AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY
Volume 14 Number 2
Fall 1980

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NEWSLETTER

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BLAKE'S MOON-ARK SYMBOLISM

NICHOLAS O. WARNER

To a reader-viewer going through Blake's work chronologically, the moon-ark or moon-boat probably seems a minor, perhaps even merely decorative motif. The image does not enter the Blakean canon until fairly late, 1804 and after, and then appears but sparsely—once line in Milton, four pictures in Jerusalem, a design from the Dante Illustrations. Yet an examination of the moon-boat image will reveal its close connections to the basic Blakean themes of spiritual degeneration and ultimate redemption through the saving power of the imagination and of Christ's mercy. Furthermore, Blake's yoking of moon and boat results in an image of both spiritual illumination and spiritual transportation from one state of moral consciousness to another. Thus, if we study the moon-boat in relation to its sources in art and myth, modified by Blake into a motif compatible with his own iconography, we will discern its value as a vehicle of transition from a lower to a higher state of spiritual perception, and as a symbol of redemptive power.

So far, the only critic to discuss the subject in detail has been Albert S. Roe, who concentrates on a moon-boat from one of Blake's designs for Dante's Divine Comedy. I would like to begin by examining this illustration, and then go on to a more thorough analysis of the whole phenomenon of the moon-ark in Blake's work. My procedure will be to demonstrate the symbolic values of the moon-boat as they arise from Blake's assimilation and transformation of traditional motifs.

The moon-boat described by Roe appears in the drawing entitled "The Angelic Boat Wafting Over the Souls for Purgation," in which an angel standing in a crescent-shaped boat bears souls away to Purgatory (illus. 1). Roe convincingly argues that this crescent boat indicates Blake's association of this "scene with Beulah, for Beulah too is a place where spirits come and go. . . ." Implicit in Roe's analysis is the view of the moon-boat as a symbol of spiritual transit, and of Beulah as a transitional state: "Man is thus shown in this design in the in-between realm of Beulah. As the spirits embrace on the shore, the angelic boat guided by the Divine Imagination waits to take them back to the eternal joy of Eden."2

I believe that Roe's interpretation can be elaborated and extended to the moon-ark images of Milton and Jerusalem. The sole moon-ark image in Milton occurs verbally, in Blake's reference to Ololon, the emanation of Milton, who descends into "Felphams Vale" and the "Fires of Intellect" in the form of a "Moony Ark" (Milton 42:7-9). Ololon's descent marks the poem's triumphant conclusion, in which God and man, as well as Milton and his emanation, are united. But why does Blake describe Ololon as an ark, and why is the ark "Moony"? To answer this question we must first turn to Jerusalem. After examining the moon-boat illustrations from Jerusalem, we can return to the figure of Ololon with a fuller, more lucid sense of her symbolic value. However, in order to understand how Blake uses the moon-arks of Jerusalem as symbols of

1 Blake: "The Angelic Boat Wafting Over the Souls for Purgation." Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
redemption, spiritual transition and refuge, we must also see how Blake re-casts a number of traditional images to form his own moon-ark iconography.

Blake was rather miscellaneous in adapting general and specific sources for his union of boat and moon into a single image. The positive symbolism of the boat in Blake is not surprising, as the image of the ship or boat is nearly always benign both in Western and Eastern symbolism. The moon, on the other hand, often functions as a baleful symbol, a source of lunacy, an emblem of mutability and inconstancy. Yet there exist positive alternative instances of lunar symbolism, and it is on these that Blake seems to have drawn for the purposes of his own image of the moon-ark. I would like to focus briefly on three such areas of positive lunar associations—first, some general, scattered images of the moon as positive; second, a moon-boat motif possibly familiar to Blake from medieval and Renaissance Christian art; third, the moon-boat symbolism set forth by the English antiquarian, Jacob Bryant.

As an object of light, the moon often functions as a symbolic promise of the return of the sun, as in Isaiah 30:26 ("Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun") and Jeremiah 31:35 ("Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night"). A sign of something hopeful, bright, and definite in an amorphous sea of darkness (broken only by stars), the moon goes through its cycle of phases with reassuring regularity (hence its many cross-cultural associations with rebirth.) As for the ship or boat, its positive meanings, as I mentioned earlier, are numerous and wide-ranging. The ship is often depicted as an image of sanctuary, as well as of rebirth and immortality. A frequent symbol of refuge from a hostile sea, the ship also appears as a means of transcending mundane existence by transporting the soul to other worlds.

Perhaps some of these associations lie behind a motif in Christian art that strikingly anticipates Blake's own use of the moon-boat, namely the appearance in medieval and early Renaissance art of distinctly crescent-shaped ships and boats. Now, whether there is any intended significance underlying the resemblance of boat to moon in certain works of art has not, as far as I know, received any scholarly attention. However, it is likely that an active imagination like Blake's, prone to complex symbolic associations, might very well have made something significant of such a resemblance. Both the moon and the boat were accepted emblems of the Church in Christian iconography, and perhaps it is this link that such works express, or that itself appealed to Blake. One frequent symbol of the Church, Noah's Ark, was occasionally portrayed in crescent-like form, as in a medieval manuscript of uncertain date in which the ark consists of a house set in an exaggerated crescent-shaped boat (illus. 7). This picture even brings to mind some lines about Los who, practical visionary that he is, provides Ulro with a moon to replace the lost moon of Beulah: "And Sixty Winters Los raged in the Divisions of Reuben: / Building the Moon of Ulro, plank by plank, & rib by rib" (p. 32:3-4).

Similarly shaped boats abound in the well-known Stuttgart Psalter, though it is doubtful that Blake would have seen it. One motif from the Psalter, however, a crescent-shaped boat in a monster-infested sea (illus. 8) is particularly interesting. The same motif occurs several times in illustrations to the Geneva, or so-called "Breeches" or Queen Elizabeth Bible, an English Bible of which there were numerous editions and copies that Blake may well have seen. The significance, for Blake, of a


3 Blake: Jerusalem, plate 20, 8 3/4 x 6 1/4 in. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
Wandering...
crescent boat as a refuge from monstrous creatures will become obvious when we realize how his own moon-arcs, especially those of plates 24 and 39 of Jerusalem, symbolize refuge from the spiritual monstrosity surrounding Albion.

The presence of a moon-boat in Blake's Dante drawings leads one to suspect the possible influence of Dante's earlier illustrators on Blake. (We should remember, however, that in Dante there is no mention of actual moon-boats.) Flaxman immediately comes to mind, but his Dante illustrations reveal no moons at all, let alone moon-boats. In one French version of Dante, however, the Bergaigne translation of 1517-25, Dante is shown riding in a small crescent-like rowboat. And in a fourteenth-century Italian manuscript, a distinctly crescent-shaped boat appears in an illustration of the City of Dis (illus. 9).

The similarity of such illustrations as those found in the Bergaigne translation, the Stuttgart Psalter, and the Queen Elizabeth Bible to Blake's moon-arcs suggests that Blake may have been familiar with these or similar sources. Although there does not seem to be any evidence for a deliberate association of moons and boats in Western art, it seems clear that Blake probably encountered some Eastern designs in which he might have noticed a similarity between boats and the crescent moon, for Egyptian art and Sumerian hymns and pictures abound in moon-boat images. Even so, we can only speculate on Blake's possible interpretation and transformation of the crescent boat motif into a symbol suitable for his own work. Whether or not earlier artists consciously imitated the lunar crescent in their moon-like boats, Blake's creatively assimilative mind could easily have drawn such a correlation from their work.

On a less esoteric level, we might note that the young Blake would probably have known the bit of British folklore that interprets a crescent moon on its side, thus resembling a boat, as a good omen, a sign of favorable weather. But it is even more certain that Blake's moon-ark imagery derives in part from Bryant's *Analysis of Antient Mythology*, for which Blake is said to have engraved a tailpiece depicting Noah's ark as a crescent moon (illus. 6). From Bryant Blake would have learned of the ark's association with the moon, as well as of many intriguing, if often far-fetched interpretations of Noah's ark and its connections to mythical figures such as Osiris and Dionysus. According to Bryant, the ark was a kind of crescent, such as is exhibited by the new moon: which in consequence of it was made a type of the Ark. Hence, in the mythology of the Ark . . . there is continually some reference to the moon . . . the Moon and the Ark were synonymous terms. Bryant goes on to link Noah's ark to the festival of Osiris, when the Egyptians "constructed by way of memorial a remarkable machine . . . an Ark in the shape of a crescent or new moon. In this the Image of Osiris was for a time concealed." One of the illustrations in Bryant's book (again, possibly designed by Blake himself) depicts Osiris in such a boat, a crescent-shaped canoe. As the ark of Noah and of Osiris the moon was, says Bryant, symbolic of renewal and birth: "The Ark was certainly looked upon as the womb of nature; and the descent from it as the birth of the world." Both this positive value of the Ark, and the general association of the ark with the crescent moon discussed above, were accepted and elaborated by Blake in Jerusalem.

The first instance of moon-ark symbolism in Jerusalem occurs at plate 18, where Blake depicts two small crescent sailboats apparently gliding toward one another as parallels to the two figures flying into an embrace on this plate (illus. 2). It is difficult to assign a specific valence to these moon-boats, but we can interpret them positively if, as seems reasonable, we see them as accompanying and/or paralleling the two embracing figures, and if in turn we identify these figures as the necessary, complementary fruits of Vala's and Jerusalem's labors, as described in the text: "For Vala produc'd the Bodies. Jerusalem gave the Souls" (Jer 18:7). At the same time, these moon-boats could be images of hope, offering us light or escape from the disasters of this plate—the rejection of the innocent Jerusalem by the warlike "Sons of Albion, joint in dark Assembly" (Jer 18:8), who set up the all too obliging Vala as their queen, the "Goddess Virgin-Mother" (Jer 18:29). The usurpation of Jerusalem's rightful place and the disruption of cosmic harmony that begin on plate 18 continue through plate 19, where Albion fails to stagger out of his spiritual stupor, and extend into plate 20, where some miniscule moon-boats reappear as tokens of hope (illus. 3). In a plate thick with despair in both the text and scattered designs, these three crescents (one with a sail, thus recalling the boats of plate 18) are the only signs of refuge or hope. Such an interpretation of these moon-boats will be more strongly confirmed if we now examine the moon-boats they seem to prefigure—the larger, more impressive arks of Jerusalem 24 and 39. The moon-arcs of these later plates embrace the meanings of those on plates 18 and 20, while also seeming to offer Albion an alternative from the Ulroic state he approaches in those plates, a refuge from the temporal-spatial sea that threatens to engulf him.

On plate 24 of Jerusalem, Blake presents a crescent moon in water as a kind of Noah's ark, much like the one he supposedly engraved for Bryant's Mythology. The suggestion of Noah's ark is intensified by the presence of a small, winged, dovelike figure in the boat. (One thinks here not only of the dove in the Biblical account of the deluge, but of the moon-ark tailpiece in Bryant, with a dove hovering over it.)

In keeping with iconographic tradition, Blake depicts the ark during a rainstorm and on a turbulent sea. This moon-ark, with even its partially submerged hull shining luminously through the water, clearly functions as a Noah's-ark symbol, traditionally suggestive of hope, and as a symbol of the security and love of moon-ruled Beulah (illus. 4).

In addition to these positive associations, Blake's moon-ark very possibly serves as an image of rebirth. Such a connection is certainly implicit in Bryant, in the same volume where he links the ark with the moon: "Osiris . . . having been confined in an ark, or coffin, and in a state of
death, at last quitted his prison and enjoyed a 
renewal of life . . . the renewal of mankind 
commenced from their issuing to light from the 
Ark.” M. Esther Harding, who has made a study of 
moon myths, points out a number of other sources in 
which the moon symbolizes the renewal of life. 
Considering his interest in Eastern myths, perhaps 
Blake knew that "the Hindus . . . speak of the moon 
as carrying the souls of the dead over the waters 
to the sun where they live a redeemed life," or that 
"the Chinese moon-goddess after the flood gives 
birth to all living things." These myths, like 
Blake's designs, present the moon-boat as a vehicle 
of spiritual transition. Whatever Blake's specific 
sources (apart from Bryant) may have been, it is 
clear that previous appearances of the moon-boat in 
both Western and Eastern traditions would appeal to 
Blake in their richness of symbolic reference and 
association.

But what is the significance of all this 
symbolic richness for reader-viewers of Jerusalem? 
What is the moon-ark’s relation to the text of plate 
24, which itself depicts the weakness, delusion and 
despair afflicting Albion? For one thing, the visual 
image of the moon-boat counters and corrects Albion’s 
assertions of hopelessness. The text of plate 24 
concludes with one of Albion’s numerous failures at


5 Blake: detail, Jerusalem, plate 39, 8 3/4 x 6 1/4 in. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
rejuvenation, and despite the appearance of Christ, Albion sinks back to deathly sleep: "I die! I die in thy arms tho Hope is banished from me" (J 24:60). Yet the moon-ark dominating the plate, with its suggestions of Noah's ark, of life and hope, shows that hope is not actually banished at all, as Albion erroneously thinks. The moon-ark stands as a reminder of the very life that Albion is in danger of losing, for it can bear him away from Ulro toward Beulah and Eden itself, which Blake elsewhere calls "the land of life" (The Four Zoas, I, 21:6). As Albion himself indicates, spiritual death and annihilation are not identical—if he fails to escape from his lethargy, he will "live" an eternal death of the spirit (J 23:40). This moon-ship of Beulah, though tempest-tossed, offers Albion a shelter of love and hope that can still bear him away from the torments of Ulroic death, if only he can muster the courage to board it.

A symbol of Beulah, of its love and hope, the moon-ark also suggests itself as a boundary, for Beulah serves as a boundary between Eden and Ulro, Blake's Heaven and Hell. (Perhaps the aspect of the moon-ark that signifies a boundary even implies some sense of a tension or balance between the positive associations of the moon-ark and the moon's frequent negative associations with mutability. While a refuge, the state of Beulah that the moon-ark symbolizes is also characterized by a "perilous equipoise" between the ascent to Eden and the fall into Ulro.) As the text of plate 24 shows, Beulah is a boundary that Ulro-bound Albion is quickly slipping past. The moon-ark reminds us that Beulah, limited as it is, is a step to Eden, a step that can lead to Albion's redemption if he will only attempt to regain Beulah and then move on to Eden. As the moon itself has served as a token of the warming light of the sun in numerous cultures, so here the moon-boat is a reminder to Albion of Eden, the fiery, sun-ruled world of the imagination. But instead of regaining Beulah at this point, Albion continues to degenerate, as evidenced by the cosmic disruption within his own system: "The Sun fled from the Britons forehead: the Moon from his mighty loins" (J 24:10). This line constitutes a verbal prophecy of what we will see graphically presented on the following plate, 25—Albion in utter despair.

6 Blake: "Noah's Ark," in Jacob Bryant's Analysis of Antient Mythology, 1807, Vol. III.

7 Anonymous: "Le retour de la coulombe a l'arche," plate xxv of La Bible toute historiée et figurée de la John Rylands Library. Courtesy of the John Rylands Library.
Ist est que ne est en lanche o vuiuerlet de totes bestes par le ouamement nte seignor.
degradation as he is tortured by the Female Will (illus. 10). The shift of the moon image of plate 24 to that of plate 25 strikingly parallels Albion's own degeneration. Both the moon (Albion's emotional center) and the sun (his spiritual center) are displaced from their positions of loins and forehead (the sources of passion and thought?) and end up on Albion's legs in a kind of symmetry that is fearful for all the wrong reasons. Blake, of course, frequently links sun and moon; yet here, in the context of both the design and text of this plate, their pairing possesses negative connotations as it underscores their displacement from the original positions of forehead and loins.

Blake's repetition of the moon image of plate 24 on the plate following it serves as a bitter reminder of Albion's unfallen state, as well as of the rich promises the moon-ark of plate 24 still held. The hopes symbolized by the moon-boat seem far away indeed when their emblem, like the sun, has metamorphosed into a mere tattoo on Albion's leg.

Besides incorporating the positive symbolic associations of plate 24, the moon-ark of plate 39 illustrates, if somewhat obliquely, the text which accompanies it. The struggle for Albion's spiritual awakening has been dragging on throughout the poem, and finally, "furious raging" Los exhorts Albion's friends and brothers to stretch a "hand to save the falling Man" (J 38:12-14). Responding to Los's urging,

With one accord in love sublime, & as on Cherubs wings
They Albion surround with kindest violence to bear him back
Against his will thro Los's Gate to Eden: Four-fold; loud!
Their Wings waving over the bottomless Immense: to bear
Their awful charge back to his native home:
but Albion dark,
Repugnant; rolls his Wheels backward into Non-Entity

(J 39:1-6)

We can easily see the extension of the symbolism of plate 24 into plate 39, where a related yet different sort of moon-boat sails over the water. The simple crescent of plate 24 has grown into a house set in a moon-like boat, and the dome of the earlier plate has been replaced by two great wings flanking the house (illus. 5). In addition to offering a vision of hope and rebirth, the design on the upper part of plate 39 supplies a visual complement to the text. This winged moon-boat, followed and perhaps impelled by the two angelic spirits behind it (two of the friends and brothers mentioned in the text), symbolically parallels the text's account of the attempt to bear the fallen Albion back through Los's gate to Eden. As a refuge from the non-entity threatening Albion, this moon-boat seems to symbolize those qualities, already suggested on plate 24, that can serve as a kind of spiritual barque bearing Albion back to spiritual health.

In its very function as a conveyance between two states, the moon-ark of plate 39 can also be seen as the kind of boundary between Eden and Ulro that we recognized in the ark of plate 24. Indeed, the winged moon-boat of plate 39 seems a variant of the winged disk-boundary appearing on plate 33 of *Jerusalem*. The design on plate 33 reveals Albion fainting back in Christ's arms, a scene verbally described on plates 23 and 24, when Albion declares all hope to be banished from him (illus. 11). Now, just what the winged globe of plate 33 represents is unclear. In discussing this image, W. J. T. Mitchell notes that in William Stukeley's *Abury*, winged orbs are interpreted as symbols of divinity, while Mitchell himself, without specifically indentifying the globe in Blake, argues that it is an emblem of the "eternal support of Pity." Such an interpretation of the winged orb of plate 33 would be consistent with Blake's parallel depiction of both Christ and the disk as supporting Albion—the winged disk supports Albion's foot, just as Christ supports him in his arms. However, it is also possible that the orb actually does represent the moon. David Erdman identifies the orb as such, maintaining that its "continents are those of the moon, not earth." Furthermore, winged moons are not unknown in mythology. An ancient Assyrian motif represents the moon as winged (illus. 12); Jacob Bryant, in a section of his *Mythology* on the symbolic links between moon and bull, presents an illustration of a winged full moon among other lunar emblems (illus. 13). Should we interpret this winged orb as a moon, we can go on to see it as an emblem of Beulah, serving as a kind of border between Albion and the Ulroic scene at the bottom of the plate, presided over by a bat-winged creature (illus. 11).

(In Blake's textual counterpart to this design, *Jerusalem* 23:24-25, Albion is described as being upon "the edge of Beulah.") The similarity between the winged moon images of plates 33 and 39 (if indeed the disk of 33 is the moon) emphasizes the similarity of their symbolic functions. In any event, the disk of plate 33, be it moon, sun, earth, or some other orb, is equipped with wings, and hence is ready to move, if necessary. The vehicular, winged moon-boat of plate 39, like its motionless counterpart in the earlier plate, represents a boundary between Eden and Ulro at the same time that it is already moving, under the guidance of the two spirits, to convey Albion back to Eden.

It is in connection with the idea of the moon-boat as both conveyance and boundary that a suggestion in Bryant's *Mythology* becomes useful. Throughout his discussion of the ark's ancient
symbolism, Bryant implies that the moon-ark, in addition to its other symbolic values, represents "an intermediate state between a lost world, and a world renewed." In terms of Blake's own symbolism, Beulah (of which the moon is chief emblem) could be viewed as such an intermediate state, between the lost death-world of Ulro and the renewed and renewing world of Eden. Albion himself needs to be redeemed from the lost world of Ulro, of non-entity, through the intermediate stage of Beulah, before going on into Eden; and what more appropriate image for his spiritual conveyance than a moon-ark, at once a boat, source of light, emblem of Beulah, and symbol of the redemption that Albion so desperately needs.

In addition to the moon-boats we have been discussing, there is a verbal instance of what might be called a moon-boat in Jerusalem when, in a pair of obscure verses, Los announces that "The Sun shall be a scythed chariot of Britain; the Moon, a Ship / In the British Ocean" (J 56:18-19). These lines appear in a passage marked by images of holocaust, and are difficult to interpret, for the relationship of sun and moon to the surrounding imagery is not clear. S. Foster Damon sees the moon here as a symbol of love and Beulah, representing a barque of refuge from the Sea of Time and Space. Yet the imagery of sun and moon in these lines disturbs, rather than calms. What we have here, after all, is imagery of great cosmic disorder, with sun and moon fallen to earth. The sun as a "scythed chariot" suggests destruction, and the real moon, if one may be permitted so fatuous a statement, simply does not belong in the British ocean. There is nothing in the context of these two lines to indicate a positive reading of these displaced celestial objects, and the only way to make sense of them is to fit them in with the entire litany of evils of which they are a part. In this moon image we have not a redemptive moon-ark, but a symbol of disruption similar to that of plate 25, where the sun flees from Albion's forehead, and the moon from his "mighty loins."

Thus far we have considered Blake's ark as the union of moon and boat. Yet there is another.

10 Blake: Jerusalem, plate 25, 8 3/4 x 6 1/4 in. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
11 Blake: Jerusalem, plate 33, 8 3/4 x 6 1/4 in. Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.
dimension to Blake's moon-ark symbolism that depends on an apparent link, in Blake's mind, between the Ark of Noah and the Ark of the Covenant. The connection between the two arks will provide us with a transition from the symbolism of the moon-boats to that of Ololon, the "Moony Ark" of Milton.

In his commentary on Jerusalem, Joseph Wicksteed finds several connections between Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant, suggested by one of the designs we have been discussing, plate 39 of Jerusalem. Wicksteed notes that the ark of this plate must have been "associated by Blake with the Ark of the Covenant as described in Bacon's New Atlantis, with its attendant angels guiding it from heaven." Wicksteed goes on to note the close association between the two arks as the result of the Vulgate's use of the word area for both, although the Hebrew words for the two arks are quite different. A similar association is found in Bryant, who discusses the merging of the symbolism of Noah's ark, the rainbow (God's first covenant with man), and the Ark of the Covenant: "Upon the resting of the ark upon Mount Baris, and the appearance of the Bow in the clouds, it pleased God to make a covenant with man... A memorial of this was preserved in the Gentile worlds. They represented the great event under the type of an Ark... which they styled Barith, in allusion to the covenant. Some ages after... another Ark by divine appointment was framed... and this too was called the Ark of the Covenant." It is worth noting, in light of Bryant's comments, that there seems to be a similar linking of Noah's ark, the rainbow, and the Ark of the Covenant in Blake. Blake's depiction of Noah's ark in his illustration, "Epitome of Hervey's Meditations Among the Tombs," shows the rainbow above the ark illustrated in Bryant, in that both vessels seem to be mirrored or paralleled by the rainbow arch in the sky (illus. 6 and 14). In both "Hervey's Meditations" and the design from Bryant, it is almost as if the rainbow covenant and Noah's ark become analogous images, both figures of God's mercy, a significance that, as I have shown, is appropriate for the moon-arks of Jerusalem as well.

Blake himself gave us a visual rendition of the Ark of the Covenant that resembles the house-like structure of Jerusalem 39 (illus. 15). Here, in this engraving for the Protestant's Family Bible, Blake has shown Joshua safely crossing Jordan through the miraculous powers of the Ark. Blake would not fail to note that both Biblical arks had provided salvation from water, both were signs of God's mercy, both were places of refuge (in Noah's case, for living beings, in the case of the Ark of the Covenant, for sacred objects). Moreover, the winged house-boat of Jerusalem 39 can reasonably be said to recall the Biblical description of the Ark of the Covenant found in Exodus 37 and 38, for, as Blake himself noted, that Ark was attended by winged cherubim: "The holy spirit like a Dove is surrounded by a blue Heaven in which are the two cherubim that bowd over the Ark for here the temple is opened in Heaven." The next line that Blake writes links the Ark of the Covenant with that of Noah, through the image of the Dove--"the ark of the Covenant is as a Dove of Peace." These subtle yet deep links between the two arks in Blake multiply the iconic force of the moon-ark, and extend not only its own range of symbolic reference, but that of Ololon as well. Having examined Blake's transformative vision of traditional iconography, we can return to the image of Ololon with a fuller understanding of her identity as a "Moony Ark"--as a figure that incorporates many of the symbolic aspects of the arks we have been studying.

Both "Dove upon a stormy sea" (Milton 42:6) (we should remember here Blake's association of the Dove of Noah with the Ark of the Covenant) and "Moony Ark," Ololon descends to Felpham's Vale. In so doing, she, like the moon-arks of Jerusalem, transcends the barriers between various states of consciousness and being. She contains within herself Beulah's love, as well as the redemptive, merciful qualities that characterize Blake's moon-ark symbols. Hence, Ololon too is a "Moony Ark," a metaphor that becomes even more suitable because she is female, and thus, in accordance with much traditional feminine symbolism, has a mysterious link to the moon and is also a type of protective vessel. Even Christ is wrapped in a kind of sheltering mantle by Ololon--"Wonderfull round his limbs / The Clouds of Ololon folded as a Garment dipped in Blood" (Milton 42:11-12). This protective, enclosing aspect of Ololon connects her to the Ark of the Covenant, which, in Catholic tradition, was interpreted as a type of the protective Virgin. If, moreover, as Roe points out, Beulah is equivalent to Blake's Purgatory, then Ololon may be his "Foederis Area," the Church's traditional symbol of woman as sheltering Ark of the Covenant which enshrines the Son of God, as Ololon envelops Christ.
Tauri Lunati.

Taurus Apis et Mneusa cum Columba sacré.

14 overleaf. Blake: "Epitome of James Hervey's 'Meditations Among the Tombs,'" 16 7/8 x 11 1/2 in. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Tate Gallery.

In connection with this dimension of Ololon's symbolism, we might observe that Erich Neumann defines images of the ship, and Noah's ark in particular, as components of the "vessel symbolism of the feminine," and describes the many myths in which the moon functions as "the great lamp, the vessel of light of the female godhead." To Ololon, as both ark and moon, clearly incorporates the powerful symbolism Neumann describes. Only when we recognize Ololon's relation to the moon-ark and Ark of the Covenant do these added layers of her meaning become apparent.

As I indicated earlier, the reference to Ololon as a "Moony Ark" is not clear within the context of Milton alone. It would seem that Blake had already conceived of Ololon's significance in the terms I have used, yet he did not develop the moon-ark image fully and coherently enough for his reader-viewers until he produced the series of moon-arks in Jerusalem. Looking back, then, from Jerusalem, we can perceive how abundant the phrase "Moony Ark" actually is. Furthermore, the moon-boat's relation to the text in Jerusalem, however oblique, is nonetheless definite. A careful attention to the rapport between text and design from plate 18 through 39 of Jerusalem can expand our perception of that poem while also shedding light on the figure of Ololon. The similar rapport between Blake's symbolism and earlier motifs can help us more fully understand his moon-ark iconography, as well as his creative assimilation of tradition.


2 Roe, p. 141.


5 Cirlot, p. 281.

6 Cirlot, pp. 281-82.


8 Between its first edition in 1650 and its last in 1616, the Geneva Bible was the most popular Bible in English, especially among the kinds of Protestant sects with which Blake felt sympathy. Even after 1616, many illustrated Geneva Bibles were available in England, and this version continued into the eighteenth century to be more widely circulated among many Protestants than the official King James Version. For useful information on the Geneva Bible, see Hugh Pope, O. P., English Versions of the Bible (Birmingham and N. Y.: Val-Ballou Press, Inc., 1952) and T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture, Vol. I (London: Bible House, 1903).


13 Bryant, pp. 181-83.


15 Bryant, p. 218.

16 It would seem that Bryant's association of the Ark of Osiris with resurrection received a curiously negative adaptation in Jerusalem 21, where Blake says of the Daughters of Albion:

I see them die beneath the whips of the Captains! they are taken
In solemn pomp into Chaldea across the breadth of Europe.
Six months they lie embalmed in silent death: worshipped
Carried in Arks of Oak before the armies in the spring
Bursting their Arks they rise again to life: they play before
The Armies: I hear their loud cymbals & their deadly cries
(12 1:42-47)

In this perversion of resurrection and of the Israelites' practice of carrying the Ark of the Covenant before them, we may find a Blakean version of victim-oppressor identification that recalls the vicious cycles of "The Mental Traveller." In Jerusalem 21, the Daughters of Albion emerge from their arks only to incite their former oppressor-worshippers to further evil. The relationship between the Daughters and the armies received detailed exposition in Jerusalem 68.

17 Copies BE of this plate depict a dove with human face, a humanized form of divine that perhaps underscores the supernatural, redemptive qualities of the image.


20 Bryant, p. 248.


25 Harding, p. 47.

26 The fallen world of the bottom portion of plate 33 shows the moon dominated by the bat-like creature, and demonstrates the inversion of order that typifies Uro, as the moon has its bright side turned away from the sun. The moon in this lower section quite possibly represents a corrupted moon, the emblem of Beulah transformed, like the sun of this design, into part of a fallen, evil universe. Or perhaps we are looking at Los's moon of Uro, which he builds "plank by plank" to replace the moon of Beulah in the fallen world, as described on the plate preceding this illustration (17 3:2-4).

27 Bryant, p. 81.


30 Bryant, p. 429.


In his letter to Thomas Johnes dated 4 January 1806 and published as an introduction to *A Father's Memoirs of His Child* (1806), Benjamin Heath Malkin provides much information about and kind words for William Blake, the designer of "the ornamental device, round the portrait in this book."¹ Malkin, however, neglects to mention the engraver of this device, Robert Hartley Cromek, who had much to do with Blake and his vicissitudes between 1805 and 1808. Fifty-seven years later, in Alexander Gilchrist's biography of Blake, there appears the additional information that "Blake designed, and originally engraved, the 'ornamental device' to the frontispiece for Malkin's *A Father's Memoirs of His Child*, but it was erased before the appearance of the work, and the same design re-engraved by Cromek."² It is a curious assertion and, without corroboration, lonely as a cloud.

Recently, however, I have found information which has led me to the print Gilchrist contends Blake made. It comes from R. H. Cromek's son, Thomas Hartley Cromek (1809-1873), who in 1864 wrote a MS memoir of his father. In it he discloses that he possesses a proof print of the original engraving Gilchrist describes:

> I have an impression of this plate [which belonged to my father del.], with the figures round the Portrait, engraved by Blake. These were erased, and re-engraved by Cromek, in 1806. . . . From the fragments of lettering at the edges of Blake's print, it seems clear that he not only designed and engraved the figures, but even printed it, himself, on some piece [sic] of waste paper that came to his hand. It is not in the British Museum, and my impression is probably unique.³

The print is now in the British Museum, for in 1867 Thomas Cromek included it in a group of 119 engravings and drawings by R. H. Cromek which he presented to the Print Room (now the Department of Prints and Drawings). Thomas Cromek's daughter, Mary Cromek, makes specific reference to the print in her letter of 9 April 1867 to Mr. W. Reid of the British Museum: "Together with that of young Malkin there is also Blake's engraving, probably a unique impression."⁴ In the volume of Cromek's works, the alleged Blake engraving is mounted on page 42 and numbered 91 (Plate 1). Cromek's own proof engraving, numbered 92, is mounted below it on the same page (Plate 2).

The "unique impression," which has the same dimensions (7 3/4 x 5 3/16 in.) as the published print, clearly differs from the published print in several ways. First, the rays of sunlight are presented as long, slender shafts, rather like those in Blake's own engraving of "Death's Door," instead of the stylized, regular rays in the published version which resemble so many spotlight beams. Second, the clouds are shaped and arranged differently. Third, there are many small differences between the two versions in the hair, drapery, hands, and feet of the figures in the ornamental device, as well as in the positions of the figures. Particularly noteworthy is the refined curve of the
teacher's neck and shoulder, rather than the in- 
elegant and strained angle of her head, neck, and shoulder in the published version. The published 
version indeed seems inferior in both design and execution to this presumably earlier print.

The "fragments of lettering" Thomas Cromek refers to confirm Blake's association with the print. Along the left-hand border are printed in letter-press "reast," and "ss," and along the right-hand border "BA," "The," "Sec;" "So," "But," "Th," and "Ra." These words and word fragments match exactly those along the right-hand border of page 26 and the left-hand border of page 19 of William Hayley's *Designs to A Series of Ballads* (Chichester: J. Seagrave, 1802). On the verso of the sheet along the left-hand border are printed "nt" and the catch-word "With" and along the right-hand border "R," "S," "L," "O," and "Sh." These words and fragments correspond exactly with those along the right-hand border of page 20 and left-hand border of page 25 of Hayley's *Ballads*. Blake had a generous supply of quarto sheets of Hayley's *Ballads* because the first four numbers of the projected series of fifteen had sold so poorly, in spite of Hayley's professed intention of publishing and selling the *Ballads* "for the sake of serving" Blake, whose engraved designs accompanied the ballads. The *Ballads* instead served Blake chiefly as scrap paper. He drew various sketches in the ample spaces between the printed pages of the sheets or otherwise used the sheets. To date, twenty-one specific instances of his doing so have been noted.

The many letter-press letters on the sheet used for the Malkin print identify beyond any doubt the pages in Hayley's *Ballads* where they appear. Page 19, for instance, yields the following configuration:

**B[ALLAD] TH[IRD]**

The[ir shouts united, and each arm in bold protection spread] Sec[jur'd the kid from real harm Tho' now with fear half dead,]

So[me furlongs from their cottage still, Now pass'd this anxious scene;] But [they had left, as safe from ill, The sleeping babe serene.]

Th[e savage bird the kid renounc'd, But round the cottage off] Ra[pid he wheel'd, and there he pounc'd And bore the babe aloft.]

Pages 20, 25, and 26 produce the same exact fit with the words and letters that show on the sheet.

Blake used copies of this sheet to draw four of the sketches noted by Bentley and Mulhallen, one between pages 26 and 19 (no. 3 in Mulhallen) and three between pages 20 and 25 (nos. 5 and 11 in Bentley and no. 6 in Mulhallen). The Malkin print, however, marks the only known instance of Blake's printing an engraving impression on a sheet from Hayley's *Ballads*. The Malkin print also appears to be the earliest known instance of Blake's using a sheet of the *Ballads* as scrap paper, the next earliest being his letter to Richard Phillips dated 14 October 1807 (no. 9 in Bentley).

The published version of the Malkin print, however, was re-engraved by Cromek—or at least the "ornamental device" originally engraved by Blake. According to his son in the "Memorials," Cromek had nothing to do with the stipple portrait of young Malkin, which actually was completed by another engraver: "The medallion Portrait is in the same unfinished state in Blake's print, and in my father's proof: it was, no doubt, engraved by Robt Cooper." Thomas Cromek arrives at this conclusion by pointing out first that his father seems never to have executed a stipple engraving, except for a medallion portrait of Dante dated 1802 and a portrait of Romney Robinson for William Hayley's *Life of Romney* (1809), and second that the signature on the engraved portrait of Robinson seems to have been altered:

I have three impressions of the plate;—one has the name of Robert Cooper; the other two—Robert Cromek. For some time I was much puzzled with these facts: at last, I was glad to receive a satisfactory explanation from my highly-gifted friend, [Miss del.] Harriet Kearsley, who wrote to me as follows—"If you examine it carefully, you will see by the crowding of the three last letters, the inequality of the strokes of the m, the first of which is longer than the other two; the m which looks as if made out of an o; and the o, which is not a good one,—but is top-heavy, like an m, that Cooper was the original name, and that the error was afterwards corrected." Now, as this plate, and those of Dante and of young Malkin are the only specimens of dotted engraving bearing my father's name; to which may be added the evidence of Hayley's letter to my father; I feel quite sure that none of these portraits were [sic] engraved by him, but that they were all the work of Robert Cooper, whom my father seems to have employed occasionally.

The information about Blake's Malkin engraving reached Gilchrist's widow in 1862, and she incorporated it in her husband's biography in a way not satisfactory to Thomas Cromek:

My friend Mr Frost A.R.A. after he had seen my probably unique impression of it, communicated to Mr Gilchrist the particulars relating to it, and thought that being perhaps a "unique print," it would be interesting to

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1 Proof of frontispiece to Malkin's *A Father's Memoirs of His Child* (1806), designed by Blake and engraved by R. H. Cromek, British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings.

2 Blake's own engraving of his design, printed on a quarto sheet of Hayley's *Ballads*. British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings.
Blake's admirers to know in whose possession it was. Now it seems evident, that it had been predetermined that my existence should be ignored: else why is M. Frost's interesting communication, reduced to the mere statement, that "the design was re-engraved by Cromek"?1

Thomas Cromek's complaint has grounds, for the wording Mrs. Gilchrist chooses implies that no impression of Blake's Malkin engraving survives. His interpreting the oversight as a personal affront, however, seems to be stretching a point.

Other information incorporated in Gilchrist's biography of Blake from items in the possession of Thomas Cromek has to do with the engraving Cromek had made from Stothard's *Canterbury Pilgrims* painting. This information was evidently obtained not from Thomas Cromek, but from Anne Eliza Bray, the author of *The Life of Thomas Stothard, R.A.* More than two years after its publication in 1852, Thomas Cromek wrote a letter to her dated 8 October 1854 in which he attempted to correct misinformation in her biography by quoting documents relating to the *Canterbury Pilgrims* engraving that were in his possession. For instance, in order to dispute the figure of 330 guineas Mrs. Bray states Cromek was to pay Schiavonetti for the *Canterbury Pilgrims* engraving, he refers to a bill for £75 to R. H. Cromek from Schiavonetti dated 23 November 1809, to a receipt from Schiavonetti dated 12 December 1809 and worded "Received of R. H. Cromek, the sum of two Hundred Pounds, in part of 840L for Engraving Stothard's Picture of the Canterbury Pilgrims," and to a memorandum of Cromek's delineating the "Expenses attending the completion of the Pilgrims, from the Etching, as left by M. Schiavonetti. The Plate was begun in the 20th Sep' 1810." Immediately below are the subsequent dates and amounts "Paid [to] M" Engleheart," totalling forty-four pounds and one shilling, with the last entry dated December 31.2

These documents clearly are the basis for Gilchrist's reporting that "Schiavonetti was to have had £840 for his engraving, but only lived to receive or entitle himself to £275. In the following autumn the plate was confided to George Engleheart, who worked on it from 20th September to the end of December, receiving some £44."3 Gilchrist learned as well from Thomas Cromek's letter to Mrs. Bray that Cromek's widow was forced to borrow money from her father in order to have the engraving completed, although he perhaps mercifully neglects to mention that her father required her to repay not only the loan but also interest upon it.

Gilchrist's biography therefore benefitted from various documents of R. H. Cromek preserved and transmitted by his son. In addition, these documents, as well as Thomas Cromek's "Memorials" and other writings about his father, enable us to locate the Malkin engraving the biography mentions and to identify it with confidence as Blake's own work. Blake's engraving the design and Cromek's erasing it to re-engrave the design himself suggests that the two men had differences and misunderstandings even in their first collaboration. Perhaps the Malkin print can be regarded as an indication of the difficulties to come in the *Grave and Canterbury* Pilgrims projects, in which both Blake and Cromek had much more at stake. Whatever the reasons were for Cromek's destroying Blake's engraving, he thought enough of Blake's proof to keep it, and his son thought enough of it to present it to the British Museum. Now it finally can be added to the catalog of Blake's works.

3 "Memorials of the Life of R. H. Cromek, Engraver. F[ellow] A[nthiquestes] S[ociety] Edinb* Editor of the 'Reliques of Burns'; 'Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song' &c with the unpublished correspondence on those works; and other papers relative to his professional and literary career. Collected and Edited by his son." Thomas H. Cromek's "Memorials" was never published, and two MS versions of it, one dated 23 December 1864 and the other dated 27 July 1865, survive in the collections of Cromek's present-day heirs, Mr. Paul Warrington and Mr. Wilfred Warrington, whose permission to publish parts of these and other materials in their possession I gratefully acknowledge. The working of the two "Memorials" MSS is nearly identical; quotations, however, have been taken from the "Memorials" bearing the later date.
4 The letter is pasted on a page at the beginning of the volume. Thomas Cromek suffered paralysis in his last years, rendering him unable to write, and his daughter, Mary Cromek, therefore attended to his correspondence.
5 Letter to Lady Hesketh, 24 May 1802; transcribed in *Blake Records*, p. 96.
7 "Memorials."
8 Cromek elsewhere gives Miss Kearsley's address as 25, Alfred Place, Redford Place, London (as of 1862). I have not been able to learn any other details about her.
9 In a letter of 15 July 1805 which Thomas Cromek transcribes in his "Memorials," Hayley thanks Cromek for the engraving of Romney Robinson and praises "the fidelity, tenderness, and spirit, with which your friend has executed his very interesting portrait." The statement suggests to Thomas Cromek that Hayley knew Cooper had engraved the portrait—or at least that Cromek had not.
10 William Edward Frost (1810-1877) was a painter chiefly of scenes derived from literary works, especially those of Spenser, Milton, and Shakespeare. He was elected an associate of the Royal Academy in 1846 and a member in 1870. In *William Blake*, II, 263, Gilchrist transcribes the contents of a previously unknown Prospectus by Blake dated 10 October, 1793, made available to him "through perseveringly kind efforts on the part of Mr. Frost." See also Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 450.
11 The statement appears in a MS volume by Thomas Cromek containing extracts from Gilchrist's biography of Blake and other works which discuss R. H. Cromek, with Thomas Cromek's responses to these extracts written on the facing page. The volume is in the possession of Mr. Paul Warrington.
12 Thomas Cromek transcribes his letter to Mrs. Bray in his "Memorials"; the documents in the collection of Mr. Paul Warrington.
Tantum ergo * omnis terra, alle-lu-ia : psal-
mum di-ci-te nó-mi-ni e-jus, alle-lu-ia : 
da-te gló-ri-am laudi e-jus, alle-lu-ia,

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William Blake's large color-printed drawings of 1795 have often been recognized as among his greatest achievements in the visual arts. While some of the individual prints have received detailed attention, the interrelationships among all twelve designs have never been satisfactorily explained. The subjects of the prints range through both Biblical and secular literature: the Old and New Testaments, Shakespeare, Milton, and, perhaps, Blake's own writings. The fact that the designs were all executed in the same technique in the same year, are of about the same size (approximately 45 by 58 cm.), and would seem to express similar emotions and basic concepts suggests that the prints may form a series. Yet the range of subject matter makes it extremely difficult to describe the format of such a group. A comparison, however, between the color-prints and Michelangelo's frescoes on the Sistine Ceiling offers new insights into Blake's work. As I will attempt to demonstrate here, Blake not only borrowed motifs and styles from Michelangelo for the creation of his great color-printed drawings, but also based their organization on the pictorial program of the Sistine Ceiling.

Blake's debt to Michelangelo is apparent throughout a great deal of his best work and has been mentioned by many Blake scholars. The color-printed drawings are no exception. The heroic musculature of the figures, the brooding or terrified visages, the dramatic postures, and even the schematic simplicity of the backgrounds all bespeak Blake's unbounded admiration for and borrowings from Michelangelo. Blake, of course, knew Michelangelo only through engraved reproductions, many of which were probably known to him from his earliest years. Blake's very first signed engraving, Joseph of Arimathea among the Books of Albion, is based on a figure from Michelangelo's fresco of the Crucifixion of St. Peter in the Cappella Paolina at the Vatican, and in the 1780s Blake meticulously copied seven of Michelangelo's figures from the Sistine Chapel—following the engravings in a small book by Adam Ghisi. These careful studies from Michelangelo, as well as many other borrowings from his work, indicate that Blake knew the Sistine frescoes intimately. There were a number of engravings of the Ceiling available in Blake's day, including Domenico Cunego's outline print (105 by 48.3 cm.) of the ceiling, vaults, and lunettes, published in 1780 (illus. 1). The schematic linearity of this engraving places particular emphasis on the structure of Michelangelo's designs, rather than on details of motif, expression, or color. Blake could have learned more about the Sistine Chapel from friends such as Flaxman, who returned from Rome in 1794, and Fuseli.

Blake wrote the word "Fresco" on five of the color prints, a word he also used to describe his so-called tempera paintings of a later date. He apparently believed that his own opaque glue or gum-based pigments and perhaps even his methods of preparing paper or canvas were the same as the fresco technique of painting on damp plaster used by the great Renaissance masters. Blake hoped that his work in this medium would achieve the same greatness for his country and age that the works of
Michelangelo and Rafael had achieved for the Italian Renaissance. In his Descriptive Catalogue of 1809, Blake wrote that he wished four of his drawings were "in Fresco, on an enlarged scale to ornament the altars of churches, and to make England like Italy, respected by respectable men of other countries on account of Art." That Blake believed, however wrongly, that his color-printed drawings were in the same medium as the Sistine Chapel frescoes forms a small but significant technical connection between Blake's works and Michelangelo's.

Before turning to specific comparisons between the color-prints and Michelangelo's paintings, we must consider for a moment the relationships among the various sections of the Sistine frescoes themselves. The central span of the ceiling is dominated by nine panels recording the Biblical history of the world from the Separation of Light and Darkness to the Drunkenness of Noah. We enter the Chapel at the end of the story, under the Drunkenness of Noah, and proceed backward in time through the Deluge, the Sacrifice of Noah, The Fall and the Expulsion, the Creation of Eve, the Creation of Adam, the Separation of Heaven from the Water, the Creation of the Sun and Moon, and finally the Separation of Light and Darkness. If one conceives of the series as running in the other direction, from altar to entrance, then the central panels proceed in chronological sequence—yet with one exception. Noah's sacrifice happened after the flood and therefore we should, when entering the room, come upon it as the second panel, not the third. Some modern scholars believe that Michelangelo desired the viewer to follow the reverse chronology and that he transposed the second and third panels because he wished not just to tell a Bible story, but to indicate a symbolic progression of human consciousness as it ascends from a beastly level to an awareness of God's primal being. Michelangelo was conversant with the Christian Neo-Platonism of the Italian Renaissance, and his organization of the ceiling was very likely influenced by a Neo-Platonic concern for the stages of spiritual enlightenment. We come upon the Deluge before the Sacrifice of Noah since the latter event indicates a turning to God and a growth of spiritual awareness. The parallels between Blake's group of color-prints and the sequence of Michelangelo's central panels hold true whether one reads the panels from entrance to altar (as I do here, following De Tolnay) or from altar to entrance (thus emphasizing a fall into sensual degradation rather than a progression toward enlightenment).

About the central sequence Michelangelo arranged several types of figures, related thematically but not sequentially to other parts of the entire composition. Again the concept of levels of spiritual awareness would seem to provide the organizational key. In the four corner spandrels are the deeds of Old Testament heroes which aided the earthly well-being of the Israelites. In the eight side spandrels are portraits of unredeemed humanity who, as St. Luke writes, "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:79). Between the spandrels are the largest figures on the ceiling—all of whom experienced a level of spiritual enlightenment that raised them above the earthly limitations of the spandrel figures. These majestic characters are of two types—Old Testament Prophets who foretold the destiny of their people and the coming of Christ, and the Sibyls, those female soothsayers of classical history whose words were seen as harbingers of the Christian era by Renaissance theologians. The spiritual struggles of these contemplative figures are given dramatic physical embodiment in the ignudi, youthful male nudes who serve as intermediaries between the seers and the central panels. Thus, Michelangelo has combined sequential narrative and a more open organization based upon levels of human consciousness—with the conceptual arrangement dominant over temporal order. By this flexible principle, Michelangelo has been able to bring together a vast array of events from both Biblical and non-Biblical history and to offer the viewer the opportunity to recapitulate on the psychological level man's fall and progress toward redemption. We find a similar architectonic program in Blake's color-prints of 1795.

The most famous and in many respects most important panel in Michelangelo's central sequence is the Creation of Adam (illus. 2). We are not given the creation of Adam's physical form, but rather the moment when God brings to man the divine spark of intellect. Adam seems to be rising physically from the primordial earth as an indication of incipient spiritual awareness. God's heroic form framed by attendant spirits and a swirling cloak is an epitome of the eighteenth century's sense of the pictorial sublime—a mixture of beauty and power that cannot fail to touch the viewer with awe. Yet God's face expresses tenderness as well as majesty.

David Bindman has suggested that Elohim creating Adam (illus. 3) is "the most probable starting design" for Blake's color-printed drawings and that its "ultimate prototype" is Michelangelo's Creation of Adam. In this investigation of the conceptual ties between Michelangelo's entire series and Blake's, the general similarities in subject and style are perhaps less significant than the contrasts that link these two designs. In Blake's creation of Adam, we see not spiritual enlightenment, but the physical creation of Adam's body—a body not rising from the earth but crucified upon it. God's face mixes melancholy with terror and while this God may, like Michelangelo's, touch us with awe, He gives us no hope. Rather than enlightening Adam, with His right hand He seems to be forcing Adam's head closer to the earth. Like "the father [who] ready stands to form / The infant head" (E 281) in Tirol, Blake's Elohim is restricting, not expanding, human consciousness. With His left hand God reaches for more clay to add to Adam's partially fleshed body. Adam's lower limbs are bound by a worm, often associated with the merely physical in Blake's writings and, in this context, suggestive of the serpent who leads to man's fall into mortality. In contrast to God's attendants and cloak in Michelangelo's creation of Adam, Blake gives his Creator gigantic wings, copied from a Greek portrayal of the Pagan god Skiron, and, in the background, the mottled disc of the sun. Blake inscribed Elohim creating Adam on the only known impression of this design, thereby indicating that God is here the
1 Michelangelo, frescoes on the Sistine Ceiling, engraved in outline by Domenico Cerrano, 1780, 103.4 x 45.5 cm. Author's collection.
2 Michelangelo, *Creation of Adam*.

3 Blake, *Elohim creating Adam*, 43.1 x 53.6 cm. Tate Gallery.

4 Michelangelo, *Creation of Eve*.

5 Blake, *Satan exulting over Eve*, 42.5 x 53.2 cm. Gregory Bateson Collection.
creator in Genesis and a God of justice and vengeance—no
type and antitype, both model and contrary, for
Blake's. With terrible energy, Blake has transforme
Michelangelo's conception from the spiritual to the
physical, from creation to bondage, from hope to
despair. *Elohim creating Adam*, particularly when
viewed in its relationship to Michelangelo, makes
it clear why Blake referred to this period in his
career as among his "dark, but very profitable
years."

Michelangelo's *Creation of Eve* (illus. 4)
embodies a lower level of intellectual consciousness
than his creation of Adam. On the left is the inert
form of Adam, clearly at this point a physical, not
spiritual, being. Eve rises heavily from his side
as if she were being levitated by God's commanding
right hand. And God, now enclosed by his mantle
rather than soaring energetically before it, seems
wrapped in solemn contemplation. Blake's equivalent
(illus. 5) shifts the scene to a later event—the
exultation of Satan over the fallen Eve, the fatal
apple under her right hand. Yet the close parallel
in the arrangement of the figures between this scene
and Blake's creation of Adam suggests that Satan
may also be the creator of Eve. In both color-
prints we have scenes of simultaneous creation and
fall, much as we do in the creation myth of *The
Book of Urizen*. The worm wound about Adam is
compositionally replaced in *Satan exulting over Eve*
by a giant serpent, his head resting victoriously
on Eve's breast. A youthful and heroic, yet
saddened, figure of Satan hovers like a triumphant
warrior, spear and shield in hand, above his earth-
bound victim and in front of hellish flames. Here
again Blake has shifted Michelangelo's prototype to
an even darker view of human nature and Biblical
history; yet he remains within the general compass
of Michelangelo's subject matter and organizational
strategy.

Progressing backwards in states of consciousness
but forward in the chronological narrative, we come
to Michelangelo's panel showing both the fall and
the expulsion from the Garden of Eden (illus. 6).
As we have seen, Blake's first two color-prints
embody images of the fall, and both contain a worm
or serpent wrapped about the human form much as
Michelangelo's serpent wraps herself around the tree
of the knowledge of Good and Evil. As far as we
know, Blake never made a color-print of the
expulsion; rather he shows us the central event
which must necessarily come between the fall and
the punishment—*God judging Adam* (illus. 7). A
stern *Elohim* with his left hand on the tablet of the
law comes to man in a blazing sun-chariot.
His steeds with fiery manes would seem to be combinations
of those two beasts Blake contrasts in *The Marriage
of Heaven and Hell*—"the horses of instruction" and
"the tygers of wrath" (E 36). Adam, bearing the
burden of mortality, has grown as aged as his God.
The gesture of God's right arm and hand and the
suggestion of a sword or shaft extending from his
hand to Adam's head recall the gesture and sword
of the angel expelling Adam and Eve from Paradise
in Michelangelo's design.

Michelangelo's three panels on the creation
and fall are matched thematically and in their
narrative relationships by three of Blake's color-
printed drawings. Given these significant parallels,
reinforced in some cases by stylistic similarities
and perhaps even a few borrowings of specific motifs,
it would seem reasonable to relate the other color-
prints to Michelangelo’s program in order to test
the basic hypothesis of this essay. What one
immediately finds is that Blake responded in a
different and much freer way to the panels depicting
the story of Noah. None of the extant color-printed
designs relate directly to the sacrifice of Noah,
but through a curious transformation, Blake seems
to have fulfilled the programmatic functions of
Michelangelo’s Deluge and the Drunkenness of Noah
through two of his most powerful and horrific color-
prints. Deluge shows not the total inundation of
the earth, but rather an early point in that
catastrophe where men and women struggle among
themselves for the remaining patches of dry ground
and for the last places in small boats or on the
gunwales of the Ark. The less active groups of
characters in this composition are not overcome by
sudden terror, but stand as mute embodiments of
suffering and despair—the dominant mental states
pictured in Blake’s House of Death (illus. 8). On
the version in the Tate Gallery Blake inscribed the
title and the word “Milton,” thereby referring us
to the description of the Lazar House in Paradise
Lost. We would seem to have here an illustration
to Milton and not a Blakean re-casting of the
Sistine Chapel; the relationship to Michelangelo,
however, becomes clear when we consult the context
of Milton’s description of the Lazar House. It is
part of the Pisgah sight, a vision of the future,
given by the Angel Michael to Adam. By this means,
Adam (with the reader of Paradise Lost) experiences
the history of the world from the creation to the
flood—the same history envisioned for us in the
Sistine panels. Milton presents three central
incidents which show the consequence of Adam’s fall:
Cain’s murder of Abel, the Lazar House, and the
Deluge. This Miltonic association between the last
two events, both embodiments of death and despair,
gave Blake ample precedent for using the House of
Death to fulfill the same thematic function as
Michelangelo’s flood in Blake’s group of color-
prints. Blake’s design would seem to be a synthesis
of influences: the most important poet in his
literary heritage and the greatest artist in his
pictorial heritage. Blake has taken his subject
from Milton, but that subject remains within the
conceptual framework presented by the Sistine
frescoes.

6 Michelangelo, The Fall and the Expulsion.
7 Blake, God judging Adam, 43.2 x 53.5 cm. Tate
Gallery.
8 Blake, House of Death, 48.5 x 61 cm. Tate
Gallery.
9 Blake, Nebuchadnezzar, 44.6 x 62 cm. Tate
Gallery.
10 Blake, The Good and Evil Angels, 44.5 x 59.4 cm.
Tate Gallery.
11 Michelangelo, Creation of the Sun and Moon.
Jerusalem.

... that structural relation of its punishment. Finally, Noah is still clearly ship we so frequently find in Blake's own works... 

The two series of "frescoes" correspond to each case, Michelangelo presents primal acts of binary differentiation as the essential feature of divine creativity. Blake has embodied the reciprocal mystery and force this basic process in The Good & Evil Angels (illus. 10). Blake first used a much smaller, cruder form of this design on plate 4 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (c. 1790) which has as one of its central themes the idea of contraries as the underlying structure for the moral distinction between good and evil. Blake writes that "Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence. From these contraries spring what the religious call Good & Evil" (E 34). Thus Blake sees a causal connection between those creative acts which necessarily entail division and the contraries of good and evil personified in the color-print. Blake could have used this same line of reasoning to generate his design in response to the three panels where Michelangelo shows the creation of contrary states: heaven and earth, land and water, sun and moon, darkness and light. Rather than showing the creator, Blake pictures the created, with man as a child struggling between opposing forces, much as Michelangelo's ignudi are caught between base materiality and a higher state of consciousness.

The lowest state of consciousness symbolized in the central Sistine panels is presented by the Drunkenness of Noah. Noah has sunk into a drunken stupor, into unconsciousness, and his nakedness is not an image of the human form divine but of the imprisonment of the soul in gross physicality. Blake's Nebuchadnezzar (illus. 9) gives us a more horrific portrayal of an equally low, or even lower, state of bondage. The color-print illustrates a passage from the Book of Daniel:

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The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws (4:33.)

The Babylonian monarch has been reduced to a sub-human, animalistic condition--much as Michelangelo showed a hero at the moment of his greatest shame.

While following the conceptual scheme of the Sistine Ceiling, Blake has given us a darker vision of Biblical history and human consciousness than Michelangelo. The Sistine Adam receives divine intellect; Blake's the imprisoning body. Michelangelo's Ewe rises into being; Blake's sinks under Satan's dominion. Michelangelo shows us the fall and expulsion; Blake gives us the direct act of judgement and the penalty of mortality brought to the aged Adam. The deluge kills but it also cleanses; the House of Death offers no amelioration of its punishment. Finally, Noah is still clearly a human form; Nebuchadnezzar has become half-beast. The two series of "frescoes" correspond to each other through contrariety, that structural relationship we so frequently find in Blake's own works from the Songs of Innocence and of Experience to Jerusalem.

There has been some disagreement over exactly what is represented in each panel, but they would seem to be the following: the Separation of Heaven from the Water; next, the Creation of the Sun and Moon; and last, the Separation of Light and Darkness. In each case, Michelangelo presents primal acts of binary differentiation as the essential feature of divine creativity. Blake has embodied the reciprocal mystery and force this basic process in The Good & Evil Angels (illus. 10). Blake first used a much smaller, cruder form of this design on plate 4 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (c. 1790) which has as one of its central themes the idea of contraries as the underlying structure for the moral distinction between good and evil. Blake writes that "Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence. From these contraries spring what the religious call Good & Evil" (E 34). Thus Blake sees a causal connection between those creative acts which necessarily entail division and the contraries of good and evil personified in the color-print. Blake could have used this same line of reasoning to generate his design in response to the three panels where Michelangelo shows the creation of contrary states: heaven and earth, land and water, sun and moon, darkness and light. Rather than showing the creator, Blake pictures the created, with man as a child struggling between opposing forces, much as Michelangelo's ignudi are caught between base materiality and a higher state of consciousness.

The design includes the four classical elements--fire on the left with what may be its personified form shackled by the left ankle to the earth below, and, on the right, water with the air above. Both Blake and Michelangelo are embodying in their designs the same elemental process, and both are more concerned with the dramatic presentation of energy than with straightforward narrative. The visual parallels between the chained figure in the color-print and the portrayal of God on the right in Michelangelo's Creation of the Sun and Moon (illus. 11) hint at the more important conceptual similarities. De Tolnay's description of the Sistine figure can be applied with equal validity to Blake's chained angel:

His body is of a fiery nature: His face is illuminated by a red glow. . . . His hair floats like fiery tongues blazing from His strongly built forehead. In the downward curve of His mouth and the wrinkles of His forehead is marked His superhuman will. . . . His body describes a curve which swings upward to terminate in the extended arms which burst forth diagonally from His body. (p. 38)

The figure on the left in Michelangelo's panel is another view of the same creator. Similarly, Blake's two angels may be the two halves or contrary states of the same principle. Although the drama in Blake's color-print is presented through very specific motifs, the theme is as universal as the acts of creation represented by Michelangelo: Blake is calling us to a perception not of any specific binary opposition, but of the nature of binary opposition as a psychological and philosophical category.
Blake's six color-printed drawings I have considered so far correspond in a variety of important ways to Michelangelo's central panels. Three of the remaining prints follow conceptually Michelangelo's corner spandrels. The iconographic significance of the corner compartments and their relationship to the entire composition are complex. One can emphasize the heroic context of these scenes and the way in which the events portrayed contributed to the triumph of the Israelites.

Typologically, these scenes may even refer to Christ. On the other hand, these incidents may be seen as tragic. For example, one design has been alternately titled The Triumph of Esther and The Punishment of Haman. The three other scenes, David and Goliah, Judith and Holopherne, and The Brazen Serpent, also emphasize violent deaths rather than the salvation they foretell. Three of Blake's color-prints are similarly poised between tragedy and divine comedy, with the visual emphasis on the former. Lamech and His Two Wives (illus. 12) returns us to a story in Genesis (4:23-24)—the murder of a young man by Cain's great-great-great grandson. Lamech pulls at his hair in despair over the penalty which will fall on him seventy and sevenfold while his wives cling to each other for comfort. The Biblical story offers no hope, but by suggesting a cruciform posture in the fallen youth, Blake may be hinting at typological possibilities much as Michelangelo does in his proto-crucifixion scenes, The Punishment of Haman and The Brazen Serpent. The bold and oddly abstract corner of a tent thrusting into the design at the left margin may have been suggested to Blake by the similarly schematic background tent in Michelangelo's David and Goliah. A further parallel comes to us by way of contrast: in David and Goliah, youth heroically slays age; in Lamech, age tragically murders youth.

The finest copy of Naomi entreating Ruth and Orpah to return to the Land of Moab (illus. 13), like the best impression of Lamech and His Two Wives, has its corners cut off on a diagonal. This fact, as well as compositional similarities, links the two designs. Further, both Lamech and his family turmoil, division, anguish, and pity. Naomi entreating Ruth, much more than Lamech, is ambiguously poised between tragedy and restoration. Naomi, on the left, is pictured as an old woman with a somewhat sinister visage and a veil draped over her head, linking her to figures in the Night Thoughts designs who may be prototypes for Vala. Yet she is given a halo in the Victoria and Albert Museum copy and assumes a Christlike posture (cf. illus. 18) with the palms of her hands turned upward. Ruth cleaves to her even though this will carry her away from family and homeland (Ruth 1:11-17), much as the apostles sacrificed their familial bonds to follow Christ. And the two women will travel to Bethlehem in typological anticipation of the journey of Joseph and Mary.

The pathetic qualities latent in Naomi entreating Ruth and Lamech are directly personified in Pity (illus. 14). Blake never inscribed a title on the known copies of this color-print, but Frederick Tatham indicated what is very likely the subject and source for the design: the images of "pity, like a naked new-born babe, / Striding the blast" and of "Heaven's cherubin horsed / Upon the sightless couriers of the air" are from Shakespeare's Macbeth. Like the last two color-prints considered here and like Michelangelo's corner spandrels, the iconography of the design is complex and somewhat ambiguous—as demonstrated by the differences in the interpretive comments Pity has elicited. In the Book of Urizen of 1794, pity is associated with the fallen world and the divisive creation of the first female. The prone figure in the design also recalls Eve in Satan exulting over Eve. On the other hand, pity is not always a negative emotion in Blake's writings, and, as personified as a child in the color-print, would seem to represent life, energy, and freedom within an otherwise dead or darkened world. The ambiguities of this design are similar to those in Blake's aphorism in "The Human Abstract" (Songs of Experience, 1794) that "Pity would be no more / If we did not make somebody poor." However valuable pity is in a fallen world, it is still the product of an evil deed. In Macbeth, the pity will result from a murder, and perhaps Blake seized upon this passage because it presents the paradoxical birth of a virtue out of a vice. Similarly, the Sistine corner spandrels prophesy political and even spiritual liberation resulting from bloody and terrible events.

Some of the most illuminating parallels between the organization of the Sistine frescoes and Blake's color-prints are between Michelangelo's Sibyls and Prophets and Blake's two designs, Hecate and Newton, designs which would seem to present the most difficulties in any attempt at fitting them into a structured group with the other color-printed drawings. Around his central sequence of nine panels Michelangelo arranged gigantic figures of five Sibyls alternating with seven Prophets. The female soothsayers have their dark parallel in Blake's Hecate (illus. 15), a figure traditionally associated with necromancy and prophecy. Although the Sibyls did not, of course, know the Christian possibilities in their predictions, their sayings were transformed by Christian commentators into prophecies of Christ's coming. Hecate is their contrastive analogue, much as black magic relates to white; she foretells not enlightenment, but mystery and the same sort of imprisonment of the human spirit we have seen in Elohim creating Adam and Nebuchadnezzar. Ever since Rossetti's catalogue of Blake's art appeared in 1863, this design has usually been associated with Shakespeare's references to Hecate in Macbeth and A Midsummer Night's Dream, although Paley has pointed to Virgil's Aeneid, translated by Dryden, as a possible source.

12 Blake, Lamech and His Two Wives, 43.1 x 60.8 cm. Tate Gallery.
13 Blake, Naomi entreating Ruth and Orpah, 42.8 x 58 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum.
14 Blake, Pity, 42.5 x 53.9 cm. Tate Gallery.
15 Blake, Hecate, 43.9 x 58.1 cm. Tate Gallery.
Several motifs in the design—the book, the dark and bat-filled environment, and the background rock—may have been stimulated by Blake’s own reference to Hecate in his fragment “then She bore Pale desire,” written before 1777:

The Gods all Serve her [Envy] at her will so great her Power is [.] like, fabled hecate
She doth bind them to her law. Far in a Direful Cave She lives unseen Closd from the Eye of Day.
to the hard Rock transfixed by fate and here She works her witcheries. (E 438)

These possible literary sources fit within the compass of Michelangelo’s pictorial presentation of the Sibyls. Four of the Sibyls have large open books and one holds a scroll (but has a book behind her). The prophetic character of these writings finds its antithesis in Hecate’s book of mystery or law, similar to Urizen’s Book of Urizen, plates 1 and 5) in the illegible swirls of color-printing on its leaves. Behind each of Michelangelo’s Sibyls are two Genii, personifications of their inspired imaginations. And in Blake’s color-print we have two strange figures which are so intimately associated with the main human form in the composition that they would seem to be, like the Genii, projections of the internal nature of the Triple Hecate. The kneeling figure on the left appears to be female, and that on the right, male—the two universal principles of human character whose relationships play such a major role in Blake’s writing. The animals further associate the main figure with the divisive, fallen world, for they are creatures of darkness (owl, lizard, monstrous bat) or, like the donkey, are bound by necessity to the vegetative world. In her crossed-leg posture, with a mantle over her knees but the upper part of her body and her feet exposed, Hecate’s presentation corresponds visually to the twisted postures of the Sibyls, their uncovered feet, and the bare upper torso and arms of the Libyan Sibyl. Further, the Erythraean Sibyl’s right hand (illus. 16), like Hecate’s, falls within a fold of her garment, and her left hand touches the pages of an open book. Yet these admittedly minor visual similarities are less significant than the conceptual ones. The Sibyl’s prophesy liberation from bondage to the material world and point toward that higher vision the viewer must entertain to experience the expansion of consciousness presented by Michelangelo’s central panels. In antithetical parallel, Hecate is the female embodiment and interpreter of the fallen state of consciousness and of bondage to the material world dominating Blake’s color-prints, as well as his writings, of the mid 1790s.

The role played by the Prophets in the Sistine frescoes is fulfilled in Blake’s series by Newton (illus. 17). As De Tolnay points out, Michelangelo accentuated the “indecision, passivity, and ambiguity” of the Sibyls and placed them “nearer to nature and to the earth” than the Prophets, who exemplify “intellectual concentration” (p. 57). Hecate and Newton have a similar relationship: Hecate presents the dark mysteries of the fallen world; Newton the attempt by fallen reason to understand that world through mathematical and geometric abstraction. The great British scientist of the seventeenth century was for Blake the prophet of the rational philosophies and natural religions ruling the intellectual life of the eighteenth century. Newton’s prophetic character is demonstrated by the role he plays in Europe (1794):

The red limb’d Angel seiz’d, in horror and torment;
The Trump of the last doom; but he could not blow the iron tube!
A mighty Spirit leap’d from the land of Albion,
Nam’d Newton; he seiz’d the Trump, & blow’d the enormous blast!

Newtonian philosophy—not so much Newton’s scientific discoveries as the application of his theories to moral and religious thought—is the herald of the French Revolution, itself a harbinger of “the last doom.” Michelangelo’s Prophets, with their books and scrolls, foretell release from mortality through the coming of Christ. Blake’s Newton, working with rapt attention on his scroll, embodies the rationalist and abstract thought which will lead to an inevitable revolt against such thought and the material world to which it is bound.

This color-print is in many ways the most remarkable in the series because of both its unusual
subject and its great beauty. It is very likely an underwater scene with Newton immersed in the waters of materialism, "the sea of Time & Space." The rock on which he sits is covered with what may be lichenous growths and just beneath him are two polyps that look like sea anemones. Newton's rock assumes the same pictorial function in this color-print as the rock jutting in from the left in Hecate, a compositional similarity which further links these two designs much as Michelangelo's Prophets and Sibyls are associated through visual parallels. This rock may be based on the similar motif in Michelangelo's Creation of Adam and Creation of Eve. Newton attempts to understand his world through the simple geometric diagram he is measuring with compasses. What he fails to perceive is his own magnificent "human form divine" ("The Divine Image," E 12), a form which links man to God, not to the world of undersea vegetation. Newton's failure of perception may be the reason that Blake bases his visual portrayal of the scientist (as distinct from the figure's programmatic role) not on one of Michelangelo's Prophets, but on the Abia lunette (also part of the Sistine ceiling frescoes), for Abia is a representative of fallen and unenlightened humanity. Much as Hecate is the Blakean antitype to Michelangelo's Sibyls, Newton is the fallen form of Michelangelo's Prophets.

Blake's idealized portrayal of Newton's body contains a potential for salvation through the realization of man's divinity. The central realization of the human form divine in Blake's later works is Christ, who is both man and God. He is not represented in the Sistine Ceiling, but many of the individual motifs and the conception of the whole point toward His coming. As Bertram writes, "Everything in the ceiling . . . leads up to Christ, but He appears nowhere. The most satisfactory explanation of this astonishing omission is that Michelangelo did not consider that Christ's real presence in the Sacrament on the altar needed any painted substitute." Blake, having no chapel and no altar with its sacraments, does give us a vision of Christ (illus. 10). It is the culmination of this linear group and an answer to the problems of material and spiritual bondage presented in the other eleven color-prints. Christ Appearing to the Apostles after the Resurrection is consistent with the dark vision of the other designs in that Christ is not shown in glory, but rather at the moment when He reveals to His followers His stigmata, those emblems of His own mortal sufferings and His own crucifixion in the fallen world of man. He is indeed the new Adam, but for Blake one who has undergone the same cruciform bondage to the world and the flesh shown in the first color-print considered here. Again, salvation is not presented in its full glory but as a potential within the darkness of this world. Blake hovers between hope and despair, between divine comedy and earthly tragedy. It is only in his later poetry and paintings that he transforms this image of suffering into the triumphant ideal.

In the illuminated books and his intaglio print series The Gates of Paradise, we can see Blake absorbing and then transforming the conventional eighteenth century formats of illustrated books and of numbered sequences of emblematic pictures. He needed the traditional systems, but often assumed an adversary relationship with them, struggling with the old forms in order to open them to new possibilities. The standard eighteenth century format for a series of narrative prints was the Hogarthian Progress. A less adventurous artist than Blake would have arranged a series of prints in general accordance with Hogarth's schema. Blake required a more flexible model which could encompass more than direct causal and temporal relationships, just as in his poetic narratives he had, by 1794, developed the polysemous vision and non-linear narrative of The Book of Urizen. Michelangelo's frescoes, linking Biblical and non-Biblical subjects, provided just such an expansive and comprehensive form for Blake's own group of "frescoes."

If we treat Blake's color-printed drawings as a collection to be experienced in sequence and as though they were true frescoes on the walls of a room, like the Sistine Chapel or Job's chamber in Blake's Plate 20 of his engraved illustrations, then the color-prints can unfold before us like Michelangelo's paintings. Blake's group begins with three designs (Elohim creating Adam, Satan exulting over Eve, God judging Adam) that parallel in subject three of Michelangelo's central panels (Creation of Adam, Creation of Eve, The Fall and the Expulsion). Next we come upon two designs (House of Death and Nebuchadnezzar) showing the despair and degradation of man also portrayed in Michelangelo's Deluge and Noah. The elemental acts of creation and division in Michelangelo's three panels nearest the altar are summarized in The Good
18 Blake, Christ Appearing to the Apostles, 45.7 x 59.7 cm. National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection.

19 Michelangelo, head of one of the ignudi.

and Evil Angels. Like the Sistine corner spandrels, Blake's next group of three (Lamach, Naomi entreating Ruth, Pity) presents us with scenes poised between destruction and the promise of salvation. Blake's antithetical Prophet (Newton) and Sibyl (Hecate) lead us finally to Christ Appearing to the Apostles, the Savior whose coming is necessitated by all we see in the Sistine Chapel.

It is difficult to prove, given the information we have, that Blake consciously modeled his color-prints on the Sistine Ceiling, but the organizational parallels between these two groups are strong enough to indicate, at the very least, an indirect influence. It is certainly safe to assume that Blake knew the Sistine designs so well that their structure had become part of his own artistic habits of mind, and that when he came in 1795 to execute his own group of frescoes, Michelangelo's influence would inevitably make itself felt. The essential ingredient was a core linear narrative, not of consecutive but of selected scenes, surrounded by actions and characters related thematically to the core. The complexities of spatial, temporal, and causal relationships suggested by such a format are part of those complexities Blake was beginning to investigate in his writings of the mid 1790s. Just as Blake modified for his own purposes the great texts in his literary tradition—preeminently the Bible and Milton—so too he did not simply reproduce the vault of the Sistine Chapel, but used its plan as the beginning of his own dark vision of creation, fall, death, and the promise of redemption.


2 See, for example, Blunt, The Art of William Blake, p. 35; Jean Hagstrum, William Blake Poet and Painter (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 40; and Anne Kostelanetz Mellor, Blake's

These are Naamah entreating Bath (Victoria and Albert Museum copy), Newton (Lutheran Church in America), God judging Adam (Metropolitan Museum, N.Y.), Christ Appearing to the Apostles (Rosenwald Collection, National Gallery of Art), and Hecate (National Gallery of Scotland).


The major discussion of this point of view can be found in Charles De Tolnay, The Sistine Ceiling (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1945), pp. 24-43. De Tolnay is generally considered to be one of the standard modern authorities on the Sistine frescoes. Unfortunately, none of the discussions of the Sistine frescoes that Blake would have been familiar with goes beyond the barest description of the program of the ceiling. In this discussion I refer to several modern commentators, although of course Blake's own interpretations would not have corresponded exactly to theirs. The parallels between modern interpretations of Michelangelo and the themes in Blake's color-prints may be the result of a common source in the Sistine frescoes themselves.
E. J. Rose points out that Blake perceived a correspondence between Milton and Michelangelo. "The 'Gothicized Imagination' of 'Michelangelo Blake,'" in Blake in His Time p. 161, 168 n. 15.


These titles are all from The Sistine Ceiling, pp. 37-40. Anthony Bertram calls the first panel in this group God Creating the Animals in all the Paintings of Michelangelo (N. Y.: Hawthorn Books, 1963), p. 28; and Herbert Von Einem calls the panel The Creation of the Creatures of the Sea in Michelangelo (London: Studio Vista, 1964), p. 41; Enzo Carli titles this same panel God Creates the Animals in The Sistine Ceiling, London: Studio Vista, 1964), p. 41; and Herbert Von Einem calls the panel The Creation of the Creatures of the Sea in Michelangelo (London: Methuen & Co., 1973), p. 70. Von Einem points out that this scene "raised difficulties" even for Renaissance interpreters of the Sistine frescoes.

Bertram describes the Ignudi as "thrusting against their imprisonment," trying "to break out of the bondage of the world" (Michelangelo, p. 70). Compare, particularly, the face of the child in The Good and Evil Angels with the head of the nude youth above and to the right of the Persian Sibyl. The leftward turn of the head, open mouth, bridge of the nose (distinctly different from Blake's usual classically straight nose), flashing eye, and general expression of terror are almost identical (see illus. 19). Compare also the face of the angel on the right in Blake's color print with the nude youth above and to the left of the Prophet Daniel. Both of these Ignudi frame the Separation of Heaven from the Water, one of the three panels to which The Good and Evil Angels is conceptually related.

For the first title see Carli, All the Paintings of Michelangelo, p. 31; for the second, De Tolnay, The Sistine Ceiling, p. 96.

The Hyacinthine curls of the fallen figure are characteristic of Blake's youthful males. See, for example, Orc in America, Albion rose, and Newton (illus. 17). The youth may be Tubal Cain--see William Blake, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, exhibition catalogue, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara, 1976, p. 84.


See Night Thoughts watercolors (Night VII, p. 22), Night Thoughts engravings (Night II, p. 35), and my discussion of these figures and their basis in Blake's drawing of Michelangelo's Solomon lunette in Blake in His Time, pp. 17-18.

Tatham's title inscription appears on one of the two preliminary pencil drawings of the design in the British Museum. It is interesting to note that in the late 1770s Henry Fuseli did a series of sketches (now in the British Museum) illustrating Shakespeare in a format based loosely on the Sistine Ceiling. These drawings, perhaps only imaginative experiments rather than preliminaries for actual frescoes, include a group of lunette and spandrel designs for Naboth. See Gert Schiff, Johann Heinrich Fuseli (Zurich: Verlag Berichtshaus, 1973), I, 108-09, II, 113; Henry Fuseli, exhibition catalogue (London: Tate Gallery, 1975), pp. 72-73.

Butlin associates this design with pity "as a negative force" in Blake, in William Blake: A Complete Catalogue of the Drawings in the Tate Gallery, p. 30; Paley points out that "pity introduces another gleam of grace into the nightmare world of the colour prints" in William Blake, p. 38. The latter view would seem to gain support from the similarity between the child in Pity and the infant Jesus, soaring between the swooning Mary and Saint Elizabeth's outstretched arms, in both Blake's tempera The Nativity (c. 1799) and The Dean's of Poepe in the Huntington Library set of watercolor illustrations (c. 1808) to Milton's 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.'


William Blake, p. 38. The most significant references to Hecate in Dryden's translation of the Aenid are in the Sixth Book in conjunction with the activities of the Cumaean Sibyl, one of the five portrayed by Michelangelo. There are also several references to Triple Hecate in the Seventh Book of Ovid's Metamorphoses.

This image is first used in The Four Zoas, Night the Fourth, p. 56, line 13 (E 331). See Essick, "Blake's Newton," Blake in His Time, 3 (1971), 149-62.

See Blake's wash drawing of the Abia lunette (British Museum), reproduced in Blake in His Time, pl. 13. Daniel, one of the Prophets, is also included in this group of drawings (Blake in His Time, pl. 29).

Butlin (Blake, 1978, p. 64) associates Hecate with Pity because they may both have sources in Shakespeare and they emphasize vegetative nature. Clearly, however, the visual character of Hecate links it to Newton: the landscape in both designs is divided by a diagonal, running from upper left to lower right, created by the edge of a rocky ledge. Both rocks are inhabited by unusual creatures, and Newton's scroll is paralleled by Hecate's book. There are, of course, many thematic and visual interconnections in all the color-printed drawings, just as there are among Michelangelo's frescoes.
As we promised last year, this edition of the checklist of recent scholarship on Blake and his circle incorporates several modifications that will, we hope, help to make it more useful. We have increased the amount of annotation and have set items on Blake's circle into a separate section. Works that treat Blake and one or more of his circle are listed in Part I, "William Blake," and cross-referenced in Part II, "Blake's Circle."

By the time this year's checklist is published, several important (but at this writing still imminent) works may be available to Blake's public. However near to publication they may be, we do not include them here, though we look forward eagerly to Butlin's catalogue and the Night Thoughts of Erdman, Grant, and Tolley, among other major forthcoming works.

Authors whom we have overlooked are encouraged to bring unnoted items to our attention. I'd like to extend a special word of thanks to Ray Thompson (of Columbus, Ohio) for passing on several important items, and to G. E. Bentley, Jr., for continuing helpful correspondence.

T. L. M.
Grant, John. See Johnson, Mary Lynn.


Toomey, Deirdre. See also Minnick, Thomas L.


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Frost, Everett C. "William Blake's John Taylor." Notes and Queries, n.s. 26, no. 1 (February 1979), 48-49.


George, Diana Hume. "Is She Also the Divine Image? Values for the Feminine in Blake, Milton, and Freud." Dissertation Abstracts International, 37 (1978), 7356-A. Diss., SUNY, Buffalo, 1979. [Argues first that "Milton was of the woman's party without knowing it." Then argues that "in her most expansive, creative, and most fully human form, woman is indeed the divine image for Blake. But in the fallen world, Blake sees her as the servant of materialism and the victim of repression."]


George Cumberland

Heppner, Christopher. "Another Cumberland Bibliography Addendum." Blake/An Illustrated Bibliography, July (1979), 257-261.

See also Part I, Blake: Critical Studies, Malqvist, Göran, "The Dean . . . ."

Erasmus Darwin


See also Part I, Blake: Critical Studies, Leonard, David Charles.

John Flaxman


See also Part I, Blake: Bibliographies, Gage, John; and Tomory, Peter A.

Henry Fuseli


See also Part I, Blake: Bibliographies, Gage, John; and Tomory, Peter A.; and Critical Studies, Hall, Carol Louise.

William Hayley


Joseph Johnson

Tyson, Gerald F. Joseph Johnson, A Liberal Publisher. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1979. $14.95. [Includes a bibliography of more than 1300 items published by Johnson.]


John Hamilton Mortimer. See Part I, Blake: Bibliographies, Tomory, Peter A.

Samuel Palmer


See also Part I, Blake: Bibliographies, Gage, John; and Part I, Blake: Critical Studies, Anonymous.


George Romney. See Part I, Blake: Bibliographies, Tomory, Peter A.

Emanuel Swedenborg. See Part I, Blake: Critical Studies, Ogude, S. E.; and Paley, Morton D.


James Ward

works.


Mary Wollstonecraft. See Part I, Blake: Critical Studies, Bentley, G. E., Jr., "A Different Face . . . "; Lange, Thomas V.; and Welch, Dennis M.

Edward Young

Brodine, Dorothy Jane. "Love of Fame, the Universal Passion: Edward Young's Personal Response to the Enlightenment." Dissertation Abstracts International, 40 (1979), 2642-A-2643-A. Diss., St. John's University, 1979. [After detailing classical influences on Young, this study examines each of the seven satires that make up Young's series, Love of Fame.]


See also Part I, Blake: Critical Studies, Allen, Orphia Jane; and Maeda, Masahiko.

PART III

WORKS OF RELATED INTEREST


Reviewed by Melvin Huan, American Notes and Queries, 17, no. 9 (May 1979), 150.

Mollor, Anne K. "On Romantic Irony, Symbolism and Allegory." Criticism, 21 (1979), 217-229. [Concerned primarily with the theories of Friedrich Schlegel, this article may still be of interest for the study of Blake's theory of poetry as well.]


Reviewed by Murray W. Zachary, American Notes and Queries, 17, no. 3 (1978), 50-51.

Storey, Mark. "Why Stevie Smith Matters." Critical Quarterly, 21 (1979), 41-55. [Includes extended comparisons between Ms. Smith's poems and Blake's Songs. Ms. Smith won the Queen's Medal for Poetry in 1969, and her collected poems were published by Allen Lane in 1975.]


PART IV

REVIEWS OF WORKS CITED IN PREVIOUS CHECKLISTS


Bindman, David, et al. *John Flaxman 1755-1826: Mythologie und Industrie.* Reviewed by Petra Kippoff, *Die Zeit,* 27 April 1979. [It is hoped that through access to the Hamburg Kunsthalle’s file material we will be able to include a comprehensive list of reviews of this important exhibition and catalogue in next year’s checklist.]


MINUTE PARTICULARS

BLAKE IN AMERICAN ALMANACS

Thomas V. Lange

Few of William Blake’s engraved designs were reprinted between his death in 1827 and the publication of Gilchrist’s biography of 1863 (as G. E. Bentley, Jr. has noted1), and it seems worth continuing to record those that have escaped the notice of Blake bibliographers.

Two early American piratings of Blake plates appear in issues of The People’s Almanac for 1834 and 1836. An article on page 29 of the 1834 issue (Boston, Willard Felt and Co., and Charles Ellms)—vol. I, no. I—is entitled, “Account of a monstrous snake, Captured by Captain Stedman, in the Wilds of Surinam [sic] and Skinned Alive by a daring Negro.” The full-page wood-engraved illustration accompanying this article generally copies a well-known and often-reproduced2 Blake design for J. G. Stedman’s Narrative of a five years’ expedition against the revolted negroes of Surinam, London, 1796 (there found in vol. I, p. 182). In the reduced American version, prepared by a talented but anonymous wood-engraver, many details are significantly altered. In the original engraved illustration entitled “The skinning of the Aboma snake, shot by Capt. Stedman,” two natives are laboriously hoisting a limp snake aloft by a rope, while in the background can be seen the lake and boat in which the enormous serpent was captured. The American copy omits the entire background and the two natives, showing instead the supporting rope tied firmly around the trunk of a tree. In the copy, Captain Stedman has donned a pair of sandals, and the snake is writhing in a most animated fashion while being skinned alive. The text of the episode is considerably edited and abridged in The People’s Almanac version, most probably to compress it into one page of unheaded text. There are no embellishments of either style or content.

1 Wood-engraved illustration from The People’s Almanac, 1834.

2 Wood-engraved illustration from The People’s Almanac, 1836.

The skinning of the Aboma Snake, shot by Capt. Stedman.
Another illustration from the Stedman work appears on p. 37 of the 1836 issue of the *Almanac* (vol. I, no. 3). The imprint—as with so many short-lived periodicals of the time—has changed, and now reads: Boston, sold by Lemuel Gulliver, 3 short-lived periodicals of the time—has changed, published by Charles Ellms. 4 The original illustration (unsigned in the Stedman volume but given to Blake by both Keynes and Bentley) entitled "The Sculls of Lieu Lepper, and Six of his Men," appears in vol. I, p. 237, where two soldiers are seen lamenting and gesticulating over the skull of the unfortunate Lieutenant Lepper. A third soldier leans contemplatively on his flintlock, surveying the skulls of the six men who... had one by one been stripped naked by the rebel negroes at their arrival at their village, and (for the recreation of their wives and children) flogged to death. 5 The modified American version shows only a single soldier reflecting on the skulls on poles, surrounded by scattered bones—this last detail added by the American woodcutter. The text beneath, only nine lines long, very briefly summarizes the scene. The People's *Almanac* cut is signed at the lower right, "Downes," most surely J. Downes of Worcester, Mass., working c. 1834-1850. 6 He is recorded as illustrating other almanacs for Charles Ellms: *The American Comic Almanac, The Comico Token*. He was also responsible for numerous book illustrations. 7

It seems reasonable to assume that the publisher or editor of *The People's Almanac* had access to or himself owned a copy of the Stedman work, which formed but one source for the illustrations of the many sensational articles commonly found in such publications. Other articles in *The People's Almanac*, for instance, include pieces on the island of Tristan D'Achuna [sic], the shipwreck of the *Blendenhall*, "Terrific contest with a lion," "The affecting narrative of [Elizabeth Woodcock's] sufferings in a snow bank," and the more predictable ephemeral information of tides, lunar charts, and astronomical tables. It was common to include sensational articles with these necessary charts to make almanacs more salable and attractive, and Ellms boasted in print that future issues of *The People's Almanac* would appear "containing numerous large Engravings, and astonishing but true accounts of Adventures, Exploits and Escapes. Also fights between wild beasts, Alligators, Snakes, Men, and Eagles." The high quality of the wood-engraving is noteworthy, as is the wide range of pictorial sources from which illustrations were taken. One article in the 1834 issue on Napoleon crossing the Alps, for instance, copies the famous painting of Napoleon by David.

It may well be that a systematic examination of the large numbers of American almanacs issued in the mid-nineteenth century will reveal other such copies after Blake.

5 Despite his remarkable name, this Gulliver was indeed a bookseller in Boston, and is listed in the Boston city directory for 1836.

4 The People's *Almanac* was published between 1834 and 1841; various issues are found at the New York Public Library, the American Antiquarian Society, and other institutions. Copies are found with varying imprints—some have Boston addresses, some Philadelphia addresses, and some are entirely without imprints. The contents of these various copies are identical. See Drake, *Early American Almanacs* (New York, 1962).


**LEONORA, LAODAMIA, AND THE DEAD ARDOURS**

David V. Erdman

Gottfried Augustus Burger's *Leonora, A Tale*, translated and altered from the German... by J. T. Stanley, Esq. F. R. S. &c. went into three London editions in 1796, one of them containing three illustrations designed by Blake and engraved by one Perry, a mysterious figure whose first name and other works (except for one Stedman plate) are unknown.

Wordsworth and his sister, on 1 October 1798 in Hamburg, bought copies of Bürger's *Poems* and *Percy's Reliques* and sat an hour in the bookseller's shop reading. M. J. Herzberg in 1925 and Geoffrey H. Hartman in 1968 have noted some influence of Bürger's poems on Wordsworth's (*Hartman calls it "unwitting"), but no one seems to have noticed how close the sexual theme of Wordsworth's currently popular *Laodamia* (1814) is to that of *Leonora*. (In 1800 Wordsworth chose to imitate, in *Ellen Irwin or the Braes of Kirtil*, the form of *Leonora* rather than the "simple ballad strain." 9)

The parallel is simple but central. Laodamia, seeing her loving but dead husband returned, in the flesh as far as her eyes could tell, pleaded:

Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss To me, this day, a second time thy bride! Leonora, deceived by her eyes into believing her revenant lover was alive and able, pleaded:

Oh come, thy war-worn limbs to cheer On the soft couch of joy and love! Laodamia's offending "the just Gods" by mistaking the spirit for the body (she had failed to "Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—Seeking a higher object") was firmly rebuked:

1 G. E. Bentley, Jr. "New" Blake engravings..."

Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;

and turned to "a lifeless corse." Leonora was
surrounded by a crowd of fiends, who danced and
howled "this awful lesson":

Learn patience, though thy heart should break,
Nor seek God's mandate to control!

1 Blake. "The dead ardours." Pencil and ink sketch
for Leonora, 1796, to have been engraved by Perry.

2 Sketch on verso--a revenant emerging from the
grave? David Bindman collection.
Each of these uxorious females had forfeited all future bliss. Bürger patched on a happy ending: "twas "all a dream." Wordsworth provided grim solace by suggesting that his heroine had become a tree which locked into an eternal pattern of "interchange of growth and blight," growing too high and getting blasted again and again (Ancient-Mariner like).

Blake's third illustration depicts Leonora waking and her lover, not really a wraith, rushing toward her with a plucked rose. His second depicts the grief in the community when they thought he was dead. His first, in four tiers, depicts five dead bodies (and an onlooker) stirring in their opening graves, above them five naked soul/bodies dancing against a full moon, above them a fiery horse in air, bearing Leonora clutched to her ghost lover, followed by a horn-blowing fairy whose trumpet is bent back as if to be heard only by himself. In the story the revenant must take his bride back with him into his grave before moon-set. In the adjacent cloud-clusters of human forms, a row of burly, sour-faced, naked men under a black cape held up by a boy, and an adjoining row of women mostly bowed down with streaming hair (there is some borrowing from the title-page and last plate of Visions of the Daughters of Albion).

A fourth design by Blake, a drawing in fairly finished condition but not used in the book, has been puzzled over from time to time without identification and is now in the collection of David Bindman, who kindly grants his permission for its reproduction here. It is on a small bit of paper, probably cut from a larger sheet, and it consists of another cloud-cluster of human forms, a cloven-footed youth with head buried in cloud and with a cloven foot like that of the dreamer in page 2 of The Four Zoas ("Rest before Labour"), a crouched Urizenic figure with triple beard and shut eyes, and a contorted female with twisted body and cloak, her eyes wide open and perhaps her mouth, shrieking.

On the back is a slight sketch, apparently of a body emerging from its grave. And a price, "2 Guineas," has been crossed out and replaced with "1 Guinea." I have not asked Bindman what he paid.

What has kept the main design in critical limbo has been its inscription, conjectured (by Rossetti I believe) to read "The dead bad doers," which does not sound like sense or like Blake. Actually the inscriptions above and below the drawing are not very difficult to make out when we realize they were not written to be read but sketched to indicate the layout of a title-page and the inscription Perry was to engrave. On the right half of the top of the paper, cut off by the top edge, are the letters V O L U M E. On the left half presumably there was to be "First" or "Second"; there seem to be shadows of some letters, apparently in upper and lower case.

Beneath the drawing, overlapping its cloud and shading, the lettering, with a very elegant capital T and a tall P, reads:

The dead ardours Perry

W.B.

People who guessed "bad doers" in place of "ardours" had to imagine a stem on the looped a. Perry's engraving of the inscriptions on the other designs specifies the division of labor: "Blake inv: Perry sc."

The Blake Concordance discloses that Blake spelled ardor/our either way, and it leads us to a cognate Blakean concept in lines 263-67 of The French Revolution (1791) in which the Nation's Assembly is described as "like a council of ardors seated in clouds, bending over the cities of men. / And over the armies of strife.../ While.../ the pestilence weighs his red wings in the sky." The praeternaturalism is quite similar. In France the ardors (passions) or spirits of the new Assembly are very much alive, while the ardors of the King and Duke of Burgundy "like the sun of old time quench'd in clouds" (68) or like clouds in a night sky ("his bosom...like starry heaven") (81-82) are as dead as the vampires in Leonora; the King sees "thro' darkness, thro' clouds rolling round me, the spirits of ancient Kings / Shivering over their bleached bones.../Hide from the living!'" (72-74). "The dead ardours" makes a perfect title-heading for the poems of Burger (as anyone with the curiosity to peruse them will find) and a suitable epithet for the interdicted passions of Leonora and Laodamia. As for Blake, his search for a term for the components of the psyche in every body, if it had not come up with "zoas" might conceivably have settled upon "ardours."

I leave to others the possibly quite rewarding pursuit of graphic and psychological resemblances to the three ardours on Bürger's cloud in the Spectres and Emanations of Blake's evolving myth. This design (and the published ones) must have been conceived in 1795-96 just while Blake was translating into design the Night symbolism of Young and was moving in his own symbolism from the Books of Urizen and Ahania into the work that only evolved the term "Four Zoas" after several years of Spirits and Spectres.

1 Wordsworth's purchase was the Richter of 1796 (2 vols.), now in Grasmere. When he and Dorothy read "a few little things of Bürger" in the German original, they "were disappointed particularly in Leonora, which we thought in several passages inferior to the English translation." The English passage he quotes (adding an unearthliness not in the German) is not from the Stanley translation. See Letters: The Early Years (1967) 233-34 & nn. and Moorman Early Years, 429.


I recently acquired an interesting letter written by Benjamin Disraeli to Mrs. Anne Gilchrist, the widow of the author of Blake's first biographer, almost exactly twelve months before the publication of that work:

**Hughenden Manor**
**Nov 5 1862**

Madam

There are some drawings, I believe a considerable number, by Blake, in this collection. It is many years, since I have seen them, but my impression is, that they are, in a real degree, rather his own etchings, coloured by himself, than, strictly speaking, drawings.

I leave this place tomorrow, for a fortnight, but, on my return, if Mr Rossetti care to examine them, I will give orders, that they shall be prepared for his inspection.

I am sorry to say, there is not the slightest foundation for any of the statements, contained in the letter, to which you refer. My father was not acquainted with Mr Blake, nor is there a single volume, in the Hughenden Library [deletion] enriched by his drawings.

I have the honour to be

Your faithful Servant

B. Disraeli

Mrs Gilchrist

The works by Blake in the collection of Isaac D'Israeli, which were inherited by his son, are now generally identified (G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books* [Oxford, 1977], *passim*), and it is true, as Disraeli says in his letter, that there was no drawing among them. The letter mentioned by D'Israeli, which had been quoted by Mrs. Gilchrist, is unidentified, but there is little doubt that its writer quoted from the well-known letter written by Isaac D'Israeli to Thomas Frognall Dibdin, and printed in the latter's *Reminiscences of a Literary Life* (1836); (pp. 784-89) this says that "It is quite impossible to transmit to you the ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY designs I possess of Blake's." If one adds up the number of pages in the illuminated books owned by D'Israeli (America, *Thel*, *Europe*, *Urizen*, *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*), the total, if each was complete, is 164, or 165, if we include "The Accusers," which Bentley thinks D'Israeli probably owned (Bentley, p. 77)--so the number given by D'Israeli is about right.

Certainly Dibdin's account is not unreliable, as Mrs. Gilchrist claimed in a letter to William Michael Rossetti, probably written soon after she had received Disraeli's letter, and later printed in *Anne Gilchrist her Life and Writings* (London 1887), p. 122. W. M. Rossetti, it will be recalled, compiled the "Annotated Lists of Blake's Paintings, Drawings, and Engravings" in the Gilchrist biography, and he is obviously the Mr. Rossetti referred to in Benjamin Disraeli's letter. The editor of *Anne Gilchrist her Life and Writings* added a note to the foregoing extract from Mrs. Gilchrist's letter, saying, "The antiquarian [i.e. Dibdin] said that Disraeli (Beaconsfield) possessed original drawings by Blake; so W. M. Rossetti wrote to Disraeli, and he replied in the most courteous spirit showing that he possessed only some of the published books." But from the newly-discovered letter it is evident that Disraeli's reply was addressed not to Rossetti but to Mrs. Gilchrist.

The present letter confirms the nature of Isaac D'Israeli's Blake holdings and the general accuracy of Dibdin's account. It is also of great interest in its complete dismissal of the idea that D'Israeli might have known Blake, a speculation current as recently as 1969, in John Ogden's book *Isaac D'Israeli* (Oxford Univ. Press, p. 43), in which it is stated: "There is not enough evidence to connect [D'Israeli] closely with any of the group that met at Joseph Johnson's bookshop, though it was here he would be most likely to get to know the work of Blake, if not the artist himself."
Even though it contains only incidental references to Blake, a book about the three authors outside the Old Testament who probably influenced him most--Milton, Spenser, and St. John the Divine--is one that Blake students cannot afford to ignore, especially when it is written by a scholar like Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr., who has already contributed so much to Blake studies. "Visionary Poetics" focuses on Milton's writings, Lylyidas in particular, as central works in the prophetic tradition that looked to the Book of Revelation as a model and in turn served as models for Romantic prophecies. The first of the two chapters describes the genre which John's Apocalypse in itself constitutes--"a whole aesthetic system, together with those supports, structural and ideological, that any formally recognized genre lends to a poet" (p. 4). The second chapter--essentially an expansion of Wittreich's essay "'A Poet Amongst Poets': Milton and the Tradition of Prophecy," in Milton and the Line of Vision, ed. Wittreich (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1975)--points out the prophetic strain in Milton's works and especially in Lylyidas, which, he argues, "finds its most important context in the Book of Revelation, which is both a context and the model, a generic analogue" (p. 136). Milton's poem, he says, "possesses all the earmarks of Revelation prophecy" (p. 152) and is in fact "a facsimile of the design of John's" (p. 158). Though I believe that Wittreich goes too far in regarding Lylyidas as a prophetic poem, his argument is often illuminating and it is supported by extensive scholarship.

The Book of Revelation is an encyclopedic work, Wittreich says, citing numerous commentators as evidence that in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries it was regarded as a "literary microcosm," an epitome of the holy scriptures, incorporating pastoral, epic, drama, lyric, epistle, tragedy, and comedy as well as prophecy. It was also regarded as a "multi-media performance," a verbal account of visions that were literally visual; hence it was an influence on literary pictorialism from Spenser to Blake.

In addition to "generic mixture," John also uses the strategies of allusiveness and obscurity. "Prophecy is a literature of contexts, depending upon the power of its allusions to return men to their source" (p. 32), and, in Isaac Newton's words, "opening scripture by scripture" (p. 33). The contexts include not only the rest of the Bible but the visions within the prophecy itself, to which the reader's eyes are progressively opened as seal after seal is broken. Along with the illumination that contexts provide, a prophecy subjects the audience to intentional difficulty, or "reader harassment" as it has been called, which screens out the unworthy but even more importantly engages the reader actively in the process of realizing the Divine Word. Blake might have named John among the ancients who he said "considered what is not too Explicit as the fittest for Instruction because it rouses the faculties to act" (letter to Trusler, Erdman p. 676).
The Book of Revelation has long been recognized as a politically radical document. Though prophecy and epic often overlap, Wittreich distinguishes them in this way: "Epic records, often celebrates, the history that prophecy, in the act of reviewing it, seeks to transform. . . . Epic is concerned with reformation; prophecy, with revolution" (p. 51); "Spenser," he concludes, "writes a prophetic epic and Milton authors an epic prophecy" (p. 76). (Clearly Blake leans toward the Miltonic model.) True prophecy thus shapes human affairs rather than merely predicting their course. Wittreich refers to Shelley when he observes that "prophecy may not foretell the future" (p. 51), and he might equally well have referred to Blake, who says that "a Prophet . . . utters his opinion both of private & public matters" Thus If you go on So the result is So He never says such a thing Shall happen let you do what you will" (annotations to An Apology for The Bible, Erdman p. 607).

Having established the characteristics of prophecy, Wittreich for most of his second chapter tries to demonstrate that Lytidias is a prophetic poem. Like the Book of Revelation, Lytidias is complex, demanding, and in places obscure; it is extraordinarily allusive; it has "recapitulated the entire history of pastoral" (p. 119), yet it transcends this genre and "by assimilating more than had ever been assimilated before also aspires to more than any pastoral had achieved before. . . . Not only are all the major forms gathered together within the central form of prophecy, but the arts--poetry, painting, and song--are reunited in Milton's verbal idiom" (p. 126). Lytidias achieves much of its impact through the interplay of contexts, the foremost external ones being the Book of Revelation, The Shepheares Calender, and the other twelve poems of Justa Edovardo King Naupguro. Perhaps the most valuable part of Wittreich's book is his penetrating discussion of these contexts.

Granting that Lytidias is complex, demanding, allusive, and encyclopedic; granting that it is saturated with the doctrines and devices of the Book of Revelation; and granting that Milton himself aspired to a "prophetic strain": none of this makes Lytidias primarily a visionary or prophetic poem, for the simple reason that, taken on its own terms, the poem does not prophesy. Its entire structure and strategy is that of an elegy, in which the persona comes to accept death through resources available to any Christian. The poet in Lytidias never claims to have received any special revelation which he is passing on through dark conceits; rather, the power of the poem arises from its dramatic representation of a sorrowing mortal's gradual progress to serenity and consolation. Although Peter's speech rises to a Jeremiad that might be called prophetic, this section is formally a digression ("Return, Alpheus. . . ." etc.) which, while it has a function in the poem's dramatic development, does not constitute its main thrust.

Certainly Lytidias is a wonderful poem. But, as Blake puts it, "Goodness or Badness has nothing to do with Character. an Apple tree a Pear tree a Horse a Lion, are Characters their cowards but a Good Apple tree or a Bad, is an Apple tree still" ("On Homers Poetry," Erdman p. 267). Of course if one wants to define "prophecy" broadly enough, and say with Blake that "Every honest man is a Prophet" (Erdman pp. 606-07), then any poem that conveys an insight--in short, any good poem--can be called a prophecy; but there is no need to write a book to prove it.

One feels that occasionally Wittreich's understandable enthusiasm for Lytidias betrays him into unsupportable claims or overingenious analyses on its behalf. Nothing is gained, for example, by saddling this 193-line elegy with the burden of being "a prelude poem--in the Wordsworthian sense: one that records the history of a poet's mind to the point where his faculties are sufficiently matured that he may enter upon more arduous labors" (p. 184). In a twenty-page analysis of the prosody, Wittreich praises Milton's "consummate skill" and "subtle and sophisticated art" in returning, toward the end of the poem, "to old rhymes" (pp. 177-79). In lines 132-44 Milton alternates new and old rhymes, but "significantly, he breaks the pattern in the central lines of paragraph nine, thus drawing our attention to the amaranthus. . . ." (pp. 177-78). One can't help suspecting that if the pattern had failed to work out at some other point, Wittreich would have found it equally significant for some other reason. Unquestionably Milton's use of delayed or looping rhymes on the model of the canzone or madrigal is a brilliant conscious device which contributes to the poem's subtlety and linked coherence. But every poet, even Milton, is limited by the medium, in this case the available rhymes. After a hundred or so lines, rhymes will inevitably begin to repeat, though at so great a distance that the repetition has little impact. If we compare a more or less random example, Part I of Pope's Essay on Criticism, which contains just 200 lines, we see that all but two of the rhymes in the last eighteen lines are old ones, and the other two are also close echoes of early rhymes—a device which Wittreich praises in the concluding stanza of Lytidias. Wittreich admires Milton's reiteration, in the poem's final couplet, of the D rhyme from the beginning. As it happens, the final couplet of the Pope passage similarly looks back to the beginning with a reiteration of its E rhyme. When similar qualities are found in two poems that achieve different effects, it seems reasonable to ask if those qualities may not be incidental rather than essential to the effects.

As part of his analysis of the prosody, Wittreich labels each rhyme with a letter, and when he gets to the end of the alphabet he starts over with A', B', etc., and then A'', B'', etc. He discovers that "appropriately, Milton completes one alphabet just before the end of the first movement [lines 135-84] and completes the second alphabet six lines into the third movement [lines 132-85]. The rhyme scheme, then, serves as a guide to the poem's tripartite structure; but rather than marking the three main divisions precisely, it serves instead to bind them together" (pp. 176-77). This analysis seems dubious on several counts. First, the alphabetical notation is arbitrary; there is no reason that Milton or his readers should think of twenty-six rhymes as constituting any sort of unit. Second, the first alphabet ends twenty-four lines before the end of the "first movement"—hardly "just before
the end." And, finally, the analysis finds significance in the very fact that the data are non-significant. If the first movement and the second movement had each contained exactly twenty-six rhymes, it is hard to imagine that Wittreich would have chided Milton for a lack of subtlety.

It is the duty of the reviewer to bring up such questions, but it is also the duty of the scholar to push his thesis to its limits. If Visionary Poetics occasionally oversteps the bounds of the convincing, in the process it also discovers a number of significant connections and cites a wealth of valuable material. Not only Milton scholars, but specialists in Blake and the Romantic period as well should find this study stimulating and rewarding.

Reviewed by Andrew Wilton

It is hard to believe that Richard Godfrey's book is the first to cover the subject of British printmaking as a whole from its origins in the woodcuts published by Caxton and Wynkyn de Worde to the present day. There have been numerous accounts of special aspects of the print, particular processes or periods, and catalogues of the work of individual artists; European surveys, like A. M. Hind's History of Engraving and Etching of 1908, have dealt very fairly with the principal masters (though even Hind limits himself to only two techniques). But never before has it been possible to read uninterrupted and undistracted the story of the print in the British Isles as a cultural achievement worthy of independent consideration.

It is an achievement of great interest and importance. The British school has not perhaps been in the van of European art, for the most part, but its significance for both Europe and America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century is perfectly clear, and at that time the British were, of all nations, most assiduous in disseminating their culture through the medium of the print. They developed and exploited new processes; their artists evolved distinctive relationships with engravers in response to the economic conditions created by rapid industrial and colonial expansion. The mass-production and popular appeal of the print are perfect mirrors of the predominant characteristics of the new middle-class democracy, and it might fairly be said that the print is the art form which
most accurately sums up the needs and tastes of that society.

Certainly the British have produced an immense variety of prints, in a great range of techniques, and treated a correspondingly wide array of subjects. The problems of presenting such a diverse mass of material are formidable. Should one simply list all the artists with whom one wishes to deal, and discuss their work individually? Should one investigate movements, fashions, technical developments? Is every practitioner to be mentioned regardless of importance, or are only the most eminent names to be cited? Mr. Godfrey has chosen what may be described as a modified version of Hind's approach. He attempts a full account, written in narrative form, in which a large number of artists are dealt with in groups or individually depending on their importance, while the salient technical developments are summarized as they crop up. Although the list of names is inevitably a selection, it is far from being obtrusively discriminatory: there are few people missing from this account that one would wish to see included on any score other than that of total comprehensiveness. The lover of sporting prints will complain that James Pollard and a number of similar figures have been ignored; this is a genre that the author explicitly omits as "mainly decorative"—a decision with which one will either sympathize or not. Since his field is decidedly more limited than Hind's, it is easier for Mr. Godfrey to sustain the continuity of narrative; he does not adopt Hind's device of indicating the artists as he deals with them by means of marginal titles, which makes his book rather less easy to use as a work of quick reference, but much more enjoyable as informative reading. There is in any case an index of all the artists mentioned, as well as a good selected bibliography and a perhaps rather too brief glossary of technical terms and processes.

The subject is tackled directly and logically in broad periods, each of which forms a chapter. The first treatment are origins of British printmaking, the Elizabethans and the foreign engravers on whom they relied for inspiration and example. The "Native Tradition" proper Mr. Godfrey deems to have begun with that most endearing of all "foreign" engravers, Wenceslaus Hollar, and his successors in the second half of the seventeenth century. Thereafter the early eighteenth century, "The Age of Hogarth," and the late eighteenth century form two chapters, and the nineteenth century is similarly divided into halves. The twentieth century is the subject of the final chapter, which he entitles "The Limited Edition." It is in some ways unfortunate that he has felt the necessity to invent titles like this, for one cannot really hit on a phrase which will adequately comprehend all that one has to say about, for instance, the romantic period: Chapter five is "Visions and Caricatures"—a fine encapsulation of the art of Blake, Fuseli, Palmer, Gillray and Cruikshank (though only by a willing suspension of disbelief do we accept that these are all artists essentially of the early nineteenth century), but hardly a clear signpost to Constable, Bonington or Bewick.

But this is a small disadvantage beside the readability of the chapters themselves. When the text consists almost exclusively of names and dates with brief and much condensed accounts of lives and works, the first essential is a lively pace and a vivid command of language. Each artist is to be characterized in a few words which must hit their mark at once or merge into an inert mass of hopelessly dull prose. Mr. Godfrey has the happy gift of being able to bring a particular style, an individual artistic temperament, alive with a minimum of pithy phrases, and this is really what makes his method succeed. When he describes the woodcuts of Ricketts and Shannon, for example, as "beautifully cut outlines, accentuated by occasional flurries of sloping lines, defining the skinny little figures in the grip of exquisitely fretful passions," he evokes sharply both the mood and the technique of these works. Such crisp concreteness is amplified by well-selected but not over-profuse quotation. There is a restraint about the whole exercise which is very satisfying; an enormous subject is compressed into small space and yet we feel that something useful is added to what we already know. This is largely because much of the material is, if not in itself new, placed in fresh perspective by the very nature of the work. The crowding of artists together, especially in the illustrations, produces juxtapositions that greatly enrich one's understanding of what was achieved: all the variety and contrast of the British school as a whole is to be found here.

The specific merits of engraving, etching and mezzotint cannot of course be adequately reproduced by means of halftone plates, and the numerous illustrations can serve at best only as reminders of the images themselves. In general the standard of reproduction is fairly high, given the moderate price of the book. Oddly enough it is often the smaller plates that are the most successful. Plates 20 (Place after Greenhill) and 50 (Earlom after Zoffany) are instances of beautifully crisp reproduction. On the other hand, the enlarged details, like the blown-up corner of a Cotman etching (fig. 3), are not so good; this illustration is particularly blurred, leaving the advantage of showing such a detail much in doubt. The choice of illustrations is stimulating, mixing, as the author says, "familiar imagery with prints that are less well known." Readers of this journal will be interested to know, for example, that Blake is represented by the line engraving of a Head of a Damned Soul after Fuseli (Keynes, Separate Plates, XXXIV; Ezekiel (Keynes VIII)); a proof without the text of plate 47 of Jerusalem, "The Spectres of the Dead," "Then went Satan from the presence of the Lord" from Job; and rather surprisingly the "Yearly wakes and feasts" block from the Thornton set of woodcuts. This last is not well reproduced and is an unexpected selection, especially as it has been chosen to show the influence of Blake on Calvert and Richmond. On the whole, indeed, Mr. Godfrey betrays a rather greater interest in the Ancients than in their Master. He is as usual lively in his description of the technique of such plates as the Ezekiel or the Jerusalem, but enthusiasm is tempered with a certain distaste (of which perhaps the choice of this particular plate from all the beautiful
images in the Jerusalem is perhaps an indication): "The musculature of the figures . . . is defined by twisting cords of thick line, reminiscent of mannerist prints after painters like Spranger or Cornelisz van Haarlem, the coarseness of certain details being redeemed by Blake's never-failing energy of conception." There is nothing that quite approaches the enraptured penetration of minute detail that he brings to, say, Calvert's Ploughman.

One may always, of course, question particular preferences in a book of this kind. It seems strange that James Ward's marvellously romantic set of lithographs of Celebrated Horses (1824) should be mentioned without any comment at all; but such things are incidents of personal taste and do not obscure the generally just and accurate picture that is painted. It is less understandable why Thomas Bewick is given so little prominence. Historically, he was an enormously influential figure, changing the appearance of English books and periodicals for half a century or more; absolutely, he was among the greatest and most universal of British artists, with a breadth of scope and human compassion worthy of the most showy of his romantic contemporaries. The succinct paragraph devoted to him is less than an adequate recognition of his genius.

In the twentieth century, it is much to Mr. Godfrey's credit that he is able to handle a more recent period with the same measured and historical objectivity as the earlier ones, without sacrificing something of the special feeling of pleasure that is always involved in making choices entirely on our own, without the aid of hindsight and historical perspective. Inevitably, when a consensus has still to be reached as to the relative importance of artists in their time, opinions will differ as to any one choice. But Mr. Godfrey traces a coherent thread which convincingly evokes the enormous quantity of work produced in this century, giving a just prominence to those who are now considered the most distinguished artists—though one wonders whether the time-lapse that enables him to give space to wood-engravers like Gertrude Hermes and Blair Hughes-Stanton will operate to maintain in prominence the figures he selects for the later part of the century: Moore, Hockney, Kitaj, Hamilton, Paolozzi. He could not mention all the minor printmakers now at work, but it is almost too safe a game to concentrate only on the most celebrated contemporaries. However, a number of lesser lights flash past our view: Birgit Skiold, Colin Self, Peter Freeth, Valerie Thornton and Norman Stevens, for instance, provide a suggestion of the welter of activity that has contributed to the great boom in printmaking of the post-war years.

It has unfortunately to be recorded that the book is peppered with small errors and misprints, nearly all of which are unimportant, though they detract from the ease and pleasure of reading to which it otherwise in all respects concedes.


Reviewed by Morton D. Paley

As Professor Harrison points out in his "Bibliographical Note," the subject of popular millenarianism has not been given serious attention by scholars until comparatively recent times. This is to distinguish popular millenarianism as a field of study from millenaryism in the Old and New Testaments and in the early Christian church. The latter has always been a respectable subject for research, but the former has all too often been relegated to what Harrison calls "the semi-popular synopsis which provides a rag-bag of freaks, curiosities, imposters and 'unbelievable' characters" (p. 264). Norman Cohn's The Pursuit of the Mellennium, first published in 1957, was perhaps the first book to study popular millenarianism with the seriousness that had previously been given to theological millenarianism. Cohn's work, however, is mainly devoted to the medieval period; and its argument that the movements it studies were precursors of modern totalitarianism may be more pertinent to the Middle Ages than to the seventeenth century and after. Christopher Hill's work on seventeenth-century radicalism may be more pertinent to the Middle Ages than to the seventeenth century and after. Hill's work on seventeenth-century radicalism includes much of the greatest interest on millenarianism during the Puritan revolution. For the period in which Blake lived, the indispensable book on this as well as other aspects of social history is of course The Making of the English Working Class by E. P. Thompson, first published in 1963. More
The First of the three main divisions of The Second Coming provides a useful overview of the millennial tradition. It does suffer from a problem which besets any overview: there is simply not enough space to treat important subjects as they deserve. To John Pordage and Jane Lead, for example, Harrison can devote only a single paragraph, with a second on their follower Richard Roach; yet this circle has been the subject of an entire book. Likewise Swedenborgianism—or rather the millenarian element of Swedenborgianism—demands far more than the three pages it is given in the second part of The Second Coming. Nevertheless, the author is right to concentrate on certain aspects of his subject at the expense of others, for this is not a history of the expectation of the millennium from 1750 to 1850 so much as a study in depth of two millenarian movements set in a wider perspective. The movements are those of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcott. The Second Coming probably gives more details about the career and adherents of the Prince of the Hebrews than have been presented before, but it is in his study of Southcott, her followers, and her would-be heirs that Harrison makes new ground, giving us the beginnings of a social history of the subject. For example the breakdown of Southcottian by occupation, while necessarily incomplete, is fascinating, leading to the conclusion that "With a following made up of artisans, small tradesmen and servants, and a top leadership drawn from the more educated and affluent classes, the believers were socially parallel to the radical reformers or the Methodists" (pp. 110-11). This type of information, along with a sense of the historical importance of what people believed to be true (as, for example, in the case of almanacs), makes The Second Coming an important contribution to our knowledge of the period in which Blake lived. The third part of the book, devoted mostly to Shakers, Mormons, and Millerites, is useful chiefly in making comparisons with the subject matter of the second in order to determine what elements were common to millenarian sects.

What of the relation of millenarian movements to Blake himself? A case has been made for connecting Blake, on the basis of similarities of ideas expressed in printed texts, with the antinomians of the seventeenth century; but Blake needs to be "placed" in relation to the millenarianism of his own time as well. I think it fair to say that in this respect The Second Coming does not go beyond my own article of 1973, although it does make mention of Blake a number of times and reproduces two pictures it attributes to him. Furthermore, two errors should be corrected. A quotation from Jerusalem 27 has been garbled so as to read "... Jerusalem was and is the Emanation of the Giant Shore" and then continue "... Your ancestors derived ..." (pp. 80-81). More than four lines of Blake's original text have been dropped by the printer here. Also, one picture reproduced as Blake's is actually a copy after Blake of The Wise and Foolish Virgins, possibly by John Linnell; and the bracketed title in the caption for this reproduction, 'The Midnight Cry' (alluding to Matt. 25.6) has no authority. In general, however, the suggestions about Blake and millenarianism in The Second Coming are well taken. A much more extensive treatment of this subject is now in order, but whoever undertakes it will necessarily make use of J. C. F. Harrison's thoughtful and informative book.


In the Prospectus of 1793 (K 207) Blake claimed to have "invented a method of Printing both Letterpress and Engraving in a style more ornamental, uniform, and grand, than any before discovered, while it produces work at less than one fourth of the expense." The use of the word "invented" is significant, for Blake is in effect proclaiming himself to be the possessor of a "secret" which could transform all the current methods of printing and book-publication. Furthermore he jealously guarded this secret, and though he occasionally hinted at publishing the method he never did do, and he was careful never to let anyone see him making relief-etchings, for it seems clear from their references to his methods that even such intimate friends as George Cumberland and John Linnell did not actually watch him at work on a plate. Nor, it appears, did he discuss the process with them in detail, although we know that for example he left the conventionally engraved Job plates lying around his workroom in an uncompleted state.

A fragment of a rejected copper plate for *America* and electrotypes from some of the Songs of Innocence are, apart from the works themselves, the sole surviving direct evidence of Blake's relief-etching methods and they formed the basis of an attempt by the remarkable trio of William Hayter, Joan Miro and Ruthven Todd to recreate them in 1947. Their method was purely experimental, that is to say it rested entirely on the making in the studio of a final product equivalent to Blake's own. In that sense their experiment was a complete success, but as Essick points out, from the historian's point of view this is not quite enough, for achieving a seemingly identical result is not proof that you have followed precisely the same procedure. Essick's brief essay should not, however, be seen as a critique of the Hayter experiment, but rather as an attempt to reconcile the information which can emerge from studio experimentation with the evidence of technical manuals known to Blake; in other words to draw together the practical and documentary. As such the essay is masterly, for it clarifies with precision some of the means used, giving a completely convincing account of why the prints look the way they do. In particular we now have a definitive account of the significance of the shallow biting of the plates which accounts for the rough, almost messy surface of the prints, contributing to their sense of urgency and containing an implied criticism of the dry finish of the commercial engraving of the time. The discussion of the question of the consistency of the acid-resist is an admirable example of Essick's approach, for he reaches what seems to me an unassailable conclusion by the judicious interplay of experiment and documentation.

On the other hand I feel slightly less happy with the discussion of the problem of whether Blake transferred the text and design by counterproofing from a sheet of paper to the copperplate, or wrote backwards in acid-resist on the copper itself. Essick comes firmly down on the side of the latter, and he rightly cites the authority of Cumberland and Linnell (and indeed Sir Geoffrey Keynes) for this having been the case. Even so I am not con-
vinced except in the telling case of *There is no Natural Religion* and *All Religions are One*, which as Essick agrees do have an uncomfortable slant to the left, for I find it hard to believe that Blake would not have made an occasional error, either a backward-facing letter or a contrary slant, particularly given the difficulty of making a correction to a relief-etched plate. While one can argue that the process of transferring the acid-resist from the paper to the plate might be difficult, there is also the possibility mentioned by Essick that he could have counterproofed the design in some other medium on to the plate and then gone over it in acid-resist, a purely mechanical process. In the last resort I am reluctant to accept the notion that backward-writing of seamless consistency was the normal attribute of a skilled engraver. In fact one sees from proof impressions of prints that engravers do frequently make mistakes which have to be corrected, and in any case they could well have used counterproofing for longer inscriptions. Unfortunately it is not likely, in view of Blake's secretiveness, that any further evidence will emerge to give a definitive answer to this problem.

A final word about the production of this pamphlet. It is produced in a limited edition on fine paper with samples of Essick's recreations of some of Blake's plates. Despite this it is not in the least precious in feeling but has the simple dignity and clarity of later Arts and Crafts book-making rather than the leather-bound opulence of some of the Trianon Press volumes. It is a very nice book indeed and preserves in a very brief compass an excellent balance between richness of content and elegance of form.

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**Such Holy Song**

Music as Idea, Form, and Image in the Poetry of William Blake

B. H. Fairchild, Jr.

Blake's holy trinity of art consisted of poetry, painting, and music. In this informed study, Dr. Fairchild examines the role of music in Blake's poetry, from the melodic "Songs" to the complex orchestration and thematic line of *The Four Zoos*. As a detailed examination of that facet of Blake's composite art that has received the least study, this book contributes a refreshing view into the visionary's often puzzling but always fascinating work. $11.00

The Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio 44242
YALE/TORONTO EXHIBITION

David Bindman is organizing an exhibition of Blake's work that will open at Yale in September 1982 and move to Toronto in January 1983. The exhibition prospectus reads as follows:

The last full-scale Blake exhibition to be held in North America was in 1939 at Philadelphia, and the most recent in Great Britain was the highly successful one at the Tate Gallery in 1978. The Tate exhibition had an unequivocal purpose, which was to establish Blake as one of the greatest of British artists in the same rank as his great contemporaries Constable and Turner. In my view and that of many people who saw the exhibition, it proved the point beyond reasonable doubt. For this reason, I think that an exhibition in which attention is focused exclusively upon Blake's qualities as a visual artist does not need doing again in the same way. We need now to take a wider and more exploratory view of Blake, and try to answer the kind of questions which must arise once Blake's stature as an artist has been accepted. While I think it is vital to show Blake at his very best, I feel we must go further in setting the intellectual and artistic context of his work and revealing his mind. There is a danger of being too didactic and I propose that this be avoided by separating visually the main display of Blake's art from the comparative material, which will run parallel to it. To give an example of how this might work: the earliest illuminated books may be shown according to their chronological development within Blake's work, but nearby, perhaps on an adjacent wall, there might be a small display explaining Blake's new printing techniques with samples of other eighteenth-century experiments. While there will be, wherever appropriate, works by Blake's friends and contemporaries, efforts will be made to define their relationship to Blake in intellectual terms rather than just through visual parallels.

It will be necessary to make a considerable representation of the great watercolor series such as the illustrations to the Bible, Milton and Dante, but I also want to try to bring the illuminated books into the foreground and take advantage of the great strides that have been made in recent years in their elucidation. American libraries are astonishingly rich in fine hand-colored copies, and an important place would be given to Blake's masterpiece, Mr. Mellon's unique colored copy of Jerusalem. There are difficulties in "explaining" these works in visual form, but I think it can be done by drawing attention to the historical and religious themes in the books. For example, a small number of images can be brought in to illustrate Blake's idea of Jerusalem, e.g., Richard Brothers' designs for the rebuilding of the Holy City; and antiquarian treatises can be used to show the importance of Stonehenge in Blake's conception of ancient British history.

The result should be an exhibition which will reveal the breadth and quality of Blake's art, but will also open up vistas to the serious inquirer by making connections between his art and wider currents of thought in his time. DAVID BINDMAN, WESTFIELD COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

10 SPECIAL ISSUE

Jim Bogan and Fred Goss are editing a special Blake issue of 10 which they have announced as follows.

Greetings: Almost 200 years ago William Blake engraved these prophetic words: "Rouse up, O Young Men of the New Age! set your foreheads against the ignorant Hirelings; for we have Hirelings in the Camp, the Court, and the University, who would, if they could, for ever depress Mental and prolong Corporeal War." In response to Blake's summons, number 29 of the 10 series will be a Blake issue which will gather some of the sparks of inspiration that are flying from Los' hammer in this new age. We are interested in any work that makes use of energies sympathetically awakened by contact with Blake's works/spirit. The meeting might be as direct as Ginsberg's visitation by Blake in Harlem or as indirect, say, as Snyder's "It" arising from the reading of a Blake poem during a storm.

Send submissions at your earliest convenience or whenever they blossom. Deadline: 15 February 1980. Please include stamped, self-addressed envelope. Kindly pass the word along to anyone you know who might be interested in contributing to this project. SWEET JOYS BEFALL THEE, JIM BOGAN/FRED GOSS, ART DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ROLLA, ROLLA, MO. 65401.
ROSENWALD COLLECTION AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

As reported in an earlier issue, with the death of Lessing Rosenwald the bulk of his significant Blake collection has passed to the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress (for a listing of the collection and its distribution between the Library of Congress and the National Gallery of Art see Blake Newsletter 35). The holdings were made available to the public in November; however, owing to the unanticipated heavy demand for the Blake materials, a written application and screening procedure has recently been instated.

The servicing of the Rosenwald Collection occasioned some unusual problems for the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, where any person with one piece of identification is entitled to reader privileges. According to Peter VanWingen, head of the Reference and Reader Service Section of the Division, there was always a great reader interest in Blake, but with the advent of the Rosenwald material, "the demand has really been quite frightening." Mr. VanWingen notes that while as a public library the Division has had a history of very seldom turning down requests, they are troubled by the number of enthusiastic casual readers who come with requests such as "I don't care what Blake I see just so I see what it looks like." Severely limited exhibition space precludes any regular display of their originals.

The Division has now instituted a form for "Request to Use Original Blake Materials." Persons wishing permission to consult the holdings should request a copy of the form or submit a letter stating "the items requested, length of time items will be consulted, scope of project for which materials are requested (including publication plans, if any), summary of work done to date, Blake collections previously consulted, and reasons why originals are required as opposed to facsimiles." The Division is particularly interested in the latter point as many of the Trianon facsimiles are based on Rosenwald originals--the facsimiles, they feel, are "about as close as a person can possibly get to the originals." Under the new guidelines, according to Mr. VanWingen, "If a person needs an original Blake they have to prove that they need an original Blake--and a statement to the fact that they've been going around the country looking at original Blakes isn't enough." Nonetheless, such requests are more frequently "modified" or "streamlined" than rejected outright, and a kind ear still exists for the scholar who turns up on the doorstep: "we're being very careful about how we handle readers."

By the end of July the large file of negatives (mostly black and white) which grew up around the Rosenwald holdings will be transferred to the Division, which will handle requests for copies. The cost is currently $5 per reproduction of existing negatives. The Division (which does not have any Blake specialist on its staff) looks forward to serving the increasing number of Blake scholars they will surely be seeing--correspondence regarding the

Rosenwald Collection should be directed to Mr. VanWingen at the Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress, Washington DC 20540.

NELSON HILTON, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

BIBLIOGRAPHY AWARD TO BENTLEY

SCHENECTADY, N.Y.--G. E. Bentley, Jr., professor of English at the University of Toronto, has been awarded the John H. Jenkins Award for Bibliography, a prize bestowed annually by Union College, Schenectady. Bentley won the award for Blake Books (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1977). Bentley's work was chosen from among bibliographies published in the U. S. and abroad in 1977. Union College President Dr. John S. Morris presented the $500 award to Bentley Saturday, 10 May. Award ceremonies were held at the College in conjunction with a two-day Blake Symposium sponsored by Union and Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs.

Serving with chairman Carl A. Niemeyer, professor emeritus of English at Union, on the award committee are William B. Todd of the University of Texas, editor of the Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America; Walker Cowen, director of the University Press of Virginia; Ernest C. Mossner, professor emeritus of English at the University of Texas; and W. Loretta Walker, associate professor and head of information services at Schaffer Library, Union College.

GARDNER ON THE SONGS

On 30 July 1980 Dr. Stanley Gardner of Colchester, England, addressed a group of students and teachers at York University's Atkinson College on the subject of a fresh look at the designs of Songs of Innocence and of Experience. Dr. Gardner's approach has been colored by his discovery of a documented link between Blake's family and the school for destitute children in Blake's parish of St. James, Westminster. Gardner believes critics have been misrepresenting Blake's attitude to organized charity and formal education in the mid-1700's, and that there are new things to be said about the illustrations, and the relationship between Innocence and Experience. Gardner's talk was based on his forthcoming book, Blake's Innocence and Experience Retraced.

Gardner's approach to the illustrations focuses on the communal nature of adults and children in the Innocence designs, and sees the figure of the Nurse (as on the title page, or "Nurses Song") as positive. Some designs he believes must be based on Blake's own experience of seeing the charity children and the nurses holidaying on Wimbledon Common. In Experience designs, Gardner notes the visual themes of absence of family, and rejection of children by adults. In his remarks, Dr. Gardner mentioned many interesting details of the necessary and benevolent practices of charity schools, carrying out the work of Captain Coram with foundlings. JANET WARNER, YORK UNIVERSITY.
Milton and the Romantics

The English Department of Northeastern University is pleased to announce renewed publication of the journal Milton and the Romantics. The journal, originally under the editorship of Luther Scales at Georgia Southern College, will resume publication under the editorship of Stuart Peterfreund and Arthur J. Weitzman. The appearance of Volume Four is scheduled for January 1980. Thereafter both title and format will be changed.

Some of the changes in format will be evident in the first issue. These include consolidating the previous editorial and advisory boards to one editorial board, expanded from seven to eight members. In addition, content will be expanded to 32 pages with hopes of doubling that in future volumes. The first number will be issued on an annual basis and thereafter twice a year.

The scope of future volumes will be broadened to include all aspects of the Romantic sense of the past. The first issue will mark a transition from the relationship of the Romantics to Milton to the relationship of Romanticism to the idea of the past generally. After the January 1980 issue, the journal will expand its focus to include the psychological and linguistic as well as the historical past. In keeping with plans to broaden the scope of the journal, the attention to English Romanticism will be expanded to encompass European Romanticism.

The subscription cost for Milton and the Romantics is $2.00 per issue.

Prose Studies

Prose Studies, a journal devoted to the study of the non-fiction of all periods, is planning a special issue on travel literature. Articles and notes are welcome on individual works, on the travel literature of a particular period, on the historical determinants of such writing, and on the forms and conventions of the genre. Early suggestions about topics are welcome. The special number will be subsequently bound in book form and published by Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. Contributions should be sent by 3 November 1981 to The Editor, Prose Studies, Department of English, University of Leicester, Leicester, LEI 7RH, England.

Blake at LIU

The theme of the Writers Conference at Long Island University (Brooklyn Center) 8-10 January 1981 will be “Visionary Literature,” with the discussion focusing chiefly on contemporary American writing. But there will be a panel discussion of “The New Jerusalem: Blake & Prophecy.” Morris Eaves, University of New Mexico, and David V. Erdman, SUNY Stony Brook, are among those who will serve on the panel.

Blake at MLA 1981

Anyone interested in participating in a proposed MLA Special Session (1981, New York) on "Blake and the Art of His Time" is invited to send a proposal to Stephen C. Behrendt, Dept. of English, University of Nebraska, 330 Andrews Hall, Lincoln, NE, 68588. Complete papers will have to arrive by 1 March 1981, but proposals, abstracts or drafts will be welcome at any time.

The idea for such a session is based on a sense that many Blakeans are still more immediately familiar with Blake's poetry than with his pictures and their relation to an artistic tradition and milieu with which Blake had much more than just a nodding acquaintance. Therefore, the session's tentative focus will be the manner in which Blake's verbal and visual work reflects, employs, or comments upon the styles, techniques, and materials particularly of Blake's contemporaries. Possible topics might include real or apparent "borrowings," the relation of commercial book illustration to Blake's work, and new assessments of Blake's place within the art of his time.

Review Editor for Blake

We are proud to announce the appointment of a Review Editor for Blake: Nelson Hilton, Ph.D., University of California, Santa Cruz, 1979, wrote his dissertation on "Revelation in the Litteral Expression: Blake's Polysemous Words," and he is now Assistant Professor of English at the University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

Blake Slides

A selection of slides of Blake's work from the Blake exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, in 1978, is available from Miniature Gallery, 60 Rushett Close, Long Ditton, Surrey KT7 0UT, England. The slides are keyed to the exhibition catalogue. The price as of March 1979 was £30 (+ VAT for British purchasers) or $64 (+ postage).

Abel Production

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme, included the premiere of William Blake's The Ghost of Abel. The half-hour production ran three shows a day from 25-30 August 1980. The play was performed by Marlborough College. The announcement declares that "The Ghost of Abel, A Revelation in the Visions of Jehovah Seen By WILLIAM BLAKE, is Blake's only known complete drama. It is his last illuminated work, created in 1822. Apparently, it has never been performed. He wrote this brief, intense play about forgiveness in reply to Byron's Cain: A Mystery. Part of that drama will be included in this half-hour programme, with extracts from Genesis 4 and Coleridge's The Wandering of Cain."
BLAKE IN THE MIDWEST

On 7 November 1980, there will be a Blake Seminar held at the meeting of the Midwest Modern Language Association at the Leamington Hotel, Minneapolis. This is the second meeting devoted to the theme "Blake and the Fall of Man." Participants: Mary Lynn Johnson (Coe College), "Blake’s Bible Water Colors." Stephen Behrendt (University of Nebraska: Lincoln), "Blake and the Fall in Paradise Lost." Michael J. Tolley (University of Adelaide), "Out of Eden: Blake’s Vision of the Fall of Man." Discussant: E. J. Rose (University of Alberta). Chair: John E. Grant (University of Iowa).

In the "Checklist of Blake Material in The Lessing J. Rosenwald," published in Blake Newsletter 35, Volume 9, Number 3, Winter 1975-76, several items were listed in the personal collection of Lessing J. Rosenwald. With Mr. Rosenwald’s death and the transfer of the collections to Washington, these items have become the property of either the National Gallery of Art (NGA) or the Library of Congress (LC) as indicated in the list below. Specific institutional catalogue or accession numbers for these items are not available at this time.

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<th>Blake Newsletter Checklist Number</th>
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<td>II, C, 12b, ii</td>
<td>Blake after?</td>
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<td>II, C, 17</td>
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<td>II, C, 33</td>
<td>Emlen</td>
<td>Proposition for a New Order in Architecture LC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV, C, 1</td>
<td>Blake</td>
<td>(several figures and horse in landscape), with variation of subject on verso NGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII, B, 1</td>
<td>Stothard</td>
<td>Battle of Ainin landscape LC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII, C, 1</td>
<td>Flaxman</td>
<td>(several studies for A Letter . . . Raising the Naval Pillar LC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII, C, 2</td>
<td>Flaxman</td>
<td>(Kneeling figure leaning over a reclining figure), brief sketches on verso NGA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII, C, 3</td>
<td>Swinburne, trans.</td>
<td>The Ghost of Abel LC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX, B, 1</td>
<td>Blake</td>
<td>Illustrations of Dante, restrike impressions Complete set in NGA; others privately distributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RUTH E. FINE, NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON, D.C.

BLAKE AT SCSECS

Jim S. Borck (Louisiana State University) is organizing a seminar on "Blake and Eighteenth-Century Illustration" for the annual meeting of the South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies at the University of Texas (Austin), 5-7 March 1981: "The seminar will examine the interrelationships of the visual and the verbal arts in the 18th century, concentrating upon William Blake, but extending that examination also to the picturesque, other types of book illustration, and perhaps caricature."