On the cover is a drawing by Bo Lindberg of the Blakes in Abo, Finland, in 1824. Lindberg had this to say about the drawing:

In 1974 the oldest surviving Finnish newspaper, *Abo Underrättelser* (published in Swedish, formerly the language of the Finnish intelligentsia, and still spoken by many Finns), celebrated its 150th anniversary. The editor asked me to make a drawing of Abo in 1824, showing people reading the first copies of the *Abo Underrättelser*, and, in the background, the Cathedral, the old town center, and the bridge across the River Aura with the small kiosk on it—from this kiosk the newspaper was sold. None of the buildings except the Gothic Cathedral survived the great fire of 1827.

The Abo of the early 19th century was "a most infamous pit, a pestified place, having a poisoned atmosphere, poor pavements and the worst 'esprit public' in the world," wrote Gustaf Mauritius Armfelt about 1800. Since Blake was in the habit of visiting infamous places such as Babylon and Hell, he must have made a spiritual journey to Abo—and, since a spirit is not a cloudy vapour or a nothing, his spirit must have had a solid body resembling his mortal body. Further, it is well known that Catherine partook in her husband's visions. Therefore I put William Blake and his wife among the readers of the first issue of *Abo Underrättelser*. Their clothes are more or less right for 1824.

Lindberg had this to say about himself:

Name. Bo Lindberg, called Ossian. I'm an artist, ethnological draughtsman and art historian, born in Abo in 1937, at present working at the University of Lund, Sweden. In 1973 my Ph.D. thesis, *William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job*, was published in the *Acta Academiae Aboensis*. I've published a few papers about Blake, Bosch, the Cathedral of Abo, etc. I've translated part of Blake's poetry into Swedish, but so far only *The Mental Traveller* has appeared in print. I've modernised Satan's Holy Trinity: Darwin, Marx and Einstein, and the prophet of the tripartite God is Freud. I believe that art and science are the foundation of empire. Hitler, Stalin, Roosevelt, etc., attend upon and follow scientists, writers and prophets like Darwin, Marx, Einstein, etc., which shows that Blake was right again.

I like Blake because his philosophy is too complicated and too truthful for political, economic and bureaucratic leaders to use it and misuse it. In this world it is a great merit merely to be harmless.

Most of the illustrations in this issue are from Blake's contributions to the extra-illustrated Shakespeare folio compiled by the Rev. Joseph Thomas. The volume was sold by his descendants to Alexander Macmillan in 1880, from whose family it was acquired by the British Museum in 1880. The pictures are reproduced here by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

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Blake Newsletter 32
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Our New Subscription System

Some subscribers have had good reason to wonder why The Newsletter can't handle its affairs with the businesslike efficiency of PMLA and Playboy. The main reason is a chronic shortage of money and clerical help. Another reason is a primitive addressing and mailing operation in the University of New Mexico post office. We have tried for years to keep our dealings with individuals, libraries, and subscription agencies clean and efficient, and our occasional failures have made us more and more unhappy with things as they are.

So we have decided to get rid of at least one large trouble spot, our revolving subscription system. We publish four issues a year, and you have been able to begin subscribing with any one of the four issues. That is, your subscription may expire with the summer issue, while someone else's may expire with spring, winter, or fall. This system is easy for a computer to handle, and convenient for subscribers, and thus it is the standard system for commercial magazines.

But the system is very difficult to manage efficiently with limited money and clerical help, and a system that might ideally be convenient to the subscriber becomes inconvenient. Everyone knows that there is no better analogy to the Gordian knot than a fouled-up magazine subscription, and we have decided to go with Alexander the Great.

Our new system of handling subscriptions will be the one used by PMLA and some other large scholarly journals—subscription by the volume. Every subscription will begin with the summer issue (the issue with which Newsletter volumes begin) and end with spring. All renewal notices will be sent out at the same time every year. New subscribers will be sent the current issue, plus all the previous issues in the current volume.

The new system is much simpler than the old for us, and we are certain it will mean fewer problems for you. But shifting from the old system to the new will be a lot of trouble for all of us, and we are asking you in advance to help us—mainly to bear with us—when the changeover begins this spring.

The procedure will not be complicated. The aim is to move each subscription from its present expiration date to expire with the spring issue. Every subscription will then begin with the summer issue. Of course, subscriptions that now expire with the spring issue will not be changed. All others will be. You will receive a bill for an amount large enough to bring your subscriptions into the new subscription cycle. You will not be paying extra money, of course—just paying on a slightly different schedule.

The procedure and the reasons for it will be explained again when you receive your bill.
REPORT: 1974 MLA Blake Seminar

"Perspectives on Jerusalem" was the topic of this year's seminar, at which Edward J. Rose presided. Three essays, each representing a different approach to the poem, furnished the material for discussion. (These essays appeared in a special edition of *Blake Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1, prior to the conference.) Methodological considerations are especially pertinent to Jerusalem, where Blake, in creating his system, draws on such a diversity of sources—philosophical, scientific, historical, religious, artistic, and literary.

E. B. Murray's "Jerusalem Reversed," briefly summarized by Rose, presents a structural approach. Murray states that reversals are intrinsic to the poem's meaning. Applying this idea and concentrating his attention on Vala, he holds that she represents hate or a reversal of Luvah. Those present at the seminar agreed that reversal is indeed a recurrent motif in the poem; there was some disagreement, however, about his analysis of Vala. It was pointed out that despite his strong insistence upon critics always sticking to the text, Murray himself had not done so: he explains not the name Vala but Yah-Lu. "Yah-Lu is Vala and La-Va is Luvah," he concludes. Since Murray was not on hand to explain the large concepts on which his meaning depends, there was no further discussion of his essay. Unfortunately, only one author of the essays selected for discussion was present; exploration of the proposed subject therefore was often limited.
Mollyanne Marks, who happily was present, views her subject thematically in “Self-Sacrifice: Theme and Image in Jerusalem.” After a fairly long summary, in which she focused on the problematic relation between self-sacrifice and selfhood, she put before the seminar the following question: are self-delusion and selfhood identical? There was general agreement among the audience that the two concepts certainly are related, but the precise nature of that relationship was never resolved. Marks had confined too narrowly the poem’s action, limiting it to Blake’s own personal struggle. To be sure, his artistic conflicts are intimately bound up with the conflict he represents in Jerusalem, but he puts his story in a larger national context. Not only artists but also nations, Blake asserts at plate 3, are destroyed or flourish in proportion as their arts are destroyed or flourish.

Of the three papers, Irene H. Chayes’ “The Marginal Design on Jerusalem 12” elicited the strongest reactions. Although Chayes was absent, Rose gave a cogent summary of her lengthy essay. Obviously, her approach to the poem is through illustrations, and her particular concern is with the minor designs, which she feels have been neglected. They form a consistent group of figures, she argues, yet their relation to the text on the same plate is frequently oblique or incidental. In her analysis of J 12, she offers a method which she believes can be profitably applied to other marginal designs in Jerusalem. After isolating the verbal keys on J 12, Chayes leaves Jerusalem to discover similar drawings as well as pictorial descriptions in other works. In this search, she ranges widely, examining not only many of Blake’s works, among them, America, Europe, The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, and The Songs of Experience but also some of Milton’s poems, such as Paradise Lost and Lytchett. The details of this examination do not clarify the meaning of the three figures and the globe illustrated at J 12. As one participant at the seminar stated, Chayes’ introduction of serpents’ coils and whirlpools from Europe together with her long discussion positioning the objects on 12 adds lots of unnecessary description but nothing to his understanding of the poem. David Bindman expressed the general sentiment of those present when he said that Chayes was creating a problem where none existed. It is somewhat paradoxical to hold that visible objects have obscure meanings when Blake intended that they should convey his total meaning more directly. How shall we interpret the illustrations? Bindman suggested that we should be faithful to what Blake actually inscribes on the plate. For example, the spherical object on J 12 is neither a sun nor a lantern continually changing into some potentially realizable object, but is plainly the global earth. Likewise, the figure with the compass measuring out space on this earth is clearly Newton. John Grant made a point related to Bindman’s. He emphasized the need of keeping one’s eyes not only on the objects depicted on the page but also on its text as a control in any interpretation of designs. Otherwise any interpretation, however misleading, is possible. One must trust the visible objects as Blake presents them in a particular situation. Although there may be similarities of figures in Blake’s other works, the function, and hence the meaning, of these figures depends on what is going on in the poem they illustrate.

In sum, the discussion of these three papers reaffirmed an important critical principle: Jerusalem must be considered in respect to both its verbal and its graphic language. (Joanne Witke, University of California, Berkeley)

Also organizing a substantial portion of the debate at the Blake seminar was the issue of how and to what extent Blake intended his pictorial designs to function as objects of critical interpretation. David Bindman emphasized Blake’s role as book designer and therefore was quite willing to accept “doodles” as purely “decorative” aspects of Blake’s composite page. Others, including David Erdman and Stuart Curran, were less willing to relegate any of Blake’s designs to a simply decorative function, even though they agreed that such a function might play a significant role in the meaning of a design. There was a strong feeling, to paraphrase Stuart Curran, that until the last doodle had been interpreted, one should not accept the methodological premise that Blake ever simply doodled at all.

Martin K. Nurmi entered another kind of caution which he felt should be invoked in interpreting pictorial designs, especially those such as appear on J 12. Nurmi argued that there is a tension between the flat page laced with images which do not physically move and the symbolic gesture the designs may make. For example, Nurmi drew attention to the fact that the globe of the world depicted in the text is structurally both three-dimensional and literally in motion, whereas the globe of the design is two-dimensional and stationary. Nurmi’s suggestion seems especially helpful in J 12 where the text describing the compass-point rotational momentum of the globe visually spreads into the space on the page occupied by the visual globe. It seems clear that the Newton-like figure can measure with compasses the visual globe but would never be able to get a sufficient perceptual fix on the textual globe to be able to measure it. The differences in perspective relationships between perceivers and object perceived and between the possibilities for compass measurement are integral to Blake’s perceptual strategy on the plate. (Donald Ault, University of California, Berkeley)

Blake Poster

A reproduction of “The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun” is now published by Trig Graphics, 55 Maple Avenue, Hastings on Hudson, New York 10706. The size of the reproduction is 19 x 28 1/2 inches. The retail price is $8, plus $2 shipping and handling charge (plus 40c New York state tax, when applicable).
1975 MLA Blake Seminar

Subject: Blake's Visions of the Last Judgment
Chairman: Morton D. Paley (University of California, Berkeley)
Co-Chairman: Anne K. Mellor (Stanford University)

This year the Seminar will return to a discussion format. There will be one or more principal discussants and, hopefully, wide participation by the Solemn Assembly. The subject is Blake's various Last Judgment pictures; probably we will also want to consider his accounts of the Last Judgment in poetry and prose.

Anyone wishing to act as a principal discussant should send me a short summary--not more than a thousand words--of his or her presentation, accompanied by whatever photographic reproductions may be appropriate.

The Blake Newsletter will produce a leaflet of reproductions for use in the Seminar. We hope that the results of the seminar can be published in the Newsletter later, either in the form of an article by the discussants or as individual articles.

The discussant will be W. J. T. Mitchell of Ohio State University. The time and place will be announced later. Those wishing to attend should send a note to Morton Paley, Dept. of English, Boston Univ., Boston, Mass. 02215.

Santa Barbara Conference

The Art History Department and the Department of English at University of California, Santa Barbara, will co-sponsor an interdisciplinary conference 2-5 March 1976 on the theme of "Blake in the Art of His Time." The idea of the conference is to bring together (Blake himself being the precedent) literary students and art historians of Blake's work and period, with the intention of viewing his complex achievement in a wide perspective. Emphasis will be on Blake's work as painter-poet-engraver-illustrator seen alongside the work of several eminent contemporaries (such as Flaxman, Fuseli, Linnell, Barry) to reveal more clearly what in Blake "belonged to his age" and what was Blake's own and Blake's only.

There will be morning and afternoon scholarly sessions, each featuring three or four twenty to thirty minute papers, on aspects of the general theme of Blake in the Art of His Time, by established scholars from both disciplines; but also a sprinkling of papers by newcomers in both fields who have fresh things to say about Blake. There will be considerable use made of color slides as well as other visual aids. Concurrently with the conference dates, there will be an exhibition of about 100 original items, by Blake and other artists (named above), on loan to us from various national collections in the U.C.S.B. art gallery. The Huntington Library and Art Gallery are planning to mount special exhibitions of Blake and Blake-related materials during the period of the conference at their nearby Pasadena galleries.

There will also be evening events of a less academic character--e.g., musical performances of certain of Blake's songs and other texts, in both new and traditional settings, examples of the music of Blake's time, theatrical treatments of some of his work (perhaps An Island in the Moon).

The editorial committee for the conference invites interested scholars to submit papers for possible presentation at one of the conference sessions. Papers should be kept to about twenty minutes total delivery time and should be keyed to the theme of the conference (e.g., literary and artistic sources of Blake's work; the relation of his work to the pictorial arts and art theories of his time; the relation of text and design on Blake's pages viewed in some kind of art-historical perspective, etc.).

Mail to:
Blake Conference
Prof. Donald Pearce, Department of English
or Corlette Walker, Dept. of Art
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA. 93106

Works in Progress


Raymond Lister, Wolfson College, University of Cambridge: awarded a Senior Research Fellowship, chiefly to assemble a full-scale critical catalogue of all the works of Samuel Palmer. Mr. Lister writes that he would like to hear from anybody who knows of the location of any such works, particularly those in private collections. Address c/o Windmill House, Linton, Cambridge, England CB1 6NS.

Reviewed by Thomas A. Vogler

This book challenges the conventional or complacent pose of the reviewer who would like to present his response in the guise of statements "about" the book. In this case, whether it is a trivial or an important book, whether it is good or bad, depends almost entirely on how it is read. The main problem area in responding and evaluating turns on the persistent way in which everything Nelson says is self-descriptive. In his responses to the authors he reads, he is acting out or presenting to us a mode of consciousness which is precisely what he claims to "see" in the works discussed. For Nelson, the reader "performs an act of literature," entering a "process in which the self of the reader is transformed by an external structure." But such transformations can work either way, and I propose to look at Nelson as Blake looked at his Reactor, "till he be revealed in his system."

In his chapter on Blake, for example, he begins by asserting tenets ascribed to "Freudian psychology" which sees "the artist projecting womb-receptacles appropriate to his psyche." He quotes Williams with approval: "We express ourselves there, as we might on the whole body of the various female could we ever gain access to her." It seems appropriate, given this position, that all Nelson can see in Blake is a "womblike iconography," which confirms that "Blake's poetic world is an egg which the imagination fertilizes." Thus Nelson's performance of an "act of literature" on Blake resembles a rape where consent--the rapist's only defense--has been established in advance. For him, Blake has "made the word flesh," and "The most frequent feature of the illuminated books . . . is flesh--the human body."

Since for Nelson all activity, psychic or physical, is sexual, we can see the fruits of his critical endeavor as a series of interpretive "apocalyptic orgasms" in which "Each page is a revolution in consciousness that resurrects the imagination in a new body." In his chapter on Burroughs the point is repeated in somewhat escalated form: "The whole of this mythology is initiated and fulfilled on every page of Burroughs' work--in each moment of intersection between reader and text." What Nelson apparently does not see is that when Burroughs says, "Gentle reader, we see God . . . in the flash bulb of orgasm," his vision includes and is disgusted by Nelson's response to it. For Burroughs this vision of God does not save us; it confirms our fallen state; it is what we must first

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Thomas Vogler is Associate Professor of Literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is the author of *Preludes to Vision* and articles on Hart Crane, Ralph Ellison, Robert Lowell, Milton, and others.
When Burroughs says "Word is flesh" or "Your bodies I have written," he is disgusted by the inevitability with which the sexual metaphor in its debased form absorbs all human experience. "The human organism is literally consisting of two halves from the beginning word and all human sex is this unsanitary arrangement whereby two entities attempt to occupy the same three-dimensional coordinate points." Clearly then Nelson is acting out Burroughs' system; but is he doing it in Burroughs' sense and with his goal, to see "sex words exploded to empty space"? Or is he an example of what Burroughs means by addiction, someone who can't break the habit? Is Nelson's book parody or satire, a knowing reducio ad absurdum, an example for us to shun? Or is he himself seduced and luring us into the same seduction? In Blake's terms, Nelson seems to be caught in the "Sexual Machine" (Jerusalem 39 [44]:25). He is not giving us the answer to Blake's question: "... what may Woman be? / To have power over Man from Cradle to corruptible Grave." He is an unknowing example of what Blake meant by that power.

The important question lurking under all this concerns the possibility of conceiving and pursuing our redemption. Can we be saved by sex? And if so, in what way and on what level is sexuality the pattern of our redemption? Is the path from the beautiful woman to the Idea of The Beautiful a true path or an unconscious rationalization for sexual appetite—-or is it the opposite misconception, a leading away from the primal reality of the flesh? These are questions Crane asks and answers in the "Three Songs" section of his Bridge. He suggests that it is impossible to achieve a spiritual vision of unity based on the pattern of the sexual act; but it is also impossible to avoid the trap:

Yet, to the empty trapeze of your flesh, O Magdalene, each comes back to die alone. Then you, the burlesque of our lust—and faith, Lug us back lifeward—bone by infant bone.

If Crane is right, the apocalyptic model Nelson offers us is a circular trap, a revolving door that returns us to our predicament with precisely that degree of energy which informs our attempts to escape through the door. Lest this seem too fanciful, we can see Nelson himself going through the motions in his essay on Williams. First, he establishes that "white blankness is the space of the page we structure verbally." Action in this space is the by now familiar verbal/sexual act. "The line propels us through the period, a black doorway into the whiteness of the page within which the line acts. Speech becomes an enactment of silence." We go through the black doorway of the period only to return to the blank page, which we fill with more masculine words. How are these words now the "enactment of silence"? Discussing another period in Williams' Paterson, Nelson informs us "That dot acts as a hole through which we fall. The leap and fall through blank space and the measured pacing into emptiness are both related and different. A period is immense; yet it is the waste of absolute finitude." Nelson's own period, at the end of this paradoxical prose, is wittily put a space beyond the final word in the sentence, a point beyond finitude. Presumably, we should get the point, and exit through that door into another space or emptiness. And Nelson does not waste his sonorous phrase. He uses it later where we
learn that "To plant a field is to extend intimate space to the horizon, infinitely. A uniform and horizontal space, composed of inseparable clumps of handled earth. It wastes no ends. Yet it is the waste of absolute finitude." We exit through that period only to return to the same blank page filled with words, to see Nelson swinging one more time on the empty trapeze of flesh. The book seemingly claims to have found the moment in each day that Satan cannot find, and to be multiplying it. It may however, like the sexual metaphor that is the basis for every image of relationship in the book, be grinding like a monotonous way on towards no climax at all. We are offered the image of a man-poet-reader-farmer spilling his seed on the field as the pattern of the ultimate economy of the cosmos. It may, however, be the image of Onan raised to the analogic level.

In his penultimate chapter Nelson points out accurately that for Burroughs "total communication becomes either grotesquely funny or grotesquely hideous." Nelson seems to succumb to the point that the moth is drawn to the flame, and as I read this chapter I was overcome with anticipation; it seemed that the only way to end the book would be with some grotesque form of self-destruction, some final revelation of the satiric wit that had been tempting me, playing with me throughout all these chapters on the Pearl Poet, Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, Blake, Wordsworth, Williams and now Burroughs.

I thought that surely this "confidence" would prove to be the Melvillean, or the Prufrockian borrowed from Dante waiting for the moment when "human voices wake us and we drown." But at the final moment there is a rapid modulation of intensity, a move towards dissociation. Burroughs' novels turn out not to be "vehicles of revelation," but the same book continually written "to perfect an instrument of aggression." Somehow the point of all this aggression is safely avoided, as it had been avoided earlier in the chapter on Swift. We go on to learn that "The final choice is always an image of all choices at once," an example of what Blake meant by his "Equivocal Worlds" in which "Up & Down are Equivocal."

Rather than leaving the book hanging at this point, I am tempted to take a second look and to ask in all seriousness if we can find a matrix for examining it which establishes an "Up & Down" axis. I am convinced that there is such a matrix, but that it can only be discovered by an examination of what the book leaves out. It is a book which overcomes obstacles by ignoring them, which avoids the struggle of Blake's "Mental Fight" by adopting the mode of pure assertion. Lacking a sense of difficulty, it fails to engage with the authors discussed on the one fundamental level they all share—that it is hard to achieve the goal of a timeless, transcendent experience without leaving our human nature behind at one extreme, or parodying it in an illusory ideology at the other. Nelson is offering his readers the "White Junk", fix that so outrages and frustrates Burroughs, that Blake fought against with his "Minute Particulars", that the author of the Pearl Poem embodied in the ravishing confusion of his central image. At the heart of his method is an ignorance of and willful ignoring of time, supported by the assertion that "pure spatiality is a condition toward which literature aspires." But to ignore time is to miss out on "the Mercy of Eternity," and to become ironically trapped in that we seek to avoid. It is our existence in time that wears away at all moments of vision, domesticating them, integrating them into our established and programmed associations, reducing them to what we have always known and tried to avoid.

Time is bearing another son.
Kill Time, she burns in her pain.
The oak is felled in the doom
And the hawk in the egg kills the wren. 1

We may share the poet's urge to kill time, but we cannot achieve the visionary goal by ignoring it.

One aspect of Nelson's ignorance and ignoring can be clearly seen in his chapter on Wordsworth. In it, he reduces the whole Prelude to a single posture or limbo. Imagine that Wordsworth found and held firm that single timeless image he spent sixty years looking for, finding and losing. Nelson falls for Wordsworth's wishful model of ascent, without ever realizing that the true subject of the poem is the experience of the fall, and the problem of coping with loss and the fear of future loss. What Nelson calls Wordsworth's "apocalyptic posture" is the beginning of the problem, not its solution. He leaves the poets standing "On Etna's summit, above the earth and sea / Triumphant, winning from the invaded heavens / Thoughts without bound." But at this point in the poem Wordsworth is sitting by his fire, indulging in "fancied images" ("bounteous images" in 1850), hoping that Coleridge has found what Wordsworth has been seeking, but knowing that "pastoral Arethuse" may "be in truth no more." It may be "some other Spring, which by the name / Thou gratulatetest, willingly deceived." Immortal without experience, pastoral without context, is as Johnson observed "sordid, vulgar, and therefore disgusting." Of course in reacting that way to Lydian Johnson was making the same mistake Nelson makes with Wordsworth, but with a different set of values. Whether or not we share Wordsworth's hope that his Prelude was "all gratulant if rightly understood," we miss the poem if we do not perceive and share in its ongoing struggle to avoid the poet's fate in time, a beginning in gladness that ends in despondency and madness—a seeing by glimpses with a gnawing awareness that in times to come we may scarcely see at all.

Nelson quotes approvingly Wordsworth's lines: "Anon I rose / As if on wings, and saw beneath me stretched / Vast prospect of the world which I had been / And was." For Nelson this captures "a moment that spreads out autobiographical chronology like a map of time unfolded into space." Yet how can we read these lines without recalling Eve's account of her dream in Paradise Lost: "Forwith up to the Clouds / With him I flew, and underneath beheld / The Earth outstretcht immense,

1 Dylan Thomas, "Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait."
a prospect wide / And various: wond'ring at my peril. For Nelson, "All fields are playing fields," avoiding the danger implicit in such moments at our peril. For Nelson, "All fields are playing fields," and he quotes with approval Freud's lines: "A number of children ... were romping about in a meadow. Suddenly they all grew wings, flew up, and were gone." Is this the way it happens for the poets? Whosever those children are, wherever they go, how are we not to be left behind in Milton's "fair field / of Emma, where Proserpin gathering flow'rs / Herself a fairer Flow'r by gloomy Dia / Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain / To seek her through the world." How can we ignore "all that pain" without being ignorant of it, and being ignorant of it how can we avoid being gathered by gloomy Dia? Plato poses the real problem and focus for the poets in his Phaedrus: "What we must understand is the reason why the soul's wings fall from it, and are lost." In Lear, Edgar may "save" Gloucester by tricking him, but that does not save those of us who see the trick. Mill may have been saved from despair by reading Wordsworth, as he reports in his autobiography. But his salvation was dependent on a selective blindness that prevented him from seeing that Wordsworth shared his own struggle with despair.

If by ignoring time, by ignoring difficulties and struggle, Nelson misses the point of Wordsworth and the other poets he discusses, he also misses an adequate context for literary interpretation. By insisting on space alone as the medium for vision he becomes an incarnation of the abstract model of the New Critic, committed to that "evasion of the whole problem of temporality" which Hartman so acutely isolates as the advantage and disadvantage of "The Sweet Science of Northrop Frye." But unlike Frye, whose practice is "preferable to his theory," Nelson's approach stays at the distance of the middle ground, constantly invoking our immediate experience of literature yet never fully acknowledging that time is inseparable from our experience. Although he sets out to understand Swift's Tale of a Tub "as reading experience," he fails miserably because he hasn't the faintest idea of the historical context in which that "reading experience" occurred and can still occur. This is obvious from his attempts to define satire by appealing to a norm of "efficient satire" which no satirist has ever shared—certainly not Swift, who in his "Apology" to the 1710 edition answers most of the problems that Nelson seems unable to cope with. But perhaps in his own way Nelson is close to the "reading experience" of the Tale, since like its first audience he fails to realize that the point of Swift's satire is directed at a kind of Natural Religion of which Nelson is a twentieth-century embodiment. Swift was revolted by the empirical model of the mind constructing its universals and absolutes out of sense experience, but he carried the model in his own mind as we continue to carry it in our time.

This last observation touches on the most serious aspect of Nelson's ahistorical approach. By ignoring time, he ignores his own context, and the dangerous possibility that his brand of fleshy apocalypse is itself a byproduct of history. Camus saw in Feuerbach the birth of "a terrible form of optimism which we can still observe at work today and which seems to be the very antithesis of nihilist despair. But that is only in appearance. We must know Feuerbach's final conclusion in this Theogony to perceive the profoundly nihilist derivation of his inflamed imagination. In effect, Feuerbach affirms, in the face of Hegel, that man is only what he eats." The consequence of this form of deification can be seen clearly only if we can locate it as a process in a historical context. With a larger context, Camus would not have attributed the "birth" to Feuerbach, but might have traced it back to the seventeenth century. There is also a comical side to the lack of historical context as we realize that Nelson, 275 years later, is still anatomized in Swift's description of "the noblest Branch of Modern Wit or Invention":

What I mean, is that highly celebrated Talent among the Modern Wits, of deducing Similitudes, Allusions, and Applications, very Surprising, Agreeable, and Apposite, from the Pudenda of either Sex, together with their proper Uses... And altho' this Vein hath bled so freely, and all Endeavours have been used in the Power of Human Breath, to dilate, extend, and keep it open: Like the Scythians, who had a Custom, and an Instrument, to blow up the Privities of their Mares, that they might yield the more Milk; Yet I am under an Apprehension, it is near growing dry, and past all Recovery; And that either some new Fonde of Wit should, if possible, be provided, or else that we must e'en be content with Repetition here, as well as upon all other Occasions. ("In Praise of Digression")

N. O. Brown claims that "The return to symbolism, the rediscovery that everything is symbolic... a penis in every convex object and a vagina in every concave one—is psychoanalysis." Nelson would seem to agree, and to extend the "return" or "Repetition" to include all literature and interpretation as well.

There is another significant lack in Nelson's book which seems related to the absence of a sense of struggle, and of historical context. Although the book is riddled with paradoxes—or the same paradox repeated endlessly—the repetitions are like literary fireworks that flash and explode and leave behind only clouds of smoke that offend the nostrils. There is no sense here of the profound mystery that underlies the mythical vision of incarnation as part of the pattern of redemption. John tells us that "That which is born of the flesh..."
is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Redemptive vision, as Blake knew, is the capacity to unite the two and to see the "Divine Revelation in the Litteral expression." As Boehme points out, in his work on Nelson's subject, this is a serious matter:

Our life is as a fire dampened, or as a fire shut up in stone. Dear children, it must blaze, and not remain smouldering, smothered. Historical faith is mouldy matter--it must be set on fire: the soul must break out of the reasoning of this world into the life of Christ, into Christ's flesh and blood; then it receives the fuel which makes it blaze. There must be seriousness; history reaches not Christ's flesh and blood.

(Die Incarnatione Verbi, II, viii, 1.)

Much of the seriousness in this matter is related to the fact that to enter the realm of "the incarnate word" is to enter a realm of metaphysical potency that was originally the exclusive prerogative of God. Elihu asserts that "the ear trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meat," but he does so in a context in which Job must acknowledge that he utters "words without knowledge. . . . I uttered that I understood not." If man lacks the power to utter "words that are things" as Byron longed to do, his speech can be knowledge only if it is congruent with something outside itself and more real than it is.

To speak a word that can be eaten, a word that nourishes, sustains, fulfills, an "incarnate word," is indeed a godlike act. To attempt it is a tremendous gesture full of risk, and to eat the word, to risk trusting it is the most dangerous of spiritually artistic ventures. It is to eat the forbidden fruit and risk the lot of eternal despair if one fails. "My word I poured. But was it cognate, scored / Of that tribunal monarch of the air / Whose thigh embronzes earth, strikes crystal Word / In wounds pledged once to hope--cleft to despair?" Poets have clearly longed through the ages for the godlike power of genetic utterance, or the lesser power of uttering a congruent word. In this context, as Touchstone says, "the truest poetry is the most feigning," and "feigning" inevitably evokes the deepest level of desire (of faining) and the possibility of deception. The urge in poets is perhaps at bottom not all that different from the urge towards magic, the desire to find some words by which man can in some way touch and control the core of reality. It is clear that the magician has often been able to fool others, even at times himself. What is not so clear is whether he has ever succeeded in uttering the magical incantation that actually causes the effects he would fain achieve. Nelson's book is an "incantation" in the full etymological sense; it is an incantation of incarnation. Like Auden, we want somehow to know "Is it honest in deed and word? is it a true thing?" Can we try his words as the mouth tasteth meat?

Our final glimpse of Satan in Paradise Lost is of him and his cohorts in a state of aggravated penance, greedily plucking the "Fruitage fair to sight" which was "like that / Which grew in Paradise." But under the semblance, there is no substance; instead of fruit there are "bitter Ashes," and an eternity of falling "into the same illusion." Nelson is oblivious to the danger that his fruit may turn to ashes when plucked. In some ways this is an enviable oblivion, but it is certainly not one shared by the poets he discusses. His book leaves us, like the tramps in Crane's Bridge, still hungry after the Twentieth-Century Limited roars by with its slogans about Science, Commerce and the Holy Ghost.

But man must eat to live, and will be what he eats. Kafka's Hunger Artist tries to make an art out of not eating, only to confess as he dies that he had to fast because he couldn't find the food that he liked--that, if he had found it, he would have stuffed himself like everybody else. Roheim has claimed that schizophrenia is "food trouble," that "There is only one story--that somebody was starved. But not really--only inside, in my stomach." So to avoid starving we eat, and as eating is the active form of the fall, it must be the active form of redemption in the Eucharist, the thankful feast. We are what we eat; but what do we eat, and how do we eat it? In the first Night of The Four Zoas we encounter a feast: "The Earth spread forth her table wide. The Night a silver cup / Fill'd with the wine of anguish 5

Hart Crane, "The Broken Tower."
waited at the golden feast / But the bright Sun
was not as yet. . . " At the feast "They eat
the fleshy bread, they drank the nervous wine."
But in spite of the semblance, they are not eating
the body of Christ. They are eating the fallen
body of the natural world, eating it with their
fallen senses and becoming what they behold.

It is no accident that Freud's myth of the
fall in Totem and Taboo locates the origin of
man's psychic disturbance in a primal cannibalistic
feast. Nor is it accidental that for most
psychologists the origins of the components of
man's psyche, like the origins of his body, can
be seen in a process variously described as
"internalization" or "identification and
incorporation" or "ingestion" or "introjection"
of the father and mother who thereby become
"figures" or patterns of expectation and possibility
that shape our potential for experience. If the
process of individuation is to happen without
alienation, there must be the development of
"personal 'realities' which incorporate paradoxical
discontinuities of the personal from maternal or
parental realities."6 In a healthy process of
growth a nourishment is provided and received
which allows for an organic growth and individuation.
But in a pathogenic process individuation is not
achieved, and after the fact our fantasy organizes
the experience as one in which by devouring the
parents we have been devoured by them; we learn too
late that we have become hooked like the addicts
to the "White Junk" in Burroughs' system.

What characterizes almost every psychopath
and part-psychopath is that they are trying
to create a new nervous system for them-
selves. Generally we are obliged to act
with a nervous system which has been formed
from infancy, and which carries in the
style of its circuits the very contradictions
of our parents and our early milieu.
Therefore, we are obliged, most of us, to
meet the tempo of the present and the future
with reflexes and rhythms which come from
the past. It is not only the "dead weight
of the institutions of the past" but indeed
the inefficient and often antiquated
nervous circuits of the past which strangle
our potentiality for responding to new
possibilities which might be exciting for
our individual growth.

Blake makes the point more succinctly than either
Mailer or Marx, when he asserts that Swedenborg
has given us "Only the Contents or Index of already
published books." Nelson, like Swedenborg, is
"the Angel sitting at the tomb: his writings are
the linen clothes folded up. Now is the dominion
of Edom." Esau is called Edom, after the red
pottage for which he sold Jacob his birthright.
Under the dominion of Edom we find again the need
for the feast of Ezekiel: "I then asked Ezekiel,
why he eat dung, & lay so long on his right and
left side? he answered. The desire of raising
other men into a perception of the infinite."
The same desire moved Swift in his time, Blake
in his, and Burroughs in ours. Like Ezekiel,
Burroughs holds a parodic mirror up to our diet
and throws us the same challenge: "We Are All Shit
Eaters. . . " Nelson finds the message
"inexplicable and intolerable," misses the shock of
recognition which might provide the point for a new
beginning, and ends his book with a chapter called
"Fields: the body as a text." This final section
is a montage of quotations and assertions organized
around various themes, and is strongly reminiscent
of N.O. Brown's Love's Body. Earlier in the book
Nelson has suggested that Brown's work and Whitman's
"symbolically offer us the visionary body of their
author," and it seems clear that he is making the
same gesture or offering with his Inanimate Word.
The emphasis here is so "practical," and goes beyond the
ordinary sense in which we can imagine any book to
be an offering by its author. This is an invitation
self-consciously modeled after Christ's invitation
to his disciples, an invitation to a communion with
the promise of redemption if we take and eat. In
fact, however, it is the gift of Comus, "Off'ring
to every weary Traveller / His orient liquor in a
Crystal Glass." The "misery" of the band that
follows Comus is so "perfect" that they cannot
"perceive their foul disfigurement. / But boast
themselves more comely than before." I can only
hope that Nelson does not gather a similar band
around himself.

I once heard of a university class which had
been reading Love's Body as a text. In the final
meeting of the class, the students tore pieces from
the book and ate them, then burned the remainder
and marked their foreheads with ashes from the
charred remains. I was moved by a sense of the
depth of their hunger, and the archetypal level
of their response to it. And I often wonder
how they felt as they returned from the field after
class to eat their lunch in the cafeteria. I
wonder if Nelson, like them, may not be an
incarnation of Kafka's panther, the missing half
of the puzzle:

... and they buried the hunger artist,
straw and all. Into the cage they put a
young panther. Even the most insensitive
felt it refreshing to see this wild
creature leaping around the cage that had
so long been dreary. The panther was
all right. The food he liked was brought
him without hesitation by the attendants;
he seemed not even to miss his freedom;
his noble body, furnished almost to the
bursting point with all that it needed,
themselves, crowded round the cage, and
did not want ever to move away.

6 John S. Kafka, "Ambiguity for Individuation," Arch gen
Psychiat. 25 (Sept. 1971), 238.
7 Norman Mailer, Advertisements for Myself (New York, 1960),
p. 310.

Reviewed by Irene H. Chayes

What is genuinely praiseworthy in this book is indirectly a tribute to an aspect of Blake's originality which is not always appreciated by his readers and critics. In the first two chapters primarily, and from time to time later, Frosch responds to the intellectual suggestiveness of the poetry in intellectual terms, completing fragmentary patterns of ideas, conceptualizing baffling images or relationships, or drawing unexpected analogies with the thought of writers in other periods. His formulations are interesting in themselves, and if some exceed the evidence of the texts, they usually are sufficiently Blakean to be persuasive at least as historical possibilities. Both Frosch and Blake appear at their best in these interludes, and a promising study of a different kind might have grown out of the beginnings made under the headings of "Perspective," "The Vortex," and "Center and Circumference" in particular.

The heterogeneous company of authors Frosch cites or quotes in parallel with Blake includes a number whose names recall earlier juxtapositions by Harold Bloom (Shelley, Ezekiel, Sergei Eisenstein) or Geoffrey Hartman (Wordsworth, Rilke, Gaston Bachelard, Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty). Others--Marshall McLuhan, R. D. Laing, Norman Mailer--reflect topical interests at the probable time of writing. The favored authority, however, is D. H. Lawrence, the late, doctrinaire Lawrence who presented himself as prophet to the England of a more recent time than Blake's, and it was evidently his example, reinforced by a speculation of William Godwin's about the perfectibility of the physical human body, that led Frosch to try to reconcile Blake's overt anti-naturalism (a word Frosch uses in more than one sense) with a conception of the body and the senses which as it is expressed in the subtitle is to be understood literally. Frosch is most successful in his quasi-Lawrentian approach when he is discussing Blake's sex motifs, especially those, such as anti-genitality and the physiological role of the Emanation, which for one reason or another some commentators have hesitated to acknowledge. But the special demands of Frosch's thesis require him in turn to deny that the "pomposous high priest" passage in Jerusalem commends what Norman O. Brown a few years ago called the "polymorphous perverse," and yet elsewhere to maintain that sexuality, though "absorbed," is nevertheless present in the state of restored harmony in Eden.

When he deals with the senses, a more complex subject, Frosch proceeds by a series of omissions, exclusions, and displacements which seriously weaken his critical discussions of the poems, chiefly *Jerusalem*, in the two later chapters. Although he gives the key position in his subtitle to the word "body," he does nothing with and indeed says nothing about the traditional images--the psyche as a society in miniature and the cosmos as a magnified human body--out of which Blake's myth of Albion and the "caverned man" is a running motif, but he mentions Plato only once, in incidental rejection. Similarly, although the book jacket reproduces "The Sun at his Eastern Gate," from the Milton watercolors, part of whose effect depends on a recollection of the Apollo Belvedere, Blake's modes of representing the body in his designs are never considered. The extent of Frosch's attention to Blake's graphic art is his observation in a note that its "anti-naturalistic" style "by itself, works against the given eye" (p. 199). Ignoring the famous eidetic visions, he assumes that Blake consistently opposed the "tyranny" of the sense of sight, and claims for the ear configurations of imagery which actually may acquire a very different character when they are rescued from the misleading isolation of the typographic page, to which Frosch restricts himself, and are set beside relevant designs among the original plates. Los's description of Jerusalem on 186 and the last paragraph of text on 54 are two passages cited as "auditory pictures" which, although they elude Frosch's exceptionally narrow criteria for a "naturalistically perceived visual scene," include images that are both visualizable and graphically visualized. The most difficult image in the passage quoted from 54 is in fact exactly illustrated in Blake's accompanying design--which is not consulted.

To Frosch, anti-naturalistic imagery in poetry, such as that in Blake's supposed "auditory style," or the metaphorical synaesthesia in familiar passages from Coleridge and Shelley, is part of a literal reorganization of the senses through which the body is to be "renovated," on analogy with the resurrection of the fallen Albion, and which it is the function of art to bring about. In this respect, Frosch perhaps has in mind (at some remove) the Romantic strategy of giving the processes of sense perception a place in the operation of the imagination and thereby enabling art to challenge epistemology and aesthetics on their own ground. If to Wordsworth the mind helps to create what it perceives, in the description at the conclusion of Jerusalem the mind that creates perceives its own creations, as artist and spectator at once. Frosch, however, turns the strategy upside down and makes the end of Los's labors the "increase" of perception until it can become "simultaneous with creation"; to open the doors of perception until the "vision of the prophet" is "finally attained by all men" (p. 95).
Frosch insists on precisely these terms, disagreeing with Peter Fisher and Northrop Frye that for Blake perception is essentially a mental act (pp. 28-29 and 187); with Frye that Blake's New Jerusalem is "the total form of all human culture and civilization" (p. 153); and with Howard Adams and Karl Kirzalis that the poem Jerusalem is written as an "example" of the Divine Vision (p. 157). Instead: "In Blake the goal of art is the moment at which it becomes unnecessary, because the whole of life has taken on the character of art. . . . It is the job of fallen art to reorganize the natural body, to awaken it to its self-induced limitations and its real potentials, until it regains the capacity to arise and enter Eden by itself. In this transformation, what we now recognize as art disappears: when Albion enters the furnaces, Los drops out of the poem, consumed with all else in his Sublime Universe" (pp. 158-59).

The relations of artist and non-artist in this account are based on the circumstances of Albion's resurrection near the end of Jerusalem, yet in Blake's text the situation is the reverse of that outlined by Frosch. It is of course Albion who sacrifices himself, or believes he is sacrificing himself, to save Los, his "friend," in whose guise Jesus becomes visible to him, and if Los disappears from the narrative at this point, it is presumably to take his rightful place in the reintegrated cosmic psyche. Moreover, by all indications of the same text, Eden is inhabited (metaphorically speaking) only by the restored Zoas and, on another level of the analogy involved, the Eternals, who very possibly are joined at the last by the redeemed William Blake. The only available counterpart of Frosch's lower-case plural, "all men," is Blake's "Public," which in his prefaces to the four chapters of Jerusalem he addresses both collectively and through its major sects. But although the aim of his rhetoric is to bring these groups to an eventual rejection of error, how and when that particular Last Judgment is to come about remains outside the bounds of the poem; the Jews, the Deists, and the Christians are left to work out their own salvation according to the three different prescriptions given in the prefaces. Again, when Frosch's undifferentiated "men" are renovated by the instant therapy of art, they enter an Eden which is described in an elusive mixture of the figurative and the literal: "we enter the images in body, in a new life, and together with all men" (p. 159); "acts and bodies are like poems, each one serving its maker for a moment" (p. 182); "the responsibility of man for his life is a kind of poetic work and the final products are no longer books but realized human lives" (p. 176). Despite faint echoes of Frosch's conception of Eden as a commune of the post-literate is a creation of his own, imposed on the situation in Blake's poem, and its orientation away from both the artist and the art-work tells more about current socio-cultural attitudes than about Blake.

Like a small number of other recent writers on Blake, Frosch seems to believe that the only alternative to a repetition of the older, received interpretations is a continual search for novel variants and ingenious reformulations, like the "new visions" in which on his last page he urges us to "keep on creating and responding" to the "reality" Blake's poems purportedly describe. This undoubtedly would be Frosch's justification of his unacknowledged shifts from what Blake actually says to what might be said in terms similar to Blake's (an illegitimate extension of the conceptualizing paraphrases) and the silent alterations he makes in the meanings of narrative episodes and verse passages which a few pages away he may have shown he understands perfectly well. Yet The Awakening of Albion is offered as the study of a theme "in the poetry of William Blake," and Frosch does violence to the poetry and its author by his distortions not only of specific texts but also and more especially of Blake's own views of art, which in actuality were the most uncompromising of all held by the Romantics. "To actualize the metaphor in the conditions of our own time and space is to translate the imaginative into the natural, not to raise ourselves to Eden but to bring it down to our level. In this way the desire for a resurrection gives birth to the Hermaphrodite." This insight occurs in one of the early sections (p. 85), in a comment on Blake's parodies of Eden and resurrection. It might stand as a judgment on much of the remainder of the book, in which the body that is renovated ultimately turns out to be only the Hermaphrodite reborn.

No brief review can do justice to Professor Wagenknecht's minutely particularized interpretations. It is difficult even to place his readings in any main line of recent Blakean criticism, for his effort to depict Blake as a "pastoral" poet depends almost entirely on a study of Renaissance pastoral, The Landscape of the Mind. There the pastoral poet is defined as one who presents "a fiction imitating an ideal difficult to credit in terms of the imagery which supports the fiction," and the idea of pastoral as that "this-worldliness and otherworldliness can be reconciled, and that a truly cultivated man, whatever his intimations of divinity, may find a natural human voice." Despite the somewhat unpromising nature of these quotations, Wagenknecht makes but a single reference to Empson and does not use his ideas, and completely ignores John Holloway's discussion of the psychologizing of pastoral in Songs of Innocence, an unfortunate omission. Wagenknecht's commitment is to abstract critical constructs. In Blake's Night literary history is at best discontinuous: "even in minute particulars there is nothing fanciful in the comparison between Blake's Songs and The Shepheardes Calendar." Nothing fanciful, to be sure, but ignoring the two hundred years which separate them may not be the most adroit fashion for developing the significance of such a comparison.

Pivotal for Wagenknecht is his interpretation of "Night," proving, he believes, "that the themes appropriate to [Blake's] pastorals are central to his imaginative and intellectual concerns . . . we may expect to find an important pastoral element in his mature work. This is in fact so much the case that we can read right through Blake's career regarding him distinctly as pastoral or as epic poet." Blake, in other words, is to be understood as following the celebrated Renaissance/Virgilian pattern of poetic development from pastoral to epic. Thel is interpreted to elucidate this pattern, yielding the insight that "we cannot conceive of avoiding Experience without falling into it; therefore the language by means of which we conceive Innocence is dependent upon Experience and tends to reinforce it. This means that whatever else the picture of Thel's world is like, it is not unreal." This is one of the more interesting suggestions in the book, and from it flows Wagenknecht's final statement of the link between Blake's early and late work, or, rather, their essential identity: "the interposition of the Covering Cherub, of the darkness of Generation, between Albion and Jesus—and more particularly the joyous acceptance of this sacrifice by the Divine Imagination in Los—is Blake's final version of the idea of pastoral. The complexity of that idea—whereby the human imagination must simultaneously apprehend reality as fallen and as capable of transcendence—is very great in the last pages of Jerusalem, but there is no difference in kind from the many analogous realizations of the idea in pages of Blake which we have already seen."

I should think few readers would want to quarrel with Wagenknecht's fundamental idea, but some may feel discomfort at his mode of presentation. Unity can be perceived and demonstrated in Blake's poetry without confining it within the limits of a rigid, statically conceived pattern of Renaissance art. Closer attention to the processes by which traditions, genres, and modes of literary sensibility changed between the later sixteenth and the later eighteenth centuries would have enriched and strengthened the power of Wagenknecht's criticism. The hermetic spirit of Blake's Night makes it seem more like a work of ten or fifteen years ago than a contemporary piece of Blake criticism, but, by the same token, the dated quality of the book indicates its freedom from the pernicious fads of 1970s Blake scholarship.

Karl Kroeber, Chairman of the Department of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University, is author of numerous studies of Romantic literature.
Since the appearance of Blake's Visionary Form Dramatic in 1970 almost every new study of Blake has paid at least lip service to the goal of unifying his "composite art." Ms. Mellor's contribution to this task is a comprehensive study of "form" in Blake's work, touching upon almost all of the illuminated books and detouring into some of the Milton illustrations, the Book of Job, the Arlington Court Picture, and the Bible paintings. The student who is looking for close readings of individual poems or pictures, or for new information on iconography and verbal symbolism will not find these things here. What he will find is best summed up in Ms. Mellor's introductory remarks:

This study of Blake's visual-verbal art will focus upon the development of form in his work, both as a philosophical concept and as a stylistic principle. I have chosen to emphasize this aspect of Blake's art, which has not been previously examined at length, because the functions and purposes of form came to pose a critical problem for Blake's thought and art. I hope to show that in 1795, Blake was simultaneously rejecting as a Urizenic tyranny the outline or "bound or outward circumference" which reason and the human body impose upon man's potential divinity and at the same time creating a visual art that relied almost exclusively upon outline and tectonic means. (p. xv)

There is some exaggeration in the statement that this subject has not been previously examined at length (most of the studies of Blake in the last twenty years have addressed themselves to the question of form in one sense or another), and there is a misleadingly cautious note in Ms. Mellor's restriction of her hypothesis to 1795, since the book really offers a developmental scheme which covers Blake's entire artistic career. Nevertheless, this year is the keystone in Ms. Mellor's argument. Blake is seen as moving from a period of utopian optimism and harmony between his formal theories and stylistic practice, to a middle period (centered in 1795) of anti-utopian pessimism and conflict between theory and practice, to a final period of return to "the beliefs Blake held as a young man" (p. 215).

The dates of these periods are treated rather flexibly. The middle period is centered in 1795, but its emergence is located "between 1790 and 1795" (p. xvi), and the real watershed sometimes appears to be 1793-94, when Blake allegedly abandons the optimism of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell for the pessimism of the late Lambeth books. This period is described as continuing on from 1795 to 1802 (p. 193), but Ms. Mellor appears to have in mind a transition period from 1802 to 1805 (Blake's final years at Felpham and his return to London), which ushers in the final period, 1805-27 (p. 243). The periods indicated in Ms. Mellor's chapter titles do not correspond very clearly to the developmental scheme presented in the text: Chapter 4, "Romantic Classicism and Blake's Art, 1793-1795," does not mean that his style of "Romantic Classicism" ended in 1795 (Ms. Mellor argues that it continues throughout his career); Chapter 5 deals with "Blake's Concept of Form, 1795-1810," but this "period" is operative only in the discussion of Vала; elsewhere, Blake's "late art" is located from 1805 to 1827.

A three-phase notion of Blake's development is fairly commonplace (E. D. Hirsch has presented the most radical argument for it in his Innocence and Experience: An Introduction to Blake, New Haven, 1964), and probably has a general kind of validity. It seems likely that Blake underwent some sort of personal crisis after the failure of the French Revolution, and another during his sojourn with Hayley in Felpham. In her "Note on Methodology" Ms. Mellor links her views with what she calls the "chronological approach" exemplified by David Erdman, Morton Paley, and Sir Anthony Blunt (one wonders why Hirsch is not mentioned here). This approach is contrasted with that of the "system" critics, Robert Gleckner and Northrop Frye, who tend to see Blake's work as a continuous, coherent whole. In some ways this methodological dispute seems to me a dead issue (especially if it means I have to decide whether to believe David Erdman or Northrop Frye), if not dead, it should be laid to rest with all deliberate speed. I doubt that Northrop Frye would be insensible to Ms. Mellor's contention that "Blake was, after all, a human being, subject to the same changes of heart and mind that plague and enrich us all." (p. xix).

The real questions of interest are, of course, whether and how these changes are manifested in Blake's work, and whether and how they affect our interpretations of those works. The answers to these questions seem to me equivocal. The scheme of optimism-pessimism-optimism may have validity of a sort, but I find it hard to see Blake so utterly depressed for all those years, even if he was illustrating Young's Night Thoughts. Blake's remark in 1804 about being "enlightened with the light I enjoyed in my youth, and which has for exactly twenty years been closed from me" cannot be taken at face value (are Songs of Innocence and
The marriage of Heaven and Hell the works of a man who had lost the light of his youth? If the statement is used to prove anything about Blake's development (as Ms. Mellor uses it on page 202), then we must conclude that Blake's pessimistic period extends from 1784, not 1794.

The main evidence for Ms. Mellor's argument is what she sees as the "anti-utopian" character of the late Lambeth books and the 1795 color prints. The book of Urizen, the Book of Los, A Shandy, and Europe mark a period when Blake "condemns the human body and all limited, rational, abstract systems" (p. 139). While it is true that these poems are generally more somber and inconclusive than some earlier works (except Tityr, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, and many of the Songs of Experience), it is quite easy to find Blake "condemning" the human body, reason, and limits in many of his pre-1794 writings. As early as 1788 he attributes religious divisions to "the confined nature of bodily sensation," asserts that "the bounded is loathed by its possessor," and satirizes rationalism and empiricism (see There is No Natural Religion, both versions, and All Religions Are One). It is also possible to see him making a distinction in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell between a true reason which serves as "the bound or outward circumference of Energy," thus functioning as a "Contrary" to Energy in order to produce "progression," and a false reason which usurps the role of energy and tries to dominate human consciousness. There is also a related distinction to be seen between a false body which confines the soul entirely within the realm of the five senses, and a true body which serves as a medium for the infinite "by an improvement of sensual enjoyment" (MHH 3, 4, and 14). Ms. Mellor seems to recognize this dialectical role of reason, and the visionary role of the body, but she argues that, within a year of articulating these distinctions in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Blake had changed his mind: "Whereas Blake had earlier defined the body as 'a portion of Soul discern'd by the five senses' [MHH 4], he now pictures the body as fixed, finite matter "inexorably bounded by the five senses and the circumscribing force of reason." (p. 94). The difference from the 1798-1793 period seems to be encapsulated in the word "inexorably," i.e., "incapable of movement or change." Hence, the conclusion: "man must deny his mortal body to enter heaven" and "only death can save man from the problem of human evil" (p. 100).

Ms. Mellor makes no mention of the fact that Europe opens with one of Blake's most eloquent assertions of the power of the senses to discern at least a portion of the infinite:

Five windows light the cavern'd man; thro' one he breathes the air; Thro' one, hears music of the spheres; thro' one, the eternal vine Flourishes, that he may receive the grapes; tho' one can look, And see small portions of the eternal world that ever groweth; The body is a cave in Europe, as it was in The Marriage, where "man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern" (MHH 14), but it still has windows and "doors of perception" which can be cleansed to reveal the infinite. There is nothing "inexorable" about this image of confinement.

Ms. Mellor cites another passage from Europe to show the "body as a physical prison that confines and inevitably prevents Energy from expanding into infinity" (p. 99):

... when the five senses whelm'd
In deluge o'er the earth-born man; then turn'd the fluxile eyes
Into two stationary orbs, concentrating all things
... 
Into earths rolling in circles of space, that like an ocean rush'd
And overwhelmed all except this finite wall of Flesh.

But this passage really says just the opposite of what Ms. Mellor claims: the body is seen here, not as a prison which confines energy, but as a bastion against the chaos of rational empiricism. The body is the Noah's Ark which rescues man from the "cold floods of abstraction" that engulf Europe.

Ms. Mellor seems unaware of or indifferent to the counter-evidence to her assertions, and she never deals with any alternative hypotheses that might explain the evidence more fully. She ignores the argument, for instance, that Blake might be presenting the body as a cave or prison in the Lambeth books, not because he is "rejecting" the body (or reason or boundaries) per se as "inevitably" oppressive, but because he is concerned with the question of how, in fact, the true body of "sensual enjoyment" and delight comes to be replaced by a false body which confines the spirit. The answer to this question would be, for Blake, the abuse of reason—not the right reason which is an eternal contrary to energy, not the reason which "A Little Boy Lost" uses to expose the priest's mysteries, and not the reason which Tom Paine uses to expose Bishop Watson—but the false reason which tries to impose one abstract law on life, or reduce human experience to a "Ratio of the Five Senses." The late Lambeth books deal with the linked themes of fall and creation, the fall of reason into a void of abstraction, and the creation of a body as an (admittedly imperfect) barrier against nihilism, the "ocean of voidness unfathomable" (Urizen 5: 10). They do not spell out any redemption or apocalyptic awakening—in Faulkner's terms, Blake was probably more concerned with surviving than prevailing in 1794. But there is nothing "inexorable" or "inevitable" about them: they are open-ended poems, the Genesis phase in Blake's "Bible of Hell," as the title of The [First] Book of Urizen implies.

The overall problem with Ms. Mellor's approach is revealed in her remarks on how she dealt with the editorial problems in Valla: "I... have often, I fear, chosen that arrangement of text that most clearly reveals the theme with which I am primarily concerned." In a similar way, she
mobilizes textual evidence, frequently misinterpreted, from Blake's earlier writings, not to explain those works, but to demonstrate her hypothesis about his development. This sort of strategy can only confuse and mislead the beginning student of Blake, and it will certainly fail to convince the experts.

But suppose, for the moment, that Ms. Mellor's hypothesis were true, and that Blake did go through a loss of faith in the middle of his career, a period in which the body, reason, the material world all seemed utterly unredeemable. How would this affect his art or our response to it? Ms. Mellor's answer is very surprising and paradoxical. It turns out that Blake's supposed hatred of bodies boundaries has no effect whatever on his pictorial strategy: "here, as everywhere, the heroic human form dominates Blake's mature art" (p. 138). The linear, tectonic, non-illusionistic style of "Romantic Classicism" remains constant throughout Blake's work, and the human figure is never more glorious than in the pictures done at the height of Blake's supposed pessimism about the body, the 1795 color prints.

If Blake's alleged hatred of bodies and boundaries had no discernible effect on his pictorial style, then the only thing left for it to do is to affect our response to that style, to make us perceive contradictions between what Blake is supposedly trying to say and what he actually does say in his pictures. It permits us, in other words, to patronize Blake retroactively, and to say things like "Blake was of the human body's party without knowing it" (p. 164).

There is, however, a kernel of truth in Ms. Mellor's intuition of a paradox in the Lambeth books. She is right to notice a tension between Blake's poetical "condemnation" of Newton and his depiction of him as a magnificent nude. Blake does, as she notes, use "the same visual style and media to paint both evil and good images," and thus "his normative attitudes often blur" (p. 139). But this paradox is not a result of unconscious contradictions: it is all of a piece with Blake's explicit strategy of satirizing categories of good and evil, as described in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. Newton and Urizen may be in error, but they are never defined as evil, utterly cast out, unredeemable. Their heroic potential continues to shine, even in the darkest pictures, and the "unsuspecting physicists" who use the Newton print to "illustrate their textbooks" (p. 164) have, in this case, more insight into Blake than Ms. Mellor.

There are some good things in this book, cropping up when Ms. Mellor forgets about demonstrating her paradoxical hypotheses. Her discussion of the relation between Innocence and Energy (Chapter 3) establishes a bit of continuity and coherence in Blake's thought that is sometimes overlooked. Her analyses of the illustrations to D'Allegro and IL Parnasso and the Arlington Court Picture (Chapter 5) challenge previous readings in interesting ways. But the general tendency of the book is to exaggerate and falsify for the sake of the thesis. In The Ancient of Days engraving, we are told, "Blake has totally rejected a natural space" (p. 136). Why, then, did he make those shapes remind us of a sun breaking through clouds? "Blake's nudes," we are told, "are always in motion, never static" (p. 144), except, presumably, about three-fourths of the time. Only while revising The Four Zoos from 1805 to 1810 did Blake learn that "the fall may be psychological rather than physical" (p. 206), a statement which leaves us wondering what those "mind-forged manacles" of "London" (1794) were made of!

I will not go into the numerous problems which arise from Ms. Mellor's fuzzy use of previous criticism, particularly her adoption of the concepts of "closed" and "open" form, taken from Heinrich Wölfflin's distinctions between Renaissance and Baroque art. Suffice it to say that Ms. Mellor seems unaware(1) that Wölfflin's categories have been vigorously challenged as over-simple by art historians; (2) that there might be problems involved in transferring concepts developed to distinguish two historical epochs onto the work of a single artist; (3) that she has reduced Wölfflin's subtle refinements of the concepts of open-ness and closure to his remarks on geometry, and that Wölfflin would certainly have seen all of Blake's paintings as "closed" in his terms.

It is distressing not to be able to find more good things to say about this book. Ms. Mellor's general intuitions seem quite good: her interest in form in a developmental context, her emphasis on checking Blake's aesthetic theory against his practice, her use of stylistic in harness with iconography—all these are, to my mind, exactly the kind of approaches that need to be applied to Blake's art. Unhappily, they do not take us very far in this particular book, and the reader who wishes to learn about Blake through Ms. Mellor will have to sift through a great deal of chaff before discovering the wheat.
Retrospectively, 1968 was an exceptional year for Blake criticism in France as it witnessed the publication of valuable studies by Francis Leaud and by Jacques Blondel. Leaud's introduction to Blake is relatively well known as it is published in a student collection. Unfortunately, Jacques Blondel's book remains neglected on the shelves of bookstores.

Blondel has also published critical studies on Milton as a Biblical poet in *Paradise Lost*, and on Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which indicates the direction of his literary interests.

Blondel first apologizes for the brevity of his book, and then considers the appropriateness of one more critical study on Blake. The concern about originality leads him to select a specific approach, namely, 'wonder and profanation,' which he deems to be a reliable thematic guide into Blake's world.

The author's main purpose is to give a few examples of Blake's treatment of contraries, as based on Blake's own motto: "Without contraries is no progression." As a result, the book holds together only inasmuch as one assumes with Blondel that the words "wonder" and "profanation" are mutually exclusive. It seems, however, that these words operate on different levels. Indeed, the poet does not wonder at the given world. He wonders at his own creation, i.e., the world seen "through" and not "with" the eyes, as Blake puts it. According to Blondel, "Profanation destroys, desecrates, yet at the same time gives birth to strangeness; it disrupts things, the established order, the church, the royal palace, matrimony." In other words, through "profanation" the poet seeks to reveal that which he can wonder at. But can one speak of desecration when nothing is sacred prior to the poet's vision? "Everything that lives is holy" Blake says again and again, but the life he speaks of depends on Imagination.

Blondel proceeds to support his views with a close, perceptive reading of *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. He undoubtedly deserves credit for his excellent analyses of innocence as Blake conceives of it. His next remarks then come as a surprise. Indeed, he relates Blake's allusion to the Golden Age to some kind of "primitivism," and ascribes Blake's celebration of a "new age" to the poet's alleged "naïveté." One only needs to return to the texts themselves in order to gain a clear understanding of Blake's conception of time.

Another weakness appears in Blondel's argument when he deals with the relationship between reality and vision. This, in fact, brings us to a problem common to all Blake critics, who are forced to choose between total involvement and the detachment known as objectivity. In taking the latter position, Blondel can be commended for his penetrating discussion of Blake with references to the Gnostic tradition, to the historical context, and to other poets with similar concerns. However, this type of criticism may generate errors, which is the case here.

The most blatant error in Blondel's approach lies in his interpretation of Albion as the mother goddess, the "female will." The error stems from his "explanation" of Albion's passivity in the light of the distinction between active (male) and passive (female) elements in most traditions. Such a reading belittles Blake's main purpose in the longer poems, which is precisely to account for Albion's long sleep on "the rock of ages." In the wake of his peculiar interpretation of Albion, Blondel stresses the characteristics of what would now be called "male chauvinism" in Blake's thought. We do not deny the violence of Blake's indictment of the "female will," but this applies only to the fallen world. Eternally, man is androgynous (something Blondel does not fail to mention), which makes impossible any hierarchy between male and female.

A poet like Blake requires an inherent acceptance of his basic tenets on the part of the reader. This acceptance involves a determination to reject any dualistic thought, hence the irrelevance of Blondel's search for the suitability of Blake's vision to "reality." It bears repeating that the only reality for Blake is the one seen "through" and not "with" the eye. Thus, when Blondel grounds Blake's originality on his being both a realist and a visionary, it should be pointed out that the "and" is unnecessary since both terms are interchangeable in Blake's universe.
This bi-lingual edition of the principal works of William Blake one has awaited for a long time. Certainly, Andre Gide, who discovered Blake, or believed he did, at the beginning of the century, launched a permanent interest for us in this great English visionary. But the attended supervision, in the circumstances of publication, did not follow. Also, Blake belonged to this unfortunate category of authors about whom one speaks and whom one reads little.

The masterpiece of this first volume is The Songs of Innocence and of Experience, the first of which were written in 1789, the second, five years later, but the poet decided to join them in a single collection. In the intervening time, Blake published The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and his poem The French Revolution. In his presentation Pierre Leyris, to whom one owes the translation of the works in this first volume, emphasizes that if The Songs of Innocence express the "pure and virginal apprehensions" of young childhood, they do not render an account of any lost paradise. The chimney-sweepers of 8 years or less, sold by their fathers to an employer and sleeping in ashes, waiting to contract cancer of the scrotum, or an illness of the lungs or of the eyes, bear witness that innocence does not exclude the experience of suffering. It concerns a state of perception. In the Songs written five years later, Blake sets up an indictment. To be is to be restricted, walled in by egotism, the prey of evil, suppressed by the forbidden things which one orders on oneself.

The questions of the fall of man and of the mystery of evil are posed. Developing his discoveries of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, influenced by his reading of Jacob Boehme, Blake does not assign to evil only a negative and scandalous role. The French revolution, which he admires, confirms his intuition about the ambiguity of violence. The condition of all progress, of existence even, is the struggle between contraries, the confrontation between good and evil.

That [dialectic] does not naturally signify that the poet of the Songs of Experience is a predecessor of Hegel and of Nietzsche, as certain people lightly claim. Blake is not a western philosopher. He is a mystic who, as a child, contemplating the reapers, behind them, saw an angel. He conversed every day with the spirit of his younger brother, who died in 1787. He writes under the dictation of those dead whom he cherished. All his life, Blake will be in a familiar relation with the supernatural. His cosmology and his cosmogony are determined by this interior experience. If upon close consideration he appears as a prophet, his vision of history is antipodal to that of the rationalists. As much by the nature of the questions as by the answers he brings to them, he is extraordinary.

Neither philosophies nor theologies can annex this prodigious William Blake, inspired engraver, painter, water-colorist, solitary thinker, and one of the greatest English poets. In this respect also, he does not resemble anyone, not even those who influence him, Shakespeare and Milton; at the same time he is easily manageable and extraordinarily complex.

For Blake, art is not an end in itself, a worldly ambition, but a necessity, an inflexible part of the mystery, as are good and evil.


Reviewed by Paul Miner

Festschriften have an endemic weakness, since they are frequently committed to assembling incompatible and disparate materials representing various degrees of readiness and competence. Since there is no single articifer in control of cohesion, emphases and development, other than the editors involved, such frution can be artificial. And the "hot house" results sometimes leave a taste of brass. Fortunately, these essays on William Blake, in honor of Sir Geoffrey Keynes, avoid this stigma. This volume presents in sequence, weight, and subject matter a studiously integrated selection of essays. The editors and the authors are to be congratulated.

The essays reveal a rich vein of provocative and hard-core evidence that reflects many facets in matters Blakean. Although Blakean research, if I adjudge its present perspective correctly, has had many of its textual and historical abysses sufficiently asphalted over by Titans such as Keynes, important massifs have yet to be climbed in search of elusive snow leopards. Blake scholarship is being refined to the point that attention, with some safety, can be concentrated on the intricate shifting sands of Blake's minute particulars.

"Blake's Early Poetry" by Michael Phillips examines, sensitively, certain classical, Spenserian and Miltonic aspects of Blake's early poetry. Phillips traces important allusions and parallels, and these help give his essay proper focus when he discusses the complex semantic tonalities of the poetry involved.

David Bindman in "Blake's 'Gothicised Imagination' and the History of England" clarifies several significant particulars concerning Blake's early pictorial preoccupations with Westminster Abbey, and he also investigates, insofar as space allows, Blake's early works on "Historical" subjects, exploring the possible graphic influence of Mortimer.

Robert N. Essick discusses Blake's *Tiriel* designs, which were executed to accompany separately Blake's text. He investigates Barry's possible influence on Blake and other relevant iconographic themes. He, rightly to my thinking, articulates the view that the *Tiriel* pictorial "experiment," a symbolic commentary on 18th century aesthetics, is manque, particularly when compared with the much later Job series, wherein the plates also are separate from the text involved.

Without pious clucking, F. R. Leavis' article represents an intelligent "appreciation" of Blake, but, considering the sophistication and urbanity of other articles in the volume, it does not cut the mustard. In part this "failure" is because the essay was, originally, a speech to a university audience, and as a consequence it is comparatively superficial. I take no great exception to what Leavis says, but object to the fact that his essay is addressed to the vegetative ears, rather than primarily to the intellectual powers. I do take trivial exception to a bit of recidivism in Leavis' remarks about Kathleen Raine, who has become something of a whipping girl of the anti-cult groups. I also am a member of the anti-cult cult, but until someone wishes to refine further the motherload of esoterica Miss Raine has mined, she should not be beaten out of proportion for panning up fool's gold occasionally.

Josephine Miles examines "Blake's Frame of Language" and points out that *death* and *night* have a high numerical frequency when compared with Blake's mention of *day*. She carefully examines the strata of the "once-words" and the "ever forms" in her essay, and she successfully negotiates the degrees of difference between statistics and common sense.

Michael J. Tolley examines in "Blake's Songs of Spring" the devious fugue-like elements of this imagery in Blake's works. "This article is patiently documented and consummately reasoned, and it crucially extends our understanding of the analogues of Blake's important but widely ignored ethos of *dayspring.*"

Jean H. Hagstrum develops an excellent essay on "Christ's Body," a study of the begotten "man-Christ" in Blake's graphic and textual works. Particularly interesting is Hagstrum's analysis of the "Frontispiece" of the *Songs of Experience* in this context.

"The Chapel of Gold" by G. Wilson Knight is an effort at acceptable solipsism, for he deliberately avoids any conjectural "sources" for this poem. Though this may be too choleric a view, limned with prejudice, *Whoa, cried the Mute!* If I may be indulged with such a vulgarity, I'm a source-man. And perhaps the differences are owing to my metaphysics. I grant that, ultimately, a poem must become what it is, an organism

Paul Miner has written several articles on Blake. At present he is preparing his manuscript for Blake's London.
independent of the poet. But to ignore the integuments of connective tissue is false physiology, and the concept here does not wash (particularly, since the poem about the Chapel is rich with Biblical allusions and parallels). To isolate a poem from its intellectual archipelago prevents us from appreciating its "geography."

The study of the "interlinear hieroglyphs" of Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell by David V. Erdman, Tom Dargan, and Marlene Deverell-Van Meter is a masterful and precise study of this poem's sub-iconography. This essay is one of the finest honours Keynes has paid Blake's "irritating form of punctuation" (according to Northrop Frye) is central to Blake's meaning. Particularly interesting are Blake's so-called bird signatures, or the pictogram of a man, or the burin in the form of a man, or the senses (portrayed by a male and female touching hands), or "Blake" in the roots of a tree, or the slug. MARK THIS (essay), Blake would have said.

The explication of Blake's ideo-glyphs is without the cant, militant speculation, or the argumentative dogma that is often attendant when lines of intellectual rectitude are drawn. This piece is definitive in the sense that the initial guide lines implemented by this essay are certainly to be followed in any further elucidations of Blake's texts and graphics.

Janet Warner explores the amalgam of Blake's hunched, bent-over, head-clutching, prostrate figures, representing despair. These figures represent hope, as Warner explains, and are connected with the symbolic interstices of the spectre, a creature torn between melancholy and pride. This is an excellent essay that acutely investigates the difficult evidence at hand, though Warner's understanding of the spectre is, perhaps because of the practical restrictions of space, far too telescoped.

Morris Eaves discusses, succinctly and sensibly, the graphic rhythm of the title-page of The Book of Urizen, and he calls attention to the formidable stack of convex curves and the rigid pictorial symmetry that are subjected to a kind of gravity which weighs upon the subject etching.

John Beer discusses Blake, Coleridge, and Wordsworth between the years 1789 and 1805, and the evidence relevant to Blake, if speculative, is highly important. The essay is a carefully controlled attempt to freeze in amber some of the ambiguities involved.

Morton D. Paley discusses Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcott and their relationship and affinities to Blake. Interesting and new parallels are pointed out, and Paley, after sorting the material he has accumulated, distinguishes Blake's philosophy from that of the Nephew and the Virgin of God.

Martin Butlin in an extensively researched article on John Varley helps to explain why several "dull" copies of some of Blake's drawings exist, evidently taken from a new telescope invented by Varley's brother. This article, with its excellently-documented speculations, is of singular interest.

Raymond Lister notes the references to Blake in Samuel Palmer's letters, and though Blake may have been affected by "erroneous spirits," he was "one of the sanest, if not the most thoroughly sane man" Palmer ever met.

Suzanne R. Hoover assesses Blake's reputation between 1827 and 1863, and this is an article that is of considerable assistance in determining the genesis and discrete evolution of Blake's critical reputation for the period.

G. E. Bentley, Jr., discusses the monumental importance that Sir Geoffrey Keynes' efforts have represented to all Blakists. Keynes, during a period of more than 60 years of scholarship, has published some 40 books on Blake, and has served as a bibliographer, editor, publisher, discoverer, and collector of Blake.

As a personal coda, I should like at this point to express my own gratitude to Sir Geoffrey Keynes. He always answered my numerous letters. He twice made special trips to Oxford to examine manuscripts for me. And when I bumbled across some drawings at the Society of Antiquaries and thought I had discovered a Westminster Abbey sketch by Blake, the exhumation of Edward I, it was years later that Sir Geoffrey was able to substantiate details of the matter. He gave me a grand acknowledgement for instinct and hope—but it was Sir Geoffrey who put the pieces of the mosaic together. Blakists know Sir Geoffrey for his courtesy and his kindness. If I may be allowed a sentimentality, he is, as someone said of Blake, a glorious piece of mortality.

Suffice it to say that no Blake library will be complete without this new volume on William Blake. Its 82 illustrations are faultlessly reproduced, and the book's seventeen essays examine many new and illuminating theses.

It is suitable that this review be followed by a review of the second edition of one of the major works of Sir Geoffrey Keynes.

The second edition of Sir Geoffrey Keynes' Blake Studies, is what one would expect from this author, this press, and this second edition (profusely illustrated). I will avoid the tedium of attempting any collocation between the first and second editions, for it would be merely an exercise in the picayune. Obviously, go with the second edition.

Sir Geoffrey Keynes is the père de famille of all Blake scholars, and his authoritative
investigation of the particulars that affects Blakean studies is an invaluable contribution to the field. One is impressed by the stability of this scholarship, for much of the material was written decades ago. The "Ratio" of Keynes' findings is still pertinent and has survived the intellectual battle to which quidnuncs and young turks have (rightly) subjected the details.

Examples of the formidable expertise of Keynes can be exemplified in the following: the tonalities of the prints of "Little Tom the Sailor" help to determine which prints were issued posthumously (also the real Blake prints have a "tassel" P). A print from Pilgrim's Progress, "Sweeping the Interpreter's House," usually assigned to the year 1817, Keynes establishes as being instead of circa 1794; Keynes also rejects one study previously included in Blake's Pilgrims Progress series, assigning the work to Paradise Regained.

There are, of course, highly speculative bibelots, such as the gut supposition that one sketch by William Blake may be in fact a sketch of William's brother, Robert. Also Keynes speculates that Blake's graphic representation of his gigantic spiritualization of a flea may have been influenced by Robert Hooke's 17th century microscope studies of this insect. Though these are legitimate assumptions, of course, their tenuosities are pointed out by Keynes.

There has been a judicious updating of material in the second edition. Since writing Blake Studies, initially, much more evidence has come to light: G. E. Bentley, Jr.'s discovery that a Robert Blake was enrolled at the Royal Academy, the further "un-earthing" of obscured and deleted passages in Blake's notebook by the use of infra-red rays, comparisons of Blake's iconography in America with John Stedman's Surinam, the assignment of an engraved map of the Hafod estate to Blake by David Erdman's "lower-case g" string of deductions, the discovery of a drawing in the Society of Antiquaries of Edward I, presumably taken at the disinterment of this monarch in Westminster Abbey, and identified as Blake's work through Keynes' diligent efforts at graphology (and along with this came to light some additional sketches that also may be among Blake's early works)... All of these, and other points, give additional dimension to Keynes' second edition of Blake Studies.

The Ark tailpiece in a work by Jacob Bryant and a minor but crucial repetitive theme in the frontispiece of Commin's Elegy Set to Music, 1786, represent highly interesting evidence that these engravings are indeed by Blake. Also interesting is Keynes' observation concerning Michael Angelo's influence on Blake's use of the "classical foot," in which the second toe is longer than the "thumb" toe. Keynes patiently and knowledgeably sorts out the typo amendations Blake made in the carelessly printed Poetical Sketches. He establishes George Cumberland's "confluence" with Blake's new method of printing and its possible influence on the painter-engraver-poet, at least as early as 1784.

Keynes points out that Blake was paid approximately ninepence each for his watercolor designs for Night Thoughts. And he also discusses the details concerning Blake's commercial association with the firm of Wedgewood (one plate design by Blake was altered, in which a Wedgewood bed pan was substituted for Blake's original design).

One interesting essay concerns Blake's Descriptive Catalogue printed by a printer in South Molton Street (where Blake then lived in London). Keynes also investigates Blake and the social-literary circle of Charles Lamb, beginning at about the period of 1809. And Southey, rightly, calls one of Blake's designs for Hayley as portraying "Fido volat, and the crocodile rampant," the latter having a mouth like a "bootjack." But Keynes remarks Southey could not have known the lamentable circumstances under which Blake was working with "Hayley-gaily." However, Coleridge was surely more on target when he stated that the symbols of the Songs of Blake were, sometimes, rather like a "wet tendon."
The discovery of the volume of Bacon's *Essays* in which Blake's annotations were written (now owned by Keynes) is a fundamental effort on Keynes' part, and the elucidation of Blake's relationship with John Gabriel Stedman is a most significant addendum to any Blake biography. (There is one error on p. 101, however, in which Keynes [or his typesetter] has Blake moving to Lambeth in 1789—too soon, as the rate books on the matter confirm.) At any rate, in the Stedman *Journal* we get additional glimpses of the important association of Joseph Johnson, Bartolozzi, Blake—and others.

Keynes' discussion of Blake's miniatures and Blake's library extends our knowledge in this area, and, from documents of Blake's trial at Chichester, Keynes surmises that Lieutenant Hulton of His Majesty's Dragoons is properly a symbolic walk-on in Blake's contemporary pantheon: Hulton. Also, very important to the textual discoveries affecting Blake are Keynes' efforts to call attention to crucial additional lines from *Jerusalem.* Keynes' essay on Blake's copper plates is an excellent example of the immensely detailed knowledge that Keynes brings to Blakean scholarship, and from this Keynes deduces that Blake's press was constructed of wood. Blake's tribulations, as elaborated by Keynes, concerning Blake's woodcuts for Thornton's *Virgil* must precipitate historical angst among Blakists (it seems Blake was always dealing with barbarians or philistines).

Keynes' discovery of Blake's copy of Dante's *Inferno* was a sustained effort that lasted some three decades, and after several trips to an attic the matter almost resulted in despair, before Keynes obtained this invaluable annotated copy in Blake's hand. Keynes discusses the history of the *Job* designs by Blake and their adaptation for the stage. Here he also calls attention to the symbolic signature on a *Job* pencil sketch, "When the Morning Stars sang together." This consisted of a straight line (immortality), a hand, a "B" (Blake), an eye, and a circle (presumably signifying symmetry). And Keynes concludes that this represents Blake's view of Poetic Genius, whose immortal hand & eye framed this symmetry.

The Arlington Court picture, which was almost thrown away with some debris, Keynes identified and it is described (additional particulars are noted by Kathleen Raine). Keynes' essay on Blake and the John Linnell documents is most revealing, for it gives invaluable details of Blake during some of the years in which he almost "disappeared." Keynes' investigation of the Cumberland papers in the British Museum has a wide perimeter of interest. Keynes notes that one line, "Blake dim'd with superstition," written on a letter by Blake to the religious huckster Dr. Trusler, was not a notation by Trusler but was instead in Cumberland's hand.

All in all, if (negatively) King James was Bacon's primum mobile, then (in a highly affirmative sense) Sir Geoffrey is the primum mobile for Blake scholars, and the second edition of *Blake Studies* is further evidence that establishes his position in this domain of scholarship.


Reviewed by G. E. Bentley, Jr.

Blake's engraved illustrations to *Job* (1826) are probably his best known series of designs, and there have been many books dealing wholly or significantly with *Job,* notably by Norton (1875), Binyon (1905), Wickstead (1910, 1924), Russell (1912), Damon (1924, 1966), Binyon & Keynes (1935), Hofer (1937), Hamblen (?1939), Patchen (1947), Lande (1948), and Wright (1972). The subject, therefore, is not novel, and to undertake a doctoral study of it at this date is an act of formidable temerity, an act which Mr. Lindberg has triumphantly justified.

The most important part of the dissertation is the catalogue (pp. 183-352), which includes not only the conventional descriptions, provenances, size, collection, etc., but also elaborate and extremely persuasive studies of the sources and meaning of each drawing or print. This catalogue rai sonné of Blake's *Job* designs will for very long remain the standard work on the subject.

Chapter I, on the chronology of the *Job* designs, is useful but somewhat abstract and tabular in form, with summaries of relevant documents. I think it might most usefully appear as an appendix.

Chapter II, with the Introduction and Synopsis of *Job,* serves its purpose very well, but I think it should be the first chapter.

Chapter III, about Blake's drawing, painting, and engraving techniques, and his use of *The Testament of Job,* is novel and extremely useful. In particular, the account of Blake's use of the visual tradition of *Job* illustration is highly original, persuasive, and important.

Chapter IV, "Blake's Visions and the *Job," is very brief (pp. 151-66) and, dealing as it does with Blake as a mystic, is interesting and plausible but not, I think, especially relevant to this work. Perhaps it belongs in an appendix.

Chapter V, on technique again, is original and penetrating, but the matter seems to overlap with that in Chapter III and might well have been included there.

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In terms of originality, the book is important primarily in six ways: (1) Mr. Lindberg looks at Blake's *Job* with the eyes of an artist and an art historian, not as a literary critic (the mode adopted by almost all his predecessors)—I believe it may be said that Mr. Lindberg is the first to see Blake's *Job* truly and see it whole; (2) The treatment is very systematic, and, with such a very large bulk of material, and an artist as unconventional and irregular as Blake, this is of the first importance, though Mr. Lindberg's predecessors have rarely been able to see, or cope with, its importance; (3) The dating of the Butts watercolors in 1810 and the well-founded dismissal of the New Zealand set from the Blake canon are original and important; (4) The dating of the first separate Job sketches and engravings in 1793 is very welcome; (5) The elaborate study of sources, and the conclusion that Blake's *Job* is entirely traditional, are important and reliable; and (6) The analysis of Blake's designs of "The Spiritual Form of Pitt," of "Nelson," and of "Napoleon" (with a visual recreation of the last, lost, drawing), which contradicts, I believe, every previous discussion of these works, seems persuasive to me, and will prove the nucleus for future discussions of these important Blake works. The book is thus much more than a study of the *Job* series of engravings of 1825; it is a systematic analysis of allusions to the Biblical Job in all Blake's writings and drawings. In future, scholars concerned with any aspect of Blake's treatment of Job, indeed scholars dealing with iconography of Job after 1700, should consult, understand, depend upon, and be grateful to, Mr. Lindburg's study of *William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job*.

The book would have been significantly improved by the addition of a few small details. It needs a Table of Abbreviations, for a number of the abbreviations are distinctly unfamiliar to literary scholars. The sources of the photographs should be given, and the locations of the originals reproduced (e.g., *Jerusalem*) should regularly be identified. The captions to the illustrations should have cross-references to the text. It would be useful to have, in one place, a survey of Blake scholarship concerning *Job*.

The difficulties of printing a book with a printer whose language is not that of the text are notorious, and in general Mr. Lindberg has overcome them heroically. It yet needed to be proofread thoroughly and effectively once more. For a book of the distinction of this one, there are considerably too many defects of a mechanical kind, particularly of spelling, punctuation and diction, but also of capitalization, and agreement of subject and verb. (Per contra, I should remark that the English is often remarkably eloquent and effective, not mere run-of-the-mill scholarly writing.) The bibliography (pp. 353-62) and the bibliographical details elsewhere are often surprisingly irregular. There is no such book as "Keynes, George Cumberland, 1970" (pp. 44, 357), for example, and John Flaxman's *Lectures* were not published in "1792" (pp. 290, 311). There are as well a few minor omissions, such as Robert Essick's *Finding List of Blake's designs in the Blake Newsletter*, Janet Warner's essays on Blake's pathos-formulae published recently, and the 1971 edition of Keynes's *Blake Studies*. The facts given are on the whole remarkably reliable, but a few are suspect, for example, that Westall "knew Blake personally" (p. 327) or that proofs of *Job* are in the "National Gallery of Art, Washington" (p. 30)—they are in the National Gallery, but the location is Jenkintown, Pennsylvania. Often it is not easy to ascertain with confidence whether Mr. Lindberg has seen the original of the design he is describing or only a photograph, and occasionally he confidently describes what can only be an inference—for example that a bag in a girl's hand contains jewels (p. 334); this last is the kind of fault for which Mr. Lindberg justly and acerbically criticizes his predecessors and which is very rare here.

Beside these petty faults, the merits of the book are major and extensive. It is methodical and comprehensive, meticulously accurate, and consistently persuasive. Mr. Lindberg describes the *Job* with the eyes of an artist and of an art historian, in sharp and vital contrast to most of his predecessors. The study of the sources of Blake's *Job*, particularly of *The Testament of Job*, is excellent and of very great importance; indeed, I think it is safe to say that most of these sources have not been related to Blake's work before and that it is impossible to understand Blake's *Job* adequately without them. The interpretation of each design is elaborate and in almost every case convincing; the dating of a number of the earlier drawings is new and well-argued; and the analyses of "Pitt" and "Nelson" are both highly original and highly commonsensical.

In summary, I conclude that Mr. Bo Lindberg's dissertation on *William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job* is the best dissertation I have ever examined, one of the two or three best I have ever read, and one of the half dozen most important books on Blake's art. Every responsible Blake scholar must read it. It is a work of the highest distinction. We are all indebted to Mr. Bo Lindberg.

Reviewed by Florence Sandler

The nature of Milton's influence on the Romantics is something no longer to be simply taken for granted, especially since it has become the subject of urgent discussion by Harold Bloom and Joseph Wittreich. (See, most recently, Wittreich's review of Bloom's book, *The Anxiety of Influence*, *Blake Studies*, 6 [Fall 1973], 89-94.) To this subject Leslie Brisman's *Milton's Poetry of Choice and Its Romantic Heirs* makes a significant, sometimes brilliant, contribution. The quality of choice that he finds to be characteristic of Milton's (as distinct, for example, from Shakespeare's) poetic is something to which he was first alerted, perhaps, by his reading of the moderns—Kierkegaard, Sartre and Camus are his points of reference rather than philosophers or critics contemporary with the poets under study. But he is surely right to assume that choice was equally a preoccupation of the generations that inherited the quarrel between Luther and Erasmus, or makes a significant, sometimes brilliant, contribution. The quality of choice that he finds to be characteristic of Milton's (as distinct, for example, from Shakespeare's) poetic is something to which he was first alerted, perhaps, by his reading of the moderns—Kierkegaard, Sartre and Camus are his points of reference rather than philosophers or critics contemporary with the poets under study. But he is surely right to assume that choice was equally a preoccupation of the generations that inherited the quarrel between Luther and Erasmus, or makes a significant, sometimes brilliant, contribution. The quality of choice that he finds to be characteristic of Milton's (as distinct, for example, from Shakespeare's) poetic is something to which he was first alerted, perhaps, by his reading of the moderns—Kierkegaard, Sartre and Camus are his points of reference rather than philosophers or critics contemporary with the poets under study. But he is surely right to assume that choice was equally a preoccupation of the generations that inherited the quarrel between Luther and Erasmus.

Brisman's deliberately modern perspective is not often felt as an intrusion, mostly because it is assumed in and under a subtle and sympathetic handling of the texture of the poetry, and also because he is prepared to make adjustments for the way in which the issue would have been presented in the seventeenth or the nineteenth century.

One of the merits of the book is that it does not assume that Milton's influence on the Romantics is monolithic, but picks up the discussion of Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley or Blake at their different points of engagement with Milton, on the issue where the Miltonic choice becomes incisive. In the chapter devoted to Milton and Blake (entitled by a phrase from Milton, "A Time to the Space"), the point of engagement is the relationship of history and salvation. Brisman traces in *Paradise Lost* the significance of historicity, first of all in Eden where it is the essential condition for the self-consciousness of Eve and Adam from which they make their decisive choices; and secondly in the post-lapsarian world, where historicity first appears to Adam as an alien structure but is eventually recognized as the space interposed by grace between the fatal choice and the sentence, the division of time (like the division of the Godhead into persons) being the accommodation of the absolute to allow for human experience and creativity. Adam's temptation to have the sentence of death carried out upon himself straightway is matched in *Paradise Regained* by the temptation presented to the Son to identify himself straightway with the Father—in either case, a temptation to foreshorten experience and to force God's hand. The pride and despair which prompt such a temptation are embodied in the Tempter himself, who insists upon complete knowledge—or else the abyss; supreme power—or else self-destruction.

By his own route, Brisman has come, like Wittreich, to the realization of the centrality of *Paradise Regained* to Blake's understanding of Milton. And, like Bloom, he asserts at this point a deliberate misreading on Blake's part of Milton's intentions. Where Milton, at the deictical resolution of *Paradise Regained*, sees the Son and the Father as one, Blake would deny the Father any reality that is not human; where Milton sees the extension of history as the work of grace, Blake insists that only in the moment, in the utmost contraction of time, is the apocalyptic opening to be found. "The two issues, division of eternity into temporal periods, and the division of the Eternal into separate persons, are precisely the issues on which Blake turns most against Milton, reading his precursor's humanistic modifications as signs of fallennis" (p. 202).

But Brisman's special contribution here is his suggestion that Blake "misreads" Milton and employs what is, on Milton's terms, the satanic maneuver of denying history only provisionally and, indeed, for the purpose of attaining the very end at which Milton's humanistic modification had been aimed, namely, the redemption of Time. Blake takes Milton's gracious extension of time as history in its determined, Urizenic form in order to get behind that form to the point from which history can be continuously recreated in vision. (If Brisman had been interested in political circumstances, he might have noted that for both poets the urgency of the issue sprang from the failure of revolution in which so much hope had been invested.) In *The Four Zoas*, Urizen, who as Creator has manifested the characteristics not only of Milton's Satan but also of Milton's God, comes in Night the Ninth to the realization that he must cast aside his projected futurity and turn his back upon the void which he himself has made, existing from henceforth in the truly human uncertainty, which is also freedom; and Milton, in the poem of that name, carries out the heroic choice in all its implications when he leaves behind the certainty of Eternity to reenter time and human relationship on "this earth of vegetation."

Reviewing Brisman's argument, a Miltonist may be surprised that he neglects what would seem to be an essential part of his case for the importance of choice in Milton, namely, Milton's portrayal of a God who is himself committed to experience, choice and change, so that history becomes not only the sphere of man's creativity but the medium in which God and man interact.

It is in consequence of this that Milton can...
affirm the existence of the "elect." Brisman's omission is the more odd in that Milton's adherence to the promise of election is exactly the subject of Blake's most explicit criticism—in a poem which celebrates Blake's own "election"! Presumably this is another instance of Blake's misreading in order to reinstate on his own terms. The Blakean, grateful for the insight which explains why all of the action of Milton must be accomplished in a moment, will still wish that Brisman had had Time or Space to handle the associated proposition that the moment comprehends all time; for the specific correlations that Milton in that poem must perceive between the corruptions of history and the corruptions of his own Spectre and Emanation deserve the same close study that has been devoted to Adam's relationship to historical events in *Paradise Lost*. Brisman admits in his Preface that Blake may seem slighted, and that he deserves a separate study. One hopes that this remark can be read as the promise of such a study to come.


Reviewed by David V. Erdman

This is a book to be taken seriously, read carefully, consulted frequently. It must make an irreversible revision of our understanding of "Bacon & Newton & Locke"; of Urizen and his World; of what Blake meant by systems; of Blake's visionary cosmos. It is an absorbing piece of scholarship to work one's way through, but one needs to summon all one's powers as philosopher, historian of science, and lover of contraries; also all one's experiences (while reading Blake) of what Ault teaches us to recognize as "the tendency in Blake to project the elements of Newton's calculus as 'process-myth.'" And still one is not done, and one feels that it will take an analytic re-reading (of Ault and Blake, not to say Newton) and much hard work to prepare even a simple classroom lecture on Blake and Newton, or on Blake and scientific imagery. At least these are the thoughts of a not very philosophical non-historian of science faced with the wish to make immediate classroom use of the ideas in *Visionary Physics*.

Let me start with the problem explored in Chapter 2, "Blake's Visionary Response: Science as System and Metaphor." Descartes and then Newton, in paradigms structured to explain the same phenomena, erected contending world systems. When by the mid-eighteenth century the contention was won by Newton's paradigm, all sorts of philosophical problems were dealt with in terms of Newtonian imagery and doctrine. The assumption of the truth of Newton's system gave to the imaginary entities such as "the void," "attractions," and "atoms" postulated as the underlying "realities" of nature, an existence "more real than the observed phenomena they were created to explain" (p. 50). To continue in Ault's words:

"Because Newton's system, and Descartes' before him, submerged such powerful metaphors under a logically consistent structure of reality, it is no accident that Blake, looking at them as a 'visionary,' could appreciate the threat these powerful images posed to the human imagination." What he had to do was appropriate and transform the supposedly "visualizable" concepts of these systems "into images in his poetry to operate symbolically." They there derived a "critical

The argument of Milton's *Poetry of Choice and Its Romantic Heir* is coherent and impressive, but to abstract the argument, as has been done here, is to give a misleading impression of the book itself. Brisman's style is by no means straightforward and expository, but subtle, sensitive, full of allusion and suggestion. This on the one hand has the effect of obscuring the argument; and, on the other, it conveys the quality of experience that the argument asserts to be involved in poetical choice. One is aware, throughout the book, that beyond such issues as the quality of Milton's poetry and of its influence on the Romantics, it is the quality of life itself that is at stake. For a book like this one can only be grateful.
aspect from their oblique references to scientific doctrines and positive aspects from their independent operation in the poetry as metaphors. . . . The fact that Blake assimilated such imagery and ideas into his poetry had a profound effect upon the kind of poetry he wrote. At the same time, Blake's powerful intellectual and imaginative independence caused him to transform the materials in such a way as to shed considerable light on the intuitive bases of the scientific doctrines themselves."

That is to say, a study of Blake's use of Newtonian imagery and ideas turns out to be double-edged. It is not simply that with Ault's help we can learn where Blake's (or Los's) counter-system to Newton's system comes from. It is also that Blake's penetrating critique of scientific terms and images, when fully grasped, rescues us all, as his contemporaries, from victimization by Urizenic pseudo explanations. It is not simply that Blake's "void" and "fluxions of an atom" are borrowed from (or stolen from) Descartes and Newton, but that Blake employs them creatively to clear our minds of the Newton within. "Blake even uses such fundamental mathematical terms as center and circumference in ways which would seem paradoxical to the typical eighteenth-century mathematician (and would perhaps be perplexing even to 'occult' readers since Blake also inverts their expectations, for the 'mystical' use of center and circumference). . . . rather than causing the reader to focus on a closed set of solvable problems which can be explained in terms of a closed set of images, Blake's poetry requires the reader to be constantly shifting his perspective and never to be willing to settle on a finite solution to a problem" (p. 51). For Blake, "progress" through the solution of finite problems is only movement into deeper delusion. "Blake can call as witness to this fact the contemporary social conditions which he so vehemently attacked." They were "the necessary result of the juxtaposition of a scientific paradigm which was taken to solve the central problems of the world" (p. 52).

Identifying the physical structure of Newton's worlds of appearance and reality ironically, Blake exposes them both as unreal "and at the same time makes this structure a mode of redemption" (p. 87). Ault helps us perceive this by taking the perspective of the "Newtonian component of Blake's own consciousness" (p. 4). To recognize such a component in the first place, we must grasp that Newton himself (as literary critics of the Romantic poets have realized) was not content with purely mechanical explanations of nature, even though the great absolutes that are required to keep his system going emerge from analysis as static (like Swedenborg's ultimate equilibrium). Taking this perspective inevitably involves Ault in explications of Blake's myth and, as a final demonstration, of "The Mental Traveller." Many clarifications of terms and allusions reward the reader along the way. To cite a small one: the "rolling of wheels As of swelling seas" in The Book of Urizen (3:29-30) refers "to Newton's reduction of the motions of the tides to the motions of revolving planets (later Blake's 'Starry Wheels')" (p. 99). A large one, in an explication of Urizen's creating a vortex in Four Zoas 72:

It is significant that between the vortices there is void space, and that Urizen is not happy either when he is in a vortex he has created or in a void space between vortices. For, as soon as he creates a vortex, he finds himself in a Cartesian plenitude in which he cannot obtain a total perspective on the system he has created; and, once outside the vortex he has created, he is in a void which, ironically, is simply a vortex which has "ceased to operate", for in Newton's void, vortexes cannot be sustained. In Descartes' system of vortexes, there is no void space because the vortexes operate conjunctively and are interconnected; Blake has transformed this image into a cosmology in which vortexes can operate independently, but, once set into operation, assume all the characteristics of the Cartesian vortexes. Urizen thus moves from the pole of total absorption into the system he has created to the pole of chaotic void, with no principle of restrictive organization, both of which Urizen finds necessary for his emerging Satanic psychology. In unifying the Cartesian system of vortexes and the Newtonian void, Blake reveals their Imaginative consistency as polar aspects of the same psychological drive; Urizen can only solve his constant oscillation from vortex to void (that is, to vortex which has ceased to operate) by reintroducing his elaborate measuring instruments 'to measure out the immense & fix The whole into another world more suited to obey His will.' The world he creates is the Newtonian world of necessity . . . yet it is the world of Cartesian 'Vortexes'. The context forces Urizen's cosmology to be shakier and his binding to be much more tenuous than in the philosophy of the Second Stage, for it is cast in the image of a 'dire Web,' 'as the Web of a Spider . . . Shivering across from Vortex to Vortex drawn out from his mantle of years . . .'. This image is strikingly similar to the illustrations . . . in eighteenth-century editions of Descartes' Principia. Urizen's 'Web,' however, is created to stretch across the void spaces between the vortexes, and thus links the Newtonian and Cartesian systems in the extremely negative spiderlike web which is the best connection Urizen can make between these logically polar systems, both of which are simultaneously appealing and repelling to him. (pp. 149-50)

This "vivaceo achievement on Blake's part" is matched by "Los's irration of the sun from particles of light in The Book of Los [which] combines opposing optical and cosmological doctrines and imagery into a subtle attack against the imaginative lure of both Newton's and Descartes' systems."

These excerpts will indicate the difficulty of compiling a brief report on Ault's Visionary Physics--and the richness of its particulars. For
some indication of its scope and variety, let me make one more selection of a particular that improves our knowledge of Blake's mental world. In discussions of how the earth would appear if it were an infinite plane, Robert Smith (Compleat System of Opticks, 1738) argues that there is a limit (optical, not mathematical) which is imposed on perception by the physiological nature of the eye, which, he argues, would cause the eye to convert a hypothetical infinite plane into an encircling and enclosing globe. . . . Blake surely would have interpreted such an account as a symptom of complete absorption into a vision of reality in which the globular shape of the eye becomes a symbolic analogue of the restrictions placed on infinity by the nature of the combined Newtonian-Cartesian cosmology. . . . Blake turns Smith's idea inside out: Instead of having the perceiver exclusively create the englobing forms, Blake has the combined Newtonian and Cartesian space, into which the individual enters, exert such physical forces as to transform the individual's perception: once he has passed a vortex, the perceiver sees the infinity 'roll backward behind His path, into a globe itself inolding; like a sun: Or like a moon, or like a universe of starry majesty.' Blake thus collapses the Newtonian idea . . . that the vertex of the cone of perception is in the object with Smith's implicit assumption that the vertex of the cone is in the eye itself and the cone extends outward. (pp. 159-60)

Obviously we can no longer do without mastering Cartesian and Newtonian cosmologies--while fiercely resisting their lure. At least we must absorb their "positives" from this learned account of Blake's Response. Once again a painstaking investigation of some difficult aspect of Blake's work and of his thought rescues us from the temptation to assume that whatever is not clear to our minds was woolly nonsense in Blake's.

P.S.: A friend of mine who is a mathematician has now become my particular friend after reading Ault and discovering, with perturbation and delight, the infernal perspective on his profession.


Reviewed by Thomas L. Minnick

The formal notice of Blake's art has undergone a slow resurrection, though the subject has not yet come fully into health. For a long while the patient was simply dead. Thanks to successive injections like the publication of Gilchrist's life of this pictor ignotus and the Burlington exhibit of 1876, interest turned at least moribund. And slowly but steadily, as the frequency of major exhibitions increased and the number of permanent gallery homes for Blake's art grew, and as the price of Blake works rose to the record paid last summer for Mary Magdalen at the Sepulchre--well, if the patient isn't yet entirely healthy, at least he can afford the best doctors. One positive recent sign is Robert Essick's new collection, The Visionary Hand: Essays for the Study of William Blake's Art and Aesthetics.

Until genius and inspiration work the final miracle, information and reflective understanding are the best treatments, and both of these are in abundance in the fine selection of essays which Essick has now made generally available in his useful book. This is the first anthology of work by various hands on Blake's art, and although the critical notice of this aspect of Blake's work has grown so rapidly that several excellent studies were published even while The Visionary Hand was in press, in many cases readers will find here the most recent statements about many of Blake's pictures and illuminated books. Essick's frequent additions to the original notes are helpful where information has come forward since the first appearance of an essay, and in several instances the authors themselves have reworked and updated their contributions. The variety of subjects and approaches is surprising: virtually every kind of Blake's work is extensively represented, and gaps generally indicate something about the state of scholarship rather than the editor's selectivity. There are twenty-two essays plus six bits reprinted from contemporary sources clearly relevant to Blake--Cumberland on etching on copper, for example, and a cut from the Rees Cyclopaedia article on "Etching."

In general the format is satisfactory. There are 165 illustrations, Blake a-plenty, but

Thomas L. Minnick, the Coordinator for Honors at University College of Ohio State University, is author of several notes and articles on Blake. Most recently, he edited Christopher Smart: Hymns for the Amusement of Children (1772) for the Scolar Press, London.
unfortunately none is in color, as the price to
printer and reader would doubtless have been
prohibitive. The type is readable and well chosen,
except for the first section of passages from
Blake’s contemporaries where a smaller type could
have been used for the editorial introductions, to
distinguish them visually from the selections
themselves.

Ruthven Todd’s still unique study of “The
Techniques of Blake’s Illuminated Printing” is
here (and hard to locate elsewhere), combining the
insights of the practicing artist (Todd himself,
and his co-workers Miró, Tanguy and Hayter from
Atelier 17) and the scholar-collector (Todd again,
and his late friend Graham Robertson). And Essick
has happily included his own study of Blake and the
conventions of reproductive engraving in the late
eighteenth century, though occasionally he sees
nets where I see minute particulars that Blake
held to in defiance of the popular fuzziness of
Bartolozzi and his admirers. What can be said of
both Todd’s and Essick’s contributions applies
more widely to much of the volume: there remains
much to be done—done, one hopes, by the
scholars represented here—but the first difficult
questions have been asked and some directions
toward answers discovered. Essick incorporates
this aspect of the present state of criticism by
including two multi-author dialogues (on the
illustrations to *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* and
the Arlington Court Picture), neither of which has
reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Here are several standard pieces—Binyon on
Blake’s engravings, Frye on poetry and design in
the illuminated books, Collins Baker on Blake’s
pictorial sources. But here is also a considerable
selection of the best recent work. I found most
valuable those essays which were best informed on
Blake’s writing and which highlighted the
interaction of Blake’s two great talents—Mitchell
on “Poetic and Pictorial Imagination in the Book
of Urizen,” Rose on Blake contra Rubens, and
Burke’s suggestive study, “The Eidetic and
Borrowed Image: An Interpretation of Blake’s
Theory and Practice of Art.” Also included are
studies of works that are seldom seen or
mentioned—Brown on the *Book of Enoch*, Nanavuty
on the Huntington Genesis, and Merchant on the
illustrations to Shakespeare, for example. For
these essays especially, the illustrations in this
volume are helpful.

Only Jenijo LaBelle’s “Words Graven with an
Iron Pen: The Marginal Texts in Blake’s Job”
appears here for the first time. Her essay will
be useful to the student looking at the Job series
without a Bible concordance handy. Ms. LaBelle
remarks accurately that “the marginal inscriptions
on Blake’s plates serve the same function as the
marginal notes in [many seventeenth- and
eighteenth-century] Bibles: both refer the reader
to similar events or images to establish new
perspectives from which one can view the biblical
text—or in Blake’s case, the central design” (pp.
539-40). But she dedicates more space to hunting
sources than to revealing significances. I would
have found her work more instructive had she woven
the minute particulars of Blake’s biblical
inscriptions into a more developed explanation
of his typology at work in the series. Also,
this reviewer at least would have been more
comfortable had she quoted Blake, as did most
other recent essayists, from David Erdman’s text.

Essick is responsible for easing the reader’s
way by providing for all quotations from Blake the
appropriate page references to both the Keynes
and Erdman editions. Also, after citations to those
pictures by Blake which are reproduced in the
volume, Essick has added the illustration number,
even sometimes when the illustration was not
included with the original publication of the essay.
But the editor is also responsible for a number of
errors—some merely distracting, others more
troublesome. For example, one of the illustrations
is taken from a wrong photograph, as Professor
Essick confirmed in correspondence: Illustration
4, captioned as a “fragment of America copper-plate.
Printed by method described in the text, is actually, like Illustration 8, inked for intaglio with the surfaces wiped.

Of the numerous errors in the text, some are easy to interpret: "insistance" (p. 13), "platten" (p. 40), "resistant" (p. 43), "artifical" (p. 180), "philosophy" (p. 148), "symbolism" (p. 210) and many others. More serious are errors in direct quotations from Blake, as "Gailley" (p. 192: see E 568); in titles, as "Eupom" (p. 152), "Satam exulting over Eve" (p. 304), and "Patina and Pink with Faires Dancing" (pp. 241-42) where if "with" were properly italicized, one would not look for two separate works; in proper names, as "grant" (p. 482) for [John E.] Grant, "Tanguay" (p. 40) for Yves Tanguay, "Maify" (p. 136) for Malfi, "Energ Walker" (p. 225) for Emery Walker, the publisher of Keynes's catalogue of the separate plates, and "Haley" (p. 331) for, I suppose, Hayley among other errors; and in dates and other numbers, as "pp. 47-47" (p. 225) and "1840-1500" (p. 94). The technical terms used of printing methods may be unfamiliar to some (I would have liked a glossary for "blankets," "bougies" and "stopping out"), and the reader who doesn't recognize "gouche" (p. 40) as "gouache" will be confused. Additionally, Essick has twice substituted "Illustration" for "Plate" in Frye's contribution (p. 156) with resultant awkwardness. The sentence in question should read: "At the bottom of Plate 8 of Jerusalem is a female figure harnessed to the moon: the symbol is not mentioned in the text until Plate 63."

In spite of these faults, which make the book a bad example to the graduate and advanced undergraduate students who will otherwise benefit from it most, Essick has provided a useful service to Blakeans by making easily available many essays important for their quality and for the attempt implicit in each to redress the long dearth of attention to Blake's visual art. I would have liked some other things included. Selections from the catalogues to important exhibits—Burlington (1876), Carfax (1906) and Philadelphia (1939), for example—might have plotted the rise of favor toward Blake and suggested something about the development of a taste for his pictorial imagination. And rather than duplicate some illustrations, perhaps works mentioned but not reproduced could have been included—in John Grant's words, "the very great but little known picture of 'The Fall of Man'" (p. 436), for example. I was startled to find virtually no mention of Blake's Laocoön, although it has been treated several times at length in the available literature. But here is abundance nonetheless, and I hope this book will enjoy a wide working audience.

At $7.95 for an unsewn paperback, the book may seem no bargain, although to xerox even just the best essays would run higher, and the photographs would reproduce less well. Libraries at least should be encouraged to get the book, in multiple copies if heavy use is likely. If all students of Blake knew these essays and a half-dozen other works on Blake's art, understanding of this aspect of his genius would increase—perhaps flourish.


Reviewed by Robert N. Essick

All previous editions of Blake's Notebook, including Keynes' 1935 printing with a photographic facsimile, have been reading texts with the manuscript analyzed into its constituent works and fragments. As its sub-title indicates, this new edition is a photographic facsimile with a typographic transcription following the original with great fidelity. As such, it commands scrutiny by serious students of Blake. But interest in this book should go beyond the circle of Blakeans, for the labors of Erdman, Moore, and the Clarendon Press have resulted in a great work of textual scholarship and a masterpiece of the typographer's art. In this case, the study of Blake is in the very forefront of literary scholarship.

The most striking characteristic of the book is its typography, exemplified by the page reproduced here [illus. 1]. At first it can be disconcerting, particularly in those pages towards the end of the Notebook printed upside-down, but a comparison with the facing-page photographs soon reveals the utility of this new species, the "typographic facsimile." As far as I am aware, all earlier facsimile transcriptions of a difficult manuscript have had to rely on a complex series of signs and symbols to indicate erasures, deletions, palimpsests, and so forth. The results were often clumsy and looked nothing like the original. In this volume the typography bears a direct relationship to the appearance of the manuscript itself. When Blake wrote a note vertically in the margin, it appears in the same place and direction in the transcription. When he erased a line which is still visible under close inspection, it is printed with an overlying screen to indicate the erasure. Even lines and carets are preserved by the typography, as the reproduction shows. Stages of revision are indicated through reduced type sizes, while italics indicate pencil writing. The system is simple, efficient, and visually pleasing—all of which belies what must have been an enormous amount of work for Donald Moore, whose "professionalism at the composing machine" is acknowledged in the Preface. This facsimile transcription includes some minor corrections of Erdman's earlier text and thus must be considered the standard edition, at least until Erdman can include the new readings in...

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a revised edition of The Poetry and Prose of Blake.

Thanks to the generosity of David Erdman, I was allowed to compare a selection of his facsimile proofs with the original manuscript in the British Museum. Blake's Notebook is no longer generally available to ticket holders because of its fragile condition and the publication of this new edition. The comparison convinced me that the British Museum is justified in believing that the reproductions accompanying Erdman's text can effectively replace the original for almost all scholarly requirements. In the pages checked I could find only one feature in the Notebook not visible in the facsimile—the partially erased number "27" below the drawing on page 49. But of course this number is duly recorded in Erdman's transcription, so the problem is negligible. The facsimile was made before new leaf numbers were added by the Department of Manuscripts to the original, but these serve no real purpose and their absence here is not to be regretted. Infra-red photography, used on 75 of the Notebook's 120 pages, brings up to the threshold of vision fine lines of text and design not recorded by regular photography, but it does cause some distortion. Infra-red "sees" not only what is on the surface but also the dust imbedded in the paper. Thus on page 64 the chain lines in the paper and the countermark are clearly visible, much more so than in the original or in the fine standard photographic facsimile kept with the original in the British Museum. Infra-red also distorts the relative darkness of pencil and ink. On page 50 the photograph brings out the erasures in the text, but makes the pencil drawing much darker than it actually is. Some shadows and off-setting from facing pages are also magnified by infra-red, as in the design on page 51. On page 59, "Prints" in the penultimate line is clearer in the original, or in a standard photograph, than in the facsimile because infra-red has increased the darkness and opacity of the lines of deletion. On the other hand, infra-red can make very slight sketches more visible than in the original itself; for example, the vague pencil lines in the lower third of page 55 not mentioned by Erdman in his notes. Both standard photography and infra-red record the shadow of the facing page along inner margins (page 55), and shadows from the clips used to hold down the pages (lower left margin of page 52 and lower left corner of page 54). All and all the original is somewhat cleaner than the facsimile would suggest, but this is primarily an aesthetic rather than a textual difference and would cause no difficulty as long as one remembers the limitations (as well as the virtues) of infra-red photography.

In his introductory essay, Erdman establishes the original order of the Notebook's pages based on the first genuinely thorough examination of the manuscript as a physical object. Every detail, including the position of mould and felt sides of the paper, has been recorded in the Introduction and...

Blake's Notebook, p. 8, an infra-red photograph and facing typographic facsimile transcription from the Clarendon Press book edited by David V. Erdman with the assistance of Donald K. Moore. The lower case letters along the right margin of the photograph identify sketches described in footnotes not included in this reproduction.
used to determine the gatherings. Unfortunately the countermark has not been identified, but a tracing of it (a Beta-radiograph would be better) is given at the end of the volume to stimulate watermark hunters in their searches. Erdman proves that the pages numbered 1 to 14 in this century originally appeared in a different order than the present binding. The new sequence followed in the facsimile places Robert Blake's sketches closer to the front of the Notebook, where one would expect to find them since he was the first to use it. Erdman's procedures and conclusions are most impressive, and demonstrate the contribution that descriptive bibliography can make to textual criticism.

The presentation—one might almost say discovery—of a series of 64 emblems in the Notebook will be for many readers the most exciting and useful section of introductory material in this edition. Erdman has deduced that the emblems actually comprise four interwoven series, all but the first identified by numbered sequences. Not only are these emblems important in themselves and as the immediate source for The Gates of Paradise, but they are also crucial as preliminary sketches for many designs later used in the illuminated books. We can now see Blake's creative processes as a pictorial artist more clearly than ever before. One can further sense here an underlying continuum between Blake's works as a poet, draughtsman, intaglio engraver, and relief etcher; and between his interests in the Bible, English history, Shakespeare, Milton, emblem books, and his own developing mythologies. Below are a few additions and corrections to Erdman's catalogue of the emblems, pages 15-31 of the introduction.

**Emblem 3 (Notebook p. 16).** The cross-reference should be to Appendix II, Fig. 1, not Fig. 3, and thus to a detail rather than a tracing of the sketch.

**Notebook p. 20.** Erdman does not include this Job sketch among the emblem series because it is on a verso and its "symbolism of gesture seems more highly symmetrical and 'coded' than in the emblems of 1793 and earlier" (p. 17). However, other emblems are on verso pages, and the sketch is about the same size and style as other emblems. I'm not sure what "coded" symbolism is, but the most dramatic gestures are the hand positions, and they are of the same general type as the gestures in emblems 2, 5, and 9. Erdman also associates this Job sketch with the late Job series rather than the early drawing and separate plate, but in William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job, Bo Lindberg argues convincingly that this Notebook sketch is "obviously the first study for the engraving Job of August 1793" (p. 11) and includes it in the emblem series.

**Emblem 6 (Notebook p. 22).** The very useful Appendix II includes detail photographs and tracings of the more obscure drawings. Many of these, including both a detail (Fig. 2) and a tracing (Fig. 3) of emblem 6, are not cross-referenced in the catalogue.

**Emblem 7 (Notebook p. 23).** The reference should be to Appendix II, Fig. 40, not Fig. 38.

**Emblem 10 (Notebook p. 27).** An illuminating comparison can be made between this design and the two versions of "A Breach in a City" (which Erdman compares to emblem 11) and the very similar but later "War" in the Fogg Museum. Certainly the subjects are basically the same, as Erdman's conjectural title ("War") for the emblem allows. The right side of all four compositions are alike—a building or wall of some sort, with two figures standing before it gazing on one or more prone figures. The right side similarities are more obvious, but to my eye no more real, than those on the left—a broken wall, a group of corpses before or within the break (the emblem is particularly similar to "War" in this respect) a small figure seen in the distance through the break and walking to the left, and an eagle at the far left perched on the wall. The eagle's beak and left wing are particularly clear in the emblem, and in the same position as the three watercolors. This arrangement at least seems more likely than Erdman's "Lightning strikes the neck of a woman whose slippers extended at left" (caption to Notebook, p. 27). A leg of such dimensions would be twice the size of the other figures at an equal distance from the viewer.

**Emblem 13 (Notebook p. 31).** The figure does not appear to be descending towards us as Erdman notes, but rather rising through a celestial doorway to be greeted by two, perhaps three, other figures. Note the bottom of the central figure's left foot, a sure sign that he is moving inward; and his arm position indicating that we are seeing his elbow from behind, as in emblem 2 (Notebook p. 17). Emblem 13 can then be seen as a companion, and antithesis, to emblem 2 where the traveller finds Death waiting at an earthly doorway.

**Emblem 14 (Notebook p. 33).** The object lower right is too small for an adult's coffin, and its trapezoidal left side is a very odd shape for any coffin. Perhaps it is a cradle or basket for the babe in the woman's arms.

**Emblem 20 (Notebook p. 40).** A reference should be included in this list of emblems, p. 20, to Gillray's print showing a ladder reaching to the moon, Appendix II, Fig. 38.

**Emblem 31 (Notebook p. 52).** This picture of an old man clipping a youth's wings is a variation on the traditional emblem of Time clipping the wings of Love. See for example Otto van Veen's Amorum Emblemata (Antwerp, 1608), p. 236.

**Emblem 40 (Notebook p. 61).** The design, used for The Gates of Paradise, plate 13, is very similar to "The Spirit of a Just Man Newly Departed Appearing to his Mourning Family," an early wash drawing now in the Royal Library, Windsor.

**Emblem 50 (Notebook p. 77).** As Erdman points out
in his caption beneath the facsimile page, the sketch below the emblem shows an "insouciant infant, not flat on his back as the ones in America 9 or Europe 6." A similar child, however, does appear in the Night Thoughts engraving, Night II, p. 23, with his legs crossed as in the Notebook sketch but with both arms thrown above his head. Curiously, the Night Thoughts watercolor is very different, showing only the back of the child. Perhaps the memory of this sketch, or even a chance return to it while using the Notebook for other purposes, stimulated Blake to revise his Night Thoughts design.

Emblem 59 (Notebook p. 93). The footnote, p. 29, should appear with emblem 29, p. 22, where Erdman first refers to the recto-verso group of sketches at Harvard described in the note. In June 1973 Erdman learned that the Harvard sketches were not by Blake, but rather copies of Night Thoughts designs made by D. G. Rossetti. Unfortunately the text could not be altered at that late date, but the situation is described in an erratum, p. 105.

Throughout the introductory materials Erdman wears his scholarship lightly. The prose is always direct and lively, never labored or pedantic; some may even find the interpretive sections on the emblem series rather too breezy. Textual scholarship flows gently into criticism. Perhaps at times too gently, for the reader must be careful not to confuse critical speculation, however well-informed and convincing, with the factual record. Certainly some of the narrative structures Erdman finds in the emblem series are open to alternative interpretations. In The Gates of Paradise the "elemental" designs, plates 2-5, represent eternally existing states rather than stages in a linear narrative, and very likely other Notebook emblems are equally non-sequential in their relationships with other emblems. Is Blake constructing an anthology of designs, as in a typical Renaissance emblem book, or a Hogarthian progress?

The least successful portions of the introductory material are Erdman's excursions into art history. A few paragraphs, pp. 10-11, are devoted to the list of twenty topics, p. 116 of the Notebook, for designs on the history of England. Erdman worries over the fact that only a few drawings in the Notebook can be identified with these topics; but the presence of the list does not indicate that the drawings must also be there, any more than the text of a poem in the Notebook means that its illustrations must be present. Erdman refers to four drawings from the British history series of 1779-80, but does not mention the five other compositions in this group, at least two of which are on topics listed in the Notebook. Erdman calls these "paintings," but they are drawings with some water colors added—very likely preliminaries for a series of prints which finally matured into "The History of England, a small book of Engravings" Blake advertised in his Prospectus of 10 October 1793. The Notebook list probably represents an intermediate stage between a group of separate drawings (the 1779-80 series plus others) and the engraved book, a trial table of contents rather than a list of works actually in the Notebook. Erdman's comments should be read in conjunction with David Bindman's fine essay, "Blake's 'Gothicised Imagination' and the History of England" in the festschrift for Geoffrey Keynes edited by Paley and Phillips.

Erdman's discoveries of supposed sources for Blake's designs are less convincing than his bibliographic scholarship. He compares the sketch of a man and woman in a bedroom in the Notebook, p. 14, to Gillray's "The Morning after Marriage," and uses the parallel to date Blake's sketch after 5 April 1788 when the print was published. But the only similarity here is in the general situation and the fact that one of the figures in each work is putting on stockings (the man in Blake, the woman in Gillray). The position and posture of the figures is very different, as are the beds and other objects in the room. In particular, the traditional posture of male sexual fatigue central to the print's humor is not found in Blake's sketch. It is convenient to have a dated source, but one can sense here a spontaneity and concern for three-dimensional realism characteristic of portrayals of actual events that sets this sketch off from the flat, iconic emblems on contiguous pages.

Equally disconcerting are Erdman's association of Blake's traveller in the Notebook, pp. 15-17, with Stothard's illustrations to Pilgrim's Progress and the suggestion that Blake might have "helped his recent collaborator with some of these designs" (p. 9). The visual parallels between Blake's sketches and the prints after Stothard (as reproduced in Appendix II) rest solely with the similar hat and staff and with the fact that in the emblem on Notebook p. 71 the old man entering the tomb uses a crutch as does Stothard's pilgrim when approaching the grave. That Blake's traveller evolved out of the iconographic traditions of Bunyan illustration is a good point, but the pictorial evidence is not sufficient to specify Stothard as the immediate source. It is even more unlikely that Blake could have influenced Stothard. Indeed, the edition of Pilgrim's Progress published by Hogg in 1778 has plates with Christian similarly adorned with broad-brimmed hat and walking stick. The crude woodcuts in an edition of 1791 contain these same motifs, and in the illustration of Christian's approach to the lions before Castle Beautiful he has his hand raised and fingers spread out as in the Notebook sketch, p. 17. My point here is not to add more specific sources to Erdman's, but rather to indicate that the pilgrim's hat and staff are part of the eighteenth-century artists' stock-in-trade for Bunyan illustrations. The switch from staff to crutch is clear in Stothard, but less distinctive in Blake since the traveller on Notebook

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pp. 15-17 may not be the same character as the old man at the grave many pages later. Further, crutches are a traditional—and rather obvious—emblem for old age (see for example Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblemes* [Leyden, 1586], p. 167), and the fact that two late eighteenth-century artists used this motif is insufficient evidence to indicate that one is borrowing from the other. After looking at Blake's designs for a few years it is easy to see his sources or influences everywhere, viewing all art through Blake-colored glasses. It would be wrong to restrain the fun of discovering such parallels, but source hunting should be guided by a wider sense of the pictorial traditions that shape late eighteenth-century art.

No reviewer of this book should end on a negative note. It is a splendid production for which all should thank Erdman, Moore, and the Blake Trust. Its very presence contributes to, in a way silently comments upon, several trends in Blake studies. The recent predominance of scholarship over interpretation is strengthened, for no more than a few of the critical articles and books written in the last ten years will have the permanent value of the Concordance, Bentley's *Blake Records*, the Blake Trust facsimiles, or this edition of the *Notebook*. Erdman's insistence on giving equal attention to the *Notebook* as an artist's sketchbook as well as an author's manuscript once again asserts the interdependence of word and picture in Blake's life and work. I suspect that little of any real importance will be produced on Blake in the future which does not take into account both media. The author of a survey of Blake's reactions to nature published in a recent issue of *PMLA* commented upon two approaches to Blake, the chronological and the thematic, and chose the latter. It is a bad selection. We will come to know more about the how and why of Blake's eternal forms only when we see them evolving as productions of time. The grand continuity of Blake's vision is not stasis; rather, it is evolution within a framework of personal development and historical change. The Clarendon edition of the *Notebook* will offer many insights into that process of creation for years to come.

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Reviewed by Alicia Ostriker

D. G. Gillham is a horse of instruction. He is quite a good horse. He approaches Blake cautiously, sensibly, step by step, appearing to take nothing for granted. Ruminant, judicial, he works his way through the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, concentrating on the ethical implications of each song, and of the two sets together. His stated assumptions, that the *Songs* form "an artistic whole," that the speakers "demonstrate a range of human potentialities," and that one can read them without reference to "background," or Blake's other works, or the biography and personality of the poet, run from the obvious to the acceptable. Gillham's readings are essentially those of his earlier work, *Blake's Contrary States* (Cambridge 1966), with most of the critical infighting omitted. A tone of sweet reasonableness prevails, and the method does elicit valuable insights about the characters of Blake's speakers, as well as some good generalizations about the Contraries—for example, a fine appreciation of the erotic elements in Innocence. But what of Gillham's nervousness about the social implications of Experience? What can one make, for example, of a reading of "The Voice of the Ancient Bard" which transforms William Blake into Edmund Burke, asserting that the poem shows us the folly of revolutionaries and the necessity of building on foundations of past tradition? What of a reading of "A Little Girl Lost" which explains Ona and her father excellently, but insists that the "future age" will be no better off than this one, and that Blake was certainly not advocating free love for persons caught in the state of Experience?

By the time Gillham comes to the conclusion that Innocence is a "touchstone" and "ideal measure" but that most of us spend the greater part of our lives meeting our obligations in the deliberate and laboured ways of Experience, performing duties and following programmes that purposely exclude the possibility of much spontaneous goodness or imaginative wisdom," he is about three-fourths through the book. A bit later, he adds that the glad grace of innocent virtue is "the sort of thing we can aim at in our more deliberate programmes of conduct." Flashes of it may come as a compensation, or reward, for

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good responsible behavior in this world. Perhaps this sounds more like William Wordsworth than William Blake?

None of Blake's later lyric work, from "Auguries of Innocence" to "And did those feet," from "Mock on, mock on" to "The Everlasting Gospel," receives mention in this volume. Chapter Seven, entitled "Blake's Longer Works," tells us not to worry about the poet's sources, then turns to the "unusual," "decidedly strange" and "eccentric" matters of the Natural Religion series, "unsatisfactory," a backflash at Poetical Sketches ("some of the shorter pieces are beautiful and some show originality"), The French Revolution ("Moving . . . though written in a heightened, apocalyptic manner"), America and Europe ("abstract" and "mysterious"). As for The Book of Urizen, The Book of Los, The Book of Ahania, Vala, Milton and Jerusalem, these are lumped together as "the more abstruse prophetic books," and they all "fail" because Blake stopped grounding his vision "on the real circumstances of life." These real circumstances, he explains, are the ones Wordsworth had the good poetic sense to stick close to, while other Romantic poets took laboured flight into realms of unreality.

Gillham's résumé of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, at the end of this chapter, deals adequately and seriously with the moral contraries, though one would never guess, from the sobriety of his exposition, that the work (here called a "poem") is funny, or that its beautiful exuberance was, and is, an incitement to mental revolution, the artist's cry "Du muss dein leben ändern." He does not mention anything so gross as the idea of practical politics in the Marriage (e.g. "The Song of Liberty"), or so outre' as the idea of cleansing the doors of perception in order to see the infinite. Having quoted Frye on the risen body with the mystified shrug of a commonsense person, he reassures us that the Marriage does not involve "escape into a realm beyond the normal."

The final two chapters, on Thel and Visions of the Daughters of Albion, are full and fine, and Gillham's interpretation of Thel as an amusing allegory on the follies of amateur metaphysics, should provoke controversy. Whether or not the author expects those who have required his candle-in-sunshine readings of the Songs of Innocence to follow him here, I cannot say.

The experienced Blake scholar will not need to be told that Blake's poetry differs throughout, in some breathtaking ways, from most of what we read; and he will know how to stitch Gillham's little patch of analysis into the total fabric of his understanding. However, this book is not aimed at Blake scholars. It is (see Mayhead's "General Preface" to the series) for the general reader and the student, throughout Britain, the Commonwealth, the English-speaking world, and even the non-English speaking world. In brief, as the Preface hints, it is for people who want to pass Examinations. One does not assume that these people adore literature, or recognize their friends. It seems to me interesting that a man who, by his own admission, does not understand most of the major works of a major English poet, should undertake to write a Critical Introduction to that poet. I am also interested by the book jacket's promise that Gillham "enables" the reader "at last to come to grips with the Prophecies." Perhaps it is a good thing that Blake's poetry emerges from this volume, after the patient attention recommended by its author, looking boring and pious—or else too inaccessible to be worth one's attention. For how would the future obedient civil servant of Uganda or New Delhi—or Birmingham—cope with a Blake who was passionate, prophetic, apocalyptic, Jacobin, visionary, deeply Christian, wildly comic, bitterly satiric, and thrilling to read? Of course, no literary scholar goes about with malice aforethought dampening the fairest joys of literature for the express purpose of maintaining an established civil and emotional order among his readers. But if the poet himself were to examine this study, carefully considering its pedagogical methods and the tenor of its understanding, he might conclude in the words of his esteemed predecessor that the hungry sheep look up and are not fed.
Reviewed by Michael J. Tolley

This is a pretentious, bad book. The author is both ignorant and prejudiced: an insecure grasp of Blake's cultural context and a determination to see Blake as a dialectical materialist distort the truth on every page.

For the pretension, see the dust jacket claim that "This new book about Blake contains the most thorough and complete study yet attempted of his entire system of ideas and action." In actuality, Blake's "entire system" is reduced to a few half-baked and overworked ideas crudely imposed on the text in the course of a mad trample through the prophetic books, during which characters become confused (Rintrah is Urizen, Vala is another name for the Four Zoas—Vala or The Four Zoas), or change sex (Theotormon becomes female and Enion male, as the TLS reviewer noticed), or have their speeches given to another character (Ore gets the nameless shadowy female's words in the Preludium to Europe), or to Blake himself (Albion's words of despair in J 4:28, "By demonstration man alone can live, and not by faith!").

In the circumstances, such indifference to simple accuracy is inexcusable; simple logic, alas, is also wanting. Marxist prejudice and cultural insensitivity are most strikingly displayed in the book's main subject, which is not Blake's system but rather his attack on Swedenborg in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. I do not need to remark on this in detail, as the TLS reviewer aforesaid (15 February 1974) has sufficiently exposed the absurdity of attributing to Blake the author's view that Swedenborg was expressing class prejudice in his vision of Heaven and Hell. However, I must take this reviewer a little to task for conceding too much in the author's favor when remarking that there is "one good point advanced in the book—Blake's language in the Marriage carries even more links with Swedenborg's in Heaven and Hell than has commonly been supposed." Certainly the book assembles an abundance of evidence for this view, in the form of numerous quotations from Swedenborg, but unfortunately the author has drawn no conclusions from all this evidence that are new, important and correct. In scouring Swedenborg for details that Blake might conceivably have satirized, the author has lost all sense of perspective. He is, admittedly, handicapped by his incapacity to read even Swedenborg correctly. Take a fair sample (p. 141):

'Still without man as a medium, divine influx into the world continues, ...'

The proverb "Where man is not, nature is barren" is a concise criticism of this idea. First, by a non sequitur, Swedenborg is misunderstood, then Blake is wrenched into contradicting the text thus misinterpreted and the point of Blake's proverb perverted. These passages would never have been so unnaturally coupled together if the author had not misunderstood the whole nature of Blake's relationship to Swedenborg, which is assuredly not that of a roaring lion who walketh about seeking texts to devour.

A reviewer can usually draw the attention of scholars to some noteworthy passages even in a bad book, but in this case I need warn no one, except perhaps the specialist student of Blake's relation to Swedenborg, of the existence of a new work in the field. I must blame the publishers for foisting such an unnecessary book on the public. Perhaps (at £4.75) they think it a subtle means of soaking the rich, but if they are seriously interested in promoting truth, they should know that it is not enough for an author's heart to be in the right place (i.e., to the left), if he is not using his head to good purpose. It is not surprising in the circumstances that the text is littered with misprints and careless misquotations.

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Reviewed by Morris Eaves

If I could choose one Blake film to show to a class, this would be it. In no way does it approach the best that could be done, but in comparison to the other things that have been done, Adrian Mitchell on William Blake is the best of the lot.

The film was made a few years ago for On Reflection, a London Weekend Television series of personal television "essays" by reflectors of various names and kinds. Adrian Mitchell is a poet with a fairly standard but still lively view of Blake as a gadfly who liked to say disturbing things about art, sex, and the state of the culture that are as pertinent now as in 1800.

As a format Mitchell chose to blend elements of a happening (as we used to say in 1963) in the style of Long Day's Night, with narration, a series of Blake pictures, and readings of poems and prose to shots of modern London. The assembly has the weight and coherence of a typical highbrow one-man TV show, which is to say, pretty light and pretty baggy. But compared to the inert, heavy, and dull sado-masochistic coagulations that have flowed down to etherize us in the past, Mitchell on Blake is electrical magic.

The film opens in the Tate Gallery, moves to Mitchell on camera first emphasizing Blake's modernness, then reading London to shots of the modern city and its assembly, and ending with a little moral lesson based on William Blake House, flats for old people, on the site of one of Blake's residences.

Then we move to the workshop of artist and craftsman Ken Sprague, which becomes the base for the rest of the program. Here Mitchell misses the chance to build a parallel between Sprague's workshop and Blake's, and thus the chance to show how Blake did what he did as watercolorist and printmaker. Television is the perfect medium for a good close look at printmaking, not to demonstrate the technology for itself, but to build a strong image of Blake as a craftsman. But Mitchell's idea of the artist--including himself as poet and graffitist and Sprague as graphic artist--seems to be mainly sociological, which is interesting enough but not complete enough or big enough, and consequently the rest of the film is thinner than it had to be.

After a narrative sketch of Blake's radicalism in religion, politics, and sex, followed by a reading of The Garden of Love with modern photographic images of chapel, graveyard, and boy--which sounds more embarrassing than it turns out to be--the film reaches its high point in a hilarious supermarket scene. Mitchell reads from the Preface to Milton and Public Address over the public-address system of the supermarket, with "Rouze up O Young Men of the New Age! set your foreheads against the ignorant Hirelings!" replacing Musak and "William Bell to cash register number 4, please" for five minutes with the total result of two half-second surprised looks signaled by two raised heads, and two dozen dumb expressions fixed firmly on the canned peas--"Suffer not the fashionable Fools to depress your powers by the prices they pretend to give for contemptible works or the expensive adverstizing boast that they make of such works." It was a tuned-out crowd that day down at the supermarket, with other prices and expensive adverstizing boasts to worry about and no time to spare for freaked-out dead artists being resurrected over the PA system. But it was a marvelous scene.

The rest is anti-climax, really. Standing by Blake's life mask, Mitchell tacks on to his supermarket scene a few of Blake's epigrams and jingles on Reynolds, Hayley, and Fuseli, with the intention, I suppose, of reinforcing the impression of Blake as a forceful, righteous personality. Then we pick up the next theme with a series of Blake prints emphasizing sensuality and sexual love, but soon we move to what I'm sure Mitchell thought was to be the climax of his "reflection," and the big Happening of the piece, when he carries paint cans and paintbrushes to the wall of a London building and makes it into a work of streetart by filling it up with slogans from the Proverbs of Hell, capped by his own invention--"Blake Lives!--over the door. The level of interest in the film drops to a low point here. Housepainting is a slower and duller business than Mitchell probably figured it would be. The supermarket scene was fun because there were people in the supermarket to react to the PA system, and nonreactions were even funnier. But here it's just Mitchell and his brush and the wall, and the only dynamism in the episode comes from our sense of what might happen if there were some spectators. This source of interest is tapped at the end of the episode, with the predictable appearance of a couple of bobbies who don't take much more interest in a fouled wall than the shoppers did in the loss of their shopping music. The point is made, all right, but for the second time; and if it had to be made twice, the order of the two happenings should have been reversed.

Morris Eaves, University of New Mexico, coedits the Newsletter with Morton Paley. On an NEH summer fellowship he is finishing a book on Blake's artistic principles in relation to the technology of printing and printmaking.
The last theme is poverty, developed with prints from Europe alternated with photographs of starving children, accompanied by a reading of the "It is an easy thing to speak of patience to the afflicted" speech from The Four Zoas.

The final section of the film is the most useful in the classroom. In good color and detail, there is an ample selection from all of Blake's original graphic work except the paintings: drawings and prints from the Job and Dante series, and prints from the Songs, The Marriage, Europe, America, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, Milton, and Jerusalem, mostly to inoffensive music, but with a little reading of passages from Jerusalem. Altogether, in selection, arrangement, and quality of reproduction, this is the best showing of Blake's work on any film, and it makes a fine introduction to Blake's books in illuminated printing for students who have seen only black and white (or no) reproductions.

Information for would-be consumers: the print of the film that RPTV sent for viewing was a good one: intensity and hue were accurate, the print was relatively free of scratches and splices, and sound was clear with ample volume. Mailing from RPTV was on time, but the company has not answered my inquiries about the year of the film's first appearance on London Weekend Television or the price of rental.

This is another production by the folks who bring us Dreams and Regrets: Selections from the Russian Mystics, Leaves in the Dust: Selections from the Jewish Mystics, and The Weeping Sky: Selections from American Indian Mysticism (Indian translation of Psalm 23: "The Great Father above a Shepherd Chief is, I am His and with Him I want not... and afterward I will go to live in the 'Big TeeDee' and sit down with the Shepherd Chief forever"—indeed, the very same Shepherd Chief who spends most of his time in Blake tromping the shit out of us, but all's fair in love, war, and mysticism). Darkness and Light: Selections from St. John of the Cross, and The Prison of Love: Selections from St. Teresa of Avila.

The eye and head of Catharine Hughes spend most of their time lost back in the late 50's when there was The Family of Man, Motive magazine, Tillicch, and lingering interests in Christian theology, the small church-related liberal arts college, and the arts as manifestations of Christian Witness. The rest of their time she spends figuring out how to get all that brotherhood, universalism, and concern together with the masscult mysticism of the 60's. The Lord bless her soul, Ms. Hughes may have harvested every good intention planted by every brotherly-love poem and picture of the last two decades, but she is still deaf and blind. I will forgive her what I don't approve—which is all of this stuff—but I'll have to beg her to get on with the exertion of her talents in some other area. If Jeffrey and his Edinburgh Review were still around, the old acid-throated buzzard could spit some of his Wordsworth juice this way with a lot more justice. "This," he could say again with the stiff-spined moral force I wish I had a little of, "will never do."

The religious columnists in hometown weeklies have more talent for Catharine Hughes' sort of thing than she does, and they produce as much light, or as little, if not as much sweetness. Hughes has cultivated her skills and tastes in the direction of the facile juxtaposition ("Beautifully produced... juxtaposing modern photographs with brief selections from the words of the saint," says Publishers Weekly; "One medium complements and illuminates the other," says Msgr. John S. Kennedy in Our Sunday Visitor) and the obscure juxtaposition ("powerful, provided that one does not just flip through them. One should pause over each combination, allowing words and pictures to interact and do their work of inspiration," Msgr. Kennedy), with some help from the Big Point and the Bitter Truth, all offered with the feeling for significance displayed by the American poetesses in Martin Chuzzlewit. The Hughes wit is chuzzled in the style and on the scale of Eeyore.

Some pithy instances:

"All that can happen to Man in his pilgrimage of seventy years," she selects to bear the Meaning of a photo of a man walking across a concrete mall in the middle of the day.

"If you have form'd a Circle to go into, Go Into It yourself & see how you would do," she chooses to extract the deepest significance from the photo of a hemp rope wound in a spiral.

"To see a World in a Grain of Sand etc." is her choice for a picture of sand with the shadow of a cross on it.

"Think not thou canst sigh a sigh And thy maker is not by" is the companion to a closeup of a crucifix seen from below, with Christ's toes hanging over the foreground, his groin unfocused above.

"For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern"--a closed door and a railway-station tunnel.

"And was Jerusalem builded here"--Manhattan.

"Enough! or Too much"—Catharine Hughes hawking copies of The Clouded Hills and The Weeping Sky at special discount price of $2.50 at Seattle World's Fair William Blake and American Indian Pavilion, with Blake life mask in door of teepee, Jewish and Russian mystics chanting around campfire, and in awesome background, the Church of the Wited Sepulchre, the Mormon Tabernacle, the Vatican, the Space Needle, Mt. Ranier, the Angel Moroni, and rainclouds.

Reviewed by Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr.

Carefully edited and handsomely appointed with twenty-five reproductions (fourteen of Blake's work), the Gray bicentenary volume is both varied in its approaches and expansive in its concerns, one of which is gathered into focus by the editors' Preface: "What of Gray's illustrators, commentators, and critics," they ask; "What, especially, of Blake . . . --what had he seen in Gray's poems to inspire him to illustrate them so copiously and beautifully?" (pp. xi-xii)? To these questions, particularly the last, the essays by Irene Tayler ("Two Eighteenth-Century Illustrators of Gray") and Ben Jones ("Blake on Gray: Outlines of Recognition") are a response. Both critics understand that in Blake's work the written word and pictorial expression, each requiring its own lexicon, each informed by its own traditions, literary and pictorial, call for different types of consciousness; and both also perceive that interpreting Blake's pictures depends upon defining their relationship to the written word. The relationship between Blake's pictures and Gray's poems, they conclude, is marked by a spirit of contention, Blake creating designs that, not "consonant" with Gray's poems, "counter" them--designs that are "disruptively critical and passionately interpretive" (pp. 119-20, 25), involving Blake in a "polemic" with his precursor. Out of this polemic--out of the "disparity" between Gray's poems and Blake's designs for them--comes what Jones calls "individualized interpretation," "highly articulate representations of . . . a response" at once "imaginative and militantly "independent" of Gray's poetry and of the critical tradition it elicited (pp. 127, 129, 134).

This thesis is not new: it was first advanced by Ms. Tayler in her admirable book-length study of Blake's designs for Gray's poems and is propounded again in her essay for this bicentenary volume, an essay that is both judicious in its description of individual designs and perceptive in its interpretation of them. In contrast, Jones' essay exhibits too much inattention to, and imprecision of, detail to inspire confidence. In his discussion of Adversity and the sleeping poet, Jones attends to the iconography of gesture, the raised right hand, while ignoring the dark clouds toward which it points. (Is there an analogue to be noted between this design and plate 3 and the "nude" poet of plate 6, who is actually clothed in filmy, bardic vestments? The quality of response that distinguishes Tayler's clarity from Jones' munkiness is strikingly evident in the statement each critic makes about the first design for the Ode on the Spring series: Jones says it is "introductory," yet different from the last four designs, which "illustrate the text of the poem" (p. 130); more pointedly, Tayler acknowledges that it is a "frontispiece to the whole set of six poems and so includes allusions to each of the six" (p. 126, n. 4).

Unquestionably, Tayler's is the finer, the more discriminating, of the two essays; but even so, her essay is flawed by inexact historical observations that, in the final pages, are crippling to her argument. According to Tayler, it was not until 1745 that publishers, either in England or on the continent, "attempted to incorporate illustrations into text" (p. 123); in that year, Albrizzi printed an edition of Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata with designs engraved after Piazzetta. What is "new" in these designs, says Tayler, is "the series of vignette-shaped headpieces and tailpieces, which contain elements not just decorative (as they had been in earlier illustration) but truly interpretive; these designs mark a turning point in the history of book illustration, her argument goes, and Bentley, probably familiar with this edition, is said "to have been the only illustrator for the next forty years to realize that a revolution in book design was taking place" (p. 125). These propositions, however convenient, cannot be historically authenticated.

James Thorpe once observed that "ornamental borders, initials, headpieces and tailpieces are not illustrations but decorations. Like the type and the cover," he says, "they belong to the production of the book rather than to the author's text. The two processes--decoration and illustration--are quite distinct"--distinct during the 1890s but not, as Tayler implies, during the eighteenth century. David Bland might have provided Tayler with the proper historical perspective, observing that "while illustration came first it was followed . . . by its abstract counterpart, decoration," which, rather than being a mere embellishment, worked in harness with illustration to convey a poem's meaning. Such was the case in the Renaissance, and in much illustration of the eighteenth century. For verification, one may turn to the first illustrated edition of Gerusalemme Liberata or to the designs that were made to accompany Spenser's The Shepheardes Calendar--in both instances, illustration and text are wedded, probably because illustrator and poet worked in consort. Or for the kind of unity Tayler discovers between decoration and illustration, one may turn to biblical illustration of the Renaissance or to some Milton illustration of the early eighteenth century (the designs by Cheron and Thornhill accompanying the 1720 Tonson edition of Milton's poems--designs composed of headpieces, tailpieces, and letter ornaments--provide a convenient example).

Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr., author and editor of many publications on Blake, has recently finished a book on Blake and Milton, published by the University of Wisconsin Press.
Moreover, it should not be inferred, that the "disruptively critical" design is the creation of Blake or of his age; for Kurt Weitzmann has shown that the tradition of corrective illustration is traceable to early illustrators of Homer and Virgil, and the same tradition is evident in Luther's Bible, where the commentator who would relegate the Apocalypse to an appendix is confronted by an illustrator who creates a set of full-page designs (they accompany only the Book of Revelation) by way of restoring John's Apocalypse to its authoritative position in the Bible. Such contention is also evident, both between illustrator and poet and between illustrator and illustrator, when Paradise Lost is illustrated for the first time. Initially, the contention manifests itself in the way that John Baptist Medina, responding both to Milton's text and to Dr. Henry Aldrich's illustrations for the first two books, tries to impose an orthodox conception of Satan on the unorthodox figure who dominates Milton's poem and Aldrich's illustrations for it; subsequently, it manifests itself in the way that one engraver, Pierre Fourdrinier, returning in 1725 to Aldrich's designs for Books I and II of Paradise Lost, alters those designs, bringing them into line with what had come to be regarded as the orthodox understanding of Satan which Milton was said to have violated.

This tradition of contention between author and artist stands behind the work of Blake the illustrator; and Blake's place within this tradition, though not unique, is quite remarkable. By Blake's time, illustration had become an art of compromise, less concerned with upholding the integrity of an author's statement than with supporting the received opinion of what an author should have said. As an illustrator, by the very fact that so many of his designs for other poets were not engraved, Blake refused to support the corporate images that eighteenth-century editors and publishers were busy creating—he refused to turn his own illustrations into a form of advertising. Often Blake felt obliged to draw "corrective" designs; yet those designs, instead of disfiguring another's vision, clarified it; on occasion, as is the case with some of the Milton designs, Blake's objective was to correct not the poet's statement but the critical tradition that had misconstrued and misrepresented it. However contentious, Blake's illustrations, subversive of corporate editorial images, are vehicles for his own innovative criticism.

It is to Tayler's credit that she pushes us beyond the individual design into the traditions that helped to shape it; but Tayler does not push us far enough. It is not the individual artist's designs that illuminate Blake's own; rather, it is the whole tradition of iconography which a poem has accumulated that opens the meaning of Blake's illustrations for it. Moreover, if the concern is with Blake's tactics of illustration (as Tayler's seems to be), then it is perhaps more productive to scrutinize those traditions of illustration that stand behind the Bible and Milton than those standing behind Gray's poetry. After all, certain texts (like the epics of Homer, Virgil, and Milton or the books of Genesis and Revelation) were frequently illustrated, often by great artists. It is these texts that inspired the great revolutions in book illustration (other illustrators, not Bentley, are responsible for the innovations Tayler attributes to him). A knowledge of these traditions, especially those surrounding Milton's poetry and the Bible (which we have yet to acquire), joined to a refined critical intelligence (of which Tayler's is exemplary) will enable students of Blake to penetrate nuances of meaning still hid in the formalities of his art.


Reviewed by Jean H. Hagstrum

Lord Kenneth Clark, an authority on landscape, the nude, and the Gothic revival, turns his trained and widely appreciated eye to late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century art in a book that has been transformed from a television film. That film will undoubtedly be shown on American television, though it may not reach the wide popular appeal of the more comprehensive series entitled *Civilisation*. Raymond Lister, a painter, illuminator, miniaturist, designer of architectural metal work, is also an author of books and articles on technical subjects, on Palmer, on Victorian narrative painting, including an untechnical, fresh, and informative book on the career and work of Blake—the comment of one craftsman on another. When authors of such special qualifications turn their attention to Blake, readers of this journal will wish to pay attention.

In the Glasgow lecture, which, with a few revisions appears as Chapter 6 in the book, Clark asks bluntly (no pun originally intended, but Sir Kenneth does acknowledge his indebtedness to Sir Anthony in the matter of sources), “How good an artist was Blake?” He partly answers his own question by including him among thirteen artists, four (including Fuseli) English, the rest Continental, ranging from David to Rodin, an honor of place not often accorded Blake by art historians. Yet Clark’s answer is not one of simple praise, for he obviously has mixed feelings. He admires the Dante illustrations enormously, sees exceptional “classical” propriety in the *Job*, speaks well of illustrations to the prophetic books, especially *Urizen*. But he seems not attracted by the *Songs of Innocence*, and he finds many of the water colors weak. He dislikes the Gray illustrations and the Milton illustrations, particularly the ones for *Comus*, and feels that Blake responded feebly to the New Testament. Since he regards Blake’s thought as a muddle, we cannot expect him to see energy flowing from the pen to the pencil, and he believes in fact that the Dante illustrations are excellent because Blake came in contact with a mind greater and better organized than his own.

Quite apart from matters of personal taste, one is disposed to debate several of Clark’s interpretations. There is space to mention only a few.

Clark believes *Urizen* is the primal economic planner, a Karl Marx drowning in the waters of dialectical materialism. We must grant that Blake would have found an enemy in any tyranny of the left or the right; but in our culture his anti-Man would probably be hypocritical capitalism, a predatory system that cloaks itself in pious or humanitarian wraps. Expectedly, Clark finds the visual primary. The evidence does not always bear him out: Innocence became verbal art before it became visual; and the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar, whom Clark believes was a recollected werewolf design long before he was attached to a biblical figure, ignores the fact that Blake knew his Bible well from his earliest years and that Nebuchadnezzar as described in the words of the King James version might well have anticipated influences from German woodcuts. The *Songs of Innocence* can scarcely be called rococo; and Clark would see them more clearly and appreciate them more deeply if he considered them against a background of emblem and book illustration, not only against a background of Hellenistic art, Raphael’s *Loggie* designs, and medieval illumination, though these latter two do play a role in shaping Blake’s imagination as an illuminator of his own songs.

Still, Clark is lively and stimulating, and we must be grateful to him for bringing much powerful Blake to a wide audience. And as a scholar he has thrown out some lines that we may wish to start winding into a ball. The Swedish artist Sergel, who is given one illustration here (and also some in Gert Schiff’s *Fuseli*; the Bolognese Mannerist Pellegrino Tibaldi, who, according to Clark, was known to Blake through a book of engravings published in 1756 and who according to Thieme und Becker has a sheaf of drawings in the British Museum; and the German, Philip Otto Runge, who Clark says was doing much the same thing Blake was in the *Songs*—these artists will bear looking into.

Blake appears in Lister’s book in many quotations, some long, a few apposite; and in nine illustrations, all but one very well known and frequently reproduced. The one exception to the familiarity of the Blakes is the reproduction on Plate 36 of Blake’s miniature of Cowper’s relation, the Rev. John Johnson (Johnny Johnson of Norfolk). Although also reproduced by Bentley in *Blake Records*, the work is not widely known, and Lister is right in finding in the church steeple a personal and prophetic touch since it is unlike any of the churches which the rector served. He might have gone farther and said that the spire was a Gothic sign of approval, as is the prominent Bible Christian even though a member of the Established Church.

The presence of this Blakean miniature and our response to it provoked by Lister’s brief comment
perhaps provide the clue as to how to use and appreciate this book. No Blakean will be satisfied by all of the interpretations; no Romantic scholar will find his conception of the period clarified or even precisely delimited in chronology. But both the scholar and the general reader—and also the collector—will find many surprises in the nooks and crannies of this book—matters he will want to pursue further. Unusual Romneys, lovely, fresh Calverts, Palmers rich in depth and meaning even without their color, an unusual Constable drawing, a Danniell that anticipates Henri Rousseau, a lovely Girtin, Shelley as an androgynous figure, the "corrupt" Byron, the haunting juxtaposition of Fuseli's and Rossetti's Doppelgänger, the dialect poems of Barnes, the discussion of the Eidophusikon (a device that brought Romantic scenery and sublime Miltonic landscapes to gaping spectators), and the appendixes on minor artists and engravers and etchers who could bear important relations to Blake and other major Romantics—all these and many more unexpected encounters await the alert reader. I confess to being puzzled at first by the audience for which this book was intended. Who needs to have the entire text of the Tyger quoted or who needs to be told in a footnote when Titian's name was first mentioned that he was "Tiziano Vecelli, called Titian . . . . Venetian painter." I still regret the many loose definitions of Romantic, and the longuesse of seeing and reading what is already so well known. But these are obliterated by the rewards that may come from following Lister's beckonings to possible discoveries of new pleasure and knowledge.

And now back to Clark for a final paragraph. He has brought us no nearer a theoretical understanding of Romanticism and Neoclassicism than has Lister, who weakens his definitions by exuberance of quotation and a loose manner of expression. Clark is the more sophisticated intellectually, but contradictions remain at the heart of his theory and he passes over significant variables. Classicism may indeed be intimately related to stress on drawing, but where does that leave Blake, who was a linear artist proud of his hard, wiry, bounding line? Classicism is related to totalitarian political order, but where does that leave David in the period of his early Roman fervor? Romantic art is sensual, yet one of the neoclassical David's central qualities is his deep sensitiveness to femininity, called, confusingly, an eighteenth-century quality. The disciplined Ingres's inspiration is the female body, for whom form could never obliterate the sensuous nature of beauty. Sometimes Clark's sensitive and trained taste deserts him. Ingres's "Napoleon" is surely uninspired pastiche-making and not a dazzling cameo, whose perfection of authority proclaims the deity of the Emperor; and the same artist's "Jupiter and Thetis" is an overblown piece of visual rhetoric that is more laughable than majestic or beautiful, however delicate the hand of Thetis that chucks the solemn and ridiculous chief of the gods under his heavily bearded chin. And hasn't Clark missed the majesty of Turner's mountains in "The Goddess of Discord choosing the Apple of Contention in the Garden of Hesperides" by insisting on the controlling classicism of the dwarfed foreground? And so one could go on with disagreements about taste and theory. But, still, the work, with its dazzling plates and bright comments, is impressive. Many feel that Clarke's enviable vulgarisation is not all that haute. But the present writer finds The Romantic Rebellion, like Civilisation, a kind of masterpiece of intelligent and attractive popularization, the kind that must take place if the humanities are to thrive or even survive. What a brilliant stroke to put the iron girders of the Liverpool Street Station near the Carceri of Piranesi! And how bold—and unpopular—to call the draped figure of Balzac, so silly when a nude study, Rodin's greatest work and display it for what it is, a mysterious and powerful mastery of massive and unyielding material. Clark will once more bring pleasure to thousands, whose horizons he will expand. And after the judicious have grieved and duly wrung their hands, we must all be grateful, for our own and others' sake.
A Checklist of Recent

Compiled by Ron Taylor

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