

# AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY BLAKE

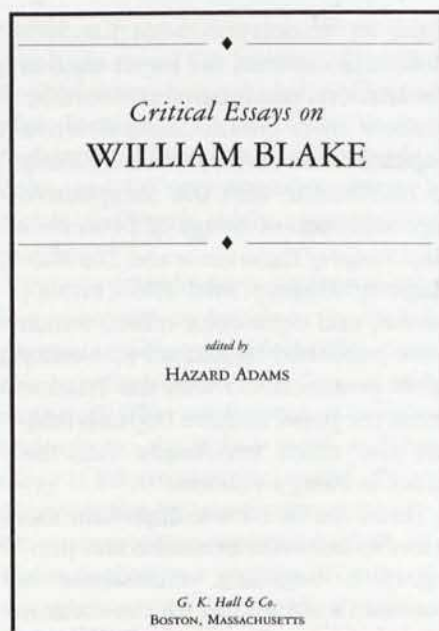
R E V I E W

Morton D. Paley, ed., William Blake, Jerusalem:  
The Emanation of the Giant Albion

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sick, Morris Eaves, and Morton D. Paley. It is from the critical contributions by Frye, Erdman, Hagstrum, Mitchell, Paley, and Essick that Adams selects six of the sixteen essays as representative examples of modern Blake scholarship.

In part two of his introduction Adams provides a rationale for having selected the sixteen essays reprinted for this volume, and for dividing the collection into two parts. The first part of the collection deals with Blake's reputation in the nineteenth century and begins with Deborah Dorfman's "Knowledge and Estimation of Blake during His Lifetime," followed by the well-known criticism of Blake by Robert Hunt in "Mr. Blake's Exhibition," Allan Cunningham's discussion of Blake from *Lives of The Most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, and a selection from *Reminiscences* by Henry Crabb Robinson. Also included in part one is a letter to Alexander Gilchrist from Samuel Palmer providing information on Blake for Gilchrist's biography. Although the majority of these essays are quite familiar, they are included together here as examples of attitudes toward Blake during his lifetime.

The second part of this volume draws from recent Blake criticism and

is, according to Adams, meant to be read sequentially. This is a bit curious since Adams does not arrange these essays in chronological order, suggesting instead that the reader's attention be focused on the varieties of critical discourse rather than a concern for chronological developments in Blake scholarship as the first part of his introduction implies. Part two also includes "Spectre and Emanation," a selection from Morton D. Paley's *The Continuing City* (1983), Steven Shaviro's article "Striving with Systems: Blake and the Politics of Difference" (1982), and "The Return to Logos" from *William Blake and the Language of Adam* (1989) by Robert N. Essick, as examples of what Adams refers to as "the so-called postmodern emphasis on difference, deconstruction, Hegelian negation, and language" (6). The inclusion of these three essays by Paley, Shaviro, and Essick, produces a radically different Blake than the one presented in the earlier essays in part two by Frye, Erdman, Hagstrum, and Mitchell. In order to remedy this disparity, it would be more useful to the student unfamiliar with contemporary critical discourse, or for the generalist audience for whom the book is intended, to have divided the book into three sections, with the third section devoted to postmodern approaches to Blake.

Given the editorial objectives of the *Critical Essays on British Literature Series*, one of which is to develop a unique perspective on its subjects, Adams' strategy is successful. By providing essays on Blake from nineteenth century accounts of him, and, selections representative of major critical directions taken by Blake scholars, Adams' *Critical Essays on William Blake* underscores the wide disparity between attitudes toward Blake's art and poetry by his contemporaries, and the wide range of critical directions taken by Blake scholars in the twentieth century.

William Blake. *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Morton D. Paley. Princeton: Princeton University Press, The William Blake Trust, and The Tate Gallery, 1991. Blake's Illuminated Books, vol. 1. General Editor David Bindman. \$75.00.

Reviewed by  
Terence Allan Hoagwood

This book is an edition of the unique water-colored copy of *Jerusalem* (copy E, which is in the collection of Paul Mellon). This copy was reproduced in full only once before, in the facsimile produced by the Trianon Press for the William Blake Trust in 1951; only 516 copies of that book were distributed, including 16 which were reserved for Trustees of the William Blake Trust. The new book here under review includes photographic reproductions of all 100 plates of the poem—in full size, and in full color—as well as excellent introduction, notes, and commentary by Morton D. Paley. The publication of this book is a scholarly event of great importance, for two kinds of reasons: the quality of this publication itself, and the matchless importance of the work which is herein reproduced.

Blake finished only one copy of *Jerusalem*, in his sense of the word "finished"; and that one is his most important work intellectually and artistically.<sup>1</sup> This version of *Jerusalem* includes relief etching, white-line engraving, water color, and pen-and-ink. This work differs substantially from all other surviving versions of *Jerusalem*, including those copies which Blake prepared in monochrome prints and those which were made posthumously,



apparently from Blake's own original plates.<sup>2</sup> I agree entirely with Paley that this work—not *Jerusalem* in general but this final, water-colored copy—is “Blake's greatest single work” (Paley, Introduction 16). The availability of this remarkably good reproduction makes possible for the first time a widespread recognition of the distinctiveness of this work, involving both visual and intellectual complexity. The book's startlingly low price (and for a book like this one I found the price of \$75 astonishing) was made possible by a grant from the Getty Grant Foundation, and likewise by the commendable work of the William Blake Trust.

What follows in this review are, first, a description of the book and its contents, an account of its production and history, and a discussion of some features of this version of *Jerusalem* which are now available for wider discovery, appreciation, and argument than ever before.

This volume is the first in a series, “Blake's Illuminated Books,” under the general editorship of David Bindman and published by the William Blake Trust, the Tate Gallery, and Princeton University Press. The editors project “a complete edition in the same format of all Blake's illuminated works” (Bindman's Preface 6). (Another volume in this series, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, edited by Andrew Lincoln, has also been published.) The book is bound in sturdy and dark brown hardcover; the front of its striking dustjacket is wholly given to a color enlargement of the photograph of the title page of *Jerusalem*. The book includes a preface by Bindman (1 page), a foreword by Paley (1 page), an introductory essay on *Jerusalem* by Paley (9-16), remarkably good color photographs of all 100 plates of *Jerusalem*, photographs of five additional plates (three other versions of plate 1 of *Jerusalem*, and two other versions of plate 51), and a typographic transcription of the verbal text of this copy of *Jerusalem*, meticulously prepared by Paley and accompanied by commentary on the plates and notes



on the text (132-297); there are also “A Note on the Reversed Writing in *Jerusalem*” (128-29), a bibliography (298-302)—which is a list of works cited in Paley's Introduction and notes rather than a more general guide to scholarship—and two blank leaves.

Bindman's preface says justly that “this edition of *Jerusalem* is, even allowing for the inevitable compromises all reproduction entails, as accurate as modern technology and expert checking at every stage can make it” (6). The color photographs represent some (I emphasize *some*) features of the original work's coloration more accurately than even the hand-colored facsimile produced by the Trianon Press for the Blake Trust in 1951. The paper on which the photographs appear is of high quality: this paper is not glossy, and though it is smoother and brighter than Blake's own cream-colored wove paper, the images are both better and more attractive in the absence of glossy paper's impertinent shine. To compare this feature with relatively familiar books, the color photos from this version of *Jerusalem* reproduced in Bindman's *William Blake: His Art and Times* are on glossy paper, as are the color photographs of *The Book of Urizen* and of *Milton*, edited by Roger Easson and Kay Parkhurst Easson, which were published by Shambhala

Press in association with Random House. In contrast, the paper used in the Trianon Press facsimiles resembles Blake's own cream-colored wove paper. Readers of this journal are likely to be familiar with the inexpensive reproductions of *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (in six-, seven-, and eight-color offset) which were published by Oxford University Press in association with the Trianon Press; the paper in these books is thinner and much less bright than the paper in Paley's volume.

There are of course important differences between facsimiles and photographs; “beguiling verisimilitude” is Bindman's apt phrase for the former, but important advantages of the latter include the lower price. Facsimiles are so expensive that they cannot be available to many, whereas the price of the book under review is sufficiently modest to make it available to most people with an interest in Blake or in the visual arts generally. It costs less than a year's subscription to any of several journals; one could use it as a text in a seminar. In contrast, the last of the Trianon Press facsimiles produced for the Blake Trust costs £580, and only 250 copies of the standard edition were produced.<sup>3</sup> The facsimile of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* published by the Manchester Etching Workshop in 1984 was (to quote the publisher's description) “printed on a rolling press with hand-made intaglio ink on dampened, hand-made wove paper.” A total of 40 copies of the facsimile published by the Manchester Etching Workshop were made available for sale, at \$800 each.

The present volume—and I agree with Bindman about the high quality of the photographs—sacrifices some features of the original medium, including texture and three-dimensionality: copy E of *Jerusalem* consists of pictures in which india ink is placed over water color which is placed over forms printed in the ink which Blake had mixed himself, using linseed oil; in many pictures liquid gold is placed



on the surface of images. No photograph can reveal this layering of media. Reproduction using color photography does gain an exactness in the registration of the water color's gradations, and (to an astounding degree) makes the work easily available for purchase.

Paley's introductory essay is excellent in its kind, as those who know his previous books, especially *The Continuing City*, would have hoped and expected. The scholarship is careful and eclectic, the style is lucid, and the essay is informative and useful. Paley discusses the circumstances of the poem's composition and production by Blake, including a concise account of the relevance of the reported visionary experience at Felpham in 1803, the treason trial involving Scholfield, Blake's report of the enlightenment he experienced after visiting the Truchsessian Gallery, and the likely meanings of "1804" on the work's title page. Paley writes briefly and well of the importance of such facts as Blake's loss of the commission to engrave his own *Grave* designs, the negative reviews of Blake's work by Robert Hunt, the failure of Blake's own exhibition in 1809, and the conflict with Stothard and Cromek over the *Canterbury Pilgrims* picture; he notes the poem's allusions to datable events, including some in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars,<sup>4</sup> and he summarizes reasonably the biographical evidence (involving Henry Crabb Robinson, Southey, the Water Colour Society, and letters to George Cumberland) concerning the composition of the poem and the production of the visual art, as well as the evidence of watermarks.

Among the interpretatively useful arguments presented in Paley's introduction is this one concerning the economically determined history of the production of *Jerusalem*: though the monochrome copies are inked too heavily to have been water colored subsequently, "Blake may not have intended to issue monochrome copies of *Jerusalem*, as this was not his usual

practice for the later illuminated books" (13); for example, there are no known uncolored copies of *Milton* or *The Book of Urizen* (I would add that the last version of *Urizen*—copy G, with watermarks of 1815 but perhaps finished as late as 1818—is more precisely and strikingly colored than any other version of that work). Blake wrote to Cumberland (12 April 1827): "I cannot Print more Except at a great loss." Citing Joseph Viscomi's observation that Blake's method of production was obviously "not cost effective,"<sup>5</sup> Paley suggests very plausibly that "it may be for this reason that he produced four complete monochrome copies of *Jerusalem* and only one complete coloured one" (13). As I shall be showing below, and as the reproduction here under review makes quite visible, these economic issues are not only relevant to the circumstances of *Jerusalem*'s production; they are likewise important within the *meanings* of the work.

In this connection, the history and the prehistory of the volume are especially interesting, not only as a record of endeavors singularly important for Blake studies, but (as if so designed by Clio) as a narrative illustrating one of Blake's own most pervasive preoccupations, which is the effect of economic conditions upon the production and reproduction of art. According to the preface by Bindman, the Blake Trust was founded in 1949,<sup>6</sup> "with the express purpose of making Blake's Illuminated books more widely known by producing facsimiles of the whole corpus." Arnold Fawcus of the Trianon Press used collotype printers (collotype is a photogelatin process which produces a base of outline for the design corresponding to the *printed* portions of Blake's plate); then, "up to thirty colours per plate" were added manually in water color. For the full-page illustrations in the facsimile of the water-colored *Jerusalem*, an average of 44 applications of water colors was used (according to Keynes's introduction in the volume). These water colors were applied through stencils, one

of which was made for each color. This sequence of layers, including the initial outline and the subsequent superimposition of several layers of water colors, replicates the three-dimensionality of the original work. So does the "pure rag paper especially manufactured to match the paper used by Blake" (Keynes's introduction), though there has been some question about whether the paper in this facsimile is unevenly darkening with time and exposure to light.<sup>7</sup>

Following the publication of that facsimile of the water-colored *Jerusalem* in 1951, the Blake Trust with the Trianon Press published facsimile editions of all the illuminated books; in 1987, the Blake Trust completed its plan of facsimile publications, with the *Job* versions.<sup>8</sup> As long ago as 1979, Keynes indicated that the Blake Trust and the Trianon Press intended to publish that facsimile of the *Job* illustrations and likewise a facsimile of the manuscript of Blake's *Island in the Moon*; in the event, that was not what happened. After the death of Arnold Fawcus, founding director of the Trianon Press, complications inevitably ensued, including "protracted negotiations involved in reaching a satisfactory agreement for the mutually desired termination of the role of the Trianon Press as publishers to the William Blake Trust."<sup>9</sup>

A new William Blake Trust was incorporated in January 1983; this group hoped to issue the *Job* facsimiles in 1985, but the Trust found it necessary to withdraw from the *Island* project.<sup>10</sup> Books, of course, "are not produced without arrangements of some sort,"<sup>11</sup> and it often happens that our understanding of the value and meaning of a book is considerably enhanced by an understanding of those arrangements.

As Keynes said in 1979, the Blake Trust facsimiles "have only been made possible by the generosity of our American benefactors."<sup>12</sup> The "protracted negotiations" in which the Trust was involved resulted in a protracted publication schedule: in 1979, Keynes expected the *Job* and



*Island* facsimiles to be published before the end of 1980;<sup>13</sup> four years after that date, Stephen Keynes announced the Trust's hope that "*Job* will be issued in 1985";<sup>14</sup> and then, after "a surprising number of years,"<sup>15</sup> the *Job* appeared in 1987, and the *Island* facsimile had found a different publisher.

The new William Blake Trust has, now, turned to this new project—the complete edition, with photographs of very high quality, of Blake's illuminated books, in a form that is accessible as well as accurate and attractive. The volume here under review is, as I have said, the first volume in this important new series.

It is a point of some importance that the difficulties which were evidently undergone by the Blake Trust—and obviously overcome through the diligence and even devotion of its members—appear to have included *business* difficulties, and, to that extent, they replicate Blake's own difficulties. Shortly before his death Blake wrote, "the Last Work I produced is a Poem Entitled Jerusalem the Emanation of the Giant Albion, but find that to Print it will Cost my Time the amount of Twenty Guineas One I have Finishd It contains 100 Plates but it is not likely I shall get a Customer for it."<sup>16</sup> Allan Cunningham reported that Blake's failure to find a buyer for his beautifully (and expensively) finished *Jerusalem* "sank to the old man's heart."<sup>17</sup> That set of conflicts and problems also sank into the work itself, including its meanings and themes. The story told by the troubled history of production and reproduction of *Jerusalem* is already told in thematic and polemical form within the poem and designs of *Jerusalem* itself—incipiently in the monochrome copies that Blake produced, which have been photographically available for years, but most evidently, gloriously, and powerfully in the visual beauty of the final (water-colored) *Jerusalem*. Specifically, that narrative and theme are embodied in Blake's use of gold in *Jerusalem*, a topic to which I shall return. Briefly in the introduction and more specifically in the plate-by-plate

commentaries, Paley provides useful discussion of the coloring of *Jerusalem*. He includes some account of the differences in effect produced by the color as opposed to the monochromatic designs present in other versions of *Jerusalem* (though I would be inclined to make much more of this issue). Paley calls the significance of colors "largely affective"; there is no color-code of meanings. But he observes that red can suggest flames of hell (pl. 26) or the blood-colored material of bodies which Vala forms (pl. 100); green can suggest "new life and perhaps even . . . the theological virtue Hope" (as he says of pl. 76—though others who have written about this plate are perhaps less optimistic about this important design). Usefully, he points out the "only in E do we see that in 32 [46] Vala and Jerusalem confront each other on a green island with the sea breaking in the foreground" (15); I agree that this pictorial fact is important; I would add that on plate 50, the king with three heads, a crown on each, is clearly tormented on his green island with white cliffs; in all other copies, he sits on a white rock with monochromatic hatching. The fact that Blake is here portraying specifically England's green and pleasant land, and not a mythical abstraction, is splendidly evident only in this version of *Jerusalem*.

As these examples suggest, Paley's interpretations, in both the introductory essay and the commentaries which follow, are chiefly devoted to the *meanings* of the pictorial images, their reference in terms of the poem, rather than their physical makeup or their predominantly visual effects. For example, Paley observes correctly that in plate 25 the umbilical filament being drawn out of the male figure by the female figures is of the same color as the fibers which are visibly trailing from the fingers of those female figures; "the identity of colour . . . creates a visual equation" (15). But that identity of color is a matter of Blake's printed ink taken directly and initially from the copper plate—in this copy as

in every other copy—and not a matter of added water color at all; it is the added water color in *other* spaces of the picture which helps to differentiate this relationship between the umbilicus and the fibers as an identity. The gold in the designs is visually striking (it is often discernible in the photographs by its color; in the original copy E, it glitters brilliantly), and it is also thematically and polemically important. The oppressions of class distinction, poverty, massive exploitation and inequality are as everyone knows preoccupations of Blake throughout his productive life: "the Opressors of Albion in every City & Village . . . mock at the Labourers limbs! they mock at his starvd Children. / They buy his Daughters that they may have power to sell his Sons . . . They reduce the Man to want: then give with pomp & ceremony" (*Jerusalem*, pl. 30; I quote from Paley's typographic transcription [177]). This theme is visualized in the designs repeatedly, and I shall limit myself to four examples: in plate 99 gold shines in the hair of the naked woman who is gripped by the (clothed) patriarch; gold is also placed in the flames below her hair to the left. Gold glitters in the rocks that are literally oppressing the struggling men in the two lower bands of picture on plate 23. As Paley's commentary points out (205), but as the photograph hardly reveals, there is gold around the arms of Albion in plate 47, in the design in which the naked woman, literally trodden upon, reaches desperately toward him with her arms. On the magnificent plate 76, gold shines in the tree around the crucified Christ, inside the nuts or fruit on the boughs of the tree (in four pieces of fruit to the tree's right, in eight to the tree's left, and in one leaf in a bough on the right side of the tree).

Paley's careful statement about the use of gold in *Jerusalem* mentions different thematic purposes to which the gold seems to be put in different plates, and he qualifies terminology valuably: "it is not possible to be absolutely certain that Blake's gold colouring was obtained by the use of



true gold without analytical testing by x-ray fluorescence [but] it is clear under microscopic examination that both gold coloured metal leaf and silver coloured metal leaf were employed," and Paley adds very pertinently that the gold contributes "perhaps the most extraordinary colour effects in copy E," and that the purchase of this gold, "along with the other materials for copy E, must have represented a considerable expense for a poor man like Blake" (15).

To that just observation I would add three more: (1) gold thematizes the polemic about wealth and oppression in *Jerusalem*; (2) quite apart from its conceptual meanings, the shining metal imparts visual brilliance to this work which has no likeness in any other version of *Jerusalem*; and (3) though color photographs cannot reproduce the physical thickness and brilliant glitter of the metal on the painted designs, this reproduction does make the gold *visible* in many of the plates, disclosing therefore a very important—and unique—dimension of the painted designs. Because this feature is important for connoisseurship, but also for a formal analysis of the work, or conceptual analysis, or socio-historical argument, it seems to me that all appreciators of Blake, however widely their methods and aims might diverge, are herein provided a valuable resource. No letterpress edition, no black-and-white reproduction, and most emphatically no explanation in critical prose could reproduce however faintly this effect and this theme. Blake suffered from the economically determined conflicts about which he wrote; the distribution of his work repeats outwardly the theme of economically determined conflicts which is elaborated within them; and the volume here under review is an important and even triumphant moment in the history of those same conflicts.

Paley's introduction makes brief but good use of important scholarship on the poem—such as David V. Erdman's "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's *Jerusalem*" (*Studies in Bib-*

*liography* 17 [1964])—but also very recent scholarly and critical work, including important arguments about the "broken text" of plate 3, and the historical meanings onto which it opens;<sup>18</sup> Paley's introduction (and likewise his interpretive notes) make excellent use of Robert Essick's argument about plate 51, which Blake apparently separated from this water-colored version of the poem and for which he evidently substituted another version, though Essick's article was not even in print when Paley's introduction was written.<sup>19</sup>

Paley's informative and accessible commentaries accompany the typographic transcription of the text of *Jerusalem*, plate by plate. The format of presentation makes the book extraordinarily easy to use, the commentary on the visual art appearing in italic type, separated by a horizontal line from the notes on the verbal content of the poem, which appears in roman type. The letterpress version of the poem has been prepared with a specific goal: "to give as close an equivalent to Blake's calligraphic text as possible" (126). Because the original plates are reproduced in the volume, the nature of the editorial goals for the diplomatic edition in letterpress is sensibly described in this way: "the text here is offered in conjunction with the reproduction and not as a substitute for it"; this fact is important, because at all those points where problems or ambiguities might arise—and Paley is sensitive and even vigilant about textual details—"the reader will turn to Blake's calligraphic text" (127), to see plainly the etched and painted plate that Blake made and from which all letterpress texts have worked. The nature of textual problems, the guesswork of all previous editors, and the nature of all previous editorial judgments regarding textual problems are thus rendered visible as no typographic text has ever been able to make them.<sup>20</sup>

Paley has examined all problematic cases under magnification; for example, Blake's commas and periods are

often difficult to distinguish, and the difference between a colon and a mark of exclamation is not always apparent. Paley has analyzed very carefully such problems as the confusion of the letter *a* with the letter *o*, occasioned by Blake's tendency to drop the loop of the cursive *o* (at 21:44, "warshipped" and not "worshipped", but at 43:19 "Forms" and not "Farms");<sup>21</sup> but the immediate presence in the book of the full-size photograph of each plate is without question the best of all possible solutions to the problem of misrepresenting the verbal text. Likewise in the case of questioning whether 10:36 ends with a dash or a large period: it is here evident, as it is not evident in any letterpress text, that one confronts a work of visual art, and not an editorial problem. As soon as a reader turns to the magnificent color plates, such problems tend to diminish or vanish, because it is strikingly evident that the manual work of producing the visual art, and not necessarily an odd rhetorical strategy, frequently determines these points.

I will allow myself one example of a longstanding point of editorial confusion which the photographic reproductions help to resolve as no editorial description could do: in *Blake Books*, G. E. Bentley, Jr., writes that in plate 98, line 45, "the Coven[and] of Jehovah" was altered to 'thy Covenant Jehovah' in [copy] E" (237). In fact, it is copy F in which the word is "thy" rather than "the," as Bentley correctly says elsewhere in the same book (258); copy E has "the"; Paley correctly says so, and he cites Erdman's essay, "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's *Jerusalem*" (38-39), for the information that the original wording of the etched plate was "thy Covenant Jehovah"; Blake attempted to alter it to "the Covenant of Jehovah." "The change was not entirely successful, so this copy reads 'the Coventet of Jehovah'" (295).

In fact, as this reproduction makes quite apparent, there is no "of" in line 45 of plate 98 in copy E. It says "the Covenant Jehovah." That is exactly what



it says in the monochrome copy A (in the British Museum). And that is exactly what it says in the monochrome copy C (Harvey collection). Editors have evidently been seeing double, taking the "nt" of "Covenant" as both "nt" in that word *and* as a fuzzy "of." There is no "of."

Regarding Paley's reading, "Covenant": it seems to me that the relative lightness of the printing of that word, over a possibly corrected copper plate, has made the stem of the *a* weak, and the *n* is more completely closed at the bottom loop than it normally is; it does not appear to my eye that Blake added a *t* or that he changed the *n* to an *e*. This question might take on some significance if somebody thought that Blake used a word, "Coventet," and if that reader then went on to undertake philological scholarship to construe its usage. I do not think that there is any such word as "Coventet" in *Jerusalem*; I think, rather, that the ambiguity arises from the physical makeup of the plate, but in any case, as Paley justly says, in this book "the reader will turn to Blake's calligraphic text," and the problem is solved as effectively as may be.

Again, that problem is solved by the vivid reminder that *Jerusalem* is primarily a work of visual art: for example, on this particular plate, where the problem of "Covenant Jehovah" appears, that sort of merely verbal problem is hardly salient; more salient is the yellow water color wash that covers the text; no effect like this appears in any other version of the design. The serpent at the top of the design has minute teeth, eyelid, pupil, and forked tongue, all drawn painstakingly with pen-and-ink (not etched on the copper plate, not printed on the paper, and thus not existent in the monochrome copies). The serpent also has, in the same carefully added ink, what looks like a head of hair—this bizarre and probably important feature is likewise missing from all monochrome versions. Most of the serpent at the top of the design is painted in blue water color (though it looks gray in the color photograph);

the printing is so light that one does not see the printed rings which make the serpent's scales, or at least one does not see them so clearly here as in the monochrome copies (compare copy A, reproduced in Bindman's *Complete Graphic Works*); they are discernible only under close scrutiny, because the printed (orange) ink is spotty and more white shows than in the monochrome copies. The snail, frog, butterfly, and moth near the bottom of the page have also been drawn manually with a pen—all of them have been outlined in ink except the moth, and even the moth has a black dot of manually applied ink on his body. It is perhaps not so evident in this photograph as in the original that the black added to the limbs of the spider is water color, in contrast to the ink outlining the other creatures in this portion of the design. The lower half of the left border is painted over in green, which adds imagery of a vine to the plate, missing from all other versions and iconographically important. A thin green band of ground below the creatures at the bottom of the page, but above the last line of the text, makes that last line of text visibly subterranean here, as in no other version of the design.<sup>22</sup>

Paley's commentary on the designs is, as I have suggested, usually concerned with the images' reference and allusions; given the necessary brevity of the commentary, and the uses for which this book is (I hope) destined, Paley has no doubt provided what most readers will find satisfying. For example, here is the complete text of Paley's commentary on the design which I have just described:

*Across the top curls the 'all wondrous Serpent' of line 44, while in the lower design we see, attractively presented, creatures often considered loathsome (especially the Worm, which has been so prominent in [Jerusalem] but which now takes its place among 'Living Creatures starry & flaming' [lines 42-3]). The viewer is put in the position of the Ancient Mariner who, having first recoiled in horror from the water-snakes, sees their beauty in the process of his own regeneration. (295)*

For another example, on the frontispiece, "Los is Christ entering Limbo as is emphasized by a comparison with an anonymous Renaissance engraving, *The Descent to Hell*, probably after Montegna" (130—and that helpful comparison is made in *The Continuing City*, as Paley says—see plates 14 and 15). "Architecture emphasizes this meaning . . . it is the Gothic arch that Blake associates with inspiration" (130). Paley's reproduction in this volume of the monochrome version of this design from copy C (in the collection of Mrs. Ramsay Harvey) enables an instructive comparison: "For the monochrome copies, Blake had to rely on the dramatic contrast afforded by white-line to create a different kind of striking effect" (130).<sup>23</sup> Clearly, however, much more than that is involved in the difference between the white-line engravings and the solid-line design in copy E, here reproduced. The legs and the hands of the male figure, for example, are white lines in all of the monochrome copies, against the solid color which is background; exactly the reverse is the case here, where the lines are drawn in black ink. The outline of the door is white line against a dark background in all of the monochrome copies; here it is black line. The picture is not the same in this important respect: what is here black is there white.

The same reversal of white and black appears in several other plates, and more than merely local effects are involved. The difference is a total reversal of the picture's constitution, like the reversals of a negative. Sometimes the reversal is achieved by Blake's drawing (often with pen and ink but sometimes in very fine lines of dark water color), whereas the lines in the monochrome copies were made by engraved lines; the drapery in the coat of the male figure on the frontispiece is an example. A more comprehensive example is the global reversal of the crucifixion design, plate 76; in all the monochrome versions, this design is a white-line engraving, such that the forms are defined by white lines



against a solid black background; in copy E, the forms are defined in black lines. In all of the monochrome versions, the rays of the sun on the horizon line are white lines against a black sky; these lines are made by printing from an engraved plate. In contrast, in copy E, those rays are black lines drawn on the paper (not the copper plate) across a sky of white and pale gray.

Another case in which the differences are spectacular between the water-colored *Jerusalem* and the monochrome versions is the wonderful design of plate 99. In all of the monochrome copies, the sun, the clouds, and the flames are defined as white spaces; the definition is achieved by black lines printed from the etched plate. In contrast, in copy E the flames are drawn very sharply on the paper—in water color applied with a fine brush and in india ink applied with a pen. The flames and the sun are defined as colored spaces, outlined in black; and the sun, which in all of the monochrome copies is white against a black sky, is here painted black.

These differences are vitally important in several ways: obviously a picture consisting of white forms against a dark background is very different from a picture consisting of colored forms against a white background; further, the lines themselves, whatever their color, are very different. Printed ink from the copper plate (copy E is printed in orange ink, and copy A in black) makes lines very different in texture, definition, thickness, and appearance from lines that are drawn on paper *after* the printing, by a pen or fine-pointed brush. Water color washed or brushed over a printed surface creates a very different effect from printed lines; and the combination, in a single picture, of several media (printed ink, water color, pen-applied india ink, and liquid gold) creates extraordinary depth and complexity. The work here reproduced is not a different "copy" of the design; it is a different work of art.

These reversals could have been achieved in a number of ways. For

example, a plate on which lines are incised, for the letters of words and the outlines of pictorial figures, can produce dark letters and lines if the plate is wiped before printing; pressure on the paper transfers ink from the incised lines. This process is often called "intaglio." From the same plate, however, an opposite effect can be produced if the plate is not wiped and if pressure is applied only lightly: in such a case, ink is transferred to the paper from the surfaces left standing, and the incised lines produce white lines on the paper.<sup>24</sup> The result is, like a photographic negative, white on one impression where there is ink on the other, and ink where there was white. This process is difficult, because the plate must be inked carefully to avoid getting ink into the incisions, but it is possible. As Essick has said, "almost any plate may be printed in either intaglio or relief"—that is, ink can be transferred from incised areas or from raised surfaces.<sup>25</sup>

An alternative, however, involves Blake's producing different kinds of plates. In a dark-line relief etching, such as Blake normally made, the letters and pictorial outlines stand up three-dimensionally on the copper plate. These raised surfaces are inked, and the result is a dark-line print on the paper. In a white-line etching, such as *Death's Door* (1805) or the title page of *Milton* in copy A (both reproduced in Essick, *William Blake: Printmaker*), in contrast, the lines defining the image are incised and the backgrounds thus receive ink. This kind of etching is not "intaglio" because the ink is printed from the raised surface of the plate; thus, this sort of printing is "relief" printing. But it is different from Blake's normal method of relief printing because the lines of the letters and the outlines of the pictorial figures are white against a dark background, as opposed to the normal effect which he produces—dark letters and lines against a white background. Blake could and did use both dark-line and white-line methods in etching *Jerusalem*, on dif-

ferent plates and sometimes within a single design.

Despite the total reversal of inked and white areas, the white-line frontispiece for *Jerusalem* was evidently made from the same copper plate as the dark-line version which is in copy E. Faint traces of the deleted inscription in the arch near the top of the design are discernible under the water color of the design in copy E; this fact suggests that the same plate was used here and in the white-line engraving which is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum. Furthermore, when I have overlain exactly sized transparent photocopies of the white-line version and the dark-line version, I have found that the images are so similar in detail that it is unlikely that they were made from two different metal plates.<sup>26</sup> Instead, Blake has evidently expended effort and skill in transforming the visual effect to produce a different pictorial effect for this copy of *Jerusalem*. Blake's application of color to the pictorial surface—ink with pen, and paint with brush—makes profound differences in the appearance of the design.

These differences between dark and light, positive and negative, are perhaps important in conceptual and thematic terms as well. In the course of developing his theological inversions in "The Everlasting Gospel," Blake writes, "thou readst black where I read white" (*The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake* 524). As Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr., remarked aphoristically, Blake's art "is continually engaged in inversional transformations";<sup>27</sup> and those who have read Blake's works with any seriousness at all have never failed to notice the reversals and inversions that are thematized ubiquitously in his written works—including the "Angel, who is now become a Devil" and the "Bible of Hell" (*Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, pl. 24), and the "Two Contrary States of the Human Soul" of the title of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. In *Jerusalem*, there are many different kinds of visual tropes of reversal: on plate 45, the final line of language on



the plate is engraved in white-line; all the other language on the plate is printed ink against a white background. Reversed writing appears in several plates, as in the backward poem on the scroll on plate 41, and in the deleted inscriptions on the frontispiece. In the work of this artistic revolutionary, such tropes of inversion are laden with meanings, transformative and even insurrectionary. For the first time, this relatively inexpensive set of color reproductions makes many of the most important of these visual tropes both visible and accessible.

In fact, I am inclined to say that the largest, most interesting, and most important inversions are the total reversals of visual definition which Blake achieved once—and only once—when he made the uniquely complex and beautiful work that is so accurately and handsomely reproduced in the volume here under review. Owing to the excellence of the photographs and the scholarly apparatus with which the reproduction is accompanied, and owing further to the generosity of the Blake Trust and its benefactors, Blakeans now and in subsequent generations can open eyes into worlds of vision that had previously been closed to all but a few. For this important contribution Paley and the Blake Trust deserve considerable gratitude.

<sup>1</sup> Other versions of *Jerusalem* have been reproduced in a variety of visual forms, as follows: copy C was reproduced in facsimile by the William Blake Trust in 1952 and again in 1955; though its note of acknowledgment seems to me ambiguous, it appears that Minna Doskow's *William Blake's "Jerusalem": Structure and Meaning in Poetry and Picture* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1982) includes photographs of that Blake Trust facsimile; copy B, consisting of only the first 25 plates, colored very differently from copy E, was reproduced by the Blake Trust in 1974; copy D was reproduced in facsimile, anonymously, in London in 1877; reduced photographs of copy D appear in David V. Erdman, *The Illuminated Blake* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974); copy A is reproduced in black-and-white photographs of full size in David Bindman, *The Complete Graphic Works of William*

*Blake* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978). Thirteen of the 20 illustrations in Paley's *The Continuing City: William Blake's "Jerusalem"* (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1983) are photographs, on glossy paper, of plates from *Jerusalem*, including two color photographs, reduced, from copy E. The 33 illustrations in Terence Allan Hoagwood, *Prophecy and the Philosophy of Mind: Traditions of Blake and Shelley* (University, AL: U of Alabama P, 1985) include 16 photographs, on acid-free rag paper, of plates from *Jerusalem* copies A and E. Joanne Witke's *William Blake's Epic: Imagination Unbound* (London: Croom Helm; New York: St. Martin's, 1986) includes 21 illustrations, all but one of them photographs of plates from *Jerusalem* (though the fact is not made entirely explicit in the book, it appears that these photographs are taken from copy D, at Harvard). Two illustrated exhibition catalogues have been so widely useful that they bear mentioning here: David Bindman's *William Blake: His Art and Times* (Yale Center for British Art and Art Gallery of Ontario, 1982) includes six color photographs (some full size) and ten reduced black-and-white photographs from *Jerusalem* copy E; Martin Butlin's *William Blake* (London: Tate Gallery, 1978) includes a full-size color photograph of the title page from copy B and 15 reduced photographs in black-and-white from copies B and E.

For the opportunity to examine in detail the water-colored *Jerusalem* and a marvelous and large collection of Blake's art in a variety of media during my tenure as Residential Fellow at the Yale Center for British Art, I am grateful to the staff of that institution, to Duncan Robinson, its Director, and to the generosity of Paul Mellon, who for a time allowed the unique water-colored *Jerusalem* to be housed at the Yale Center.

<sup>2</sup> "Not all works had to be coloured to merit [the] term['Finished']", but *Jerusalem* did" (Paley, Introduction 9).

<sup>3</sup> This was the set consisting of *William Blake's Illustrations of the Book of Job* and *Colour Versions of William Blake's Book of Job Designs from the Circle of John Linnell*, ed. David Bindman (London: The William Blake Trust, 1987).

<sup>4</sup> For this information Paley aptly cites Erdman's *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1977).

<sup>5</sup> Visconti, *The Art of William Blake's Illuminated Prints* (Manchester: Manchester Etching Workshop, 1983) 16.

<sup>6</sup> Keynes had specified 1948 [Blake 14 (1979): 110]; George Goyder, "The Origins of the William Blake Trust," *Blake* 21 (1988): 150-51, shows that initial steps were taken for the project in 1945.

<sup>7</sup> For instructive comments on this problem, I am grateful to Patrick Noon, Curator of Rare Books and Prints and Drawings at the Yale Center for British Art, and Peter Van Wingen, Director of the Rare Book Division at the Library of Congress.

<sup>8</sup> See the excellent review of these volumes by Martin Butlin, *Blake* 22 (1988/89): 105-10.

<sup>9</sup> See Stephen Keynes, "Blake Trust's Chairman's Report," *Blake* 18 (1984): 126-27.

<sup>10</sup> The Chairman's Report announced that "Dr. Haven O'More has assumed responsibility for *The Island in the Moon* and the Trust has indicated its readiness to be associated—though without obligation—with the publication when it is eventually issued" (Stephen Keynes 127). The *Island* facsimile did appear, in 1987, edited, introduced, and annotated by Michael Phillips, under the imprint of Cambridge University Press and the Institute of Traditional Science. G.E. Bentley, Jr.'s review of the *Island* facsimile points out that "For unexplained reasons, 'it fell to the Institute [of Traditional Science] to take the work soon after its conception and bring it to completion'" (Blake 22 [1988/89]: 103, quoting O'More's Preface to the *Island* facsimile). It may be that Stephen Keynes's "Chairman's Report" of 1984 gives us an indication of those unexplained reasons.

<sup>11</sup> Jerome J. McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983) 48.

<sup>12</sup> Blake 13 (1979): 110.

<sup>13</sup> Blake 13 (1979): 110.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Keynes 127.

<sup>15</sup> Bentley, Blake 22 (1988/89): 103.

<sup>16</sup> Blake, letter to George Cumberland, 12 April 1827; in *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, newly rev., ed. David V. Erdman (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982) 784.

<sup>17</sup> See G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Records* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1969) 501.

<sup>18</sup> See Jerome J. McGann, "William Blake Illuminates the Truth," *Critical Studies* 1 (1989): 43-60.

<sup>19</sup> Essick's argument appears in the *Art Bulletin of Victoria*, no. 31 (1990): 20-25.

<sup>20</sup> It is the way of sublunary things to have mistakes in them and in this sense the volume here under review is no exception; for that matter, neither were Blake's calligraphic works, as in the misspelling "incoherent," plate 5, line 3—a slip-of-the-brush which Paley's meticulous transcription faithfully reproduces. I shall record here a few merely mechanical errors in the editorial apparatus of this book (I have found none at all in the transcription of the text of *Jerusalem*); it is my hope that this volume will have a long life that will include many reprintings, and these errors are entirely easy of correction.



page 9: "the whole work cannot have been existed then" page 15: "41 [37]" means pl. 41 in copy E, here reproduced, and pl. 37 in the monochrome copies; however, without explanation, on p. 14, "41 [46]" means pl. 41 of the monochrome copies, and plate 46 in copy E. There is apparently some unintended confusion in the method of citing plate numbers for the alternative orders of pagination in the different copies of *Jerusalem*.

page 126: missing mark to close quotation: "Loss Hammer 36 [32]: 21."

page 130: missing opening parenthesis: "a portable sun. Raine 1: 223 and pl. 66)"

<sup>21</sup> As Paley points out, this issue has been helpfully interpreted by Nelson Hilton, *Literal Imagination: Blake's Vision of Words* (U of California P, 1983): according to Hilton, the relationship of "worshipped" and "warshipped" in *Jerusalem* "creates another instant in Blake's identification of early Jewish history and contemporary Britain" (18).

<sup>22</sup> That subterranean line is: "And from the Thirty-two Nations of the Earth among the Living Creatures."

<sup>23</sup> A fuller discussion of the differences between the monochrome version of plate 1 and the water-colored version in copy E appears in a book not mentioned by Paley; for that discussion, and a comparison of plate 1 with Blake's "Death's Door" design (in its very different versions as a white-line engraving, then as illustration 11 for *The Grave*, and then plate 15 in *For the Sexes: The Gates of Paradise*) and with "The Soul exploring the recesses of the Grave," see Terence Allan Hoagwood, *Prophecy and the Philosophy of Mind: Traditions of Blake and Shelley* (University, AL: U of Alabama P, 1985) 61-66. Like Paley's, this discussion of the plate emphasizes the meanings and reference of the images, including the backward wind and the globe of fire.

<sup>24</sup> For helpful conversation about these methods of etching, inking, and printing, I am grateful to Robert Patten.

<sup>25</sup> Essick, *William Blake: Printmaker* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980) 24. I would like to thank Professor Essick for additional information, provided in correspondence, which has been helpful to me in the interpretation of the visual differences and in the preparation of this review.

<sup>26</sup> For advice on this procedure of comparison, and for providing the transparent photocopies, I am grateful to Theresa Fairbanks, Chief Conservator at the Yale Center for British Art. On the issue of Blake's different print methods and their resulting effects, and on many other issues that have transformed and enriched my understanding of Blake's art, I am likewise grateful to Patrick Noon, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Yale Center.

<sup>27</sup> Wittreich, "Opening the Seals: Blake's Epics and the Milton Tradition," in *Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on "The Four Zoas," "Milton," "Jerusalem"*, ed. Stuart Curran and Wittreich (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1973) 55.

## Newsletter

### William Blake: Innocence and Experience

The National Endowment for the Humanities has announced a Summer Seminar for School Teachers on "William Blake: Innocence and Experience," to be led by Nelson Hilton. The session will run from June 21 to July 16, 1993, and offer each participant a stipend of \$2450. The seminar is designed primarily for full-time or regular part-time teachers at public, private, or parochial schools, grades 7 through 12, but other school personnel, K-12, are also eligible to apply. For further information contact Professor Hilton at the Department of English, University of Georgia, Athens GA 30602 (email: nhilton@uga.cc.uga.edu).

### Blake's Creative Process

Call for Papers:

#### Topic:

*Blake's Creative Process*,  
to be read at the  
Northeast Modern Language  
Association 1993 Convention  
at Philadelphia, March 25-27, 1993.

Send an abstract and text of paper with a reading time of 15 minutes (approximately 8-10 typed pages) by August 1993 to

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