

## Introduction: The Threshold

*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 of his cavern."*  
— Blake, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Plate 14  
[@blake1790marriage]

### The Threshold

Between perceiver and perceived lies a boundary. Blake called it a door. In causal inference, that boundary may be called a blanket. The exoteric syntax differs; the esoteric semantics does not.

William Blake (1757–1827) composed his prophetic works during the consolidation of Newtonian mechanism—the reduction of cosmos to clockwork, of vision to optics, of mind to matter arranged [@raine1968blake]. His response was not retreat into mysticism but a vigorous *expansion*: a fourfold epistemology that could contain Newton's single vision while transcending it.

The Active Inference framework, developed by a growing community of researchers worldwide, offers a formal complement to Blake's insights. The free energy principle formalizes how self-organizing systems maintain existence by minimizing prediction