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NEWSLETTER

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INFORMATION
BLAKE'S TRANSFORMATIONS OF
EZEKIEL'S CHERUBIM VISION
IN JERUSALEM

DAVID STEN HERRSTROM

During the only period he lived away from London, Blake underwent what he describes in a letter-poem to his friend Thomas Butts as nothing less than a personal Last Judgment, a harrowing experience which involved a crisis of faith in himself and his friends, as well as an accusation by the spectres of "Poverty, Envy, old age & Fear." These demons hounded him until he found the strength to resist and defeat them in what he calls a "fourfold vision" (E693/K818).1

Blake's allusion to Ezekiel's vision, which sparked a sudden, liberating personal vision of poetic and prophetic power, marks a turning point in his life. Having abandoned his heroic efforts to forge the "torments of Love & Jealousy" into The Four Zoas, Blake gained the necessary strength to endure the pressure of maintaining artistic faith and integrity in face of William Hayley's destructive patronage and to persist in the epic tasks of Milton and Jerusalem. This vision awakens him, he says, from his "three years Slumber on the banks of the Ocean" at Felpham (E697/K823), and he adopts a new stance. "If all the World should set their faces against" his work, he declares, "I have Orders to set my face like a flint (Ezekiel iiiC, 9v) against their faces, & my forehead against their foreheads" (6 July 1803; K825). Like Ezekiel on the banks of the Chebar, Blake experiences a personal, as well as political "call" to "Spiritual Acts" of perception and creation.

From this time on Blake's life and art are informed by Ezekiel's vision of the Cherubim—the four "living creatures" come out of the whirlwind of cloud and "fire infolding itself," having the "likeness of a man" (Ezek. 1, 10). Less than a year after Blake returned to London in 1804 he rendered this vision in a watercolor for Butts, "Ezekiel's Wheels" (illus. 1), which features the human fourfold man, his hand raised in a sign of peace above the wheels whirling in flames. The awakened sleeper, Ezekiel himself, is depicted at the bottom of the picture, lying on a rock beside the river. In the same year Blake painted St. John's metamorphosis of this vision, "The Four and Twenty Elders casting their Crowns before the Divine Throne" (Rev. 4).2 Blake's insistence on the human form of the Cherubim, his emphasis on its hand, fire and wheels, and his attention to the sleeper's landscape of rock and river become central to Jerusalem, also begun in this year.

Blake explicitly identifies Ezekiel's Cherubim, his idiosyncratic Hebrew spelling in the margin of Plate 32 of Milton alluding to the identification of the Cherubim and humanity, with aesthetic and moral wholeness, the "Human Form Divine" and "holy Brotherhood" (E130/K521).3 Having seen this vision, he proclaims to the public in his Descriptive Catalogue that it contains the archetypes of all true art, "those wonderful originals called in the Sacred Scriptures the Cherubim" (E522/K565). Blake refers
here specifically to graphic works, but the culmination of his seizing on the vision of the human, bodily form of the Cherubim as the original of all truly imaginative art, verbal and graphic, occurs in the last plates of Jerusalem. Here the "Four Living Creatures" (98:24, 42) frame a celebration of resurrection in which everything—animal, vegetable, mineral—becomes individuated living being that appears united in the "One Man" (98:39) of Ezekiel's vision. Furthermore, Blake makes it clear that these "Visionary forms dramatic" (98:28) or Cherubim is the "exemplar" (98:30) of all true art, including his own prophecy—Jerusalem. This is why, when Blake in a later work, The Lacoön, condemns classical art for being mere "mathematical diagrams" as opposed to the "Naked Beauty displayed" of prophetic art, he further and more damningly accuses it of being a debased copy of the "Cherubim of Solomon's Temple" (E270/K775-76) reflected in Ezekiel's vision.

As Ezekiel's Cherub vision became the paradigm in Blake's mind not only for the clarity and unity of vision but for the shape and method of his epic prophecy, its demonic parody in the form of Ezekiel's "Covering Cherub" also became important. 4 Ezekiel vows to destroy the tyrannous "Cherub" appearing, like the Cherubim itself, as a man "midst of the stones of fire" (Ezek. 28.16). This satanic being in Jerusalem the "Selfhood" and the Spectre of self-doubt, the destroyer of brotherhood and prophetic faith masquerading as the true Cherubim (89:10; 96:8). As the Cherubim is perverted by false artists, such as the Greeks, it becomes a parody of itself, the Covering Cherub, who is exceedingly dangerous because it is so easily mistaken for the true Cherubim.

Blake is acutely aware, after his experience at Felpham, that the imposter pretending to friendship is more dangerous than the outright antagonist, as he makes clear in a couplet privately addressed to Hayley, asking him to be an "Enemy for Friendships sake" (E495/K545). The Covering Cherub conceals the very truth that it parodies, for imaginative liberty—Jerusalem herself—is hidden within "as in a Tabernacle of threefold workmanship, in allegoric delusion & woe" (89:44). When the outer garment or false body of self-delusion is thrown off, like the gravedothes of Jesus, the true Cherubim body is revealed. Until this comes to pass at the end of the poem, however, the threefold Covering Cherub mocks the fourfold Cherubim.

This equivocal opposition is rooted in Blake's interpretation of an ambiguity in Genesis: God, after driving man out, placed Cherubim "at the east of the garden of Eden" and a "flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Gen. 3.24). 5 Does "keep the way" mean that the Cherubim at the gate bars man from the tree of life or preserve it for him? Blake provides the answer in an early work, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, saying: "For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at tree of life, and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed, and appear infinite. and holy" (E38/K154). Blake asserts that the Cherubim must abandon its traditional role as guard if art and the true prophet-poet are to triumph. 6 The Cherubim who assumes the role of guard becomes a parody of itself, a perverse imposter barring man from the Garden of Eden, Blake's primary symbol for the world of imagination. This perversion is the Covering Cherub, whom Ezekiel also places in Eden (Ezek. 28.15), a nightmare of "Doubt which is Self contradiction" that in the Gates of Paradise flies around Blake as a "Flaming Sword" (E265/K770). As the accuser, Satan, the Cherubim in its fallen state becomes the Covering Cherub responsible for expelling man from the imaginative world and preventing his return by instilling doubt in himself and his brothers. As the archetype of prophetic art, however, the Cherubim or "One Man," whom Blake identifies in Milton (42:11) with Jesus, guides man into Eden, where self-delusion is removed and all appears "infinite."

In Jerusalem the ambivalence of the Cherubim as guard or guide is central. Blake recounts a vision in the proem to Chapter 4 (E230-31/K717-18) of a "devouring sword turning every way" and Jesus striving "Against the current of this Wheel." Jesus is called the "bright Preacher of Life," who wields the sword of the prophetic word in opposition to the "dark Preacher of Death." The "devouring sword" of death is another name for Blake's "Covering Cherub." Jacob Boehme, whose interpretation of Genesis influenced Blake, calls this the sword "proceeding from Babel," that is, the false word. 7 Blake's vision opening Chapter 4 is of Jesus's attempt, in Boehme's language, to change the "Fire-sword of the Angel into a Love-sword," and this is the true Cherub which drove the false Adam out of Paradise, and brings him in again by Christ. 8 The true Cherubim, who ushers us into imaginative realms, is Jesus, the true Word. 9 He is the "One Man" in whose body at the end of Jerusalem the Living Creatures or "Visionary forms dramatic" of the Cherubim have their unity.

We are invited to view Blake's prophecy, then, as an attempt to turn the fire-sword into a love-sword, just as in the first chapter of the poem Los (Blake himself) attempts to turn Hand's (Los's Spectre) fiery sword into a "Spiritual Sword" (9:5, 18). In the prose introduction to Chapter 3, Blake calls this the war between the "Natural Sword" and the "Spiritual" sword (E198/K682), which he makes clear is between experiment based on doubt and revelation based on faith, self-righteousness and love, tyranny and liberty, as well as the classical warrior ideal and the command of the prophet Jesus to "Conquer by Forgiveness." 10 In short, by separating the true from the false Cherub, changing the guard to a guide, Blake attempts in his prophecy to usher us into Eden and its Tree of Life, that personal and political liberty grounded in the freedom of the human imagination.

Blake guides us into the world of imaginative liberty in Jerusalem by a non-traditional meditation on the Cherubim appearing to Ezekiel, that "glorious vision," as Ecclesiasticus puts it, "which was shewed him upon the chariot of the Cherubins" (Eccles. 49.8). Blake, knowing this text, as well as Revelation 4, was well aware that Ezekiel's vision was understood to be, as meditated upon by the Jews, primarily a chariot-vision and was, as Austin Farrer points out, "a technique of ecstasy." This tradition of God descending from the heavens
in his fiery chariot, which catches the worthy meditator up in spiritual ecstasy, preserved in the books of the Merkabah mystics, came to be one of the two pillars of the Kabbalah. Blake was not concerned, however, with ecstatic ascent but with assertion of the prophetic imagination in times of spiritual and political oppression. His purpose was to unveil Christ on Antichrist, the true against the false word, as in his "Mandrake and Ogres," where he says Jesus "Become a Chariot of fire / cursed the Scribe & Pharisee / . . . Broke down from every Chain & Bar / And Satan in his Spiritual War" (E515/K749). Blake departs from the traditional, mystical meditation on the Cherubim vision by making the benignly descending chariot of convention a war-chariot instead. This departure owes much to the version of Ezekiel's vision in Paradise Lost (VI: 749-59), but Blake also changes Milton's static, patriarchal chariot by identifying it with the dynamic, fiery prophet Jesus. Traditional Cherubim meditation emphasized watching and waiting for its appearance, clearly distinguishing God the rider from his chariot, whereas Blake emphasizes actively uniting with the chariot.

Blake's meditative technique, like that of Jesus, who "became" the Chariot, achieves the unity of chariot and rider, image of the true relation of the prophetic poem to its poet, as well as its audience. He expresses this unity in "Ezekiel's Wheels" by putting the human visage of Christ, who "rides" at the top of the picture, in each of the faces which carry him on the wheels below. This living body of the Cherubim vision corresponds to the prophetic word of Jerusalem (98:28-40). Consequently, Blake's prophecy is not a vehicle for vision, a means of attaining the mystical end of spiritual transport, but the body of the Word itself in its most disturbing fullness. Blake, as rider, is one with the chariot of his poem (98:40-42). That is, by a series of transformations of the chariot-vision, he internalizes or accepts as his own its images of forgiveness, thereby entering the Cherubim body and freeing himself from guilt and doubt. But this is not he reveals the Covering Cherub as false, casting out "Satan this Body of Doubt that Seems but Is Not" (93:20).

Furthermore, he expects his audience to do the same, to make "companions" of these images, which heal a fragmented psyche and society by liberation from self-doubt and mutual suspicion. Thus he entreats his reader to actively enter his work in A Vision of the Last Judgment. He could enter into these Images in his Imagination approaching them on the Fiery Chariot of his Contemplative Thought if he could . . . make a Friend & Companion of one of these Images of wonder . . . then would he arise from the Grave then he would meet the Lord in the Air & then he would be happy" (E590/K611). He would meet Jesus because he would be part of the chariot-body of Jerusalem, one with Blake's visionary forms. The Merkabah is a "giant image," as Harold Bloom rightly observes, "for the prophetic state-of-being, for the activity of prophecy." But because Blake expects his audience to join him as rider in becoming one with the chariot, Bloom is mistaken in his notion that throughout Jerusalem Blake "studies in hope to see" the Merkabah. This is the hope of the mystic not of the radical engraver on South Molton street in London. Blake insists that we "Enter" into his images and that we remember he was first called by Ezekiel's vision to speak out against mental and physical tyranny by transforming and embodying that archetypal vision of wholeness and brotherhood in works of art.

Departing from the tradition of the Cherubim meditations in Revelation, the Kabbalah and Paradise Lost, Blake replaces God as rider with the visionary himself, Jesus-Blake, and thus effects the union of rider and chariot. That is, he insists on the unity of imaginative vision—the chariot—and its landscape—ultimately the mind and body of the prophet. Blake employs Ezekiel's chariot-vision of "wheels within wheels" (Ezek. 1.16) and "burning coals of fire" (1.13) or furnace as an image of man's imaginative part. For Blake, the "spirit of the living creature" in the wheels (Ezek. 1.20) is man's imagination, as is the furnace, which he associates with Jesus. The furnace in Daniel is a threefold fiery death for the three faithful sons of Israel until Jesus, by his saving appearance as the "Son of God," makes it fourfold (Dan. 3.25; cf. E533/K578). The scene or natural landscape in which the prophet lies is, on the other hand, an image of the body alienated from itself. It is a projection and externalization of the imaginative body until, "all Ridicule & Deformity" (E677/K793), it mocks the prophet and becomes in Jerusalem the threatening "serpent" nature (43[29]: 80). Blake adds the obdurate rock, symbol of contracted vision, to the natural landscape in Ezekiel, but otherwise conflates the landscape of its first and tenth chapters, respectively, where the visionary lies beside a river and stands in the court of a temple-city. Developing John's use of Ezekiel in Revelation, Blake adopts his metaphoric identification of temple, city and bride (Rev. 3.12; 21.2, 10-27), one confirmed by St. Paul's trope of the temple-body (1 Cor. 6.19) and by the appearance of the Cherubim in the "likeness of a man" (Ezek. 1.5). Its appearance of wholeness is the unity of the body and imagination, rider and chariot, in the "One Man." Man's fragmented state is a result, therefore, of the separation of imaginative vision from the landscape of his body. In this fallen condition, the furnace and the wheels of the chariot-vision are exiled outside the landscape of the temple-city (E146/K623; Ezek. 10.19) in which the sleeper or potential prophet lies on a rock beside a river (Illus. 2), just as Adam and Eve are exiled outside the East gate of Eden.

By a series of meditative transformations, then, Blake brings the exiled chariot-vision back inside its landscape of the rider-visionary, thereby restoring man to psychic and bodily wholeness. In Blake's symbolism, that is, the furnace and wheels are recalled to the temple-city. And in this he follows the progression from Ezekiel 1, where the Cherubim appears on the roof of the temple, to Ezekiel 10, where the Cherubim appears inside. The drama of the
furnace and wheels is reunited with its true scene in the temple-body when Albion and his soul, Jerusalem the spirit of imaginative liberty, embrace. At this point in Jerusalem, the visionary ceases externalizing his landscape, and, consequently, the temple-city no longer contains him; he is the temple itself (9:24-26). Interaction between the temple and its exiled vision, between Albion and Jerusalem, generates much of the power of the poem. Moreover, the smith Los, Blake's figure of imagination, labors throughout at his furnace in the center of the wheeling universe to restore the members of the divided man to unity.

Before examining Blake's transformations of Ezekiel's vision, we must view them within the context of his larger debt to Ezekiel. Addressing the "Public" at the opening of Jerusalem, he repeats a phrase from his letter to Butts, saying, "After my three years slumber on the banks of the Ocean, I again display my Giant forms" (E143/K620). The allusion here to Ezekiel's slumber by the river Chebar is clear, and Blake reinforces it in his subsequent reference to himself as a "true Orator" (E144/K621), a term Bishop Robert Lowth invokes from Milton to describe Ezekiel, who "frequently appears the orator than the poet." Jerusalem is fundamentally a series of orations aimed at different audiences—the general public, Jews, Deists, and Christians. Consequently, its gross structure is rhetorical; we are confronted with four addresses, saying much the same thing but adapted by varied emphases to their respective readers. Like the gospels it tells virtually the same story four times. Unlike the gospels, however, Blake is not concerned to narrate the life of Jesus but to anatomize the "Temple of his Mind." Like the books of Ezekiel and Revelation, the basic question of Jerusalem is who shall have dominion, Jerusalem or Babylon, God or Satan, but all attempts to show that its form is congruent with the narrative of the book of Ezekiel are ultimately unsatisfying. This method, which correlates the events of one book with those of the other, reveals that Blake is continually aware of Ezekiel's prophetic strategies, even at times giving them an ironic twist, but it obscures Jerusalem's most prominent symbols—furnace, hand, wheel—and, more importantly, its basic structural principle—successive transformations of Ezekiel's Cherubim vision.

As an orator Blake is a literalist, both verbally in his expository, declarative language, and visually in his schematizing tendency, as in the diagram on Plate 36 of Milton (IB252) of the Mundane Egg surrounded by the four universes. As a rhetorical and artistic strategy, the literalness of Blake's paradigmatic scene that includes the sleeper on a rock by a river in a temple-city offers an advantage. The setting remains the same, giving Blake's readers a point from which to get their bearings and, by its repetition, enabling them to grasp the substance of the prophecy. At the same time, however, it offers astounding variety, as the schema remains inviolate but the scene is transformed by Blake's continual renaming: the sleeper is variously Blake, Albion, England, Los, or even Ezekiel himself; the rock is sometimes the English isle, the Rock of Ages, a sepulchre, an altar, Golgotha, Mt. Zion, or London Stone; the river is the Chebar, the Thames, the Euphrates, Tyburn's brook, the Jordan, or the River of Paradise; and the temple-city is England, Jerusalem, Golgonooza the city of art, or Stonehenge the Druid place of sacrifice. The physical relations of these archetypal elements of the setting of Ezekiel's vision do not change; the reader has the assurance of being rooted always in the same visionary landscape, though Blake shifts perspective, as he constantly changes the names of the visionary sleeper, the rock, the river, and the temple-city. The relationship between the furnace and the wheels in each transformation, however, as well as that between this vision and its setting, varies according to the audience.

Jerusalem consists, then, of a series of transformations of this paradigmatic scene and vision. Blake creates a transformation by renaming the scene's fixed elements—sleeper, rock, river, temple-city—and reestablishing the presence of the furnace and wheel. Each of these transformations, which embodies a different relation of exiled vision to landscape, as well as of wheel to furnace, is usually marked as a rhetorical subunit by a shift in speaker or by an introductory or concluding phrase: "such is my awful vision" (15:1), for example, or "Thus they contended" (9:31). Each of the prophecy's four chapters is prefaced by a prose introduction together with a proem, the verses in ballad or distich form, which set the scene and establish the rhetorical emphasis of subsequent transformations for its particular audience. The emphasis of the transformations of chapter 1 is on the judgment of the visionary, the prophet-poet Blake as he begins his poem, not only by God, who divides the "SHEEP" from the "GOATS" (E143/K620), but by his "Public," who may not, as he says, forgive this "energetic exertion of my talent" (E144/K621). Consequently, the rock is Sinai's "cave," where the word was first given to man in what was commonly thought to be the origin of all writing, as well as the "caverns" of Blake's ear, which receive the word. At the outset, Blake correlates body and landscape. The second chapter begins with a proem in which Blake has a vision of Albion sleeping on London's Stone (the Roman mile-stone) beside Tyburn's brook (place of human sacrifice by hanging) in Satan's Synagogue (E170/K620) or Babylon. Emphasis on sacrifice sets the direction for an oration addressed to the "Jews." This shifts in the third chapter, its transformations aimed at the "Deists," to mental imprisonment, and, as a consequence, the Grey Monk of the proem, a type of Christ, is bound in a cell of stone in the Synagogue of Satan (E198-200/K682-83). This stone dungeon bursts open in the proem to the transformations of the last chapter and becomes Mt. Zion in Jerusalem (E229-31/K716-18). Prefacing an address to the "Christians," the emphasis here is fittingly placed on the resurrection of the Lamb of God, who symbolizes the imaginative Body as opposed to the vegetable or mortal body. This returns us to the hope that Blake expresses in his introduction to the "Giant form" of Jerusalem, that "the Reader will be with me wholly One in Jesus our Lord" (E144/K621).

One, that is, in the resurrected temple of Albion's body, which Los-Blake struggles to build throughout the poem, and which we discover in the end
Blake's Paradigm of Ezekiel's Cherubim Vision in Jerusalem
(Vision--Furnace/Wheels--Exiled outside East Gate from Its Landscape)

It is this body that is at stake in each of the transformations of Ezekiel's vision that make up Jerusalem. The four faculties or "Zoas" of Albion's body are at enmity, as are those of the body politic of the English people. That is, the Cherubim body is fragmented, the furnace and wheels warring against each other outside the gates of the temple, and must be restored to unity. Blake explores the nature of Albion's disintegration by means of eight Cherubim transformations (not counting the proem) in chapter 1. In the first of these (4:1-7:8), Albion asserts his independence and denies his wholeness (4:23), expressed in the exile of vision--furnace and wheel--from its landscape--temple-city--(soul from body, Jerusalem from Albion), but fails to understand the true nature of his circumstances. Albion's abstracting, self-dividing skepticism splits his person into a contemplator self and its object self. Furthermore, as his male and female aspects (Luvah and Vala) contend with each other, the furnace and the wheel also separate. It is not until the last two transformations of the chapter (17:1-19:47, 20:1-25:16) that Albion realizes his true situation. He is a victim, his independence a delusion. Blake symbolizes this by obscuring the redemptive furnace of Los and emphasizing the oppressive wheel of Vala. Because Albion mistakes the Covering Cherub for the Cherubim,
the furnace and the wheel remain at war. Hand tries to control first one and then the other, succeeding in his attempt to deceive Albion with a pretense of unity.

This fundamental conflict between the true and false Cherubim and its ultimate resolution are explored in the intervening transformations of the chapter. The second and third (7:9-50, 7:51-9:31) clarify the conflict by introducing its literal context and showing, respectively, how the isolated wheel or female aspect of the psyche becomes a tyrant, weaving the veil of mystery, and how the furnace or male aspect in separation becomes a sacrificial altar of guilt. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth transformations (9:32-12:24, 12:25-15:5, 15:6-16:69), respectively, Los realizes that Hand can be defeated and Albion saved by reuniting the furnaces and wheel, forging the true body of the Cherubim; Los becomes Ezekiel in order to appropriate the Cherubim vision; and Los reveals himself as Blake, who from Ezekiel's perspective reasserts the necessity of wholeness and his prophetic-poetic method of achieving this by meditation on the Cherubim vision.

After the proem, we are in the first transformation of chapter 1 (4:1-7:8) presented with the drama of Albion casting out imaginative vision (illus. 3). The scene of this action is clearly delineated, as we see him lying on the mountain of England (its island tip rising above the Atlantic), shrunken to a rock (5:8), by the Thames (4:34) in a temple of sacrifice (5:15). Before him the "throne" (4:35) of the Cherubim (Ezek. 1.26, 10.1; Rev. 4.2) is dark and cold because the immortal human form has been dethroned, vision (Jerusalem) cast out and sacrificed (5:15,55). This is a spiritual or imaginative event, which causes Albion's fall or vice versa. The order is irrelevant, for the event and its cause are simultaneous, but Albion's fallen status becomes clear as we learn that the Covering Cherub (5:42) hovers over him on his bloody stone altar (5:6) beside the Euphrates (5:43) in Egypt (5:14), land of slavery.

Albion's enslavement is a function of his dethroning the Cherubim, the disunity of the Four Zoas within his body. This casting out of imagination is dramatized by the banishment of vision from its scene, exiling of furnace and wheel from the temple-city-body, and their consequent separation. That is, as Albion self-divides, Jerusalem is cast out, splitting into a spectrous (destructive) and emanative (creative) portion. The former, or male part, descends into the "Furnace of Los" (5:28) outside the East gate of the city, just as the Cherubim stands before the East gate of the Lord's house in Ezekiel (10:19). This is the "Furnace of beryll" (5:34) or appearance of the Cherubim (Ezek. 1.16, 10.9). The latter, or female part, ascends out of the furnace as a pillar of cloud and smoke that becomes the "Starry Wheels" of a cosmic loom, which includes the sons of Albion, revolving continually over the furnace in an attempt to destroy it, to "desolate Golgonooza; / And to devour the Sleeping Humanity" (5:27-30). Thus, the furnace or center of the Cherubim vision is divided from its wheels or circumference, both exiled from their proper landscape within the body of the temple-city. Blake summarizes this as "Abstract Philosophy warring in enmity against Imagination" or Satan against the "Divine Body of the Lord Jesus" (5:58-59). The horror of these divisions is intensified by Blake's illumination on Plate 8 of the female in a cloud of smoke harnessed to an inauspicious moon-chariot, and on Plate 6 of the grotesque male Spectre revealing itself to Los as a bat-winged Covering Cherub (IB285, 287).

This male-female conflict between the furnace and the wheels is developed in the next two transformations, the Spectre's first speech to Los (7:7-50) and Los's reply (7:51-9:31). In their exchange, the identities of the male and female parts of Jerusalem--"The Male is a Furnace of beryll; the Female is a golden Loom" (5:34)--are revealed, respectively, as Luvah, the figure of physical and political passion, and Vala, the veil of deceit. The Spectre assumes the sons and daughters of Albion, but his rock is renamed the Tower of Babel (7:19), the place of confusion existing in a "once admired" Palace "now in ruins" (7:16). This is the fallen Eden guarded by what Boehme calls the "devouring sword," the false word. The Spectre's harangue is an attempt, by misconstruing language, to confuse Los, that he might despair at his "Furnaces of affliction" (7:30). We find that Luvah is "sealed" (7:30) in these furnaces, while Vala feeds them in "cruel delight" (7:31) and joins the children of Albion in the wheeling loom of the zodiac, which in its separation has become oppressive. It is this seal, as in Revelation, which is opened at the end of Jerusalem to reveal the true Word, as Luvah-Jesus breaks the bonds of death and bursts the sealed tomb (Rev. 7:9; Matt. 27:66). The wheels of Vala, daughter of Babel, weave the "mantle of pestilence & war" (7:20), the "webs" of Religion which roll "outwards into darkness" (7:45-46). These wheels involve all the sons of Albion in their web, and the Spectre, mocking the true fourfold Cherubim, calls the son in whom all the others are "One," a "Fourfold Wonder" (7:46).

The focus on the isolated wheels in the Spectre's accusation shifts in Los's reply to a focus on the separated furnace. The meaning of the wheels as the circumference of Albion, later "closed" (19:36), is clarified in this third transformation, as we learn that Albion "saw now from the outside what he before saw & felt from within" (8:25). Here Los attempts to transform Babel into "Zion's Hill" (the Word). Los is now himself the visionary in a scene whose familiar landmarks are renamed, as he lies on the rocky tomb, which he can open to reveal "Immortality" (7:56), by Tyburn's Brook (8:1), in a temple garden. The Spectre, seeing the Lamb of God here, desires to supplant this true Cherubim vision with the "Abomination of Desolation" (7:70) as Jesus predicted (Mark 13:14; Matt. 24.15-16). It is against such spectrous desire that Los struggles in his furnace. He knows he operates within the fallen condition, inasmuch as the laptops outside the temple-city of Albion's body, and as a consequence is himself split into Spectre and Emanation, but his labor at the furnace is Albion's only hope for reintegration. Golgonooza is here in the furnace at the center. But the separation of the center from the circumference, inside from outside, furnace from wheels, occurs only when the
unity of the Four Zoas or Cherubim body collapses. In this fallen state, what Albion before thought and felt as a whole becomes a neurotically self-conscious act, so that all spontaneity of emotion and thought is lost, and the result is a plague of doubt, guilt, and fear—a hoard of spectres.

Los's preoccupation with the potential fall of the Word into the word, the Cherubim body become its parody, is also Blake's. It degenerates, on the one hand, into the wheeling machinery of tyrannous political and religious abstraction and, on the other, into the fiery self-destruction of atomistic concreteness. Los's spectres are Blake's. At the outset of the poem Blake reminds us, in a rather confessional passage, that he is the visionary on the "Rock of Ages" (5:23), writing with a trembling hand beside the river Thames in Golgonooza-London, the city of art. The disintegration of the psyche and its necessary reintegration is not only true of the "Public" body, whom he addresses in this first chapter, but of himself. At its opening the identity of the "sleeper" is ambiguous (4:6); it can be Albion or Blake. Thus, his reintegration in his own work brings about redemption of the public as it enters into his images. With Los he rebuilds the imaginative human form, which he understands literally, perceiving language itself as a body or building (36[40]:58-59).

His most personal fear, consequently, as a prophet-poet embarking on his greatest prophetic-epic task is that in the midst of extreme self-consciousness about his role and medium, as well as his powers, either language or his trembling engraver's hand will fail—the hill of Zion become Babel. If the Spectre controls either, the Cherubim or true Word is undone and becomes the Covering Cherub of the warring wheel and furnace.

Employing his literal method, Blake introduces his own uncertain hand as the personage "Hand," who contends with Los and is developed as a major, ambiguous figure in the rest of Jerusalem. Blake desires not to be the poet whose hand "trembles" with self-doubt, but the prophet in Ezekiel who boldly stretches "forth his hand" into the furnace between the wheels of the Cherubim and seizes the "coals of fire" (10:2,7). Blake in this role seizes his fiery etching acids and cuts verbal and graphic images into the metal plates of his prophecy. Significantly, Hand first appears to Los as a "triple-form" (8:34) mockery of the fourfold Cherubim, his "self-righteousness like whirlwinds of the north!" (7:73; cf. Ezek. 1.4). He takes the "bars" of his "condens'd thoughts, to forge them: / Into the sword of war" (9:4-5), which Los, in his furnaces, labors to form into a "spiritual sword. / That lays open the hidden heart" (9:18-19). As a Covering Cherub, the demonic parody of the four-fold Cherubim, Hand seeks to control both the furnace and the wheel. But before Los's furnace he attempts to appropriate it for his own ends (7:71), and later he so dominates Vala that her loom becomes known as the "Wheel of Hand" (60:43).

This symbolic expansion of Hand as the supreme charlatan is not only suggested to Blake by the editorial signature of the three accusing Hunt brothers, but very likely also by the only human features in Parkhurst's well-known drawing of the Cherubim, its three hands prominently and ludicrously poking out from the right, left, and middle of the figure. Blake would have noted the cloven hoof of this silly creature and thought it fitting (illus.4). In his picture of Hand on Plate 26 (IB305), he presents the insidious Cherubim imposter as a fire-cloaked Christ in a satanic pose with nail-wounded hands, a mockery of the stigmata of the Christ rising in flames over Adam and Eve on Plate 31(35)(IB310). When Hand ceases to exist in this form and is redeemed as the Cherubim (Ezek. 1.8, 10.21), however, he becomes the hand of God himself and, for Blake as poet-engraver, his own hand.

As Hand's deception is clarified, Los simultaneously becomes aware that Hand can only be defeated—parody restored to reality—by reuniting the wheel and furnace as living contraries in imaginative vision. Accordingly, Los dominates the next three transformations (fourth-sixth), forcing us to view Albion's landscape from three points of view, respectively, that of Los himself, Los as Ezekiel, and Los as Blake. In the fourth transformation (9:32-12:34) Los remains the visionary by Tyburn's brook, but the tomb of the previous scene, an image of regeneration (7:67), is now renamed a grave stone.
(10:54), because the Spectre of Man is fully revealed as the "Reasoning Power, / An Abstract objecting power than Negatives every thing" (10:13-14). He has entered the Temple (10:16) as the Abomination of Desolation and driven out the vision of furnace and wheels. In face of this, Los intensifies his labor outside the temple walls at the furnace (9:34-35), convinced that the encircling "Wheel of Albion's Sons" are ultimately redemptive, "Giving a body to Falsehood that it may be cast off for ever. /.../ piercing Apollyon with his own bow!" (12:13-14). Thus, the wheel and furnace are not absolutely fallen in their separation. The wheels reach from the "starry height to the starry depth" (11:12) and so by imaginative labor can be used in their fallenness against Hand or the angel of the bottomless pit, as John saw in Revelation (9:11). And out of the furnaces comes imaginative space, Erin, to fill the void between the starry wheels in order to consolidate and clarify error so that it may be easily identified and cast out.

With this hope, Los appropriates the true Cherubim vision at its source, becoming in the next transformation (12:25-15:5) Ezekiel himself by the Chebar (12:58). From this perspective we learn that the "dark Satanic wheels" (12:44), taking the form of wheels "as cogs /.../ in a wheel, to fit the cogs of the adverse wheel" (13:13-14), are explicitly the fallen version of Ezekiel's wheels within wheels. But we are focused on the product of the furnace: the "great City of Golgonooza" (12:46). With its "four Faces towards the Four Worlds of Humanity / In every Man," this city is also the fourfold Cherubim body: "And the Eyes are the South, and the nostrils are the East. / And the Tongue is the West, and the Ear is the North" (12:57-60). Los now lies on "Mild Zion's Hill" (12:27) rather than on the grave stone, because even though this temple-city-body is surrounded by the Twenty-seven Heavens of death (13:32), it is a city of "pity and compassion," a building of hope against the void. Los knows that the inside and the outside, the furnace and the wheels, of vision can be restored to unity because even the fallen Vegetative Universe, opens like a flower from the Earths center: / In which is Eternity. It expands in Stars to the Mundane Shell / And there it meets Eternity again, both within and without" (13:34-36). The ultimate significance of this fact is revealed in Blake's illumination at the bottom of Plate 14 (IB293), where we are reminded that Los is struggling on Albion's behalf, who is pictured lying on a rocky tomb beside a river, with Jerusalem hovering over him as a six-winged Cherubim. The arch encompassing her may be interpreted as part of the satanic wheel or of the rainbow of promise accompanying the Cherubim in Ezekiel (1:28) and Revelation (4:3), which at the end of chapter 2, as Erin's bow, encloses the wheels of Albion's sons (50:21). This vision of Albion is a counterpoint to Los's of Golgonooza, for here, without Los's hope, he is sad and indifferent.

At this crucial point, hope discovered in the face of indifference, Los, Blake's surrogate, gives way in the sixth transformation (15:6-16:69) to Blake himself. He is sustained by the previous Cherubim vision of the "Four-fold Man" (15:6) but prays for strength: "That I may awake Albion from his long & cold repose" (15:10). Blake is haunted, as when he began his task, by the same spectre of doubts and paralyzing "Reasonings," as he says, "bruising my minute articulations" (15:12-13). Consequently, we again see fallen Albion lying on his rock (15:30, 16:27) by "London's River" (the Thames, 16:40), his counties fleeing out of the temple-city gate (16:30), and as a result the wheels of the Cherubim vision are "Wheel without wheel, with cogs tyrannic / Moving by compulsion each other: not as those in Eden: which / Wheel within Wheel in freedom revolve in harmony & peace" (15:18-20). These wheels of compulsion are those of mental and physical slavery, the "loom of Locke" and the "Water-wheels of Newton." Hence, the furnaces separate from them and become for Blake the literal sacrificial altars (15:34) of English sweatshops.

Against this fallen condition, Blake reasserts his poetic-prophetic method, that is, transformation of the archetypal Cherubim vision: "All things acted on Earth are seen in the bright Sculptures of / Los's Halls, & every Age renews its powers from these Works /.../ Such is the law of One & One & Sina, & Sina, & / And such the Holy Gospel of Mount Olivet & Calvary" (16:61-69). Los's sculptures are those of the Cherubim Blake refers to in his Descriptive Catalogue, "which were sculptured and painted on walls of Temples" (ES22/K565). By transformation of this archetype, the body of prophetic art is created, the contrary union of wheel and furnace, "Law" and "Gospel," the universal and the particular. This inheritance of art as body liberates Blake from the imitative bondage of classical art. The cavern of Mt. Sinai, where the word originated, is transformed into Mount Olivet, where the Word is revealed as a living body. The false body of error is cast off to reveal the naked beauty of the true Word. The fires of Los's furnace forging a new temple-city-body are Blake's etching fires creating the body of Jerusalem, as well as a new people of England, by removing a false covering.

Because Los-Ezekiel-Blake's activity has been confirmed and the circumstances of Albion are now to be presented in their starkest form, along with his realization of his true state, the furnace is obscured in the last two transformations of the chapter (17:1-19:47, 20:1-25:16) by the wheels. We return to Albion lying on his rock by the Thames (19:40), but without the comfort, as in the chapter's opening, of the city of Golgonooza in the promised land even as we observe Albion in Egypt. He is now emphatically in "Babylon the City of Vala, the Goddess Virgin-Mother.... Nature!" (18:29-30, 21:30), which Blake, like Ezekiel and John, draws into sharp opposition to the city of Jerusalem. Moreover, he ironically parallels the building of Golgonooza, earthly image of Jerusalem (12:25-13:27), with that of Babylon (24:25-35). "Nature" or Vala rules Babylon, the city of slavery, because Albion is held captive by what his age promulgated as the Natural Law of religion (Deism), politics (kingship) and poetics (the classics), epitomized for Blake in the cold, determinist wheels of the zodiac. Such an imaginative hold did this abstract philosophy have, that it was in his view ultimately responsible for the grinding down of individual people slaving at the looms in Spitalfields.
Albion only becomes truly aware of his enslaved situation as he is able to recognize the Cherubim imposter. His wheels are absorbed into the great wheel of Hand (momentarily taken over from Vala), who reveals himself as the Capering Cherubim in demonic triple-form (18:8). Albion, sitting on a "rocky form against the Divine Humanity" (19:35) in this penultimate transformation of the chapter (17:1-19:47), is horrified by such "An Orbed Void of doubt, despair, ... & sorrow"(18:4). Enslaved by Hand's "Starry Wheels," the whole of his inner or imaginative world is turned inside out, "His Children ex'd from his breast" (19:1). The product of Hand's wheels is a deceitful veil, which in the last transformation of the chapter (20:1-25:16) covers Albion in the form of nature or the Mundane Shell (42:81, 59:7) and Moral Law (21:15, 23:22), a false Body (55:11, 65:61, 90:4) separating him from reality. The rock on which he sits, consequently, is renamed Luvah's sepulcher (21:16), and he now realizes that his temple-city is Vala's "Scarlet Tabernacle" (22:30). He yearns for the "Veil" to be rent (35:36), as it was at the death of Jesus (cf. 30:40, 55:16, 65:61; Matt. 27:51), and as Vala spreadeth her "scarlet Veil over Albion" (21:50), the exiled Jerusalem poses a pivotal rhetorical question: "Why should Punishment Weave the Veil with Iron Wheels of War / When Forgiveness might it Weave with Wings of Cherubim?" (22:34-35). Flames from the furnace of the true Cherubim consuming the wheels of war are pictured in Blake's illustration at the bottom of Plate 22 (Illus. 5 Jerusalem, Plate 22 (copy A). British Museum. 6 Jerusalem, Plate 41 [46] (copy A). British Museum.

5). Albion's identification of these wheels as imposters is crucial to his salvation; for only then is the Cherubim of forgiveness, the whirling lances of Jerusalem, revealed as imagination and liberty, Jerusalem herself.

By successively renaming and shifting emphases, thus changing the relations of the archetypal elements of Ezekiel's vision—the furnace and the wheel—in their exile from the visionary's landscape, Blake completes Albion's public judgment. Moreover, the reader's, as well as Blake's, is also complete. At the end of this chapter Albion realizes, as he did not in the opening transformation, why he is fallen and precisely what his situation is, admitting: "O human Imagination O Divine Body I have Crucified / I have turned my back upon thee into the Wastes of Moral Law: / There Babylon is built" (24:23-30). By exiling imaginative vision from the temple-city of his own body, Albion crucifies himself. He sacrifices his body on the altar of "Law" and "demonstration"
Based on doubt in the connection of humans with each other and with the world, Blake survives his own self-judgment, exercising the spectres of sorrow and self-doubt, by entering Ezekiel's vision and creating with it his prophecy, which in turn invites his readers to enter into its "Visionary forms dramatic." If they accept this invitation not to consider these images at a distance but to embrace them, they will be liberated with Blake from the bondage of doubt, and will wake from the nightmare of separation from each other and the natural world. They will receive their imaginative soul back from exile. Albion's redemptive realization, that is, becomes our own as we enter into and move through Blake's transformations of the Cherubim vision.

Blake continues to bring historical and personal imaginative errors under judgment throughout the rest of his poem by continually renaming and so shifting our perspective, until, in the final transformation of the last chapter, the wheel and the furnace unite as true Contraries and return from exile to Albion's temple-city-body. We will examine in the remainder of this essay some pivotal transformations in the second chapter, addressed to the "Jews," the dialectic of the true and false sacrifice becomes more acute. Throughout, Albion in a familiar landscape sits on his rock (28:10, 34[38]:1, 38[43]:79, 43[29]:2, 48:4) beside a river (28:14, 30[34]:48, 37[41]:8, 43[29]:3, 44[30]:24, 45[31]:59, 47:2) in Babylon. But at the heart of the chapter Albion's sacrificial body itself becomes a parody of the true body of the Cherubim. When Los, in the third transformation of the chapter (not counting the proem; 38[39]:12-42:81), personally enters "Albions House" (36[40]:24) or body, he opens his furnaces before Albion (42:2), but "dark, / Repugnant," he "roll'd his Wheels backward / into the World of Death" (39[44]:5-9). Albion has sacrificed himself in a parody of the true sacrifice of Jesus, and, as a result, Los discovers in this temple "A pretence of Art, to destroy Art: a pretence of Liberty / To destroy Liberty" (38[43]:35-36). Albion's twenty-eight friends, one in Los-Jesus (35[40]:4,46), respond "in love sublime, / and 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" (39[44]:1-4). They offer to act as Albion's guide into Eden, but are rebuffed because his will cannot be bent; he has chosen to close off his body to genuine self-sacrifice in Los's furnaces, thus mocking with his own body the imaginative body of the One Man of the Cherubim.

The sacrificial body or chariot that Albion chooses is pictured on the lower half of Plate 41[46] (illus. 6) in all its horror, as a false body, and all its humor, as a parody of the Cherubim. This chariot, vision of its chassis and wheels formed by serpents, which Blake associates with the Druid Serpent Temples of stone devoted to human sacrifice and nature worship, is revealed as the Covering Cherub. The serpent heads thrust forward, but their deathly rigid bodies have hardened into yokes and wheels that insures no escape or movement. Flames from the "Furnaces of Los" glimmer feebly beyond the wheels, while each beast of Ezekiel's vision (Ezk. 1:10) is satirized. The shaggy lion names serve only to make the men's faces appear more pompous in their grim determination to move ox-hoofed bodies, clearly fixed to the ground. And the emaciated eagle-men on their backs, who hold forth quills as if simultaneously wishing to give them away and commanding the chariot to move on, satirize the prophet proclaiming change. Instead of the movement that Ezekiel emphasizes in his vision, where every one "went straight forward" (Ezek. 1:7, 12, 17, 23; 10:11, 22), this chariot is totally static, an image of paralyzing self-doubt. The two horns of the maned heads curl into serpentine coils and end in hands, each gesturing in opposite directions. Albion, who sits with Vala in the chariot, passively lets the reins drop. His face mirrors the lion men's, its determined expression working against his body, which has become the sacrificial altar of stone itself.

If the "Jews" worship the paternal God of vengeance and sacrifice, the "Deists," whom Blake addresses in chapter 3, worship the maternal Goddess of Nature and Natural Law. She is both womb and temptress, protector and tyrant. As Deist, Albion is thus imprisoned in the coils of serpent nature. And as the Deists asleep (50:49) in the transformation of the chapter (not counting the proem; 60:1-63:25), he "by Tyburn's brook (62:34) in the city of Babylon (60:23), his rock is renamed a Dungeon of Babylon (60:39) where he is forced to labor at the "iron mill" (60:59). This is the mill wheel in his mind of abstract generalizing that grinds all the minute particulars of art and life into nothing. And though the Divine Vision appears in Los's furnace outside the city (60:5), even walking among the "Druids Temples & the Starry Wheels" (60:7), Jerusalem's reason has become the "Wheel of Hand" (60:43); and Albion returns to his labors in the dungeon, the chariot of the Cherubim having become a raging war chariot (63:11).

The problem with the "Christians," though they claim to worship the Cherubim, the resurrected body of Albion-Jesus or Imaginative liberty, is that they habitually mistake the mortal for the resurrected body. At the center of Blake's oration addressed to them, consequently, are two transformations of the Cherubim (80:57-86:64, 87:1-93:27) which separate the true from the false body. In the first of these, Albion sleeps by the Euphrates (82:18) on a rock (84:7) in Babylon (82:18), a landscape revealing his imaginative death. But Los works outside the gate at his furnace, despite the "Spindle of destruction" (84:30) whirling overhead, to give Hand a body so that the unimaginative may be cast out once and for all. We are reminded that the furnace and wheel are still separate—the "Male is a Furnace of beryll, the Female is a golden Loom" (90:27)—and, like Hand in the furnace, the "Starry round" (88:2) is revealed for what it is, the false body of the "Dragon" Antichrist (89:53), serpent Satan. At the same time, however, Los glimpses their potential unity in his vision of the still imprisoned Jerusalem as the Cherubim, a temple-body with "Gates of precious stones" (88:23). Her "Form is lovely mild, / Wingd with Six Wings," and her bright "forehead / Reflects Eternity" (86:1-15). More important, Los sees in her "translucent" body her own landscape, "the river of life . . . the New Jerusalem descending out of Heaven in Flames," clear as the "rainbow" (86:18-23). Here is a remembrance of promise in her rainbow that the wheel and the furnace will be united in Jerusalem, who will return to Albion.
This perspective opens out in the next transformation as Albion becomes the dreamer beside a river, renamed the Thames (89:20, 90:47), on a rock, renamed Golgotha or the Sepulchre of Luvah-Jesus (92:26). His landscape now reveals the imminence of his awakening and resurrection; the body of imagination, the Lamb of God, will burst open the sepulchre and rend the veil in Albion's "triple Female Tabernacle" of "Moral Law" (88:19). Accordingly, Los manages to give Hand a body, "Satan" the "Body of mortal "Womb" (87:14). The Covering Cherub, moreover, reflects Moab, his "Loins inclose Babylon on a "Head, dark, deadly" whose 'Train incloses a river, renamed the Thames (89:20, 90:47), on a rock, renamed the Temple-City-body of Jerusalem, as in Revelation (21.2-3,22-23). The body now becomes its own scene, its landscape "From Babylon to Rome/.../the World of Generation & Death" (89:48-49). Hence, the Covering Cherub can no longer be mistaken for anything other than a "majestic Image / Of Selfhood, Body put off, the Antichrist" (89:9-10). So ends his masquerade.

This apocalyptic consolidation of error clears the way for the resurrection of the true body. The furnace and wheels of the Cherubim are at last united in the final transformation of Jerusalem (94:1-99:5), and together they return from exile, becoming the temple-city-body of Jerusalem, as in Revelation (21.2-3,22-23). The body now becomes its own scene, the scene its body. Albion's rock (95:1) is renamed an "immortal Tomb" of "Resurrection" (94:1, 98:20), and the ocean beside him renamed a river of Paradise (94:6, 98:25). In deathly slumber he moves "Beneath the Furnaces & the starry wheels" (94:2). He has made attempts to move before, getting only as far as the East gate of his temple-city, but now as the Four Zoas rise into "Albion's Bosom" (96:42), he awakes from death and walks in "flames, Loud thundering with broad flashes of lightning" (cf. Ezek. 1.13-14; Enoch 14.12; Rev. 4.5), "Speaking the Words of Eternity in Human Forms" like a prophet (95:5-9). He takes the living "Bow" of the starry wheels, which Erin redeemed, making it into a bow that fires "arrows of flaming gold," and, one with Los-Jesus, throws himself into the "Furnaces of affliction" (96:35) uniting wheel and furnace. These Contraries in turn become "Fountains of Living Waters flowing from the Humanity Divine" (96:37) into the temple-city-body of "Golgonooza" (98:55), the Four Living Creatures, Choirs of Humanity Divine" (98:24). Thus the furnace and the wheels, for the first time in Jerusalem, are recalled from exile. Albion's landscape and vision are unified; its emblem is his embrace of Jerusalem, together forming a flame-embellished bow, which, with its "sight thoughts" and circumference are no longer separate because of the "rejoicing in Unity / In the Four Senses" of the Cherubim and "in the Outline the Circumference & Form, for ever / In Forgiveness of Sins" (98:21-23), which is the only true Christianity, the religion of Jesus or Imagination. This is Albion's ultimate liberation from the idolatry of the deceitful mortal body, his freedom from the mind's male and female errors, worship of an abstract paternal God or maternal Nature.

In Albion's resurrected body, the new Jerusalem, there is no accuser causing fear and doubt because there is no self-division. Here, in Blake's last Cherubim transformation of his prophecy, the "Hand of Man," like that of the man in linen commanded to go between the wheels of the Cherubim and gather coals to scatter over the city in a prophetic gesture (Ezek. 10.2), "Forbrasp firm between the Male & Female Loves" (97:15), between the furnace of beryl and the wheels of the loom. Blake has not arrived at ecstasy, but he has reached out with his firm engraver's hand and achieved the prophetic end of rebuilding a people and a city by transformations of Ezekiel's Cherubim, whose wings weave forgiveness of oneself as well as others. Its body is for Blake a symbol of the unity of man and his imagination of inside and outside, the visual and the verbal; but it is also a body in the most literal sense—Jerusalem itself.


2 "Ezekiel's Wheels" is also known as "Ezekiel's Vision of the Whirlwind." The change in Blake's life recorded in his letter-poem is also registered by the contrast between this painting of the wheels and his earlier depiction of Ezekiel's wheels in an illustration to the ninth night of Edward Young's Night Thoughts (c. 1795), repro. by Geoffrey Keynes in Illustrations to Young's Night Thoughts (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1927), no. 26, p. 56, as mathematical mysteries intimidating a benighted worshipper on the shores of the sea of chaos, a far cry from the ecstatic visionary of the later picture. "The Four and Twenty Elders" is repro. by Darrell Figgis in The Paintings of William Blake (London: E. Benn, 1925), pl. 4.


4 That Blake understands the Covering Cherub as the demonic parody of Ezekiel's Cherubim is evident in his painting of him as a winged being, surrounded by flames, who, posed in a similar gesture as the fourfold man. In this picture of the Covering Cherub, commonly known as "Satan in His Original Glory" (repro. in Figgis, pl. 6), Blake's Bible Illustrations (Paris: Trianon Press, 1969), pl. 83), alludes to the classical winged "Victory" (Andrew Wilson, "Blake and the Antiquite," The Classical Tradition, British Museum Yearbook I [London: British Museum Publications, 1976], p. 188), the visionary eyes of the spirit-filled wheels are changed to fallen
stars, dying remnants of the zodiacal wheel of fate. The body's fragmentation is symbolized by the small, faceless, contracted beings hunched in fear or confusion or hurling downward, as in descriptions of the Last Judgment.

Blake's identification of the Cherubim here with the fourfold creatures of Ezekiel (c. 1820), who has discovered another version completing Jerusalem: "every Man stood fourfold, each Four Faces had... the Horsos Fourfold" (98:12-13).

Christian orthodoxy, of course, interprets the Cherubim in Eden as a guard keeping man out, but Blake was not alone in his heterodox position. John Parkhurst, a Hebrew scholar and contemporary of Blake's, comments in his widely respected An Hebrew and English Lexicon... 4th ed. (London: for G. G. and J. Robinson, 1799), that the Cherubim was "undoubtedly" placed at the gate of Eden "not to hinder, but to enable man, to pass through it" (p. 343).

This book may have prompted Blake's renewed interest in the ambiguous Genesis passage, for when Blake was studying Hebrew at Felpham (c. 1806) he undoubtly used this text, as it was the best known of its time, and William Hayley owned the fourfold edition (A. N. L. Munby, ed., Sale Catalogue of Libraries of Eminent Personae [London: Mansell, 1971], II, 136).


9 Parkhurst shares this view, p. 341.


13 See Harold Bloom's "Commentary," E834-44, and Randel Helems, "Ezekiel and Blake's Jerusalem," Studies in Humanistic, 13 (1974), 133-40. Joanne Witke, Jerusalem: A Synoptic Poem, Comparative Literature, 22 (1970), shows that Blake's four chapters are addressed to what were traditionally conceived to be the respective audiences of the four gospels. But she goes further and makes the largely unsubstantiated claim that "just as each of the evangelists' gospels carries the image of one of the apocalyptic animals, so each of Blake's four chapters bears a particular stamp of one of these creatures." (p. 275). Blake was very likely aware, as she notes, of S. Irenaeus' comment--"Fourfold, Christ's Gospels, fourfold the Cherubim whereon he sitteth" (p. 267, n. 6)--but Blake would have viewed this as a structural criticism of the gospels. The body of Christ is not separate from the chariot-throne in Jerusalem: It is the Cherubim body itself, as in Ezekiel's Wheels. Blake's prophecy is not a vehicle for vision; it is vision incarnate, the body of Los-Jesus.

Blake's playing the present fallen landscape off the past backdrop of the beginning in Eden, however, does not constitute a transformation. I suggest that Jerusalem consists of twenty-eight transformations and tentatively submit the following table, which in the second chapter assumes Jerusalem's order, though my argument is not changed by Blake's alternate arrangement in Kenyon's edition (bracketed numbers) and Chapter 1--(1) Proem; (2) 4:1-7:8; (3) 7:9-50; (4) 7:51-9:31; (5) 9:32-12:24; (6) 12:25-15:55; (7) 15:56-16:69; (8) 17:1-19:47; (9) 20:1-25:16; Chapter 2--(1) Proem; (2) 35 [39]:12-42:81; (5) 43[29]:1-46[32]:16; (6) 47:1-50:30. Chapter 3--(1) Proem; (2) 53:1-55:69; (3) 56:1-59:55; (4) 60:1-63:25; (5) 64:26-66:15; (6) 67:1-70:27; (7) 71:4-72:27; Chapter 4--(1) Proem; (2) 78:1-80:56; (3) 80:57-82:94; (4) 87:1-93:27; (5) 94:1-99:55. The number twenty-eight, which was to be the original number of chapters of Jerusalem (E7) and which Blake derives from the vision of the Cherubim and the four beasts of John's reworking of Ezekiel's vision, signifying wholeness and redemption, is tempting as the total number of transformations. Twenty-eight cities rise up to restore Albion's altars (destroyers of the body) in the Druid temple of England (42:76-77), and the union of the sixteen sons of Jerusalem and the twelve sons of Albion (soul and body) Blake does not, however, always indicate his rhetorical subunits clearly enough to establish this figure indisputably as the total number of transformations. Hence, I fear the number is somewhat arbitrary at best, an idol at worst.

These transformations, as I have provisionally indicated them (excluding proems), correspond roughly to the "scenes" of what Roger Easson terms, in "Blake and His Reader in Jerusalem," Blake's Sublime Allegory, ed. Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. [Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1973]), the "verbal drama" (p. 317). Because the Blakean landscape rather than obscures the landscape or necessary context of Albion's vision, Easson's association of Jerusalem with the drama, and Vala with the narrative of the poems (p. 319), parallels the split between the verbal drama and the wheels and the psyche (the rock, river, and temple-city) central to my analysis. In the visionary body of the Cherubim, drama and narrative are unified, as is Jerusalem-Vala in Albion.


16 On Blake's derivation of "Hand" from the Hunt brothers' editors' signature, and Randel Helems, Against Desire, 3rd ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 450-61; for Parkhurst's drawing, see the plate between pp. 340-41 of Calvert's Great Dictionary of the Holy Bible, ed. L. Taylor (London 1800; rpt. Frederic, 1913), III, p. 5. E. J. Rose notes that on Plate 26 "Hand resembles the figure of Satan in the Illustrations to Job" ("Blake's Hand: Symbol and Design in Jerusalem," Tanen Studies in Literature and Language, 6 [1964], 49). The number symbolism evident in Blake's opposition of the threefold Hand to the fourfold Cherubim is structurally, as well as thematically, significant. He tells us in Milton that "The Sexual is Threefold: the Human is Fourfold" (4:5), associating three with generation and death, four with imagination and the "Human Form Divine." Thus, the numbers four and three and their derivatives, sixteen and twenty-eight, nine and twenty-seven, come to symbolize in Jerusalem, respectively, imaginative and fallen forms, Christ and Satan, the Hebrew four-headed Cherubim and the fourfold. In this context, as W. J. T. Mitchell concludes, Blake "reverses the traditional numerological preference for heavenly triads to earthly tetrads" (p. 203).

Such a reversal misleads G. M. Harper, "The Divine Tetrad in Blake's Jerusalem," William Blake, ed. Rosenfeld, and Jane McCluskey, "Blake's Demonic Triad," Wordworth Circle, 8 (Spring 1977), to conclude that Blake was "operating chiefly in the Neo-Pythagorean tradition" (Harper, p. 254) because his "divinity is tetramorph rather than trimorphal" (p. 240), the number three being a symbol of form without substance (McCulley, p. 172). Harper specifically discounts, therefore, Blake's debt to Ezekiel (p. 241), while Milton Percival, William Blake's Circle of Destiny, and Désirée Hirst, Hidden Hekhshe, respectively, note...
possible sources in the Kabbalah (p. 294, nn. 8, 26) and the Anima of Paracelsus (p. 68).

Yet Blake's source is clearly Ezekiel's Cherubim vision, the fourfold man, who is Jesus the true God, form of the fourth in the fiery furnace, opposed to the abstract, tyrannously dogmatic trinitarian God. In this view Blake was very likely influenced by Parkhurst's interpretation of the Cherubim, which he contrasts to the "material Trinity of Nature" (italics his) "adored" by the "heathen" (p. 342). The very body of Blake's prophecy reflects this opposition, as Stuart Curran observes in "The Structures of Jerusalem" (Blake's Sublime Allegory): "at the end of each of Jerusalem's four chapters Christ the Eternal is invoked. But if we divide the poem into three parts, we find ourselves confronting climactic symbols of the fallen state" (p. 334), a structure recapitulated in each chapter.

17 Blake has in mind the "Cherubim of cunning work" on the veil of the Temple (Ex. 26.1; II Chron. 3.14), "emblems" that Parkhurst claims the Jews felt "to be foundation, root, heart, and marrow of the whole Tabernacle" (p. 356; italics his). Ansari, "Blake and the Kabbalah," notes the analogue of this in the idea of the cosmic "curtain," described in the Book of Enoch, "on which is inscribed the pre-existing reality of forms and images of every event and passion" (p. 220).

18 Ezek. 8-11, 40-48; Rev. 17, 21. See Farrer, pp. 167-68.

19 Blake develops this parody in an illustration to Dante's Purgatorio, "Beatrice addressing Dante from the Car" (c. 1825), reproduced by Martin Butlin in William Blake: Catalogue of the Tate Gallery Exhibition (London: Tate Gallery, 1978), pl. 74. The vortex of the wheels, Albert S. Roe observes, Blake's Illustrations to the Divine Comedy (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1963), are "deliberately introduced by Blake" in a departure from the text (p. 166). The wheels of Ezekiel's vision are perverted in this image of death, as is the fourfold man by the three female forms in its whirlpool. Moreover, the four beasts are ludicrously depicted. Blake's caricaturing of the Zoas goes back to an early sketch in Vala, p. 136; John E. Grant briefly discusses the larger context of such caricature in "Visions in Vala: A Consideration of Some Pictures in the Manuscript" (Blake's Sublime Allegory, pp. 198-99, n. 60).
BLAKE'S "CANTERBURY" PRINT:
THE POSTHUMOUS PILGRIMAGE
OF THE COPPERPLATE

ROBERT N. ESSICK AND MICHAEL C. YOUNG

Blake's etching-engraving, "Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims," is by far the largest plate he ever executed. His writings about the design, including a long entry on the tempera painting in A Descriptive Catalogue of 1809, two prospectuses for the plate (May, 1809 and c. 1810), and several passages in the Public Address of c. 1810, testify to the importance the artist himself placed on this work. The early history of the project, which attracted the attention and duplicitous instincts of Robert Hartley Cromek, is a well-known episode in Blake's biography. But little attention has been given to the history of the copperplate (see illustration) after Blake's death in 1827. New information has recently come to light concerning the many posthumous impressions taken from it, particularly those pulled when the plate came to America. Some of this information suggests that the plate's latter-day history, like its beginning, is in part a story of questionable business practices.

According to Henry Crabb Robinson, the "print of Chaucer's pilgrimage" belonged to Mrs. Blake in January 1828. By this he probably meant that the copperplate and impressions still in stock were part of Blake's estate that passed to his wife. After Mrs. Blake's death in 1831, the plate may have passed to Frederick Tatham (died 1878), although there is no direct record of his ownership or use of the plate. At an unknown time, probably in the 1860s or 1870s, the plate was seen in a "shop window" by John Giles, Samuel Palmer's cousin and a friend of George Richmond's, and was purchased by Giles "for the rapturous 'old song' so dear to the true Londoner of those days of amazing bargains." Giles died in 1880 and the plate was sold with his collection at Christie's in London, 4 February 1881, lot 483, described in the auction catalogue as "Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims, by W. Blake; and the engraved steel [sic] plate." The lot was purchased for £35 by the London art dealer Colnaghi who, according to a brief announcement in Notes and Queries of 1881, had "an unnamed number of impressions printed from it 'on Japanese paper' (i.e., laid India). The present firm of P. & D. Colnaghi & Co. has no records of the number of impressions taken or over how long a period the plate was used. All of these Colnaghi prints are of course in the final state and can be identified by the fact that they are on India paper laid on to thick wove and are rather flatly printed, as though the plate had not been sufficiently cleaned of old ink or not thoroughly inked for the new printing. We have been able to locate six impressions on laid India which are very probably Colnaghi restrikes. These are in the collections of Maxine S. Cronbach (Westbury, New York), Donald A. Heald (London), Mills College (Oakland, California), the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Jerome M. Norman (San Francisco), and the University of Texas (Austin). There are no doubt a good many more Colnaghi restrikes; and several impressions on wove or laid paper, including the one in the New York Public Library, may also have been pulled by that firm as part of another printing with better inking. Indeed, any impression of the final state of the plate may be a posthumous print unless there is documentary evidence to the contrary.
The copperplate next passed into the hands of the New York dealer Gabriel Wells no later than April 1940. Early in that month, William Hobart Royce, one of Wells' representatives, sold the plate to Mrs. A. Edward Newton, who presented it to her husband on their fiftieth wedding anniversary, 7 April 1940. After Newton's death, it was sold with his great book collection at Parke-Bernet, New York, on 16 April 1941, lot 150. The plate was purchased by the Philadelphia book and print dealer Charles Sessler for $2,300, plus the usual 10% agent's commission, on behalf of Charles J. Rosenbloom of Pittsburgh. But before the physical transfer of the copperplate to Rosenbloom, Sessler hired a printer to pull a new group of impressions.

According to Geoffrey Keynes in his catalogue of Blake's separate plates, Sessler had "thirty-five proofs pulled on French hand-made paper (Rives) by Ernest D. Roth under the supervision of James McBey; these were sold for $35.00 each. An impression was also printed on Chinese silk for a lamp-shade." Keynes' figure is based on information supplied by Mabel Zahn, for many years the manager of Sessler's antiquarian book and print department and something of a legendary figure among collectors. That the new owner of the plate knew about and approved of a press run of thirty-five is indicated by Rosenbloom's receipt (according to Sessler's records) of $175 on 25 June 1941, representing a five-dollar commission or permission fee for each of thirty-five prints. Keynes' figure of thirty-five impressions (discounting for a moment the one on silk) thus corresponds exactly to the number for which Rosenbloom received payment, but a census taken directly from Sessler's inventory cards indicates that in fact at least ninety-one impressions were pulled.

The printer, Roth, received payment for his work totaling $440.50 in five installments: $200 on 15 May 1941, for forty prints at $5 each; $85.50 on 28 May 1941, for nineteen prints at $4.50 each; $45 on 18 June 1941, for ten prints at $4.50 each; $90 on 2 July 1941, for eighteen prints (on silk) at $5 each; and $20 on 14 February 1942, for four prints at $5 each. All impressions for which Rosenbloom received his fee were pulled in the first group for which Roth was paid, independent of their eventual price or date of sale. Since Sessler's records indicate dates of payment, not the physical transfer of goods or time printing was completed, it is possible that the plate was delivered to Rosenbloom long before the final payment was made to Roth in February 1942. It would take an unusually patient collector to allow his agent to keep a beautiful work of art purchased at auction for as long as ten months.

Sessler's sales records of their "Canterbury Pilgrims" restrikes are summarized in the following chronological list of purchasers. The total of ninety-one impressions does not include the resale of returned prints or the one sold on consignment by an earlier purchaser. Sales for which Rosenbloom was paid a commission are indicated by an asterisk following the price for each impression.


We have been able to trace eight of the Sessler restrikes. Three are still in the possession of the original purchasers: Henry E. Gerstley, Philadelphia (purchased 2 May 1941); Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts (20 January 1943); and Wilson College, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania (13 May 1944). The impression on consignment from Park in 1967 remains in the collection of Professor Roland M. Frye, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. The print sold to the Chiswick Book Shop on 28 April 1950 was acquired by Lawrence M.
William Blake, "Chaucers Canterbury Pilgrims." Photograph of the copperplate with the negative reversed so that the image appears right way around (as in an impression from the plate). Image 30.55 (left side) to 30.65 (middle) to 30.5 (right side) x 94.9 cm.; plate 35.6 (left side) to 35.8 (right side) x 97.05 cm. Reproduced by permission of the Yale University Art Gallery. Bequest of Charles J. Rosenbloom, B.A. 1920.

Landé, who gave it to McGill University, Montreal, in 1953. Staunton P. Peck gave the impression he purchased on 25 August 1941 to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in the same year; the example given to the Princeton University Library by Miss Caroline Newton is probably one of the seven purchased by "Newton" (19 May 1941 and 12 February 1946). We have not been able to discover the original purchaser of the impression in Robert Essick's collection he acquired in 1972 from the estate of the Hollywood character actor Thomas Gomez. The impression recently bequeathed to the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, by Ruthven Todd was given to Todd by Charles Sessler in 1947. There is of course no record of this gift in Sessler’s sales accounts; the impression may have been an additional, ninety-second restrike or the one returned by "Wells" on 10 June 1941 and not resold. The present firm of Sessler’s no longer has any impressions in stock, but there are surely other restrikes still extant. Many of the original sales were to dealers—Goodspeed of Boston, Wells, Double-day Doran, Knödler, Duschnes, Parke-Bernet, and probably others—and these were no doubt sold to a variety of private customers in the 1940s. Because of the Colnaghi and Sessler reprints and sales, "Chaucers Canterbury Pilgrims" exists in more impressions than any other separate plate designed and executed by Blake.

The eighteen impressions taken on silk were fated to become ornamental curiosities. All were purchased by Warren E. Cox, a collector of and dealer in porcelains, who, soon after his purchases of 27 June 1941 and 24 April 1942, offered for sale lamps featuring "Canterbury Pilgrims" shades. The book dealer John Fleming purchased one in the 1940s for the antique dealer Philip Rosenbach for $500; he recalls that some twelve were offered at that time for the same price. That lamp has since passed into Fleming’s private collection in New York; another is owned by Charles Rosenbloom’s widow, Lucile Johnson Rosenbloom, of Pittsburgh. We have not been able to locate any further examples. The shade owned by Mrs. Rosenbloom is now rather browned and warped by the heat of the lamp; perhaps other "Canterbury" shades have been nicely toasted by excessive wattage.

Whereas most of the identifiable Colnaghi restrikes were flatly printed, the Sessler prints
were heavily inked and printed. The plate shows minimal wear and the Sessler prints are generally preferable to Colnaghi's earlier printings—probably because of better cleaning of the copper and superior presswork. Because of framing and glazing, we have been able to check for watermarks only in the Sessler impressions now owned by Robert Essick, Mount Holyoke College, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. These three show a "FRANCE" watermark in the lower right corner. This is no doubt the "French hand-made paper (Rives)" noted by Keynes. The other Sessler restrikes we have seen appear to be on the same rather soft, easily stained, but good quality wove paper; it seems likely that Roth printed all but the eighteen silk impressions on this paper manufactured by Rives.

The fact that Rosenbloom was paid a commission for only thirty-five Sessler restrikes, and that Mabel Zahn told Keynes that only that number was printed (plus one on silk), suggests that the further fifty-six prints recorded in Sessler's sales records were not authorized by the owner of the copperplate. Zahn certainly knew that more than thirty-five impressions were taken from the plate, but may have avoided telling Keynes of this in order to prevent the plate's owner from learning the truth. That Zahn told Keynes about only one impression on silk—thus accounting for the lampshade in Rosenbloom's possession—is particularly suspicious. The evidence presented by Sessler's sales records hardly constitutes legal proof of fraud, but the possibility exists that Sessler or his employees acquired a good many more impressions than Mr. Rosenbloom authorized, or was paid for, or was told about.17

In October 1973, Mr. Rosenbloom bequeathed the much travelled copperplate of "Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims" to the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut. The copper has crystallized, as is to be expected, but the plate is in good condition and shows little evidence of wear and no damage. The incised lines are thoroughly clogged with old, solidified ink, but if properly cleaned the plate could certainly yield acceptable impressions. Fortunately, the present location of the plate in a responsible university collection makes future printings unlikely and should prevent its unauthorized use in the pursuit of profit. After such a long and difficult pilgrimage, "Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims" deserves a respectable retirement.

William Blake composed his own tunes which he sang for friends. Approximately 150 years later, Pianist Mike Westbrook, who for years has been making some of the most important music in Britain, has set six Blake poems to music.

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BLAKE AND HIS CIRCLE:
A CHECKLIST OF RECENT SCHOLARSHIP

THOMAS L. MINNICK
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
DETLEF W. DÖRRBECKER

This year's issue of our annual checklist includes two modifications that we hope will increase its value to those who consult it. First, we have numbered the entries and added an index, since the organization that we adopted last year multiplies the number of sections and therefore the number of alphabets in which a reader may have to look to find a favorite author. Second, we have adopted the convention of including an asterisk (*) after items that at least one of us has not personally examined. (We have abandoned the use of the asterisk or any other symbol to indicate retrospective items.)

As always, it is a pleasure to record our gratitude to those who sent along offprints of their articles, notes, and reviews that we might not otherwise have located. Mr. Ray Thompson of Columbus, Ohio, helpfully reported on some items. And a special word of thanks is due to Professor G. E. Bentley, Jr., for his continuing advice and support.

T. L. M.

PART I
WILLIAM BLAKE

EDITIONS, TRANSLATIONS, FACSIMILES, REPRODUCTIONS


### Critical Studies


24 Bentley, G. E., Jr. "Dr. James Curry as a Patron of Blake." Notes and Queries, n.s. 27 (1980), 171-73.


27 Bindman, David. "The Dead Ardours Revisited." Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, 14 (1981), 211. [A reply to David Erdman, q. v.]


67 Hibbard, David Otis. "Blake's Metaphorical Transforming Vision and the Problem of the One and the Many." Dissertation Abstracts International, 41 (1980), 1610-A. Diss., Kent State University, 1980. [Hibbard argues that Blake's fourfold vision provides the key to his visionary solution to the traditional problem of the One and the many. This study includes a comparison of Blake's vision and Martin Buber's I-thou relationship with Erich Fromm's doctrine of visionary participation, the Christian Trinity, and Paul's notion of membership in the Body of Christ.]


82 Mann, Paul Jay. "A Preface to William Blake's The Four Zoas." Dissertation Abstracts International, 41 (1980), 2123-A-2124-A. Diss., University of California, Santa Cruz, 1980. [Mann begins with a consideration of the "status of the manuscript and the nature of manuscripts in general" and, rather than "dismissing the manuscript's apparent inability to manifest objective unity, the first chapter explores the manuscript as a representation of the fallen world." Chapter Two investigates several theories of reading "in the light of the apocalyptic project of The Four Zoas, in order to reveal more clearly the reader's role in the production of meaning." The third and final chapter "explores the nature of prophecy" and takes the Four Zoas and Albion as "paradigms" of reading.]


84 McMahan, Catherine Louise. "Creation Unfinished: Text and Structure in William Blake's Jerusalem." Dissertation Abstracts International, 41 (1980), 2616-A. Diss., The University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee, 1979. ["This close reading of Jerusalem explores two propositions. First, the poem's basic structure is a spiral, shaped by parallels and contrasts, and proceeding by dialectic. . . . Second, Jerusalem is designed to be read as what Roland Barthes calls a 'text': a form generated only by reader and work together." ]


111 Todd, Ruthven. "'Poisonous Blues,' and Other Pigments." Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, 14 (1980), 31-34.

112 Vaughan, Frank Andrew. "Blake's Illustrations to the Poetry of Thomas Gray: A Movement toward Eternity." Dissertation Abstracts International, 41 (1981), 4049-A. Diss. University of California at Riverside, 1980. [Vaughan argues that each series of designs within the set of 116 designs Blake made for Gray's poems "is an independent portion of a movement which first explores the reasons for the fall, next articulates the errors of Generation, and, finally, announces the qualities of mind necessary for a reascension. . . ."]


PART II

BLAKE'S CIRCLE

William Cowper


Erasmus Darwin

120 Hassler, Donald M. "Byron and Erasmus Darwin," Ball State University Forum, 20 (1979), 75-80.

John Flaxman


124 Irwin, David. John Flaxman 1755-1826: Sculptor, Illustrator, Designer. London: Studio Vista/Christie's, 1979. [With Bindman's exhibition handbook, for a long time to come this will probably be the standard monograph on the artist.]
See also item 10, Hofmann, Werner, ed.; and item 153, Byron, Arthur, et al.

Henry Fuseli
125* Garlick, Kenneth J. Eighteenth-Century Master Drawings from the Ashmolean. [exhb. cat.] Oxford: International Exhibitions Foundation, 1979. [Fuseli was among the artists represented in this traveling exhibition.]
126 Hock, Erich. "Klopstocks Ode 'Verhängnisse' und ihre Umdichtung durch Johann Heinrich Füssli." Euphorion, 73 (1979), 219-226. [Fuseli's so-called "Gaben Gottes" ode was modeled after Klopstock's poem.]

See also item 10, Hofmann, Werner, ed.

William Hamilton
See also item 130, Ravenhall, Mary Dennis.

William Hayley

Thomas Holcroft


Friedrich Klopstock

John Caspar Lavater

Samuel Palmer

George Romney
143* Cubbon, A. M. "The Romney Portraits of the Taunton Family." Journal of the Mansfield Museum,
**PART III**

**WORKS OF RELATED INTEREST**


151 Auden, Wystan Hugh. The Prophets and the Devil. *Antaeus*, no. 42 (Summer, 1981). [This book of aphorisms and reflections written by Auden in 1939 makes up this entire issue of *Antaeus* and is printed in full for the first time. Allusions to Blake appear throughout, including in the title.]


156 Farnsworth, Rodney. "Permanence and Change: Water Images and Symbols in Western European Poetry and Painting, 1770-1840." *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 41 (1980), 1050-A. [This study, "the first interdisciplinary study of the water cycle and its four quarters (springs, rivers, seas, clouds/rain)," focuses on Romantic poetry and painting in Germany (Goethe, Lenau, Caspar David Friedrich, Joseph Anton Koch), England (Byron, Shelley, Constable, Turner), and France (Rousseau, Victor Hugo, Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg).]


164 Higonnet, Margaret R. *Bachelard and the Romantic Imagination.* *Comparative Literature*, 33 (1981), 18-37. [Mentions Blake as one of Bachelard's Romantic sources.]


171* Nelke, Laura, and Richard W. Hutton. Alderman Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery. [exhb. cat.] Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago, David and Alfred Smart Gallery, 1978. [On show were engravings after the paintings of Romney, Opie, Northcote, Stothard, and Barry, amongst others.]


177 Spivey, Ted R., ed. W. B. Yeats: The Occult And Philosophical Backgrounds. Studies in the Literary Imagination, 14 (1981), whole issue. [This issue includes nine essays on Yeats's sources, with references to Blake throughout.]


180 Stockard, Olivia Tate. "Poetic Picture, Painted Poetry: A Study of Restoration Advice-to-a-Painter Poems." dissertation Abstracts International, 41 (1980), 684-A. Diss., New York University, 1980. ["The Restoration Advices to Painters are infrequently studied.... Graphic caricature was rare when the Advices flourished in the 1660's, and the form seems to have satisfied a need to expose distortions in the political art of the period. This fortuitous concurrence of form and historical moment accounts for the painter poem's extreme but short-lived popularity."]


PART IV
REVIEWS OF WORKS CITED IN PREVIOUS CHECKLISTS


1979; by Herbert H. Wagner, Conntster Zeitung, 17 May 1979 (also published in the Esslinger Zeitung, in the Dusseldorf Handelblatt, 18 May 1979, and in various other papers); by A. zum Winkel, Ostheisterer Anzeiger, 28 April 1979; in the New Statesman & Nation, 4 May 1979; in Der Spiegel, 16 April 1979.


200 Gage, John, ed. Zwanzig Jahrhunderte Englische Malerei. [exhb. cat.] Reviewed by Graham Dry, Burlington Magazine, 122 (1980), 87-88 (see ib., 221, for a review of the symposium held in connection with the exhibition by the same author); by Hans Joachim Muller, Die Zeit, 30 November 1979; by Eberhard Straub, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 1 December 1979 [and, no doubt, in many other German newspapers].


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At first blush, B. H. Fairchild's subject seems promising. Blake once referred to poetry, painting, and music as "the three Powers in Man of conversing with Paradise which the flood did not Sweep away"; his poems, as Fairchild demonstrates, employ a good deal of musical imagery; and one contemporary witness, John Thomas Smith, reports that "his ear was so good, that his tunes were sometimes most singularly beautiful, and were noted down by musical professors." But the tunes, unlike the words and the engravings, do not survive, and their absence cripples Fairchild's work. Without a single note of Blake's music, he must fall back on several kinds of speculation, none of them entirely convincing. Among topics touched on here are: the influence of Blake's lost melodies on the meter and matter of the Songs of Innocence and of Experience, the influence of music by other composers on Blake's poetry, the alleged "originality" of Blake's "preference for melody and distrust of harmony" (p. 9), the "musical" scansion of Blake's later poetry, the "orchestration" of the musical imagery in The Four Zoas, and (inevitably) the nature of meaning in music, on which Fairchild takes a highly Jungian position.

Chapter Three, published five years ago in Blake Studies, begins by accepting unquestioningly Allan Cunningham's account of Blake's creative method in the Songs: "As he drew the figure he meditated the song which was to accompany it, and the music to which the verse was sung, was the offspring too of the same moment." But this account is surely a fantasy; without downgrading Blake's genius and versatility, one may reasonably question his or anyone's ability to create three kinds of art simultaneously. Nonetheless, Fairchild quotes Cunningham and immediately concludes that "the simultaneous composition of words and music... allowed the rhythms of these lyrics to survive despite the loss of melody" (p. 30). Then, after several pages of slippery Jungian theorizing, leading to the conclusion that "we can at least approximate within broad limits a verbal description for the felt significance of certain poetic rhythms" (p. 36), he offers some perfectly ordinary scansion of some well-known Songs. Granted, the rhythms of these songs are strong, and it has long been common to speak of their "incantatory qualities." But to leap from that feature of their form to the unqualified claim that "a particular number of recurrences of metrical stress, syntactical features, or rhetorical elements tends to evoke in us particular preverbal attitudes" (p. 41, emphasis mine) is to harden one's own subjective response into insupportable dogma. Would all readers, even all readers of Blake, agree that "two- and three-stress lines suggest completeness, but because dichotomy furnishes our earliest vision of complexity, the two-stress line often suggests a wholeness whose excessive simplicity is likely to provoke our distrust" (p. 41)? If I understand Fairchild's argument correctly, the claim
here is that Blake's strong, simple rhythms, because they may strike us as primitive (hence, by a Jungian
leap, "preverbal"), ultimately function ironically, and would so function regardless of the meaning of
the words in the poem. But Blake did not invent his rhythms out of thin air; he drew many of the patterns,
as Fairchild elsewhere acknowledges, from Wesleyan hymns, where there is surely no ironic intent. A
page later, a similar observation about rhyme-schemes leads to a similarly dogmatic claim: "In Imagination
and Experience, the simple and frequent resolution of couplet rhyme enclosing short stress-sequences tends
to evoke a feeling of relative complexity" (p. 42).

For Fairchild, perhaps, but for any reader? And
could this claim be extended beyond Blake? Would
Fairchild want to claim that Shenstone's Elegies,
thanks to their "alternating rhyme," are more complex
than Pope's couplets? The lesson of this chapter is
twofold: (1) there is always a danger in separating
the formal features of any poem permanently from the
lexical features of its meaning, especially when that
separation leads to dogmatic claims that a particular
rhythm always produces a particular response; (2) the
kinds of analysis one can perform on a sonnet which
has both words and melody cannot be adequately
performed on words alone, even when we know that the
words once had a melody.

In his first chapter, drawing on scholarship
by Martha England and others, Fairchild assembles
some useful lore about serious and popular music
Blake might have heard in Vauxhall Gardens and
elsewhere. But the absence of really solid evidence
makes conclusions from this evidence uncertain:
Smith reports that Blake was "entirely unacquainted
with the science of music," and Fairchild repeatedly
speaks of his "intuitive" skills; there is no
evidence that he could either read or write music.
So when Fairchild quotes the "Nuptial Song" from
Night the First of The Four Zoas, notes its verbal
semblances to Milton's poem "At a Solemn Music,"
demonstrates the dependence of the libretto for
Handel's Messiah on the same Milton poem, and
concludes with the "conjecture" that Blake "is
hearing Handel through Handel" (p. 68), it is not
clear what this conjecture, even if correct, tells
us about Blake's poem. And the larger claim that
"The Four Zoas [is] an imitation, albeit experimental,
of Handelian oratorio" (p. 75), unless meant only
in the most impressionistic way, seems doubtful in
the face of Blake's ignorance of compositional
technique and his professed distaste for harmony and
counterpoint, an opinion otherwise emphasized by
Fairchild. Nor is our faith in Fairchild's judgment
strengthened by his own mistakes in musical
terminology: rondo form is not simply a b a, as
alleged on p. 49, and the participle "doubling,"
employed by Blake in The Four Zoas, has nothing to
do with variations and embellishments (see p. 67).

But these minor slips pale in comparison with
Fairchild's really misleading account of British
aesthetics in the later eighteenth century. The
author concedes that his "sampling of British
aesthetics contemporary with Blake," a sampling which
looks suspiciously like a sequence of file-card
quotations, "is in no way intended to suggest an
overall consistency or agreement among the theorists"
(p. 13), but inevitably that is the impression the
sampling creates. The assertion that "Blake may have
been alone in his theoretical rejection of the
harmonic and nonlinear (p. 14) will not stand up.
Daniel Webb, for example, whose Observations on
the Correspondence between Poetry and Music (1769)
is among the treatises Fairchild cites, holds opinions
quite similar to Blake's. He advocates a poetry
"measured by sentiment, and flowing in ever new yet
musical proportions" (p. 113), as Blake, in the
preface to Jerusalem, would claim to have "produced
a variety in every line, both of cadences & number
of syllables" (see Fairchild, p. 15). Like Blake
twenty-five years later, Webb objects to the
regularity of couplets and of the ancient hexameters,
comparing them to musical counterpoint, to which he
also objects, like Blake preferring unadorned melody:
"Were the counterpoint to take entire possession of
our music, we should lose every ideal of its original
destination, and the sole object of the art would be
to flatter the ear" (p. 119). So Blake's coupling
of "paltry Rhymes" and "paltry Harmonies" in Milton
was not a new idea. Fairchild speaks of the remark­
able similarities between the musical ideas of
Rousseau and Blake" (p. 26), but I fail to see why
those similarities should seem surprising. Rousseau's
ideas about music, despite objections by a number of
composers, were taking hold in the literary world:
the myth of the origin of music and poetry in a
primitive lyrical outcry, shared by Rousseau, Herder,
and a number of English theorists, allowed such
poets as Blake to justify their ignorance of harmony
and counterpoint, and to seek analogies with music
based on sentiment, not on technique.

But if Blake was not as original in his ideas
about music as Fairchild claims, he went further than
most poets in trying to put his ideas into practice,
particularly in seeking metrical flexibility in his
later works. Fairchild believes that Blake was
influenced by Joshua Steele's prosodic theory, which
equates musical and poetic rhythm, and he may have
been. But as John Hollander and others have shown,
any scan of a poem using musical notation is
bound to be debatable, since musical rhythm is in
fact far more exact than poetic rhythm. Some of
Fairchild's musical scalps show an interesting
ear, but as he properly points out, "time-scan-
scans loses as many of the subtleties of the apoken
poem as does accentual scan" (p. 57), and the
example that precedes this disclaimer does not ring true to
my ears. In the later poems, with their long,
flexible lines, Blake may have had a precise musical
or "quantitative" scan in mind, but the words
alone are an insufficient guide to his rhythmical
intent, if indeed it was so precise. Like other
poems, these will be read aloud differently by
different readers, and the choices between scalps
readers will make will have something to do with
their sense of Blake's meaning.

To his credit, Fairchild recognizes that the
use of musical notation for scansion is an arbitrary
and subjective procedure. Unfortunately, he seems
less aware that the use of musical terms as meta-
phorical and impressionistic descriptions of poetry
is equally subjective. On page 9 he quotes
approvingly some cautionary statements and definitions by Steven Scher and John Hollander, but in the same paragraph, he lapses into the looseness of terminology they deplore: "I use 'orchestration' in the imitative sense, meaning that Blake uses musical imagery and poetic sound as a way of under-scoring a particular dramatic event, theme, emotion, or atmospheric effect, thus loosely imitating the manner in which musical orchestration produces colors that heighten the intended musical effect." Loosely indeed! Chapter Four goes on to develop at length the notion that musical imagery "orchestrates the most significant dramatic events" of The Four Zoas, by which I take it Fairchild means that musical language appears at important points in that poem. But why is it necessary to introduce the concept of "orchestration," an advanced compositional technique, to describe the poetic procedures of a man untutored in composition? If there were, in the words of Scher's definition, "a substantial analogy to... and an actual influence from the art of music," Fairchild would have to validate his notion of The Four Zoas as oratorio by a technical account of its structure; he would also have to establish that Blake knew and understood Handel's technique. In fact, his argument is much weaker. He cites, for example, these apocalyptic lines:

Then fell the fires of Eternity with loud & shrill
Sound of Loud Trumpet thundering along from heaven to heaven
A mighty sound articulate: "Awake ye dead & come
To Judgment from the four winds Awake & Come away"

(IX, 117:10-13)

and suggests an influence from the vaguely similar bass aria in Handel's Messiah ("The trump shall sound"), overlooking the closer and more obvious influence of Dryden's Song for St. Cecilia's Day, 1687. And this detail may stand as an example of the problem in Fairchild's method: to the extent that there are precedents for Blake's late poetry, those precedents are finally poetic; if Blake meant the poems to be "musical" (as in some sense he surely did), he imitated his own notions about music, not the advanced techniques of such composers as Handel; when he wished to employ musical terminology, he drew quite naturally on Milton and Dryden, not on treatises on composition. So he is not finally as fruitful a subject for the study of interactions between music and poetry as, say, Machaut, who was both a skilled composer and a skilled poet, and who made innovations in the technique of one art by drawing on the technique of the other.

But studies of relations between musical and poetic technique require a detailed knowledge of musical technique—something few poets and fewer critics have had since Blake's time. Fairchild takes a different, more metaphorical tack, and persuades himself of its validity by espousing the following theory of musical meaning:

Music does seem to communicate meaningfully, whether it expresses the composer's spiritual state or signifies precise meanings through symbols. And it communicates by avatarizing certain preverbal, premusical experiences, whether those experiences are part of the Jungian racial unconsciousness or fragments of our own experiences that have been submerged in the individual unconscious. (p. 33)

These two sentences lump together at least four separate accounts of musical meaning, alternate theories now nicely discriminated in Peter Kivy's Problems in Aesthetics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980). Worse yet, Fairchild attempts to support this theory by misrepresenting one of our most precise thinkers about music, the composer Roger Sessions. Fairchild cites a passage in which Sessions locates the ultimate origin of musical meaning "in the inner gestures which embody our deepest and most intimate responses," then leaps to the claim that Sessions "apparently believes that the nature of [musical] meaning is archetypal" (p. 33). But when Sessions directly addresses the vexed question of meaning in music, his account is hardly metaphysical; indeed, the following passage from The Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950) is distinguished by its clear-headed precision. Sessions outlines two kinds of 'association' by which music can acquire meaning:

The music may be brought into association with words or dramatic gestures, and these elements will give it meaning... [Or] when there is nothing of a not strictly musical nature to contribute this element of association, it must be supplied from within the music itself. The music must, to state it cautiously, supply some element of repetition. (p. 63)

That element of repetition might be rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, modal, tonal, serial, even textural, but its repetition will be in any of those cases a principle of structure. Poetry, even poetry as chaotic as some of Blake's late work, also thrives on repetition; indeed, Fairchild lists a number of times with striking patterns of assonance and alliteration. For me, Blake's musicality lies in those patterns, not in the "avatarizing [of] preverbal experiences."

One last observation: this is a hardback book from a university press containing 92 pages of text, including a 17-page chapter already in print. Problems in its organization, not least the tendency to quote the same primary and secondary passages several times, suggest that Fairchild expanded his article to book-length, then excised some of his expansion, bringing the manuscript back toward a length more appropriate for publication as an article. I am speculating, of course, and the story of the making of this little book may be different. In any case, its publication in the present format suggests a problem many scholars now confront: the reluctance of journals to print long essays. Increasingly, one must either write a 25-page article or a 200-page book; essays of intermediate size, like this one, are so rarely accepted by journals that authors understandably seek to bring them out as books. But in this case, there are so many problems that I wonder whether the press, the author, or the scholarly community is well served by publication in hardback.

Blake died singing: but there have been few attempts to celebrate his genius musically, by comparison with the large number of illustrated commentaries and facsimile editions now available. Mike Westbrook's *Bright as Fire* is a new album of jazz settings of Blake's poetry, and it earns its title with Blakean vigor and a rare Blakean sense of satirical fun.

The first two tracks each open with a piano solo, hymnlike and slightly portentous in the manner of Alan Price, but the lines from *Jerusalem* (Plate 27:19-34, 103-06, and Plate 86:1-10) are delivered by Phil Minton with ecstatic conviction. Despite the inevitable children's choir, the Blake we hear is no grade-school saint but a full-blooded proletarian artist. Alan Sinclair's tuba in "The fields from Islington to Marybone" makes Track 1 rather bass-heavy, but "I see thy Form" is good, with an inspired trumpet entry at "From thy white shoulders."

Track 3, a powerful setting of "London," opens with ghastly screams on saxophone and clarinet. A lonely lament on saxophone (which is used throughout rather as Vaughan Williams used it in *Job: A Masque for Dancing*, suggesting the whining hypocrisies of Job's comforters) then introduces the song itself, delivered in tones of bitter despair by Kate Westbrook, whose voice has the riveting huskiness of Lotte Lenya's--it is worth noting that Mike Westbrook's band came to Blake by way of Brecht and Kurt Weill. Further lamentations on saxophone, gradually gibbering into incoherence, conclude the track, the most original on the album. After the intensity of "London," "A Poison Tree" is played for sheer fun as a diabolic tango. Alan Wakeman's tenor sax growls menacingly; Kate Westbrook's hoydenish diction is just right for the exaggerated malice of this poem. The tango rhythm accelerates to a contemptuous closing flourish.

"Holy Thursday" (the one from *Experience*) is the longest track on the album. The poem itself is sung to a simple accompaniment of piano and cello, but there is a long and highly inventive jazz epilogue. Clarinet, bass and drums are joined by saxophones and tenor horn, playing lamenting, wailing chords, then the trumpet stutters mockingly, caricaturing the smug "philanthropy" affected by the "wise guardians of the poor." Chris Biscoe's saxophone imitates a pathetic, leaden-footed dance to the choppy accompaniment of cello and bass.

This mood of hopelessness is dispelled by the opening of the last setting, based on an extract from *America* and one from *The Four Zoas*. It begins with a Hebraic-sounding summons on tenor horn; Phil Minton sings, unaccompanied for the first four lines, "Let the slave, grinding at the mill, run out into the street . . . ." His reassuringly cockney voice is joined (at "his chains are loose") by the band, which crescendoes to a startling and effective key-change at "The Sun has left his blackness." The great affirmation, "For everything that lives is holy," is the climax of this last track; but before the final fade-out there is an impassioned reading (by Mike Westbrook) of "What is the price of Experience?" from *The Four Zoas*, with ostinato accompaniment by piano, horn and saxophones.
Adrian Mitchell chose the texts, and his emphasis on Experience and the prophetic books reflects what is usually thought of as modern taste in Blake. The music was originally composed at Adrian Mitchell's request for his Pyger (1971), "a stage show in celebration of the life and works of William Blake," and Mitchell writes that what had impressed him about Mike Westbrook's music was its combination of "earthiness and fire." These qualities, with much bold and inventive musicianship, are strongly apparent in this valuable addition to Blake discography.

A. H. Palmer confirms that the Macbeth music in question was that published first in 1770, claiming to be Boyce's revision of the score which Matthew Locke composed for D'Avenant's version of the play. This music, which held the stage until 1875, was in fact composed in 1702 by Richard Leveridge. The following melodramatic lines would seem to suit the occasion upon which Palmer and his friends performed them:

Crimes follow'ing crimes on horror wait
The worst of creatures faster propagate
Many more murders must this one ensure
As if in death were propagation too
He shall he will he must spill much more blood
And become worse to make his title good.

When we try to identify the "ancient music" which provided a more thoughtful contrast to "Locke" and Tom Moore, we might do well to remember that, in the early nineteenth Century, the phrase "ancient music" would have suggested the "Concerts of Ancient Music" given under Royal patronage. The definition of "Ancient" in this context was "no music less than twenty years old," but the repertory was primarily Handelian, although works by the older English composers were also performed. In the light of this it is interesting to find this reference in a letter of 5 June 1836 from Palmer to Richmond:

Then vow you'll not stand it; but get out your Handel;
and a kind friend will call in and give you some scandal.

There is one firm clue concerning the musical repertory of "The Ancients." In his memorial essay on Francis Finch, Palmer writes,

The writer has felt more pleasure in sitting by his pianoforte, listening to fragments of of Tallis, Croft, or Purcell than from many displays of concerted music.

Given this, we may attempt to discover the extent to which music by these composers would have been available in the 1820s.

At this point, it should be noted that, apart from a few pieces printed in such collections as Stafford Smith's Musica Antiqua, Palmer and his friends would have had no access to Dowland, Campion and the earlier English composers whose printed works have a poor rate of survival and whose notation would have presented considerable difficulties.

A surprising quantity of Purcell's vocal music would have been obtainable; a "third edition" formed from unsold sheets of earlier editions of Orpheus Britannicus had appeared in 1721. A Collection of Songs, taken from Orpheus Britannicus, was published by John Johnson in the 1790s. Benjamin Goodison published at the same time several volumes of a proposed "complete" edition. Purcell could also be found in Clarke's 1809 collection or Corfe's 1805 Beauties of Purcell, which contains a generous selection from the operas, stage music and songs. In view of Palmer's admiration for Dryden, and of the Ancients' common vision of the pastoral landscape,
we might suppose that this song from King Arthur would have found favor:

For folded flocks and Fruitful Plains
The Shepherd's and the Farmer's gains
Fair Britain all the world outvies
And Pan as in Arcadia reigns
Where pleasure mixt with profit lyes.

Croft's Musica Sacra was published in 1724. It seems unlikely, judging from the complexity of the part writing, that the Ancients would have sung the choral anthems and, while the accomplished Finch would have been able to sing the vocal line of any of the solo anthems, there would have been no instrument available for the accompaniment. Especially in view of the fact that thirty Select Anthems by Croft, with convenient pianoforte/organ accompaniments, were published in 1847, it seems likely that Finch sang these pieces to Palmer after they had left Shoreham.

Chants and hymn tunes attributed to all three composers make frequent appearances in contemporary hymn and anthem books, and these are the form in which Tallis would have been easily available to Palmer's friends. (The vogue which Tallis enjoyed in the 1840s would not have started by then, although Tallis' full services were in print and in use in the early nineteenth century.)

Boyce's Cathedral Music, with Arnold's continuation, does, however, provide three comparatively easy pieces: "I call and cry," "Hear the voice and prayer" and "All people that on earth do dwell." There is one piece of which we may be sure, as it recurs in many collections, and that is Tallis' Canon, which was used throughout the period as an evening hymn.

The idea of the evening hymn is strong, in Palmer's world. There is the painting Coming from Evening Church; there is his statement that

The smaller glories of Heaven might be tried--hymns sung amongst the hills of Paradise at eventide.

and there is also the poem,

With pipe and rural chaunt along,
The Shepherds wind their homeward way,
And with melodious even song,
Lull to soft rest the weary day...
The **Evening Hymn** in a contemporary hymnbook.

For I though base believe that Thou for me
Hast better things prepared than village gardens be:

By streams of life, and th'ever blooming tree,
To walk, and sing with antique saints, and see
Bliss above all, dear Lord thy face eternally.  

Thus we might imagine the Ancients singing:
Finch leading the round with his alto voice, Palmer's baritone, then Calvert and the others joining with the words,

Glory to Thee my God this night
For all the blessings of the light
Keep me o keep me King of Kings
Beneath thy own almighty wings.

---

5. Finch, p. 45.
10. For this and other information, I am indebted to Dr. Richard Luckett and Mr. Richard Andrews, both of the University of Cambridge.
12. Lister, pp. 70-71.
13. In the notes of A. H. Palmer, communicated by Mr. Raymond Lister.

**BLAKE’S INSANITY: AN UNRECORDED EARLY REFERENCE**

*Jenijoy La Belle*

Published references to William Blake prior to the appearance of Alexander Gilchrist's *Life of Blake* in 1863 are uncommon, generally brief, all too often inaccurate—but still worthy of notice as curious bits of Blakeana. G. E. Bentley, Jr., in his monumental *Blake Books*, attempts to list "all works published before 1863 which refer to Blake at all, except catalogues," as he states in his Introduction. A previously unnoticed reference appears in Thomas John Gullick and John Timbs, *Painting Popularly Explained*, first published in London in 1859 by "Kent and Co. (late Bogue), Fleet Street." A two-page overview of "The Rise of Modern Water-Colour Painting" appears towards the end of this 318-page discussion of painting techniques. There (pp. 302-04), the authors note the early masters of the British school of watercolorists, including Paul Sandby, John Cozens, and Thomas Girtin. The section concludes with the following two sentences:

[Joseph Mallord William] Turner is even greater in water-colours than in oil; but several other eminent oil painters have distinguished themselves also in water-colour painting. The following are some of the principal deceased masters of this branch of art, viz., [William] Blake, and [Richard] Dadd (who both died insane), [Thomas] Rowlandson (the caricaturist), [George Fennel] Robson, [George] Barrett, [John] Varley, Samuel Prout, [Peter] Dewint, and Copley Fielding.

It is surprising to find Blake included in an 1859 list of "principal deceased masters" in water-color; his appearance here suggests that Blake's
artistic reputation was being quietly resurrected shortly before the publication of Gilchrist's biography. But the most remarkable feature of the passage is the symmetry of its errors: Blake was dead, but did not die insane; Dadd was insane, but did not die until 1886.

Gullick and Timbs very probably lifted some of their misinformation from A Handbook to the Water Colours, Drawings, and Engravings, in the [Manchester] Art Treasures Exhibition, Being a Reprint of Critical Notices Originally Published in "The Manchester Guardian" (London, 1857). In this work, pp. 12-13, the anonymous author compares Blake and Dadd and asserts that "both were mad... [But] Blake's fancies were lovely, rather than terrible."

The statement—premature by a mere twenty-seven years—that Dadd was deceased may have resulted from a misreading of other published statements. The Art-Union of October 1843 took note of Dadd's insanity, his murder of his father in August 1843, and his subsequent confinement. The journal apostrophizes the unfortunate man as follows: "The late Richard Dadd. Alas!... for, although the grave has not actually closed over him, he must be classed among the dead." Perhaps Gullick and Timbs misconstrued this (or some other) elegy for Dadd's psychological demise, and this prompted them to list him, along with Blake, among the principal, insane, and deceased British masters of watercolor.


4 P. 12; quoted from Bentley, Blake Books, p. 660.

5 Vol. 5, p. 267; quoted from Patricia Alleridge, The Late Richard Dadd, exhibition catalogue (London: The Tate Gallery, 1974), p. 9. Alleridge notes the reference to Dadd in Painting, Popularly Explained, but does not record its authors or the reference to Blake.

A NEWLY DISCOVERED WATERMARK AND A VISIONARY'S WAY WITH HIS DATES

Martin Butlin

Recent conservation treatment at the Tate Gallery has revealed that the Gallery's large color print of "Newton," signed and dated by Blake in his own hand "1795 W8 in [in monogram]," is watermarked "JWHATMAN/1804." The watermark, in the margin of the actual design, was only found when the fine canvas on which the print had been mounted was removed. Eight of the other large color prints in the Tate Gallery, also from the collection of Thomas Butts, were similarly mounted on canvas though "Pity" was lifted from its canvas preparatory to being lent to an exhibition in 1800. It is expected that others will be similarly treated in due course, when further watermarks may be discovered; "Hecate" is already known to be watermarked "1794/JWHATMAN" but was not dated by Blake.

The first documentary record of any of the twelve designs is the inclusion of eight in an account between Blake and Thomas Butts of 3 March 1806, apparently as having been delivered, four at a time, on 5 July and 7 September 1805: "Newton" was apparently delivered on the latter date. All the works delivered in 1805 are in fact dated "1795," with the possible exception of the copy of "Christ Appearing to the Apostles" now in the Yale University Art Gallery, the only print from these eight not in the Tate Gallery. Nine prints from the Butts collection (seven of those listed in the account, including "Newton," together with two titles not listed in any account) were sold by Butts's grandson, Captain F. J. Butts, to W. Graham Robertson in 1905 or 1906 and were presented by him to the Tate Gallery in 1939.

A number of cases of what may be called conceptual, mythical or even wishful pre-datings by Blake are already known. There are several examples of the later state of an engraving bearing the date of the first state. It is also highly likely that the version of "The Penance of Jane Shore" that Blake claimed in the catalogue of his exhibition in 1809 had been "done above Thirty Years ago" was not the small, immature example from his series of watercolors of subjects from English history now in a British private collection—that version is easily reconcilable with a date of c. 1779—but the larger, more finished and more accomplished version in the Tate Gallery that seems to date from about 1793. But what, in the case of this print of "Newton," is the original to which the date "1795" applies? Many people, including myself, have supposed that Blake printed more than one example of each color print at one time, by a sort of monotype process, finishing each print in pen and watercolor on demand at a later date. This would mean that the two known versions of "Newton," like the (up to three) known versions of the other prints in the series,
would both have been printed in 1795 and that this copy of "Newton" would have been finished in 1805 for delivery to Thomas Butts; this would of course have been reconcilable with a date, for the finishing only, of 1804 or later. But in no way can the first printing have been done in 1795 on paper watermarked 1804. It is known that paper manufacturers occasionally post-dated their watermarks by a year or so; a watercolor by Joshua Cristall in the Tate Gallery, on paper watermarked 1808, is signed and dated "J. Cristall 1807", apparently when the work was executed, in a space carefully left uncolored. 7 But for a manufacturer to post-date his paper by as much as nine years is inconceivable, and in fact the previous batch of Whatman paper was dated 1794, only a year before the date given by Blake with his signature. 8

The Butts prints are not only the first series for which there is any evidence; they also seem to have been the first set to have been sold to a patron. Blake offered another set of twelve prints to Dawson Turner in a letter of 9 June 1818 but these, and other examples, seem to have remained unsold at his death. One possibility could be that Blake printed one set in 1795 but that when he came to do the set for Butts he chose not to finish his existing prints but to start again from the beginning with new impressions. Frederick Tatham, who was not born until 1805, stated that Blake re-painted "his outline on the millboard when he wanted to take another print." But to re-do the color printing after a period of nine years, with the original thick, gummy colors all dried up on whatever form of plate Blake used, whether millboard (Tatham stated that Blake used "a common thick millboard") or metal, would seem to be a very perverse way of setting about things. If in fact the prints were color printed from metal plates it is possible that an outline was etched onto the plate in 1795 but that nothing else was done at that date. This is supported by the appearance of "God Judging Adam" in which Blake seems first to have printed a monochrome outline before overprinting it with his usual tacky color-printing medium. Or, in view of the fact that there are certain preliminary drawings, including one for the "Newton," and even a small-scale preliminary color print of "Pity," perhaps it is to these that Blake's 1795 date applies, meaning that at least he had the idea and had made the first experiments in that year. Or, he may have actually begun printing the series of twelve designs in 1795 with the whole scheme in his mind but not completed it until he was able to sell a series to Butts in 1805. It is significant that three of the titles owned by Butts but not included in the 1805 accounts, "Satan Exulting over Eve," "Pity" and "Hecate," were signed in a different way from the others, with the single word "Blake" actually incised into the pigment. The 1794 watermark of "Hecate" allows for this work to have been executed in 1795, while "Pity" does not have a watermark; it is difficult however to be certain about the copy of "Satan Exulting over Eve" now in the collection of John Craxton, though no watermark is visible from the front of the work. 9 Further explanations are no doubt possible.

Whatever the exact solution, both as to the techniques used by Blake and the stages in which he applied each process, there are far wider implications in this new discovery. It has been generally assumed, at least recently, that Blake's use of color printing was confined largely to the years 1794, 1795 and 1796. 10 This is based partly on the evidence of the large color prints but also on that of the illuminated books and the designs from them that were issued separately in color-printed versions. But it is now clear that Blake was still using color printing in at least one print executed as late as 1804-05. This also has implications for the theory that a revolution in Blake's style took place as a result of his experiences during his stay at Felpham from 1800 to 1803, in which he came to concentrate far more on clear outlines and balanced forms than in his earlier works. It is one thing to postulate a color print basically executed in 1795 and then more closely defined with pen outlines and clear color washes on being sold to Thomas Butts in 1805; it is quite another to see Blake re-using, as late as 1804-05, a technique the most dominant feature of which was its blotting and blurring.

1 Martin Butlin, The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake, 1981, I, 166-67 no. 396, repr. II, pl. 394 in color. All the large color prints, together with related drawings, are catalogued in Butlin, I, 156-77, introd. and nos. 209-329, and repr. in vol. II.

2 I am indebted to Kasia Szleynski of the Tate Gallery's conservation department for informing me of this discovery and discussing it with me. An inscription on the back of the print, previously covered by the canvas, reads "No. 22 Page 203"; this

"Newton," color print finished in pen and watercolor, 46 x 60 cm. Tate Gallery, London.
refers to William Rossetti's listing in the 1863 edition of Gilchrist's Life of William Blake, which means that the paper must have been mounted on the canvas after that date.

3 Butlin 310; exh. The Painterly Print, Metropolitan Museum, New York, and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, October 1980-March 1981 (17, repr.). The exhibition also included the small color-printed try-out in the British Museum (Butlin 313; 16, repr.) and the version in the Metropolitan Museum (Butlin 311; 18, repr. in color); the version in the Yale Center (Butlin 312) was repr. as fig. 50.


5 See Butlin 1, 23-24 nos. 67 and 69.

6 The fullest discussion of the technique of the large color prints is in Essick, pp. 125-35.

7 See The Tate Gallery 1972-4, 1975, p. 52, repr., where the contrary is argued.

8 See the tables of watermarks in Butlin 1, 627, and G. E. Bentley, Jr., Blake Books, 1977, p. 72, until the discovery of the watermark on the Tate Gallery's "Newton" no. 3 (Whatman/1804) watermarks were known on any of the works included in my catalogue. For Whatman paper see also Essick, p. 105.

9 For a discussion of possible implications of the way in which the color prints are signed, though not in fact of the group with the incised "Blake," see my article "Cataloguing William Blake" in Robert N. Essick and Donald Pearce, eds., Blake in His Time, 1978, pp. 84-85.

10 See Essick, pp. 147-51.

THE SHOCK OF THE NEW BLAKE

Nelson Hilton

Robert Hughes seems to have discovered some curious new verses of Blake's, which he quotes without reference on page 235 of his recent study of modern art, The Shock of the New (New York: Knopf, 1981). Hughes writes that, "A century before Miró's birth, William Blake had urged his readers to Seek those images That constitute the Wild: The lion and the Virgin, The Harlot and the Child.

That is the aim of Miró's early paintings."

EXHIBITIONS : MORGAN LIBRARY

From 1 September through 4 October the Pierpont Morgan Library exhibited a selection of Blake watercolors and illuminated books, including the Morgan (Butts) set of Job watercolors, watercolor designs to L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, "Samson Breaking His Bonds," "Fire," America, and the Songs. The Pickering Manuscript was also on exhibition, along with engravings from books illustrated by Blake. A catalogue is available for $7.50.

SANTA CRUZ CONFERENCE: BLAKE & CRITICISM

The National Endowment for the Humanities has approved funding for the conference, which the sponsors hope will bring into the open the collision between Blake studies and the concerns, values, and strategies of contemporary critical theory. Ever more perceived as a key document at the origins of post-modern consciousness, Blake's work arguably anticipates and contests many contemporary and often anti-humanistic critical formulations. The conference will focus on the profound role Blake's work has to play in any new organization and interpretation of humanistic studies. The conference will be held 21 and 22 May 1982 at the campus of the University of California, Santa Cruz. Detailed information concerning the program will appear in the next issue of Blake and will also be available from The Conference on Blake and Criticism, Literature Board, Kresge College, UCSC, Santa Cruz, CA 95064.