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BY MARSHA KEITH SCHUCHARD

When William Blake returned to London from his "three years Slumber" at Felpham, he initially found sympathetic friends as he pursued his "visionary studies."¹ Blake participated throughout the 1780s and 90s in an eclectic network of *illuminés*, which included Swedenborgians, Freemasons, and Cabalists who shared his interest in animal magnetism, spirit-communication, and erotic trances.² In 1804 he apparently renewed his acquaintance with several theosophers, who continued their secret meetings and occult studies over the next decade. Unfortunately, the fragmentary evidence for this collaboration comes from an embittered notebook poem (c. 1808–11), when Blake accuses his friends of cowardly withdrawal from their mutual studies. Compressed into eight hostile lines, Blake's mental distress and spiritual commitment reveal the radical daring of his visionary enterprise:

Cosway, Frazer & Baldwin of Egypts Lake
Fear to Associate with Blake
This Life is a Warfare against Evils
They heal the sick he casts out Devils
Hayley Flaxman & Stothard are also in doubt
Lest their Virtue should be put to the rout
One grins tother spits & in corner hides
And all the Virtuous have shewn their backsides
(E 505)

The first three friends—Cosway, Frazer, and Baldwin—were drawn together by shared interest in animal magnetism, the bizarre pseudoscience that played a role in its day equivalent to Freudian and Jungian psychology in our own.³ Animal magnetism was a "modern" version of ancient Cabalistic meditation techniques, merged with Hermetic, Paracelsan, and astrological theories of man as microcosm. Seventeenth-century speculation on the universal magnetic fluid was updated with new theories of electricity. Developed by Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer into a methodical science of hypnosis, trance, and nervous catharsis, magnetism became a kind of countercultural therapy and religion to the restless, millenarian spirits of the revolutionary decades. Despite its "holistic" claims, the new magnetic religion split into

rival schools which accused each other, respectively, of materialistic atheism and occultist fanaticism. Blake and his three friends were not immune to these bitter though often comical quarrels.

Richard Cosway (1740–1821), the fashionable miniature painter, was one of Blake's oldest friends. Fascinated by magic, alchemy, and Cabala, Cosway was intimately acquainted with radical Freemasons and millenarian *illuminés* in Europe as well as England.⁴ Cosway joined the Swedenborg society in 1783–84, at a period when it was dominated by French and Swedish Freemasons who believed that Swedenborg himself was a Cabalist, alchemist, and Mason.⁵ Working closely with the London society were Dr. Benedict Chastanier and the Marquis de Thomé, who founded the Masonic rite of *Illuminés Théosophes* in London and Paris.⁶ They believed that Mesmer took his theories from Swedenborg and then perverted them into a materialistic science.⁷ Cosway and the London group agreed, and John Flaxman still believed this in 1823.⁸

In 1784 a French governmental commission exposed animal magnetism as a fraud, which only drove its disciples into more radical defenses of the new science.⁹ A disgusted Mesmer traveled to England in August 1785, hoping to establish a Mesmeric Masonic lodge.¹⁰ But he found his rivals already dominating the popular magnetic stage. Mesmer faded from the English scene, while his apostate pupil, Dr. John Bonniot de Mainaduc, instituted a decade-long reign.¹¹ Cosway and his Swedenborgian friends became Mainaduc's earliest and, for a while, most ardent disciples. Born in Ireland to a French Protestant family, Mainaduc studied medicine in London in the 1770s under Drs. William and John Hunter, George Fordyce, and other eminent physicians. In 1782–84, he studied in France where he was caught up in the Mesmeric enthusiasm. When he offered Mesmer 200 guineas for his secret, the German doctor haughtily refused.¹² Mortified, Mainaduc turned to Dr. Charles Deslon, an early champion of Mesmer, who developed a different technique. Mainaduc claimed that Deslon raised the science beyond Mesmer's "crude state."

Returning to London in 1785, Mainaduc introduced magnetism into his medical treatment, drawing a clientele initially from his large midwifery practice. He soon deviated from the materialistic gadgetry of Deslon's style (tubs, tubes, rods, etc.), and declared a purely spiritual form of magnetism. A Freemason himself, Mainaduc attracted the interest of Swedenborgian Freemasons who appreciated his spiritualistic approach in which "divine influx" aided the cures. On 12 December 1785, he initiated Chastanier into "this Modern Magical Science."¹³ For the next ten months, Chastanier served as Mainaduc's chief assistant at his lavish clinic in Bloomsbury Square. Attacked by a Mesmeric rival, Dr. John Bell, as superstitious and unscientific apostates, Mainaduc and Chastanier defended themselves by claiming to perform the same kind of spiritual cures as Christ and his disciples.¹⁴ The two *illuminés* then invited "twenty gentlemen of distinction" to hear their lectures, in which Paracelsus, Fludd, Kircher, and Swedenborg were presented as precursors of Mesmer.¹⁵ Mainaduc also recruited twenty women to form a "Hygeian Society," which was incorporated with a sister lodge in France. To demonstrate their Masonic notions of equality, Mainaduc instructed Chastanier to round up twenty poor patients for free treatment at Bloomsbury. Over the next decade, Mainaduc instructed over 270 paying customers in the secret science. Among the dozen identifiable Swedenborgians were four artistic peers of Blake — Maria and Richard Cosway, P. J. de Louthembourg, and William Sharp.

In Mainaduc's lectures, printed posthumously in 1798 with his portrait by Cosway, there are many striking similarities to terms and themes in Blake's work. In April 1786, Mainaduc revealed to an eager assembly that men and women "possess a power in themselves of which they are ignorant, and want but little instruction to do more than they are aware of; I open to you an astonishing field, if you dare to cultivate it, a field which must redouble the religionist's devotion, confirm the deist in the existence of his God, and fill the atheist with astonishment."¹⁶ His first lecture covered "Atmospheres and Emanations of the Form," which proved that "emanating atoms continually fly from the earth, and from all its productions; and that, as the earth, so all its forms are surrounded by atmospheres, and passed through by emanations peculiar to themselves."¹⁷ The "atmospherical part of the human body" may, by the magnetizer's effort, "be attracted from, or distended to, any unlimited distance"; it may then "penetrate any other form in nature." The healing occurs when through "the influence of Volition (or Spirit)" the Emanations are "forced out of their natural course" or "attracted into the Pores of the Operator."¹⁸ The magnetizer is effective according

to the Intention and Energy of his or her "spiritual Volition." Mainaduc then gave detailed instructions, such as:

The Examiner should fix on some particular part of the Patient's external or internal Form; then, turning the backs of his hands, with the fingers a little bent, he must vigorously and steadily command the Emanations and Atmospheres, which derive from that part, to strike his Hands, and must closely attend to whatever Impressions are produced on them.¹⁹

Maria Cosway possessed great "spiritual Volition" and was easily magnetized. As she wrote her lover, Thomas Jefferson, "I am susceptible and everything that surrounds me has great power to magnetise me."²⁰

Mainaduc and Chastanier soon faced stiff competition as new rivals entered the field. In France the Puysegur brothers rediscovered "induced hypnosis" or "magnetic sleep," in which the entranced patient spoke with spirits and displayed clairvoyance. In a derivation of the Cabalistic "revolution of perspective," the somnambulists saw the inner organs of their patients in externalized visions.²¹ Mainaduc complained that this "new food" of somnambulism is "grasped at with avidity by impostors" and many "entertain their acquaintances with the wonder of their last comatose dream."²² Even worse, "a most scientific lass, wishing me to believe she saw my brain," said it "resembled an oyster." Cosway and Sharp magnetized Henry Tresham (another friend of Blake) and told him he had a hole in his liver, "the form of which Cosway drew."²³ Blake probably refers to this magnetic effect when he proclaims: "Their eyes their ears nostrils & tongues roll outward they behold / What is within now seen without" (E 314). Moreover, Blake's strange descriptions of Bowlahoola and Allamanda seem to draw on the magnetizers' concept of the Archaeus, the ganglion of sympathetic nerves in the abdominal region.

Paracelsus and Van Helmont believed the Archaeus to be "a sort of demon presiding over the stomach, acting constantly by means of vital spirits, performing the most important offices in the animal economy, producing all the organic changes which take place within the corporeal frame."²⁴ Van Helmont further claimed that by virtue of the Archaeus, man could be approximated to the realm of spirits. In somnambulistic trance, the "exalted sensibility" of the epigastric region transferred perception from the brain to the abdomen (including the erotically susceptible "loins"). The modern magnetizer manipulated the transfer of sensibility from one organ to another, in order to clear the flow of lucidity (health) from obstruction (disease). Mainaduc taught that "in Man is comprised in miniature, the entire vegetating system in its greatest perfection."²⁵ His form is composed of pipes and particles, "between which the

most extensive and minute porosity admits . . . the passage of atoms and fluids." Similarly, though with vivid mythic overtones, Blake describes "the Four States of Humanity in its Repose":

The First State is in the Head, the Second is in the Heart:
The Third in the Loins & Seminal Vessels & the Fourth
In the Stomach & Intestines terrible, deadly, unutterable
And he whose Gates are open in those Regions of his Body
Can from those Gates view all these wondrous Imaginations
(E 134)

Blake's principal regions of vision are Bowlahoola, "the Stomach in every individual man," and Allamanda, "the Loins & Seminal Vessels" (E 121, 134). His strange physiology was entirely consistent with that of animal magnetism, especially in its Swedenborgian forms.

Where Mainaduc and his more radical disciples got into trouble was in their technique of stroking the Archaeus:

The fluids are to be conducted upward, slowly, softly, and gently . . . [in order to] carry up the fluids from the stomach to the brain . . . the operation is to commence at the pit of the stomach, and the first intention must be to separate the plexus, or heap of nerves, situated in that part . . . The nerves must then be pursued, through the diaphragm up the pleura, and into the skull to the Brain.²⁶

Critics charged them with sexual designs on the women; in fact, this accusation was the real motive for the French Commission's hostile report. In an unpublished appendix, sent secretly to the French king, the commissioners revealed:

. . . the greater number of women who are magnetised are not really ill . . . their senses are not impaired, their youth has all its sensibility. Continued proximity, contact, the communication of bodily warmth, and the mingling of glances . . . effect a communication of sensations and affections. The man who magnetises had generally the knees of his female patient enclosed between his own . . . the hand is applied to the hypochondriac region, and sometimes over the ovaries. Touch is exercised over a large extent of surface, and in the neighborhood of the most sensitive parts of the body . . . the reciprocal attraction of the sexes acts, of course, with all its force. . . . When this state of crisis approaches, the visage fires by degrees, and the eyes light up with desire . . . the eyelids now become moist; the breathing hurried and irregular; the bosom heaves violently and rapidly, and convulsions and sudden twitchings take place in particular limbs, and sometimes all over the body. In lively and sensitive women, the last stage, the most agreeable termination of their emotions, is often a convulsion.²⁷

One critic saw "a woman thrown by a magnetic process into a *furor uterinus*," and London wits ridiculed Maria Cosway and the high-born women who flocked to Mainaduc as Princesses of the "House of Libidinowsky."²⁸

Undeterred by such criticism and inspired by visions into their patients' Bowlahoola and Allamanda, Cosway, Sharp, and Loutherboung enthusiastically practiced magnetic medicine. At Loutherboung's house in Hammersmith, thousands of patients sought the miracle cure. As Anthony Pasquin wickedly remarked, "The

blind followed the whoopings of the lame" to the "liberal chymists" of the clinic.²⁹ Initially with Mainaduc's approval, Chastanier opened a magnetic clinic in his residence at 62 Tottenham Court Road, where the Swedenborgian Freemasons also gathered.³⁰ But Chastanier eventually broke with Mainaduc, charging that he "made the art instrumental to horrid enormities."³¹ Apparently worried by the competition of his own pupils, Mainaduc began to require a Masonic-style oath of secrecy from his clients.³² For paying "Brothers," he would draw aside the veil of the sacred mysteries: "Here we shall find the *grand arcanum*, the steady *point d'appui*, the *philosopher's stone*, and *omnium uno*" — all under the Masonic "all-seeing Eye of the Creator."³³

Blake probably could not have afforded Mainaduc's deluxe course, but he may have benefited from Chastanier's inexpensive instruction. Blake may also have attended the spin-off lectures of Thomas Holloway, the engraver, with whom he worked on Lavater's *Essay on Physiognomy*. (Lavater himself was an enthusiastic magnetist.³⁴) Following the lead of his brother John, Thomas Holloway gave lectures on animal magnetism which attracted hundreds of artisans as well as professional people.³⁵ The Holloways' magnetic therapy was so successful that John Newton tried to persuade the poet William Cowper to accept their offer of treatment. However, a wary Cowper replied:

With respect to my own initiation into the Secret of Animal Magnetism, I have a thousand doubts. Twice, as you know, I have been overwhelmed with the blackest despair, and at those times every thing in which I have been at any period of my life concerned has afforded to the Enemy a handle against me. I tremble therefore almost at every step I take, lest on some future similar occasion, it should yield him opportunity and furnish him with means to torment me. Decide for me, if you can. And, in the mean time, . . . best thanks to Mr. Holloway for his most obliging offer. I am perhaps the only man living who would hesitate a moment whether on such easy terms he should, or should not accept it. But if he finds another like me, he will make a greater discovery than even that which he has already made of the principles of this wonderful art.³⁶

Cowper's worry was later echoed by Blake, who resented those magnetic healers who tried to bind "all Mental Powers by Diseases," rather than allowing the artist to "spend his soul in Prophecy."³⁷

As part of their sympathy for the French Revolution and the new egalitarian trends, the Holloways developed a simplified, democratic form of magnetism.³⁸ Though they were both Freemasons and enjoined secrecy on their pupils, they required neither oath nor bond.³⁹ Teaching a short, simplified form of hypnosis and making no supernatural claims, the Holloways avoided the illu-minist controversies that eventually placed animal magnetism on dangerous political grounds. John Holloway was still advertising his lectures in 1805, opposite the Shakespeare Gallery.



"Le Doigt Magique." Courtesy of Robert Darnton.

For many of Mainaduc's students, however, magnetism became increasingly a vehicle for political radicalism. Darnton points out that as the French Revolution developed, "mesmerists tended increasingly to neglect the sick in order to decipher hieroglyphics, manipulate magic numbers, communicate with spirits, and listen to speeches on Egyptian religion."⁴⁰ This development stemmed from the somnambulists' refined techniques of vision-inducement as well as a revival of Cabalistic meditation on Hebrew letters and talismans. The magnetizing Swedenborgians in London were soon linked with Cabalistic developments in France, for they were visited by three celebrated *gurus* of Cabalistic Freemasonry—Count Grabianka of the Avignon *Illuminés*, "Count" Cagliostro of the Egyptian Rite, and Louis Claude de Saint-Martin of the *Élus Coëns*.⁴¹ Their colorful personalities and visionary claims made a lasting impression on the London group, while at the same time accelerating the turbulent schisms over political and sexual controversies.

As the English government geared up for a counter-revolutionary crackdown on secret societies, followers of Swedenborg and Mainaduc were considered fair game for official spies and police. On 4 March 1795, the *London Times* charged that Swedenborg was "the Chief of the Somnambulists," whose influence on the "revolutionarily exalted" prophets prepared the public mind for "great political convulsions." In 1797 the Abbé Baruel (a former Freemason, now an emigré priest) proclaimed in London:

The brethren of Avignon recognized the *Illuminés* of Swedenborg as their parent Sect; neither were they unmindful of the embassy sent them by the Lodge of Hampstead. Under the auspices of *De Mainaduc*, they have seen their disciples thirsting after that *celestial Jerusalem*, that *purifying fire* (for these are the expressions I have heard them make use of) that was to kindle into general conflagration throughout the earth by means of the French Revolution—and thus Jacobin Equality and Liberty was to be universally triumphant in the streets of London.⁴²

Unintimidated by the crackdown and encouraged by his Swedenborgian readers, the flamboyant William Belcher published *Intellectual Electricity, Novum Organum of Vision, and Grand Mystic System . . . the Connection between the Material and Spiritual World Elucidated, the Medium of Thought Rendered Visible, Instinct Seems Advancing to Intuition, Politics Assume a Form of Magical Intimation* (London, 1798). Boldly interpreting mystical vision and sexual passion in electromagnetic terms, Belcher praised the *illuminati* as the only society still practicing "this field of science."⁴³ To political radicals like Cosway, who acquired Belcher's work, his assertion that "mysticism carried Buonaparte into Egypt, its original school," must have rung with millenarian implications.⁴⁴ Among the Swedenborgian and Masonic acquaintances of Cosway and Blake, politi-

cal charge and countercharge proliferated, as increasingly polarized radicals and conservatives split into rival factions. However, the lines were not always clearly drawn, and radical devotees of animal magnetism were sometimes odd bedfellows of political conservatives.

Into this complex milieu in 1793–94 walked George Baldwin, who eagerly plunged into magnetic experiments regardless of their political ramifications.⁴⁵ Home on leave from his post as British Consul in Egypt, Baldwin renewed his acquaintance with various artists and Swedenborgians. Blake may already have known Baldwin in the period 1781–86, when the exotic traveler and his beautiful Greek wife, Jane, attracted much attention in London's social scene. Cosway and Bartolozzi painted portraits of Mrs. Baldwin, and Joshua Reynolds exhibited "The Fair Greek," in full Turkish costume, at the Royal Academy in 1782.⁴⁶ Baldwin also shared Blake's interest in Druid lore, Ossian, Boehme, Law, and Paracelsus.⁴⁷ During his adventures in the Middle East, Baldwin had investigated the contacts between Egypt and India, which he applied to the study of hieroglyphics.⁴⁸ These inquiries also fueled his interest in native medicines, with their heavy component of magic and trance. While in London, he read in *The Gazeteer and New Daily Advertiser* (6 October 1783) an article on Quinquet's "new discoveries in the electric arcana."⁴⁹ He studied the French Commission Report on magnetism in 1784 and interpreted its hostile criticism as testimony to "the stupendous power" of magnetism.⁵⁰

Fired with enthusiasm for electric and magnetic therapy, Baldwin returned to Egypt in December 1786, where he ordered a continuing stream of literature on animal magnetism. One of these may have been Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* (London, 1789), with engravings by Blake and Holloway, for a "Captain Baldwin" subscribed to the first volume. As noted earlier, Lavater was widely viewed as a fanatic for animal magnetism, and his system of physiognomy was assimilated into the grab-bag of magnetic literature.⁵¹ By 1789 Baldwin was tirelessly experimenting with magnetic therapy and even boasted of finding an effective preventative for the plague. Believing the disease traveled by "electric sparks," he advocated the coating of the body with sweet oils to prevent penetration of the pores.⁵²

In 1793–94 Baldwin returned to London, where he showed off his collection of drawings of Eastern scenes.⁵³ He probably revisited Cosway and his artistic friends, as well as those Swedenborgians who still experimented with magnetic and electric cures. Baldwin subscribed to George Adams' *Lectures on Natural and Experimental Philosophy* (London, 1794), which combined Swedenborgianism and Freemasonry with advanced magnetic and electric theory. Blake almost certainly knew Adams, who was also the mentor of Blake's friend, Dr. John Birch. (Blake would later praise "Mr. Birch's Electrical

Magic" for relieving his wife's rheumatism [E 759].) George Adams embodied the contradictory strains among the Swedenborgians, for he was fascinated by occult and magnetic phenomenon but repelled by the radical politics which often accompanied its practice. Baldwin shared these polarized opinions but, like Adams in the 1790s, he was willing to keep his feet in both camps in the interest of the "new science."

While he was in London, Baldwin apparently added somnambulistic techniques to his magnetic repertoire, for on his return to Egypt in late 1794, he plunged into experiments in spirit-communication, automatic writing, and dream analysis. Could he have learned these from Blake, Cosway, Loutherboung, Sharp, and their Swedenborgian friends? In 1794 Blake described his own involvement in spirit-dictation:

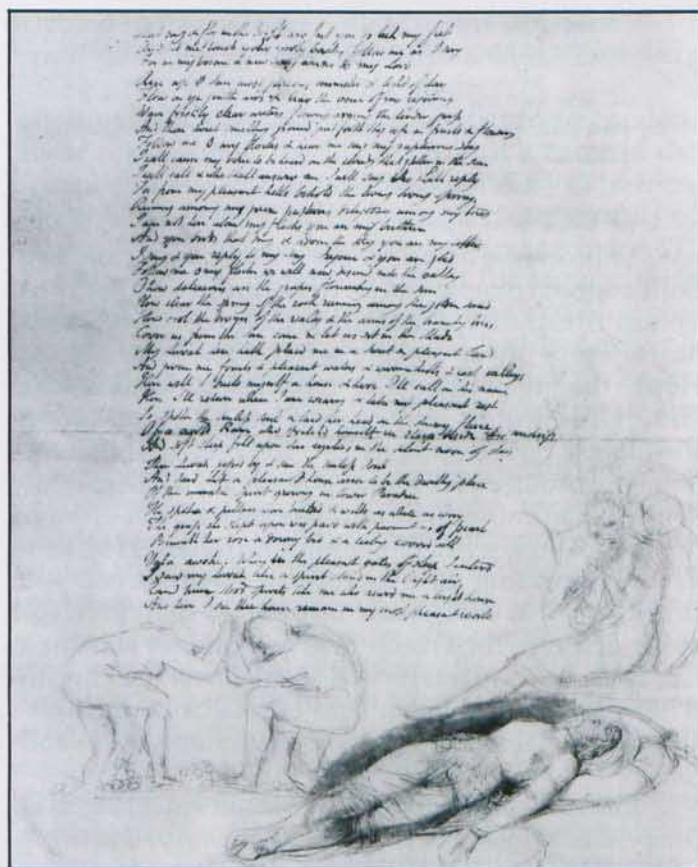
Eternals I hear your call gladly,
Dictate swift winged words, & fear not
To unfold your dark visions of torment.
(E 70)

In *Vala*, which he began in 1795, Blake describes various magnetic phenomenon: "... they behold / What is within now seen without"; Los has "sparks issuing from his hair"; emanations produce "sweet raptur'd trance" (E 314, 332, 371). Most suggestive, though, of Blake's probable collaboration with Baldwin is the drawing in Night Nine of a woman dressed in Turkish costume, holding a tambourine, lying in a trance state on Oriental pillows.⁵⁴ In the earlier portraits of Mrs. Baldwin by Cosway and Reynolds, she holds a tambourine and sits on a divan, respectively. George Baldwin also dressed in Oriental garb in London and discoursed on magnetism while lolling on pillows.⁵⁵ The accompanying speech by Vala seems to echo Baldwin's new enthusiasm for the "magnetic sleep" which led to spirit-communication:

Vala awoke. "When in the pleasant gates of sleep I enter'd,
"I saw my Luvah like a spirit stand in the bright air.
"Round him stood spirits like me . . .

.....
he laid his hand on my head,
"And when he laid his hand upon me, from the gates of sleep
I came."⁵⁶

In Egypt from 1794 to 1798, Baldwin continued his experiments with the "magnetic sleep," which he explained as "the discovery of a spiritual influence on the physical temperature of man."⁵⁷ As he witnessed many "elevations of the soul," Baldwin became convinced that "no earthly bound could bound this spirit." Then, in January 1795, his life changed dramatically when a wandering Italian poet, Casare Avena de Valdieri, arrived in Alexandria and joined in Baldwin's sessions. Through the poet's magnetic trance, Baldwin achieved communication with the spirit of a young girl, his first love in the 1760s. He rapturously affirmed:



Page 128 in C. T. Magno and David V. Erdman, *The Four Zoas by William Blake* (Bucknell UP, 1987). Courtesy of the British Museum.

It is in common tradition over the world, that spirits will come and converse with men; mankind, in general, hath an involuntary dread of these spirits; why? — for my part I see nothing to dread; or something of the kind must exist to justify our fears. — I say indeed that these spirits do exist; — must of necessity exist . . .⁵⁸

Baldwin and Valdieri magnetized an Arab servant, whose clairvoyant descriptions were verified by witnesses. But the most astounding of their feats was the massive output of poetry and operas produced by Valdieri from spirit-dictation. In a trance state, Valdieri claimed to travel through the celestial world, speak with spirits, and experience a state of ecstatic beatitude. The poetic works, produced by automatic writing, revealed "amid the most eccentric flights of fancy, an order, an intricacy of arrangement, a regular confusion, a wilderness of beauties, an harmony of verse, a reach of discovery that shall satisfy his (the reader's) mind about the real author of it."⁵⁹ Like Blake in *Milton*, Baldwin identified this dictating spirit as the same Muse who illumined Milton in *Paradise Lost*, 1.25. For Baldwin, Blake's description of automatic writing would seem precisely accurate:

... Muses who inspire the Poet's Song,
Record the journey of immortal Milton thro' your Realms
... Come into my hand
By your mild power; descending down the Nerves of my right
arm
From out the Portals of my Brain ...

(E 96)

To provide a haven for the writing bouts, Baldwin built a special temple within the British consulary mansion in Alexandria. Baldwin's artistic friends may have heard about these psychic adventures from Thomas Hope, the art patron, who returned to London after visiting Baldwin in 1797.⁶⁰ Hope was also interested in the Cabala, Swedenborgianism, and magnetism; moreover, his brother Henry was a student of Mainaduc.⁶¹ When Napoleon moved into Egypt, Baldwin opposed the French in a series of complex intrigues. He had to flee Egypt, losing all his property, but returned with British forces in 1801, where he played a significant role in the defeat of the French. Arriving back in London in late 1801, Baldwin was treated as a political hero by conservatives and as a psychic hero by magnetizers. Blake's allusion to Baldwin suggests his familiarity with both roles.

Immediately upon his arrival, Baldwin arranged for the private printing of *An Investigation into Principles* (1801). It was not for sale but was distributed by the author to his friends. The work traced the history of animal magnetism and told the romantic story of his contact with the spirit of his lost love. Evidently encouraged by his friends, he next printed privately *La Prima Musa Clio* (1802), which included his explanation of automatic writing and the Italian poems of Valdieri. Though Blake was in Felpham, he may have heard of these works from London friends or from Hayley, who was an inveterate student of electric and magnetic medicine.⁶² When Blake returned to London in autumn 1803, he evidently joined the magnetic sessions of Baldwin, Cosway, and their friends. Baldwin soon gained a devoted following. As Thomas Wright observed, Baldwin was "in respect to the healing art, the Aloysius Horn of his day; he was now famous and lolled on Oriental cushions amid strange hangings."⁶³

Baldwin's courageous commitment to his visionary studies would surely have appealed to Blake. In *Mr. Baldwin's Legacy to His Daughter, or the Divinity of Truth* (1811), he revealed his enthusiastic philosophy which merged Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Swedenborg, and Druidism into a therapeutic, visionary science. He had delayed publication of this work because "I have been told, that I shall be called a Visionary"; however, "I am told by Scripture that where there is no vision the people perish."⁶⁴ In *B. A.'s Book of Dreams* (London, 1813), he described his treatment of an extremely de-

formed young lady (B. A.), who not only saw visions but greatly improved physically. Blake seems to refer directly to this case in his *Notebook*, emblem 19, when he sketches a sick girl on a pallet, approached by a turbaned, cloaked man. Blake's odd lines may reflect his ambivalent feelings towards Baldwin: "The Cripple every step Drudges & labours / And says come learn to walk of me Good Neighbours."⁶⁵ The next lines scratched out and confused, either condemn the single vision ("doubt") of Newton, Bacon, and Reynolds, or possibly scorn the medical treatment of Baldwin: "He is all Experiments from last to first." On the same page where Blake criticizes "Cosway, Frazer, and Baldwin," for merely healing the sick, he shows five figures grouped in pyramidal form (suggestive of Egypt), who watch over the sickbed of a girl who holds a book (possibly *B. A.'s Book of Dreams*).⁶⁶



N39, emblem 19, from *The Notebook of William Blake* by David V. Erdman (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973). Courtesy of the British Museum.

Blake's identification of Baldwin with "Egypt's Lake" may point to one reason for their broken friendship. Blake, whose acquittal of treason charges did not mean he gave up his radicalism, was possibly put off by Baldwin's contribution to Napoleon's defeat in Egypt. In 1802 Baldwin published *Political Recollections Relative to Egypt*, in which he revealed that it was his idea to cut the canal of Alexandria and let sea water into the dry bed of Lake Mareotis. When carried out by Sir Sydney Smith on 13 April 1801, the French were cut off from all communication with the interior of Egypt. This led to the English victory over Napoleon in August. Baldwin carried home "the famous Standard of the Invincible Legion of Bonaparte," and he was caught up in the outburst of patriotic enthusiasm.⁶⁷ Thus, Blake's phrase, "Baldwin of Egypt's Lake," had definite political connotations. Cosway, on the other hand, seemed to forgive Baldwin his political stance while benefitting from his magnetic expertise. Still as radical as Blake, Cosway could blithely boast of witnessing the King's birthday dinner (while invisible and "in a spiritual capacity") and then rejoice exceedingly at the victories of Bonaparte.⁶⁸

The last four lines of Blake's poem suggest another possible reason for Baldwin's withdrawal from Blake. Blake accuses Hayley, Flaxman, and Stothard of prudish concern over his works. Certainly, if Baldwin saw Blake's *Vala* and believed that Mrs. Baldwin was portrayed in Oriental costume, he may have been offended. Through her diaphanous Turkish veil, her vulva is clearly revealed. For the Swedenborgian magnetizers of the 1790s, the mystical significance of the female genitals to the visionary process was considered the highest of "coelestial arcanæ."⁶⁹ William Belcher proclaimed, "As well almost might Paracelsus make a man, without female aid, as can be acquired mystic knowledge without woman, the centre of magnetic attraction."⁷⁰ Ebenezer Sibly, a Swedenborgian Freemason and magnetizer, made a series of Rosicrucian drawings which depicted the vulva as the center of the Cabalistic universe.⁷¹

The radical Swedenborgians among the magnetizers struggled to publish Swedenborg's more explicit writings on the methodology of the Cabalistic erotic trance, but their efforts were frustrated by a wave of counter-revolutionary prudery which developed at the turn of the century. By 1805, Fuseli complained about prudish objections to naked figures in art, and Thomas Hope feared that nude sculpture might have to be draped for exhibition.⁷² In this new pre-Victorian climate, the radical magnetizers went underground. The explicit Cabalistic drawings of Sibly and manuscripts of erotic rituals were never published; rather, they became the provenance of a secretive Rosicrucian network that gathered at occult bookstores and clandestine lodges in the early decades of the century.⁷³ Cosway and Blake par-

ticipated in this network, whose members stimulated a revival of Hebrew and Cabalistic studies, especially among a new generation of magnetizers.⁷⁴

Bindman observes that on his return to London, "Blake's rejection of the Classics is in the name of the Hebraic sublime."⁷⁵ In his renewed devotion to Hebrew studies, there may be a clue to the puzzling identity of "Frazer," the third member of Blake's healing trio. A "J" or "I" Frazer appears on Mainaduc's list of pupils. He may be the artist, G. Fraser, who painted a striking portrait of Solomon Bennett, a talented Jewish engraver.⁷⁶ Though nothing more is currently known of G. Fraser, the fact that Cosway was a patron of Bennett makes the possible linkage of Blake to Bennett (via Frazer and Cosway) worth pursuing. The question of Blake's access to Hebrew and Cabalistic instruction, through published sources or personal contacts, continues to perplex scholars.⁷⁷ Though the full context of Swedenborgian and Masonic connections with Jews in London needs extensive investigation, the immediate context of magnetism in 1804-11 makes Solomon Bennett a plausible candidate for a role in Blake's biography. Besides being an admirable artist and erudite man of letters, Bennett was the most accomplished Hebrew teacher in London. Moreover, the connection between magnetic healers and Jewish instructors is consistent with the experiences of Cosway and Baldwin among the Swedenborgians and students of Mainaduc. Dr. Isaac Benamore, a Jewish physician, was Mainaduc's most successful disciple.⁷⁸ Benamore was still practicing magnetic medicine, in collaboration with various Swedenborgians, in 1807. Curiously, though William Cowper turned down the Holloway's offer of magnetic therapy, he had only praise for Benamore's treatment of a friend.⁷⁹

If Blake knew Solomon Bennett, through the medium of Cosway, Frazer, and their magnetizing friends, the two would have had much in common, as well as critical differences of religious opinion. Bennett (1761-1831) came from a Polish family in White Russia and seemed to have absorbed the peculiar, paradoxical mentality of the Sabbatian Jews of the period.⁸⁰ In his home area, many Jews became Freemasons and aspired to assimilation with Christians. Bennett recorded "the unbounded veneration I feel for our present Nazarenes . . . from my infancy I was their admirer, and exerted myself to be their imitator."⁸¹ In 1792 Bennett set out for Copenhagen, determined to pursue a career in the arts that was impossible at home. He evidently had some contact with the alchemical circle headed by Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel, who attempted to unite Christians and Jews in a new Masonic rite of "Asiatic Brethren," which synthesized Sabbatian Cabalism and Christian mysticism.⁸² It was in this Danish lodge that Blake's idol Lavater, a vet-

eran magnetizer, achieved the visionary spirit-communication that made him a convinced Rosicrucian.⁸³

As Scholem observes, the "Asiatic Brethren" occupied a "no man's land" between extreme tendencies of rationalism and mysticism, which it aspired to synthesize in a Christian-Cabalistic equilibrium.⁸⁴ Bennett exemplified this paradoxical mentality, for he was a skeptical, scientific rationalist, who also studied Cabala and alchemy. His strikingly engraved portrait of Lorenz Werskoss, a seventeenth-century alchemist, was said to reflect "his own mystic nature."⁸⁵ Bennett was elected to the Danish Royal Academy of Art, a singular honor for a Jew at the time. Moving to Berlin in 1795, Bennett achieved acclaim as a portraitist and evidently mixed in high Jewish-Masonic circles.⁸⁶ However, he chafed under Prussian anti-Semitism and, seeking a freer climate, he emigrated to London in November 1799.

Relishing English liberties, Bennett boldly expressed his eclectic and colorful views, compounded of radical free-thinking and ardent spirituality. Soon rejected as a heretic by orthodox rabbis, whom he scorned as "insignificant reptiles," he found supporters among gentile artists, literary men, and Freemasons.⁸⁷ While studying voraciously, he eked out a living by engraving and giving Hebrew lessons. William Beechey, who helped Blake in 1805, also helped Bennett that year, by allowing the poverty-stricken Jew to engrave his portrait of the Prince of Wales (Grand Master of the Freemasons).⁸⁸ Bennett's portrait of Shakespeare was used as the frontispiece to the 1807 Stockdale edition of *Shakespeare's Dramatic Works* (the edition used by Coleridge for his marginalia).⁸⁹ In 1808 Bennett boldly exhibited his own portrait of his hero, Napoleon, whom he praised in millennial terms for emancipating the Jews and spreading tolerance throughout Europe.⁹⁰

Bennett may have met Cosway and Frazer by this time, for they evidently supported his effort to publish *The Constancy of Israel* (1809), by "a native of Poland . . . professing the Arts in London." Bennett stressed his appreciation for the artists who helped him publish, and Cosway owned the extremely rare first edition of the work.⁹¹ The frontispiece was Bennett's engraving of his portrait by Fraser. As Kirchstein observes, Fraser's portrayal reveals the whole history of Bennett: "In the eyes are a penetrating spirituality and a quiet pensive melancholy. You can read from his face all his wanderings and striving, all his intellectual and artistic powers, all his lone battle with life."⁹² Bennett's book was a learned defense of Judaism in the face of aggressive propaganda by the newly formed London Society for the Conversion of the Jews. Bennett heard in some chapels, "a crow from the pulpit, with a human voice," who ignorantly attacked Jewish beliefs, and he scorned the "religious barterers" who "spy among the poor, illiterate, and dis-

tressed" Jews of Petticoat-lane and Frying-pan Alley.⁹³ Cosway, who had long been a champion of the Jews, followed the conversionist controversy with interest and collected many of the treatises put forth by both radical and reactionary "philo-Semites."⁹⁴

Though Bennett welcomed Christian students and enjoyed debating with sincere readers of the Hebrew Bible, he resented those conversionist efforts that were based on ignorant linguistic analysis and anachronistic Christological interpretations. It may have been Cosway who was the "friend" who showed Bennett *An Address to the Jews* (1710), by John Xeres.⁹⁵ Cosway owned a rare copy of the little known work, which described Xeres' reasons for abandoning Judaism and embracing Christianity. Bennett then refuted Xeres' argument that the Cabalists' notion of a plurality within God was the same as the Christians' Trinity.⁹⁶ Blake, who was immersed in Hebrew studies and mystical illustrations of the Old Testament, made his own contribution to the conversionist controversy with his address "To the Jews" in *Jerusalem*. As Bogan notes, in Blake's solution, "Hebrew Adam / English Albion joins the two seemingly disparate nations of England and Israel in a common patriarchal religion."⁹⁷ Even more suggestive of Blake's conversionist preoccupation with the Jewish visionary tradition is the frontispiece to *Jerusalem*, in which the illuminator, Los, is dressed like a Hasidic rabbi or Polish Jew.⁹⁸

Cosway, Frazer, and their magnetizing friends may have sought out Bennett because of his expertise in Cabala, for the Jewish mystical traditions of the microcosmic Grand Man underlay the psychic physiology of animal magnetism. Bennett described his studies in published and manuscript works on "Kabala or Magic, which are merely extracts from the Hebrew."⁹⁹ He discusses the Cabalists' seven names for *Alohim*, but then urges that we must "proceed to a more sublime idea of this noble creation of the Microcosm," for Man's "qualities material and spiritual" are the "sublime of all Creations."¹⁰⁰ In Blake's address "To the Jews," he stresses this Cabalistic concept: "You have a tradition, that Man anciently contained in his mighty limbs all things in Heaven & Earth" (E 171). Unlike Blake, Cosway, and Baldwin, however, Bennett was determined to maintain a scientific and rational view of the Cabalistic microcosm. He scorned the revivers of occult notions of spirits:

The prophane doctrines of invisible beings who act on mankind, faith in sorcerers, visionaries, dreamers, etc. which had been but too successful on the human mind are now exploded, except in the brains of some chimerical individuals, or hypocrites, to dazzle the lowest class of humanity.¹⁰¹

For Blake, who was enthusiastically describing in *Milton* his celestial journeys among the Rosicrucian-style "Fairies, Nymphs, Gnomes, and Genii of the Four Elements," Bennett's scorn would have stung. Moreover,

Blake's defense of a "Professor of Sidereal Science" (an astrologer), who was arrested and "the cabalistical chattels of his profession" confiscated, would undoubtedly have been ridiculed by Bennett as the product of a low-class, chimerical brain.¹⁰² Cosway, however, may have understood Bennett's desire to distance himself in print from spirit-communicators and magnetizers. Cosway acquired *The Supernatural Magazine* (Dublin, 1809), in which a critic charged that animal magnetism was a diabolical, anti-Christian practice, imported from France, which had insidious links with the naturalization of the Jews and the Revolution.¹⁰³ The same magazine noted that a recent book described the current revival of Rosicrucianism in London, out of the ashes of Egyptian Masonry, Illuminism, and the New Jerusalem Church.¹⁰⁴ Bennett may have become disillusioned with those of his Masonic friends whose interest in Cabalism led them into Rosicrucianism, for, as the radical republican Richard Carlile later charged, "the drift . . . of these Rosicrucian degrees, is to make Masonry begin in Judaism and end in Christianity."¹⁰⁵ Certainly, Blake seemed to share that "drift," for he challenged the Jews that "If your tradition that Man contained in his Limbs, all Animals, is True," then you should "Take up the Cross O Israel, & follow Jesus" (E 174).

Frustrated that Cabalism was being turned into "ill digested opinions" by conversionists and Rosicrucians, Bennett determined to reclaim the Temple of Ezekiel from the Christian visionaries and dreamers and to root it solidly in actual Jewish history. In February 1811, he announced a new work on the rebuilding of the Temple of Ezekiel, with an explanation of the Jews' "newly reformed *democratical* or rather theocratical government":

Although the explanation of the visionary Temple of Ezekiel upon scientific principles may be objectionable to some orthodox Jews or Christians, who prefer the mystical to the rational, especially in scriptural matters, yet I think . . . the prophets (independently of their divine inspiration) were able politicians and men of science.¹⁰⁶

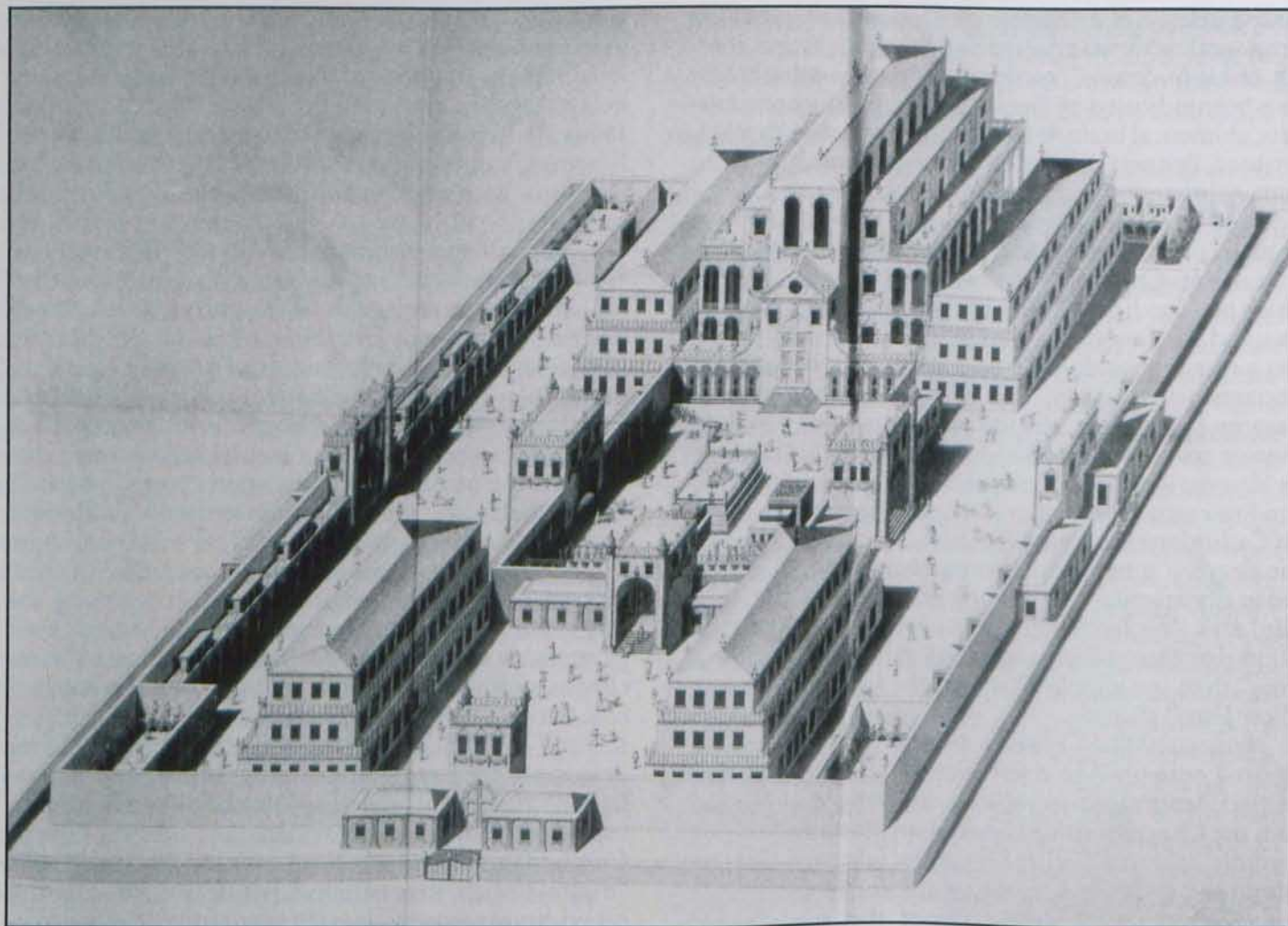
Bennett had prepared for the work a large, fold-out engraving of the Temple of Ezekiel which was considered a "masterpiece of imagination and technique," showing his "sound knowledge of architectural draftsmanship."¹⁰⁷ It is possible that Blake's preoccupation with the architectural design of Ezekiel's Temple in *Jerusalem* was stimulated by conversations or arguments with Bennett.¹⁰⁸ Told by a Christian printer that "It is our duty to suppress everything relating to Hebrew literature," Bennett turned to his artistic and Masonic friends for help.¹⁰⁹ Three current friends or patrons of Blake—William Friend, Prince Hoare, and Earl Spencer—subscribed to the project.¹¹⁰ Another subscriber, the sculptor John Henning, utilized Bennett's Hebrew instruction to further his own investigations into alchemy, astrology, and

geomancy (studies Henning shared with John Varley, soon to become Blake's intimate friend).¹¹¹ Unfortunately, orthodox opposition (both Jewish and Christian) delayed publication of *The Temple of Ezekiel* until 1824. As Blake became more vociferous in his British Israelism, Bennett became more vehement in his Jewish Israelism. Both men became isolated in their own communities.

Though the withdrawal of Cosway, Baldwin, and Frazer from Blake may have also signaled the withdrawal of Bennett from their circle, Blake's break with his magnetizing friends may have been temporary. In fact, his suspicious and hostile reaction was possibly caused by overindulgence in Cabalistic-magnetic experiments. Cabalistic texts and Swedenborg's writings are full of warnings about the dangers of mental derangement that threaten the intense meditator upon magical arcana.¹¹² Podmore discusses the paranoia that often accompanied excessive attempts at magnetic trances.¹¹³ The conviction of persecution by distant enemies, operating by Mesmerism or telepathy, occurred frequently among the magnetizers of the nineteenth century. Though such paranoia is one of "the commonest delusions of incipient insanity," many sane persons who dabble in psychic trances "have not escaped the contagion of this panic fear." In 1806 Blake accused Stothard of effacing his drawing of the Canterbury Pilgrims by means of a "malignant spell."¹¹⁴ He railed against the plots of his steady supporters Hayley and Flaxman. The tolerant George Cumberland noted that he seemed "crack'd" and "dim'd with superstition," while Robert Southey pitied his obvious madness.¹¹⁵ Curiously, Seymour Kirkup also diagnosed Blake as insane, a verdict Kirkup later retracted when he became an animal magnetizer.¹¹⁶ Bentley points out that between 1807 and 1812, Blake seemed to lose his firm grasp of the nature and limits of reality:

He sometimes seems to have thought of the spiritual world as supplanting rather than supplementing the ordinary world of causality. More and more frequently the spirits seem to have been controlling Blake rather than merely advising him.¹¹⁷

Blake's insistence that animal magnetism include exorcism—"he casts out devils"—may have smacked of magical megalomania to his friends. However, his plight would have been well understood by Benedict Chastanier, the former "powerful assistant" to Mainaduc. After playing a lead role in disseminating animal magnetism, Chastanier "at last found out its evil tendency, and like an honest man first abandoned the practice and next exposed it."¹¹⁸ Still friendly with Cosway in the early 1800s, Chastanier may have influenced Cosway's withdrawal from Blake's essentially magical practice.¹¹⁹ As Chastanier explained in 1795, animal magnetism was



"The Temple of Ezekiel." Engraving, 26½ x 20½ inches. Designed by Bennett in the 1790s, engraved c. 1809–10, and published in 1824 in Bennett's book of the same title.

certainly a real and powerful science, which only increased its spiritual dangers:

... the very great danger there is for a man to meddle with any Science that openeth to them a freer communication with the world of Spirits, than that they naturally are to have; for as every man is by nature attached to his own peculiar evil, (and there is no Man, nor even any Angel, also free from evil,) the Spirits with whom he may thus communicate, can but confirm him more and more into that evil, peculiarly annexed to his own nature, and thus become an insurmountable bar to his Regeneration.¹²⁰

Despite the timidity or genuine worry of his magnetizing friends, Blake was committed to his "perilous adventure," regardless of political, erotic, or psychic dangers. Though he would be driven to note, "Jan^y. 20. 1807 between Two & Seven in the Evening—Despair," he could also boast in happier times, "excuse my enthusiasm or rather madness, for I am really drunk with intellectual vision" (E 733, 694, 757).

¹David V. Erdman, ed., *Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake*, newly rev. ed. (New York: Doubleday/Anchor, 1982) 728–29. Hereafter cited as E.

²Marsha Keith Schuchard, *Freemasonry, Secret Societies, and the Continuity of the Occult Traditions in English Literature* (Ph.D. dissertation, Univ. of Texas at Austin, 1975); *The Men of Desire: Swedenborg, Blake, and Illuminist Freemasonry* (forthcoming).

³Robert Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (Harvard UP, 1968); Clarke Garrett, *Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution in France and England* (Johns Hopkins UP, 1975).

⁴George Williamson, *Richard Cosway*, rev. ed. (London: G. Bell, 1905); Frederick Daniell, *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Engraved Works of Richard Cosway*, R. A. (London: F. B. Daniell, 1890).

⁵"Mr. Cosway, Painter in History," is listed by C. F. Nordenskjöld as a member of the group in 1783–84. Unpublished list in Academy Collection of Swedenborg Documents, Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, PA. On Freemasonry and early Swedenborgianism, see Martin Lamm, *Upplysningstiden Romantik*, 2 vols. (Stockholm: Hugo Gebers, 1918) 1: 63; R. L. Tafel, "Swedenborg and Freemasonry," *New Jerusalem Messenger* (1869): 266–67.

⁶Karl-Erik Sjoden, "Swedenborg en France," *Stockholm Studies in the History of Literature*, 27 (1985): 10-40.

⁷*Intellectual Repository*, 2 (1874-75): 191-98; *Journal Encyclopédique*, 6 (1 Sept. 1785): 310-20.

⁸Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, ed. Thomas Sadler, 2 vols. (Boston: J. R. Osgood, 1871) 1: 494-96.

⁹Darnton 62-66.

¹⁰See W. R. Dawson, ed., *The Banks Letters* (London: British Museum, 1958) 66, as a corrective to Vincent Buranelli, *The Wizard from Vienna* (New York, 1975) 182.

¹¹*The Lectures of J. B. de Mainaduc, M.D.* (London: printed for the Executrix, 1798). Copy in Royal College of Surgeons, London. Includes list of paying students. I am grateful to Jonathon Miller, M.D., for informing me of this copy.

¹²John Martin, *Animal Magnetism Examined* (London, 1790) 5-6.

¹³Benedict Chastanier, *A Word of Advice to a Benighted World* (London, 1795) 30-31.

¹⁴Daniel Lysons, *Collectanea*, A Scrapbook of Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Clippings in the British Museum, 1: 156-63 on animal magnetism. Also, John Bell, *A New System of the World* (London, 1788).

¹⁵*Morning Herald* 15 Feb. 1786.

¹⁶Mainaduc xi.

¹⁷Mainaduc 28-29.

¹⁸Mainaduc 81-83.

¹⁹Mainaduc 97.

²⁰Julian Boyd, ed., *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, 22 vols. (Princeton UP, 1950) 4: 3-4; F. M. Brodie, *Thomas Jefferson* (New York, 1974) 204-24.

²¹Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1954) 217.

²²Mainaduc 196.

²³K. Garlick and A. Macintyre, eds., *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, 16 vols. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1978) 3: 710.

²⁴J. C. Colquhoun, trans., *Report of the Experiments on Animal Magnetism* (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 1833) 101-03.

²⁵Mainaduc 31.

²⁶Mainaduc 207.

²⁷"Animal Magnetism," *British and Foreign Medical Review* 14 (1839): 9.

²⁸"Animal Magnetism" 19; *A Letter to a Physician in the Country on Animal Magnetism* (London: J. Debrett, 1786) 32.

²⁹Anthony Pasquin [John Williams], *Memoirs of the Royal Academicians* (London: H. D. Symonds, 1796) 80-81.

³⁰*Morning Post* 16 June 1786.

³¹*Monthly Observer and New Church Record* 1 (Jan.-Dec. 1857): 420.

³²Mainaduc xi.

³³Mainaduc 226-28.

³⁴*Analytical Review* 6 (1790): 155-56.

³⁵*World* 2 Oct. 1791; Thomas Holloway, *Memoir* (London, 1827) 29-32.

³⁶J. King and C. Ryskamp, eds., *The Letters and Prose Writings of William Cowper*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979-82) 3: 404-05.

³⁷David V. Erdman, *The Notebook of William Blake* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973) N50-51.

³⁸Holloway, *Memoir* 24-25; Maria, *The Secret Revealed: or, Animal Magnetism Displayed* (London: T. Hawkins, 1790) 5-11.

³⁹Grand Lodge, London: Atholl Register F., vol. 6, f.487; Index to Moderns, F series, vol. 14.

⁴⁰Darnton 70.

⁴¹Garrett, *Respectable* 100-20; Constantin Photiades, *Count Cagliostro* (London: William Rider, 1932); M. Matter, *Saint-Martin* (Paris, 1862).

⁴²Augustin Barruel, *Memoirs, Illustrating the History of Jacobinism*, 4 vols. (London: T. Burton, 1797-98) 4: 546.

⁴³William Belcher, *Intellectual Electricity* (London, 1798) i, 27.

⁴⁴Belcher (i); handlist of half the books in Cosway's library, compiled by the late Diana Wilson and now at the Huntington Library. I am grateful to Morton D. Paley for informing me about this list.

⁴⁵"George Baldwin," *Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁴⁶Freeman O'Donoghue, *Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits . . . in the British Museum* (London, 1910) 1: 107; J. T. H. Baily, *Francesco Bartolozzi* (London, 1907).

⁴⁷George Baldwin, *Mr. Baldwin's Legacy to His Daughter* (London: William Bulmer, 1811) 4: 40-45.

⁴⁸British Museum Additional Manuscripts. 29,198.f.379.

⁴⁹George Baldwin, *An Investigation into Principles* (London: George Bulmer, 1801) 31.

⁵⁰Baldwin, *Legacy* iv.

⁵¹Darnton *passim*.

⁵²George Baldwin, *Political Recollections Relative to Egypt*, 2nd. rev. ed. (London: W. Bulmer, 1802) 127.

⁵³Dawson 672.

⁵⁴C. T. Magno and D. V. Erdman, *The Four Zoas* by William Blake (Bucknell UP, 1987) 242.

⁵⁵Thomas Wright, *Life of William Blake*, 2 vols. (London: Olney, Bucks, 1929) 2: 31.

⁵⁶Magno and Erdman 242.

⁵⁷Baldwin, *Investigations* 88.

⁵⁸Baldwin, *Investigations* 120.

⁵⁹Baldwin, *Investigations* 93.

⁶⁰Dawson 427.

⁶¹Sandor Baumgarten, *Le Crépuscule Neo-Classique: Thomas Hope* (Paris: Didier, 1958) 218-24, 254; also Mainaduc xii.

⁶²Morchard Bishop, *Blake's Hayley* (London: Gollancz, 1951) 95-96.

⁶³Wright, *Blake* 2: 31.

⁶⁴Baldwin, *Legacy* iii.

⁶⁵Erdman, *Notebook* N39.

⁶⁶Erdman, *Notebook* N39.

⁶⁷Baldwin, *Political Recollections* 145.

⁶⁸Garlick and Macintyre, *Diary* 7: 3096.

⁶⁹Based on Swedenborg's descriptions in his *Journal of Dreams, Spiritual Diary*, and *Conjugal Love* (especially #103, 146). See also Magno and Erdman 158.

⁷⁰Belcher, *Intellectual* 109.

⁷¹Ebenezer Sibly, *The Dumb Made to Speak . . . or the Grand Arcanum of Adepts*. Manuscript #4594 in Wellcome Institute of History of Medicine.

⁷²Garlick and Macintyre, *Diary* 7: 2518-19.

⁷³Sibly, *Dumb; A Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts . . . on Astrology, Magic, and Alchymy, etc. . . the Stock of John Denley* (London, 1820).

⁷⁴Schuchard, *Freemasonry* 476-505; and more extensively in *Men of Desire*.

⁷⁵David Bindman, *Blake as an Artist* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1977) 141.

⁷⁶Alfred Rubens, "Early Anglo-Jewish Artists," *Transactions of Jewish Historical Society of England* 14 (1935-39): 112-17. The initials to names on Mainaduc's list are often inaccurate. Keynes speculated that Blake referred to Alexander Fraser, a minor painter (*Blake: Complete Writings*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes [Oxford UP, 1985] 911). But Fraser lived in Edinburgh until 1813, when he moved to London. Earlier, I speculated that Blake referred to Alexander Fraser, a Freemason and shorthand writer, who was also a friend of Bennett (Schuchard, *Freemasonry* 478-80). The question remains open.

⁷⁷Sheila Spector, "Kabbalistic Sources—Blake's and his Critics," *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly* 17 (1983-84): 84-99.

⁷⁸Rainsford Papers, British Museum Add. Mss. 23,670.f.71; *Monthly Observer and New Church Record* 3 (Jan.-Dec. 1859): 281. Benamore's son was also a physician and student of Mainaduc.

⁷⁹Cowper, *Letters* 3: 404.

⁸⁰Arthur Barnett, "Solomon Bennett, 1761-1838: Artist, Hebraist, and Controversialist," *Transactions of Jewish Historical Society of England* 17 (1951-52): 91-111.

⁸¹Solomon Bennett, *The Constancy of Israel*, 2nd. ed. (London: printed for the author and sold by him at No. 475, Strand, 1812) iv-v.

⁸²Jacob Katz, *Jews and Freemasons in Europe* (Harvard UP, 1970) 27-53.

⁸³Antoine Faivre, *Mystiques, Théosophes et Illuminés au Siècle des Lumières* (New York: Georg Olms, 1976) 175-90. Fuseli owned Lavater's *Reise nach Copenhagen* and was working on a biography of his friend in the early 1800s.

⁸⁴Gershom Scholem, *Du frankisme au jacobinisme* (Paris: Galimard, 1981) 28.

⁸⁵S. Kirchstein, *Juedische Graphiker* (Berlin, 1918) 20.

⁸⁶Katz 27-53; Bennett, *Constancy* 224-25.

⁸⁷Bennett, *Constancy* 216.

⁸⁸G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Records* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969) 165; Rubens, "Anglo-Jewish" 114.

⁸⁹Bentley 17; British Museum Catalogue entry for Stockdale edition.

⁹⁰Barnett 96; Bennett, *Constancy* 5, 228.

⁹¹Handlist of Cosway's library.

⁹²Barnett 94.

⁹³Bennett, *Constancy* 34, 206.

⁹⁴Handlist of Cosway's library.

⁹⁵Bennett, *Constancy* 34, 206.

⁹⁶Bennett, *Constancy* 105-06.

⁹⁷E 171; J. M. Bogan, "Apocalypse Now: William Blake and the Conversion of the Jews," *English Language Notes* 19 (1981): 117.

⁹⁸See entry on "William Blake" in *Encyclopedia Judaica*.

⁹⁹Bennett, *Constancy* 200.

¹⁰⁰Bennett, *Constancy* 106-09.

¹⁰¹Bennett, *Constancy* 77.

¹⁰²E 769; "Police . . . Astrology," *Oracle and True Briton* (13 Oct. 1807).

¹⁰³*The Supernatural Magazine* (Dublin, 1809) 7-9.

¹⁰⁴*The Supernatural Magazine* 67-71.

¹⁰⁵Richard Carlile, ed., *The Republican*, 12 (1825): 469. Bennett became the close friend of the Duke of Sussex, who, as Grand Master from 1813 on, struggled to maintain Jewish rights within Freemasonry and to suppress the exclusively Christian Rosicrucian degrees.

¹⁰⁶Solomon Bennett, *The Temple of Ezekiel* (London, 1824) 151.

¹⁰⁷Barnett 96.

¹⁰⁸See Morton D. Paley, "'Wonderful Originals'—Blake and Ancient Sculpture," in *Blake in His Time*, eds. R. N. Essick and D. Pearce (Indiana UP, 1978) 183-92.

¹⁰⁹Bennett, *Temple* 5.

¹¹⁰Bentley 273, 136, 232.

¹¹¹William Bell Scott, *Autobiographical Notes*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper's, 1892) 1:115-20.

¹¹²Sheila Spector, *Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Garland, 1984) xi; Swedenborg's *Journal of Dreams and Spiritual Diary passim*.

¹¹³Frank Podmore, *From Mesmer to Christian Science* (New York: University Books, 1963) 258.

¹¹⁴Bentley 180.

¹¹⁵Bentley 229, 236.

¹¹⁶W. M. Rossetti, *Rossetti Papers* (London, 1903) 171-72.

¹¹⁷Bentley 180.

¹¹⁸William Spence, *Essays in Divinity and Physic* (London: Robert Hindmarsh, 1792) 58.

¹¹⁹Rainsford Papers, British Museum Add. Mss. 23, 670, vol. 2.f.275.

¹²⁰Chastanier 31.

REVIEWS

Jerome J. McGann, *Social Values and the Poetic Acts*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988. xii + 279 pp. \$25.

Reviewed by Michael Fischer

Social Values and Poetic Acts is the fourth in an important series of books that includes *The Romantic Ideology* and *A Critique of Textual Criticism* (both published in 1983) and *The Beauty of Inflections* (1985). (McGann has not yet said when the fifth and final installment, *The Literature of Knowledge*, will appear.) These books all aim at restoring historical consciousness to literary studies. Although the English romantics have figured in this project from the beginning, in *Social Values and Poetic Acts* Blake is especially important to McGann's argument. Part 1 of the book, with its four chapters addressed to the deconstructionists, the new historicists, the formalists, and the marxists, respectively, is of course patterned after *Jerusalem*, and what McGann calls Blake's "habit of returning to the same topics from slightly altered perspectives" (ix) influences the method of the several chapters that follow.¹ In addition, Blake's intervention in the "legitimation crisis of art" (x) of his own time guides McGann's response to the problem of revitalizing literary study today. Even the dust jacket of the book reproduces a plate from *Jerusalem*. Understanding why Blake has become so important to McGann sheds light not only on *Social Values and Poetic Acts* but on the series of books that it extends.

Although discussed in *The Romantic Ideology*, Blake is peripheral to that book's larger concerns and figures mainly as an example of the first, optimistic phase of romanticism, when the promise of the French Revolution could still be believed. Because politics was still "a pleasant exercise of hope and joy," as Wordsworth described this period in *The Prelude*, radical works like *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* could be exempt from