

Synthesis: Eight Themes of Vision

Hold your hand in front of your face. The boundary between your skin and the surrounding air is your Markov blanket—the statistical interface through which all inference flows. Blake called this the “door of perception.” Two names for the same structure, separated by two centuries of intellectual history.

In what follows, we trace eight such structural identities between Blake’s prophetic vision and the Active Inference framework, each demonstrated through specific perceptual scenarios that ground abstract formalism in lived experience. Each theme begins with Blake’s fire—his phenomenological observation, expressed in the language of prophecy and illuminated printing—and then traces its mathematical shadow in the equations, architectures, and dynamics of computational neuroscience. The correspondences are not approximate analogies but precise structural mappings: shared topology (the Markov blanket as Blake’s door), shared dynamics (free energy minimization as the cleansing of perception), shared architecture (hierarchical generative models as fourfold vision), and shared pathology (prior dominance as Newton’s sleep). Figure 1