Swedenborg 'never acted as a preacher but rather relied totally on the effect of his huge Latin volumes'. See also Thando Tshabalala, 'New Church of Jerusalem: Swedenborgian', in *Religious Movements Homepage Project* (University of Virginia, 2000) <http://web.archive.org/web/20060902232218/http://religiousmovements.lib.virginia.edu/nrms/borg.html> [accessed 25 April 2012].

[45] Garrett, p. 69-70.

[46] The *Encyclopedia Britannica* states that Swedenborg's 'visions and religious ideas have been a source of inspiration for a number of prominent writers, including Honoré de Balzac, Charles Baudelaire, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Butler Yeats, and August Strindberg. His theological writings have been translated into many languages, and there is a constant flow of new editions.' Rix has noted that 'Swedenborg's influence on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is all too easily forgotten in modern studies of the period' (p. 4).

[47] Tshabalala, *Religious Movements Homepage Project*.

This thesis considers Swedenborgianism at two fixed points in time, in relation to Blake's early religious radicalism and in reference to the Swedenborgian minister and Chartist, William Hill, who edited the *Northern Star* between 1837 and 1843. However, it conceives of Swedenborgianism not only in these specific historical moments, but as a continuous cultural thread that changed and developed throughout history. This thread was historically rooted in the cultural matrix prior to the time in the 1790s when it became part of Blake's personal cultural matrix. Blake engaged with this thread and it then continued onwards through history, having affected the structure of his thought and been affected, if only to a minor degree, by the poet's engagement.[48]

The thread of Swedenborgianism has been selected as an example because it helps to clarify the way in which ideas can be transmitted through the matrix. The first chapter of this thesis demonstrates that there is no evidence of a direct link between Blake and the Chartists. Within that discussion, Tulk and Wilkinson's early reproductions of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* were considered. Rix has argued that Tulk 'laboured to present Blake's poems within a Swedenborgian framework', that Tulk and Wilkinson became acquainted as a result of their shared involvement with the Swedenborgian church, and that Wilkinson was undoubtedly introduced to Blake by Tulk.[49] These early copies of *Songs* were 'made to give to friends who were interested in Blake' and their distribution was limited to the Swedenborgian community.[50] Nevertheless, this research also shows that a connection with

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[48] It is difficult to gauge precisely how an individual may have impacted upon the cultural threads with which they engaged. In this example Blake can be seen to have effected the thread of Swedenborgianism through C.A. Tulk's distribution of *Songs* within the religious community. Futhermore, the poet is frequently mentioned in overviews of the Swedenborgian movement to this day, see for example the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and *Religious Movements Homepage Project*.

[49] Rix, p. 115-117.

[50] Rix, p. 116.

Swedenborgianism did not, in itself, equate to an awareness of Blake's poetry. This cultural thread was not sufficient to transmit Blake's poetry from Tulk and Wilkinson to the Chartist editor and Swedenborgian minister William Hill.

One of the key arguments made by Thompson is that we must consider the vectors through which Blake could have encountered specific traditions.[51] The most obvious vector through which Blakean imagery might have been transmitted into Chartist poetry would be through the Chartists' direct engagement with the texts of Blake's poems. Having ruled out this possibility, the connection between early publishers of Blake's work and an editor of the *Northern Star* would seem to provide a clear route of transmission, but this too has been shown to be insufficient. The threads of the cultural matrix *can* constitute direct vectors, but this is not the principle manner in which they operate. Nor, in fact, is it the only way in which Thompson conceives of cultural transmission occurring. Rather than providing specific, individual links between poets and traditions the threads of the cultural matrix work in combination to inflect the structure of a poet's thought with what Glen and Thompson have described as a 'vocabulary of symbolism' or 'vocabulary of imagery'.[52]

As has been outlined above, within a conceptual model of the cultural matrix different radical Christian movements such as Moravianism, Muggletoniaism, Swedenborgianism and Antinomianism are each represented by an individual thread, but these threads converge to form part of the general strand of radical Christianity. It is this strand, rather than distinguishable individual threads that can be seen to affect Blake and the Chartists' poetic composition. This conception of the interrelated and

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[51] E.P. Thompson challenges the perspective that Blake should be placed amongst a tradition of 'neo-Platonic and hermetic thought' not because it is impossible that he read in these sources, but because they were scarce and 'inaccessible'. Therefore, the vector through which ideas expressed in they mystic writings might have been transmitted into the structure of Blake's thought is distinctly unclear, *Witness*, pp. 136-141.

[52] E.P. Thompson, *Witness*, pp. 85-6; Glen, p. 167.

interdependent nature of different movements and traditions is supported by existing scholarship exploring Blake and the Chartists' religious engagement.

Critics of both Blake's poetry and the Chartist movement have emphasised the interconnections between different forms of religious dissent and radicalism in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century century England. When discussing Blake in relation to cultures of Enthusiasm and Antinominanism, Rix states: 'These beliefs cannot be plotted on the religious map of eighteenth-century England with any accuracy. They may best be described as approaches or attitudes shared by a number of often very different individuals or groups.'[53] Moreover, Rix argues that

> mystical theosophists often drew on a font of commonly shared ideas that were hard to distinguish. This warns us against treating any one idea in Blake's writing as necessarily derived from only a singular source. It is central to Blake's understanding that "all sects of Philosophy", as well as "Religions of all nations", have a source in the same original truths […] Thus, his discussions often draw on a syncretistic amalgam of ideas, but he remains loyal to none.[54]

Similarly, in the article 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle', Eileen Yeo emphasises, not only the significance of radical Christianity within the Chartist movement, but also the interconnected nature of the radical churches:

> The West Riding preachers also shared the lives of their congregations: Benjamin Rushton was a working handloom weaver, William Thornton a woolcomber, while Jon Arran plied a number of callings, blacksmith, teacher and later dealer in coffee and tea and Chartist missionary, getting his livelihood from the movement. They were often veteran radicals […] They preached to a network of radical congregations not confined to any one denomination.'[55]

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[53] Rix, p. 7.
[54] Rix, pp. 1-2.
[55] Eileen Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle 1838-1842', *Past and Present*, 91 (1981), 122-139 (p. 116).

The same interconnections are observed between strands of religious and political radicalism. In *The Tyger, The Lamb and the Terrible Desart: Songs of Innocence and Experience in Their Times and Circumstances*, Stanley Gardner agues against the separation of 'those personages who go by the name of "religious Blake" and the "political Blake"', stating that Blake's religious belief and his political radicalism were closely aligned: 'One aspect of the "utopianism" of Blake's text which I have highlighted throughout is the notion that, at least in this historical period, religion can be a powerful form of political radicalism.'[56] This is corroborated by Rix who insightfully observes: 'none of Blake's "political" poems are about constitutional changes. They deal principally with the freeing of the people from *religious* falsehood, something which Blake sees as the root of all civil tyranny.'[57] Chartist historians have equally noted the complementary and interrelated nature of political and religious radicalism, as Yeo states:

> It is important to stress how compatible, indeed mutually reinforcing, the radical Christian and constitutional outlooks were within Chartism […] as Chartist preacher Abraham Hanson put it, "their labour was the source of all property – they performed that labour by the physical power of their bodies, they derived that power from none but God"[58]

Whilst Malcolm Chase provides an example of Chartist reading habits through the case study of Abram Hanson, a shoemaker from West Yorkshire who owned: 'a variety of religious works (mainly by seventeenth-century writers), but also Paine's *Age of Reason*, William Howitt's anti-clerical *History of Priestcraft* and *Labour's Wrong and*

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[56] Stanley Gardner, *The Tyger, The Lamb and the Terrible Desart: Songs of Innocence and Experience in Their Times and Circumstances* (Golden Cockerel Press, 1998), pp. xiv-xv.
[57] Rix, p. 4.
[58] Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle', p. 112.

Labour's Remedy by the Leeds socialist J.F. Bray'.[59] Hanson's collection of literary

works illustrates the mutual significance of religion and political radicalism within the

Chartist imaginary.

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Neither Blake nor the Chartists' cultural matrix was characterised only by threads

of radical politics and radical Christianity. These strands interwove with those of

numerous other influences, traditions, movements and ideas. A complete or

comprehensive recovery of any individual's cultural matrix would prove impossible; as

Thompson suggests, it is unlikely that even Blake himself was aware of all the external

sources that inflected his thought.[60] However, it is not necessary to re-capture every

aspect of Blake and the Chartists' cultural matrices in order to identify significant

similarities between them. Thompson's scholarship suggests that the structure of a

poet's thought is constructed from the texts in which he read and the cultures in which

he was immersed. The cultural matrix model extends this concept to suggest that when

the individual cultural matrices of different poets contain similar threads, these threads

expose them to a similar vocabulary of symbolism, providing a connection between

their poetic imaginations.

The possibility of multiple influences

Although the cultural matrix model has been developed to explain the re-sounding

of poetic language in the absence of a direct link, it by no means precludes or denies

the fact of direct transmission. Rather, this model asserts that texts are created as the

result of multiple influences, both cultural and literary. The most direct vector through

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[59] Chase, p. 26.
[60] E. P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. xix.

which imagery used by one poet could be transmitted into the structure of another poet's thought, would be through the text itself. Therefore, a body of poetic work might be viewed as a distinct thread within the cultural matrix. A text, or body of work by an author, travels through the matrix in the same way as the thread of a cultural movement; meanings shift and change in response to readings and critiques of the text, and in response to context. For example we might visualise the thread of Blake which ran through the cultural matrices of Tulk and Wilkinson, later encountering Gilchrist (who had a particular impact on the ideas, assumptions and interpretations it provoked), and continued onwards to the modern day where it has become part of my cultural matrix and inspired the ideas behind this thesis.

It will not been possible within the confines of this thesis to discuss in detail the influence that William Shakespeare and John Milton (and in particular *Paradise Lost*) had upon both Blake and the Chartists' structure of thought. In each case the impact of these authors is evident. Nick Rawlinson has recently provided an excellent overview of Shakespeare's influence on Blake:

> Shakespeare's influence on Blake is well documented. R. F. Gleckner remarks that for Shakespearean reference, 'Blake's verbal memory was unusually acute' and Garnett notes 'few have so thoroughly assimilated Shakespeare' as Blake. Bate reviews Blake's considerable number of borrowings from Shakespeare and also notes Blake's emphasis on the importance of his influence: 'Shakespeare in riper years gave me his hand' (E707), 'let our Bible be Virgil & Shakespeare (E669).[61]

As its title suggests Blake's penultimate illuminated book *Milton - a Poem*, was written in response to Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Discussions of both Shakespeare and Milton can be found throughout the Chartist press. For example the greatness of the 'immortal' Shakespeare is mentioned in two of the twelve extracts of Chartist literary

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[61] Nick Rawlinson, *William Blake's Comic Vision* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p.47.

criticism anthologised by Kovalev;[62] the following advertisement from the *Northern Star* summarises the way that Shakespeare was presented to the movement: 'The Englishman who has not read SHAKESPEARE may doubt his nationality; he is, at best, but half an Englishman, when ignorant of the words of his greatest countryman'.[63] Milton was mentioned on over 600 separate occasions in the *Northern Star* which contained advertisements both for biographical accounts of the poet and for inexpensive reproductions of Milton's political thinking.[64] The fifth extract of literary criticism in Kovalev's collection is entitled 'John Milton' and dedicated to the discussion of Milton's poetry.[65] This thesis will not examine exactly how each of the shared images in Blake and the Chartists' poetry might have been produced by their cultural matrix, but an inheritance of Shakespeare and Milton will be acknowledged alongside radical politics and Christianity when Blakean echoes are being presented in the upcoming chapters.

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This chapter has outlined the cultural matrix model, which is an extension of Mee, Worral, Thompson, McCalman and Rix's interpretative methodology. The theory of the cultural matrix situates a poet within their historical and social milieu, but conceives of this situation as characterised by the continually developing, interconnected threads of several different groups, ideas and movements. The threads of the cultural matrix inform the structure of a poet's thought and the character of his

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[62] *The Chartist Circular*, July 11, 1840, and *Northern Star*, December 21, 1844, in Kovalev, *Anthology*, p. 296 and 306.
[63] *Northern Star*, 29th November 1845, p.3.
[64] For example, John Carpenter's 'The Life and Times of John Milton' was advertised in the *Northern Star* on June 2nd, 1838 (page 7), and an advertisment for 6 pence editions of 'Consdierations Touching the Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church' and 'A Speech for the Liberty of Un Licensed [sic] Printing' appeared in the *Northern Star*, December 5th 1840, p.6.
[65] The *Chartist Circular*, March 13, 1841, in Kovalev, *Anthology*, p.299.

sensibility. Therefore, when the individual cultural matrices of two poets (such as Blake and Jones, or Blake and Massey) contain similar threads, these provide a connection between their poetic imaginations. Due to a shared underlying cultural matrix Blake and the Chartists were expressing themselves through a shared vocabulary; this explains the Blakean echoes that we encounter in Chartist poetry. The historicist ideas explored in this chapter will inform the textually focused close readings that follow.

Chapter 3 – Shelley's Influence on Chartist Poetry

The previous chapters have outlined the methodology that this thesis will employ when undertaking the close textual analysis of the Blakean echoes in Jones and Massey's poetry. The terms 'echo', 're-sound', and 'correspondence' will be used to describe textual resonance in the absence of a direct link. In the close textual analysis presented in this chapter, I will indicate how and when Shelley, Jones and Massey can be seen to be drawing upon shared formal structures and how the forms and images in their texts are indicative of their involvement in a radical political culture.

As the Introduction argued, the aesthetic value of Chartist poetry has been undertheorised. This, combined with the lack of a demonstrable link between Blake and the Chartist movement has meant that the relationship between Blake and Chartism has not previously been discussed. However, critics of Chartist poetry have frequently explored the way in which these Chartist poets engaged with other Romantic predecessors. The most frequently cited Romantic influence has been that of P. B. Shelley. Therefore, a critical analysis of the Chartists' response to Shelley will provide useful insight into existing debates about Jones and Massey's engagement with their literary inheritance. In *The Industrial Muse* Vicinus states:

> These ideas had their roots in the previous generation of Romantic poets. Chartist writers eagerly imitated their subject matter and poetic style […] Shelley's idealism and faith in human potential were fundamental tenets among all Chartists. He had been able to imbue such familiar, and well defined, abstractions as Liberty and Freedom with a mythic importance beyond specific battles for a free press or universal suffrage. But in the hands of less skilful writers the

descriptions of such ideals too often became diffuse, static and even incomprehensible.[1]

Whilst Vicinus shows that Shelley's poetry was highly valued among the Chartists, her important research concludes that the Chartists' use of this influence was derivative. This interpretation will be challenged throughout this chapter, which will instead follow the critiques of Kovalev and Janowitz in arguing that the Chartists developed many of the images to which they allude.

This chapter will open by presenting an overview of the publication history of Shelley's work. This will demonstrate the link between Shelley and Chartism, identifying to which of Shelley's texts the Chartist had access. Secondly, it will present an overview of critical perspectives, outlining the debate around the Chartists' derivative or developmental poetic allusion. Finally the chapter will present the close textual analysis of Jones' 'The Two Races', 'A Chartist Chorus' and 'Labour's History'; and Massey's 'The Three Voices'. These poems will be shown to engage with Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' and 'The Mask of Anarchy'. This section will open with a discussion of the traditional ballad, which will support the comparisons of poetic form that will be made in this and proceeding chapters. Ricks, Hollander and Irwin's discussions of Traditional influence and allusion were explored in Chapter 1; the work of these critics will inform the argument that the Jones and Massey allude skilfully to Shelley, working in collaboration with his images to create new meanings.

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[1] Vicinus, p. 96.

Publication History

The publication history of Shelley's work reveals that the Chartist movement, running on a national level from approximately 1838 until 1855, had access to a relatively complete edition of Shelley's poetry. Furthermore, many of Shelley's more politically focused works were made available to the public for the first time in the years that the Chartist movement was at its strongest.

A brief overview of the publication history of P. B. Shelley's work indicates the sensitivity around publishing some of his more overtly political poetry. For example, although in 1824 Mary Shelley published a posthumous edition of her husband's poetry, it was not until 1839 that the first collected edition to include poems such as 'The Mask of Anarchy', 'Song to the Men of England' and 'Lines Written During the Castlereagh Administration' was presented. In the opening lines of her introduction to the first 1839 edition, Mrs Shelley states that 'Obstacles have long existed to my presenting the public with a perfect edition of Shelley's Poems. These being at last happily removed.'[2] However, in November 1839 a second edition appeared which contained 'omitted passages of *Queen Mab*', which, previously censored by the publisher, had now been 'restored'.[3] This edition also included 'Two poems […] of some length, *Swellfoot the Tyrant and Peter Bell the Third*'. Janowitz has discussed the impact that these delays in publication had on radical perceptions of Shelley:

> After the 1815 publication in the *Theological Inquirer* of sections of
> the poem, *Queen Mab* had been printed in pirated editions from
> 1821, and when 'The Mask of Anarchy' was published in 1832,

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[2] Mary Shelley, 'Preface by Mrs Shelley To First Collected Edition, 1839', in *Shelley: Poetical Works*, ed. by Thomas Hutchinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. ix.
[3] Mary Shelley, p. xii.

> coinciding with the passage of the Reform Bill, Shelley's poem was thought to speak directly to the argument that British labourers had been poorly done by the terms of the Bill. [4]

Mary Shelley's 1839 publications of *The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* coincided with significant incidents in Chartism's campaign for the vote, appearing in the year of the November 4th Newport Uprising. Janowitz's argument that the delayed publication of 'The Mask of Anarchy' increased the sense of its apparent relevance to the passage of the 1832 Reform Bill, can be extended to suggest that Mary Shelley's 1839 publications increased the perception that Shelley's poetry was current and relevant to the Chartism's political situation.

The publication history of Shelley's work suggests that the Chartists had access to the full range of Shelley's poetry. Bouthaina Shaaban's research indicates with which poems the Chartists engaged, and in what context these were presented. Her bibliography demonstrates that extracts from a handful of Shelley's longer poems such as *Queen Mab*, *The Revolt of Islam*, *Prometheus Unbound* and 'The Mask of Anarchy' were reproduced repeatedly in the Chartist publications, whilst 'Song to the Men of England' was published four times in 1839; firstly by *New Moral World* and *The Northern Star* in April and then by *The Chartist Circular* in October, also appearing in *The National*. *The Northern Star* reproduced the poem three years running in January 1846 and then July 1847 and 1848, with *The Red Republican* also publishing the same 32 line song in 1851. Evidently, this short poem was of particular importance to the Chartist movement.

The impact that Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' had on the Chartist movement is demonstrated by the speed with which it was identified and reproduced

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[4] Janowitz, p. 115.

in the Chartist press. The poem was first published by Mary Shelley in the first edition of 'Poetical Works' which appeared between January and May 1839. The *Northern Star* published the poem in full in April 1839, almost immediately after it was first made available. The significance that Shelley's words held for Chartist poets is evident in their rapid assimilation and development of 'Song to the Men of England' in their own poetry. Kovalev identified the similarities between Shelley's poem and William S Villiers Sankey's 'Ode' which was published in the *Northern Star* on February 29th 1840, less than a year after 'Song to the Men of England' was released.[5] Shelley's influence is evident in Sankey's opening lines, 'Ye working men of England, / Who plough your native soil', which, as Sanders has noted, recall Shelley's opening lines to identify 'a group unified by concrete economic activity'.[6] Sanders also discusses two further Chartist poems, published within two years of the time that 'Song to the Men of England' first appeared in the Chartist press, that display the influence of Shelley's poem with equal clarity.[7] James Syme's 'Labour Song', published in the *Northern Star* on December 26th 1840, and A.W.'s 'To the Sons of Toil', which appeared in the *Northern Star*'s poetry column on April 3rd 1841, both highlight the inverse relationship between labour and economic reward using the antitheses and juxtapositions that had structured Shelley's argument in 'Song to the Men of England'.

Shelley's longer poems do not appear in full in either Chartist newspapers or in Linton's volume *The National*.[8] However, the third canto of *Queen Mab* seems to have been favoured, with sections being published in *The London Democrat*, *The Chartist Circular* and *The Northern Star*. The extracts from *The London Democrat*, were both

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[5] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', pp. 126-7.
[6] Michael Sanders, 'Poetic Agency: Metonymy and Metaphor in Chartist Poetry 1838-1852', *Victorian Poetry*, 39 (2001), 111-135 (p. 124).
[7] Sanders, 'Poetic Agency', pp. 124-127.
[8] *The National: A Library for the People* was presented in one volume in 1839 and edited by W. J. Linton. See Shaaban, p.30.

published in April 1839.[9] In July of the same year virtually the entire canto was reproduced in *The Chartist Circular*.[10] The third canto of *Queen Mab* denounces the monarchy as parasitic and corrupt and demonstrates how the institution of monarchy has enslaved both the monarch and the people in a tyrannical system. In 1839, *The National* included an extract from the fifth canto, entitled 'Commerce', where the downfalls of the capitalist system of commerce are denounced as unnatural.[11] *Queen Mab* is the most reproduced of Shelley's poems in *The Northern Star,* with an extract from canto three entitled 'A King' appearing in 1844; in October 1848 the newspaper published a selection of seven extracts taken from throughout the poem.[12] Janowitz refers to Medwin's bibliographical study of Chartism to emphasise the literary importance *Queen Mab* held for the Chartists

> In his life of Shelley, Medwin says that Owenites considered *Queen Mab* to be 'the gospel of the sect', and Shaw recalled hearing an "Old Chartist […] confess that […] it was through reading Shelley that he got the ideas that led him to join the Chartists. A little further inquiry elicited that *Queen Mab* was known as the Chartists' Bible".[13]

Seventeen stanzas from Canto VIII of *The Revolt Of Islam* appeared in *The National* in 1839,[14] discussing the enslavement of Man, Woman and Child by the rule of 'Power'.[15] In June of the same year *New Moral World* published lines 19-126 from the 'Dedication', Shaaban describes how 'the writer […] offers his readers a long

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[9] Shaaban, p. 29; these extracts were composed of lines 22-63 and 225-238.
[10] Shaaban, p. 27.
[11] Shaaban, p. 31.
[12] Shaaban, pp. 39 and 42.
[13] Janowitz, p. 150, with reference to Thomas Medwin, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (London:1847).
[14] Shaaban, p. 30; the published stanzas were 11-27.
[15] Shelley, 'The Revolt of Islam', line 3309. Further references are given in the text.

quotation from the poem and then explains the gist of the poet's argument.'[16] The lines

taken from Shelley's 'Dedication', describe the process of inspiration and

composition. In stanza V, Shelley sets the liberating knowledge of self-education in

opposition to tyrannical control, it is interesting that these lines form part of *New*

Moral World's extract because so many Chartist readers and poets were self-taught:

> And from that hour did I with earnest thought
> Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore,
> Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
> I cared to learn.   (37-40)

In July 1839 *The Revolt of Islam* was also taken up by *The Northern Star*, in which six

stanzas from the sixth canto appear under the title 'The Arguments of Tyranny'.[17]

The National included what Shaaban describes as the Chorus from *Prometheus*

Unbound, with the first 134 lines of Canto IV being reproduced. Unlike many of the

extracts of Shelley's poetry reproduced in the Chartist press, this section of

Prometheus Unbound is not overtly political. However, this section of Shelley's drama

has an oral focus; it opens with the song of '*A train of dark Forms and Shadows*' and

progresses into a '*Semichorus of Hours*'; following Shelley's stage directions the

majority of this 134 line section would be sung. This section may therefore have

appealed to the Chartist movement because of the oral and communal nature of much

of the movement's original poetry.

With the exception of the eleven stanzas from XXXVII to XLVII which appeared

in *The Northern Star* in April 1839, only very short extracts from 'The Mask of

Anarchy' were reproduced in the Chartist press. *The National* selected stanzas LII and

LVII for publication, while in 1851 *The Red Republican* isolated lines 217-222 of

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[16] Shaaban, p. 35.
[17] Shaaban, p. 38; The lines that were reproduced are listed as 2425-60, 2470-78, 2488-96.

stanzas LIV and LV.[18] The eleven-stanza section published in the *Northern Star* begins at Earth's first cry of 'Men of England, heirs of Glory'.[19] The extracts taken from this poem all focus on the rousing, optimistic sections that occur in the second half of the work, after the negative aspects of the political situation have been outlined. 'The Mask of Anarchy' as presented in the Chartist press, announces hope for a better future, rather than dwelling on the difficulties caused by society's acceptance of tyranny in the past.

It is interesting to observe that many of the references to Shelley's poetry that Shaaban has identified in the Chartist press appear in the form of illustrative epigraphs or demonstrative quotation in works of journalistic prose. Furthermore, these short illustrative sections, usually a few lines in length, are often taken from these parts of *Queen Mab*, *The Revolt of Islam*, *Prometheus Unbound* and 'The Mask of Anarchy' that were not published as literary extracts. As well as supplementing the introductory education that was provided by longer extracts of Shelley's poetry, these articles also provide the contemporary critic with clues as to how the Chartists used Shelley's poetry to develop their political ideas. For example, in June of 1852 the *People's Paper* published the article 'Romance. A light in the gloom; or, the politics of the past' with an epigraph from Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*. Shaaban notes that 'the actual narrative echoes the gist of Shelley's lines. In fact, all numbers of this romance […] are preceded by epigraphs from Shelley's poem and the arguments of the historical narrative echo his central points in *The Revolt*.'[20] Shaaban's research indicates that Shelley was especially valued for his economic and political criticism and his ideas, and this is confirmed not only by the context in which the Chartists employed

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[18] Shabban, pp. 33-35.
[19] Shaaban, p. 38.
[20] Shaaban, p. 43.

quotations from Shelley within their journalistic article, but also by the selection of Shelley's poems that were frequently re-produced. Shelley's significance to the Chartists has frequently been discussed in critical accounts of the movements own literary works.

Critical Perspectives on Shelleyan Influence

Kovalev's 1956 *Anthology of Chartist Literature* was the first anthology of Chartist poetry and prose, and remains the most significant anthology of Chartist literature in existence.[21] Many of the intellectual enquiries raised by Kovalev, such as the suggestion that Chartist literature occupied a 'firm place' in nineteenth century literary tradition because it 'enriched English literature with new themes' which had an impact on the 'visions' of Victorian 'literary masters', have yet to be fully researched.[22] This is especially true of Kovalev's assertion that the influence of Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' and 'The Mask of Anarchy', can be detected in the text of Chartist poetry.[23] Even without J.C. Dumbreck and Michael Beresford's translation of Kovalev's Russian introduction, the layout of *An Anthology of Chartist Literature* portrays the importance that Shelley's writing had on the development of a Chartist literary aesthetic. In the third section of his volume, Kovalev anthologises some examples of Chartist literary criticism. The opening piece, 'Percy Bysshe Shelley', was originally published in *The Chartist Circular* in October 1839. Its anonymous author confidently states: 'Among the few who have been called "Poets of

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[21] Peter Scheckner published *An Anthology of Chartist Poetry: Poetry of the British Working Class, 1830s-1850s* through the Associated University Presses in 1989. This anthology essentially reproduced Kovalev's research. Although Scheckner offered an original perspective on the poetry he reproduced, this volume did not make a wider range of Chartist poetry available, and Scheckner did not acknowledge Kovalev's contribution.

[22] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', p. 120.

[23] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', p. 126.

the People", assuredly the first and noblest name is that of Shelley.'[24] Kovalev's

anthologised extracts of literary criticism confirm not only the high regard in which

Shelley's writing was held, but the poet's place alongside Byron and Burns in a

Romantic poetic tradition that was actively studied and admired by Chartist writers. In

their critical discussions of these literary predecessors, Chartist commentators

emphasise moments at which the demands of poetic aesthetics coincided with an

interest in the political ambitions and social conditions of working men. For example,

in the article 'The Politics of Poets', which was published in *The Chartist Circular* on

11th July 1840, the view of the anti- corn law poet Ebenezer Elliot is contrasted with

that of the 'gentleman critic':

> Elliot in the preface to one of his poem, says, "All genuine poets are
> fervid politicians." The gentleman critics complain that the union of
> poetry and politics is always hurtful to the politics and fatal to the
> poetry. But these great connoisseurs must be wrong if Homer, Dante,
> Shakespeare, Milton, Cowper and Burns were poets.[25]

The critical piece reaches a conclusion between these two perspectives by highlighting

great poets who have previously succeeded by combining poetry and politics; thus

setting an aesthetic agenda for the Chartist poet.

In his introduction Kovalev argues that Chartist poets developed a poetic tradition

out of an admiration for their Romantic predecessors:

> From the point of view of method, early Chartist poetry leaned
> towards the work of the revolutionary romantics. The Chartists knew
> well and valued highly the poetry of Byron and, especially, of
> Shelley. The works of Byron and Shelley were continually printed in
> the most popular Chartist newspapers and lines of their revolutionary
> verse were written out on banners and placards carried by the

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[24] Y.V. Kovalev, *An Anthology of Chartist Literature* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956), p. 295.

[25] Kovalev, *Anthology*, pp. 295-296.

Chartists during mass demonstrations and meetings. Naturally, the works of these great revolutionary poets were the most imitated in Chartist poetry.[26]

However, Kovalev does not present the Chartists' engagement with Romantic poetry as derivative; rather, his critique emphasises how the movement's search 'for a literary method' lead them to develop the techniques that they most admired in Romantic poetry. [27] W. J. Linton's poetry is used as an example of the Chartists' developmental method.[28] Kovalev demonstrates how Linton incorporates Shelley's influence into a discussion of the social conditions in Victorian Britain, and in so doing creates something original:

> In 1849 Linton printed the long poem "Dirge of the Nations" in the periodical *The Republican*. Its theme, the poet's relation to the social struggle, is a fairly common one in Chartist poetry, but it is treated in a very original way. Linton was interested in the problems facing Chartist poets in 1849: what is the role of a poet in a period of revolutionary defeat? At the centre of this poem, extremely similar in structure to Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound," stands the figure of a poet-Colossus, chained to a rock and witnessing with anguish the universal triumph of reaction.[29]

Kovalev's presentation of Chartist poetry as developmental can be contrasted with the perspective of the critic Vicinus. In her ground breaking study of nineteenth century working class literature, *The Industrial Muse*, Vicinus also examines the Chartists' engagement with their Romantic predecessors, highlighting the importance of this influence to the construction of a Chartist poetic tradition. However, as was demonstrated by the quotation that opened this chapter, Vicinus' assessment of Chartist poetry emphasises its imitative, derivative nature. Vicinus states that the ideas

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[26] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', p. 126.
[27] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', p. 127.
[28] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', p. 130.
[29] Kovalev, 'Literature of Chartism', p. 131.

expressed in Chartist poetry 'had their roots in the previous generation of Romantic poets', and highlights the Chartists' particular deference to Shelley; however, she does not evaluate how this influence manifests itself on a textual level. [30] This chapter will examine Jones and Massey's poetry on a close textual level and demonstrate the ways in which their allusions to Shelley developed and interrogated their predecessor's ideas.

In contrast to Vicinus, P. M. Ashraf's *Introduction To Working Class Literature In Great Britain*, emphasises 'the primary role played by poetry within the Chartist movement', arguing that there were '"some 200 worker and radical poets" requiring critical attention'. Ashraf highlights the development of a working class aesthetic, which 'built on pre-existing culture' while 'inventing' and bringing 'in new qualities'.[31] This consideration of the Chartists' own aesthetic criteria results in a new perspective on the movement's relationship with the poetry of their predecessors, Ashraf states that 'there was always an attitude that regarded any poetry written or unwritten as a form of common property', explaining that:

> Generally speaking these poets were not seeking originality.
> Technique is subordinated to sense. Meaning is concentrated into a
> common phrase. Neat paraphrase is not regarded as plagiarism but
> as skill. It is therefore quite possible to dismiss a poem on the first
> reading because it seems merely a commonplace piece of riming
> (sic), and to discover later that one has missed the essential point.[32]

As will be argued later in this chapter, Ashraf's consideration of the importance of the recognisable poetic phrase will be useful when analysing the Chartists' development of Shelley's poetry and their reference, for example, to the phrase 'Men of England'.

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[30] Vicinus, p.96.
[31] P. M. Ashraf, *Introduction to Working Class Literature In Great Britain*, (German Democratic Republic, 1978) pp. 16-17.
[32] Ashraf, p. 37-38.

Although Ashraf's study does not discuss Shelley's influence in Chartist poetry on a close textual level, its interrogation of the Shelleyan motifs at work within Chartist texts further emphasises the continued necessity of such critical work. Ashraf's detailed inspection of the Shelleyan aspects of Chartist texts leads to the perspective that:

> the use of personification (especially of Reason, Brotherhood and Liberty) within Chartist poetry [which] is often ascribed to the influence of Shelley […] can also be seen as examples of "emblematical allegory" as practiced in the pictorial tradition of trades union and friendly society banners and certificates.[33]

Ashraf is here arguing for a reduced role for Shelley, as she identifies other factors that might better explain aspects of the Chartists' texts. Nonetheless this analysis further demonstrates the widely held acceptance of Shelley as a key influence on the movement. Ashraf's critique could profitably be extended and explored through direct engagement with the Chartists' texts; therefore, this study further highlights the need to undertake a close textual analysis of Chartist poetry.

This gap in literary criticism is only partly addressed by Stephen Lieske's articles on the work of Jones. Lieske's 'Ernest Jones and the Development of a Class-Based Poetry' specifically engages with Vicinus' study, arguing that:

> Chartist poets did not merely imitate Romantic poetry, as has been suggested by Martha Vicinus, even though there was indeed a good deal of that. Rather, Chartist poets tried to give traditional metaphors a specific working-class content.[34]

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[33] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism*, p. 49.
[34] Stephan Lieske, 'Ernest Jones and the Development of a Class-Based Poetry', *Nature, Society & Thought*, 2 (1989), 5-18 (p. 11).

Lieske emphasises the influence that Byron and Shelley had upon Jones, attempting to give some specific examples of where a Shelleyan inheritance can be detected in Jones' poetry. In general this identification is rather vague with ideas such as 'Jones develops Shelley's concept of the poet as the "prophet of the people" into the concept of the "philosopher in action"'.[35] Lieske's central claim, that Romantic poets in general, and Shelley and Byron in particular, were read by and did have an impact on perhaps the best known representative of Chartist poetry, Jones, is extended by Janowitz to Chartist poetry as a whole in *Lyric and Labour in the Romantic Tradition* (1998).

Janowitz emphasises the influence of Shelley in particular. However, rather than stating the historical biographical fact that the Chartists read Shelley and published copies of his poetry, Janowitz propounds the idea that two distinct Shelleyan voices, those of the 'democratic internationalist' and the 'domestic communitarian', re-sound in the Chartists' own poetry:

> The example of Shelley, in both his democratic internationalist and
> his domestic communitarian voices, pervades the radical poetics of
> the 1820s and the Chartist poetry of the later 1830s and 1840s [...]
> Shelley provides, via Owenism, an overarching figure of the link
> between high romanticism and Chartism.[36]

Janowitz argues for a developmental interpretation of the Chartists' use of Shelley's poetry and she does provide some textual examples. When discussing Jones' poem 'Earth's Burdens', Janowitz states: 'the poem's speaker listens to the voice of the earth. Romantic maternal Nature is enlarged, and Jones deepens the figure of Shelley's

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[35] Lieske, pp. 5-6.
[36] Janowitz, p. 115.

Earth in 'The Mask Of Anarchy'.[37] However, Janowitz does not analyse Jones and Shelley's use of imagery, this kind of close textual work is not the focus of her study. Like the other critiques of Chartist poetry that have been discussed in this section, the arguments and ideas presented by Janowitz could be profitably extended through a more detailed close textual analysis of Shelley's influence on Chartist poetry.

This chapter will advance Kovalev's assertion that the Chartist poets developed their romantic inheritance, drawing confidence from Janowitz's recognition that Shelley's voice pervades Chartist poetry. Previous critics have tended to assume a generalised Shelleyan influence in Chartist poetry without providing evidence of specific textual engagement with Shelley's work. The remainder of this chapter will begin to address the critical absence through the close analysis of Jones' 'The Two Races', 'A Chartist Chorus' and 'Labour's History'; and Massey's 'The Three Voices'. This close textual analysis will present a model that conceives of the poetic dialogue between Shelley and Chartism in terms of adaptation and development.

Close Textual Analysis

Ernest Jones

'The Two Races', 'A Chartist Chorus' and 'Labour's History' are taken from Jones' first collection of Chartist poetry, which was published in October 1846 just under a year after Jones formally joined the Chartist movement.[38] In his biography *Ernest Jones, Chartism, and the Romance of Politics* the historian Miles Taylor states that this first collection of poetry marked a major transition for the middle class Jones,

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[37] Janowitz, p. 186.

[38] Miles Taylor reports that *Chartist Poems*, which 'went through five editions by the end of the year', and sold 'many thousands more' copies in penny editions of *Chartist Songs and other Fugitive Pieces*', *Ernest Jones, Chartism, and the Romance of Politics 1819-1869* (OUP, 2003), pp. 77-78.

who had previously written on 'the fringes of the London literary scene'. Upon happening across an edition of the *Northern Star* in the winter of 1845, and concluding that 'the political principles advocated, harmonized with my own', Jones found an audience for his literary productions within the Chartist movement. [39] This first collection appeared as *Chartist Poems* and was also published as a penny edition under the title *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces*.[40] Many of the songs contained within this volume were also published in *The Northern Star*'s poetry column in 1846, with the first example 'Our Summons', appearing on 16th May 1846.[41]

Jones' poetry is permeated with images of bondage and state oppression, which are presented in a language and form that is characteristic of Romantic verse. This Romantic dialogue has most frequently been identified as a development of P.B. Shelley's poetry. This chapter will explore 'The Two Races', 'A Chartist Chorus' and Labour's History' as exemplary texts. These poems have partly been selected because they will later be shown to contain Blakean echoes. The following discussion will therefore identify a Romantic poetic influence that was present in Jones' cultural matrix, and had a demonstrable affect within poems that also echo Blake.

In 'The Two Races' and 'A Chartist Chorus' Jones reworks images from Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' (a poem that was reproduced eight times in the Chartist press) to bring them more precisely into line with beliefs and contexts appropriate to Chartism's political agenda. 'Labour's History' demonstrates Jones' engagement with 'The Mask of Anarchy', which, as Shabaan's bibliography has shown, was also particularly important to the Chartist movement. It is significant that these, two of the

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[39] Taylor, p. 77.

[40] This collection of Jones' early Chartist poetry is much richer in Shelleyan imagery than later works such as *The Battle Day*, which was published in 1855. Jones' move away from the allusion to and adaptation of Shelleyan imagery as his own political style developed and the Chartist movement failed to make political gains, might be explored in future research.

[41] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism*, p. 263.

Shelley poems that were most important to the Chartist movement, are two of only three Shelleyan ballads.[42] Throughout this thesis Chartist poetry and the work of the Romantic poets Shelley and Blake will be discussed in relation to the ballad form. Therefore, this section of close textual analysis will open with a discussion of the traditional ballad form and a overview of both Romantic and Chartist adaptations of the ballad.

The ballad is not a poetic form that can be defined by strict metrical criteria. Ballads were originally composed in quatrains of alternating iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter with an ABCB rhyme scheme. However, many traditional ballads differ from this model with variations in rhyme scheme and of line and stanza length.
[43] Rather, the term ballad defines a type of poetry that is historically rooted in popular culture and often contains qualities that encourage both oral transmission and communal performance. Nonetheless, poems written in this form can generally be seen to employ a tetramic rhythm and quatrain structure with a focus on repetition.[44]

Malcolm Laws has identified two distinct genres within the traditional ballad. He distinguishes the rural folk ballad, which was composed communally and distributed orally, from urban broadside ballads (or 'the balladry of the printing press'), copies of which were bought for a small sum by the labouring classes as a printed poem.[45] However, in *The Industrial Muse*, Vicinus explains how broadside ballads were also distributed through the oral networks of the labouring classes: 'sung or read aloud,

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[42] Shelley also published 'The Devils Walk: A Ballad' as a broadside in 1812. This satirical critique of the British govenement was mentioned in the *Northern Star* on 8th July 1843 (Volume 6, Edition 3), but was never reproduced in the Charitst press.

[43] G. Malcolm Laws, Jr., *The British Literary Ballad: A Study in Poetic Imitation*, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Univeristy Press, 1972).

[44] For examples of traditional folk ballad poetry see Walter Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border: Consisting of Historical and Romantic Ballads*, two volumes (Edinburgh: James Ballantyne, 1802) and Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry: Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, etc.*, new edition, ed. by Edward Walford (London and New York: Frederick Warne and Co., 1887)

[45] Laws, p.2.

broadsides gave a very large number of people access to current events, trade customs, local legends and cultural life around them.'[46]

Both Romantic and Chartist poets adapted and developed the ballad form in their own poetry. Janowitz presents the ballad tradition as a collection of contested signs with which the Romantics interacted in the production of new meaning:

> Both as a poetic practice, and as an object of study, the ballad was crucial to the founding of romantic lyricism: simultaneously dated and fashionable, oral and written, choric and monologic, the ballad expressed the pan-cultural possibility of a democratic poetry.[47]

In her discussion of perhaps the best known collection of Romantic ballad poetry, Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads,* Marilyn Butler emphasises the poets' adaptation of an established ballad tradition, and argues that ballad poetry had radical political connotations in the Romantic period, simply because of the culture with which this form was historically connected:

> To publish ballads in 1798 – moreover, to add a Preface in 1800 which insists that there is one language for poetry, the language of the people – here is already a solecism, compounded by a theory about as controversial as could well be conceived.
> We should dismiss at the outset the belief, still widely held, that Wordsworth's contributions to the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798 represent an altogether new kind of poetry.[48]

Butler highlights the impact that the historical context of the French Revolution had on the nation's understanding of the ballad form by relaying the argument of the critic Jeffrey, who has suggested that Wordsworth's use of the language of the common man could link his ballads to a Painite political position:

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[46] Vicinus, p.9.
[47] Janowitz, p.33.
[48] Marilyn Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760-1830* (OUP, 1981), p.58.

> Jeffrey links the Wordsworthian ballad with Paine's *Rights of Man*,
> the most notorious of all books of the 1790s directed at a mass
> audience. The implication is clearly that the influence of
> Wordsworth is likely to be similarly in the direction of 'levelling'
> proper social distinctions.[49]

Despite these political implications of the ballad form, Wordsworth and Coleridge's ballad poetry was not overtly political in content; equally Keats' ballad 'La Belle De Sans Merci' (one of the few poems by canonical Romantic poets that drew deliberately upon ballad tradition) did not engage explicitly with contemporary political debates.[50] Conversely, Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' and 'The Mask of Anarchy' are overtly political, and his choice to present these poems as ballads is indicative of their intended audience.

Shelley, the son of a Whig politician and landowner, was a poet of upper class background whose main contemporary readership were upper and middle class (as was discussed above, 'The Mask of Anarchy' was originally submitted for publication to Leigh Hunt's radical periodical *The Examiner*, which had a large middle class readership). However, the contents of 'Song to the Men of England' make clear that this poem is addressing the English working classes through its title, and the chorus 'Rise like lions after slumber' in 'The Mask of Anarchy' is again speaking directly to working men. The form in which Shelley composed these songs supported this address to the labouring classes. Furthermore, Shelley was adopting a form that was conducive to the cultural distribution of these poems through the oral networks of the working class.

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[49] Butler, p.62.

[50] See Jerome J. McGann, *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 77-79. McGann's perspective can be contrasted with Jeffrey Cox's views of Keats' political involvement with the Hunt circle (*Poetry and Politics in the Cockney School – Keats, Shelley, Hunt and their Circle* (CUP, 1998), p.84).

Although the production of poetry by the Chartist rank and file demonstrates the growing efforts of the working class to gain literacy through autodidactic means, a large portion of the nineteenth century working class were illiterate. Paul Murphy discusses this matter in *Towards a Working Class Canon*. While 'court records, marriage registers' and 'regional and occupational surveys', place the figure for working-class literacy between 1816 and 1858 'at somewhere between two-thirds to three-quarters of the labouring population' Murphy states that:

> The most commonly cited evidence of literacy, for example - signatures in marriage registers - testifies at best to every form of literacy from the most rudimentary upward. Many readers considered literate in this sense cannot be considered "periodical literate", as it were; many would find reading and comprehending ... *Northern Star* impossible. [51]

Sanders expands upon Murphy's discussion when estimating the distribution of the *Northern Star*, explaining it 'is generally assumed that a reasonable estimate of a working-class journal's readership in this period may be obtained by multiplying the circulation figures by a factor between 20 to 30'. This figure reflects the practice of sharing one copy of the *Star* amongst a small community, but more significantly alludes to the larger audience that was gained through literate members reading the *Star* aloud to a group.[52] This research by Murphy and Sanders indicates the importance that oral networks of communication played in the distribution of information amongst the working class, and the Chartist movement in particular.

The simple structures and repeated patterns of ballad poetry were memorable and easily repeatable, making this form ideal for oral transmission. In his *Anthology of*

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[51] Paul Thomas Murphy, Towards A Working-Class Canon: Literary Criticism in British Working-Class Periodicals 1816-1858 (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1994), pp.7-8.
[52] Sanders, Mike, '"A Jackass Load of Poetry": The *Northern Star*'s Poetry Column 1838-1852' , *Victorian Periodical Review*, 39 (2006), 44-66 (p.63).

Chartist Literature, Kovalev records a selection of Chartist rank and file poetry that was dominated by tetramic (or alternating tetramic and trimetric) rhythms and repeated choruses or exclamations that encourage communal participation. This tendency is also found in the Chartist rank and file poetry that was published in the *Northern Star* poetry column in 1840. For example George Binns' address 'To the Magistrates Who Committed me to Prison under the Darlington *Cattle* Act for Addressing a Chartist Meeting', which was published in the *Northern Star* on May 9th 1840 appears to have a very specific addressee, but the fourth line of each quatrain within the poem is a variation of the statement 'I'LL WEAR THEM FOR THE CHARTER!' The capitalisation and punctuation of this line not only conveys the emphatic nature of Binns' assertion, but also invites many other individual Chartists to join in one voice with Binns and take a stand for the Charter:

> OH! bind your fetters fast as hell
>   Can forge them for your master
> I smile to think they ring your knell,
>   I'LL WEAR THEM FOR THE CHARTER
>
> And 'ope' your dismal dungeons jaws
>   To those who will not barter
> For tinsel rank, a noble cause,
> I'LL ENTER FOR THE CHARTER[53]

As can be seen from these opening stanzas, this is a poem that is composed in a form very close to ballad meter (the poem follows a regular pattern of alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter, in an ABAB rhyme scheme). The form creates a poem that is easily memorable and has an energetic but straightforward rhythm, which invites vocalisation and repetition. The fourth line of each stanza continues to be presented as

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[53] George Binns, ''To the Magistrates Who Committed me to Prison under the Darlington *Cattle* Act for Addressing a Chartist Meeting', *Northern Star*, May 9, 1840.

a variation on Binns' original statement, with the final two lines of the poem confirming the poet's communal focus and his intention that these words have an application outside of his specific situation, and that they be vocalised by the movement as a whole: 'The men who've nobly liv'd and died / CRY ONWARD WITH THE CHARTER!'

Similarly, E. C. H.'s 'Address to the Charter' opens with an invocation of the collective Chartist voice through the words 'All hail', which are repeated at the start of the third line. This poem follows the conventions of the traditional ballad more closely, employing an ABCB rhyme scheme in the opening stanzas (later stanzas follow an ABAB pattern) and presenting the poet's discussion of working class conditions through an extended narrative about the "poor man", which mirrors the tradition of a ballad as a narrative tale:

> ALL hail to thy genial influences –
> The good, the just, the free –
> All hail to thy bright wave rolling on
> With the tide of liberty!
>
> The wanderer forth from early home,
> Though darkened be his lot,
> Still knows he lives – still knows he hears
> Hope's voice "forget me not".[54]

Poems such as the anonymously composed 'What is a Peer?' do not visually resemble a traditional 4 or 8 line ballad stanza; however, they too are dominated by oral traditions. 'What is a Peer?' captures an oratorical style, with the first two of three stanzas being presented in response to this opening question. The half line 'What is a peer?' opens with a trochee which contrasts with the regular iambic foot that follows, emphasising the sense of dialogue. Upon closer examination the form of these six line

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[54] Kovalev, p.47, *The Northern Star*, June 6, 1840 originally.

stanzas does draw upon the ballad structure, with trimeter appearing at lines 3 and 6 to

create a poem that alternates between iambic trimeter and iambic tetrameter in a

similar way to the traditional ballad:

> What is a peer? A useless thing;
> A costly toy, to please a king;
> A bauble near a throne;
> A lump of animated clay;
> A gaudy pageant of a day;
> An incubus; a drone![55]

The poem 'Who Stole The Rugs' was re-published in the *Northern Star* on 29th

August 1840. The *Star* states that this had originally been published in *The Sun*, and

the text opens with a quote from the *Morning Chronicle*. The poem is not written in

ballad form, but it does exemplify several ways in which communal traditions of

orality were employed within the Chartist movement. This poem was written in

response to a specific event, which gained notoriety and political significance amongst

the working class. The text of the poem states that the chorus 'Who stole the rugs?'

recorded the spontaneous public outcries of this question that had occurred in Market

Harborough. The poem was published without a designated author and is likely to

have been a work of communal composition. Therefore, in 'Who stole the rugs, we

have an example of the political use of the working-class voice in a real-life dispute,

the communal recording of this cry, and the publication of a poem that encourages a

continued vocal performance by groups of Chartists. The opening gloss and first

stanza of this poem read:

> "A manufacturing firm in Market Harborough has lately
> submitted to seizure for the   Church rates. The sale took
> place amidst tremendous uproar, the Church-warden who had

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[55] Kovalev p. 40, *The Northern Star*, May 7, 1842 originally.

seized, and a brother of the constable, being the purchasers of
the two hearth-rugs that had been taken. 'Who stole the rugs?'
was the popular cry, and it is not likely soon to be forgotten.
The clerk may sing: 'but who stole the rugs?' will nullify all
the good of psalm or sermon. Nothing more can be said after
the question   is popped – 'Who stole the rugs'" – *Morning
Chronicle*.

> "Who stole the rugs?" No need to search,
> The culprit's known – 'twas Mother Church!
> Twas she that stole them, such the fact is,
> Just to keep her hand in practice,
> Crafty Dame, she's growing quite
> The soul of avarice, rage and spite,
> Filching here, and bullying there,
> And mischief-making everywhere.
> Backed by persecuting laws,
> And sharp *Appropriation-claws*,
> Nought cares she how day by day,
> People curse her grinding sway,
> But, fixed her reckless course to run,
> Looks alone to Number One!
> If a man withhold his pence,
> She steals his rug for recompense;
> If he strive to keep what's his'n[56]
> She claps the stubborn dog in prison
> She consigns him to Old Nick,
> Then cries with meek, uplifted eye,
> "What a specimen am I
> Of sterling Christianity!"

In 'Chartist Poetry and Song' Randall emphasises the importance that an oral

poetic tradition played in the political and social life of the Chartist movement:

> Chartist verse possessed a context which historians find
> difficult to fully recover, and which literary critics are largely
> oblivious of: the mass open-air gatherings, the anniversary
> celebrations, the reading groups, the feasts, the evening teas,
> the workplace lunches, the public house meeting, the
> extempore singing in prison.[57]

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[56] Original footnote read: '"The rhyme obliges me to this, sometimes Kings are not more imperative than rhymes." Don Juan.'
[57] Randall, p. 172-173.

Randall argues that for the Chartist movement, singing 'was a means of strengthening resolve in adversity'.[58] The Chartists were directly influenced by the oral traditions of the rural ballad and urban broadside, both of which held a firm place in literary culture of the labouring classes. Conversely, this discussion has shown that Shelley's adaptation of the traditional ballad form in the composition of his more overtly political works served both to emphasise their radical political nature, and to direct their address to the working classes. Both the Romantics and the Chartists were advancing a ballad tradition that pre-dated their own compositions; however, the following discussions will demonstrate that the Chartists also responded to the politics and imagery presented in Shelley's Romantic ballads, engaging directly in the adaptation of these 'literary ballads'.[59]

'The Two Races'

Both Jones' 'The Two Races' and Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' draw upon the orality of the traditional ballad form, but neither poem adheres strictly to ballad meter; rather, meter and rhyme are adapted to best emphasise the poets' individual arguments. Jones' 'The Two Races' is presented in quatrains of primarily iambic foot, the majority of stanzas follow the ABCB rhyme scheme of the ballad form. The effect of this rhyme scheme is maintained throughout the poem; where an ABAB pattern occurs the first and third lines are usually linked by half-rhyme, end-rhymes or assonance such as in 'chivalry' and 'liberty' in stanza two, or 'haunts' and 'courtezan' in the first stanza of 'Part II'. 'Song to the Men of England' is also written

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[58] Randall, p. 173.
[59] Laws distinguised ballads that were composed by individual poets and presented on the page from traditional ballads which he presents as orally composed, by applying the term 'literary ballad' to these more modern, written compositions (p.xii).

in quatrains; however, the rhyme scheme Shelley uses is particularly unusual in a four-line stanza, with the lines being presented in rhyming couplets. The implications of the rhymed pairings this creates will be discussed in 'The Chartist Chorus' section below. Despite this irregularity, Shelley's poem contains a strong vocal imperative. In the first four stanzas the succession of questions posed to the working class gain emphatic effect from the strict rhythm of three trochaic feet, which are followed by a single stress so that each line begins and ends on a stressed syllable. This rhythm drives the enjambed couplets forwards:

>   **x**   /   **x**   /   **x**   /   **x**
> MEN of England, wherefore plough
>   /   /   **x**   /   **x**   /   **x**
> For the lords who lay ye low?
>   **x**   /   **x**   /   **x** /   **x**
> Wherefore weave with toil and care
>   /   **x**   **x**   /   **x**   /   **x**
> The rich robes your tyrants wear?[60]

Jones' main deviation from ballad form is his variation in the use of stress and line length. Rather than writing in a strict metrical pattern, Jones adapts his use of tetramic and trimetric rhythms throughout; this creates a poem that is less aurally predictable than most ballads:

> **x**   /   **x** /   **x** / **x**   /
> Up ye gentlemen of England!
>   **x**   **x** /   **x**   /   **x**
> Brace armour to your breast!
>   **x**   **x** /   **x**   /   **x**
> Where are you, North and South?
>   **x**   **x** /   **x**   /   **x**
> Where are you, East and West.[61]

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[60] Shelley, 'Song to the Men of England', lines 1-4. Further references are given in the text. In this notation x indicates a stressed beat and / a unstressed beat.

[61] Ernest Jones, 'The Two Races – Part I', *CS*, lines 1-4. Further references are given in the text.

This poem opens with a line containing four trochaic feet followed by a three-foot line that ends in two iambs; in this way it draws upon the traditional four-foot / three-foot structure of ballad form. However, in lines three and four, trimeter is employed to emphasise the rhetorical effect created by Jones' rousing questions. If the openings of the second, third and fourth line of this stanza are read as spondaic, then this creates an emphatic call to attention that both emulates and encourages vocal performance. Jones' most significant rhythmic choice is made in the first line of this opening stanza where the trochaic rhythm adds particular emphasis to the opening word 'up' and the word 'men' in the phrase 'gentlemen of England'. It is through this emphasis that Jones' 'The Two Races' engages with Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' from its very first line.

Although Shelley's opening lines, 'Men of England, wherefore plough / For the Lords who lay thee low?' are quite different from Jones' in their structure, Jones draws upon this key phrase in Shelley's poem. Jones changes the focus of Shelley's address, placing the gentleman rather than the men in the subject position. By identifying the aristocracy with a phrase that recalls Shelley's address to the working class, Jones unites the cause of the gentlemen and the Chartists at the outset of 'The Two Races'. In this respect, the meaning created by Jones' uses of the phrase 'gentlemen of England' stands in contrast to Shelley's poem; whilst Jones' opening line conveys a desired unification of the working and upper class, Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' sets 'men' against 'lords'. It is interesting that in portraying this alternative response to the upper classes Jones inverts the motif of Shelley's opening line, beginning with the word 'Up' where Shelley's line had ended with the word 'low'; Jones' poem aims to call 'Up' the support of the 'lords who lay thee low'.

Jones' altered response to the 'lords' may be explained by the different political and economic situation that surrounded the composition of his poem; while in 'Song to the Men of England', society is divided into 'lords' and 'men', Jones' 'The Two Races' portrays a society stratified into three groups, a working class, a hereditary upper class (which would include Shelley's 'lords'), and a newly emerging class of industrial capitalists. This division between the working and middle class can be traced back to hostility created by the passing of the 1832 Reform Bill. Whig politicians whose 'leadership came from middle-class reformers' recruited working class support for their campaign to extend the vote, but ultimately agreed to the passing of a moderate bill that left the working man disenfranchised.[62] Malcolm Chase has identified the 'profound grievance' caused by the Reform Act at the heart of the formation of the Chartist movement.[63]

'The Two Races' is divided into two parts. Part I, subtitled 'The Old' addresses the landed gentry, it draws upon the unity created in the opening line, appealing to the gentleman to fight for the fair treatment of working men: 'To give its rights to Labour, / And punish purse-proud guilt.' Part II, subtitled 'The New', identifies the industrial capitalists as the perpetrators of 'tyranny', painting them in a very negative light as lustful, vain philanderers 'wrecked by premature excess', who would be likely to 'lure' the 'village-maid'. This stands in contrast to the heroic 'gallant knights' or 'champions of old Liberty' that the first part of the poem is clearly trying to recruit on behalf of the working class. When 'The Two Races' is considered in the light of Mark

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[62] Edward Royle, *Chartism*, p. 10. Royle identifies the passing of the Reform Bill as a crucial point in the formation of a middle class. He discusses the middle class prior to 1832, explaining why they needed the support of the working class: 'the reformers' position was hardly secure and the middle class itself was not the dominant force that it tried to appear to be. The limited extent of industrialisation by 1830 meant that the manufacturing sector was still of minor importance when compared with land, and the position of the middle classes in society was neither large nor particularly stable' (pp. 10-11).
[63] Chase, p. 2.

Girouard's discussion of Victorian medievalism in *Return To Camelot*, it appears that

Jones was drawing upon upper class radical sensibilities of the 1820s and 30s in the

formation of this argument:

> English Radicalism at this period contained a strong vein of romantic
> nostalgia for a pre-industrial [...] England in which a beneficent
> monarch had protected the rights of Parliament and people, and
> benevolent landowners had looked after their dependants. The wide
> variety in their attitudes was one reason why the political Radicals of
> the 1820s and 1830s were so disunited. But it also meant that
> members of the upper classes with popular sympathies could be
> accepted as being 'for the people' and yet retain a belief in the
> necessity of an upper class.[64]

In his use of terms such as 'Peers of the Plantagenet', Jones identifies specific historic

moments at which 'the old' ruling class had acted both to limit the power of the state

and in the interests of the working class. Alluding for example to Thomas Becket who,

when appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, resisted the control of his old friend King

Henry II, and was hospitable and generous towards the county's poor; and to the

barons who in 1215 forced the first legal document to limit the powers of a King, the

Magna Carta, or Great Charter, on King John. The fact that he was himself a

gentleman leader of the Chartist movement lent support to Jones' argument. Thus

Jones uses Shelley's phrase 'Men of England' to enrich the meaning of his own words.

<p align="center">*</p>

Jones also 'corrects' a line from Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' in 'The

Two Races', in a way that redirects the blame and responsibility for working-class

oppression. The penultimate stanza of 'The Two Races – Part I' reads:

> With weights of gold and silver,

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[64] Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 70.

> They are crushing spirits fast!
> Now, who shall be the foremost
> To break the chains they cast.　　　　　　　　(37-40)

The rhythm and positioning of words in Jones' line 'To break the chains they cast' suggests that it is a direct response to, and correction of, Shelley's question 'Why shake the chains ye wrought?' (27). Shelley uses two main metrical patterns in his poem. At the start of the fifth stanza the meter changes to iambic tetrameter: this emphasises the working class passivity expressed in lines such as 'The seed you sow, another reaps', and contrasts with the trochaic rhythm and masculine line endings that opened the poem. A stronger rhythm is created in stanza six, where each iambic line opens with a spondee to emphasise Shelley's statements of defiance: 'Sow seed, - but let no tyrant reap'. Stanza seven opens with a stressed beat, but this is used to highlight the passivity that was exposed through both the words and rhythm of stanza five. The stanza then returns to iambic foot in lines 38, 39 and 40; by this point Shelley has established a relationship between the iamb and passivity and the trochee or spondee and defiance and strength. Every stress in this stanza amplifies an accusation of working-class weakness, Shelley is challenging the workers to defy not just the upper classes, but also his assessment of them:

>   **x**　/　/　　**x**　/　　**x**　　/　　**x**
> Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
> /　　**x**　/　　**x**　　/**x** /　　　**x**
> In halls ye deck another dwells.
> 　/　　　**x**　/　　**x**　/　　**x**　　　/　　**x**
> Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
> 　/　**x**　　/　**x** /　　　**x**　/　**x**
> The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

Jones' poem is an enactment of the very challenge Shelley invites; however, Jones emulates the passive rhythm employed by Shelley and turns the meaning of both the words and rhythm of this crucial line.

As was shown above, Jones varies the meter of his poem to create a poem less aurally predicable that a traditional ballad, but where poetic stress is deliberately chosen to create emphatic effect. Jones composes this stanza in strict ballad meter, in doing so he follows the same rhythm in his line 'To break the chains they cast' as Shelley did in the question 'Why shake the chains ye wrought?' This not only strengthens the sense of correspondence with Shelley's line, but systematically rejects the accusation of the previous poem. With each stress Jones emphasises the working man's defiance and the upper class responsibility for their oppressive behaviour: 'To **break** the **chains** they **cast**'. While the questioning nature of Shelley's sentence dwells on the oppression of the working man, Jones' line focuses on the end of that oppression by changing the word 'shake' to 'break'. The fact that Jones' word rhymes with Shelley's, and appears at the same point in the line, further strengthens the sense of intertextual engagement. The question of when and if the working man's chains will be broken is not punctuated with a question mark; this has become rhetorical. Jones' stanza assumes that revolutionary change is near and that it is merely a case of who will be the first to break the working men's chains. However, Jones' certainty also contains an implicit warning to the gentlemen that if they do not act swiftly in aiding the working men they will be overtaken by events; the working class's chains will be broken, and if not by the gentlemen then by the working men alone.

Jones' most important correction is to change the words 'ye wrought' into 'they cast'. Not only is he embracing the working classes' ability to change their situation, but refusing the idea that they should accept the primary responsibility for creating it.

The blame is instead placed with the industrial capitalists who are vilified in Part II of the poem. Rather than addressing only the working man, Jones challenges both the working and gentleman in the question 'who shall be the foremost', asserting their shared obligation to bring an end to tyranny. Thus Jones' question contains the 'double address' that Brian Maidment has identified as a characteristic of 'Chartist and radical poetry'.[65] Both Shelley and Jones use the metaphor of a chain to describe the oppression of the working class, with Jones changing Shelley's 'wrought' chains to chains that are 'cast'. The word 'cast' has connotations of casting a net, or a spell, as well as being descriptive of an industrial process. This is befitting of Jones' assertion that chains are cast onto the working-class by their oppressor as opposed to being created by the men themselves.

Therefore, there are two moments in 'The Two Races' when Jones engages with Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' through recognisable poetic allusion. Jones inverts and corrects his predecessor's words to create new meaning; in the first instance he takes what had become a 'commonplace' phrase and reinterprets it.[66] In this way, these allusions constitute a valuable literary moment according to the aesthetic criteria laid out by Ricks, Irwin and Hollander.

Jones also engages with Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England' through his presentation of chains in 'A Chartist Chorus'. As in 'The Two Races', the argument that Jones is conveying through his use of chain imagery in 'A Chartist Chorus' contrasts with that portrayed by Shelley in 'Song to the Men of England'. However,

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[65] Maidment has argued that the work of politically driven, self-taught poets is generally directed 'upwards to the aristocracy and Government, which it seeks to challenge or threaten, and outwards to the already converted radical groups and followers, where its function is confirmation and uplift [...] furthering group feelings of [...] common purpose' (p. 14). This argument is described by Sanders in terms of a 'double address' (*The Poetry of Chartism*, p. 56).

[66] Hollander, p. 61.

the form and structure through which Jones' argument is put forward in 'A Chartist Chorus' draws upon and engages with Shelley's 'Song'.

'A Chartist Chorus'

In 'A Chartist Chorus' Jones once again presents a poem that both captures and co-opts the oral tradition of the labouring classes. The exclamations of the opening lines 'Go! Cotton lords! and Corn lords, go! / Go! live on loom and acre;' capture the enthusiasm and volume of collective vocal performance; whilst the closing line 'But ours shall be – THE CHARTER' confirms that this piece intends to articulate the concerns of, and be articulated by, the movement as a unified group. Jones adopts the ABCB rhyme scheme of a traditional ballad, but presents his poem in a varied four-foot rhythm in which a lively, defiant, sing-song quality is created through a an irregular pattern of stresses:

     x   x   /   /   x   /   x
     Go! Cotton lords! and Corn lords, go!
       x   x   /   x   /   x /
       Go! live on loom and acre;
     /   x /   x   /   x   /   x
     But let be seen – some law between
        /   x   /   /   x /
        The giver and the taker.

Stanza four of 'A Chartist Chorus' operates in a similar way to Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England'. Both poems seek to disrupt perceptions of social hierarchy by making the reader, listener or participant in the song, aware of the true value of the working man as opposed to the lord. This is demonstrated in the fifth stanza of 'Song to the Men of England', through a series of statements, which, by exposing the exploitation of the social order, force this order to be questioned:

> The seed ye sow, another reaps;
> The wealth ye find, another keeps;
> The robes ye weave, another wears;
> The arms ye forge, another bears.   (16-20)

The four verbs used to describe the working men's industry are active, in contrast to the passive verbs used to describe the consumption of the products of labour by the 'lords'. Therefore, the impetus of the sentence, and by implication the societal relationship, lies with the workers. However, as was discussed above, the iambic rhythm of this stanza contrasts with the opening four stanzas of Shelley's poem to emphasise the passive nature of the working man's current behaviour. Shelley challenges the men to realign their power relationship with the lords so that their labour is appropriately rewarded. This stanza of 'Song to the Men of England' makes explicit an inequality that has been signalled from the outset of the poem through Shelley's AABB rhyme scheme. In stanzas five and six the contrast between the labouring act to 'sow', 'weave' or 'forge' and the consuming act to 'reap', 'wear' or 'bear' is highlighted by the use of midline caesuras which counterpoint these positions. In previous stanzas this comparison between labour and consumption has been drawn through the pairings created by rhyming couplets, for example in lines 3 and 4: 'Wherefore weave with toil and care / The rich robes your tyrants wear?'

Jones puts forward a similar argument in 'A Chartist Chorus', however the power dynamic between the lords and workers is merely stated here, with the explanation behind it being assumed:

> You forge no more – you fold no more
>   Your cankering chains about us;
> We heed you not – we need you not,

But you can't do without us.[67]

It is Jones' statement 'you can't do without us' that most clearly assumes a prior awareness of the argument made by Shelley in 'Song to the Men of England'. Shelley's poem presents an accretion of examples in which the working classes' labour is consumed by the lords. This demonstrates that the true power is held by the working class, upon whom the lords depend for food, clothing, and armaments. No longer is there a contrast between labour and consumption; rather Jones' caesuras merely serve to emphasise the ruling classes' impotence, through repetition. Jones does not re-state the irony that the working class are subservient to an idle upper class despite the essential nature of their labour; he makes collaborative use of allusion. Jones' allusion to, rather than repetition of, Shelley's argument allows him to develop the discussion of class relations that was initiated by his precursor. While Shelley's poem identifies the exploitation of the working class, Jones is able to go beyond this identification and assert a working class resistance to upper and middle class exploitation. In this respect the textual analysis of Jones' 'A Chartist Chorus' demonstrates the way in which the Chartist poet developed Shelley's work to produce a poem that would specifically articulate the resistance of an active political movement, who had formed as a result of an established belief that the working class were being exploited.

'Labour's History'

Thus far this chapter has demonstrated that Jones' allusions to Shelley in 'The Two Races' and 'A Chartist Chorus' were developmental. In 'The Two Races' Jones

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[67] Jones, 'A Chartist Chorus', *CS*, lines 9-12. Further references are given in the text.

'called' his predecessors words 'into play', creating a 'crepitating discrepancy' by replacing 'men' with 'gentlemen' in his allusion to Shelley's recognisable address: 'Men of England'.[68] Jones' use of Shelley's ideas in 'A Chartist Chorus' has been shown to be collaborative; the later poet alludes to aspects of his predecessor's argument, on some occasions using Shelley to lend weight to his own observations, on others correcting Shelley's statements to bring them in line with the Chartists' political position. This section will explore the Shelleyan influence that can be seen in Jones' 'Labour's History'.

In 'Labour's History' Jones re-works not only phrases and images from his predecessors work, but significant formal structures and patterns. However, this reworking is less collaborative and developmental than the previous examples that have been discussed. Jones does adapt the central image that he takes from Shelley's poem; however, the comparison of the structural similarities between 'A Mask of Anarchy' and 'Labour's History' illustrates Vicinus' argument that Jones writing was skilful, but derivative.[69] Nevertheless, this poem is important to the discussion being held in this thesis, firstly because its inclusion presents a balanced representation of the way in which Jones engaged with Shelley, but also because in Chapter 3, the central imagery in 'Labour's History' will be discussed in relation to Blake's poetry. This chapter has consciously demonstrated Shelley's influence on Chartism through the exploration of poetry that will later be shown to contain Blakean echoes. By showing that 'Labour's History' engages with Shelley's poetry as well as recalling images in Blake, this thesis illustrates that multiple influences are at work within a literary text.

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[68] Ricks, p. 157 and p. 53.
[69] Vicinus, p. 98.

The poems discussed thus far in this chapter have been shown to be drawing upon the oral qualities and communal reading traditions that were found in labouring-class culture, and expressed through the rural ballad and urban broadside. Neither 'The Mask of Anarchy' nor 'Labour's History' contain oratorical statements such as 'Men of England wherefore plough?', or 'Go! Cotton Lords and Corn Lords, go!', but they do draw upon another aspect of the ballad tradition that was absent from the songs that have been discussed previously. These poems contain a strong narrative structure, they present the poet's ideas through a story, and in this way draw upon the tradition of the ballad as a medium for disseminating local tales, legends and news. Both poems have a tetramic rhythm and are written in quatrains, emulating ballad form (there are some untypical stanzas in Shelley's poem that contain five lines). Jones writes in an ABAB rhyme scheme which resembles that of many contemporary ballads, whilst Shelley once again uses rhyming couplets, often enjambing his lines to present one idea or clause in a rhymed pair of lines.

Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy', begins with a group of figures journeying towards the main scene being described. As Shelley travels through 'visions of Poesy' from his bed in Italy to the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester, he meets four fellow travellers – 'Murder', 'Fraud', 'Hypocrisy' and 'Anarchy' – whose responsibility for the incident becomes increasingly clear.[70] Symbols are used by Shelley to establish the meaning of these allegorical figures. Hypocrisy is said to be 'Clothed with the Bible', suggesting that the character represents a member of the clergy, and it is stated that Anarchy 'wore a kingly crown; / And in his grasp a sceptre shone' (34-35), identifying him with the props of Monarchy. Shelley describes four key figures of authority and oppression, but Anarchy, the title character and last traveller on the road, is described

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[70] Shelley, 'The Mask of Anarchy', lines 4, 5, 14 and 24. Further references are given in the text.

using a pattern of three "'I AM GOD, AND KING, AND LAW!'" (37). Anarchy's self-declaration is confirmed through the obedient repetition of his 'hired murderers, who [...] sing / "Thou art God, and Law and King"' (60-61), and the Lawyers and priests who whisper "'Thou art Law and God.'" (69) before crying "'Thou art King, and God, and Lord; / Anarchy, to thee we bow, Be thy name made holy now!'" (71-72). This third variation of Anarchy's declaration, with its substitution of the word 'Law' for 'Lord' emphasises the idolatry at work in the country's submission to Anarchy and identifies Shelley's pattern of three as a false trinity.

A false trinity also appears in Jones work and is introduced through similar modes of representation. In 'Labour's History' Jones presents the allegory of 'three Outlaws' who come 'from afar' with a shared aim: 'upon the fall of man to rise'.[71] The outlaws are symbolically represented with a 'golden crown' (9), 'mystic sign' (10), and 'flaming blade' (13). Their identity is not revealed as that of '*King, - Priest, - and Soldier*' (20) until the fifth stanza. This method of character definition resembles the way that Shelley presents his characters in 'The Mask of Anarchy'. Both poets are describing a group of characters on a journey toward the action of the poem, in each case symbolic representation is used and Shelley's presentation of a false trinity is mirrored by Jones' capitalised, hyphenated, '*King, - Priest, - and Soldier*'.

However, Jones adapts Shelley's image to include the soldier amongst this list of oppressors. The positioning of the soldier creates a significant difference between Shelley and Jones' patterns of three. Despite the various repetitions and re-workings of 'God and King and Law' in 'The Mask of Anarchy', Shelley does not include the soldier amongst these central repressive figures. Nonetheless, soldiers are complicit in the 'desolation' (49) that takes place, Shelley describes:

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[71] Ernest Jones, 'Labour's History', *CS*, lines 5 and 8. Further references are given in the text.

> a mighty troop around,
> With their trampling shook the ground,
> Waving each a bloody sword,
> For the service of their Lord.   (42-45)

While the soldier is not part of Shelley's image of 'God and King and Law' soldiers are unambiguously described as 'hired murderers' who 'sing' (60) in affirmation of this trinity of oppressors. Jones emphasises a similar aspect of the soldier's character describing the soldier as a 'hireling, taking human life!' (16) However, Shelley's presentation of the soldier is less straightforward that that offered by Jones.

In *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces* the soldier is consistently presented as an oppressor. For example, in 'A Chartist Chorus' the pattern of three 'crown, and cross, and sabre,' metonymically represents the soldier as part of the state apparatus, alongside the king and priest; and in 'Our Summons' Jones repeats the description used in 'Labour's History', stating that soldiers are 'hired to murder / The brothers they should guard'.

In Jones' poetry the soldier is directly contrasted with the Chartists who are bravely representing the interests of themselves and all working men rather than fighting on behalf of another social class. Conversely, in the first half of 'The Mask of Anarchy' the general population are described as a 'prostrate multitude' (126); 'panic-stricken' (54) and 'terror sic[k]' (55). Before the call to 'Rise' that occurs mid-poem in stanza 38, Shelley has presented a working class whose inaction has made them somewhat complicit in their own situation; as a result of their fear they have presented themselves to Anarchy as an 'adoring multitude' (41). The difference between the 'prostrate multitude' and the 'hired murderers' is not as great as the contrast drawn between Chartists and soldiers in Jones' poetry. Shelley's complex presentation of the

soldier, in relation to the state apparatus and the population, can also be seen in 'The Revolt of Islam'.

In 'The Revolt of Islam' the humanity of the soldier is explored. Cythna willingly submits herself to a troop of soldiers as the first step in her endeavour to 'brake' (999) 'the servitude / In which the half of humankind were mewed […] the slaves of slaves' (986-988). She attempts to reassure Laon with the following words:

> Look not so, Laon – say farewell in hope,
>   These bloody men are but the slaves who bear
> Their mistress to her task – it was my scope
>   The slavery where they drag me now, to share,
> Among captives willing chains to wear.   (1179-1183)

Cythna presents the soldier from a compassionate perspective. By depicting them as slaves she likens them to the 'half of humankind' she has set out to enlighten, and, in so doing, to some extent naturalizes their crimes. This puts some distance between the soldier and the institutions of power. However, Cythna and Laon's conversation necessarily identifies soldiers as individuals who have chosen their own slavery: they are described as 'armèd men […] whose degraded limbs the tyrant's garb did wear.' (1160-1161) It is interesting that when Shelley presents an alternative false trinity of 'kings, priest, and slaves' in 'Ode to Liberty' it is the slave that replaces the soldier.[72] This emphasises the implicit warning behind Shelley's handling of the soldier image, that the population are often complicit in state led oppression and that their acceptance also makes them perpetrators of tyranny.

Shelley questions the agency and culpability of soldiers, placing them in support of, but outside the false trinity of 'God and King and Law' and drawing comparisons between their slavery and the servitude of a complicit population. Conversely, through

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[72] Shelley, 'Ode to Liberty', line 128. Further references are given in the text.

his adaptation of Shelley's pattern of three, Jones diametrically opposes working men who fight (mainly through peaceful channels of political demonstration and campaign) as part of the Chartist movement, and those who fight for the state. The difference in Shelley and Jones' representation of the soldier can be attributed to their political situation. The organised resistance of the working class, which preceded and was encouraged by Shelley's poem, was actively underway in the form of the Chartist movement, for whom Jones' poetry was written.

This section has shown that Jones' 'Labour's History' alludes to Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy', drawing upon the narrative structure of Shelley's poem in a way that is somewhat derivative, but adapting Shelley's image of a false trinity to place the figure of the soldier alongside the church and state. Massey's 'The Three Voices' also recalls 'The Mask of Anarchy'.

Gerald Massey's 'The Three Voices'

Alongside Jones, Massey has been identified by Janowitz as one of the Chartist 'labour laureates' whose poetry 'came to be recognised as central within the Chartist press'.[73] Whilst Jones was a gentleman leader of the Chartist movement, Massey was a self-taught working man. The poet's economic position was of particular importance to Chartist readers. This can be noted, for example, in the first of a two-part review of the volume, published in the Chartist periodical *The Friend Of The People* in April 1851:

> A "Working Man," GERALD MASSEY, dedicates his poems to
> another working man, his friend Walter Cooper. This is nobly done.

[73] Janowitz, p. 159 Janowitz does not list Massey alongside Allen Davenport, Thomas Cooper and Ernest Jones in the title of her 'Labour Laureates' chapter, but by she states in this opening paragraph: 'the ratified "Chartists Poets" comprised most crucially Cooper and Jones, alongside Massey'.

> […] In days not long gone by, a poet must needs dedicate his rhymes
> to some lord, or squire, or knight of the shire. What a revolution,
> when poets spring not from colleges, but from field and factory; and
> the young aspirant, poor but proud, turns from the dazzling
> temptations of wealth to dedicate his "thoughts that breathe, and
> words that burn" to Walter Cooper—"Working Man!"

Massey's working class position and his poetry's radical content helped to make him

one of the most widely read poets of the nineteenth century; as Sanders has shown,

'between 1849 and 1851, Massey became the most published Chartist poet' 'in the

leading Chartist newspaper the *Northern Star*'.[74]

There are many instances in Massey's poetry that recall or, on occasion, appear to

be in dialogue with P. B. Shelley's Romantic verse. In this section Massey's allusion

to Shelley will be explored through the 'The Three Voices'. This poem exemplifies

Massey's complex interaction with his predecessor and, as with the poems discussed

in the Jones section, will later be shown to contain Blakean echoes.

Central images from Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy' re-sound in 'The Three

Voices', but whereas Jones' allusions to Shelley in 'The Two Races', 'A Chartist

Chorus' and 'Labour's History' were easily discernible, the relationship between

Massey and Shelley's texts is far less immediately apparent. As chapter 1

demonstrated, Ricks, Orr and Hollander have each stated the importance of authorial

intention to the creation of allusion; however the Shelleyan resonances in Massey's

text appear less deliberate than those in Jones; they are harder to discern within

Massey's poem partly because these parallel images are not supported by parallels in

poetic form.[75] Unlike Jones and Shelley, Massey does not explicitly draw upon the

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[74] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism*, p. 204.
[75] Ricks has suggested that a poet need not always be aware that he is aluding to another, but his explanation that this might be an unconscious intention, nonetheless places authorial intention at the centre of the explanatory model. p. 314.

form of traditional ballad in the composition of his poetry. There are aspects of his work which have an oral quality that encourages public or communal vocalisation, but 'The Three Voices' acts as a good example of the individuality and inventiveness that can be seen in Massey's use of form. Like 'The Mask of Anarchy' and 'Labour's History', Massey's poem has a strong narrative structure, portraying the working-classes' past, present and future situation as a narrative tale told in three stanzas. However, these stanzas each contain nineteen lines – though they do not draw upon a villanelle structure (which is the only poetic form in which a grouping of nineteen lines might typically be seen in English poetry) – natural breaks occur, or sentences end, in a pattern that breaks these 19 lines into an opening 4 line grouping, followed by three groups of five lines; the transition between these groupings is subtle and not emphasised by content. Massey's lines vary greatly in length and are centralised on the page to create a shape that evokes that of a winding path.

The correspondences between 'The Mask of Anarchy' and 'The Three Voices' are closer to those between Chartist poetry and Blake, which will be explored in chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis. Their presence is dependant not on authorial intention, but on the observatory powers of a reader who is engaged in the close reading of both Shelley and Massey's poetry. However, whereas there is no direct link between Blake and the Chartists – and so the exploration of Blake re-sounding in Chartist poetry cannot be theorised in terms of allusion – there is a clearly demonstrable direct link between Shelley and Massey's texts. Furthermore, the central correspondence between 'The Mask of Anarchy' and 'The Three Voices' can be profitably explained as what Ricks terms allusion 'in reserve'.[76]

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[76] Ricks, p. 52.

In 'The Mask of Anarchy' 'a voice' comes 'from over the Sea' (2) at the beginning of the poem, drawing Shelley's poetic vision and the narrative of the poem on an imaginative journey to the Peterloo Massacre. In stanza 10 Shelley presents an image that creates the mental picture of a path of blood spreading behind Anarchy's horses and across the country:

> With a pace stately and fast
> Over English land he passed,
> Trampling to a mire of blood
> The adoring multitude.   (38-41)

For the first thirty-two stanzas of 'The Mask of Anarchy', the possibility of working class resistance to oppression remains unexplored. Shelley explains their apathetic acceptance of tyranny through the conflicting descriptions of the populace as both an 'adoring multitude' and 'panic-stricken' (54) dwellers; this creates the impression of a vicious cycle in which the men of England flatter Anarchy in an attempt to placate his oppressive tendencies, only leading to the infliction of further injustice. This cycle is broken when the personified figure of Hope is seen stained with blood, and Anarchy is found dead on the ground:

> And the prostrate multitude
> Looked – and ankle-deep in blood,
> Hope, that maiden most serene,
> Was walking with a quiet mien:
>
> And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,
> Lay dead earth upon the earth;   (126-131)

This depiction of Hope is visually striking because of the contrast between the associated purity of a 'maiden', and the horrifying redness of the human blood on her feet and ankles. The image conveys two ideas. On a surface level Shelley is stating

that Hope can bring an end to tyranny. However, the shock value of the image chosen

to convey this message is important. The blood on Hope's person is very specifically

placed to suggest that she has been stained with the blood of the populace, by walking

through the 'mire of blood' created by Anarchy. By presenting the consequences of

the working class' apathetic acceptance of Anarchy in a way that they cannot ignore,

Hope causes the men to wake up. This turning point in the poem can be identified as

taking place at the point at which the 'the prostrate multitude / Looked', in lines 126-

127. The motif of awakening is sustained by the Earth's call to the men 24 lines later:

'Rise like Lions after slumber' (151).

Parallels can be made between the narrative structure and imagery used in 'The

Mask of Anarchy' and that of Massey's 'The Three Voices'. For example, 'The Three

Voices' also opens with the description of a journey:

> A WAILING voice comes up a desolate road,
> Drearily, drearily, drearily!
> Where mankind have trodden the byeway of blood,
> Wearily, wearily, wearily!
> Like a sound from the Dead Sea, all shrouded in glooms,
> With the breaking of hearts, chains clanking, men groaning
> [...]
> 'Tis the voice of the Past: the dark grim-featured Past,
> All sad as the shriek of the midnight blast.[77]

However, unlike Shelley's narrative, which follows the progress of an imaginative

journey, the narrative perspective in 'The Three Voices' remains fixed, as it observes

the progress of the voice of the Past, Present and Future.

Massey's line 'mankind have trodden the byeway of blood', can be compared with

Shelley's depictions of Anarchy 'Trampling to a mire of blood / The adoring

multitude' in 'The Mask of Anarchy'. Massey implies that all of human history has

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[77] Gerald Massey, 'The Three Voices', *VF*, lines 1-6 and 12-13. Further references are given in the text.

previously been a history of exploitation and oppression, which can be represented by a continuous trail of blood. In his use of the word 'byeway' rather than path or road, Massey parallels Hegelian and Marxist perspectives alike, suggesting that the progression of history should have allowed the individual increasingly more freedom, and that a history characterised by oppression has been diverted off this main road. However, while the 'mire of blood' created by Anarchy is described in the present tense and acts as a demonstration of the population's apathy and subservience in Shelley's poem, Massey's presentation of oppression is immediately described as a 'Past' (12) state which can be changed in the 'Future' (50). The suggestion later in this first stanza that 'earth hath been fatted / By brave hearts that rotted', links back into the image of a 'byeway of blood' implying that some working class blood has been lost in resistance to rather than acceptance of oppression, this foreshadows the change that it charted in the second and third stanzas of the poem as mankind progresses on the main road towards political liberty.

This specific usage of blood imagery in Shelley and Massey's poems is so similar that Shelley's description of Hope 'ankle-deep in blood' (127) comes to mind upon reading Massey's lines. Although Massey does not specifically depict the results of treading a byeway of blood, a reader familiar with Shelley's 'Mask of Anarchy' might fill this absence of a visual image with a memory of Hope with blood on her feet and ankles. In Shelley's poem, the image 'a mire of blood' implies that a path of the 'prostrate multitudes' blood now runs across England; it can be deduced that Hope is 'ankle-deep' in blood as a result of stepping in this mire. In Massey's poem the combination of treading and 'byeway' suggests feet, and the absence of a description of mankind's feet can be filled with Shelley's image of the character Hope.

The image of blood spilt through a process of treading, and the motif of a road on the journey to the restitution of the rightful order, have a strong precedent in the book of Isaiah. Prophetic books such as Isaiah and Revelations were of particular importance within radical Christian traditions and as part of millennial thinking.[78] Therefore, key images from these biblical texts may have entered the structure of Massey's thought as a result of the strong culture of dissenting and radical Christianity within the Chartist movement. Isaiah uses the allegory of a highway to prophesy the Israelites' journey from exile and enslavement in Edom, through redemption, to the restitution of their rightful place in the Promised Land. In book 63 the messianic figure returns from Bozrah and the Israelites are surprised by the red dye of his clothing:

> Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.[79]

This section is part of an allegory of Israel as a vineyard, which is introduced in Chapter 5. According to the prophecy, the land has yielded wild grapes and these grapes must be pressed in an act of cleansing and repentance. This redemptive act will allow the land to bear true fruit, and so this image signals the Israelites' return to the Promised Land and the restitution of divine order. Shelley's images do not appear to

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[78] See William H. Brackney, *Historical Dictionary of Radical Christianity*, (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2012): 'The millennial ideal is rooted in the Old Testament prophecies of Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah, as well as the key passage in Revelation 20:1-6'. Brackney states that the period 1780-1850 was key in the development of milllennialism and defines this radical Christian tradition as 'a desire to create a better world or usher in a new one. He has found common features, like collective movements […] a mechanism for seeking societal change, and a hoped-for end to current institutions of power.' p.14.

[79] Isaiah 63:1-3.

draw upon this prophecy, as the 'mire of blood' would be a reversal of the way in which blood and redemption operate in Isaiah. However, there are distinct similarities between Massey's poem and Isaiah. Massey's 'desolate road' recalls the highway of the 'way of holiness' in Isaiah, and the description of a 'trodden […] byeway' and of blood spilt upon the earth, recalls the bloody images in this prophesy.[80] Massey's poem does not contain a recapitulation of the narrative found in Isaiah, but the concept of blood being spilt on the road to redemption, and the shared use of the verb 'trodden', suggests that this source may also have influenced the conception of Massey's poem.

The intertextual allusion to Shelley that has been proposed above, is my particular reading of 'The Mask of Anarchy' and 'The Three Voices'; however, it is also an intertextual connection that was available to the Chartist reader. Due to the reproduction and discussion of 'The Mask of Anarchy' within the Chartist press, and the direct relevance of Shelley's radical political discussion to the Chartist cause, it is possible to take the similarities between Shelley and Massey's structure and subject matter as evidence of a specific allusion to Shelley by this Chartist poet. Such an assertion is not precluded by the suggestion that Massey's composition may also have been influenced by Isaiah.

In his close textual analysis of Robert Burns' epitaph to Robert Fergusson, Ricks identifies an allusion to Alexander Pope that is not overtly present in the text; this is a connection made in the 'memory' of the reader rather than one overtly identified by the poem itself. Ricks takes Burns' lines: 'Yet Luxury and Wealth lay by in state, / And thankless starv'd what they so much admir'd', and shows how they 'are fired by a memory of a bitter mock-prostration before a patron in 'An Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot'

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[80] Isaiah 35:8.

(247-8): "But still the Great have kindness in reserve, / He help'd to bury whom he help'd to starve"'.[81] These lines are only overtly linked by their shared use of the word 'starv'd' (or 'starve'), but Ricks explains that 'Pope's couplet survived, in reserve', saying 'what saves Burns from being only parasitically helped by it is his reconstitution of the couplet's antithesis within the differently antithetical scheme of the abab quatrain.'[82] This concept of allusion 'in reserve' can also usefully explain the position that Shelley's Hope holds in Massey's text. Shelley's figure of Hope, 'ankle-deep in blood' is held 'in reserve' in Massey's text; when Massey states that 'mankind have trodden the byeway of blood' the image of Hope's feet is recalled, but this connection to Shelley's text does not appear as overt allusion. Significantly, the chorus to the third stanza of 'The Three Voices' is 'Hope, hope, hope!' (52) This line is repeated three times, covertly announcing the hidden image to which the first stanza alluded.

Further parallels can be made between Shelley's blood imagery and that used by Massey later in the first stanza of 'The Three Voices'. The image of blood as a stain is found throughout Shelley's poetry. Blood is often used to identify the perpetrators of tyranny, conveying this through an irremovable mark the guilt that is both widely visible to the community and personally felt by the individual. For example, in 'The Mask of Anarchy' the working men, who are applauded for protesting their cause peacefully 'With folded arms and steady eyes' (344) even in the face of great violence, are reassured that 'the blood thus shed will speak / In hot blushes on their cheek' (350-351).

The image of blood as a stain is not unique to Shelley, Massey may also have

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[81] Ricks, p. 52.
[82] Ricks, p. 52.

noted its usage by Milton in book 1 of *Paradise Lost* where the tyrannical false idol Moloch, whom Milton describes as a 'horrid King', is 'besmear'd with blood / Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears'.[83] Perhaps the most influential use of this image can be found in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, where Lady Macbeth's growing madness is marked by her belief that Duncan's blood cannot be washed from her hands. Lady Macbeth cries: 'Out, damned spot; out, I say', becoming increasingly distressed at the apparition of blood staining her hand: 'Here's the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.'[84]

Shelley and Massey shared in a culture of English poetry in which both Milton and Shakespeare were highly influential; these established images of blood as a stain likely formed part of both Shelley and Massey's conception of how blood might operate symbolically. However, Shelley can be put forward as an additional source through which this particular imaging of blood may have entered the structure of Massey's thought. Shelley uses this image to put forward the suggestion that the perpetrators of the Peterloo massacre would be shamed into changing their ways because they had shed the blood of an organised, yet peaceful, working class. The Peterloo Massacre held very strong cultural resonance for the Chartist movement and historians widely acknowledge its importance to the formation of Chartism.[85]Therefore, Shelley's use of blood imagery was particularly relevant to the discussion being held by Massey in 'The Three Voices'. Due to the repeated publications and discussions of 'The Mask of Anarchy' in the Chartist press, the Chartist movement as a whole would readily have made a connection to this poetic

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[83] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (OUP, 2004), I.392-393.
[84] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Stephen Greenblatt et al. (Norton, 1997), V.1.30-43.
[85] See Dorothy Thompson's introductoin to *The Early Chartists* (Macmillan, 1971), and Chase, especially pp.12-13.

source.

Shelley also uses the image of a blood stain to identify a specifically capitalist political tyranny in 'Ode to Liberty', where the image of a blood stain is used to convey the responsibility and guilt that is associated with the cannibalistic nature of capitalism: 'Anarchs and priests, who feed on gold and blood / Till with the stain their inmost souls are dyed' (43-44). It is significant that Shelley develops the image of a bloodstain in 'Ode to Liberty' to depict an attempt to wash the stain of blood with tears:

> A thousand years
> Bred from the slime of deep Oppression's den,
> Dyed all thy liquid light with blood and tears,
> Till thy sweet stars could weep the stain away;
> How like Bacchanals of blood
> Round France, the ghastly vintage stood.   (167-174)

A similar combination of the images of blood as a stain and blood being washed away by tears appears in Massey's poem as the first stanza of 'The Three Voices' continues:

> Weep, weep weep!
> Tears to wash out the red, red stain,
> Where earth hath been fatted
> By brave hearts that rotted –
> And life ran a deluge of hot, bloody rain,
> Weep, weep, weep!   (14-19)

Massey's 'bloody rain' and Shelley's 'Bacchanals of blood' are similar because each image describes the visual red overspill that would result at the beginning of the process of washing away blood with tears. In each case this imagery represents the idea that the pain and apparent carnage of the political situation being addressed, may appear to increase on the way to resolution, or revolution.

However, Shelley and Massey differ as to the agency behind this cleansing process. In Massey it is specifically the workingmen, described as 'yoke-fellows' (10) whose glistening eyes weep the tears for the past that will cleanse the present; this image asserts that the identification of past wrongdoing will be the first step towards future 'glee' (49). In Shelley, tears fall from Liberty's stars. By personifying Liberty, Shelley mystifies the process that will break the 'thousand year' absence of liberty on earth, creating a symbolic imagery that circumvents some of the more sensitive issues of political process.

In stanza 14 of 'The Mask of Anarchy', Shelley presents an image which resembles Massey's image of bloody rain: 'And those plumes its light rained through / Like a shower of crimson dew.' However, the difference between Shelley and Massey's image highlights a weakness that appears not only in Shelley's depiction of 'light rained through / Like […] crimson dew', but also in the images of blood as a stain that can be washed away, which appeared in 'Ode to Liberty'. While Massey's stanza presents a consistent image of blood from brave hearts and bloody rain staining the ground, both Shelley's image of a stain and of rain is complicated by both red and colourless imagery. The line: 'Dyed all thy liquid light with blood and tears,' describes the transparent image 'liquid light' which is 'dyed' by both blood (which is associated with the colour red) and tears (which are colourless). This is further confused by the concept of tears weeping away the stain of other tears. This partly undermines the image of tears weeping away the stain of blood and resulting in a diluted, 'ghastly vintage'. Similarly, while Massey's image of bloody rain is visually striking, Shelley's actually describes light 'raining through'. His metaphor of light is layered with a simile, which compares the light to crimson dew. Rather than creating a strong visual

image of blood falling like rain, as Massey has done, Shelley's comparable imagery becomes complex once scrutinised.

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In contrast to the critique of Vicinus who conceived the Chartist poets' relationship with Shelley as imitative, critics such as Kovalev, Janowitz and Maidment have argued that the Chartists developed the poetry of their predecessor. The original close textual engagement presented in this chapter has shown that, though there are elements of Jones' poetry that are clearly derived from Shelley's text, there is also significant evidence that both Jones and Massey developed 'Song to the Men of England' and 'The Mask of Anarchy'.

Jones reworked significant lines from his predecessor's text to produce poetry that gained strength through allusion to Shelley's widely circulated arguments about the inverse relationship between labour and economic reward. However he also corrected and inverted these lines to assert that working men did not hold responsibility for their enslavement, but did possess the agency to restructure society.

Similarly, the comparison of imagery in Shelley and Massey's work has been used to suggest that Massey was influenced by and engaging with his predecessor's poetry. The results of these comparisons reveal the differences between Shelley and Massey to lie in issues of agency. Whilst Shelley was abstracted from the situations he described, Massey and the Chartists were located within an active political movement; they were engaged in the political resistance that Shelley wished to incite.

Chapter 4 – Blakean Echo in Ernest Jones

The close textual analysis of Chartist poetry that has been presented in Chapter 3 demonstrates a connection between Romantic and Chartist poetry which can largely be explained in terms of poetic dialogue and reworking. There is a demonstrable link between Chartism and Shelley: the Chartists reproduced Shelley's poetry in their periodicals and discussed their predecessor's skill and technique in their literary criticism. Demonstrable links can equally be made between Chartist poetry and the work of poets such as Burns, Byron and Milton. However, this chapter and the next will focus on what appear to be distinct echoes of Blake in the poetry of Jones and Massey, which cannot be explained using existing theoretical models of literary influence and intertextuality.

The focus of this and the next chapter will be to demonstrate that there are Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry and that they warrant aesthetic consideration; however, possible indications of a shared cultural matrix, such as shared influences, formal structures and political ideas, will be indicated throughout. Both chapters will show that the Blakean echoes in Jones and Massey's poetry comprise a relatively concise group of themes and images, which recall moments in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, with only a few echoes recalling Blake's later poetic works. In particular, Blake, Jones and Massey's poetry contains a shared theme of Priestcraft and Kingcraft, which is often expressed through images of a false trinity. In addition, Blake's images of chains and his presentation of binding appear to re-sound in Jones and Massey's poetry. Jones and Massey also seem to write within a similar

mythos to Blake;[1] both present idyllic images that recall Blake's world of *Innocence*, and Massey's *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* is thematically divided in a way that invites comparison with Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*.

I will argue that poems such as Jones' 'Labour's History' and Massey's 'The Three Voices' are particularly reminiscent of Blake, not because they contain a single Blakean echo, but because there are several different, apparently Blakean images and themes, operating within the same Chartist poem. This piling up of imagery draws a striking correspondence between Blake and Chartism, demanding that the connection between Blake, Jones and Massey's texts be discussed. Many of these images, if taken in isolation, find precedent in other literary texts, indicating their presence within the cultural matrix. However, whilst these images, taken individually, can be traced back to sources with which the Chartists are known to have engaged, they appear in combination in Blake's poetry, creating a network of interconnected connotations that draw a compelling parallel with Blake.

As was outlined in Chapter 1, the correspondence between Blake and Chartist poetry will be explored through the concept of echo. This term is being used to identify a connection between two poems that cannot be explained in terms of a direct link. However, the exploration of Blakean resonances in Jones and Massey's poetry will demonstrate that 'echo' is not simply employed as an alternative term to 'influence' where the necessary criteria to assert traditional influence is absent; rather, this term denotes a different kind of textual relationship.

It is particularly appropriate to consider the relationship between Blake and Chartist Poetry in terms of echoes. The interconnected nature of the themes and

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[1] *OED* 'Mythos': 'A body of interconnected myths or stories, esp. those belonging to a particular religious or cultural tradition. More generally: an ideology, a set of beliefs (personal or collective)'.

imagery in Blake's poetry has been recognised and explored by many Blakean scholars. In order to understand the ways in which an image is established and conveyed in Blake's poetry it is necessary to consider how images and poetic tropes operate across as well as within his poems. There has been much critical debate as to how the interconnections in Blake's poetry can best be understood, and these discussions provide critical models that can be usefully applied to an investigation of Blakean imagery in Chartist poetry.

Makdisi conceives of Blake's poetry as 'a vast interlocking network of synapses and relays, both verbal and visual'.[2] Makdisi focuses particularly on the re-appearance of lines or images throughout Blake's oeuvre, for example the 'opening line of *America* ("The Guardian Prince of Albion burns in his nightly tent") reappears as the closing line of *Africa* in *The Song of Los*'. Makdisi argues against the chronological reading of these works, in which 'critics assume that this signals the continuity of the same narrative progress from the end of *Africa* to the beginning of *America*', but suggests instead that this connection 'reminds us of the array of perpetually open channels, the network of continually firing synapses, linking Blake's works to each other.'[3]

Similarly, Nicholas Williams critiques the idea 'that Blake's career presents one integral whole, the entirety of which is expressed in each of the parts', describing this as a 'critical fiction'. However, the prevalence of this view in the 'decades' preceding Williams' 1998 study, and his own endeavour 'to pursue a single theme through its progression over the course of Blake's life', are indicative of the way in which

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[2] Makdisi, p. 170.
[3] Makdisi, p. 185.

Blakean images reoccur and were developed by the poet throughout his career.[4]

Summarizing the critical reception of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, Williams

describes how 'one can read Blake's concepts as fully dialectical, each undercutting or

completing the other'.[5]

Whilst Makdisi and Williams identify the ways in which Blake's themes and ideas

echo throughout the poet's various poetic works, the critic Glen focuses on the way

that meaning is created through the echoes that resound within an individual work.

Glen's 1983 study *Vision and Disenchantment* continues to provide one of the most

illuminating accounts of Blake's *Songs*. Although Glen considers *Songs of Innocence*

and *Songs of Experience* as distinct from one another, she demonstrates how 'Unlike

those of *Songs of Experience* the different poems' in *Songs of Innocence* 'echoingly

interconnect':

> the green landscape of 'Laughing Song' ('When the green woods
> laugh with the voice of joy') is like the animated world of 'Nurse's
> Song ' ('And laughing is heard on the hill') and finds its apotheosis
> in 'The Chimney Sweeper' ('Then down a green plain leaping
> laughing they run [...] They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind')
> – in imagery which recalls the child upon a cloud of the
> 'Introduction'.[6]

Glen's observation is supported by Morris Eaves, who says of the *Songs of Innocence*

and Experience: 'their multiple interconnections can make them seem a hall of word-

mirrors, each refracting at least several of the others.'[7]

The previous chapter argued that Shelley's influence on Chartist poetry often took

the form of the sustained development of a precursor text by a Chartist poet. For

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[4] Nicholas Williams, *Ideology and Utopia*, p. xiii.
[5] Ibid., p. 58.
[6] Glen, p. 137.
[7] Eaves, 'Introduction', p. 2.

example, it argued that Jones' 'The Two Races' draws upon ideas presented in Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England', and that Massey's 'A People's Advent' develops an image of awakening that can also be found in Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy'. In most cases Shelley's influence on Chartist poetry can be described as univalent, with a single Chartist poem tending to explore, draw upon, or develop one particular theme or image in a single Shelleyan text.

In contrast, this chapter and the next will show that the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry are multivalent. These chapters will develop Glen's concept of echoing interconnectivity, showing how the images of idyllic innocence, and chains and binding, which are presented in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, echo through several different poems. Blake's images are interdependent; they create meaning through interconnections that can be drawn both across and within individual poems. Therefore, it will not be possible to point to a single occurrence of a Blakean image and take from this a coherent understanding of how this image operates in Blake's poetry. Rather, it will be necessary to explore the way in which meaning is created through the interconnection of several related images.

Crucially, the echoing interconnectivity of symbols and imagery within Blake's poetry extends to the operation of the Blakean echoes that we find within Chartist Poetry. In addition to the multiple resonances of Blake that occur within single Chartist poems, an individual Blakean echo in a Chartist poem corresponds with more than one site in Blake's oeuvre, recalling various instances in which a particular image or theme was explored by Blake; this imagery is multivalent.

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This chapter will present a detailed exploration of the interconnected imagery that appears in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. This exploration is vital, not

only to the discussion of Blakean echoes in Jones, but to the discussion of echoes in Massey's poetry that will take place in chapter 5. Moreover, the argument that Blake's poetry contains complex and ambiguous imagery, which deliberately inspires multiple possible interpretations, is important to the thesis as a whole. Due to the multivalent nature of Blake's imagery it is necessary to explore the complexity of a particular aspect of Blake's echoing network of images before demonstrating how these images re-sounds in Jones. Therefore, this chapter will identify a point of correspondence with Blake in Jones' poetry and explore the network through which this image is created in Blake's poetry before returning to provide an analysis of the similarities and differences between Blake and Jones' usage. On each occasion a discussion of Blake's interconnected imagery will precede the exploration of a Blakean echo in Jones. The detailed discussions of Blake's *Songs* that will take place in this chapter provide an opportunity to explore the sometimes ambiguous nature of Blake's poetry, and to touch upon the different interpretations that this might inspire. This reading of Blake's poetry as a text that deliberately inspires many possible imaginative responses will be vital to the thesis as a whole and will impact the conclusions that can be drawn about how Blakean echoes might come to re-sound in Chartist poetry. When Blakean images re-sound in the poetry of Jones and Massey they contain little of the ambiguity in Blake's work; the Chartists were writing poems with a clear and straightforward meaning and employing images that appeared to draw upon some, but not all, of the ideas expressed in Blake's texts.

This chapter will focus on exploring the piling up of Blakean imagery that occurs in Jones' poem 'Labour's History'. Jones' poetry corresponds with Blake because there are several different Blakean echoes operating within the same poem; the multiple Blakean echoes in 'Labour's History' exemplify this effect. Following the

investigation of 'Labour's History', the chapter will consider how some of the same images re-sound in 'A Chartist Chorus'. This discussion of 'A Chartist Chorus' will be included partly to demonstrate that Blakean echoes occur in more than one poem in *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces*, but primarily to illustrate the way that Jones' imagery can be seen to resonate across poems. Whilst the discussion of interconnected imagery is established practice in Blake scholarship, Chartist imagery has not previously been considered in this way. Therefore, critical models from Blake scholarship will inform my approach to the discussion of interconnection in Chartist poetry.

'Labour's History'

The poem 'Labour's History', which appears in Jones' first collection of poetry, *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces*, contains a cluster of Blakean echoes, which draw attention to the re-sounding of Blake throughout Jones' collection. The sense of a correspondence between Blake and Jones' poetry is established from the first lines, which appear to draw upon images of a pastoral idyll that are presented in *Songs of Innocence*:

> Beneath the leaf-screened vault of heaven
>   Lay a child in careless sleep,
> Amid the fair land, God had given
>   As his own to till and reap.   (1-4)

These correspondences will be discussed in detail below, but before echoes of Blake can be identified in 'Labour's History', it will first be necessary to briefly explore how and where these themes and images are established in Blake's poetry.

Idyllic *Innocence*

Many of Blake's *Songs of Innocence* are set in a rural environment. The critic

Andrew Lincoln, for example, suggests the 'landscape of innocence is typically

common ground: pastoral field, valleys wild, the village green.'[8] Jonathan Roberts has

identified the poetic tradition of the pastoral operating in a specific way in Blake's

Songs, he argues that the:

> fusion of pastoral and Christian elements that Milton uses in *Lycidas*
> is also visible in some of the *Songs of Innocence*, including 'The
> Introduction', 'The Lamb', 'Night', 'Spring' and 'The Shepherd'.[9]

In 'The Ecchoing Green', 'The Blossom', 'Night' and 'A Dream', Blake depicts an

idyllic society in which a rural setting and religious ideals are closely related. Blake

goes beyond the fusion of pastoral and Christian traditions that was established in

Milton's elegy. He presents a protective, nurturing society, watched over by a caring,

paternal God, *through* the representation of these characteristics in nature. The two

plates of 'The Ecchoing Green' open with an image of an oak tree, which fills the

upper half of plate 6. This engraving depicts not just 'the old folk' but the whole

community sitting or playing 'under the oak'. The protection afforded by the oak is

visually extended throughout the text of the poem by the illustration of leaved

branches, which encircle Blake's words. In the centre of the main image Blake

presents children falling asleep 'Round the laps of their mothers', as is described in the

final stanza.[10] The description of the children 'Like birds in their nest' is made tangible

by Blake's illustrations to this poem. Blake presents four images of protective

encircling in 'The Ecchoing Green', extending the arched shelter of the oak and the

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[8] Lincoln, p. 9.
[9] Roberts, p. 26.
[10] Blake, 'The Ecchoing Green', *SI*, line 25. Further references are given in the text.

curved branches that envelop the text, into the human relationships, with the description of the children gathering 'round' (27) the laps of their mother, and the comparison with the circular home of the nest. This poem has a simple, lilting rhythm; with the majority of lines arranged in anapaestic dimeter, and each of the poem's three decimas presented in rhyming couplets. This is an unusual and inventive poetic form, but one that supports the strong aural focus of the first two stanzas; Blake's short lines allow the opening rhyme of each couplet to be quickly resolved in its pairing, creating a poem with multiple internal echoes that convey the musicality of the ringing bells, singing birds and laughing folk.

'The Blossom' also offers a microcosm of the innocent idyll, with each of the two stanzas describing a bird, cradled near the 'Bosom' of the 'Blossom', safe and protected 'Under leaves so green'.[11] Once again this is a poem of inventive form, with short lines emphasising the links that an ABCAAC rhyme scheme creates across each stanza. This imagery is further developed in the poem 'Night', where lines 3 and 4 confirm that the safety of the nest extends to all inhabitants of innocence: 'The birds are silent in their nest, / And I must seek for mine'. The statement in lines 13-16 that 'angels', 'pour blessings', 'On each bud and blossom, / And each sleeping bosom', firmly links the imagery in this poem to that presented in 'The Blossom', making the connection between God and nature more overt.[12] Blake maintains a strong musicality

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[11] Blake, 'The Blossom', *SI*, line 2.

[12] Glen has pointed out that '*Songs of Innocence* does not ignore' 'the facts of decay and suffering and death' (p. 141). Glen highlights the fourth and fifth stanzas of 'Night' as a site at which 'innocence is not merely threatened but violently attacked' (142). The protective angels in 'Night' are faced with the conflict of allowing 'wolves and tygers' their need for food, whilst guarding the birds and lambs upon which they would feed ('Night', line 25). Andrew Lincoln has discussed this in relation to the meeting of pastoral and Christian imagery that occurs in *Songs*: 'Blake's poem […] relates the ministry of angels to the protective role of the shepherd. […] the song exposes and attempts to resolve a contradiction between two ideas of divine benevolence: one traditionally associated with the good shepherd who must protect his lambs from the lion and the wolf, the other with the divine maker who cares for all his creatures. […] the speaker's faith is sustained by the vision of 'new world's in which natural conflicts are resolved, a vision that recalls Isaiah 11.6 and Revelation 22.1-5. As in other poems of Innocence, the

in this poem; each octave opens with four lines of alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter whose structure is emphasised by an ABAB rhyme scheme. This pattern changes in the second four lines, in which a dimetric rhythm of rhyming couples once again creates a sense of echoing completion, with each quickly resolved pairing emphasising the idea that concepts such as 'night' must naturally be paired with 'delight' (whereas in *Experience* the Earth is 'chain'd in Night', which represents the moral vacuum of a corrupt society).[13]

Similarly 'A Cradle Song' and 'A Dream' both open with an image of a sleeper, protected in their bed. The first two lines of these poems have much in common; 'A Cradle Song' begins: 'Sweet dreams form a shade, / O'er my lovely infants head.', whilst 'A Dream' begins: 'Once a dream did weave a shade, / O'er my Angel-guarded bed,'. Neither poem includes leaves in the description of the formed or woven shade that protects the bed, but Blake has made the concepts of God and nature synonymous by repeatedly representing the protective force of a Christian God through the medium of the natural world elsewhere in *Innocence*. Thus, the 'Angel-guarded bed' from which the poetic voice dreams of a supportive natural community, where the Emmet will be safely returned home with the help of glow-worm and beetle, operates in the same way as the 'leaves so green' that are provided by the empathetic blossom.

Furthermore, almost every one of the plates of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* are illustrated either with leaves and branches, or with complete trees framing the text of the poem. This can be seen, for example, in 'The Shepherd' and 'Night' in *Songs of Innocence* and 'The Fly' and 'The Tyger' in *Songs of*

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distinctions between separate identities dissolve as the lion identifies itself with both the shepherd and the lamb' (pp. 162-3).

[13] Blake, 'Night', *SI*, lines 7-8, and 'Earth's Answer', *SE*, line 14. It is interesting that the pairing of 'delight' and 'night' returns in this song of *Experience*, but it is now 'jealous selfish fear' (13) that delights, whilst the Earth and her inhabitants suffer.

Experience.[14] Therefore, when the text describes the weaving or forming of 'a shade', this unites both with the accompanying written descriptions of protective leaves, bushes and trees in adjacent poems, and with the visual depictions which dominate the volume, to create the image of nature protecting the Blakean subject.

In the previous chapter Jones' 'Labour's History' has been identified as a poem that draws upon the ballad form. Blake's *Songs* do not follow the traditional patterns of the ballad, but these idyllic poems, in particular, employ very simple rhythm and rhyme schemes with a strong focus on repetition and echo. These poems are unchallenging to the ear: the frequent use of rhyme has a mnemonic effect, and the lively rhythms often capture an aural or signing quality. This collection of poetry by Blake has been frequently and extensively cited as engaging with an eighteenth century traditions of children's verse. Nicholas Williams describes *Songs* as 'a project for creating a viable theological alternative, at all times remaining deeply committed to writing a book for the benefit of the child'. Williams suggests that Blake was imitating 'a poetic technique used by both Isaac Watts and Mrs. Barbauld, the two most often read practitioners of religious verse for children at the time', but highlights the poet's adaptation of this form:

> What is most striking in Blake's *Songs*, however, is that moral
> imperatives are absent, when we most anticipate them. Blake's
> positive guardians accept the children's intuitive and natural play, as
> activities uninterrupted by moral reminders of duty. There is none of

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[14] The natural world plays a very different role in *Songs of Experience*. The idyllic imagery of *Songs of Innocence* is drawn upon to expose the contrast that is found in the largely urban environment of *Experience* (this can be seen, for example, in stanza 4 of 'Earth's Answer'). However, I suggest that the visual dominance of natural imagery in the illustrations which surround these songs is intended to remind the reader of the possibility of renewal which is suggested in the 'Introduction'. The energy and freedom of the natural world is not lost altogether in *Experience*, it is still accessible, and therefore the innocent idyll remains a present possibility. In *Experience* nature is present but it is interpreted differently. This can be seen in the contrasting attitudes presented by the 'Nurses Song' in *Innocence* and its counterpart poem in *Experience*.

the stern morality found in Isaac Watts's *Divine and Moral Songs* (first published 1715).[15]

Jonathan Roberts notes the way in which Blake's *Songs* engage, not just with children's' verse, but with poetic traditions practiced by, and culturally linked to, the labouring-class:

> Nothing else looks quite like Blake's books, though they are in a visual and literary dialogue with other forms of contemporary publication, such as the chapbook […] Chapbooks are small, cheaply printed pamphlets for the popular market, containing fairy stories, nursery rhymes, ballads and so on, they were widely available in the eighteenth century. They represent (among other things) an early form of children's literature, an audience Blake was glad to reach.[16]

Therefore, although Chartist poetry in general, and the poems under analysis in this thesis in particular, do not draw upon traditions of children's poetry, Blake's *Songs* can be seen to engage with some of the same literary traditions, and these verses certainly contain a strong focus on oral performance and the aural effects of poetic language.[17]

The leaf-screened vault

Blakean images of idyllic innocence are echoed in the opening stanza of 'Labour's History', constituting the first of many correspondences between Jones' poem and the poetry of Blake. The echoing interconnectivity of leaves, trees and shade in Blake's poetry can also be seen in Jones' 'Labour's History'. Indeed, the first stanza of

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[15] Rix, p. 114.

[16] Roberts, p.23.

[17] On Blake and children's poetry see also: Nicholas Williams, *Ideology and Utopia*, p. 6; John Beer, *Blake: A Literary Life* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), p. 61; Glen, pp. 9-16.

'Labour's History' describes a society in which man lives in harmony with God and nature:

> Beneath the leaf-screened vault of heaven
>   Lay a child in careless sleep,
> Amid the fair land, God had given
>   As his own to till and reap.   (1-4)

Jones' opening line recalls the images of natural protection found in Blake's 'Blossom', where the birds are sheltered '[u]nder leaves so green', and 'The Ecchoing Green', where the life of a community takes place 'under the oak'. Like Blake, Jones immediately links the concepts of God and nature to form a protective system: the sky is sacralised through the adjective 'heaven' and the subject's experience of this 'vault' is mediated by leaves, which signify the natural world. The society that is represented by a child in Jones' opening stanza is presented as a past state; this is a golden age which is lost, in the second stanza of the poem, to the corrupt forces of church and state. Jones' opening stanza anticipates this 'fall' through the inclusion of details such the vault of heaven being 'leaf-screened' and the child's sleep being free from care. Had society not progressed beyond this state of innocence then indications of the child's safety and comfort would be unnecessary; Jones' descriptive language is post-lapsarian.

The idyllic imagery found in *Songs of Innocence* similarly describes a society other than that of eighteenth-century London, in which Blake lived.[18] Temporal distinctions operate in a complex way in Blake's *Songs* and it would not be accurate to

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[18] When discussing the idyllic society represented in Blake's *Innocence*, I am referring to the idealised rural imagery found in poems such as 'The Ecchoing Green', 'The Blossom', and 'Night' which have been discussed above. *Songs of Innocence* such as 'The Chimney Sweeper' and 'Holy Thursday', do not operate in the same way as these idyllic poems, but are grounded in the urban realities of Blake's present society.

describe Blake's *Innocence* as a past state.[19] However, as David Erdman has argued in

his discussion of the publication history of *Songs*, the idyllic world that is described in

many of the *Songs of Innocence* (1789) was created in reaction to a less ideal reality:

> The parallel *Songs of Experience* were not published until 1793-
> 1794. But Blake, like Samson, had experience long before that. And
> it is misleading to reason that when he etched the *Songs of
> Innocence* there was "no contrary [...] in his mind." Only a person
> aware of much amiss and seeking a cloak against ill winds could
> have made Blake's conscious creative effort to organize a place of
> shelter for Wisdom and Innocence, lion and lamb, to dwell in
> together.[20]

Like the opening stanza of 'Labour's History', which operates in contrast to, but with

an awareness of, the rest of the poem; the protective, inclusive descriptions in *Songs of

Innocence* gain power from the contrast they offer to both Blake's contemporary

society, and to the society described in *Songs of Experience*. These parallels in Blake

Songs, and Jones' 'Labour's History', form the first correspondence between the

poems.

A further layer of correspondence exists between the first four lines of 'Labour's

History' and Blake's depiction of the *Innocent* idyll, due to each poet's use of archaic

language in their descriptions of peaceful security. In the second line of 'Labour's

History', 'Lay a child in careless sleep', Jones uses the word 'careless' to mean 'free

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[19] The *Songs of Experience* 'Introduction' and 'Earth's Answer' could be used to suggest that the idyllic
society described in many of the *Songs of Innocence* is being depicted as a past state that was lost to the
present society. The opening lines of 'Introduction' draw attention to the alternative perspectives of
different temporal states, by describing the Bard as one who 'Present, Past, & Future sees'. Both
'Introduction' and 'Earth's Answer' draw upon the natural cycles of the day and the seasons to suggest
that 'Earth' is 'Chain'd in night' ('Earth's Answer', line 14) and must 'return' or 'renew' in order to
escape the restrictions of the present ('Introduction' lines 11 and 10). A cyclical view of *Innocence* and
Experience is compelling; however, this is not a model which is applied to the *Songs* as a whole. Each
of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* is written and occurs in the present tense.
[20] Erdman, p. 115.

from care, anxiety or apprehension'.[21] By the eighteenth century this archaic construction was more frequently employed in poetic language.[22] Similarly, when describing the idyllic society of innocence in the poem 'Night', Blake uses the suffix 'less' in his description of the 'thoughtless nest', to denote a freedom from care or anxiety. Again this use of 'thoughtless' is now rare, but identifies a cluster of examples of this usage in poetry from 1747 to 1801.[23] Therefore, the use of the words 'careless' and 'thoughtless' was not uncommon in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century poetry, however, it is untypical in both Blake and Jones' work. 'Night' is one of only two occasions when Blake uses 'thoughtless' in this way, and 'Labour's History' is the only occasion upon which Jones uses the word 'careless' to denote someone acting without anxiety or apprehension.[24] Had Blake and Jones used this kind of linguistic construction frequently then the appearance of the expressions in poems that contain similar imagery would be unremarkable. However, the atypicality of this language heightens the sense of a correspondence between 'Labour's History' and 'Night'.

Blake brings out several nuanced meanings of 'thoughtless' in his use of the term throughout his poetic career. Within *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, 'thoughtless' appears for a second time in the opening stanza of the *Song of Experience* 'The Fly':

> Little Fly
> Thy summers play,
> My thoughtless hand

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[21] *OED* 'careless'.

[22] *OED* 'careless'.

[23] *OED* 'thoughtless'. Blake's use of this term in 'Night' forms one of the examples given by the *OED*. This appears alongside Thomas Gray's 'The thoughtless Day, the easy Night.', in 'Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College' (1747); Oliver Goldsmith's 'So blest a life these thoughtless realms display', in 'Traveller' (1764); and 'That princes often ridicule their nurse, and sleep, with thoughtless ease…', in Fredrick von Schiller's translation of 'Don Carlos (1801).

[24] Both *Chartist Songs* and *The Battle Day and Other Poems* (Routledge, 1855) have been considered in this analysis.

Has brush'd away.[25]

In contrast to the description of a 'thoughtless nest' in 'The Blossom', this more typical use of 'thoughtless' conveys that the individual has raised their hand 'without thought or reflection'[26]. In 'A Vision of the Last Judgement', thoughtlessness is used to describe someone who is innocent in their freedom from reflection:

> Three Females representing those who are not of the dead but of
> those found Alive at the Last Judgement they appear to be
> innocently gay & thoughtless not <being> among the Condemnd
> because ignorant of crime in the midst of a corrupted Age.'[27]

In this instance the women described as 'innocent' share some common features with the children in 'The Chimney Sweeper' and 'Holy Thursday': this use of the term is not wholly positive, but is connected with ignorance and naivety as well as having positive connotations of freedom and mental peace.[28]

Blake does not use the term 'careless' anywhere in his poetry and Jones only uses this term once, in line 2 of 'Labour's History'. However, Jones does use the term 'thoughtless' on two occasions, neither of which are intended to convey a freedom from anxiety or apprehension. Jones uses the term 'thoughtless' in 'The Better Hope' and in the first part of 'The Cost of Glory', 'A Country House'. The first stanza of 'The Better Hope' reads:

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[25] Blake, 'The Fly', lines 1-4.

[26] *OED* 'thoughtless'.

[27] William Blake, 'A Vision of the Last Judgement' in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David V. Erdman, rev. ed (New York: Anchor Books, 1988), p. 559.

[28] It is interesting to note that outside of the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* collection, Blake uses the term 'thoughtless' in the same way as it had been used in 'Night', and in the description of almost the same set of images. In 'The Four Zoas' the 'Sparrow & the Robin' are described, living in a later time when their society is no longer idyllic. Blake describes the birds remembering their past state of *Innocence*: 'that once in thoughtless joy / Gave songs of gratitude to waving corn fields round their nest.' Blake's use of 'thoughtless' in *The Four Zoas* contains a note of foreboding. This foreboding is created by the qualifying expression 'that once', which draws attention to the implicit danger in the bird's previous state, and conveys a note of fear that the current situation might further deteriorate. Although enjoying a situation free from anxiety, the birds were also naïve and vulnerable.

> A CHILD of the hard-hearted world was I,
> And a worldling callous of heart,
> And eager to play with the thoughtless and gay,
> As the lightest and gayest, a part.

Whilst, lines 17-18 of 'A Country House' describe: 'The careless boy he led astray / With the lure of lust and the thirst of play'. Each of these descriptions warn against naivety, with 'The Better Hope' lamenting the poet's younger days, when his ignorance of the national political situation allowed him to succumb to the allure of middle-class comfort without question. Similarly, 'A Country House' describes the vulnerability of a young beneficiary who can be exploited by a 'cunning lawyer'. In the poetry of both Blake and Jones the use of the suffix 'less', to denote a peaceful state in which the subject if free from 'care' or 'thought', occurs very rarely. These unusual linguistic constructions occur at the points where Blake and Jones' idyllic imagery corresponds, stengthening the sense of resonance between the two texts. The parallels between the idealised society depicted in Jones' opening stanza, and the rural idyll presented in Blake's *Songs of Innocence,* are important because Jones appears to echo Blake, despite there being no direct link between the two poets' work.

Temporal Difference and Political Context

Blake and Jones' imagery is not identical. The main difference in the poets' idyllic images occur because of the way that temporality operates in their poems. Each of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* is written, and occurs, in the present tense. Conversely stanzas 1 – 8 of 'Labour's History', describe events that have taken place in the past; it is only in the opening line of stanza 9 'But now the child has grown a

man,' that Jones' poem changes to the present tense. In her enlightening account of the

Songs of Innocence, Glen writes:

> In these Songs, Blake by-passes 'protest' and offers something much
> more radical: a refusal to accept the terms of the dominant culture,
> either by agreement or opposition, and a concentration upon that
> within the society which might implicitly challenge its hegemony by
> providing not merely a possible image but an actual experience of a
> wholly different mode of being.[29]

Glen doesn't specifically mention tense, but her account of the 'experience' produced

by the *Songs* relies on Blake's images occurring in the present. The idyllic world of

Innocence gains power by being presented as a current possibility.[30]

Blake and Jones' collections are written in different historical and political

situations. Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* have a didactic function; they

identify societal corruption with the intention of motivating a mental shift in the mind

of the reader and inspiring revolutionary change. In contrast, Jones was writing as part

of a movement that was organised around a shared understanding of social corruption.

The Chartist movement had a clearly stated manifesto for redressing the injustice in

society, and although their strategy for achieving the aims of the Charter was subject

to change, by 1846 the movement had been engaged in acts of protest and resistance

for over 8 years. Blake's idyllic imagery would lose much of its revolutionary power if

it were situated in a past time, as this would weaken the sense of hope and potential

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[29] Glen, pp. 146-147.

[30] Glen contrasts her account of *Innocence* with an interpretation of *Experience* as devoid of hope and lacking in the creative energy and sense of possibility found in *Innocence*: 'one after another the Songs of *Experience* expose the destructive deadlock which results from even well-intentions ("moral") failure to recognize and actualize that existing *potentia* which the earlier collection celebrated' (p. 222). For Glen, the 'actual experience' offered by the present tense of *Experience* is suffocating; the critic makes a strong case for this collection closing down the 'transcendent possibility' offered by *Songs of Innocence* (p. 165). However, I disagree with this assessment: it is my contention that Glen overlooks key moments in *Songs of Experience*, that offer change and revolution, again as a present possibility. For example, as has been discussed in footnote 14 above, the natural idyll remains a possibility in *Experience* due to the continued presence of nature in the illustrations to these texts.

that the *Songs of Innocence* offer. However, Jones actually *creates* a sense of hope and potential by situating the first half of 'Labour's History' in the past. The idyllic society described in the opening stanza is destroyed by the 'three Outlaws' who 'hoped' 'Upon the fall of man to rise!'. By describing this process, and creating a sense of loss and injustice, Jones fuels his poem with the energy of righteous protest. Whilst the motivating hope of Blake's idyllic descriptions would be lost if *Songs of Innocence* were set in a past time, the political context of Jones' poem allows him to figure the present as a time of action. The hopeful future, offered in the final stanzas of 'Labour's History', is presented as both imminent and inevitable.

The political context of Jones' poetic production is also expressed in the details of his idyllic imagery. Jones' brief description of society before 'the fall', explicitly focuses on the freedom to labour, and the communal ownership of land. Conversely, the fact that Blake's 'ecchoing green' and pastoral field are 'common ground', remains implicit.[31] The idyllic society described in *Songs of Innocence* is consistently presented as non-hierarchical and mutually supportive. For example, 'The Ecchoing Green' demonstrates how individuals fulfil different positions in society, according to their age and experience. The roles of the children, mothers and old folk are all crucial to the cyclical harmony of the community, and each role is presented positively. These poems may therefore be described as expressing communitarian sensibilities, but Blake does not refer to specific political or economic strategies. Jones' commentary is more overtly politicised, bringing the depiction of harmony between man, God and nature, more precisely in line with Chartism's political agenda.

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[31] Andrew Lincoln in particurlar, has identified this feature, stating that the 'landscape of innocence is typically common ground: pastoral field, valleys wild, the village green' (p. 9).

In the 1840s, after the failed Chartist petitions of 1839 and 1842, the National
Chartist Association began to shift its focus away from the six points of the Charter
and toward the acquisition of land and the establishment of agrarian communities.[32]
The Land Plan was built around O'Connor's vision of a 1000 acre estate made up of 4
acre private dwellings, as well as public buildings such as a library, and 100 acres of
common land.[33] This was realised to some extent in March 1846, when the first estate
of the Chartist Co-operative Land Society (a 103 acre plot at Heronsgage in
Hertfordshire) was purchased and re-named O'Connorville. It is important to note that
Jones joined the movement when the O'Connorville project was at its peak, Malcolm
Chase discusses the speech made by Jones when he visited the first open viewing of
the site, only two weeks after making his first address at a Chartist demonstration.[34]
'Labour's History' expresses an agrarianism that is specifically aligned with the
ideology underpinning the Chartist Land Plan. The lines 'Amid the fair land, God had
given / As his own to till and reap', present a direct attack on industrial capitalism
from an alienated workforce who had been separated from the products of their labour.
The stanza implies that the right to labour for one's own bread is God given, and that
the control of both land and the products of labour by a privileged elite, are in
contravention of the natural law.

Unlike both Blake's presentation of the idyll and the example of Owenite
socialism, which was contemporary to Chartism and Jones, the idyllic vision presented

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[32] Malcolm Chase has stated that 'The constitution that emerged from the 1843 Convention marked a
fundamental departure for the NCA. All mention of the Charter was expunged from its objectives,
which instead were expressed as 'by peaceful and legal means alone to better the condition of man, by
removing the causes which have produced moral and social degradations'; and second, 'to provide for
the unemployed, and [provide the] means of support for those who are desirous to locate upon the land.'
(p. 248). Chase is also careful to point out that 'Chartism was not converted into the land plan; but the
latter filled the vacuum left by the decline of so much normal Chartist activity after 1842' (p. 256).
[33] Chase, p. 249.
[34] Chase, p. 260.

in 'Labour's History' asserts a degree of private ownership; this is construed through the words 'As his own'. Fergus O'Connor was careful to distinguish the Chartists' agrarian ambitions from those of Owenism and Socialism, stating: 'I tell you that my plan has as much in common with Socialism as it has with the Comet'.[35] Values of private property and the family unit were important to O'Connor and the Chartists. Chase has discussed the fact that 'the male-breadwinner ideal was a powerful one, especially among factory operatives' and that this constituted a 'fundamental ideological difference' between the values of the Chartist land movement and Owenite communitarianism.[36] Due to the terms of the 1832 Reform Bill, the private ownership of land also had a significant political implication insofar as the 1832 Bill extended the vote to the owners of property over the value of £10. The Chartists can be seen to be considering this implication in the *Northern Star*'s report of the stated objectives of the Chartist co-operative Land Society, as outlined at their 1845 Convention. The society intended, through the enactment of the Land Plan, to give:

> to the working classes of the kingdom – firstly, the value of the land,
> as a means of making them independent of the grinding capitalists;
> and secondly […] the necessity of securing the speedy enactment of
> the 'People's Charter'.[37]

By securing land and establishing Chartist smallholdings the movement would gain a degree of political representation, albeit on a small scale. This contributed to the ideological importance of private ownership to the Chartists, as is reflected in Jones' poetic imagery.

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[35] Chase p. 251.
[36] Chase, p. 250.
[37] Chase, quoting from a report in the *Northern Star*, 3rd May 1845, p. 254.

Chains, Binding and the Echoing Interconnectivity of *Experience*

The sense created in the opening stanza of 'Labour's History' that Jones' imagery and expression echoes Blake, is strengthened in stanza 5 where there are further correspondences with Blake's *Songs*:

> They bound the child, in slumber's hour,
>   With chains of force, and fraud, and craft, -
> And, round the victim of their power,
>   *King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier* stood and laughed.   (17-20)

In particular Jones' image of the three Outlaws binding the child, recalls images of chains and binding that characterise the social oppression described in Blake's *Songs of Experience*. This sense of correspondence is strengthened by Jones' description of the three Outlaws as '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*', which echoes Blake's depiction of the false trinity 'God & his Priest & King'.[38]

Before discussing the way in which images of chains and binding re-sound in Chartist poetry it will be necessary to explore the depiction of chains in Blake's poetry, because stanza 5 of 'Labour's History' echoes a concept that is established, not in a single poem, but through the dialogue that occurs between similar imagery in several different poems in *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. The echoing interconnectivity of imagery that Glen has identified in *Songs of Innocence* also occurs in *Experience*.

In *Vision and Disenchantment*, Glen contrasts the interconnected echoes in *Songs of Innocence*, with the interpretation that the 'characteristic poetic shape' of *Songs of Experience*, 'is not one of echoing harmony […] but one of linear progression toward

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[38] Blake, 'The Chimney Sweeper', *SE*, line 11. Further references are given in the text.

a final disillusion which echoes nothing and leads nowhere.'[39] However, it is my contention that echoing interconnectivity is central to the creation of meaning in both *Innocence* and *Experience*. Glen describes the relationships in the society of *Innocence* as 'echoingly interconnect[ed]':

> there is no isolated individual: no individual exists except in relationship […] Within the world of these *Songs*, identity is expressed, recognized in its otherness, and answered: there is no attempt to appropriate or control. There is no preconceived purpose, but a pattern that evolves freely, in play.[40]

In the discussion of idyllic influence presented above, I have begun to extend this concept to describe the way that key Blakean images appear in a number of poems, and gain their meaning through the dialogue that occurs between these poems. This argument has drawn upon Glen's suggestion that the 'green landscape' of the Innocent idyll, echoes across 'Laughing Song', 'Nurse's Song' and 'The Chimney Sweeper', but Glen's idea will be developed throughout this and the following chapter, becoming a central concept of the thesis.[41] Glen argues that Blake's *Experience* does not echo. In making this statement Glen denotes a lack of 'interconnectivity' in both social relationships and poetic imagery in *Songs of Experience*. However, as the following discussion of Blake's images of chains and binding and his depiction of a false trinity will demonstrate, images appear at different points across the collection of *Songs of Experience* and meaning is created through the combination and comparison of these images.

In *Songs of Experience*, Blake presents a series of descriptions of constraint and repression being enacted in different ways, and affecting different members of the

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[39] Glen, p. 220 and p. 165.
[40] Glen, p. 137.
[41] Glen, p. 137.

Experience[d] society. The 'Clod' and the 'Pebble' are confined, by their polarised and restrictive attitudes, within a miserable relationship; the child chimney sweep is trapped in the 'clothes of death' and indentured to a shortened life of 'woe'; and 'wrath' unspoken, refuses to be suppressed, but instead grows into a tree bearing poisonous fruit. In a number of the *Songs of Experience*, these central motifs of constraint and repression are represented through images of chains and binding. The personified Earth is 'Chain'd in night'; the natural haven of the 'Garden of Love' is replaced by a grave yard in which 'Priests' bind 'joys & desires'; 'every Man' is affected by 'mind-forg'd manacles'; and the 'piping' infant is swaddled at birth and made 'weary'. Blake uses the shared imagery in these poems to convey the idea that the social repression he is exposing through *Songs of Experience* is all encompassing. These various images of chains and binding are sufficiently similar to create a link between the poems in which they appear. Blake strengthens his social commentary by presenting a consistent theme from a range of perspectives. 'The Garden of Love', 'Infant Sorrow', 'Little Boy Lost' and 'London', are particularly involved in creating the Blakean images of chains and binding that echo in Jones' poetry. Each of these poems associates chains and binding with the oppressive patriarchal figures 'God & his Priest & King', who are directly responsible for the binding that takes place in *Songs of Experience*.

'The Garden Of Love'

'The Garden of Love' is the contrary poem to 'The Ecchoing Green'. The 'merry bells' of *Innocence* develop a sinister echo in this song of *Experience*. The unmentioned church, which chimed in harmony with the bird song as a musical accompaniment to the 'sports' and laughter of 'The Ecchoing Green', is now silent,

but ever present in the aural vacuum of 'The Garden of Love'. The central oak tree which supported the energy, natural regeneration and familial unity of 'The Ecchoing Green', is replaced in 'The Garden of Love' by a symbol of privatised, institutional religion: 'A Chapel was built in the midst, / Where I used to play on the green.'[42] Throughout the poem, Blake associates institutionalised religion with repression and control. Blake frames the 'Garden' as a graveyard. By contrasting this bleak space with the memory of a 'green' flower garden, he connects religion to death, implying that life and energy cannot survive in the institutionally dominated environment:

> And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
> And Thou shalt not, writ over the door;
> So I turn'd from the Garden of Love,
> That so many sweet flowers bore,
>
> And I saw it was filled with graves,
> And tomb-stones where flowers should be   (5-10)

The domineering, patriarchal figure of the priest plays a central role in this repressive environment. Dressed in a 'black gowns', the priests visually reinforce the connection between institutional religion and death. Furthermore, both the priests' physical appearance and social behaviour contrasts with the senior male figure in 'The Ecchoing Green'. Characterised by his 'white hair', 'Old John' sits and happily observes the activity taking place on the green, his acceptance seems to facilitate the

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[42] Blake, 'The Garden of Love', *SE*, lines 3-4. Further references are given in the text. 'The Garden of Love' has been contextualised by critics such as Stanley Gardner, who suggests that: 'On January 9, 1793', as Blake's mind was on *Song of Experience*, John and Sarah Bond were granted a lease of land fronting South Lambert Road, 'for the erection of a proprietary chapel.' So 'a Chapel was built' on a green a short walk from Blake's house, where fee-paying communications were submitted to the Divinity, whilst against the inadmissibly poor 'the gates of the Chapel were shut'. The local initiative brings a bitter double sense to 'Thou shalt not, writ over the door', *The Tyger, The Lamb and the Terrible Desart: Songs of Innocence and Experience in Their Times and Circumstances* (Golden Cockerel Press, 1998), p. 241.

'sports' and 'joys' that take place. In contrast, the controlling priests in the 'Garden of Love' are directly responsible for restraining these positive experiences.

Crucially, in 'The Garden of Love' Blake links the concept of an oppressive religious institution to the theme of social binding through an extended image: 'And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds, / And binding with briars, my joys & desires' (11-12). These images of binding are multilayered. In describing the priests' as 'walking their rounds', Blake represents the clerical presence in the garden as restrictive and encircling. The priests enact a further circling motion through the process of 'binding with briars'. These images are made more tangible by the poetic technique of internal rhyme, which reflects the circling motions of the priests. Blake frames this text with serpentine illustrations, which support the sense of entrapment.[43] Blake uses the same layering of circular imagery in 'The Garden of Love' as appeared in 'The Ecchoing Green', but these techniques create opposite poetic effects in the two poems. Unlike the encircling branches and familial units, which convey protection and security in 'The Ecchoing Green', the circular patterns in 'The Garden of Love' represent restriction and control. Whilst the senior male in 'The Ecchoing Green' sits 'under the oak', at the centre of the protective, familial circles that are built around him, the Priests in 'The Garden of Love' act as an external, controlling force, which restrict rather than supports the environment.

'Infant Sorrow'

These images of circling, binding, and briars, can be paralleled with the images of binding that appear in 'Infant Sorrow'. Blake extends his exposition of restraint and

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[43] In his commentary on this plate of Blake's *Songs*, Andrew Lincoln has suggested that the 'serpentine earthworm that coils at the right of stanzas 1 and 2, and the smaller worms that divide the stanzas, evoke the horrors of the grave' (p. 191).

social repression in 'Infant Sorrow', to convey the idea that these processes of control are enacted, and begin to affect the individual, as soon as they enter the society of *Experience*. As Stanley Gardner suggests:

> in *Songs of Experience* Blake traces the social attrition and manipulation far back from the mills on the River Wandle; back even to the midwife's swaddling bands. The seed of Experience strikes root in the turmoil and stress of that claustrophobic birth in 'Infant Sorrow', even before the infant is cradled.[44]

The central image in 'Infant Sorrow' is of a baby being bound in swaddling bands. The process of binding is not explicitly described, but rather, a contrast is presented between the energetic child described in the first stanza, who struggles against the restraint that is being inflicted, and the 'weary' child of the final couplet, who may only express his independence and agency by 'sulk[ing]' upon the breast. The father's successful binding with swaddling bands evidently effects this change:

> Struggling in my father's hands:
> Striving against my swaddling bands:
> Bound and weary I thought best
> To sulk upon my mother's breast.[45]

Stanley Gardner has discussed the role of the father in 'Infant Sorrow':

> Blake consigns the manipulative binding of the infant, not to the unmentioned midwife, but to the father. This improbable *accoucheur* fights for control of the child, the swaddling anticipating the "stern commands" of the Omnipotent Father Urizen.[46]

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[44] Gardner, p. 132.
[45] Blake, 'Infant Sorrow', *SE*, lines 5-8.
[46] Gardner, p. 132.

By attributing the binding of the infant to the father, Blake represents the same repressive patriarchal dynamic in 'Infant Sorrow' as had been described in 'The Garden of Love'.

Blake's negative depiction of swaddling in 'Infant Sorrow' might be compared to the protests made by philosophers such as John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau, who spoke against the swaddling of infants in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) and *Emile, Or, On Education* (1762).[47] However, as Stanley Gardner demonstrates, swaddling was no longer common practice in England at the time that Blake was writing *Songs of Experience*. Gardner points to Dr William Codogan's advice against swaddling, first published in an article in *The London Magazine* in 1748. He states that Dr Cadogan became a physician at the Foundling Hospital in 1754 and 'at once sent out printed notices to his nurses in the country forbidding swaddling'.[48] Dr William Buchan's *Domestic Medicine*, first published in 1769, confirmed that Cadogan's advice had effected change in the practice of swaddling, but also stated that swaddling at birth did continue in many parts of Britain.[49] However, whilst Gardner observes that when Cadogan forbade his midwives from swaddling children in 1754 'the Foundling Hospital, and the nurses at Wimbledon from St James's parish, [...] were ahead of their time and most middle ranking parents in child care.', he also reports that by 1784, a decade prior to Blake's publication of *Songs of*

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[47] John Locke was ahead of his time in campaigning against the practice of swaddling. Locke draws a link between the restrictive clothing of infants, and symptoms of ill health that persist into later life: 'I have seen so many instances of children receiving great harm from straight-lacing[...] Narrow breasts, short and stinking breath, ill lungs, and crookedness, are the natural and almost constant effects of hard bodice, and clothes that pinch.' John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (J and R Ronson, 1779) p. 14. Jean Jacques Rousseau provides practical suggestions for the clothing of infants, advising against swaddling: 'When the child draws its first breath do not confine it in tight wrappings. No cap, no bandages, nor swaddling clothes. Loose and flowing flannel wrapper, which leave its limbs free are not too heavy to check his movements, not too warm to prevent his feeling the air.' John Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, Or on Education*, (United States: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), p. 22.
[48] Gardner, p. 133.
[49] Gardner, p. 134.

Experience, 'visitors from abroad worried that English children "are not swaddled",

and the next year *The Ladies Magazine* wrote that there were few gentlewomen who

would know how to swaddle a child.'[50] Therefore, Blake's image of the swaddled

infant should be considered, not as a critique of a literal practice that continued to

impact the welfare of infants nationwide, but rather as a metaphoric representation of

the psychological restrains at work in the *Experience*[d] society.

Blake was not alone in conceiving of swaddling as a representation of a culture of

control and restraint, Jean Jacques Rousseau also frames the practice within his

broader critique of a repressive society:

> Our wisdom is slavish prejudice, our customs consist in control,
> constraint, compulsion. Civilised man is born and dies a slave. The
> infant is bound up in swaddling clothes, the corpse is nailed down in
> his coffin. All his life long, man is imprisoned by our institutions.[51]

Dr William Buchan, whose treatise on swaddling bands in *Domestic Medicine* is

concerned with practical advice for the care of infants and not with broader political

issues,[52] also equates the binding of children to the treatment of prisoners or slaves: '

"England", the doctor wrote, "would hardly know such a thing as a deformed child",

should parents stop "manacling their children". '[53] The doctor goes on to emphasise

his point, once again describing the swaddling band with language that indicates

punishment, confinement and restraint rather than care giving:

> No sooner are they freed from their bracings, than they seem pleased
> and happy; yet, strange infatuation! the moment they hold their
> peace, they are again committed to their chains.[54]

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[50] Gardner, p. 134.
[51] Rousseau, p. 7.
[52] William Buchan, *Domestic Medicine* (Joseph Cruckshank, 1774), pp. 7-8.
[53] Gardner, p. 134.
[54] Buchan, pp. 8-9.

These contemporary discussions of swaddling complement Blake's use of the image, supporting the associations of social restriction and imprisonment which underpins Blake's political analysis in 'Infant Sorrow'. The way that Blake identifies swaddling as a restrictive binding of the infant is particularly significant to his development of imagery in *Songs*. In *Songs of Innocence* the child had figuratively represented the treatment and behaviour of society as a whole. This immediate binding of the child in *Experience*, squashes the joy and energy which had characterised the *Innocen*[t] child, signifying that the state of society has drastically altered.

'The Little Boy Lost'

Blake draws upon the connection between the child and *Innocence* in plate 50 of *Songs of Experience*, 'A Little Boy Lost'. This poem is consistently presented towards the end of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, and it contains the most graphic images of patriarchal control and repressive chaining in the collection.[55] The description of the little boy as 'Lost', does not simply indicate the loss of life caused by his capture and execution; from the perspective of the *Experience*[d] society, the child is 'Lost' long before his death. The boy's freedom of thought and honesty of expression are incompatible with the dogmatic acceptance required in *Experience*; the child's *Innocence* is unacceptable. The images presented in this poem echoingly

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[55] Blake reordered his *Songs of Innocence and Experience* between collections. Most notably, 'The Little Girl Lost' and 'Found', which appear on plates 34-36 in both Keynes and Lincoln's publications (these publications are based on copies C and W), were first published in *Songs of Innocence*, before the joint collection was presented in 1794. This creates some critical confusion around the 'Little Girl Lost' poems, because 'The Little Girl Lost' and 'A Little Girl Lost', which might appear to be contrary songs, are often both published in *Songs of Experience*. Blake presents 'The Little Boy Lost' in the latter half of *Songs Of Experience*, in every version of the combined *Songs* except for copy A, in which it does not appear. The poem moves between plate 43 and 50 between editions, but appears before both 'The Garden Of Love' and 'Infant Sorrow' in all but copy V, where Infant Sorrow appears on plate 49 and 'The Little Boy Lost' on plate 48. The contrary poem of the same title always appears in *Innocence*.

interconnect with those in 'The Garden of Love' and 'Infant Sorrow', but the violence of the chain imagery presented in this poem provides the strongest single parallel with Jones' imagery in 'Labour's History'.

Blake presents a horrific example of censorship and repression in 'The Little Boy Lost', his description of the capture and execution of the little boy is emotive, with line 18 'The weeping parents wept in vain' being repeated in line 23 so that the description of the child's execution is framed by its human impact. The subtlety of the patriarchal binding described in 'The Garden of Love' (in which the priests are binding mental phenomena rather than physically restraining their congregation) and 'Infant Sorrow' (where the father binds the infant in a way that had been considered best practice for many years previous to Dr Cadogan and Dr Buchan's observations), is removed in 'The Little Boy Lost', and the physical binding of the boy by a Priest is explicitly portrayed:

> The weeping child could not be heard,
> The weeping parents wept in vain:
> They strip'd him of his little shirt,
> And bound him in an iron chain.
>
> And burn'd him in a holy place,
> Where many had been burn'd before
> The weeping parents wept in vain.
> Are such things done on Albion's shore.[56]

The verbs 'strip'd', 'bound' and 'burn'd' each convey the violence with which the child is treated, whilst images of 'iron' and fire not only indicate a process of purging, but also suggest industrial processes, drawing a connection between societal restriction, religious control, and the industrialised landscape of 'Albion's' increasingly urbanised population.

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[56] Blake, 'A Little Boy Lost', *SE*, lines 17-24.

The events described in 'The Little Boy Lost' are not literal observations of social practice; rather Blake is presenting an allegory, which exposes the damage done by the institution of the church. Blake extends the theme of chains and binding in this poem, using explicit imagery to directly implicate the Priest and indicate his control and repression of society.

However, there are three features of 'The Little Boy Lost' which suggest that the *Experience*[d] society as a whole, and not just the Priest, is responsible for the rejection of the little boy, and his subsequent treatment. This is asserted in the cutting satire of line 12: 'And all admired the Priestly care'. Blake's use of the term 'care' calls both the morality of the Priest, and the expectations of the society in which he ministers, into question. The statement in line 22, that 'many had been burn'd before:', indicates that this form of punishment was accepted within the society of *Experience*. This suggestion is most effectively conveyed through the opening stanza of the poem, which makes the reader complicit in the Priest's judgement of the Little Boy.

'A Little Boy Lost' opens with direct speech, a series of statements are presented in a manner that recalls both 'The Human Abstract' from *Songs of Experience,* and 'The Divine Image' in *Songs of Innocence*. Although each of these poems represent a different perspective, each poem opens with a confident assertion of belief, requiring the reader to consider the speaker's ideas in relation to both their own opinion, and the perspectives of the surrounding *Songs*:

> Nought loves another as itself
> Nor venerates another so,
> Nor is it possible to Thought
> A greater than itself to know.[57]

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[57] Blake, 'A Little Boy Lost', *SE*, lines 1-4.

By delaying the identification of the speaker until the second stanza, Blake forces the reader to consider these statements from a range of potential perspectives. These words might be most easily aligned with the self-interest expressed in 'The Human Abstract', but if they are understood as representing this *Experience*[d] perspective, and dismissed as 'wrong', then the reader becomes complicit in the subsequent condemnation of the Little Boy. Ultimately 'The Little Boy Lost' demands the same open mindedness and intellectual enquiry from its reader, as is expressed by the Little Boy. The poem cannot be straightforwardly understood, right and wrong are shown to be negations rather than contraries,[58] and the conflicts of allegiance caused by the presentation of the first stanza, serve to more strongly emphasise the tyranny of the Priest, as the reader reacts against their initial misjudgement. The idea that society is complicit in the binding that takes place in *Experience*, and that Blake encourages open-mindedness and the questioning of dogma, are more thoroughly explored by the representations of chains and binding that appear in the *Song of Experience* 'London'.

'London'

In 'London' Blake uses a complex image of manacles to convey his perception of a social constraint, which, although enacted by the Church and State, is ultimately controlled by the individual. Blake describes London society as visually 'mark[ed]' by 'weakness' and 'woe', and aurally dominated by 'mind-forged manacles' which can be heard 'In every cry of every Man, / In every Infants cry of fear, / In every voice; in every ban,'. Although the description of manacles as 'mind-forged' places the focus

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[58] Andrew Roberts provides a succinct discussion of the distinction between negations and contraries in William Blake's poetry in *William Blake's Poetry: A Reader's Guide*. The summary provided on pp. 44-45 is particularly helpful: 'Our aim should be to bring the two halves of any aspect of existence back into relationship […] This does not mean neutralizing the nature of contraries, rather it does mean recognising their respective characters and differences without needing to attach moral labels to them. Blake clarifies this central tenet of his thought by distinguishing a "contrary" from a "negation".

on the individual's control, the repetition of 'In every' emphasises that this restraint

was taking place throughout London's society. Furthermore, as David Erdman has

argued, Blake 'is not saying simply that people are voluntarily forging manacles in

their own minds.'[59] The church and state are clearly identified as the perpetrators of

the fear and misery described in 'London'.

Blake uses three images of marking or staining to direct responsibility for the

marks of weakness and woe that he witnesses in London society, towards the

institutions of the church and palace. The first two images of marking or staining in

London, occur in the third stanza of the poem:

> How the Chimney-sweepers cry
> Every black'ning Church appalls,
> And the hapless Soldiers sigh,
> Runs in blood down Palace walls.[60]

Blake's images of the 'black'ning Church' and bloodied palace refuse a singular

interpretation. However, the stanza creates a visual impression of a church wall

marked with soot from the chimney-sweeper's clothing, and a palace wall stained with

the blood, either of a soldier killed in service, or of a ruling class and monarchy, killed

by their own citizens as the events of the French Revolution are paralleled in Britain.[61]

In this way the oppressive patriarchal behaviours of the Priest and King remain evident

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[59] Erdman, p. 277.

[60] Blake, 'London', *SE*, lines 9-12. Further references are given in the text.

[61] David Erdman has drawn attention to the eighteenth century connotations of the word 'sigh', stating 'The latter are Blake's "hapless Soldiers" whose "sigh Runs in blood down Palace walls" – and whose frequently exhibited inclination in 1792-1793 to turn from grumbling to mutiny is not taken into account by those who interpret the blood as the soldier's own' (*Prophet Against Empire*, p. 278). E.P. Thompson has explored the rich, multilayered imagery in this stanza, focusing particularly on the implications of the connotations of 'blackening': '[Blake] has packed the meaning of 'The Chimney Sweeper' of the *Songs of Experience* (whose father and mother 'are both gone up to church' to 'praise God & his Priest & King, / Who make up a heaven of our misery') into a single line, the adjective 'blackening' visually attaching to the Church complicity in the brutal exploitation of your childhood along with the wider consequences of the smoke of expanding commerce' (*Witness*, p. 16).

even whilst Blake is depicting chains that are not externally inflicted, but rather 'mind-forg'd'.

As has been discussed previously, the critic Glen has interpreted the Songs *of Experience* as devoid of hope. Glen describes the poetic shape of *Experience* as 'one of linear progression toward a final disillusion which echoes nothing and leads nowhere. Poem after poem terminates in an image of blight, often a single word'.[62] Conversely, I have suggested, not only that the model of echoing interconnectivity inspired by Glen can be extended to the *Songs of Experience*, but also that these *Songs* continue to present a possibility for social change, even as they focus on exposing the problems in Blake's contemporary society. Blake's poetic imagery is frequently ambiguous; a clear example of the way this ambiguity works can be seen in stanza 3 of 'London'. In his discussion of 'London' in *Witness Against The Beast*, E.P. Thompson has discussed two possible ways of interpreting lines 9-10: 'How the Chimney-sweepers cry / Every blackening Church appalls,'. Thompson states that:

> Pertinacious critics have been able to invert most of Blake's meanings, and readers have even found to suppose that these two lines […] are comment upon the awakening social conscience of churches under the influence of the evangelical revival. [63]

Thompson views this reading as a 'confusion' of the meaning of the lines, whereas I suggest that the possibility of such a reading is a deliberate consequence of Blake's ambiguity. I argue that these lines do not conform to a monolithic, stable reading, rather they demand that a number of meanings remain a present possibility. As well as creating the visual image of the chimney-sweeper staining the church with soot, the lines also carry other connotations. The description of the church as 'blackening' also

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[62] Glen, p. 165.
[63] E.P. Thompson, *Witness*, pp. 184-185.

relates to the growing moral degradation of the institution. In this sense the lines suggest that the church is appalled by the 'Chimney-sweepers cry' because, in the same way that 'The Little Boy Lost' 'could not be heard', the child's aural presence presents an unacceptable challenge to the state institution. The Chimney-Sweeper's cry continually announces the harm done by child labour, challenging the church to recognise this exploitation. However, it is from this challenge that the hopeful connotations of the Blake's image are drawn. At the same time as exposing the immorality of the contemporary church, Blake's image suggests the possibility that the church could be appalled, not because of a wish to silence the child, but because such an injustice had been allowed to take place. The lines imagine a religious community that cares for and protects the crying child. Despite the 'blackening' soot of the industrial revolution, the communitarian values seen in the innocent idyll remain accessible, suggesting that the current reality can be changed.

The images of staining depicted in lines 9-10 and 11-12 of 'London', follow a pattern; the cry of the chimney-sweeper blackens the church, and the sigh of the soldier bloodies the palace. Ambiguous tensions are implicit in these images, because it is the aural signature of the sweep and soldier that produces the visual stains. Erdman has discussed line 14: 'How the youthful Harlots curse', in relation to Blake's images of staining, stating that:

> In the structure of the poem the soldier's utterance that puts blood on palace walls is paralleled to the harlot's curse that blasts and blights. And Blake would have known that curses were often chalked or painted on the royal walls.[64]

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[64] Erdman, p. 278.

Erdman's contextual insight suggests a connection between the structure of the imagery in the third and fourth stanzas of 'London', but his identification of the stain in the fourth stanza is imperfect. Following the pattern of the Chimney-sweeper's cry and the Soldier's sigh, the word 'blasts' describes the action of the harlot's curse, the stain the harlot causes is in fact the tear on the Infants face. The implications of this stain are different from those depicted in stanza three, as both the Harlot and Infant are victims of 'London' society; the only institution in the final stanza is that of marriage.[65] This change of emphasis suggests that it is the private citizens of 'London', and not just the state, who are responsible for the marks of weakness and woe that Blake records; these various images of staining ensure that both the state and the individual are implicated. This tension is contained in Blake's 'mind-forg'd manacles', which form the central image of in the poem 'London'.

Unlike the previous images of chains and binding in *Experience*, which have been inflicted by figures of patriarchal authority, the chains depicted in 'London' are related to repressive state control, but inflicted and maintained in the mind of the individual. The chains in 'London' are internal whereas the other examples of chains and binding in *Songs of Experience* are external. In 'The Garden of Love' the Priest's briars are binding mental phenomena, whereas in 'London', mental phenomena are producing the bonds. This social observation by Blake precedes Louis Althusser's concept of 'Ideological State Apparatus' and Antonio Gramsci's discussion of 'hegemony', in recognising the importance of individual self-restraint and compliance to the operation of state power.

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[65] See E.P. Thompson, *Witness*, pp. 185-186 for a contextual discussion of Blake's presentation of marriage in this stanza.

Louis Althusser and Antonio Gramsci each made similar interventions into the Marxist theory of the State. Both theorists observe that the forces of public and private control, as enacted overtly by the State or covertly within civil society, are separate and distinct from one another, but equally important to the maintenance of State power. In *Ideology and the State*, Althusser argues that 'something else' has to be added 'to the "Marxist theory" of the state'.[66] Althusser explained that the 'Marxist theory of the State' recognised that State power was secured through repressive apparatuses such as the police, courts, prisons and army, which maintained control by overt aggression (functioning 'by violence').[67] However, Althusser argues that this does not account for the ideological control which takes place in private:

> it is clear that whereas the – unified – (Repressive) State Apparatus belongs entirely to the *public* domain, much the larger part of the Ideological State Apparatuses (in their apparent dispersion) are part, on the contrary, of the *private* domain.[68]

Althusser expands his theory by figuring ideological control as enacted through various institutions. The institution of the church is one of the key components of Althusser's Ideological State Apparatus, whereas in Blake's depiction of State control the Church is aligned with the Palace as an overt component of public, rather than private, control. However, Althusser's argument that State power is enacted not just through the Repressive State Apparatuses, but also through ideology, is useful to our discussion. This argument is extended by Gramsci's theory of Hegemony.

Gramsci conceives of Hegemony as a form of social control that is enacted through the superstructure of society. In explaining his theory he states that:

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[66] Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in *Lenin and Philosophy*, trans. by Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press), pp. 126-186 (p. 141).
[67] Althusser, p. 143.
[68] Althusser, p. 144.

> we can [...] fix two major superstructural 'levels': the one that can be
> called 'civil society', that is the ensemble of organisms commonly
> 'private', and that of 'political society' or 'the State'.[69]

Like Althusser, Gramsci uses this distinction between public and private to demonstrate that State power is exercised not just through overt violence or repression, but also more subtly, through the dissemination of beliefs and expectations within civil society. Whereas Althusser had explained this second form of control in terms of the Ideological State Apparatus, Gramsci called it Hegemony:

> These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of
> 'hegemony' which the dominant group exercises throughout society
> and on the other hand to that of 'direct domination' or command
> exercised through the State 'juridical' government.[70]

Gramsci contrasts '[t]he apparatus of state coercive power which "legally" enforces discipline on those groups who do not "consent"', with '[t]he "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group.'[71] Blake represents essentially this same social observation in *Songs of Innocence and Experience*; his image of 'mind-forg'd manacles' clarifies that social repression is enforced, not just from above, through the actions of the Church and Palace, but also from within.

E.P. Thompson has compared Blake's understanding of social repression to that of his cultural contemporaries, describing the central innovation of Blake's 'mind-forg'd manacles' in a way that supports the alignment of Blake's image with Althusser and Gramsci's observations:

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[69] Antonio Gramsci, *Further Selections From The Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), p. 12.
[70] Gramsci, p. 12.
[71] Gramsci, p. 12.

> The average supporter of the London Corresponding Society, would
> have been unlikely to have written 'mind-forg'd' (since the manacles
> would have been seen as wholly exterior, imposed by priestcraft and
> kingcraft); and the voice of indignation would probably have
> drowned the voice of compassion, since most Painites would have
> found it difficult to accept Blake's vision of man as being
> simultaneously oppressed (although by very much the same forces as
> those described by Paine) and in a self-victimized or Fallen state.[72]

Whilst the comparison with Althusser and Gramsci's distinction between public and

private control, does help to clarify the intervention Blake was making by representing

'London''s 'manacles' as 'mind-forg'd', there is a potential danger in transposing this

Marxist theory too strictly onto Blake's images of chains and binding. *Songs of*

Experience contains some images of physical chains, such as the iron chain that

restrains 'The Little Boy Lost', and some images of ideological chains, such as 'mind

forg'd manacles', however, in the strictest sense, none of the chain imagery in

Experience describes processes of repressive State control. Blake's images of external

chaining and binding such as the 'briars' 'swaddling bands' and the 'iron chain' do

not describe literal chains that are legally enforced, rather these are allegorical images

that expose the way in which society was being repressed by the State. Drawing upon

the connotations of slavery and imprisonment associated with the chain, Blake uses

images of chains to make tangible the public repression of the Church and State and

the private repression that occurred in the minds of the individual.

In 'London' Blake overtly exposes the presence of private repression as it is

enforced in the mind of the individual, but this hegemonic force is present throughout

the *Songs of Experience*. Focusing just on the images of externally inflicted chains or

bonds, which have already been explored, it is interesting to examine the implications

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[72] E.P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. 193.

of the father, who wraps the infant in swaddling bands in 'Infant Sorrow', and to consider the public compliance described in 'The Little Boy Lost'. As well as reinforcing the connection that Blake has drawn between figures of repressive patriarchal authority and images of chains and binding, this image of the domestic father demonstrates the '"spontaneous" consent' to State control that takes place within the private realm of the *Experience*[d] society. Within *Songs of Innocence and Experience* the father represents the acceptance and replication of the values and beliefs of the dominant social group. In Althusserian terms, the behaviour of the domestic father in 'Infant Sorrow' indicates the parents' 'submission to the ruling ideology', and the 'reproduction' of this ideology in the father's treatment and expectations of the next generation.[73] Conversely, the parents in 'The Little Boy Lost' refuse to enforce the values and beliefs of the State in their private domestic relations, instead allowing their Little Boy to express and explore his views freely. These parents hold a central position in Blake's poem, with their cries framing the description of the Little Boy's death, but they are socially marginalised: they weep 'in vain' as the Priest is able to take their son because the surrounding adults 'all admir'd the Priestly care'.[74] Therefore, it is possible to observe 'mind forg'd manacles' at work in 'The Little Boy Lost', it is particularly possible to make such a connection because of the way in which Blake's images of chains and binding, echoingly interconnect across *Songs of Experience*.

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[73] Althusser, p. 132.
[74] Blake, 'The Little Boy Lost', *SE*, lines 18, 23 and 12.

It is important to consider the implications of Blake's 'mind forg'd manacles' in relation to the argument that *Songs of Experience* contains the possibility of social change. Nicholas Williams has stated that:

> the mind cannot effect an escape from a situation which it itself has created. Blake's identification of the "mind-forg'd manacles" is the equivalent of Mannheim's paradox, for it extends ideology even to the position of the poem's speaker, who can "mark" weakness and woe in the faces which he meets but cannot perceive the mark of woe branded into his own consciousness.[75]

I disagree with this interpretation. I follow David Erdman and E.P. Thompson in reading the narrator of 'London' as Blake himself. The poem describes the poet's experience of recognising manacles in 'every man' in society, in so doing, Blake breaks the manacles in his own mind. Like Gramsci's philosophical observations, Blake's critique in 'London' does the work of identifying a problem rather than providing an explicit solution. Evidently the private liberation of a single individual does not in itself effect revolutionary change, but Blake's motivation in presenting this commentary is to effect change on a wider social level by enlightening many individuals. Revolution must take place on both a public and a private level if the control of the Church and Palace is to be undermined. Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* address the intellect, challenging the reader's perceptions of the world around them.

A strong indication that the 'mind forg'd manacles' Blake observes in London can be broken is contained in the multiple connotations of the word 'forged'. The *OED* records that dating back to the 1390s and Chaucer's 'Miller's Tale', the term 'forged' was used to denote something that was 'fashioned at the forge', with 'forge' being

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[75] Nicholas Williams, *Ideology and Utopia*, p. 19.

defined as an 'apparatus consisting of an open hearth or fireplace with a bellows

attached, used by blacksmiths for heating iron to render it malleable'. The term also

held a now obsolete association with the specific forging of money, denoting money

that was 'coined' at the forge; the *OED* takes an example from Ovid's *Metamorphosis*

(1621) to demonstrate this connotation. These associations with industry and

commerce situate Blake's image of manacles firmly within 'London's 'blackening'

and 'charter'd' streets.[76] However, the *OED* also records an alternate meaning of the

term, which undermines the substance and therefore, the permanence of this society.

Forged is also defined as 'made in fraudulent imitation of something genuine;

counterfeit, false, spurious.' The suggestion that 'every man' is constrained by mental

phenomena that are 'forg'd' in the sense that they are fraudulent, emphasises the

unjust State that perpetuates this private form of social control, and the possibility that

this fraud could be exposed, and the Church and Palace overthrown. Concurrently, this

connotation of the term 'forg'd' undermines the strength of the image of the iron

manacle; if these internal binds are recognised as imitations of physical manacles then

they lose much of their power, emphasising the fact that each individual has the power

to break the manacles in their own mind. Finally, the definition of the noun 'forge' as

a 'hearth or furnace for melting or refining metals',[77] highlights the ways in which

Blake's image of 'mind forg'd manacles' anticipates Plate 14 of *The Marriage of*

Heaven and Hell, in which Blake equates his artistic process of 'melting' and

corroding metal plates, to the effect of cleansing the man's senses and perceptions:

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[76] E.P. Thompson discusses Blake's use of the term 'charter'd' in relation to Burke and Paine's political perspectives. Drawing upon theoretical language of Raymond Williams, Thompson argues that 'The adjectival form – charter'd – enforces the direct commercial allusion: "the organisation of a city in terms of trade"(p. 179). See *Witness Against The Beast* pp. 175-179 for a full discussion of 'charter'd'.
[77] *OED* 'forge'.

> But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul, is to be expunged; this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.
>
> If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is: infinite.
> For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks in his cavern.[78]

This section of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* contains a clear sense of hope that man's mental bondage might be removed, and places the production of Blake's art as the first step in a process that was to culminate in the apocalyptic, revolutionary overthrow of the current order, and the 'world […] consumed in fire'.[79] In his introduction to the *Cambridge Companion to Blake*, Morris Eaves comments that the way in which Blake presents his texts 'makes conditions ideal for mental earthquakes'.[80] Blake challenged and disrupted his readers' conception of familiar ideas, I suggest that Blake intended his poetry to be corrosive to existing systematic ideas and to inspire imaginative responses in his readers, which they might develop into their own system (rather than becoming 'enslaved by another mans'[81]).

In extending his interconnected network of chain imagery in 'London' by presenting an explicit image of internal control and restraint, Blake recognises the public and private dimension of State control and emphasises the hegemonic forces that he shows to be at work throughout *Songs of Experience*. The image of 'mind forg'd manacles' is not a hopeless 'paradox'; by exposing this private component of

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[78] Blake, *MHH*, plate 14.
[79] See Johnathan Roberts p. 17, for a discussion of Blake's use of this image. Roberts argues that Blake uses apocalyptic language 'in a characteristically ambiguous manner, deploying these ideas, and yet mocking them at the same time.'
[80] Eaves, 'Introduction', p. 5.
[81] William Blake, 'Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion', in *Blake's Poetry and Designs*, ed. by Mary Lynn Johnson and John E. Grant (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1979), p. 316, Plate 10, line 20.

State control Blake is attempting to cleanse his reader's perceptions and empower them with a personal agency through which the social problems in *Experience* might be tackled.

'God & his Priest & King'

Throughout this discussion of Blake's images of chains and binding, I have emphasised how Blake interlinks chain imagery and the domineering, patriarchal figures of Priest and King (who are extended into the domestic setting by the figure of the father). In the final stanza of 'The Chimney Sweeper' in *Songs of Experience*, Blake presents three figures of patriarchal oppression together:

> And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
> They think they have done me no injury:
> And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
> Who make up a heaven of our misery.   (9-12)

Blake's 'God & his Priest & King' draws upon the holy trinity of God, Son and Holy Spirit. Blake's image recalls and 'turns' the image of the holy trinity. The poet here creates a subversive image that exposes the irony that 'God' has become aligned with the repressive forces of church and state, and divorced from true divinity. Therefore, the meaning of Blake's image is created not only by his expression of repressive state power through the coupling of Priest and King, but also by the way that he turns existing symbols to create new meaning. Blake's 'God & his Priest & King' is not a rhetorical pattern of three, but a false trinity.

The interconnection of these Blakean images is particularly relevant to the investigation being held in this thesis, because the image of a false trinity, and the technique of representing adverse forces in a pattern of three, resonates through Jones

and Massey's poetry. In Chapter 2 the possibility that these images demonstrate a Shelleyan influence has been discussed; the patterns of three and chain imagery that appear in 'Song to the Men of England' have been considered as a source for this imagery. However, as well as recalling 'Song to the Men of England' these moments in Chartist Poetry also echo a network of imagery in Blake. The dual resonances of Shelley and Blake within Jones and Massey's poetry will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

Chains of Force, and Fraud, and Craft

A number of Blakean images of chains and binding re-sound in stanza 5 of Jones' 'Labour's History':

> They bound the child, in slumber's hour,
>   With chains of force, and fraud, and craft, -
> And, round the victim of their power,
>   *King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier* stood and laughed.   (17-20)

Jones' description of the child being bound recalls Blake's image of the infant bound in swaddling-bands in 'Infant Sorrow'. Jones situates this event in 'slumber's hour' and frames the restraint of the child as a three-pronged attack, in order to emphasise the subject's vulnerability. The structure of 'Labour's History' emphasises the contrast between the tranquil and protected child beneath the 'leaf-screened vault' in stanza 1, and the brutal restraint of the child that takes place in stanza 5. By shifting the poem's focus to the description of the 'three outlaws' in stanzas 2-4, and opening stanza 5 with an abrupt statement of the sleeping child's restraint, Jones draws a stark contrast between the previous safety, and current vulnerability of the subject. This contrast parallels that which is drawn in Blake's *Songs*, between the *Innocen[t]* infant

described in 'Cradle Song' and 'Infant Joy', and the *Experience[d]* infant who is bound in 'Infant Sorrow'.

Once the 'King', 'Priest' and 'Soldier' arrive in 'Labour's History', Jones' imagery leaves the nursery; the child is bound, not by swaddling bands, but '[w]ith chains'. Whereas, in Blake's 'Infant Sorrow' the child had been bound by the father, who reproduced the ruling ideology of the state within a domestic setting; in 'Labour's History' the child is bound directly by the repressive forces of the state.[82] The brutality in Jones' description and the image of physical chains, recalls Blake's portrayal of the priest binding the child with an 'iron chain' in 'The Little Boy Lost'.[83]

This correspondence with Blake is strengthened by effect of encircling that Jones uses in 'Labour's History'. Jones' description of the scene in stanza 5 gives the effect of a double binding, the child is bound in chains and also encircled by the three outlaws, who stand 'round' him. By listing the 'chains of force and fraud and craft' with which the child is bound, Jones creates the impression that the subject is encircled by multiple binds. These techniques recall the layers of circular imagery which emphasise the 'Priests in black gowns, […] walking their rounds, / And binding with briars, my joys & desires', in 'The Garden of Love'.

Therefore, 'Labour's History' draws parallels with Blake's interconnected network of chain imagery. The correspondence with Blake is multivalent; Jones'

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[82] On the distinction between 'Repressive' and 'Ideological State Apparatuses', see Althusser, pp. 144-145. In 'Labour's history these are external rather than internal chains.

[83] Jones is using chains within an allegory in 'Labour's History' to metaphorically represent that oppression of the working-class. The chains in Chartist rank and file poetry often denote the actual shackles placed upon Chartists imprisoned for their political demonstrations. For example, George Binns' 'To The Magistrates Who Committed Me to Prison Under the Darlington *Cattle Act* For Addressing A Chartist Meeting' was published in the *Northern Star* poetry column on May 9th 1840 (p.7). In his opening stanza Binns declares: 'OH! bind your fetters fast as hell / Can forge them for your master, / I smile to think they ring your knell, /I'LL WEAR THEM FOR THE CHARTER!' (lines 1-4). Binns is literally willing to wear fetters for the charter. While in Blake and Jones' poetry fetters are mentally repressive and restrict progress towards liberty, for Binns they are almost as a badge of honour on the way to a Chartist victory.

stanza recalls not one, but many sites in Blake's *Songs*. Stanza five of 'Labour's History' echoes the contrasting structure of 'Infant Joy' and 'Infant Sorrow'; the shocking images of chaining in 'The Little Boy Lost'; and the effect of encircling that is employed in 'The Garden of Love'. However, the binding presented in this stanza of 'Labour's History' is directly enacted by the state; some of the complexity of Blake's interconnected imagery is lost. Jones' child is a direct victim of the '*King, - Priest, - and Soldier*' so the image does not carry Blake's suggestion that a child's parents can act on behalf of the state apparatus, to reproduce the ruling ideology within a domestic setting. Similarly, this particular stanza does not recall Blake's most complex image of binding, the 'mind-forg'd' manacle.

King, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*

A final level of correspondence occurs between stanza 5 of 'Labour's History' and Blake's network of images of chains and binding. Like Blake, Jones figures his critique of the institutions of the Church and Palace, through interrelated images of chains and a false trinity. Jones' 'chains of force, and fraud and craft', extend the allegory of 'the three outlaws', symbolically depicting the corrupt behaviour of the 'King', 'Priest' and 'Soldier'. Whereas stanzas 2-4 had introduced these three figures in turn, in line 20 Jones presents them in a single image, linking the three italicised names with hypens: '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*'. Due to its formation, Jones' image bears distinct visual similarities to Blake's false trinity. The way in which Jones' three capitalised figures are linked by hyphens mirrors Blake's use of the ampersand to inextricably link 'God & his Priest & King'.

In Chapter 3, the parallels between Jones' 'Labour's History' and Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy', were explored. The image of '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*' can be

presented both as an allusion to Shelley's 'God, and Law and King' and as an echo of Blake's 'God & his Priest & King'. As Chapter 3 explained, this thesis has deliberately presented evidence of a Shelleyan influence through the analysis of poems that will be also be shown to contain Blakean echoes. Blake, Shelley, Jones and Massey all denounce priestcraft and kingcraft in their poetry.[84] These images likely became part of the structure of their thought through their engagement with radical political cultures. The use of these terms as descriptions of the church and state was popularised by their presence in the writing of Thomas Paine. Their use can be seen, for example, in Paine's 1776 *Common Sense*, which states: 'There is as much of kingcraft as priestcraft in withholding the scripture from the public in popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the popery of government.'[85] This vocabulary can be seen as characteristic of Paine's writing, since it re-appears in private letters and is present in the last work that Paine gave to the press, his 1807 'An Essay on Dream'.[86] The presence of 'kings' and 'kingcraft' within Chartist poetry indicates the residual power of Paine's coupling of Priest and King, because at the time that Jones and Massey were writing Queen Victoria was the country's monarch.

Jones' inclusion of the soldier in his pattern of three, contrasts with both Shelley and Blake's imagery. The contrast between Jones and Blake's conception of the soldier is more striking than that of Jones and Shelley. In 'London', Blake positions

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[84] The denouncement of priestcraft and kingcraft through the image of a false trinity rarely appears in the poetry of Chartists other than Jones and Massey, but a similar patterning can be seen in the poem 'Daniel O'Wheedle – A portrait drawn from life', which was published under the name Argus in the *Northern Star* poetry column on 5th September 1840 (p.3).This poem sarcastically describes 'Kings, Lords, and Commons' as 'the holy three': 'Whilst he proudly ---'d the *holy three*, * / And swore by the mass, that he'd slice up the TREE †' (lines 15-16). The corresponding footnotes read: * Kings, Lords, and Commons. † The "Glorious Constitution!"

[85] Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, in *Thomas Paine: Political Writings*, ed. by Bruce Kuklick (CUP, 1989), pp. 1-38 (p.11).

[86] In a letter to Samuel Adams, Paine writes: '*some* of your priests, for I do not believe that all are perverse, cry out, in the war-whoop of monarchical priest-craft, what an infidel!'. In 'An Essay on Dream' he asks 'Is man ever to be the dupe of priestcraft, the slave of superstition?', both in *The Theological Works of Thomas Paine* (R. Carlile, 1824), pp. 305-309 (p.307) and pp. 215-220 (p.220).

the soldier as a victim or opponent of the State ('And the hapless Soldiers sigh, / Runs in blood down palace walls'), whereas in Jones the soldier is a position of power sharing equal responsibility with the Priest and King for the atrocities being described.

Blake, Shelley and Jones present the figure of the soldier with varying degrees of sympathy, this seems to be connected with how closely entwined the soldier has become with the state apparatus. Blake's poem 'London' uses the soldier as an example of state oppression upon the population, the relationship is described as one of victim and aggressor with the soldier being exploited by the state apparatus. Chapter 3 has demonstrated how Shelley's depiction of the soldier in *The Revolt of Islam* shows the soldier as a figure who is recruited on behalf of the state and is subservient to the state apparatus. In Shelley the soldier stands somewhere between the state itself, and the general population who are at risk of becoming slaves to the state themselves, if they do not resist control and exert their right to personal liberty. Conversely, in Jones the soldier is used to directly represent the state apparatus. These differences between Blake, Shelley and Jones' poetry could be the result of a gradual change in the political understanding of the soldier in the nineteenth century.

Thinking and Reasoning

The final Blakean echoes in 'Labour's History' occur in stanzas 9 and 10:

> But now the child has grown a man,
>   Thinking, reasoning, strong and bold, -
> And they, who that false game began,
>   Are withered, feeble, failing, old!
>
> And, lo! those chains of Priests and kings
>   As grows the frame, expanding under,
> Those cankered, miserable things!
>   Burst like rotten threads asunder.   (33-40)

Jones' images of the child growing into a man and bursting his chains through '[t]hinking' and 'reasoning', suggest a parallel between the concepts at work in 'Labour's History', and the structure and assumptions behind Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience.* Jones' frames stanzas 9-10 of 'Labour's History' around the concept of the child growing into a man; in so doing, he is engaging with a trope that many critics have used to define the difference between Blake's *Innocence* and *Experience*. The parallel between Blake and Jones' use of the child needs to be clarified at the outset. Following this section an interpretation of Blake's *Innocence* and *Experience* as states of childhood and adulthood will be discussed. This discussion will acknowledge the apparent paradox in the way that the tropes of childhood and adulthood operate in *Songs*, and ask what it means to echo ambiguous imagery. Although this chapter has recently explored the images of a swaddled, repressed infant that appear in *Songs of Experience* (emphasising the presence of childhood in both of Blake's contrary states), the differences between *Innocence* and *Experience* can nonetheless be understood in terms of maturation; a child growing into a man. This interpretation will be explored below, before that, this section will consider the parallel that can be drawn between the power that Jones places in the intellectual forces of thought and reason, and Blake's assertion that the *Experience*[d] society is bound by 'mind-forg'd manacles'.

The possessive 'of' in the line 'And, lo! those chains of Priests and kings', is crucial to the meaning of Jones' image.[87] Jones' conceives of the subject's chains as belonging to the 'Priests and kings', suggesting that public forces of the State are singularly responsible for the creation and maintenance of social restraint. However,

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[87] Jones, line 37.

the subject regains freedom from the State as the result of 'thinking' and 'reasoning', suggesting that, throughout history, the power to break the 'chains of Priest and kings', has been held by the individual. Therefore, Jones' model of social control recognises the public and private (or institutional and hegemonic) factors necessary to the maintenance of State power. Jones presents this model in more simplified terms than Blake, he assigns the responsibility for repression to the State, but places the power for change with the working man; this emphasises both the moral fortitude and the political agency of the working classes, creating a hopeful and motivating message for the Chartist movement.

The Child has Grown a Man

As well as conceiving of social change as coming about due to an intellectual shift in the working-class subject, Jones also explains this new ability to overthrow the '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*' through an image of physical change. Jones frames stanzas 9-10 of 'Labour's History' around the concept of the child growing into a man; in so doing, he is engaging with a trope that can be used to define the difference between Blake's *Innocence* and *Experience*.

There is no ultimate interpretation of Blake's poetry. Critics continue to disagree as to how *Innocence and Experience* relate and should be considered, and each individual plate has inspired a wide variety of different imaginative responses from Blakean scholars. The two contrary states of the human soul, presented in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, resist straightforward definition. As Andrew Lincoln has described:

> Some poems contain contradictory views within them [...] Blake's technique generates ambiguities that repeatedly complicate

> interpretation. Few books offer such challenges with such a
> disarming appearance of simplicity.[88]

Songs of Innocence and Experience can be explained using a number of apparently contradictory organisational strategies. For example, many of the *Songs of Innocence* can be described it as idyllic. The rural idyll of poems such as 'The Ecchoing Green', 'The Blossom', 'Night' and 'A Dream', might be contrasted with the representations of an urban environment that characterise many of the *Songs of Experience*. 'The Garden of Love' can be offered as an example of nature constrained, and this can be contrasted with the natural freedom that was described in poems such as 'The Ecchoing Green'. However, the contrary states cannot be simplified and defined as depictions of a rural and an urban England; such easy division is refused by Blake's representations of contemporary, urban, London in 'The Chimney Sweeper' and 'Holy Thursday' poems, which appear in both states. As has been demonstrated in this chapter, a number of interconnected *Innocence* poems can profitably be grouped together as representations of 'idyllic *Innocence*', but this grouping must be qualified: Blake's idyllic images represent only one way in which *Innocence* operates.

The description of *Innocence* and *Experience* as childlike and adult states encounters similar structural contradictions, which I suggest are designed to destabilise any simplified or systematic understanding of the text. Evidently, children appear throughout both sequences of poetry and so it is technically inaccurate to suggest that in *Experience* we find only adults. However, the images of children in *Experience* are often used to convey the loss of innocence (as in 'The Little Boy Lost' where society has lost its innocent perspective and therefore views the child as a heretic) or a suppression of natural joy and energy (as in 'Infant Sorrow'). It could therefore be

[88] Andrew Lincoln, p. 10.

argued that the children in *Experience* have lost their child-like qualities.

Alternatively, as Nicholas Williams has acknowledged:

> There are those, Harold Bloom in *Blake's Apocalypse,* for instance,
> who generally see Innocence as a state of ideologically clouded
> consciousness corrected by the more clear-sighted Experience ("The
> Chimney Sweeper" and "Holy Thursday" poems, as well as the pair
> of "The Divine Image" and "The Human Abstract," can easily fit
> this pattern).[89]

Glen's presentation of *Innocence* is directly opposed to this interpretation,[90] but

nonetheless, it does constitute one way in which the contrary states might be

understood.

Northrop Frye has argued, not that *Innocence* and *Experience* represent childhood

and adulthood, but that they express the poet's own personal and intellectual

development:

> Blake is to be regarded as an ultrasubjective primitive whose work
> involuntarily reflects his immediate mood. The *Songs of Innocence*
> are then to be taken at their face value as the outpourings of a naïve
> and childlike spontaneity, and the *Songs of Experience* as the bitter
> disillusionment resulting from maturity – for when Blake engraved
> the latter he was no longer a child of thirty-two but a grown man of
> thirty-seven.[91]

Both Erdman and Beer have fervently disagreed with this perspective.[92] The volume of

critical debate around the idea that the state of *Innocence* can be seen as childlike or in

some way naïve whilst the state of *Experience* expresses wisdom about the real state of

society, indicates that this resonance of Blake's text is compelling. Even if the *Songs*

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[89] Nicholas Williams, *Ideology and Utopia*, p.58.
[90] See chapter 4 of Glen's *Vision and Disenchantment*, which aruges: 'These Songs do not dramatiza a
naively blinkered or partial point of view'(p. 111).
[91] Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1969), p. 4.
[92] Beer, p. 36; Erdman, p. 115.

cannot be adequately explained by such divisions, tropes of childhood and adulthood are evoked by the titles of Blake's contrary states. Irrespective of our ultimate interpretative position these resonances necessarily affect our understanding of the poems; they must be negotiated.

This discussion of child and manhood in 'Labour's History' and *Songs* has not simply been held to illustrate that Jones' line '[b]ut now the child has grown a man' adds a further level of correspondence with Blake. Rather this correspondence helps to illustrate a question that has been raised by several of the Blakean echoes discussed in this poem – what does it mean to echo ambiguous imagery? On several occasions a parallel can be drawn between Jones' poetry and a web of interconnected Blakean imagery that often contains internal ambiguity and contradictions. Jones' poetry does not re-echo the full complexity of Blake's work, but rather carries a resonance that can be traced back to part of several images or ideas in Blake. The conclusion to this thesis will explore this question in detail, discussing Blake's poetry as an open text that invites several different interpretations. The example of the child/man trope that occurs towards the end of 'Labour's History' provides a particularly stark example of a Blakean resonance being identifiable, despite the later poem lacking the complexity of the former text.

<div align="center">*</div>

The exploration of the Blakean echoes in 'Labour's History' has demonstrated that Jones' poem contains multiple points of correspondence with Blake. The leaf screened vault in Jones' first stanza recalls Blake's images of idyllic influence; this parallel is strengthened by both Blake and Jones' untypical use of the suffix 'less' in the terms 'careless' and 'thoughtless'; the images of chains and binding and a false trinity in stanza five recall Blake; a parallel can be drawn between the structure and

assumption of stanzas 9 and 10 and Blake's presentation of 'mind-forg'd manacles';
and the trope of a child growing into a man around which these stanzas are organised
carries a resonance of one way in which Blake's contrary states can be understood. It
is this piling up of imagery and expressions that creates the sense of a connection
between Blake and Jones' poetry. Within this discussion Jones' poem has been
paralleled with a network of interconnected imagery in Blake. Jones 'leaf screened
vault' has been compared to 'The Ecchoing Green', 'The Blossom', 'Night' and 'A
Dream', and the images of chains and binding and a false trinity have been discussed
in relation to 'The Garden of Love', 'Infant Sorrow', 'The Little Boy Lost' and
'London'. 'Labour's History' was shown in Chapter 3 to develop Shelley's 'The Mask
of Anarchy' and the Shelleyan imagery in this poem can therefore be described as
univalent; this chapter has shown that the same poem also contains multivalent
Blakean echoes.

The most compelling evidence of Blakean echoes in Jones' poetry can be found in
'Labour's History'; however, Blake's imagery does continue to re-sound throughout
Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces. The Blakean echoes that appear in 'A Chartist
Chorus' are particularly interesting because these points of correspondence with Blake
also correspond with the representations of similar images in 'Labour's History'. The
chapter will close with an analysis of 'A Chartist Chorus' through which some
examples of interconnected imagery within Jones' poetry will be identified.

'A Chartist Chorus'

Crown, and Cross, and Sabre

'A Chartist Chorus' follows sequentially from 'Labour's History' in *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces*, and reinforces images established in the previous poem. In stanza two Jones reasserts the false trinity of '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*' through the metonymic pattern of three 'crown, and cross and sabre'. Jones established this descriptive technique in 'Labour's History' where the 'three Outlaws' were first introduced using the visual signifiers of a 'golden crown', 'mystic sign' and 'priestly frown'. The grouping of 'crown and cross and sabre' echoes these earlier images from 'Labour's History', emphasising the central role of the monarchy, church and army as historical oppressors of the working class, and reasserting these institutions as the key opposition to Chartist concerns. The repetition of this image of a false trinity highlights its importance to the argument put forward in *Chartist Songs*. This repetition also strengthens the sense that Jones' poetic imagery echoes the imagery used by Blake in *Songs of Innocence and Experience*; the concept of a false trinity is central to discussions presented across both Blake and Jones' collections.

However, there is also a significant difference in the way that Jones' false trinity of '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*' operates in 'A Chartist Chorus' as compared to 'Labour's History'. The opening line 'Go! Cotton lords! and Corn lords, go!' identifies 'A Chartist Chorus' as a song of communal protest, which is primarily directed not at the church and state, but at a newly emerging class of industrial capitalists. The King, Priest and Soldier are invoked in the second stanza of 'A Chartist Chorus' as facilitators and protectors of industry's 'stolen' wealth:

Go! Treasure well your stolen store

> With crown, and cross, and sabre,
> Despite you all – we'll break your thrall
> And have our land and labour!   (5-8)

Jones' metonymic expression has a significant impact on the poetic effect of this stanza. The poet is not merely describing the institutions of the church and state, he is specifically referencing the presentation of a false trinity in 'Labour's History' and drawing upon the associations and arguments developed in this previous poem; the order of the images 'crown, and cross, and sabre' correspond directly to the grouping of '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*'. Line 7 confirms the interrelationship of the Cotton and Corn Lords and the '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*', uniting all five oppressors with the words: 'Despite you all'. This line is divided by a caesura, which visually sets the determined, powerful chorus of Chartists against all five oppressive, authoritarian figures. In this way the opening stanzas of 'A Chartist Chorus' provide a clear example of imagery operating across as well as within Jones' poetry.

As has been shown previously, Blake presents the image of the false trinity 'God & his Priest & King' in the final stanza of the *Song of Experience* 'The Chimney Sweeper':

> And because I am happy, & dance & sing,
> They think they have done me no injury:
> And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King
> Who make up a heaven of our misery.   (9-12)

Although Blake does not directly address the 'Lords' of industry in *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, his songs are permeated with imagery which evokes industrial process and contrasts the increasing urbanisation and industrialisation of the city with an, often idealised, rural economy. The chimney-sweeper's song names the church and state as the institutions responsible for child exploitation, but the child's

job is necessitated by, and emblematic of, the processes of urbanisation and industrialisation. The middle stanza of this poem operates not just as a narrative of the child's move from a life of freedom and play, to work as an indentured labourer, but also acts as an allegory of the move from an agrarian to an industrial economy, that was taking place on a societal level:

> Because I was happy upon the heath,
> And smil'd among the winters snow:
> They clothed me in the clothes of death,
> And taught me to sing the notes of woe. (*SE* 5-8)

This imagery corresponds with the way in which Jones conceives of industrialisation. Jones' poem 'A Chartist Chorus' is followed in *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces* by the poem 'Blackstone Edge', which opens with a similar sense of relocation:

> O'er the plains and cities far away;
> All lorn and lost the morning lay,
> When sunk the sun, at break of day,
>   In smoke of mill and factory.

The image of the 'sunk' sun conveys the suffocating nature of the city smoke and links industrialisation to ideas of darkness in a way that corresponds with Blake's images of 'blackening' soot in 'London' (9-12) and 'The Chimney Sweeper' (1 and 5-8).[93] On the page facing 'A Chartist Chorus', Jones reproduces the poem 'O'Connorville'. Originally published in *The Labourer* periodical, this poem was written in support of the Chartist Land Plan, openly promoting O'Connor's vision of an agrarian society.

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[93] Blake's image of the chimney-sweeper as ' a little black thing among the snow' is expanded in stanza 3 of 'London' where the Church is marked with the responsibility for this exploitation: 'How the Chimney-sweeper's cry / Every blacking Church appals,'. Both images convey a tangible sense of the soot covering the child sweep, with the black colour of the soot being contrasted with ideas of purity and light in each poem.

The following extract from 'O'Connorville' almost reverses the move that takes place in the second stanza of 'The Chimney Sweeper':

> There distant towns uplift their clouded sin,
> As though to hide from heaven the hell within.
> But through the shady lanes the wanderings glide,
> With joyous songs along the greenland's side.'[94]

These comparisons show that Blake and Jones' concerns about urbanisation, and their presentation of an industrial capitalist society in contrast to a rural economy, correspond in a number of ways. Jones presents the false trinity of '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*' as facilitators of the 'Cotton' and 'Corn lord's' to whom 'A Chartist Chorus' is primarily addressed. Similarly, 'The Chimney Sweeper' is also overtly concerned with the human impact of industrial capitalism. Blake and Jones each use an image of a false trinity to identify the institutions of the church and state as perpetrators of social injustice, focusing their critique on exploitation that occurs as the result of a newly industrialised society.

Cankering Chains

In 'Labour's History' Jones presented a critique of state control through a combination of images of a false trinity, and images of chains and binding; this combination of imagery is also used to figure Jones' social critique in 'A Chartist Chorus'. In the third stanza of 'A Chartist Chorus' the poet associates the trio of oppressive patriarchal figures (now acting alongside the Cotton and Corn Lords) with images of chains and binding:

> You forge no more – you fold no more

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[94] Jones, 'O'Connorville', lines 42-46.

> Your cankering chains about us;
> We heed you not – we need you not,
> But you can't do without us.   (9-12)

Lines 9 and 10 recall the images of chains and binding in Blake's *Songs of Experience*, corresponding particularly with the description of binding that occurs in 'The Garden of Love'. Jones' portrayal of the Cotton and Corn Lords forging and folding 'chains about us', echoes Blake's description of 'Priests in black gowns', 'walking their rounds' and 'binding with briars our joys and desires' (11-12). Jones' image of binding is strengthened by the circular formation of lines 9 and 11. The repetition in line 9 and the internal rhyme of 'heed' and 'need' in line 11 are emphasised by caesuras, creating a visual pattern of links that emphasises the aural pattern of the words. What is particularly interesting about these lines, and stands in contrast to the impression of a double-binding that occurs in Blake's poem, is that the sound pattern that Jones creates evokes a repeated process of entrapment, but the words articulate a collective denial of the oppressors' power. Unlike 'The Garden of Love' in which the subject's 'joys and desires' are restrained by 'briars', and further encircled by the Priests 'walking their rounds'; 'Labour's History' announces the repeated breaking of chains. The lords of industry can no longer forge chains because their workers refuse to co-operate; the statement 'You forge no more' could read 'We forge no more' because 'without' the Chartists the industrial process of forging cannot take place. As in 'Labour's History' where the subject breaks the oppressor's chains by 'thinking and reasoning', the Chartists' declaration of independence in 'A Chartist Chorus' is self-fulfilling; the poem declares that the chorus can put an end to their bondage by realising their true value over the lords of industry.

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The discussion of 'A Chartist Chorus' has demonstrated that the Blakean echoes found in 'Labour's History' also re-sound in other poems in *Chartist Songs*. In 'A Chartist Chorus' Jones represents the '*King*, - *Priest*, - and *Soldier*' through the metonyms of 'crown and cross and sabre'. These oppressive patriarchal figures have been explored in detail in 'Labour's History' and their connotations are not reiterated in 'A Chartist Chorus'. However, Jones does develop his image of the false trinity in 'A Chartist Chorus', considering these representatives of state power in relation to the lords of industry. Therefore these images are interconnected, each enhances the meaning and significance of the other. As was stated in the introduction to this chapter, Chartist poetry has not previously been conceived of in terms of interconnected imagery. Whilst Jones makes relatively limited use of this technique in his poetry, echoing interconnection is an important characteristic of Massey's *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*. The detailed discussions of Blake's poetry that have taken place in this chapter will inform the understanding of Blake that is presented in the next. Moreover, the consideration of interconnected imagery is established practice in Blake scholarship; the models provided by critics such as Glen and Nicholas M. Williams will inform my approach to the discussion of interconnection in Massey's poetry.

Chapter 5 - Blakean Echo in Gerald Massey

Chapter 3 discussed the Shelleyan influence in Jones and Massey's poetry in terms of allusion. Chapter 4 looked in detail at the Blakean echoes in Jones. These echoes could not be explained by a direct link, but in most cases they were shown to operate in much the same way as allusion. This chapter will identify the Blakean echoes in Massey's poetry. These correspondences, and the textual moments in 'The Three Voices' in particular, operate in more complex ways. The close analysis that will be undertaken in this chapter will illustrate the full potential of considering poetry in terms of echoes; it will show how the use of echo as a methodological approach facilitates the discussion of aural and oral patterns that could not otherwise be described.

Whilst presenting the argument that Massey's work contains Blakean echoes, key images will be contextualised within the history of English poetry. The chapter will suggest ways in which these images may have become part of the structure of Blake and Massey's thought. It will indicate how and where common tropes are adapted in similar ways by these two poets, furthering the argument that Blakean echoes in Massey's poetry occur as the result of a shared underlying cultural matrix.

The discussion of Blakean echoes in Jones focused on images of Priestcraft and Kingcraft and Chains and Binding. These key images continue to re-sound throughout Massey's *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*. For example, 'Press On!' asserts: 'Kings, Priest, ye're far too costly, and we weary of your rule', later presenting these figures of the state within a rhetorical pattern of three: 'You know that God made men,

not princes, kings or priests! press on!'[1] 'The Song of the Red Republican' opens with

a description of tyranny which is expressed through images of chaining: 'Aye,

Tyrants, build your Babels! forge your fetters! link your chains!' The poem reverses

this trope in line 38 to signify the process of working class revolution: 'Our land is rife

with sound of fetters snapping 'neath the file'.[2] However, there are compelling

structural parallels in Massey's text that demand a focused investigation. Rather than

re-visiting these key Blakean images and outlining the ways in which they re-sound in

Massey, the chapter will instead explore those echoes in Massey's poetry that operate

in a different way to the echoes that were identified in Jones.

The chapter will open by identifying a structural link between Massey's *Voices of
Freedom and Lyrics of Love* and Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Next,

Massey's development of the trope of dawn and awakening will be compared with

Blake's image of the dark Priest. Finally, the chapter will demonstrate the piling up of

Blakean resonances in 'The Three Voices', exploring the ways that these sites of

correspondence operate through the creation of aural and visual parallels.

Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love

Chartist Poetry has been given limited attention by the scholarly community.

Kovalev, Vicinus, Maidment and Sanders have all written about Massey's literary

works, with Sanders devoting the final chapter of *The Poetry of Chartism* to a close

textual exploration of the 'messianic' and 'millenarian' aspects of Massey's poetry.

However, the existing bibliographic information relating to Massey is limited, and at

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[1] Gerald Massey, 'Press On!', *VF*, lines 5 and 8.
[2] Massey, 'The Song of the Red Republican', lines 1 and 38.

times contradictory. Our understanding of Chartist Poetry would benefit greatly from additional, comprehensive bibliographical studies of all the Chartist labour laureates.[3] This chapter is primarily concerned with demonstrating that Massey's Chartist Poetry contains echoes of Blake and will therefore present an overview of the publication history of Massey's *Voices and Freedom and Lyrics of Love* at the outset.

Some of the most interesting correspondences between Blake and Massey occur because of the way in which Massey's *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* is structured. Massey conveys his political message through two contrasting but complementary poetic states. There are significant differences in the way that Massey's *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* and Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* are structured. It would be misleading to suggest that *Freedom* operates in the same way as *Experience*, and contrived to attempt to construct contrary pairings of Massey's poems. However, the individual, private focus of *Lyrics of Love* does balance the communitarian protest of *Voices of Freedom*, presenting the natural world and the possibility of human love and security through a set of images and tropes that bears an uncanny resemblance to some of the defining images of idyllic *Innocence*.[4]

The initial clarification of Massey's publication history will demonstrate that structural similarities between the two poets are not coincidental. I argue that Massey's thematic divisions were considered and deliberate; the contrary states of *Freedom* and *Love* allowed Massey to articulate both the public and private implications of his radically political, dissenting Christian manifesto.

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[3] Sanders' research provides significant bibliographical information about Chartist rank and file poetry (especially that which appears in the poetry column of the *Northern Star*). Details pertaining to the publications of poets such as Cooper, Linton, Jones and Massey can be particularly confusing because the labour laureates published both in the radical press and in multiple collected volumes, several of which contained significant overlap and re-writing of poems between editions.

[4] In this way Massey's construction of *Freedom* and *Love* replicates Janowitz's discussion of the communitarian and individual poetic voice.

David Shaw's biography of Massey provides invaluable insight into the circumstances and details surrounding the Chartists' poetic production. Shaw, together with Ian Petticrew, has composed a table of Massey's early appearances in the *Bucks Advertiser and the Alysebury News*, *Cooper's Journal*, *The Red Republican* and *The Friend of the People*.[5] Having corroborated these publications with archival research, I have combined Shaw's overview with details from Sanders' account of poetry published in the *Northern Star*. The following comprehensive table outlines all surviving publications of Massey's poetry in the Chartist Press:

Key:

Bold : Poem appears in *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*
  i)   : Indicates first appearance of poem
  ii) : Indicates second appearance of poem
  iii) : Indicates third appearance of poem

N.B. Where a poem has been published more than once in the Chartist press prior to the 1851 publication of *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*, the record of these poems appears together in the table. In order to make clear which poems were published prior to the appearance of *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* all poems published in the Chartist press after March 1851 are presented after the table break.

Poem	Publication		Date
At Eventide There Shall Be Light		*Bucks Advertiser* [6]	6-Feb-1847
Stanzas To Amy		*Bucks Advertiser*	13-Feb-1847
Ode To A Very Lovely Little Child		*Bucks Advertiser*	27-Feb-1847
Spring Is Coming		*Bucks Advertiser*	27-Mar-1847
Hope On! Hope Ever!	**i)**	*Bucks Advertiser*	25-Dec-1847
	ii)	*Northern Star* (Re-printed from the *Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*)	8-Sep-1849
Yet We Are Brothers Still		*Bucks Advertiser*	15-Jan-1848
I Love England		*Bucks Advertiser*	22-Jan-1848
Now Or Never		*Bucks Advertiser*	29-Jan-1848
Up And Be Stirring		*Bucks Advertiser*	6-May-1848
This World Is Full Of Beauty	**i)**	*Bucks Advertiser*	27-May-1848
	ii)	*Cooper's Journal*	6-Apr-1850
Tradition And Progress		*Bucks Advertiser*	12-Aug-1848
Sweet Spirit Of My Love		*Bucks Advertiser*	19-Aug-1848
Things Will Go Better Yet!	**i)**	*Bucks Advertiser*	4-Nov-1848
	ii)	*The Friend of the People*	18-Jan-1851

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[5] <http://gerald-massey.org.uk/massey/cpm_early_poems_index.htm> [accessed 5th February 2012].
[6] Full title is Bucks Advertiser and the Aylesbury News.

Title		Publication	Date
The People's Advent	i)	*Northern Star* (Re-printed from the *Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*)	7-Apr-1849
	ii)	*The Red Republican*	20-Jul-1850
To Those Who Meet Sorrow Half-Way		*Bucks Advertiser*	2-Jun-1849
Oh Listen In Your Palaces		*Northern Star*	16-Jun-1849
Reminiscences Of Childhood		*Bucks Advertiser*	23-Jun-1849
Kings Are Giants Because We Kneel [7]	i)	*Northern Star*	23-Jun-1849
Kings Are But Giants Because We Kneel	ii)	*The Friend of the People*	8-Mar-1851
Saith a Voice Truly		*Northern Star* (Re-printed from the *Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*)	7-Jul-1849
We Are Many, Our Tyrants Are Few		*Northern Star*	4-Aug-1849
Truth, Love And Beauty		*Bucks Advertiser*	11-Aug-1849
Stanzas To A Beloved One		*Bucks Advertiser*	25-Aug-1849
The Martyrs Of 1848-49		*Northern Star*	29-Sep-1849
There's No Dearth Of Kindness	i)	*Bucks Advertiser*	3-Nov-1849
	ii)	*Cooper's Journal*	11-May-1850
Hold On, Hold On, In The World's Despite		*Northern Star* (Re-printed from the *Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*)	10-Nov-1849
Struggle On Bravely		*Northern Star* (Re-printed from the *Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*)	8-Dec-1849
Twas Christmas Eve		*Cooper's Journal*	12-Jan-1850
A Call To The People	i)	*Cooper's Journal*	26-Jan-1850
	ii)	*The Red Republican*	29-Jun-1850
The Three Voices		*Cooper's Journal*	2-Feb-1850
God's World Is Worthier Better Men [8]	i)	*Northern Star* (Re-printed from the *Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*)	9-Feb-1850
God's World Is Worthy Better Men	ii)	*Northern Star* (Reprinted from *The Leader*)	30-Nov-1850
The Cry Of The Unemployed		*Cooper's Journal*	16-Feb-1850
The Kingliest Crown	i)	*Cooper's Journal*	23-Feb-1850
	ii)	*Northern Star*	2-Mar-1850
A Lay of Love	i)	*Cooper's Journal*	2-Mar-1850
	ii)	*Northern Star*	16-Mar-1850
Song (No Jewelled Beauty Is My Love)		*Cooper's Journal*	20-Apr-1850
Press On! Press On!		*Cooper's Journal*	27-Apr-1850
The Famine-Smitten		*Cooper's Journal*	1-Jun-1850
Lovers' Fancies		*The Red Republican*	6-Jun-1850
Song (Sweet Smile)		*Cooper's Journal*	8-Jun-1850
Song Of The Red Republican		*Cooper's Journal*	15-Jun-1850
A Night Musing		*Cooper's Journal*	22-Jun-1850
The Red Banner	i)	*The Red Republican*	22-Jun-1850
	ii)	*Northern Star* (Reprinted from *The Red Republican*)	13-Jul-1850
A Red Republican Lyric		*The Red Republican*	17-Aug-1850
Love		*The Red Republican*	7-Sep-1850
Overtoil!		*The Red Republican*	14-Sep-1850
The Last Of The Queens And The Kings		*The Red Republican*	28-Sep-1850
Anathema Maranatha		*The Red Republican*	19-Oct-1850
We'll Win Our Freedom Yet!		*Bucks Advertiser*	30-Nov-1850
They Are Gone		*The Friend of the People*	14-Dec-1850
Our Land		*The Friend of the People*	21-Dec-1850

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[7] This is a variation of the title 'Kings Are But Giants Because We Kneel'.

[8] This is a variation of the title 'God's World Is Worthy Better Men'.

The Men Of "Forty Eight"	*The Friend of the People*	25-Jan-1851
------------------------*Voices of Freedom and*	*Lyrics of Love* on 22ⁿᵈ March 1851----	-----------------
Hope On Hope Ever	**iii)** *Northern Star* (Reprinted from *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*)	3-May-1851
The Kingliest Kings	*Northern Star* (Reprinted from *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*)	21-Jun-1851
Our Father's Are Praying For Pauper Pay	*Northern Star* (Reprinted from *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*)	30-Aug-1851
A Song Of Welcome To Kossuth	*Northern Star* (Reprinted from *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*)	11-Oct-1851
Love's Fairy Ring	*Northern Star*	3-Jan-1852
Labour's Social Chivalry	*Northern Star*	31-Jan-1852
God's World is Worthy Better Men	**iii)** *Northern Star*	14-Feb-1852
Fragments of "My Scrap Book"	*Northern Star*	24-Apr-1852
Today And Tomorrow	*Bucks Advertiser*	25-Dec-1852
One Of God's Treasures For The Poor	*Bucks Advertiser*	1-Oct-1864

This table demonstrates that many of the poems included in *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* appeared in the Chartist press in the years and months preceding the publication of this collected works. Some of Massey's early poetic documents have been lost, making this bibliographical account incomplete; it is likely that the Chartists had access to a broader range of Massey's poetry than can be represented here.

In his preface 'To Walter Cooper' Massey presents these poems as the 'first-fruits of my awakening in the dawn of Thought'; however, *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* was his second collection of poetry.[9] Massey's first volume, *Poems and Chansons* was published in 1847 'by subscription in Tring'. Although it 'was reported to have sold 250 copies locally', no known copy has survived and therefore the contents of this volume cannot be discerned.[10] In Massey's later collections of poetry there is substantial duplication of poems between editions (for example, of the 80

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[9] Gerald Massey, 'To Walter Cooper', *VF*. Massey's description likely refers to *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* being, as Sanders frames it, his 'first collection of Chartist Verse' (*The Poetry of Chartism*, p. 2). There has been some confusion surrounding the publication details of Massey's poetry. Vicinus presents *Voices* as Massey's 'first volume' and describes *Poems and Ballads* as a 'later issued' version of this first text. However, because *Poems and Ballads* contained 80 poems, only half of which had appeared in the 55 poem *Voices*, this information is misleading (*The Industrial Muse*, p. 102).

[10] David Shaw, *Gerald Massey: Chartist, Poet, Radical and Freethinker* (lulu.com, 2009) [Unpaginated, Part 1.1] <http://gerald-massey.org.uk/massey/cbiog_part_01.htm>

poems that appear in Massey's third collection *Poems and Ballads*, 40 had previously been published in *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*, with only 15 of the poems from this earlier collection being omitted). Therefore, it is possible that some of the poems published in Massey's second collection had previously appeared as part of his first collected works.

Similarly, in 1849, a year after becoming involved with the Chartist movement through the Uxbridge Young Men's Improvement Society, Massey founded the radical periodical *The Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom* with fellow member John Bedford Leno; there is no known surviving copy of this periodical. Of the twenty-two Massey poems published in the *Northern Star*, six were republished from *The Uxbridge Spirit of Freedom*, suggesting that this periodical regularly included poetic works by Massey.

The choice of works included in Massey's second collection was selective, with several poems that had recently appeared in the Chartist press being omitted, whilst others were reproduced. By entitling this collection *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* Massey made explicit the dual focus that had long formed the subject of his work. Public poems of overt political protest were integrated with more personal works meditating on the beauties of nature or expressing devotion towards an individual loved one, so that the celebration of romantic love 'I Love My Love And My Love Loves Me' appears opposite 'A Call To The People 1848'.

A significant portion of poetry published by the Chartist movement was not overtly political in content. Sanders has explored the way that 'sentimental' poems in the *Northern Star*'s poetry column complicate any narrowly political, or '"self-evident" definition' of Chartist poetry:

> If we adhere to the definition of Chartist poetry as 'political' poetry,
> then between half and three-quarters of these poems qualify

(depending on what constitutes an appropriate degree of political relevance). However, even the most generous definition of what constitutes a political poem would exclude a quarter of the Poetry column's contents. Is such an exclusion warranted? It would be a questionable methodological assumption which considers that the editor of the poetry column knew exactly what he was doing when he decided to publish, for example, "Working Men's Rhymes – No.1" but which views the inclusion of "Answer to Beauty's Tear" as an aberrant editorial decision.[11]

Many of the *Lyrics of Love* (for example 'A Chaunt', 'Ichabod', and short ballads such as 'Kisses' and 'Love') do not contain overt political discussions or engage directly with specifically Chartist issues. I argue that all the poems in *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* nonetheless contribute to the expression of Massey's political message. Massey's prefatory address 'To Walter Cooper' indicates several political concerns that are explored through the *Lyrics of Love*.

Massey's Political *Lyrics*

Early in his preface 'To Walter Cooper' Massey expresses regret that some working men 'live on, their only tenure of life being to toil and suffer: that is their only part or lot in this God's world, rich in all loveliness and over-brimming with plenteousness.'[12] Massey addresses this deprivation directly, by providing sensual pleasure through poetic verse. The celebration of beauty is a consistent theme in *Lyrics of Love*; for example, 'Ichabod' pays tribute to the natural world 'A blush of flowers is mantling, where, the silken grasses grow' and poems such as 'I Love My Love And My Love Loves Me' capture the ostentatious joy of romantic love. In publicly declaring this private happiness Massey is asserting the working man's right to such an emotion. This poetry resists and opposes the dehumanization of industrial capitalism,

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[11] Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism*, pp. 66-68.
[12] Massey, 'Preface – To Walter Cooper', p. i.

proclaiming that the working man's life amounts to more than his labour, and that all are entitled to enjoy the beauties of 'God's world'.

Massey's descriptions of harmonious nature and the beauty of 'God's world' carry a further political implication. The poet was suggesting that the current social order and the laws of State and King were unjust because they stood in opposition to the natural order that had been ordained by God. In the article 'A form in Formation: the *National Chartist Hymn Book* and Victorian Hymnody', Sanders states:

> '[T]he belief in a God-created universe underpins Chartism's economic analysis and its demands. Stated baldly, the fact that God created the world means that nature is figured as a guarantor of plenty'.[13]

This stands in contrast to the argument that the monarchy and social order were ordained by God, and that every man should be satisfied with his lot. The Chartists felt that there was a biblical warrant for working class opposition to the social order:

> *The National Chartist Hymn Book* contends that the world as made by God comes with an in-built guarantee of an ample sufficiency for every human being. Starvation and want (of which there were plenty in the "hungry forties") are not the result of Malthusian "natural checks" to population growth, but the consequence of economic and political mismanagement.[14]

Due to the context in which the *Lyrics* were produced, Massey's depictions of domestic happiness were also politically charged. Since the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 working class domesticity had become a political issue.[15]

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[13] Mike Sanders, 'A Form in Formation: the *National Chartist Hymn Book* and Victorian Hymnody', [forthcoming].

[14] Sanders, 'A Form in Formation'.

[15] The significance of working class opposition of the poor law to the formation of the Chartist movement is broadly recognised. Dorothy Thompson states that Many of the radicals who went on to found the Chartist movement had already cut their teeth on the politics of the select vestry or the conflict over freemen's rights' (*The Chartists*, p. 14), whilst Edward Royle explores how 'anti-poor-law

Designed to limit the economic burden of outdoor relief, which was deemed to have become unsustainable, the New Poor Law stated that the able-bodied poor should receive support only in the workhouse. Man and wife, parent and child were separated within the workhouse system; families were most often held across different wards of the same workhouse, but they could be divided across separate institutions. As Rachel G. Fuchs has shown '[b]reaking up the family into separate, prison-like workhouses dissolved family, kin and community'. The New Poor Law was met with substantial, hostile opposition from the working classes, with the issue of family separation being a significant cause of, and focus for, protest. Fuchs states that 'Local Poor Law Guardians played a paternalistic police role in deciding how families should function and which among them were deserving.'[16]

Massey explicitly discusses the workhouse system in the final stanza of 'The Cry of the Unemployed'. As the title suggests, this is a poem of public protest, but it appears alongside the celebrations of private domesticity found in *Lyrics of Love*:

> Lord! what right have the poor to wed? love's for the gilded great,
> Are they not formed of nobler clay, who dine off golden plate?
> Tis the worst curse of poverty to have a feeling heart,
> Why can I not with iron-grasp, thrust out the tender part?
> I cannot slave in yon Bastille! ah no, twere bitterer pain,
> To wear the Pauper's iron within, than drag the Convict's chain.
> I'd work but cannot, starve I may, but will not beg for bread,
> God of the wretched, hear my prayer, I would that I were dead![17]

The questions posed in this poem present a direct challenge to the familial separation enforced in the workhouse. In separating husband and wife the system broke the marriage bond, contravening the biblical teaching that through marriage man and

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movement passed over into Chartism during 1838 and 1839, taking with it a legacy of organisation, leadership, experience, and hatred (Roger Lockyer, ed., *Chartism*, 3rd edn (Longman, 1996), p. 16).
[16] Rachel G. Fuchs, *Gender and Poverty in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (CUP, 2005), p. 204.
[17] Gerald Massey, 'The Cry Of The Unemployed', *VF*, lines 25-32.

woman are joined, becoming: 'no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.' (Matthew 19:6). Massey emphasises the dehumanising nature of this separation through the rhetorical suggestions that the New Poor Law denies the working class the right to marriage and love. By celebrating romantic love and kinship among the working classes, the *Lyrics of Love* reassert the working man's right to familial bonds, personal agency, and the security of the marriage union. Both Massey's direct challenges to political policy and private meditations on romantic love address the issues raised by the New Poor Law. Therefore by presenting the genres of *Freedom* and *Love* together, Massey highlights the political relevance of his most sentimental poetry.

The resounding idyll in Massey's *Lyrics of Love*

As was discussed in chapter 4, Blake establishes his vision of idyllic innocence through a series of images that echoingly interconnect across the *Songs of Innocence*. 'The Blossom' is a microcosm of the innocent idyll, with each of the two stanzas describing a bird, cradled near the 'Bosom' of the 'Blossom', safe and protected 'Under leaves so green'.[18] This imagery is further developed in the poem 'Night', where lines 3 and 4 confirm that the safety of the nest extends to all inhabitants of innocence: 'The birds are silent in their nest, / And I must seek for mine'. The statement in lines 13-16 that 'angels', 'pour blessings', 'On each bud and blossom, / And each sleeping bosom', firmly links the imagery in this poem to that presented in 'The Blossom', connecting God with the natural world. In *Lyrics of Love* Massey presents a similar set of images. These appear for the first time in the fourth poem of the collection 'To A Beloved One'.

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[18] Blake, 'The Blossom', *SI*, line 2.

In the first stanza of 'To A Beloved One' Massey depicts an idyllic, natural world in which everything has value and a safe place. This is contrasted in the second stanza of the poem with the sorrow of the mistreated poor:

> Heaven hath its crown of Stars, the Earth,
>   Her glory-robe of flowers,
> The Sea its gems, the grand old woods,
>   Green leaves, and silver showers:
> The birds have homes, where honey blooms
>   In beauty bend above;
> High yearning hearts, their rainbow dream,
>   And we, Sweet! we have love.
>
> There's sorrow for the toiling poor;
>   On Misery's bosom nurst-
> Rich robes for ragged souls, and crowns
>   For branded brow, Cain-curst;
> But cherubim, with clasping wings,
>   Ever about us be,
> And happiest, of God's happy things
>   There's love for you and me.

These stanzas combine to further the argument that the poverty and sorrow of the working class is unjust because it stands in opposition to the natural order of plenty that is ordained by God. Massey's presentation of romantic love is also placed in contrast with the toil of daily life. Massey was himself a member of the 'toiling poor' and there is nothing in 'To A Beloved One' to suggest that the narrator of the piece was a member of a more privileged class; nonetheless, the couple at the centre of this poem are set apart from 'sorrow' and aligned with nature through their experience of 'love'. Therefore, this poem engages with several of the arguments that make Massey's sentimental poetry political - it challenges the idea that the poor should be happy with their lot, promotes the importance of the familial relationship, and asserts the working man's God given right to enjoy companionship.

In this poem Massey introduces the image of the bird in his nest as symbolic of a protective natural world. The line 'The birds have homes, where honey blooms / In beauty bend above', echoes Blake's depiction in 'The Blossom', of the 'Merry Sparrow' and 'Pretty Robin' 'Under leaves so green'. Both Blake and Massey use birds as symbolic representations of the natural world, and of human society. Blake conveys this dual significance through the anthropomorphisation of the 'Blossom'; this song of *Innocence* is narrated by the blossoming bush, and the leaves which hold the birds' nesting place are described as the Blossom's 'Bosom'. The protective relationship between bird and blossom is emblematic of, and extends into, the human interaction throughout idyllic *Innocence*.

Massey uses his image of the bird and blossom in a similar way. In the opening stanza of 'To A Beloved One' the loving human relationship is compared to the security of the birds, who are at home in a 'honey bloom'. However, in the penultimate stanza, these natural and human images are combined:

> The sunshine from our sky may die,
>   The greenness from Life's tree,
> But ever 'mid the scathe, and storm,
>   Thy nest shall shelter'd be![19]

The sky becomes a metaphor for the loving relationship, and the tree a metaphor for human life. In the final line, in which the loved one is equated with a nest that offers shelter, Massey establishes a parallel between the nest and the human bosom that will resound throughout *Lyrics of Love*. The images of bird and bloom, nest and human love, which are explored in 'To A Beloved One', re-sound throughout *Lyrics of Love*. The image of the flowering bush is encapsulated in the term 'blossom'. The 'bosom'

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[19] Massey, 'To A Beloved One', lines 37-40.

that is presented in 'To A Beloved One' belongs to Misery, but when this image appears in other poems in the collection it denotes a place of safety and comfort; the human equivalent of a bird's nest. This can be seen, for example, in 'A Night Musing'.

In the first stanza of 'A Night Musing' the image of the bosom is connected to the nest through the adjective 'nestling':

> Earth, garnisht bride-like, bares her bosom to the nestling Night,
> Who hath come down in glory from the golden halls of light,
> Ten thousand tender, starry eyes, smile o'er the world at rest,
> The weary world-husht like an infant on its mother's breast!

The simile in line 4 confirms that this use of the word 'bosom' in the opening line intends to suggest that the Earth's relationship to Night is like that of the infant to the mother's breast. Although the bird and his nest are not overtly present in this stanza, Jones' use of 'nestling' evokes the image of birds settling into their nests for the night.

Images of the blossom and bosom echo throughout *Lyrics of Love*. In 'To A Beloved One' the political implications of Massey's presentation of love are made clear. When 'blossom' and 'bosom' re-appear it is usually within poetry that is not overtly political. However, the meaning that is established in this first usage is carried throughout the collection, extending Massey's political argument to *Lyrics* that are devoted only to the celebration of love.

For example, as its title suggests, 'A Lover's Fancy' is a simple poem that celebrates romantic love. Lines 17-18 read: 'Or, in fragrance like a blossom, / Give my life up on her bosom!' recalling the natural image of the 'bird' at home in a 'honey bloom' that appeared in 'To A Beloved One'. This poem is presented in rhyming couplets which emphasise the assonance of blossom and bosom, further connecting Massey's pairing. By linking these terms back to the discussion presented in 'To A

Beloved One', Massey emphasises that it is natural to be engaged in a loving relationship, reasserting the working man's God given right to love and security.

The blossom/bosom pairing appears in five further lyrics of love, re-sounding through 'Ballad', 'Song', 'A Chaunt', 'I Was Not Made Merely For Money Making', and 'Sweet Spirit Of My Love'. These images do not echoingly interconnect in the same way as Blake's images of idyllic *Innocence* have been shown to do; rather the later *Lyrics* are linked back to the first usage of 'blossom' in 'A Lyric of Love'. The distinction here is that Blake's idyllic *Innocence* is created by a combination of interlinked imagery, whereas Massey's first presentation of the blossom/bosom is almost complete, with later instances carrying the full meaning of the earlier poem.[20] Nonetheless, Massey's use of this unusual assonant pairing is very similar to Blake's and it echoes through his collection, appearing in several different poems.

The words blossom and bosom are both frequently used in poetry, particularly poetry published in the Romantic and Victorian era. The English Poetry database reports that 1481 poems published between 1100 and 1953 contain both the word blossom and the word bosom. Significantly, if this date range is limited to 1780 to 1855 (the beginning of the Romantic to the end of the Chartist period) then the database still turns up 1283 entries, showing there was a concentration of these specific words being used poetically at the time that Blake and Massey were writing. However, these words far less frequently appear as a rhymed pairing. Where this does occur the context tends to be straightforward, with bosom denoting little more than the human chest, and blossom referring to a bloom. Blossom does not represent security or

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[20] Blossom and bosom are not used in exactly the same way on each occasion, for example the lines 'There's sorrow for the toiling poor; / On Misery's bosom nurst-' from 'A Lyric of Love', gain clarity from later poems in which the human bosom is paralleled with the bird's nest. This first usage is ironic as the bosom should be a place of safety, therefore Massey's presentation of the image in 'A Lyric of Love' strengthens the sense that working class misery is unnatural.

a nest in these poems, and this sense of nature as a protective society being absent from the poems as a whole. Robert Burns and John Clare make repeated use of this rhymed pairing in their ballad poetry.

Burns has frequently been identified, both by modern commentators and the Chartist movement itself, as one of the movement's most important precursor poets. Kovalev anthologises an article of literary criticism devoted to Burns that was originally published in the *Chartist Circular*. This piece exemplifies the importance that the movement placed on Burns' background and status as a 'self-taught' poet: '[b]orn in a cottage, nursed in poverty, reared in toil, and fed on the coarsest of Scotia's food, he grew up one of the people'. It also focuses in on four poems ('Man was made to Mourn', 'A Man's a Man for a'that', 'The Twa Dogs' and 'A Winter Night') which are presented as evidence of Burns' political position as 'a republican, a democrat; and in principle and practice, an honest Chartist'.[21] However, the poems in which Burns' pairing of blossom and bosom appears are not overtly political. The ballads 'Young Peggy' and Highland Mary' exemplify Burns' usage of this rhyme. These poems are written in a form very close to ballad metre. They are organised into octaves rather than quatrains, but their rhythm rarely deviates from an alternating sequence of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. 'Young Peggy' is written in an ABAB rhyme scheme which emphasises the four-line groupings of a traditional ballad, whilst 'Highland Mary' follows the ABCB pattern of the traditional rural folk ballad. 'Young Peggy' is a straightforward celebration of 'our bonniest lass' (whom, Allan Cunningham reports, Burns had courted unsuccessfully for eight months). The ballad contains tropes that had become clichéd by the Elizabethan period, such as the comparison of Peggy's lips and 'cherries bright'. Cunningham suggests that 'Young

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[21] Kovalev, p. 298, originally from the *Chartist Circular*, Feb. 20 1841.

Peggy' be set to the tune of 'Last Time I Cam O'er the Muir', emphasising the work's potential for vocal performance. In this poem, bosom designates the heart or affections of both the community and Burns, and blossom refers to flowers with which the maid might be adorned:

> Still fan the sweet connubial flame
> Responsive in each bosom,
> And bless the dear parental name
> With many a filial blossom! [22]

Cunningham similarly recommends that 'Highland Mary' be set to a tune, in this case 'Katharine Ogie'. In this poem both blossom and bosom are used in their most straightforward sense, with blossom denoting the flowers of a bush, and bosom describing the narrator's chest:

> How sweetly bloom'd the gay, green birk,
> How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
> As underneath their fragrant shade
> I clasp'd her to my bosom! [23]

In the poem 'Nature's Law' Burns places the blossom and bosom in contrast with political subjects such as 'wars' and 'strife'. Unlike Massey, who presents the subjects of nature and love as integral to the political message of his poetry, in 'Nature's Law' Burns can be seen to draw a separation between these subjects. This contrast is made clear in the opening stanzas:

> Let other heroes boast their scars,
> The marks o' sturt and strife,

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[22] Robert Burns, 'Young Peggy', in *The Works of Robert Burns with His Life*', ed. by Allan Cunningham, (Boston: Phillips, Samson and Company, 1855), lines 29-32. This is a single volume edition of Cunningham's 8 volume collected works, which was considered a key text by the Chartist movement and given away as prizes – see *Northern Star*, May 29th 1847, p.5. All of Burn's poetry is taken from this edition.

[23] Burns, 'Highland Mary', lines 9-12.

> But other poets sing of wars,
> The plagues o' human life!
> Shame fa' the fun: wi' sword and gun
> To slap mankind like lumber!
> I sing his name and nobler fame
> Wha multiplies our number.
>
> Great Nature spoke, with air benign:---
> 'Go on, ye human race;
> This lower world I you resign;
> Be fruitful and increase.
> The liquid fire of strong desire,
> I've poured it in each bosom;
> Here on this hand does Mankind stand.
> And there, is Beauty's blossom!' [24]

Here Burns is actually setting his poetry in opposition to verses that glorify war or document unrest. Whilst this sense of heroic war is distinct from the Chartist fight for the enfranchisement of the working class, Burns is nonetheless championing a poetry that focuses instead on the simple pleasures of nature and love.

The words blossom and bosom frequently appear in the nature poetry of John Clare, where they are used to similar effect. Clare was known to the Chartist movement and his poetry was occasionally reproduced in the Chartist press. The opening to the article 'John Clare, The Peasant Poet', which was published on page 3 of the *Northern Star* on 5th October 1844, concisely conveys the Chartist movement's opinion of the poet:

> POOR CLARE! – who has not heard of the "Village Minstrel" of Northamptonshire, the poor, benighted child of genius, who, a quarter of a century ago delighted us with his untaught muse, and excited our symphathy at his humble portion? Like the lowly but sweetly scented wild-flower, his mission was to breathe fragrance o'er Nature's peaceful retirements.

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[24] Burns, 'Nature's Law', lines 1-16.

This presentation of Clare as a helpless victim of circumstance has been challenged by modern critical accounts such as that of Alan D. Vardy.[25] However, it is evident that the Chartists understood Clare's poetry as apolitical. Whilst the movement admired Clare's motivation and initiative as an autodidact poet of humble birth, this article from the *Star* captures the Chartist reading of Clare's poems as a passive acceptance of his rank and position, deserving of pathos. The poems in which Clare rhymes blossom and bosom are free from political or social commentary; instead, this rhymed pairing facilitates the discussion of romantic love and celebrations of the natural world. For example, in the final stanza of 'Ballad [Where the dark ivy the thorn tree is mounting]' Clare links the admiration of nature to the nostalgia of lost love:

> It grieves me to see the first open May-blossom
> Mary if still the hours 'memberd by thee
> Twas just then thou wisht one to place in thy bosom
> When scarce a peep showd itself open to me [26]

This poem does not follow traditional ballad metre. Like Burns' ballads it is presented in octaves that are broken into four-line groups by a regular ABAB rhyme scheme, rather than being written in a quatrain structure. 'Song [A beautiful flower that bedeckt a mean pasture]' follows a more typical ballad meter of alternating iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter; this poem exemplifies the celebration of nature we find in Clare's poetry:

> O sweet was the eve when I found the fair blossom
> Sure never seemd blossom so fair
> I instant transplanted its charms to my bosom
> & deep has the root gatherd there [27]

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25 See Alan D. Vardy, *John Clare: Politics and Poetry* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
26 John Clare, 'Ballad', in *The Early Poems of John Clare*, ed. by Eric Robinson, David Powell, Margaret Grainger, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), II, lines 13-16. All of Clare's poetry is taken from this edition.

Burns and Clare's poetry is demonstrative of a wider trend in Romantic and Victorian literature. Blake and Massey's politicised representations of nature, and the alignment of the bird's nest and the blossom with the security of the human bosom, are distinct from the other examples of this rhymed pairing that were employed in the same period. Nevertheless, Burns and Clare's usage demonstrates that this kind of poetic language was commonplace within a tradition of rural songs and ballads, and was prevalent in the verse of self-taught poets. Burns and Clare share some aspects of both Blake and Massey's cultural matrices and their work demonstrates one way in which this poetic expression could have become part of the structure of their thought.

Whilst Chapter 3 discussed Jones' use of the ballad form and Chapter 4 identified Blake's poetry as working within an idyllic tradition and engaging with children's verse, Massey's poetry does not generally conform to the traditional structures of the ballad or song. Many of Massey's *Lyrics of Love* employ a simple repeated rhythm and rhyme scheme, but the use of ballad form is rare. It is therefore significant that 'To a Beloved One' is written in a form that is highly comparable to Burns and Clare's ballads. Each eight-line stanza is further divided into four-line groups through the use of an ABAB (or occasionally an ABCB) rhyme scheme, and, with the exception of the opening five beat line, the poem generally follows a pattern of alternating iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter.[28]

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[27] Clare, 'Song', lines 13-16.

[28] The sacred language used in Massey's poetry recalls that which is found in the hymn form. Sanders has recently discovered perhaps the only remaining copy of the *National Chartist Hymn Book*; his article on this volume, and on Chartist hymnody more generally, is forthcoming. Sanders observes that 'many of the hymns in the *National Chartist Hymn Book* encode a Christian cosmogony', exemplifying the 'belief in the world as the work of a Creator-God' ('A Form in Formation'). This belief system underpins Massey's discussions of nature and his politicisation of the natural world. Although hymn form is measured in a different way from poetic form, with a greater focus being placed on the number of syllables within each line, the 8:6:8:6 pattern of Common Meter and 8:8:8:8 pattern of Long Meter

Massey's pairing of blossom and bosom can also be found in 'Ballad' and 'Song'. Whilst their titles clearly signal that Massey had an oral tradition in mind when he composed these poems, their form is indicative of the varied and individual compositions found throughout this collection. In 'Ballad' (which contains both the images bosom and blossom) the bosom is linked to the safety of the bird's nest in the opening lines of the poem's second octave:

> One of God's own darlings was my bosom's nestling dove,
>   With her looks of love, and sunshine, and a voice so sweet and low,
> O! it hallowed all my being, like a canticle of love,
>   And its music yearns through all my memory now:[29]

When scanning this poem it appears that Massey is employing a simple ABAB rhyme scheme, but he is actually using rhyme in a more complex way, which breaks the regular structure that such a form would usually create. In these four lines alone, 'dove' at the end of line 9 rhymes first with 'love' that appears before the caesura in line 10, and then later with 'love' at the end of line 11. Line 10 is aurally linked to line 11 with the opening 'O!' re-sounding the vowel experienced in the line ending 'low'. Massey's lines vary between 7 and 8 beats, which is highly irregular for a ballad.

'Song' is also presented in octaves with the rhymed pairing of blossom and bosom appearing in a very conventional usage in the final four lines:

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produce written texts that are almost identical to quatrains written in alternating lines of strict iambic tetrameter and trimeter, or those in which all lines are written in iambic tetrameter. Furthermore, Sanders identifies an abridged version of William S. Villiers Sankey's 'Men of England, ye are slaves', in the *National Chartist Hymn Book*. This poem was originally published in the *Northern Star* on 29th February, 1840, where there was no suggestion that this poem was intended as a hymn. Sanders' discovery suggests that there is little possibility of discerning between a written text that drew upon the hymn tradition and one that drew upon ballad based purely on a poem's form. As Massey rarely writes in a form that adheres to the traditions of either the ballad or hymn, little can be concluded except to note that the world view implicit in his presentation of nature is one that was shared by many Chartists and that Sanders has recently discovered amongst a collection of Chartist hymns.

[29] Gerald Massey, 'Ballad', *VF*, lines 9-12.

> When life hath no spring-burst of beauty and blossom,
>   Still will I live for thee, darling, and when
> The world shall forsake thee, O turn to my bosom,
>   My heart will forgive thee with "welcome again."[30]

Due to the tetramic structure and regular rhyme scheme the form of this poem is closer to that of the traditional ballad, but the rhythm is complicated by caesuras and sub-clauses such as are seen in lines 14 and 15. Once again Massey has sought to emulate the oral quality of song, but has adapted this form to facilitate the content of his poem rather than following a strict pattern for the purposes of oral effect.

It is evident from the discussions held in the *Northern Star* and *A Chartist Chorus* that the work of self-taught Romantic poets was of interest and importance to the Chartist movement, and that Massey would have been aware of the nature poetry of both Burns and Clare. The rarity with which Massey used the ballad form suggests that he was deliberately engaging in a tradition that was shared with these poets when he composed the *Lyrics of Love*. Therefore, whilst Massey could not have been alluding directly to Blake's discussions of the blossom and bosom, he was drawing, whether consciously or unconsciously, on a poetic expression that had a strong affinity with the traditional rural song. What remains distinct in Massey's poetry is his politicisiation of the natural world and of the subject of human love. Blake's anthropomorphisation of the blossoming bush and birds is complex and unique; there is less of this complexity in Massey's poetry, where human relationships are merely compared to that of the natural, especially the avian, world. However, Massey's presentation of an idyllic society, which is politicised and presented in combination with the contrary *Voices of Love*, creates a strong correspondence between his poetry and Blake's *Songs*, even in the absence of a direct link.

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[30] Gerald Massey, 'Song [Farewell my darling, the daw of to-morrow]', *VF*, lines 12-16.

Spring

The resounding images of blossom and bosom do not form the only point of

correspondence between Blake's idyllic *Innocence* and Massey's *Lyrics of Love*. The

poets' use of the trope of springtime creates a further parallel between the two

collections. The *Lyrics of Love* are characterised by images of natural abundance, and

poems such as 'A Lyric of Love' are clearly set in the spring season. The third stanza

of 'A Lyric of Love' recalls Blake's 'Spring' and 'Nurses Song':

> Merry as laughter thro' the hills
>   Spring dances in my heart, -
> And at my wooing Nature's soul
>   Into her face will start!
> The Queen-moon in her starry bower
>   Looks happier for our love:
> A fierier splendour fills the flower,
>   A mellower coos the Dove.'[31]

Blake's idyllic *Innocence* is firmly situated in the season of Spring. Poems such

as 'Laughing Song' and 'The Ecchoing Green' are framed by illustrations that depict

trees in full leaf. As Makdisi has identified, Blake's text and designs can sometimes be

incongruous, but this design is confirmed by the text of 'Laughing Song', which

begins with the seasonal designation 'When the green woods laugh […]'.[32] Similarly,

the image of blossom forming a secure, protective bed, in 'The Blossom' and 'Night'

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[31] Massey, 'A Lyric of Love', lines 17-24.

[32] Makdisi examines the frequent discontinuity between the text and designs which appear on the same plate: 'the pictures in Blake's books rarely simply illustrate the words that they accompany, and even when they do, such "simplicity" is often confounded. More often, especially in the prophetic books, the words and images seem to operate more or less autonomously, more often than not pulling away from each other and tracing different trajectories' (p. 163). This seasonal motif is occasionally extended into *Experience*. For example, it is winter in 'The Chimney Sweeper' because the blackened child is contrasted with the 'snow' (line 1), and 'The Garden of Love' is described in relation to the loss of flowers and green.

is necessarily set in the Spring; the trees would only blossom for a short season, prior to the Summer and Autumn months when they would bear fruit.[33]

In Massey's poetry Spring is a trope for political and social re-birth: in 'The Three Voices' the future comes '*like* the touch of the soft Spring' [my emphasis]. Blake's 'Spring' poses a challenge to the current social order by offering the present possibility of hope and renewal.[34] Therefore, both poets convey their redemptive visions of an alternative society partly through this seasonal imagery. Springtime is a common theme throughout English poetry and is often used as a hopeful motif imbued with a sense of new beginning. However, whilst images of the Spring season are commonly used to indicate a personal renewal as well as the regeneration of the natural world, both Blake and Massey use Spring to symbolise a specifically political renewal. In Massey, images of Springtime are used to strengthen the argument that labour and reward should be distributed equally and that all men are entitled to a share of leisure, joy and love; this is in keeping with the seasonal context of Blake's idyllic society in *Innocence*. In Blake and Massey's radical poetry Spring becomes a symbol for the revolutionary re-instatement of the God-given order. [35]

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[33] Blake, 'Laughing Song', line 1; 'The Blossom', line 3; 'Night', lines 15-6.

[34] Blake's song to 'Spring' is a celebration of the natural season and is ostensibly apolitical, but outside of its immediate context, 'Spring' is not politically neutral because it forms part of the interrelated web of poetry through which the innocent idyll is conveyed.

[35] The prevelance and specific usage of Spring within Massey's poetry is distinct from the Chartist labour laureates Ernest Jones, W. J. Linton and Thomas Cooper. Jones and Linton mention the Spring within their poetry (Jones most frequently includes the season in *The Battle Day*, this 1855 publication contains far fewer Blakean echoes than his early work. Linton mentions Spring only once in his Chartist poetry, in a straightforwardly descriptive manner at the start of *Bob Thin: The Poorhouse Fugitive*, but it is frequently used in as a conventional non-revolutionary image in his later work). Thomas Cooper mentions the season only twice, once again the Spring is not used to enhance a revolutionary ambition as it is in Blake and Massey's work. Conversely, Massey uses Spring in 109 separate poems, often employing the season as a symbol of revolutionary change.

Fiends of Darkness

This section will present an analysis of Massey's 'A Call To The People 1848' and 'The People's Advent'. These poems contain images of chains and binding and Priestcraft and Kingcraft which can profitably be explored in relation to Blake, but they are particularly interesting because of the way in which they develop the trope of dawn and awakening to create images of Kings and Priests who stand in opposition to revolutionary change as 'fiends of darkness'.

Randall and Sanders have identified the dawning of a new day as a frequently used and somewhat clichéd trope in Chartist poetry. Sanders describes the metaphor of Chartism as dawn as 'familiar (if not hackneyed)', stating that 'tropes of daybreak, light, and awakening recur throughout Chartist poetry'.[36] Similarly, Randall states that depictions of natural change such as 'the purging fire, the emerging sun, the dawn of glad day, the awakening earth' were inherited from Romanticism and were commonly used in Chartist poetry as an analogy or symbol of revolutionary change.[37] John Milton was a significant influence on Romantic and Chartist poets alike. In Book II of *Paradise Lost*, darkness and night are allied with Chaos, and the dawn is described as 'the sacred influence':

> But now at last the sacred influence
> Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven
> Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
> A glimmering dawn; here nature first begins
> Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
> As from her outmost works a broken foe
> With tumult less and with less hostile din,[38]

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[36] Sanders, 'Poetic Agency', p. 114. Maidment has also discussed the Chartists frequent use of images of natural change, stating that they met the challenge 'of describing the unknown, perhaps even unknowable, nature of dramatic political change' through this use of natural analogy (p. 38).
[37] Randall, pp. 177-178.
[38] Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II.1034-1040.

The dawn can be seen here to be holding back Chaos, and it therefore becomes a sign of God's presence as creator.[39] Milton's use of dawn as a hopeful, reassuring image, is a precursor to the Romantic's appropriation of this theme. *Paradise Lost* might be seen as a common cultural thread that was developed by both the Romantics and Chartists in their use of dawn as a symbol for restoration of the 'natural' order.

Therefore, the appearance of dawn imagery in Massey's poetry is not particularly noteworthy in itself. For example, Jones makes use of the trope of dawn in 'Chartists and Liberty' and 'Onward' and it can also be seen in the opening line of 'The Coming Day': 'The midnight hour is passing – The sunrise is at hand'.[40] The images of dawn and awakening in Jones' poetry can be profitably explored in relation to the Chartist use of this trope, and they do demonstrate a Romantic inheritance; however, these images are not particularly Blakean.[41] Conversely, Massey's use of dawn and awakening does recall Blake. Whereas Sanders and Randall conceive of the Chartists' use of dawn as clichéd, this section will demonstrate how Massey develops this trope to express his critique of Priests and Kings. It is Massey's specific development, rather than the metaphor of the new day in general, which carries a resonance of Blake's poetry.

Blake employs the trope of dawn and awakening in the poems 'Introduction' and 'Earth's Answer', which open the *Songs of Experience*. In 'Introduction' the corruption of the present social order is expressed through the plight of the personified 'Earth'. The bard implores the Earth to 'return' and '[a]rise'. Blake conveys the

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[39] In *Paradise Lost* 'Chaos' describes the matter outside of the God-created universe. See *Paradise Lost* II.894-897 and II.910-16.

[40] Sanders, 'Poetic Agency, pp. 114-116.

[41] See Randall who cites M.H. Abrams as having identified these images as common tropes within Romantic poetry, and states that the 'Chartists followed the Romantics in using images of nature as an analogy or symbol for revolutionary change' (pp. 177-178).

current situation through the image of '[n]ight' and 'fallen light', suggesting that a change to the social order would mark the dawning of a new day.[42] In 'Earth's Answer' this trope of dawn and awakening is used in conjunction with other significant images that run through *Songs*. Earth is represented 'chain'd in night'. The fourth and fifth stanzas report the direct speech of the Earth as she contrasts her situation with the joy of springtime, and appeals to the reader to 'Break this heavy chain, / That does freeze my bones around'.[43]

However, Blake's most interesting development of this common trope occurs in the final chorus to *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*:

> Let the Priests of the Raven of dawn, no longer in deadly black, with hoarse note curse the sons of joy.[44]

The image of 'the Raven of dawn' is oxymoronic; the large black Raven is a ubiquitous symbol of death and so its connection with a widely recognised metaphor for renewal, initially seems incongruous. However, the second half of Blake's line clarifies this pairing, describing the blackness of the priest as a deadly curse and placing this in opposition to joy. The Ravens in this image are figures who obscure, rather than herald, the dawn.

Blake's image of the foreboding priest as a figure closely associated with death and darkness has its root in the 'Priests in black gowns' who bind joys and desires in 'The Garden of Love'. The interconnection of Blake's images of Priests in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and the 'Garden of Love' will be discussed in detail in 'The Three Voices' section below. What is significant about these images in relation

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[42] Blake, 'Introduction', *SE*, line 10-15.
[43] Blake, 'Earth's Answer', lines 14-22.
[44] Blake, *MHH*, plate 27.

to Massey's 'The People's Advent' and 'A Call To The People 1848' is that Blake presents the dark figure of the priest in opposition to the trope of dawn and renewal.

The following discussions of Massey's 'The People's Advent' and 'A Call To The People 1848' will explore Massey's depictions of dawn. These images appear in conjunction with images of chains and binding and Priestcraft and Kingcraft. This context facilitates the sense that Massey's poems correspond with Blake, not only because the poems contain a piling up of Blakean imagery, but because the way that these various representations interact.

'The People's Advent'

The opening stanza of 'The People's Advent' makes conventional use of images of natural change to suggest the inevitability of working class victory:

> 'Tis coming up the steep of Time,
>   And this old world is growing brighter!
> We may not see its dawn sublime,
>   Yet, high hopes make the heart throb lighter.
> We may be sleeping in the ground,
>   When it awakes the world in wonder,
> But, we have felt it gathering round,
>   And heard its voice of living thunder,
>   'Tis coming! yes, 'tis coming.

This is an interesting Chartist poem in its own right because rather than rousing the movement to act (such as in the opening line of 'A Call To The People 1848': 'People of England, rouse ye from this dreaming,') or supporting an already active protest ('Then on for the glorious goal, Boys! / We are many, our Tyrants are few'), Massey consoles the movement with a promise that victory will occur, even if not in their lifetime. Massey inverts Shelley's call to 'rise like Lions after slumber' (151), conceding that the Chartists 'may be sleeping in the ground, / When it awakes the

world in wonder'. Although this poem appears among many examples of optimistic, determined verse, in 'The People's Advent' the weight of three defeated Chartist petitions is evident. Brian Maidment has argued that the recitation of Chartist poetry 'often seems to have served a *cathartic* effect rather than a persuasive one, so that […] [r]eading became to some extent a substitute for action.' It would be accurate to describe this poem as 'a self-contained political act'; however, rather than foreclosing the need for action, 'The People's Advent' provides catharsis and reassurance after significant action has taken place.[45] Having failed to achieve the desired political changes through the fact of their 'unvanquishable number' or sustained determined protest, this poem relinquishes a belief in the Chartists' personal agency in favour of the belief that a personified revolution is 'coming' (152) of its own accord.

In this poem Massey conceives of a working class revolution (the People's Advent) through the metaphor of night turning to day. The Chartists can be reassured by the inevitable progress of time; because they are now living in darkness, a new 'dawn' must be on its way. This metaphor is in keeping with the common usage of this natural trope. However, Massey also personifies the earth, conceiving of the world itself as 'old'. This image conveys the fatigue of the late Chartist movement; alongside the breaking of a new dawn, the 'old world' will be renewed and reinvigorated. This image extends the Chartists' concerns and fatigue, metonymically, to the whole world.

In *Songs of Experience* Blake depicts the inertia and stagnation of a repressed society through the plight of the personified 'Earth' who is 'chain'd in night'. Blake imbues his representation of the Earth with a sense of fatigue. The 'Night is worn', suggesting that the Earth has been trapped in darkness for a long time.[46] In the first

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[45] Maidment, p. 37.
[46] Blake, 'Introduction', *SE*, lines 10-12.

stanza of 'Earth's Answer' this external darkness is extended to the Earth herself, who is shown to be aging:

> Her light fled:
> Stony dread!
> And her locks cover'd with grey despair.[47]

Both Blake and Massey use the image of an aging Earth or World, in combination with the trope of dawn and awakening, to express political and social corruption and assert the inevitability of an impending revolutionary change.

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Throughout *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*, Massey identifies Priests and Kings as responsible for working class suffering; for example ' "Kings Are But Giants Because We Kneel' warns: 'Trust not the Priests, their tears are lies, their hearts are hard and cold', stating that 'The Church and State are linkt, and sworn to desolate the land'.[48] In the fourth stanza of 'The People's Advent' (as in A Call To The People 1848) Massey develops the image of a new dawn to identify that Priests and Kings are responsible for the current darkness:

> Out of the light ye Priests, nor fling,
>   Your dark, cold, shadows, on us longer!
> Aside! thou world-wide curse, called King!
>   The People's step, is quicker, stronger,
> […]
>   'Tis coming! yes 'tis coming.

Massey's positioning of 'Priest' and 'King' within an abab rhyme scheme creates a rhyme between 'fling' in line 28 and 'King' in line 30, this creates an aural connection between the Priest and King which recalls Blake's presentation of the false trinity

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[47] Blake, 'Earth's Answer', lines 1-3.
[48] Massey, 'Kings Are But Giants Because We Kneel', lines 9 and 13.

'God & his Priest & King' in 'The Chimney-Sweeper'. However, the strongest resonance of Blake in this stanza is created by Massey's depiction of the Priests and King in relation to light and darkness. By commanding the Priests to step '[o]ut of the light' and the Kings move '[a]side', this stanza suggests that dawn has already broken, but that daylight is being blocked by the Church and State. This recalls Blake's lines from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*:

> Let the Priests of the Raven of dawn, no longer in deadly black,
> with hoarse note curse the sons of joy.[49]

In both Blake and Massey's image the Priest is placed in opposition to light and dawn; in Blake's lines the Priests curse the sons of joy, whereas in Massey's image the King is described as a 'world-wide curse'. In each case the common usage of dawn and awakening as a metonym for revolutionary change is developed to suggest that it is the Priest (or the Priest and King) that stand in opposition to revolution.

A Call To The People 1848

Somewhat paradoxically, in view of the claims made at the beginning of this section, the opening of Massey's 'A Call To The People 1848' is distinctly Shelleyan:

> People of England! rouse ye from this dreaming,
>   Sinew your souls, for Freedom's glorious leap;
> Look to the Future, lo! our day-spring's gleaming,
>   And a pulse stirs, that never more shall sleep[50]

The exclamation 'People of England!' alludes to Shelley's call to the 'Men of England', whilst the suggestion that the working classes should arise from their sleep

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[49] Blake, *MHH*, plate 27.
[50] Massey, 'A Call To The People 1848', *VF*, lines 1-4. Further references are given in the text.

was a central tenet of 'The Mask of Anarchy'. Massey adapts these allusions, firmly linking them to the cyclical imagery of the day and seasons. These Shelleyan images and the trope of natural change had become recognisable calls for revolution within Chartist poetry, and Massey employs these familiar images at the opening of this eleven stanza poem to signify the theme of the piece; he goes on to complicate the promise of a new dawn with a more detailed social critique.

It is the second stanza of this poem that contains a number of Blakean images. Massey conveys the repressive nature of the Church and State by representing these institutions through the combination of a rhetorical pattern of three, the trope of darkness and night, and an example of chain imagery:

> Vampyeres have drain'd the human heart's best blood,
>   Kings robbed, and Priests have curst us in God's name:
> Out in the midnight of the Past we've stood –
>   While fiends of darkness plied their hellish game.
> We have been worshipping a gilded crown,
>   Which drew heaven's lightning-laughter on our head;
> Chains fell on us when we were bowing down,
>   We deem'd our Gods divine, but lo! instead –
> They are but painted clay, -- with morn, the charm has fled! (10-18)[51]

What is particularly interesting about this stanza of 'A Call To The People' is that it extends the familiar tropes of awakening and renewal with which Massey opened this poem, to describe the current corruption of society in terms of 'midnight' and 'darkness':

> Kings robbed, and Priests have curst us in God's name:
> Out in the midnight of the Past we've stood –
> While fiends of darkness plied their hellish game.   (11-13)

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[51] This discussion is focused on identifying the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry. Massey's images of the vampire and painted clay are doing different work in this stanza. This is a complex and interesting poem which could sustain a detailed close textual analysis in its own right; such attention is not possible within the confines of this thesis.

Massey's use of a colon is significant here. The King and Priest are responsible for the midnight of the past; these figures created the darkness that will be overcome by the coming day. This connection is reinforced in the fourth stanza with the statement 'priestcraft stealthy, / Stabs at our freedom through its veil of night' (32-33). This combination of imagery recalls the presentation of Priests in Blake's poetry. In describing the Priests and King as 'fiends of darkness', Massey is making a similar connection to that which characterised Blake's Priests, who appear in 'black gowns', or 'deadly black'. Moreover, in figuring the 'People' standing in 'the midnight of the past' as a result of the 'fiends of darkness', Massey recalls 'the Priests of the Raven of dawn' who 'curse the sons of joy'.

This stanza can also be profitably discussed in relation to other frequently occurring Blakean echoes. In line 11 Massey combines the capitalised Kings, Priest and God for rhetorical effect, this recalls Blake's image of 'God & his Priest & King' in the 'The Chimney Sweeper' from *Songs of Experience*. However, Blake and Massey's images differ in their positioning of God. Blake uses the name 'God' to signify a controlling, paternalistic 'Nobodaddy' who is at the centre of the repressive apparatus of *Experience*.[52] This God stands in contrast to the loving, fraternal divinity of *Innocence*, which is symbolically represented by the Lamb. In Massey's poetry the concept of God is much less complicated. Massey's God is exploited by the Priest and King; these supposedly holy figures, God's representatives on earth, are imbued with irony because they act in God's name as the sources of corruption and suffering. Massey's second use of 'Gods' in this stanza suggests that the Church and State have

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[52] William Blake, 'To Nobodaddy', *Songs and Ballads*, in Erdman, ed., *Complete Poetry and Prose*, p. 471.

become false idols that stand in contrast to, rather than combination with, the divine God. Nonetheless Massey's description follows a pattern that aurally recalls Blake's false trinity, and, like Blake, his conveys the ironic observation of the Priest working in opposition to, rather than on behalf of, that which is holy. [53]

Massey's statement: 'Chains fell on us when we were bowing down' is not uniquely Blakean. As is illustrated in Chapter 2, Shelley, along with other Romantic and Chartist poets, represents the repression of the working class through the image of a chain. Once again it is the piling up of Blakean resonances in this stanza that draws attention to Massey's use of chains. This example does not resonate strongly with any single instance of chains or binding in Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, but Massey's observation that the metaphoric chaining of working man can only take place with their submission and acceptance, corresponds with the description of chaining in 'A Little Boy Lost', where the child can only be bound 'in an iron chain' because of the compliance of the congregation. The appearance of multiple Blakean echoes within the same poem is also crucial to the sense of correspondence with Blake that is created by 'The Three Voices'.

'The Three Voices'

The Blakean echoes that appear in 'The Three Voices' are perhaps the most complex correspondences between Blake and Chartist poetry. In chapter 3 of this

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[53] Blake's positioning of the deity in relation to the state and Church has been discussed in chapter 4, above. The contrast that Blake and Massey draw between the Church and God is also present in William S. Villiers Sankey's 'The Bishops to the Bible' which was published in the *Northern Star* poetry column on February 29th 1840 (p.7). For example, Sankey's final stanza reads: 'I asked what meant such strange debating, / Such echoes – Such responses odd; / And learnt the Bishop was translating / The Bible for the Church of God.' (lines 9-12). Like Massey, Sankey presents a more straightforward conception of God than is found in Blake's highly complex discussions.

thesis 'The Three Voices' was shown to recall Shelley's figure of 'Hope' from 'The Mask of Anarchy', a poem with which the Chartist movement are known to have engaged. This textual interconnection could profitably have been explained through the theory of echo, but it also gained clarity through Ricks' concept of allusion 'in reserve'. 'The Three Voices' contains Blakean resonances that are similarly difficult to describe. However, in the absence of a direct link between Blake and the Chartists texts, these *will* be theorised in terms of echo. In fact, as the section will demonstrate, the exploration of these textual effects would not be supported by theories of allusion or influence. Therefore, the following section will demonstrate the value of the echo theory for facilitating the discussion of oral and aural patterns within poetry. Once again the sense that this poem is corresponding with Blake occurs due to the piling up of different Blakean images within the same text.

Concurrently the discussion will indicate how Blake and Massey's ideas may have been sourced from within a similar cultural matrix. Massey's imagery will generally be shown to be less complex than Blake's, appearing within poems that deliberately present their political message in clear and easily comprehensible terms. As a poet speaking for and to the Chartist movement Massey had a responsibility to reflect Chartist ideals in a straightforward manner. Therefore, Massey's poetry often lacks the ambiguity and rich meaning of Blake's verse.

However, the most obvious difference between Massey's 'The Three Voices' and the Blakean *Songs* with which it resounds is that of poetic form. Whilst Blake adopts a very simple form, drawing upon Children's verse, Massey uses form in inventive and unconventional ways. Chapter 3 has discussed the irregularity of Massey's 19 line stanzas and the way that he centralises lines of varying length to create the image of a winding path across the page. The following discussion will provide further detail of

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how this three stanza structure supports Massey's presentation of the Chartist struggle through the voices of the 'Past', 'Present' and 'Future'.

Direct Quotation?

The first example of apparent direct quotation of Blake in Massey's 'The Three Voices', occurs in lines 9, 14 and 19 where 'the voice of the past' moans and shrieks: '"Weep, weep, weep!"' This voice of despair is reminiscent of Blake's Chimney-sweeper's cry, which appears in line 3 of 'The Chimney Sweeper' in *Songs of Innocence*, and line 2 of the counterpart poem in *Songs of Experience*:

> When my mother died I was very young,
> And my father sold me while yet my tongue
> Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep
> So your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep.
>
> A little black thing among the snow:
> Crying weep weep in notes of woe![54]

As was discussed in the Introduction, 'weep' was a common term within English poetry, but the poetic repetition of this phrase is rare. The three and four-fold repetition of weep appears only eight times, with four of these occasions post-dating Chartism. Amongst these eight occasions Massey and Blake are the only poets to use this repeated poetic phrase to emphasise the aural experience of a cry. In Charles Harpur, Edward Robert Bulwer Lytton, Phillip Marston and Charles Kingsley's poems, 'weep' is used as a description of the physical act of crying rather than as an

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[54] Blake, 'The Chimney Sweeper', *SI*, lines 1-4 and *SE*, lines 1-2.

evocation of a crying sound.[55] In both Blake and Massey's poems the sound 'weep' becomes a key signifier of a central poetic character.

The shared cry of 'weep' is the defining characteristic of the child chimney sweeps depicted by Blake. These contrary poems are narrated by different sweeps; the poems do not simply depict the same child in different stages of personal and political awakening: the child in *Innocence* only becomes a chimney sweep after losing his mother, whilst the sweep in *Experience* still has both parents. Despite their contrasting perspectives, the children are united by a cry that marks both their profession, and their state of physical and spiritual distress. In his account of Blake's 'London', E. P. Thompson suggests that the '"weep", "weep", of the chimney sweeps would have formed the city-dweller's primary experience of these children, stating that 'although we may now be forgetting them, if we were to be transported somehow to eighteenth-century London, these cries would be our first and most astonishing impression.'[56]

Blake uses aural details such as vocal calls and cries throughout *Songs of Innocence and Experience* to define characters and convey social structures and interaction. The 'notes of woe' that identify the chimney-sweepers within the commercial environment of industrial London contrast starkly with the songs of childhood laughter and play that resonate throughout Blake's depiction of the rural idyll in *Songs of Innocence*. The Chimney-sweeper's "weep" sounds as part of a

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[55] Closer consideration of the 70 occasions of the two-fold repetition 'weep, weep' reveals similar trends. For example, during the years that the Chartist movement was active the phrase 'weep, weep' appeared in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 'The Seraphim' (1838) and 'The Fourfold Aspect' (1844), and L.E.L's 'The Zenana' (published posthumously in 1839), none of these poems draw upon the aural experience of this term. Similarly the Chartist labour laureate W. J. Linton used the phrase 'weep, weep' in two of his later poems, written after the poet had distanced himself from his earlier radical involvement. In both 'Claribel' (1865) and 'Amaryllis' (1889) Linton uses 'weep, weep' in a literal sense as a description of crying. Amongst the occasions identified by the English Poetry database, apart from Blake and Massey, only Jonathan Swift makes use of the onomatopoeic quality of 'weep, weep', using a variation of this phrase ('Sleep-ing weep, weep-ing sleep' [line 42]) in the penultimate line of the satirical poem 'Cantata' which ridicules attempts to imitate the sound of music in verse (the exact date of this poem's composition is unknown).

[56] E. P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. 187.

network of children's vocal cries. The aural memory of the 'Merry voice / Infant noise' that was heard in 'Spring' or the chorus of 'Ha, Ha, He' sung by 'Mary Susan and Emily' in 'Laughing Song', emphasises the injustice and exploitation that is signified by the Chimney-sweepers' cry of 'weep'. Defined by his commercial role, the Chimney-sweeper has lost the 'joys' that characterise the 'girls and boys' of the innocent idyll.[57]

When the cry of 'weep' re-sounds in Massey's 'The Three Voices' it appears to be a direct quotation from Blake's *Songs*. Although this cry has lost the dual significance it held in Blake's poem (where the sound weep was created by the child's imperfect articulation of '(s)weep'), the context of Massey's cry initially seems similar to Blake's, as this vocal signature also defines a character within a temporal framework. The three voices to which Massey's title alludes are that of the Past, Present and Future, and the cry of '"weep, weep, weep!"' is the defining characteristic of Massey's voice of the Past. The voice of the Past is said to be travelling 'up a desolate road' (1), but, whilst Massey gives a detailed description of the sound of the voice and the events that it signifies, only a very limited description is given of the 'grim- featured' (12) individual from which it originates. As the title suggests, the personified Past is primarily distinguished from the Present and Future by its voice, and the words '"weep, weep, weep!"' are the only words spoken by this voice. Therefore, both Blake and Massey use the cry of 'weep' to define the figures in their poems.

In 'The Three Voices' Massey is allegorically depicting the sorrow of the past, as part of a progressive model of past woe, present struggle and future joy. When the Chimney-sweeper's cry of woe re-sounds in Massey's 'The Three Voices', it appears within the context of an active political movement; this suffering is described as a past

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[57] Blake, 'Spring', lines 16-17; 'Laughing Song', lines 7-8.

state, with the process of revolution already being underway. In comparing Massey

and Blake's poems, we encounter the same difference in the poets' use of temporality

as has been discussed when comparing Blake and Jones' work. Blake and Massey

conceive of similar models for social change but their cries of 'weep' appear at

different points in the process of revolution and rebirth. The *Songs of Innocence and*

Experience are concerned with identifying social and political injustice. The line '[s]o

your chimneys I sweep & in soot I sleep' [my emphasis] presents a direct challenge to

the ignorance and apathy that Blake perceived in his contemporary society, indicating

that the audience of Blake's *Songs* are currently part of the problem.[58] Conversely,

Massey addresses Chartism as a movement that is already fighting for 'Liberty'; he

places the agency for social change and future joy with the working men, in the

present day:

> 'Tis the voice of the Present – it bids us, my brothers,
> Be freemen: and then, for the freedom of others-
> Work, work, work![59]

Influence, Allusion and Echo

Massey's apparent direct quotation of Blake's Chimney-sweeper's cry raises a

number of vital questions about how literary inheritance operates in poetry. Whilst this

echo initially seems to re-open the possibility that Massey had actually read Blake's

Songs of Innocence and Experience during the time that the Chartist movement was

active, this suggestion is undermined not only by the strong historical evidence to the

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[58] Blake, 'The Chimney Sweeper', *SI*, line 4. There is a consensus among Blake scholars that *Songs of Innocence and Experience* were framed in response to a contemorary market in books of verse for children. Robert Rix states that 'Blake was deeply committed to writing a book for the benefit of children', discussing the contrasting style of similar books of contemporary verse (p. 112), whilst Glen argues: '[i]t seems clear that *Songs of Innocence*, with its colourful designs and its introductory promise that "Every child may joy to hear", was aimed at a known (and growing) market of parents from the polite classes' (p. 9).
[59] Massey, 'The There Voices', lines 31-33.

contrary, but also by the way that Blake and Massey's cries of 'weep' resonate. Although Blake and Massey both use the cry of 'weep' to identify and define characters, and their emphasis on the aural experience of the cry sets these images apart from other repetitions of 'weep' in English poetry, there is little similarity between the broader poetic context in which these cries resound. Massey is not developing Blake's image, but nor is his 'Voice of the Past' a derivative or imitative duplication of Blake's Chimney-sweeper; Massey uses the same cry as Blake to different, and largely unrelated, effect.

Both poets are lamenting the exploitation of the working-classes within an unjust society. However, Blake uses the cry of 'weep' to specifically highlight the mistreatment of child chimney sweeps. Conversely, Massey's poem does not mention chimney sweeps or discuss the issue of child-labour. With its collective addresses to 'Yoke-fellows' (29), 'brothers' (31) and 'freemen' (32), 'The Three Voices' strives to present a *collective* working class; no distinction is made between the working age of those being addressed, and various professions are united by the assertion that the singular 'Voice of the Present' awakes from 'Mine, Forge and Loom' (26). This collective representation does not exclude chimney sweeps, but the focus of Massey's poem is distinct from Blake's.

Due to the way that Massey's echo of Blake operates within the context of his poem, it cannot be usefully conceptualised either as allusion or misprision. Chapter 1 of this thesis has presented Ricks' and Hollander's discussions of allusion, demonstrating how emphasise the crucial importance of engagement with, and development of the original poetic context. Ricks describes allusion as 'stagnant' when there is 'no crepitating discrepancy between what [the poet] takes and what he makes'. He expands this concept to argue that '[a]n allusion predicated a source (no

coincidence), but identifying a source is not the same as postulating an allusion, for a source is not necessarily called into play by its beneficiary.'[60] In her discussion of Traditional Influence, Mary Orr supports the idea that development of the original is central to the process of poetic allusion. Quoting from E.E. Kellett's *Literary Quotation and Allusion* (1933), Orr states that allusion 'extrapolates beyond its attribution to create "a new entity greater than any of its constituent parts".'[61] Massey's cry of 'weep' cannot be conceived of as collaborative allusion, but nor can it be dismissed as stagnant. Ricks' identification of stagnant allusion is predicated upon a similarity in the context of the poetic image, with Ricks warning against 'too much of a willed likemindedness'. Whilst Ricks' discussions of allusion have been usefully applied to the exploration of Shelleyan imagery in Chartist poetry that was held in Chapter 2, due to the difference in the contexts of Blake and Massey's cry, this theoretical approach is inappropriate on this occasion.

Although there are many differences between the model of allusion presented by Christopher Ricks, and Harold Bloom's earlier theory Influence, these approaches both emphasise the recognition of engagement and development between texts. For Ricks, development occurs when the poet 'calls into play' his predecessor's words, for Bloom, the poem is itself a recognisable misreading of a previous poem. Bloom places particular importance on a poet's ability to supersede his precursor: 'strong poets make [poetic] history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves. […] Weaker talents idealize; figures of capable imagination appropriate for themselves.'[62] As has been discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, Bloom's theory does not depend upon a direct relationship between two poets (that is, the ephebe

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[60] Ricks, p. 53 and p. 157.
[61] Mary Orr, p. 139.
[62] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 5.

having direct knowledge of the precursor's work); although he does not sufficiently

demonstrate or explain the implications of his statement in terms of critical practice,

Bloom asserts that 'an ephebe's best misinterpretation may well be of poems he has

never read'.[63] As Graham Allen explains in *Harold Bloom – A Poetics of Conflict*:

> Bloom's point is that when we begin to understand poems as
> misreadings of prior poems then our conception of what a poem *is*
> changes radically [...] Poems are "relational events", "inter-texts"
> which can only be understood "antithetically; that is, in terms of
> their relationship with other poems'.[64]

The relationship between poems is central to Bloom's theory, in each of Bloom's six

revisionary ratios this relationship is conceived of in terms of interaction, development

and correction; none of Bloom's revisionary ratios allow for the kind of repetition of

'weep' that occurs in Massey's 'The Three Voices', where only the word itself signals

an engagement with the precursor text, whilst the context bears no similarity. This is

explained more explicitly by Bloom in his later work *Kabbalah and Criticism*:

> Only weak poems, or the weaker elements in strong poems,
> immediately echo precursor poems, or directly allude to them. The
> fundamental phenomena of poetic influence have little to do with the
> borrowings of images or ideas, with sound-patterns, or with other
> verbal reminders of one poet by another. A poem is a deep
> misprision of a previous poem when we recognize the later poem as
> being absent rather than present on the surface of the earlier poem
> and yet still being *in* the earlier poem, implicit or hidden *in* it, not yet
> manifest, and yet *there*.[65]

Therefore, whilst Massey's 'weep' cannot be conceived of as strong misreading, it

does in fact meet Bloom's criteria for weak poetic echo. This provides an excellent

example through which the assertion made in Chapter 1 - that Bloom's theory cannot

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[63] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 70.
[64] Allen, *Harold Bloom*, p. 19.
[65] Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, p. 33.

productively explicate the tensions between Blake and Chartist poetry - can be explored. This is an echo that occurs between Massey's work and a poem 'he has never read'. Whilst Bloom specifically conceived of this kind of indirect poetic inheritance taking place in strong poetry (possibly the 'ephebe's best' work[66]), that does not preclude the possibility that, according to Bloom, a weak misreading could occur in the absence of a direct poetic link. The resounding of 'weep' in Massey's poem could certainly be categorised as 'a verbal reminder of one poet by another' and it might be fair to say, based on this single poetic echo, that the two poets' work is not engaged in a more meaningful relationship.[67] Applied on its own, Harold Bloom's theory of influence would not enrich or explain the textual effect that can be observed in Massey's poem, but rather allow Blake and Massey's shared used of 'weep' to be quickly dismissed. However, this echo does not appear in isolation, as this section will demonstrate, it is one of five correspondences between Blake and Massey within the same poem. The reader does not encounter this poetic effect alone, but rather as one instance in a sequence of similarities. Although Bloom's theory does allow for more than one moment of correspondence occurring within a poem (with it being possible for 'weaker elements' to occur with 'strong poem[s]'), it does not provide us with a sufficient, useable critical framework through which a multiplicity of contrasting correspondences might be explored and explained.[68]

This first correspondence between Blake's poetry and Massey's 'The Three Voices' provides a clear example of why my application of the term 'echo' is not being used as a simple substitute for 'allusion', 'influence' or 'intertext' in the absence of a direct link between poets and texts. Rather 'echo' denotes an entirely different

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[66] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p. 70.
[67] Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, p. 33.
[68] Bloom, *Kabbalah and Criticism*, p. 33.

textual effect that must be judged in new terms. These are not just correspondences with Blake that occur despite the Chartists having no knowledge of Blake's poetry; they are correspondences which operate in a different way from influence. This is one of five correspondences in 'The Three Voices' that are difficult either to pin down or dismiss, but are none the less present.

Whilst Massey's use of 'weep' cannot have come directly from Blake and cannot be profitably considered in terms of influence or allusion, the examination of other poetic uses of 'weep' suggests the availability of this phrase within Massey's cultural matrix. Two of the eight occurrences of 'weep, weep, weep' in English poetry precede Massey's 1851 publication of 'The Three Voices'. In addition to Blake, Kingsley used this phrase in his 1838 drama *A Saint's Tragedy* and his 1850 novel *Alton Locke*, which was a fictional autobiography that followed the life of the tailor and Chartist poet of the same name.

Kingsley attended his first Chartist rally in 1838 and was known to and well regarded by the Chartist movement. He took holy orders in 1842 and in his position as curate, took an active interest in the conditions of his working class parishioners in Eversley, Hampshire. Anne Graziano reports that:

> Although he at one point claimed to be a Chartist in his effort to convince workers of his sympathy, Kingsley was part of a group of Christian socialists who ultimately felt that aristocratic leadership was necessary to initiate reform and direct working class interests.[69]

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[69] Anne Graziano, 'The Death of the Working-Class Hero in "Mary Barton" and "Alton Locke"', *Journal of Narrative Theory*, 29 (1999), 135-157 (p.136).

Modern criticism of *Alton Locke* suggests that Kingsley's indirect experience of working class conditions is reflected in his presentation of the Chartist struggle.[70] Nonetheless, the Chartist movement can be seen to have embraced Kingsley's novel and accepted his politics: the *Northern Star* advertised the availability of a 'splendid likeness' of the Reverend Charles Kingsley for the price of 3d.;[71] presented detailed and positive reports of his sermons on the situation of the working-class;[72] and in a review of September 1850, described *Alton Locke* as a 'remarkable and admirable exposition' and its author as having an 'intimate knowledge of the actual conditions and hardships of the working class' which was 'perfectly marvellous for a person occupying his position'.[73] Massey was aware of both Kingsley and his novels and, as is indicated in an advertisement in the *Northern Star*, both men contributed to the *Christian Socialist* periodical.[74]

Kingsley's use of the repeated phrase 'weep' occurs at the very end of *Alton Locke* in a poem left in place of a suicide note by the departing poet. In the final paragraphs of Alton's first person narrative Kingsley reveals the fictional composition of these lines in response to hearing 'the spirit-stirring marching air of the German workman students', which begins with the line: 'Thou, thou, thou and thou'. Alton is shown to be very impressed with this song, thinking 'What a glorious metre! Warming one's whole heart into life and energy! If I could but write such a metre!' On the facing page, under the title 'My Last Words' Alton's final poem is presented. It opens

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[70] For example Richard Menke emphasises the detachment of Alton from 'collective experiences of working-class'. He states that 'Kingsley's hero wears his working-class identity like a baggy coat', stating that the author 'distances his hero from working-class identity and emphasizes his individual drama'. 'Cultural Capital and the Scene of Rioting: Male Working-Class Authorship in "Alton Locke", *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 28 (2000), 87-108

[71] *Northern Star*, 27th September 1851, p. 4.

[72] *Northern Star*, 'Chartism in the Pulpit', 28th June 1851, p.4.

[73] *Northern Star*, 7th September , 1850, p.4.

[74] *Northern Star*, 4th October 1851, p. 4.

with the line 'Weep, weep, weep and weep' and this rhythmic pattern is mirrored in the first line of the second verse where 'weep' is replaced with 'down' and in the third and final verse where it is replaced with 'up'.

Whilst Kingsley does discuss the aural experience of the term 'weep', this is in relation to poetic form; he considers the word's placement and repetition within the poem but not its individual aural effect. As with the other examples of 'weep' discussed above, Kingsley's usage does not draw upon the word's onomatopoeic effect. In this respect Massey's usage remains distinct from his contemporary, finding precedent only in Blake.

Although Massey's 'The Three Voices' contains no evidence of allusion to Kingsley (Massey draws upon none of the context of his predecessor's poem and presents the repeated term in a different rhythmic pattern), the presence of 'weep, weep, weep and weep' in Kingsley's poem does provide evidence of this kind of poetic formation within Massey's cultural matrix. It is significant that whether Kingsley's narrative is imagined, or is a report of the author's actual experience, it states that this poetic pattern was composed in response to hearing a German workers song. Moreover, Kingsley's other use of 'weep, weep, weep' (the only other printed usage preceding the publication of Massey's 'The Three Voices') is spoken by the character Elizabeth in *The Saint's Tragedy* as an expression of sorrow upon contemplating the working classes condition.

Kingsley's use of this poetic pattern suggests that it is representative of the form of working class songs and ballads. The Chartists accepted the likeness of a Chartist poet, and of Chartist poetry, presented by Kingsley. 'My Last Words' is a representation of a culture that originated in oral forms, and it might well record a poetic pattern that has not been entirely witnessed in print. This section has shown

how Massey's use of 'weep, weep, weep' appears to be quoted from Blake's 'The Chimney Sweeper' poems, but cannot be described as allusion, not only because Massey was unaware of Blake's verse, but because 'The Three Voices' draws upon little of the context found in 'The Chimney Sweeper'. The theory of echo facilitates the discussion of this image whilst the historical context of the poetic pattern 'weep, weep, weep' reveals a comparable usage within Massey's immediate poetic culture, suggesting the availability of this kind of poetic pattern within a radical cultural matrix. However, Massey's 'weep' is of interest not as an isolated example of a Blakean echo, but as part of a succession that appear within 'The Three Voices'.

'Merrily, merrily, merrily'

The motif of Springtime and renewal has been discussed above as an example of the common trope of nature as an image for revolutionary change. However, Massey's poetry makes extended use of this particular motif; his use corresponds with Blake's poetry specifically, as well as recalling Romanticism in general. The sense that Massey's 'Voice of the Past' is quoting Blake's Chimney-sweeper's cry is strengthened by the close correspondence between Blake's song to 'Spring' and Massey's presentation of the 'Voice of the Future'. In lines 42-43 Massey describes the effect that the voice of the Future has upon the listener, through the chorus: 'Merrily, merrily, merrily! / It comes like a touch of the soft Spring, unwarping.' This recalls Blake's Song of *Innocence*, 'Spring', which has a repeated chorus that re-sounds at the end of each of the poem's three stanzas: 'Merrily / Merrily Merrily to welcome in the Year'.[75] Massey also structures his poem around three repeated choruses, but the proclamation 'Merrily, merrily merrily!' appears only once, at the

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[75] Blake, 'Spring, *SI*, lines 8-9.

beginning of the third and final stanza. Nonetheless, Blake and Massey's exclamations are almost identical, and both are announced as a cry of regeneration in response to the coming of 'Spring'.

As was explained in the Introduction, in English poetry the repetition of 'merrily' very rarely appears in connection with descriptions of Spring; of the four occasions upon which this combination does occur, only Blake usage precedes Massey's. However, the two-fold repetition 'merrily, merrily' can be found in several poets who were known influences upon, or contemporaries of, Massey. For example, in 'The Deformed Transformed', Byron's Caesar proclaims: 'Merrily! merrily never unsound, / Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground!'[76] The phrase also appears in the chartist poetry of W. J. Linton and Ebenezer Jones. Linton's poem 'Bob Thin or The Poorhouse Fugitive', which concludes with the lines:

> Laughing there continually,
> In the ever-rocking light
> Nursing their hilarity,---
> Merrily, merrily.
> And merrily the streamlet singeth,
> As on and onward aye it springeth:
> Ever abroad its song it flingeth,
> Gloriously.[77]

Ebenezer Jones uses this phrase in his 1843 poem 'To A Personation Of Ariel At The Theatre'.[78] This third example not only reveals a Shakespearean source which Blake

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[76] George Gordon N. Byron, *The Deformed Transformed* (J. and H.L. Hunt, 1824), Part 1 Scene 1, lines 566-567.

[77] W. J. Lintion, *Bob Thin or The Poorhouse Fugitive*, (British Library, 2010), lines 274-281. Although these lines contain the word 'springeth' which has simliarities to Spring, it has nto been counted amongst the poems that contain these two features because the word is being used here to mean 'to move with a sudden jerk or bound' (*OED*) rather than to denote the season.

[78] Ebenezer Jones was described by Ashraf as 'the most significant pioneer of Chartist poetry' (p.153). His poetry was regarded with a mixture of admiration and critique within the Chartist movement, as can be seen for example the critical extract from *The Labourer*, originlaly published in 1847 and reproduced on pp. 313-4 of Kovalev's *Anthology*: 'We are ready to give him credit for great power at intervals,

and Massey may have developed to form their own images, but also acts as evidence

that this source was influential to a fellow Chartist poet. Jones wrote:

> We saw thine eyelids quiver beneath the springing
> Anew to thine heart, of the memory of thy life,
> Where the bee sucks, where summer sounds are ringing;
> Merrily, merrily abandoning, rose thy strain,
> And our hearts did sink with bliss e'en while thy flight did pain.[79]

As Jones' title suggests, these lines make deliberate allusion to Ariel's song in Act V,

Scene I of *The Tempest*:

> Where the bee sucks, there suck I:
> In a cowslip's bell I lie;
> There I couch, when owls do cry:
> On the bat's back I do fly
> After summer merrily.
> Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
> Under the blossom that hangs on the bough! [80]

This song appears toward the end of *The Tempest* and is sung by the fairy Ariel in

celebration of his re-found freedom, after being released from Prospero's servitude.

The play is resolved when Ferdinand and Miranda return to Naples, marking the

restitution of the island to its natural owners. New Historicist critics such as Greenblatt

and Brown have read this play in a post-colonial context, viewing Prospero as a

tyrannical invader. [81]

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great originality at times, and for the production of a few little pieces which are among the sweetest
gems we have for some time met. But most of his subjects – a grave fault – are unhappily chosen'.
[79] Ebenezer Jones, *Studies of Sensation and Event* (Charles Fox, 1843), lines 50-54.
[80] William Shakespeare, 'The Tempest', in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by
Stephen Greenblatt et al. (Norton, 1997) V.I.88-96.
[81] See Greenblatt, 'Invisible Bullets' in *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles:
University of California Press, 1988), pp. 21- 65, and Paul Brown, '"This thing of darkness I
acknowledge mine": The *Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism' in *Political Shakespeare*, ed. by
Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, second edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press,
1994), pp. 48-71.

As was stated in Chapter 2, Shakespeare's plays are known to have been admired by both Blake and the Chartist movement and can therefore be understood as an influential component in both of Blake and Massey's cultural matrices. It is possible that both poets were either knowingly or unconsciously adapting Ariel's song in their choruses of 'Merrily, merrily to welcome in the Year' and 'Merrily, merrily, merrily it comes like a touch of the soft Spring'. However, Blake and Massey use Spring as a symbol of political renewal and draw upon a Springtime motif to strengthen the argument that all men are entitled to the leisure and joy expressed in idyllic *Innocence* and *Lyrics of Love*. Ariel sings 'After summer merrily. / Merrily, merrily' and this seasonal difference between Shakespeare, Blake and Massey's songs is indicative of a crucial distinction in the way that freedom is being presented.

Although *The Tempest* can be read as a political play about colonisation and tyranny, Ariel's song is not political or revolutionary in itself. The fairy celebrates being at one with nature without external interference, but his song does not contain active images through which he has achieved this freedom. Blake's idyllic *Songs* celebrate innocence as a present possibility, but even within the collection of *Innocence* (if the *Experience* poems are discounted) this state occurs alongside an alternate possibility of social injustice, and political and religious tyranny. When Springtime is celebrated in 'The Three Voices' with a chorus of 'merrily', it is very clearly occurring in a future state which has been striven for through revolutionary protest in the present, in response to a tyrannical past. Therefore, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* can be suggested as the thread within Blake and Massey's cultural matrices through which an almost identical combination of terms came to produce a shared image in the absence of a direct textual link. Blake and Massey can be seen to be

alluding to and adapting Shakespeare's image: changing the Summer season to Spring and emphasising the political implications of *The Tempest* to present a radical chorus that contained the revolutionary potential expressed by their specific use of Springtime.

Unlike the Voice of the Past's cry of 'weep', which carries little of the context or implications of Blake's Chimney-sweepers cry, the exclamation 'Merrily, merrily, merrily! / It comes like the touch of the soft Spring', not only appears to be a quotation of Blake, but also appears to engage with the context of his song. If it were not for the lack of a direct link between the two poets, Massey's description of the Voice of the Future could be interpreted as an allusion to Blake. The interconnected echoes of Blake's innocent idyll would enrich Massey's image of the future coming 'like the […] Spring'. Massey presents an encouraging, optimistic view of a future that can be created through resistance and 'work' (28) in the present, but his vision for this society is only roughly drawn. Massey's 'Future' is imagined in terms of inspirational music: 'It comes like a choir of the seraphim, harping, / Their gladsomest music around us', 'It makes the heart leap to its trumpet call' (45-46). This is compatible with the music of the 'Flute' and birds that is described in Blake's 'Spring', as well as the focus on music and singing that is introduced as 'Piping' in the 'Introduction' to *Songs of Innocence*, and carried throughout the collection, re-sounding in the 'merry bells' of 'The Ecchoing Green' and the 'sweet chorus of Ha, Ha, He' in 'Laughing Song'.[82] Overall, Blake and Massey use the motif of Spring in a similar way, but Blake's vision of a regenerated, communitarian society, is more fully formed that Massey's. Although Massey could not have been alluding directly to Blake, the apparent quotation of Blake's chorus to Spring in 'The Three Voices' draws a connection

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[82] Blake, 'Introduction', *SI*, line 1, 'The Ecchoing Green', line 3, 'Laughing Song', line 12.

between these two motifs allowing Blake's vision of idyllic *Innocence* to complete

Massey's hopeful representation of the 'Future'.

It is significant there are only two examples of apparently direct quotation of

Blake in Chartist poetry, and they both occur in 'The Three Voices'. The combination

of these two echoes not only strengthen one another, they also serve to bring a cluster

of more complex correspondences into focus. The remaining three Blakean echoes in

Massey's poem operate in unexpected ways; correspondences between 'The Three

Voices' and Blake's poetry occur both as a mis-hearing and through the 'always

already absent presence' of poetic trace.[83] There is no existing critical precedent

through which to explore these remaining connections but they can be conceived of in

terms of echo.

Poetic Trace in Blake and Massey's image of the Priest

In lines 6-7 of 'The Three Voices' Massey employs an extended simile to describe

the voice of the past, drawing a comparison between its sound and:

> the breaking of hearts, chains clanking, men groaning,
> Or chorus of ravens, that croak among tombs.   (6-7)

Massey's description makes no direct mention of priests or religion, and yet this

sequence of imagery, and the depiction of ravens and tombs in particular, recall

Blake's portrayal of priests in 'The Garden of Love' and in *The Marriage of Heaven*

and Hell:

> And Priests in black gowns, were walking their rounds,
> And binding with briars my joys & desires.   (11-12)

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[83] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Translator's Preface', in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, ed. and trans. by Spivak (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins Press, 1977), p. xvii.

> Let the Priests of the Raven of dawn, no longer in deadly
> black, with hoarse note curse the sons of joy.[84]

The raven, as a carrion bird, is readily associated with themes of death and so becomes a common trope of ill omen in English poetry.[85] The images that make up Massey's line find some precedent in the book of Isaiah and in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. However, it is Massey's combination of the image of ravens not simply with death, but specifically with tombs, which draws a correspondence between this image and Blake's.

As was discussed in Chapter 3, Chapter 35 of the book of Isaiah figures the restitution of the Israelites to the Promised Land, partly through the image of a highway that would allow safe passage back to Zion through the 'solitary' wilderness of Edom. In verse 9 Isaiah assures the Israelites of the safety of this highway, saying: 'No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there'. Although this passage asserts the absence of 'ravenous beasts' rather than the presence of ravens, the combination of the highway and the aural allusion to the raven does have parallels with Massey's 'desolate road' 'where mankind have trodden the byeway of blood', and the voice of the past comes 'like a chorus of ravens'. Massey combines imagery in a similar way to that which is found in book 35 of Isaiah (though there are no tombs or allusions to a graveyard), but uses the image of the raven in an effectively opposite role: to evoke the trials of the past, in the same way as the images of blood spilt whilst striving.

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[84] Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, plate 27.
[85] See, for example, John Milton, 'L'Allegro', in *The Complete Shorter Poems*, ed. by John Carey, 2nd edn (Longman, 2007), lines 1-5; Edgar Allen Poe, 'The Raven' (1845).

In *Macbeth* Shakespeare uses the raven's croak as an ill omen, prefiguring the subversive overthrow and murder of King Duncan. Lady Macbeth announces 'The raven himself is hoarse / That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan / Under my battlements.'[86] This is the image through which Lady Macbeth declares her intention to overthrow the existing social order, essentially opening up a radically subversive space within Shakespeare's play. Although this subversion is ultimately contained through the punishment of the Macbeths and the restoration of the hereditary monarchy, Greenblatt highlights the way that such radical spaces in Shakespeare's texts nonetheless allow alternative social conditions to be imagined:

> in the very act of homage to the great formal structures [here, that of
> the established monarchy], there open up small but constant
> glimpses of the limitations of those structures, of their insecurities,
> of the possibility of their collapse.[87]

Spaces such as the 'fateful entrance' of Duncan in *Macbeth* were particularly suggestive to radical political thinkers such as Blake and the Chartist movement. Similarly, Nick Rawlinson has argued that for Blake: 'Shakespeare's work was visionary in that his reading of the world was imaginative and transformational.'[88] However, Massey cannot be seen to be alluding directly to Shakespeare in his rendering of the ravens croak; in Massey we find ravens among tombs, with the battlements from *Macbeth* being absent. Therefore, this source can be identified as one that may have influenced the structure of Massey's thought, but the poet cannot be described as alluding to Shakespeare because the vital element of authorial intent is not indicated.

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[86] William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Stephen Greenblatt et al. (Norton, 1997), I.5.36-38.
[87] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, pp. 297-298.
[88] Rawlinson, p. 48.

Before exploring the way in which Blakean images of ravens and tombs re-sound in Massey's poem, it will be necessary to discuss how Blake's depictions of Priests echoingly interconnect. There are a number of similarities between these two extracts from Blake. Although these depictions of priests do not appear within the same collection of poetry, they are connected, and impact upon one another just as the interconnected imagery within the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* has been shown to do.

Priestcraft is a common theme within Blake's poetry. However, among the numerous depictions of priests that appear throughout Blake's oeuvre, there is a particular connection between the descriptions of priests in 'The Garden of Love' and the 'Chorus' to 'A Song of Liberty' in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*; these poems explore priestcraft through a related group of images and associations. It is not possible to place a precise date on the composition of 'The Garden of Love' or the 'Chorus' to 'A Song of Liberty'. However, the broader estimations that can be deduced from Blake's manuscript drafts and publication announcements suggest that these two images were developed concurrently. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* was begun in 1790 and completed between 1792 and 1793, and 'The Garden of Love' was recorded in Blake's notebook between 1790 and 1792, being advertised as part of a separate booklet containing the *Songs of Experience* in 1793 and published under the combined title page of *Songs of Innocence and Experience* in 1794.[89]

In each poem, priests are strongly associated with the colour black. In 'The Garden of Love' the connection between 'black gowns' and death remains implicit, but this impression is supported by the description of priests 'walking their rounds',

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[89] Erdman, ed., *Complete Poetry and Prose*, p. 801 and p. 791. Erdman has suggested that 'The Garden of Love' is a fair copy of an earlier draft, showing how the notebook copy of 'The Garden of Love' is almost identical to the final version. (p. 795).

'among tomb-stones where flowers should be' (10-11). In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* the priests are described 'in deadly black', making the connection between black and death explicit.

In both of these textual moments Blake is portraying a shift between one state of being and another. 'The Garden of Love' is filled with the lost innocence of the rural idyll; the priests' presence is described in terms of the natural features of 'the green' and 'flowers' that they have usurped. Conversely, in the final 'Chorus' of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, the description of priests is interrupted by the words 'no longer'; the syntax of these lines disavows the dominance and authority of Priestcraft and religion, even as it describes it:

> Let the Priests of the Raven of dawn, no longer in deadly black,
> with hoarse note curse the sons of joy. Nor his accepted brethren
> whom, tyrant calls free; lay the bound or build the roof. Nor pale
> religious letchery call that virginity, that wishes but acts not!
> For everything that lives is Holy.[90]

This closing section of *The Marriage* conveys a hopeful affirmation of change. Unlike the temporal structure of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, in which the possibility of change is asserted by describing contrary states in the present tense, this 'Chorus' simultaneously describes injustice, and confines it to the past. Despite the contrasting shifts that are taking place in each extract, both descriptions place priests in opposition to 'joy'; the priests' association with blackness and death denotes their spiritual corruption, and conveys an absence of both energy and inspiration.

In discussing the Blakean echoes in Jones' poetry I have expanded upon Glen's argument that the *Songs of Innocence* 'echoingly interconnect', to demonstrate that echoing interconnectivity is vital to the creation of meaning in *Songs of Innocence and*

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[90] Blake, *MHH*, plate 27.

Experience; key images echo throughout the collection, but more importantly, the concepts and associations that form these images are created through the contrasting and interrelated contexts in which they resound. This model can be extended beyond the confines of *Songs*, Blake's imagery interrelated across his oeuvre and the Priests in 'The Garden of Love' and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* provide one example of these interrelations can create a trace of one image in another.[91]

In describing the interconnections in Blake's poetry as 'trace', I am using a term that carries a specific meaning within critical theory. Derrida uses the term trace to denote the 'always already absent presence' of other signs, which the differential sign is defined against and produced in relation to.[92] Derridean trace refers not to complex images, but to the components of language, the individual signs through which writing is formed. My use of this term is distinct from Derrida's concept, I use 'trace' to suggest that two images are defined in relation to one another and create meaning, not only through their difference, but through their interconnection; each image leaves an imprint of itself on the other. However, this idea of imprinting can also be usefully described as an 'absent presence'. In the preface to her English translation of *Of Grammatology*, Gayatri Spivak explains that 'The structure of the sign is determined by the trace or track of that other which is forever absent.'[93]

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[91] Makdisi also conceives of the interrelated imagery in Blake's oeuvre in terms of poetic traces, asserting the existence of virtual network of connections, waiting to be activated by the engaged reader. However, his usage is different from my own. Makdisi demonstrates this model through the discussion of the relationship between text and design in Blake's illuminated books; the contrasting but connected imagery within *Songs of Innocence and Experience*; and through the exploration of repeated lines of poetry in different poetic works. Although Makdisi states that a 'virtual network of traces' connects 'different illuminated books', the interconnection of different but related imagery across Blake's oeuvre is not explicitly demonstrated (pp. 164-167).

[92] Spivak, p. xvii. In *Of Grammatology* Derrida states: 'differences appear among the elements or rather produce them, make them emerge as such and constitute the *texts*, the chains, and the systems of traces. These chains and systems cannot be outlines except in the fabric of this trace or imprint'. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 65.

[93] Spivak, p. xvii.

Blake's description of 'priests in black gowns' carries the trace of the raven, which is an absent presence in this image – the description of the priests' gowns make these figures resemble a raven, with the gown recalling the ravens wings. Similarly, Blake's image of ravens recalls the graveyard and carries the absent presence of this image – the deadly black of the Priests of the Raven of dawn, point towards the grave. These images are defined in relation to, and gain meaning from, one another; the image of the priest and the raven, and the graveyard, become synonymous.

<div align="center">*</div>

Massey's 'chorus of ravens that croak among tombs' makes manifest the traces between Blake's images of 'priests in black gowns […] among tomb stones where flowers should be' and 'ravens of dawn in deadly black'. It is precisely because Blake's poetic imagery echoingly interconnects that it appears to re-sound in Massey's poetry. To a reader familiar with Blake's work, the priest is conspicuously absent from 'The Three Voices' because Massey's poem combines the thematic and aural features associated with the interconnected instances in Blake, but not the central figure (i.e. the Priest).

The priests in 'The Garden of Love' and 'A Song of Liberty' are placed in opposition to joy. Similarly Massey's 'chorus of ravens' are synonymous with heartbreak, imprisonment and pain: '[…] the breaking of hearts, chains clanking, men groaning, / *Or* chorus of ravens, that croak among tombs'[my emphasis]. Massey's description of ravens focuses on aural details, with the word 'chorus' conveying a sense of numbers and the idea of common purpose, and the onomatopoeic word 'croak' emphasising the ravens' association with death. The *OED* defines 'croak' as the 'deep, hoarse, dismal cry, made by a frog or a raven'. However, when 'croak' is used as a verb, as it is in Massey's poem, the word can also mean to die, or, more

significantly, to murder. This slang usage had become a recognised but recent addition to the vocabulary prior to Massey's birth.[94] The first records of these uses of 'croak' in the print media correspond with the composition and publication of *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* (1851). The *London Labourer* used the phrase 'They go mouching along as if they were croaking' in 1851, and the *Ladies Repository* used croak in the sense 'to murder' in 1848.[95] Therefore, when Massey describes a 'chorus of ravens, that croak among tombs' he is not only conveying the dismal sound made by these birds: the line perhaps also suggests that the ravens are murdering among tombs. This connotation strengthens the impression that Massey's image is alluding to Blake, re-asserting the question of how this Blakean echo could come to resound in Massey's poetry. As allegorical representations of priests these ravens serve not simply as an omen for death, they also suggest (in a similar way to the 'black'ning church' in 'London') that the clergy and the institution of the church were implicated in the murder of the working classes.

Whilst the raven is absent from 'The Garden of Love' and tomb stones are absent from the 'Chorus' to 'A Song of Liberty', both are present in 'The Three Voices', but Blake's image of the Priest does not appear. This creates the uncanny sense that something is missing from Massey's image: the image seems familiar, because it contains these interrelated echoes of Blake. This sense of an absent presence re-occurs in the final correspondences between 'The Three Voices' and Blake's poetry.

Mis-hearing

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[94] The *OED* reports that the definition of croak as a slang term for 'to die' first appeared in James Hardy Vax's *A New and Comprehensive Vocabulary of the Flash Language*, in 1819.[94] Similarly, the slang or dialectical definition 'to kill; to murder; to hang' appeared in P Egan's *Grose's Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*, in 1823.

[95] *OED* 'croak'.

In addition, there are two moments in Massey's 'The Three Voices' that recall the poem 'London'. These Blakean echoes operate on an aural level, occurring not as an apparent allusion to or quotation of Blake, but resonating as a pattern of familiar sounds, which aurally resemble recognisable images. Upon re-reading (or listening) it seems clear that the parallel between the two texts was the result of mis-hearing. However, it is particularly interesting that the sections of Blake and Massey's texts that these echoes bring into comparison, do correspond on a broader thematic level; these mis-hearings emphasise the similarities between Blake and Massey's social critique.

Following the first chorus of '"Weep, weep, weep!" in line 9 of 'The Three Voices', the cry is identified as:

> the voice of the Past: the dark, grim-featured Past,
> All sad as the shriek of the midnight blast.
> Weep, weep, weep!

The phrase 'midnight blast', and the sadness that this describes, recall the 'Harlots curse' that 'Blasts' 'thro' midnight streets' in Blake's 'London':

> But most thro' midnight streets I hear
> How the youthful Harlot's curse
> Blasts the new born Infant's tear,
> And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.   (13-16)

It is perhaps the opaque nature of Massey's image that allows this mis-hearing to occur. 'All sad as the shriek of the midnight blast' is an unusual simile, because the sound that sadness is being compared to is itself ill defined. It is unclear what the 'midnight blast' actually is, and why it might be shrieking. Furthermore, a shriek would typically be associated with an expression of sudden fear or anger rather than

sadness; this unexpected pairing creates a parallel between the emotional context of Blake and Massey's images. Blake's 'Harlots curse' is a complex but coherent image in which the 'blast' of the curse causes the sadness and suffering symbolised by the infant's tear. If this familiar image is projected onto Massey's line it brings resolution to the questions raised by his simile.

It is unlikely that the 'shriek of the midnight blast' would sound particularly Blakean if it were the only image in Massey's 'The Three Voices' that could be compared to Blake's poetry. Whilst the sadness and shrieking of the Voice of the Past conveys the pain of lost human potential, Massey does not allude to the specific social mechanisms that might have brought about this suffering. Conversely, the complex imagery in the final stanza of 'London' focuses on the issue of prostitution, conveying the damaging causes and consequences of the Harlot's situation through the motif of venereal disease. [96] All the characters involved in the relationship described in the final stanza of 'London' (the Harlot and Infant, and the unseen husband and wife) are victims of the repressive and oppressive social mechanisms at work in the city. Blake is not condemning the Harlot, this character is placed alongside the Soldier and Chimney-sweeper as a victim of the church and palace. In a city demarcated by commercial relations the Harlot represents the commodification of love, further

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[96] The 'Harlot's Curse' has frequently been understood to denote venereal disease. Bloom has challenged this interpretation, arguing that the harlot's curse is 'menstruation, the natural cycle of the human female', *William Blake* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 2006), p. 10. However, as Helen Hennessy Vendler observes: '[t]his reading is not […] in any sense proved, but only, in two passages, asserted', *The Music of What Happens: Poems, Poets, Critics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988), p. 54. E.P. Thompson also discounts Bloom's reading as 'unhelpful', but does engage with Bateson's argument that '"The diseases that descend upon the infant and the newly married couple are apocalyptic horrors similar to the blood that runs down palace walls."' Thompson refutes Bateson's suggestion that the interpretation of venereal disease is '"too literal"', concluding that '[i]t may be nice to think so. But the blood of the soldier is for real, as well as apocalyptic, and so it he venereal disease that blinds the new-born infant and which plagues the marriage hearse' (p. 186).

highlighting the isolation of the individual.[97] Our understanding of this final stanza can be informed by the related discussions of love and sexuality that are presented throughout *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. The business of prostitution exists because of the sexually repressive attitudes which cause '*Love! sweet love!*' to be '*thought a crime*'.[98] The Harlot occupies her pitiable position both as a result of dire economic need, and due to the demand created by the 'mind forg'd manacles' of sexual repression which confine male and female relationships, ultimately turning marriage into a 'hearse'. The Harlot, husband (and customer), wife and Infant, are infected by the corruption that these societal relations bring about.

As was discussed when comparing Massey's use of 'weep' in 'The Three Voices', to the 'weep' of the Chimney sweeper, Blake demonstrates his social critique by focusing on specific characters from within the working classes; these problems extend throughout society to 'every […] Man' ('London', 5). Conversely, Massey focuses on the collective plight of the working classes, conveying a more generalised sense of the social and political problems that have caused this hardship and oppression. Nonetheless, both the 'Harlots' curse' and 'midnight blast' articulate the suffering caused by a corrupt society and emphasise the need for revolutionary social change.[99] The immediate context of the 'Harlot's curse' within Blake's 'London', contrasts with the 'shriek of the midnight blast' in 'The Three Voices'; however, this echo of Blake, which occurs as a mis-hearing in Massey's poem, highlights the

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[97] The repeated use of 'charter'd' in the opening stanza to 'London' emphasises the comercial relationships which define the city. E.P. Thompson has argued that 'charter'd' 'is clearly a word to be associated with commerce: one might think of the Chartered Companies which, increasingly drained of function, were bastions of privilege within the governement of the city', also noting that '[t]he association of the banks of the Thames with commerece ws already traditional when Samuel Johnson renewed it in his "London" (1738)' (*Witness*, p. 176).
[98] Blake, 'A Little Girl Lost', *Songs of Experience*, line 4.
[99] In his Preface 'To Walter Cooper', Massey laments the plight of those who are by poverty driven to 'sell the sweet name of love for bread in the midnight streets and lanes'.

similarities between the broader social critique that forms the subject of both Blake and Massey's work.

<p style="text-align:center">*</p>

In line 26 of 'The Three Voices', the second echo of 'London' also occurs as a mis-hearing. Massey describes a change of consciousness that causes a social 'awakening', depicting a united working class through the collective articulation of the 'Voice of the Present':

> From many a worn, noble spirit that breaks
>   In the world's solemn shadows, deep down in life's valleys
> From Mine, Forge, and Loom, trumpet-tongued, it awakes
>   On the soul wherein Liberty rallies.
>   "Work, work, work!"
>   […]
> 'Tis the voice of the Present – its bids us, my brothers,
> Be freemen: and then for the freedom of others –
>   "Work, work, work!"   (24-33)

Massey's grouping of 'Mine, Forge and Loom' is aurally similar to Blake's image of 'mind-forged manacles', causing the reader, now alerted to the presence of Blake by the four surrounding Blakean echoes, to do a double-take. The contrast between Blake's image and Massey's list of work places is quickly apparent; however, the comparison that this textual moment draws between Massey and Blake's poetry emphasises the thematic similarities in their work. Blake uses the image of 'mind-forged manacles' to identify the internalised, hegemonic forces that maintain the repressive, exploitative society described in 'London'. Whilst this section of 'The Three Voices' is figuratively describing the process of revolution, which *follows* a history of repression, it is significant that revolution is initiated by a change of consciousness; it occurs in the '*spirit* that breaks' (24) and 'On the *soul* wherein Liberty rallies' (27) [my emphasis]. Like Blake, Massey does not conceive of societal

repression simply in terms of externally inflicted chains, his imagery indicates what might be described in Gramscian terms as a hegemonic form of control. Massey portrays the suffering of the past in the first stanza of 'The Three Voices', signifying intellectual and spiritual distress alongside corporeal restraint: 'breaking of hearts, chains clanking, men groaning' (21). The uprising depicted in the second stanza initially finds the men 'tearfully' (23) frozen in a state of fear. It is a collective and widespread 'break' in the spirit, which allows these men to rally from their various work places and unite in a different kind of 'work' (28), utilising their combined strength in the pursuit of freedom, rather than suffering an oppression that they themselves maintain.

Blake's image of 'mind-forg'd manacles' was discussed in detail in Chapter 3, when the echoing internconnectivity of *Experience* was explored. I argued that Blake's critique in 'London' identifies the public and private repression of the individual, but does not provide an explicit solution or remedy to this repression. In recognising the manacles in 'every Man' (5) Blake breaks the manacles in his own mind, but the private liberation of a single individual does not in itself effect revolutionary change. Blake's motivation in presenting this commentary is to effect change on a wider social level by enlightening many individuals. Revolution must take place on both a public and a private level if the control of the Church and Palace is to be undermined. However, the process of this simultaneous awakening of many individuals is not described, and the difficulty that both the reader and Blake find in visualising or conceiving of how both public and private repression might be overthrown, is indicative of the central obstacle that prevents such a revolution from taking place.

In the above discussion of the Blakean echoes in 'The Three Voices', Blake's detailed vision of idyllic innocence in 'Spring' has been contrasted with Massey's less

specific conception of a promised 'Future'. Similarly, it has been suggested that Blake's image of the 'Harlot's curse' which 'blasts through midnight streets' may echo through Massey's image of a 'midnight blast', partly because Blake's lines bring resolution to Massey's opaque image. Significantly, in the lines surrounding the sequence 'Mine, Forge and Loom', Massey does provide a coherent account of the process through which the revolutionary overthrow of both hegemonic and corporeal imprisonment might be enacted. Massey resolves the conundrum of whether physical uprising or mental liberation would need to come first, in order to bring about a national revolution. As identified above, the shift from a position of compliance and fear to position of unified strength (tearful eyes becoming 'earnest eyes' [30]) is initiated by a spiritual break. However, after this initial break, physical uprising and mental awakening occur in tandem. Massey's revolution is one in which working man leads working man: 'Be freemen: and then, for the freedom of others – Work, work, work!' (32) This is a powerful vision which places the poetry of Massey and other Chartist writers at the forefront of revolutionary change; Massey only need awaken the spirits of some of his readers' in order to bring about revolution in the 'Present'.[100]

The different focus of Blake and Massey's poetry has been noted throughout the discussion of 'The Three Voices'. Whilst Blake focuses on specific members of the working class such as the Chimney-sweeper and Harlot and extends his social critique to 'every Man', Massey unites working men of different professions, representing the

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[100] Massey wrote this poem in the 'late' Chartist period, after the defeats of 1839 and 1848 in which three sucessive Chartist petitions to parliament failed. This 1851 publication was speaking to a movement that had been awoken a decade previously and had already rallied on a national scale. Massey's caution in promising that present resistance would lead unproblematically to future 'joy' can be detected in the 'Voice of the Future' which speaks, not of the joy, renewal and celebration suggested by the image of 'Spring', but rather, repeats a chorus of 'hope'. I suggest that the contrast between Massey's detailed vision of revolution and relatively vauge depiction of the 'Future' can be explained by the context of late Chartism; the movement's previous defeats undermined the inevitability of such a vision for change.

working-classes (but not society as a whole), through the collective articulation of the voice. 'The Three Voices' actually depicts not three, but one, unified voice of the Chartist moment, in three different temporal states. The contrast between Blake and Massey's perspective and address occurs because Massey's poetry was composed within, and published for, an active political moment. Massey focuses specifically on working men because the Chartist movement, which was largely comprised from the working class, was campaigning to extend the vote to these disenfranchised citizens. Malcolm Chase has argued that 'Chartism's strength rested on presenting a united front that made no concession whatever to the rights of universal male suffrage'.[101] Similarly, Janowitz states that: 'a central cultural task of the [Chartist] leadership was to encourage a sense of common identity.'[102] By minimising his focus on the differences between the working men and uniting all under the banner of ta single voice, Massey recognises and maintains this all important unity. It is only by conceiving of societal repression through its broader impact on this united social group that Massey finds a template for the process of revolutionary social change – 'The Three Voices' conceives of working men collectively working to awaken and bring freedom to others.

The correspondence between Massey's 'Mine, Forge and Loom' and Blake's 'mind forg'd manacles' particularly demonstrates the value in conceiving of the relationship between two poems in terms of echo. There is no direct link between Blake and Massey's poetry, Massey did not have access to Blake's texts whilst the Chartist movement was active. When 'The Three Voices' was published in 1851,

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[101] Chase conceives of O'Connor's opposition to separate strands within Chartism (such as '"Church Chartism, Teetotal Chartism, Knowledge Chartism and Household Chartism"', which 'O'Connor seemed poised to purge from Chartism's mainstream') not in terms of a 'personal desire for aggrandisement' but rather as 'a shrewd grasp' of the importance of presenting a united movement with undivided aims. (p. 172).

[102] Janowitz, p. 134.

Massey could not have known that the imagery he was using recalled that of the poet Blake. Therefore, the discussion of these correspondences is not supported by existing theories of influence or allusion, which rely upon a direct link between precursor and ephebe. Furthermore, poetic effects such as mis-hearing are not discussed in established methods of poetic analysis; this correspondence could be easily dismissed as reader error. The above analysis profitably draws into comparison the related social critiques and revolutionary ideas from two apparently unrelated poets. Blake's highly sophisticated and concise concept of 'mind forg'd manacles' illuminates our understanding of 'The Three Voices'. The process of spiritual awakening could easily be overlooked where it appears among the description of the 'Voice of the Past', as a 'breaking of hearts' and 'men groaning', and might become conflated with physical uprising where it appears in the present; comparison with Blake emphasises the central importance of this feature. Moreover, Massey's skilful depiction of a sequential overthrow of both mental and corporeal repression, provides a model for social change that is absent from Blake's 'London'. Not only does comparison with Blake highlight the complexity of the concepts being put forward by this Chartist poet, but Massey's vision enlightens Blake's work, helping to bring clarity and resolution to one of the most challenging aspects of Blakean vision.

Close reading of Massey's 'The Three Voices' reveals a cluster of echoes of Blake. These Blakean echoes are significant because they appear together, creating an accretion of similarities. A number of the Blakean echoes in 'The Three Voices' appear within a poetic context which, on a local level, contrasts with Blake's usage. However, upon closer inspection, these correspondences highlight the broader similarities between Blake and Massey's social critiques. Significantly, whilst the Blakean echoes in 'The Three Voices' repeatedly raise the question of how such

correspondences with Blake could appear in Chartist poetry, they also suggest an answer to this question. The parallels that these Blakean echoes draw between Blake and Massey's ideas and perspectives actually indicate how and why these poets could be presenting their arguments through a similar set of images. It is precisely because Blake and Massey shared similar social and political ideas that their poetic imagery corresponds.

Conclusion

This thesis has posed the question: how can Blakean echoes re-sound in the work of poets who had never read Blake? The work done in preceding chapters has aimed to establish that this is a question worth asking, by identifying the Blakean echoes in Jones and Massey's poetry, and by indicating how and where these images may have originated from sources and ideas with which both Blake and Chartism engaged. The setting out of this question has been the original contribution of the thesis; it is beyond the scope of this project to provide a fully comprehensive answer. Rather, this thesis introduces connections that could be productively explored in future research.

This thesis opened with the premise that Jones and Massey could not have been alluding to, or influenced by, Blake when they wrote *Chartist Songs and Fugitive Pieces* and *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* because the Chartists did not have knowledge of, or access to, Blake's poetry during the time that the movement was active. It also asserts that existing models of influence are insufficient when exploring the Blakean echoes that appear with Jones and Massey's poetry, largely because of this lack of a direct vector of transmission. As was identified in the Introduction, the lack of a demonstrable link between Blake and Chartism presents major theoretical and methodological difficulties.

Firstly, there is not an existing critical vocabulary through which these correspondences might be discussed. In response to this absence the thesis has conceptualised the theory of echo and demonstrated its value as an analytical tool.

Secondly, the Blakean echoes in the Chartist poetry present a theoretical conundrum - how can these echoes re-sound in the work of poets who had never read Blake? In order to establish that this was a question worth asking the thesis has shown

that the resonances of Blake within Jones and Massey's texts are significant, and that the 'problem' of their presence within Chartist poetry is compelling.

Chapter 1 introduced the thesis by setting out the evidence upon which these central premises were based. The investigation of Blake's early publication history revealed that the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* were reprinted in 1839 by J.J. Garth Wilkinson and in 1843 by Charles Augustus Tulk; selected *Songs* also appeared within Alan Cunningham's *Eminent British Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, which was first published in 1830 and continued to be reprinted throughout the Chartist period. However, archival research revealed that the Chartist press contained no mention either of the poet William Blake or of any of these early reproductions of his work. This absence stands in contrast to the numerous discussions and reproductions of other Romantic poetry within the Chartist press.

Following this, the chapter presented a discussion of Traditional and Bloomian Influence, demonstrating why these theories insufficiently support the study of Blakean echoes within Chartist poetry. It the explored theories of Intertextuality and New Historicism, identifying areas that would help support the methodology employed throughout the thesis. These discussions emphasised the focus placed on author and the reader and history within their explanatory models arguing that the Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry are *created* by shared cultural context, developed in the poetic imagination and *expressed* by the author, and *observed* by a reader engaged in close textual analysis.

The key methodological intervention of Chapter 1 was to present and explain the theory of echo. This theory was then employed throughout chapters 4 and 5, where it informed the conception of Blake's interconnected imagery and the discussion of Blake's correspondence with Chartist poetry.

In Chapter 2 the scholarship of Mee, Worral, Thompson, McCalman and Rix was presented as a model from which the theory of the cultural matrix might be developed. The cultural matrix was explained through the metaphor of threads. It was suggested that every individual cultural group, idea or movement can be visualised, not as a single event focused in one historical moment, but as a thread running through history. Viewed as a whole, the cultural matrix can be seen to contain the threads of all the cultural movements and significant ideas throughout history; these threads cross and merge as the movements or ideas they represent interact. The model also depicts the multiple interconnected threads that constitute an individual's cultural situation, to reveal not only the various movements and ideas that characterise their underlying cultural matrices, but also the development of each of these threads as they precede the individual's engagement, and continue onwards beyond the specific points in time and space under consideration.

The cultural matrix has been put forward throughout the thesis as a conceptual model rather than a fully evidenced argument. The presentation of this theory in the second chapter of the thesis foregrounded the three chapters of close reading that followed. These close readings identified the ways in which Shelley, Blake, Jones and Massey were making radical arguments, and indicated points at which crucial images could be identified in shared cultural sources such as the prophetic books of the bible, and in Shakespeare and Milton.

The third chapter of the thesis presented an analysis of Shelley's influence upon the Chartists. The chapter outlined the publication history of Shelley's poetry, showing that several of the poet's most radical works appeared for the first time during the Chartist period. These radical poems were the most frequently reproduced of Shelley's works in the Chartist press, demonstrating the Chartists' particular interest in poetry

that related directly to political and economic concerns. Shelley's influence on the Chartists has frequently been identified by existing scholarship, with theorists such as Vicinus arguing that the Chartists' use of this Romantic inheritance was derivative, whilst those such as Janowitz and Kovalev argue that it was developmental. Previous criticism does not discuss the relationship between Chartism and Blake; therefore, this analysis of the Chartists' response to Shelley provided a useful insight into existing debates about Jones and Massey's engagement with their literary inheritance.

A close textual analysis of Shelley's influence on Jones and Massey closed this chapter. Due to the demonstrable link between these poets, existing models of Traditional Influence (in particular Christopher Rick's theorisation of allusion) were applicable. Although the structure of Jones' 'Labour's History' was shown to be derived from Shelley's 'The Mask of Anarchy', the chapter identified Jones' active engagement with Shelley's 'Song to the Men of England', showing how the Chartist poet corrected or inverted images and ideas to better represent the political concerns of the Chartist movement.

Gerald Massey's 'The Three Voices' contained more complex allusions, showing that reader observation and 'memory' is important to the recognition of allusion. Massey's description of a 'byeway of blood' recalls Shelley's figure of Hope, but does not overtly allude to this central figure. This textual moment was explained through Rick's concept of allusion 'in reserve'. Whilst 'Hope' was held 'in reserve' at the point that this image was deployed, the chorus of 'Hope, hope, hope!' later encouraged this 'memory' of Shelley.

Chapter 4 discussed the Blakean resonances in Ernest Jones' poetry in terms of echo. It developed Heather Glen's theory of echoing interconnectivity, arguing that Blake's imagery is interlinked so that the full meaning of an image cannot be derived

from any single poem. The chapter then demonstrated that a number of moments in Jones' 'Labour's History' correspond with Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, recalling not one, but several of Blake's poems due to the multivalent nature of Blake's imagery.

The discussion focused on the piling up of Blakean imagery in Jones' 'Labour's History'. It was important to show that this single poem contained numerous correspondences with Blake because each one of these instances, if taken in isolation, could be traced to other sources of literary or cultural inheritance. However, these instances taken together carry a strong resonance of Blake's poetry. Through the 'cultural matrix' model put forward in chapter 2, we can see that these individual images in Jones can indeed be explained by other elements of his social and literary experience. As E.P. Thompson suggested, the structure of the poet's thought was informed by the 'vocabulary of symbolism' encountered in his specific cultural situation; therefore, the appearance of several similar images in Blake and Jones' poetry indicates the poets' engagement in a shared underlying cultural matrix. The structure of Jones' thought was informed by threads of radical politics and radical Christianity and not by direct engagement with Blake. However, the combination of tropes and imagery in 'Labour's History' sounds Blakean because many of the same cultural threads inspired Blake's poetic imagination.

Chapter 4 closed with a short analysis of the Blakean echoes in 'A Chartist Chorus'. This is revealing because Jones' use of 'crown and cross and sabre' in 'A Chartist Chorus', interconnects with his presentation of the false trinity '*King, - Priest, - and Soldier*' in 'Labour's History'. The imagery in Chartist poetry had not previously been considered in this way; the investigation of Blake's poetic imagery informed our understanding of Jones' textual interconnection.

Chapter 5 showed that Massey's *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love* contained a greater sense of internal connection than was seen in Jones. Parallels were drawn between the structure of Massey's collection and Blake's presentation of the contrary states of *Innocence* and *Experience*. The *Lyrics of Love* contain internal echoes, with Massey's presentation of the blossom and bosom in 'To A Beloved One' creating meaning that is then carried through its numerous re-soundings.

The type of correspondence that occurs between Blake and Massey's text was also shown to be more complex than the Blakean echoes in Jones' poetry. The discussion of 'The Three Voices' highlighted correspondences with Blake that could only be explained using the theory of echo. The chapter argued that theories of influence and allusion would not account for these textual effects even if there were a direct link between the poets. This discussion demonstrated that the 'echo' is not simply a substitute for 'allusion' that can be employed in the absence of a direct link; rather it facilitates the discussion of aural and oral patterns within poetry (such as the 'Mine, Forge, and Loom' and 'midnight blast') that could not otherwise be described.

The chapter also explored the correspondence between Massey's 'chorus of ravens, that croak among tombs' and Blake's image of the dark Priest. This discussion recalled the 'memory' of Shelley's 'Hope', which was shown to complete Massey's presentation of mankind treading a 'byeway of blood' in chapter 2. Like 'Hope', the central figure of the Priest does not appear in Massey's poem, and yet his lines echo Blake's image of 'Priests in black gowns […] walking their rounds' 'among tomb-stones where flowers should be' in 'The Garden of Love', and the 'Priests of the Raven of dawn, no longer in deadly black' in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Whereas the direct link between Shelley and Massey allowed the absence of 'Hope' to be theorised in terms of allusion 'in reserve', the absent Priest was explained through

the close examination of Blake's interconnected imagery. Blake's images were shown to carry a trace of one another; the 'deadly black' of the 'Raven of dawn' recalled the graveyard, and the description of 'Priests in black gowns' recalled the image of the raven, with the Priests' gown recalling the raven's wings.

The final three chapters of the thesis therefore legitimised the claim that there are Blakean echoes in Chartist poetry, and that they warrant literary consideration. These discussions also indicated various ways in which a shared underlying cultural matrix might explain the Blakean echoes that re-sound within Chartism. A number of examples that have been put forward to indicate the shared culture of Blake, Jones and Massey have primarily indicated their shared reading habits. For example, it has been suggested that images of ravens in *Macbeth*, or of dawn and awakening in *Paradise Lost*, may have become part of their structure of thought. However, what is really significant about these poets' use of their cultural heritage is the way in which they turn existing symbols or images to new purposes, the way that they support and create a radical argument from common available resources. This thesis will close by returning to the scholarship of Mee, Worral, Thompson, McCalman and Rix, from which the conceptual model of the cultural matrix was developed in Chapter 2. Significantly, Blake scholars and Chartist historians alike identify a tendency within radical culture to subvert or overwrite the meaning of inherited vocabularies; these discussions suggest that the cultural matrix affects the elements that make up the structure of a poets thought *and* the way in which he employs these poetically.

Worral presents the example of the radical Thomas Spence overstamping coins of the realm with 'abbreviated political messages'; Spence's practice of overstamping can be seen as a metonym for the way in which radical cultural discourses operate. Worral

explores the significance of this 'political token coinage', arguing that Spence was not only challenging the dominant culture, but subverting its authority:

> By occupying the site of the authorized, legitimated currency, Spence was showing a revolutionary willingness to take over the sites of the dominant discourse of king and coin. That it happened on only penny or halfpenny pieces is unimportant. What is significant is that the site of Spence's discursive utterance is here superimposed on that most authorized of dominant discourse, the discourse of money.[1]

This 'tactic' of deliberately challenging the 'ruling definition' of a material object is also identified in Spence's subversive presentation of literary extracts in the periodical *Pigs' Meat.*[2] Worall explains how Spence made 'elaborate use of the ironical reader (so that texts mean what they are said not to mean)'.[3] The subversion of inherited meanings is a feature of both Blake's poetry and the written and oral traditions of the Chartist movement.

In the introduction to his study of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, Stanley Gardner explains: 'There is little or nothing about 'sources' here, since, when we seem to recognise them, Blake always turned them.'[4] E.P. Thompson's study provides a detailed account of the various sources in which Blake might have read, but like Gardner, Thompson does not suggest that these sources can be used to determine the meaning of Blake's texts in any straightforward way. Rather than identifying a certain contextual detail, stating that this influenced Blake's language and relying on the source to explicate a poetic image, Thompson suggests that we consider how a source may have become part of 'a set of signs, which [Blake] knows by heart, but which he

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[1] Worral, p. 26.
[2] Woral, p. 24; Raymond Williams, p. 125.
[3] Worral, p. 24.
[4] Gardner, p. ix.

employs as he pleases.'[5] Thompson qualifies his recovery of possible sources for
Blake's thought with the statement:

> If Blake read any or all of these works, he read them in his own
> way. He employs an inherited vocabulary to make statements
> directly opposed to those authorised by the "Tradition". He
> appropriates old symbols and turns them to new purposes.[6]

The 'turning' that Gardner and Thompson identify in Blake's use of his inherited
vocabulary does not operate in exactly the same way as Thomas Spence's
overstamping. Whereas the original meaning of Spence's coins and literary extracts
remains evident underneath their newly designated message, the images Blake turns
cannot often be traced to a definite source. Blake practices a far less direct form of
subversion, and he challenges the meaning and application of a wide variety of images,
not only those that carry an obvious cultural or political currency. The deliberately
ambiguous, polysemic nature of Blake's imagery has been discussed in chapters 4 and
5; Blake employs the strategy of subversion not simply to challenge the dominant
meaning of symbols and images, but to destabilise any straightforward designation of
meaning throughout his poetic expression.

   Nonetheless, this feature of Blake's poetic technique is characteristic of a radical
cultural approach to language. In *Dangerous Enthusiasm* Jon Mee (with reference to
Levi-Strauss) presents Blake as a *bricoleur*: an 'engineer' who 'forge[s] new tools' (or
crafts a new languages) from 'whatever diverse materials lay at hand'.[7] He states that
'Blake's poetic is deeply concerned with the disruption and transformation of

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[5] E.P.Thompson, *Witness*, pp. 85-6.
[6] E.P. Thompson, *Witness*, p. 50.
[7] Mee, p. 3.

hegemonic discourses'.[8] Although Mee is careful to note that the technique of

bricolage 'is not a rigidly class-determined strategy', he describes this concept through

an exploration of the radical culture of the 1790s, aligning Blake's approach to

symbolism and imagery with that of several prominent political radicals:

> Many radicals in the 1790s took up the role of the bricoleur; they
> relished breaking down those discourses which had cultural authority
> and creating from them new languages of liberation.[9]

In identifying the 'disruption and transformation' of language, Mee emphasises the

ways in which words become sites of contested meaning, carrying hegemonic

significances that are often deliberately subverted by radicals such as Spence, Lowth

and Paine. Blake's technique and that of other political radicals is drawn into direct

comparison in Mee's text, with the poet being show to make collaborative use of the

work of Thomas Paine:

> Blake is constantly seeking to break down the notion of scripture as
> monolithic authority. It is generally true of radical writing in the
> 1790s that it similarly sought to contest the authority of hegemonic
> texts and their established readings. As with Blake, this contestation
> frequently centred around the Bible, the key text of the Christian
> state. Perhaps the prime example is Paine's *The Age of Reason*, the
> book which Blake set out to defend against Bishop Watson's
> *Apology for the Bible*.[10]

This radical subversive practice was also a characteristic of Chartist culture. Eileen

Yeo discusses the ways in which religion became a particular site of tension in

Victorian England; she links the Chartists' radical Christianity to a division with the

church that was accentuated by the Peterloo Massacre:

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[8] Mee, p. 10.
[9] Mee, p. 9.
[10] Mee, p. 14.

earlier nineteenth-century experience, and particularly the Peterloo massacre of 1819, had ensured that Christianity would remain a battleground in the social war. Two Anglican clerics were prominent among the magistrates who ordered the cavalry charge on a peaceful demonstration and then used the courts to punish the victims.[11]

Yeo demonstrates that this division was articulated through the speeches and banners presented by the Chartists during protests against the Anglican Church in 1839:

> The demonstrations were rich in double-edged tones of voice and double meanings, all the more so because the contest was going on within and for possession of the same cultural vocabulary.[12]

The specific example of 'a placard ending with the words "God save the People!", contains two of the key elements through which the Chartists challenged State power through their poetry.[13]

Throughout Chartist poetry the movement is identified by terms such as 'the People', the 'Men of England' or 'Britons'. This can be seen, for example, in Gerald Massey's 'A Call to the People 1848', which opens with an address to the 'People of England'. Rather than identifying all the inhabitants of England, the political context in which Massey line appears excludes the middle and upper classes from the definition of an English citizen.

Similarly, in 'Chartist Poetry and Song', Timothy Randall states that, within the Chartist movement, singing provided:

> the opportunity for converting national 'patriotic' tunes and anthems over to the radical political cause. Edwin Gill's 'Spread the Charter' was to be sung to the tune of 'Rule Britannia,' and Thomas Copper recalled how Leicester stockingers regularly did so. M. Cleaments'

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[11] Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle', p. 110.
[12] Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle', p. 131.
[13] Yeo, 'Christianity in Chartist Struggle', p. 131.

> version of 'God Save the Queen,' expressly entitled 'National
> Chartist Anthem,' overturned its original by wishing the people
> 'From Queen and Priestcraft free'. Fergus O'Connor usurped the
> monarch's place at a Chartist dinner, where 'O'Connor's the Man of
> our Choice' was sung to the melody, 'Victoria's the Queen of the
> Rose'.[14]

Therefore both Blake and the Chartists have been shown to engage in the radical cultural practice of subverting the inherited meanings to challenge 'the ruling definition of the social'.[15]

The radical practice of turning available imagery has been demonstrated throughout the thesis. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 have identified the presence of Priestcraft and Kingcraft in the poetry of Shelley, Blake, Jones and Massey, and in Chapter 4 Jones' presentation of '*King, - Priest, - and Soldier*' has been compared to Blake's 'God & his Priest & King'. These discussions of Priestcraft and Kingcraft were shown to draw upon expressions and images used in Paine's political writing, but these Romantic and Chartist poets do not merely repeat Paine's coupling. Rather, they present these images in rhetorical patterns of three that ironically invert the traditional meaning of the holy trinity. In Blake and Massey's poetry this turning is particularly acute; although the concept of God is more complex in Blake's work, both poets draw a stark contrast between the true God and his earthly representation through the clergy, implying that the institutional church is far from holy. Shelley, Blake, Jones and Massey present false trinities that express subtle differences in their perspectives of the state, but in each instance these poets are not only deploying an image from within radical culture, but employing this image subversively.

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[14] Randall, pp. 173-4.
[15] Raymond Williams, p. 125.

In Chapter 4, Blake's engagement with children's verse was discussed. Blake's *Songs* radically interpret this form, subverting the Conservatism found in the poems of Isaac Watts and Mrs. Barbauld, and challenging traditional social structures in their refusal to imitate structural commonplaces such as the moral imperative, which, as Rix has argued, are significantly 'absent, when we most anticipate them.'[16] However, the most prolific examples of the subverting the inherited meanings were found in Chapter 5, when the Blakean echoes in Massey's poetry were discussed.

Both the terms blossom and bosom are used frequently in Romantic and Victorian poetry. In Chapter 5 the rhymed pairing and common usage of these words was exemplified by Burns and Clare's rural ballads. These autodidact Romantic poets were contemporaries of Blake and known precursors of Chartist poetry, but whereas Burns and Clare's poems typically used 'bosom' to designate the human breast, and occasionally to indicate strong feeling, and 'blossom' to identify a flowering plant, Blake and Massey both use these terms as part of complex social commentary. Blake anthropomorphises the blossom, presenting its secure protective bosom as a microcosm of idyllic innocence. Massey presents similar imagery in a less ambiguous manner; the human relationship is compared to the natural world and the bosom parallels the blossom as a place of security and comfort. Blake's *Innocence* is full of ambiguity and resists straightforward interpretation, but has been interpreted here as offering the present possibility of an idyllic society which challenges the social structure of Blake's contemporary England. Conversely, Massey's political intent and radical deployment of natural imagery is explicitly outlined in the Preface to *Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love*. The poet accuses the church and state of treating working-men as inhuman and challenges this treatment by identifying love and joy in

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[16] Rix, 114.

the natural world as ordained by God. Nonetheless, in their images of the blossom and bosom both Blake and Massey employ a commonplace vocabulary in a way that challenges the current social order.

As well as presenting priestcraft through the image of a false trinity, Blake and Massey deploy images of a dark priest who stands in opposition to the commonplace trope of dawn and awakening. In Romantic poetry dawn frequently represents political renewal. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton represents the returning light of dawn as evidence of a God-created world, distinct from chaos, creating an understanding of dawn as a reassuring omen. However, in Blake and Massey's figuration, this well-known image of dawn as political awakening (or as evidence of the inevitable renewal of divine order) is complicated by the image of the Priest blocking out the light. These poets strengthen their protests against priestcraft through the adaptation of this frequently used imagery; they complicate an existing radical commonplace.

Finally, perhaps the strongest example of radical turning can be seen in Blake and Massey's chorus to Spring, which can be understood, in each instance, as a direct and deliberate politicisation of Ariel's song from *The Tempest*. Ariel's song contains a three-fold repetition of 'merrily', which has been shown to be highly unusual in English poetry: 'After summer merrily / Merrily merrily shall I live now'. Ariel uses this poetic pattern to announce joy at regaining her freedom, but his verse is non-striving; it does not contain active images through which this freedom has been achieved. Blake and Massey both use this same poetic pattern in choruses to the Spring. Chapter 5 has shown how the common trope of Springtime designates a specifically political renewal in the work of these poets, and these choruses certainly appear within poems that contain radical political intent. Once again Blake's presentation of imagery in idyllic *Innocence* is complex and ambiguous, but has been

understood within this thesis as challenging contemporary social structures by presenting an alternative society. In Massey the politicisation of this chorus is much more straightforward. 'The Three Voices' is a poem that figures the Chartist struggle in terms of past woe, present revolution, and future joy; the lines 'Merrily, merrily, merrily! / It comes like a touch of the soft Spring, unwarping' describe the happiness of this future state.

This thesis has shown that the radical cultures in which Shelley, Blake, Jones and Massey were engaged affected not only the elements that made up the structure of their thought, but also the ways in which they employed this vocabulary of symbolism poetically. This thesis intends to provide a platform for future research. The precise ways in which cultures of radical politics and radical Christianity might explain the images in Blake and the Chartists' texts requires further detailed historical investigation. Alongside this central avenue of research, additional questions have emerged. The first of these questions arises from this work on radical turning.

It is not clear how far the similarities in Blake, Jones and Massey's poetry occur as a result of the shared cultural threads that make up the structures of their thought, and how far they are a result of the poets' subversive treatment of these inherited symbols and images. For example, Blake's images of Priestcraft and Kingcraft resound in Chartist poetry partly because of a shared radical (specifically Painite) vocabulary, but also because of the ironic presentation of this vocabulary in images of a false trinity and fiends of darkness. This raises the question of whether we would see the same correlation between texts if the poets in question were not engaged with radical cultures. Is Blake and the Chartists' shared underlying cultural matrix only visible because these poets' engagement with radicalism not only impacted upon the vocabulary of available images, but affected the way that those images were deployed?

Secondly, this thesis has presented a reading of Blake's poems as open texts, in which complex, ambiguous imagery deliberately inspires multiple possible interpretations. Blake's images have repeatedly been shown to be more complex than Jones and Massey's Chartist verse, which contains little ambiguity. Chapter 4 introduced the idea that the Chartists' imagery corresponds with part of the multiple resonances created within Blake's poetry. It raised the question of what it means to echo ambiguous imagery. A moment in Chartist poetry often appears Blakean, but only contains some of the resonances that characterised Blake's imagery, engaging with some but not all of the concepts and ideas that were raised by Blake's text. This suggests the possibility that Blakean echoes might re-sound in Chartist poetry, partly because of the open nature of Blake's texts. If Blake's imagery were not multivalent, if it did not contain multiple competing resonances, would a shared cultural matrix be sufficient to create echoes of this imagery without the need for a direct link? We might consider whether univalent monolithic imagery would re-sound as a result of a shared underlying cultural matrix, and whether we more frequently encounter Blakean echoes in the work of other poets because Blake's images resonate in numerous different ways.

In Chapter 2, Hollander's definitions of strong and weak allusion were discussed. The critic was quoted as stating that:

> What a great writer does with direct citation of another's language is quite different from what a minor one may be doing. Similarly his handling of a commonplace will be radically interpretive of it, while the minor writer's contribution will be more one of handing on the baton, so to speak, of cultivating the topos rather than replanting or even rebuilding there.[17]

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[17] Hollander, p.73.

This suggestion resonates in two ways with the research that has been presented in this thesis. It rings through the discussions of Blake's highly complex poetic imagery as Blake resonates in more straightforward Chartist texts. Concurrently, upon considering the numerous instances in which Gerald Massey, in particular, turns or subverts available images and tropes, Hollander's words challenge us to define this work as anything but 'radically interpretive' in its 'handling' of the 'commonplace', asserting the literary value of the Chartist text.

Appendix

Ernest Jones

The Two Races – Part I
       The Old

Up ye gentlemen of England!
   Brace armour to the breast!
Where are you, North and South?
   Where are you, East and West.

Up Gentlemen of England!
   Ride up from tower and hall,
Ye Peers of the Plantagenet,
   And conquerors of the Gaul.

Ye sons of Saxon chivalry,
    And hospitable state;
Those champions of old liberty,
   When kings had grown too great.

Who bearded York and Lancaster,
   And John on Runnymede;
Who tamed the tyrant's tyranny,
   And soothed the people's need.

Who welcomed honest poverty
   To shelter and to feast, –
And broke on his own infamy
   The crozier of the Priest.

Now mount your high-blood chargers,
   And furbish up your mail,
And let your proudest summons
   Go gathering on the gale!

For nobler work's awaiting,
   Than Tournament and tilt:
To give its rights to Labour.
   And punish purse-proud guilt.

Arise! If ye are nobles
   In nature as in name:
There's misery to banish!
   There's tyranny to tame.

The Lords of Trade are stirring
  With their treasures far and nigh;
They are trampling on the lowly,
  They are spurning at the high.

With weights of gold and silver,
  They're crushing spirits fast!
Now, who shall be the foremost
  To break the chains they cast.

Now, gentlemen of England!
  Where are ye, one and all?
Ye Peers of the Plantagenet,
  And conquerors of the Gaul.

The Two Races – Part II
    The New

Go! Seek them in pale Fashion's haunts
  Where rustling silk is sheen;
Or lolling with the courtesan,
  Behind the painted scene.

Not wooers of an English maid,
  By deeds of honour done:
But kneeling at the shameless feet
  Of lust that wealth has won.

Not hunting cheery forests through
  In chase of deer or fox:
But pacing Bond street or Pall-mall,
  Or sconced in opera box.

Not leading on their yeomen bold,
  For hearth and home fight
But languid exquisites by day,
  And ruffians in the night.

Not bidding in their father's halls
  The general welcome swell:
But pale, and thin, and fevered waifs,
  That crowd the rattling hell.

Not righting innocence betrayed,
  Like gallant knights and true:
But lurers of the village maid,

That scorn what they undo.

Then, wrecked by premature excess
   By ransacked pleasures cloyed,
They seek on banks of foreign streams
   The health they have destroyed.

No champions of the nation!
   No men of better kind!
But a worn-out generation
   In body and in mind.

They've buried all their manhood
   In silk, and plume, and gem:
They look for strength for *us*,
   Not we for strength from *them!*

Tho' still some fever-flashes
   Of former power are seen,
And still an old pulse dashes,
   But few and far between;

Like echoes, that remind us
   While faintly fleeing o'er,
Of some old gallant ditty,
   That men can sing no more.

But another strain is sounding,
   In music fresh and clear,
And the nations' hearts are bounding
   That glorious psalm to hear!

It tells: a race has risen
   Of more than knightly worth,
Forth-breaking from its prison
   In the lowlands of the earth;

And not by lance or sabre
   These nobles hold their lands,
But by the right of Labour,
   And the work of honest hands

And not for Crown or Crozier
   They till the sacred sod,
But the liege-lord of their holding
   Is the Lord of nature – God!

Labour's History

Beneath the leaf-screaned vault of heaven
    Lay a child in careless sleep,
Amid the fair land, God had given
    As his own to till and reap.

From afar three Outlaws came;
    Each seemed to each of kindred guise,
For each one thought – felt – hoped the same:
    Upon the fall of man to rise!

The first one wore a gold crown;
    The second raised a mystic sign,
And darkened, with a priestly frown,
    The faith that *might* have been – divine!

The third flashed forth his flaming blade,
    And reeked of blood and sulphury strife;
He gloried in his horrid trade –
    A hireling, taking human life!

They bound the child, in slumber's hour,
    With chains of force, and fraud, and craft, –
And, round the victim of their power,
    King, – Priest, – and *Soldier* stood and laughed.

Then centuries raised from time's dark womb
    A bloated from, in cunning bold:
The gold-king of the mine and loom,
    Who tramples all that bows to gold.

On feudal power denouncing hate,
    He challenged it the strife to bide, –
For money bought the church and state,
    And money deadened martial pride.

Before their battle they arrayed
    Each sought the slave and promised fair –
And those, who conquered through his aid,
    Tightened his chains and – left him there!

But now the child has grown a man,
    Thinking, reasoning, strong and bold, –
And they who that false game began,
    Are withered, feeble, failing, old!

And, lo! those chains of Priests and kings
    As grows the frame, expanding under,
Those cankered, miserable things!
    Burst like rotten threads asunder.

Rise then, strong self-liberator!
    Hurl to earth the weak oppressor!
Scorn the aid of faction's traitor!
    Be thyself thy wrongs' redressor!

Kings have cheated – Priests have lied –
    Break the sword on Slavery's knee,
And become, in manhood's pride,
    That, which God intended, – FREE!

A Chartist Chorus

Go! Cotton lords! and Corn lords, go!
    Go! live on loom and acre;
But let be seen – some law between
    The giver and the taker.

Go! Treasure well your stolen store
    With crown, and cross, and sabre,
Despite you all – we'll break your thrall
    And have our land and labour!

You forge no more – you fold no more
    Your cankering chains about us;
We heed you not – We need you not,
    But you can't do without us.

You've lagged too long, the tide has turned
    Your helmsmen all are knavish,
And now we'll be – as bold and free,
    As we've been tame and slavish.

Our Live are not your sheaves to glean
    Our Rights your bales to barter!
Give all their own – from cot to throne,
    But ours shall be – THE CHARTER.

Gerald Massey

The Three Voices

A WAILING voice comes up a desolate road,
        Drearily, drearily, drearily!
Where mankind have trodden the byeway of blood,
        Wearily, wearily, wearily!
Like a sound from the Dead Sea, all shrouded in glooms,
    With breaking of hearts, chains clanking, men groaning,
Or chorus of ravens, that croak among tombs,
    It comes with a mournful moaning:
            "Weep, weep, weep!"
        Yoke-fellows listen,
        Till tearful eyes glisten,
"Tis the voice of the Past: the dark, grim-featured Past,
All sad as the shriek of the midnight blast.
            "Weep, weep, weep!"
Tears to wash out the red, red stain,
        Where earth hath been fatted
        By brave hearts that rotted—
And life ran a deluge of hot, bloody rain,
        Weep, weep; weep!

There comes a voice too, from the millions that bend,
    Tearfully, tearfully, tearfully !
From hearts which the scourges of Slavery rend,
    Fearfully, fearfully, fearfully!
From many a worn, noble spirit, that breaks
    In the world's solemn shadows, deep down in life's
        valleys
From Mine, Forge, and Loom, trumpet-tongued, it
        awakes
    On the soul wherein Liberty rallies.
            "Work, work, work!"
        Yoke-fellows listen,
        Till earnest eyes glisten,
"Tis the voice of the Present—it bids us, my brothers,
Be freemen: and then, for the freedom of others—
            Work, work, work!
For the many, a holocaust, long to the few;
        O, work while ye may,
        O work while 'tis day,
And cling to each other, united and true,
            Work, work, work!

There cometh another voice, sweetest of all—
    Cheerily, cheerily, cheerily!
And the heart leapeth up to its trumpet call,

Merrily, merrily, merrily!
It comes like the touch of the soft Spring, unwarping;
The thrall of oppression that bound us:
It comes like a choir of the seraphim, harping,
Their gladsomest music around us.
"Hope, hope, hope!"
Yoke-follows listen,
Till gleeful eyes glisten;
To the voice of the Future, the sweetest of all,
That makes the heart leap to its trumpet call.
Hope, hope, hope!
Brothers, step forth in the Future's van,
For the worst is past,
Right conquers at last;
And a better day dawns upon suffering man:—
Hope, hope, hope!

A Call To The People 1848

People of England! rouse ye from this dreaming,
    Sinew your souls, for Freedom's glorious leap;
Look to the Future, lo! our day-spring's gleaming,
    And a pulse stirs, that never more shall sleep
In the World's heart!   Men's eyes like stars are throbbing,
    The traitor-kings turn pale in Pleasure's bower,
For at the sound which comes like thunder—sobbing,
    The leaves from Royalty's tree, fall hour by hour;
    Earthquakes leap in our temples, crumbling Throne and
       Power!

Vampyres have drain'd the human heart's best blood,
    Kings robbed, and Priests have curst us in God's name;
Out in the midnight of the Past we've stood—
    While fiends of darkness plied their hellish game.
We have been worshipping a gilded crown,
    Which drew heaven's lightning-laughter on our head;
Chains fell on us as we were bowing down,
    We deem'd our Gods divine, but lo! instead—
    They are but painted clay,—with morn, the charm has
       fled!

And is this "Merrie England," this the place—
    The cradle of great souls, self-deified?
Where smiles once revelled in the Peasant's face,
    Ere hearts were maskt by gold—lips steept in pride—
Where Toil with open brow went on light-hearted,
    And twain in love, Law never thrust apart?
Then, is the glory of our life departed
    From us, who sit and nurse our bleeding smart;
    And slink, afraid to break the laws that break the heart.

Husht be the Herald on the walls of Fame,
    Trumping this People as their Country's pride;
Weep rather, with your souls on fire with shame,
    See ye not how the palaced knaves deride
Us facile-flatter'd fools? how priestcraft stealthy,
    Stabs at our freedom through its veil of night,
And grinds the poor to flush its coffers wealthy?
    Hear how the land groans in the grip of Might,
    Then quaff your cup of Wrongs, and laud a Briton's
       "Right."

There's not a spot in all this flowery land,
    Where Tyranny's cursed brand-mark has not been:
O! were it not for its all blasting hand,
    Dear Christ, what a sweet heaven this might have been,

Has it not hunted forth our spirits brave—
    Killed the red rose which crown'd our darling Daughters,
Wedded our living hopes unto the grave—
    Filled happy homes with strife, the world with slaughters,
    And turn'd our thoughts to blood—to gall, the heart's
       sweet waters.

Gone! is the love that nerved our ancient Sires,
    Who, bleeding, wrung their Rights from tyrannies
       olden,
God-spirits have been here, for Freedom fires
    From out their ashes, to earth's heart enfolden;
The mighty dead lie slumbering around—
    Whose names, smite as if God's soul shook the air,
Life leaps from where their dust makes holy ground,
    Their deeds spring forth in glory—live all-where,
    And are we traitors to th' eternal trust we bear?

Go forth, when night is husht, and heaven is clothed
    With smiling stars that in God's presence roll,
Feel the stirred spirit leap to them betrothed,
    As Angel-wings were fanning in the soul;
Feel the hot tears flood in the eyes upturning,
    The tide of goodness, heave its brightest waves—
Then is't not hard to crush the God-ward yearning
    With the mad thought that ye are still Earth's slaves?
    O ! how long will ye make your hearts its living graves?

Immortal Liberty!   I see thee stand—
    Like Morn just stept from heaven upon a mountain,
With rosy feet, and blessing-laden hand,
    Thy brow star-crown'd, thy heart Love's living fountain,
O! when wilt thou string on the People's lyre
    Joy's broken chord?   And on the People's brow
Set Empire's crown? Light up thy beacon-fire
    Within their hearts, with an undying glow;
    Nor give us blood for milk, as men are drunk with
       now?

Curst, curst be war, the World's most fatal glory,
    Ye wakening nations, burst its guilty thrall!
Time waits with out-stretcht hand to shroud the gory—
    Grim glave of Strife behind Oblivion's pall,
The tyrant laughs at swords, the cannon's rattle
    Thunders no terror on his murderous soul.
Thought, Mind, must conquer Might, and in this battle
    The warrior's cuirass, or the sophist's stole,
    Shall blunt no lance of light, no onset, backward roll.

Old Poets tell us of a golden age,
    When earth was guiltless,—Gods the guests of men,
Ere sin had dimmed the heart's illumined page—
    And Sinai-voices say 'twill come again.
O! happy age! when love shall rule the heart,
    And time to live, shall be the poor man's dower,
When martyrs bleed no more, nor Poets smart—
    Mind is the only diadem of power—
    People, it ripens now! awake! and strike the hour.

Hearts, high and mighty, gather in our cause.
    Bless, bless oh God, and crown their earnest labour,
Who dauntless fight to win us equal laws,
    With mental armour, and with spirit-sabre!
Bless, bless O God! the proud intelligence,
    That like a sun dawns on the People's forehead—
Humanity springs from them like incense,
    The Future, bursts upon them, boundless—starried—
    They weep repentant tears, that they so long have
      tarried.

The Men of Forty-Eight

They rose in Freedom's rare sunrise,
    Like Giants roused from wine;
And in their hearts, and in their eyes,
    The God leapt up divine!
Their souls flasht out like naked swords,
    Unsheathed for fiery fate,
Strength went like battle with their words—
    The Men of Forty-eight.
                                        Hurrah!
            For the Men of Forty-eight.

Dark days have fall'n, yet in the strife
    They bate no hope sublime,
And bravely works the fiery life,
    Their hearts pulse through the time,
As grass is greenest trodden down,
    So suffering makes men great;
And this dark tide shall grandly crown
    The Men of Forty-eight.
                                        Hurrah!
            For the Men of Forty-eight.

Some in a bloody burial sleep,
    Like Greeks to glory gone,
But, in their steps avengers leap
    With their proof armour on,
And hearts beat high with dauntless trust:
    We'll triumph soon or late—
Though they be mould'ring down in dust—
    Brave Men of Forty-eight.
                                        Hurrah!
            For the Men of Forty-eight.

O! when the World wakes up, to worst
    The Tyrants once again,
And Freedom's summons-shout shall burst
    In music on the brain—
With heart to heart, and hand in hand—
    Ye'll find us, all elate
And true, as ever Spartan band—
    We Men of Forty-eight.
                                        Hurrah!
            For the Men of Forty-eight.

To a Beloved One

HEAVEN hath its crown of stars; the
      earth
  Her glory robe of flowers;
The grand old woods have music,
  Green leaves, and silver showers;
The birds have homes, where honey-
      blooms
  In beauty smile above,—
High yearning hearts their rainbow-
      dreams,—
  And we, Sweet! we have love!

There's suffering for the toiling poor,
  On misery's bosom nursed;
Rich robes for ragged souls, and
      crowns
  For branded brows, Cain cursed!
But cherubim, with clasping wings,
  Ever about us be;
And, happiest of God's happy thing!
  There's love for you and me!

We walk not with the jewelled great,
  Where love's dear name is sold;
But we have wealth we would not give
  For all their world of gold.
We revel not in corn and wine;
  Yet have we from above
Manna divine—then we'll not pine:—
  Do we not live and love?

Thou dear, true heart! within our lot
  May mingle tears and sorrow!
But love his rainbow builds from tears
  To-day, with smiles to-morrow.
The sunshine from our sky may die,—
  The greenness from life's tree;
But ever 'mid the warring storm,
  Thy nest shell sheltered be.

I see thee, Ararat of my life!
  Smiling the waves above;
Thou hail'st me victor in the strife,
  And I love thee for thy love!
The world may never know, dear,
  Half what I've found in thee;
But though nothing to the world,
      dear,
  Thou'rt all the world to me!

A Lyric of Love

The Lark that nestles nearest earth,
     To Heaven's gate nighest sings;
And loving thee, my lowly life
     Doth mount on marvellous wings!

Thine eyes are starry promises,
     And affluent above
All measure – in rich blessing, is
     The largess of thy love.

My heart may sometimes blind mine eyes
     With utterances of tears –
But feels no pang for thee, belov'd:
     But all the more endears!
And if life comes with cross and care,
     Unknown in years of yore:
I know thou'lt half the burden bear,
     And I am strong once more.

Merry as laughter thro' the hills
     Spring dances in my heart, –
And at my wooing Nature's soul
     Into her face will start!
The Queen-moon in her starry bower
     Looks happier for our love:
A fierier splendour fills the flower,
     And mellower coos the Dove.

Ah! now I see my life was shorn,
     That like the forest-brook –
When leaves are shed: my darken'd soul,
     Up in Heaven's face might look!
And blessings on the storm, that gave
     Me haven on thy breast –
Where my life, climax like a wave,
     That breaks in perfect rest.

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<u>Online Resources</u>

Bible Gateway <www.biblegateway.com>

Encyclopaedia Britannica <www.britannica.com>

English Poetry database <http://www.proquest.co.uk/enUK/catalogs/databases/detail/english_poetry_2.shtml>

Gerald Massey Archive <http://gerald-massey.org.uk/massey/cpm_early_poems_index.htm>

William Blake Archive <www.blakearchive.org>

Nineteenth Century Serials Edition <www.ncse.ac.uk>

Oxford English Dictionary <www.oed.com>

Religious Movements Homepage Project <http://web.archive.org/web/20060907005952/http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/relmove/>