individual rights. Blake thus stood as a key transition figure who drew upon past and present conceptions of liberty that were to become the cornerstones of modern liberal democracies. He called for a society of virtuous men, a society, that is, in which every individual would be free to follow his own conscience—one of universal toleration without martyrdoms, wars, or dominancy, based on the recognition that there can be no single abode of holiness and that every man's wisdom is peculiar to his individuality. The foundation of this society is not religion, but art and science, and it is to be composed of virtuosi who, to the extent that they do not hinder the acts of others, are free in mind and body to gratify their desires and act upon their leading propensities so that they may give expression to the spirit and genius within each and every one of them.

Works Cited


