

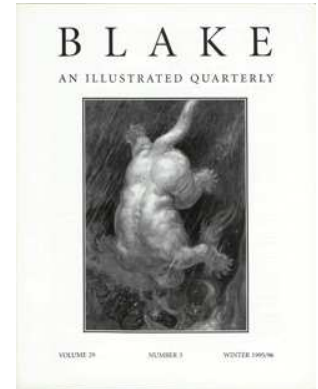
AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY BLAKE

R E V I E W

G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Studies in Japan: A Bibliography of Works on William Blake Published in Japan 1893-1993*

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G. E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Studies in Japan: A Bibliography of Works on William Blake Published in Japan 1893-1993*. Tokyo: Japan Association of English Romanticism, 1994. xxv + 189 pp. ¥2,800.*

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The arrival of G. E. Bentley's comprehensive bibliography, *Blake Studies in Japan*, may be a surprise to Western scholars, for it tells an unexpected story of Blake scholarship burgeoning in Japan from as early as the 1910s. The bibliography is organized, like his *Blake Books*, into six parts: "Blake's Writings," "Reproductions of Blake's Art," "Commercial Book-Engravings," "Bibliographies and Catalogues," "Books Blake Owned," and "Scholarship and Criticism." Though it shares basically the material compiled in his recent *Blake Books Supplement* (1995), *Blake Studies in Japan* is more than an excerpt of the Japan-related entries from the former; it contains new discoveries after the completion of the *Blake Books Supplement* manuscript and, more significantly, a valuable introduction, which is particularly rewarding for scholars who wish to understand the history of Blake's reception in Japan. The introduction is an informative story of "East meets West," with Blake being an intersection, "from the point of view of a western scholar" (xvi). I wish here, however, to supplement that account by telling the same story from within the Japanese scholarly tradition, so that my review, together with Bentley's introduction, may serve as a good invitation to his bibliography.

The Japanese contribution to Blake studies is massive. Bentley affirms it in the introduction: "Hundreds of Japanese scholars have published on Blake on an enormous range of subjects" (xxi). The introduction is a seamless fabric, but it can be divided in three sections, in all of which Bentley reiterates the vigor and profusion of Japanese scholarship. The first section presents interesting statistics on the yearly total numbers of Blake-related scholarly publications in Japan from 1893 to 1993. The statistics are followed by the second brief section which enumerates Japanese literary works influenced by Blake. The third and longest section concerns itself with characteristics of Japanese scholarship on Blake. Though lucid, Bentley's analysis is not always accompanied by necessary historical explanations. The statistics in the first section, for example, are both his strength and weakness:

his strength, because they enable him to point out that "the bulk is over a third (31.8%) of the number of works about Blake recorded in *Blake Books* (1977)" (xvii), and his weakness in that they allow him to put forth a picture of Japanese scholarship devoid of a first-hand understanding of the material. The remaining two sections of Bentley's introduction—his summaries of Japanese literature influenced by Blake and of characteristics of Japanese scholarship—also lack adequate historical explanation.

Bentley's statistics are fascinating data, because they show four spikes in the formative years of Blake studies in Japan, in the years 1914, 1927, 1931-32, and 1957. The year 1914 has an entry of 14 publications, which is a strikingly large number, considering that all preceding 21 years have entries of zero to three publications at most. The sudden surge of Blake studies in 1914, marking the first modern stream of publications on Blake in Japan, was inaugurated by the enormously influential Japanese scholar Muneyoshi Yanagi, and an artistic group called "White Birch School" or "Shirakaba Ha." Yanagi's legacy is still felt today in the academic distinction given to younger scholars employing Western methodologies. Yanagi's monumental book of 1914, *William Blake*, is 756 pages long, with 60 reproductions of the works of Blake. This lavish tome received international recognition, its titlepage being reproduced in the original language with English translations in Geoffrey Keynes's *Bibliography of William Blake* (1921).¹ Yanagi was a member of the White Birch School, a group of artists in various fields such as poetry, fiction, music, painting, and literary criticism and contributed essays on Blake to their journal, *White Birch*, which had a special issue on Blake in 1914. Yanagi sparked interest in Blake's works among the members of the group, who were enthusiastically waiting for Yanagi's completion of *William Blake* by reporting his progress on the book in almost every monthly issue of *White Birch* in 1914. These progress reports, together with Yanagi's essays (and one essay by another member of the school) published in *White Birch*, account for 13 out of 14 listed publications of 1914 in Bentley's statistics, the fourteenth being Yanagi's book itself.

Why did Yanagi, "an important Blake pioneer in Japan" (13) in Bentley's words, become interested in Blake in the first place? It is an intriguing question, to which I will briefly address myself. In the wake of enthusiastic mass Westernization, both politically and culturally, Yanagi was introduced to Blake's poetry. The whole of Japan was dominated by an obsession with the West. Professors from the West, such as W. A. Houghton and Lafcadio Hearn, had been teaching Blake at Tokyo University to students a generation before Yanagi's. Coming to the University later, Yanagi did not have

*This work may be obtained from the bookstore Tsurumi Shoten, Hongo 4-1-14, Bunkyo, Tokyo 113, Japan. Tel. 81-3-3814-0491. Fax 81-3-3814-9250.

¹ Geoffrey Keynes, *Bibliography of William Blake* (New York: Grolier Club, 1921) 365.

an opportunity to see these professors, but he was educated in this iconoclastic intellectual atmosphere. Yanagi was first introduced to Blake's poetry by Torahiko Kori, a fellow student of Tokyo University and a member of the White Birch School, who later went to England, produced Japanized experimental dramas and, most significantly, taught Noh Plays to W. B. Yeats. Soon after his initiation into Blake's poetry by Kori, Yanagi became friends with Bernard Leach, the only Western member of the White Birch School, who lent the Yeats edition of Blake's poetry to him. Yanagi "finally became haunted by Blake,"² as he himself confessed.³

The second and fourth spikes in Bentley's statistics fall in the years 1927 and 1957, Blake's centenary and bicentenary respectively. *The Rising Generation*, first published in 1897, had special issues of Blake on both occasions, resulting in the large numbers of publications recorded by Bentley.

The remarkable rise in the years 1931-32 is the third spike in Bentley's statistics. These two years significantly saw the publication of the first substantial Blake journal in the world, *Blake and Whitman*, edited by Yanagi and his scholar-friend Bunsho Jugaku. It is worth noting what led to the genesis of the journal and how it affected Japanese Blake scholars, thereby filling up the silence Bentley has left in his *Blake Studies in Japan*.

Prior to publishing *Blake and Whitman* Yanagi, together with other members of the White Birch School, had been involved in various activities to spread Blake in Japan. The activities included organizing Blake-related exhibitions and lectures. The first notable exhibition was held in Tokyo in 1915, in which were displayed 60 reproductions of the printings of Blake in color and black and white, together with 100 reproductions of the works of Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and Goya.⁴ It was followed by two exhibitions on Blake exclusively, arranged by Yanagi in 1919, one touring seven rural sites in Nagano in September, and the other, in Kyoto and Tokyo in November. Every single day during the September exhibition in Nagano, the audience could enjoy Yanagi's lecture on Blake and singing by his wife, a White Birch School singer. Yanagi further gave a series of lectures on Blake to schoolteachers in Nagano in 1921, for which he had ordered 110 copies of *The Poetical Works of William Blake* edited by J. Sampson. Meanwhile, another member of the White Birch School, well-known novelist Takeo Arishima, was giving a series of lectures on Walt Whitman in Nagano, for which he ordered 60 copies of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

² Muneyoshi Yanagi, *The Complete Writings of Muneyoshi Yanagi* (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1981) 4: 11.

³ As for Yanagi's socio-historical and intellectual background, see Kimiyoshi Yura, "Starting Station of Yanagi's Thought: His William Blake," in Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 4: 679-707.

⁴ The information is provided by Bernard Leach in his interview in 1973, which is incorporated in Kazuko Hisamori, "A Phase in the History of the Reception of Blake in Japan," *Faunus* 6 (special issue, 1976): 172. The exhibition of 1915 is not mentioned in Bentley's *Blake Studies in Japan*.

In the Maruzen Bookstore, which received both orders, "Nagano" was on everybody's lips as a strange and amazing place where so many people would gather to read foreign poets in the original language.⁵ Yanagi thus introduced Blake among the Japanese in the 1910s through the 1920s, and his work culminated in the publication of *Blake and Whitman*.

The journal was issued monthly for two years, from January 1931 until December 1932. It was printed on thick, expensive, yellow-white, handmade Echizen paper with the watermarks of a key to an intellectual treasury and of the initials of Blake and Whitman ("B W"). Five hundred copies per issue were carefully packed and mailed only to the preregistered subscribers. Each copy was numbered by hand, and a subscriber received a copy of the same serial number each month. Yanagi and Jugaku apologized to the public who clamored for more, but held to their intention not to print additional copies. The figure of 500 itself is surprisingly large for a circulation of this kind of journal in the 1930s. I. A. Richards, stopping in Japan on his way back to England from Harvard, was startled to learn about *Blake and Whitman* from Yanagi. "It is absolutely improbable that such a journal should exist in England," Richards remarked; "even if it did, it would never attract that huge number of subscribers."⁶

One of the major characteristics of the journal was its concentrated focus on Blake's graphic art. Mitsuharu Hashizume's laborious essay in three parts, "The Oriental Development of Blake's Conception of 'Line,'" is still the definitive article on this subject. Hashizume regards the "line" in an oriental art form called calligraphy⁸ as an operative factor in explicating Blake's art. Emphasizing the indivisible relationship between writing and painting in calligraphy, Hashizume points out the same relationship in Blake's illuminated works. He further brings out the contrast between Western art concerned with composition and Oriental art based on lines, regarding Blake's art as identical with the latter.

Yanagi already advocated, in 1914, the kind of approach that W. J. T. Mitchell later propagated in his *Blake's Compos-*

⁵ The lectures and exhibitions organized by the White Birch School concerning Blake in Nagano are recorded in Nobuo Imai, *The Periphery of the White Birch Journal: The Intersection of the White Birch Movement and School Education in Nagano* (Nagano: Shinano Educational Committee, 1986) esp. 70-77, 79.

⁶ These words of I. A. Richards, a friend of Yanagi's, were recorded in Muneyoshi Yanagi, "Miscellaneous Notes," *Blake and Whitman* 1 (1931): 429.

⁷ Mitsuharu Hashizume, "The Oriental Development of Blake's Conception of 'Line,'" *Blake and Whitman* 2 (1932): 147-55, 195-209, 243-52.

⁸ Brought from China to Japan together with Zen Buddhism, calligraphy was established in fifteenth-century Japan as an art form, characterized by an allusive mode of expression based on lines drawn in Chinese ink. It creates a composite of picture and words, with visual and verbal elements together producing meaning and vision.

ite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry (1978). Using the term "picture book" instead of "composite art," Yanagi clearly stated the significance of examining Blake's works as composite art:

Jerusalem is great as a poem but greater with many illustrations. A reader familiar with his [Blake's] visual achievement can understand profound meanings that these illustrations have to poetical lines, which are themselves, in a sense, painting rather than letters. Blake expressed his thoughts with clarity in this picture book.⁹

To regard verbal and visual elements as inseparable from, and indispensable to, each other is, in fact, easily understood by the Japanese, who have a long history of calligraphy.

Yanagi was always concerned with intellectual contributions of the Japanese to Western scholarship. He believed that the only way for Japanese scholars to be internationally recognized, considering disadvantages such as their language handicap and their difficulty in obtaining material, would be to read Blake "in the perspective of eastern ideas and experiences,"¹⁰ by taking advantage of culturally cultivated aesthetic sensibility. He suggested some possible topics for the Japanese to pursue, one of which was an examination of Blake's visual art, particularly his "line," because the Japanese, Yanagi emphasized, had a finer-grained aesthetic sensibility that made them more sensitive than Western people to the beauty of line.¹¹ The contributors to *Blake and Whitman* grappled with Blake's graphic art, along the lines of Yanagi's advice, and yielded a rich harvest represented by Hashizume's essay, "The Oriental Development of Blake's Conception of 'Line.'"

Yanagi seems to have gained this confidence in Japanese aesthetic sensibility while staying in England and the United States in 1929-30. In London, Yanagi arranged for two successful exhibitions of Japanese folkcrafts, which inspired the Victoria and Albert Museum to acquire some of the Japanese folkcrafts in Yanagi's collection.¹² Having crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the United States, where he was invited to teach two courses on Art and Religion at Harvard University, Yanagi organized exhibitions of "Modern Japanese and British Folkcrafts" and "Japanese Otsu Painting." Engaged to research in the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard and lecturing on art at the college, Yanagi became fully assured that "it is time for the Japanese to go to the West and teach truth,"¹³ and that "Japan should contribute to the world in religion

and art . . . and histories of religion and art should be rewritten by the Japanese."¹⁴ He confidently concluded that "if some of the best Japanese studies [on art] were translated into English, western scholars would have more faith in and admiration for Japanese scholars."¹⁵

Yanagi embodied the Japanese nationalism that is succinctly described by Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto: "[a firm conviction that] there is something unique about Japan and the Japanese."¹⁶ Yanagi underlines unique Japaneseness in his efforts to understand Blake: "Japan is unique. . . . Japan is the only place where East and West meet each other. We should not end up being connoisseurs of the West, but should digest the West, yet retaining the East. It is not rewarding to appreciate Blake and Whitman as Western poets; we must discover the East in their works."¹⁷ Yanagi's attitude to Blake is not unrelated to the upheaval of Japan's eager domestication or commodification of the West.

Bentley does not attempt to recount the story of Yanagi and *Blake and Whitman*, explaining that "this is not the place, nor am I the scholar, to examine in detail the development of Blake studies in Japan" (xv). Instead, he lists 14 essays on the subject as references. But these essays are not of much help to Western scholars, because they are all written in Japanese which, as Bentley realizes, "very few western scholars can read" (xxii).

The second section of Bentley's introduction enumerates works of Japanese literature influenced by Blake. Beginning with Bin Ueda, a famous poet who referred to Blake in 1885, Bentley lists about 15 examples up to the entry of 1910 for novelist Homei Iwano. Significant literary names such as Soseki Natsume and Ariake Kanbara are included. But strangely, Bentley leaves out some 80 years from 1911 to the present with the exception of the entry of 1994 for Kenzaburo Oe, a novelist who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994. Oe is given annotations in both the introduction and the bibliography itself, whereas other names, such as Yukio Mishima and Odaka Haniya,¹⁸ are totally omitted. Others—Koichi Ijima, Motomaro Senke, and Saneatsu Mushanokoji—are curiously treated in the bibliography, with no reference in the introduction. Why is Oe so special? Probably because he is a world celebrity, and because his works, particularly *Rouze Up, O Young Men of the New Age* (1983) with its title quotation from Blake's *Milton*, can be regarded as a unique analysis of Blake's poetry.

¹⁴ Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 5: 386.

¹⁵ Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 5: 37.

¹⁶ Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, "The Postmodern and Mass Images in Japan," *Public Culture* 1 (1989): 8-25, quoted in Frederick Buell, *National Culture and the New Global System* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994) 69.

¹⁷ Yanagi, "Miscellaneous Notes," *Blake and Whitman* 1 (1931): 429.

¹⁸ Shoichi Matsushima refers to these names in his essay about Blake's influence on Japanese literature, "Blake and Whitman, Part 2," *Journal of Kokugakuin University* 90 (1989): 60-77.

⁹ Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 4: 224.

¹⁰ Yanagi, "Miscellaneous Notes," *Blake and Whitman* 1 (1931): 429.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The contract between Yanagi and the Victoria and Albert Museum is referred to in Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 5: 365, 369.

¹³ Yanagi's letter to Ryusaburo Shikiba, a member of the Folkcrafts Movement, written in Cambridge on 3 February 1930, reprinted in *Complete Writings* 5: 386.

Bentley does not employ a systematic method with which to compile works influenced by Blake. If all the examples were put together under a heading such as "Blake's Influence," the bibliography would be more valuable to scholars who are interested in how Blake was consumed and incorporated in Japanese literature. The inconsistency in the compilation of the material is probably caused by Bentley's endeavor to retain the six-part organization of his *Blake Books* and *Blake Books Supplement*, which does not offer the heading "Blake's Influence." Though given less priority by Bentley, research on Japanese literary works influenced by Blake is regarded as indispensable by Japanese Blake scholars. Jugaku in his later years asked members of the Japan Association of English Romanticism "to examine how English Romanticism influenced Japanese literature since the Meiji era [the late nineteenth century], on the basis of each member's intellectual background."¹⁹ Shoichi Matsushima, a notable Blake scholar, encourages his fellow scholars "to vigorously conduct research on modern Japanese literature [influenced by Blake], without limiting [their] scholarly perspective."²⁰

In his commentary on Oe, Bentley turns attention to Oe's incorporation of Blake, pointing out that Oe's personal life is presented as if it is decisively directed by his encounter with Blake" (85). It would be helpful to note that the novel belongs to a peculiarly Japanese fictive tradition called the "I" novel, in which the first person singular narrator is expected to reveal what can be regarded as the novelist's own private life. The narrator of *Rouze Up, O Young Men of the New Age*, as is expected, discloses his personal life with his retarded son, Iyo, and the reader is thrilled to think that s/he is reading Oe's secret diary in a private chamber, a diary that includes even a confession about the narrator's repressed desire to murder his own deformed child at an earlier time. With this traditional form of the "I" novel, Oe interweaves commentaries on the work of Blake to create an interesting blend of fiction and literary criticism. The novel consists of seven stories, the titles of which are, as Bentley observes, "quotations from Blake's works" (85). Each story presents interpretations of selected poetical lines of Blake in light of Iyo's growth. The two apparently unrelated elements, Blake's poetry and Iyo's growth, are deeply interwoven with each other by the manipulative, authoritative power of Oe, who appropriates works by Geoffrey Keynes, Alexander Gilchrist, Foster Damon, Northrop Frye, David V. Erdman, Kathleen Raine, and others. The reader is invited to take the narrator's interpretations of Blake's poems as clues to understanding Iyo's idiosyncratic behavior, and to regard Iyo's crisp and aphoristic utterances as reflecting Blake's fundamental messages.

¹⁹ Bunsho Jugaku, "The English Romantics and Myself: A Speech at the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Japan Association of English Romanticism," *Essays in English Romanticism* 12 (1988): 5.

²⁰ Shoichi Matsushima, "Studies of Romanticism: The Reception of Blake in Japan," *Essays in English Romanticism* 9-10 (1986): 27.

Transplanting Blake's poems thus in his own fictive space, Oe provides new meanings for them until they become a part of his own creations. It is a marriage of Japan and Blake, for Oe's writing is basically about Japanese society, his family, and himself. Oe deconstructs Blakean visions through the eyes of a Japanese living in the late twentieth century. In an interview, Oe discloses his ambition to become "a mediator between my generation of Japanese writers and European postmodern culture."²¹ This ambition may sound similar to the enthusiasm with which Yanagi and Jugaku tried to consume and domesticate the West. What distinguishes Oe's efforts from the earlier examples, however, is his awareness of a worldwide movement towards globalization devoid of cultural imperialism. Blake does not need to be Japanized. Jugaku admitted later in his life that his and Yanagi's method of imposing an Eastern framework upon Blake had its limitations.²²

The final section of the introduction to *Blake Studies in Japan* analyzes characteristics of Japanese Blake scholarship. The most conspicuous aspect that Bentley notes is the paucity of Japanese publications outside Japan. "Despite its profusion," Bentley says, "the work of these Japanese scholars is largely unknown to Blake scholars in the West (including Australia and India)" (xxii). What Bentley does not note, however, is the fact that the work of Japanese scholars is not widely circulated even inside Japan. There are only two refereed academic journals to which Blake scholars can send a contribution on Blake: *Essays in English Romanticism*, published by the Japan Association of English Romanticism, and *Studies in English Literature*, by the English Literary Society of Japan, which happens to have the same title as the American *SEL*. The alternatives left for Blake scholars are either a journal of their *alma mater* and/or a journal sponsored by the university where they currently teach, as Bentley correctly observes: "Most Japanese Blake scholars . . . publish in only one or two journals, often that of their *alma mater*" (xxii). There are a tremendous number of these kinds of university journals in Japan; Bentley lists 180. It is in them that the majority of Japanese Blake scholars publish their essays. The audience is usually limited to colleagues of their university, for the journals are not advertised or widely circulated. It would be easier and faster to refer to well-circulated Western publications than to these esoteric university journals. Bentley's *Blake Studies in Japan* provides, for the first time, comprehensive information about Japanese publications in these university journals. In this sense, the bibliography is epoch-making.

The paucity of refereed academic journals reflects the lack of the "publish or perish" creed in Japan. In order to be hired

²¹ *Boston Globe* 6 June 1995, 30.

²² Bunsho Jugaku, "Blake and Japan," *Lamplight of Learning* 70 (1973): 8-11, reprinted in Bunsho Jugaku, *My Days, My Footsteps* (Tokyo: Aratake, 1977) 80-86.

or promoted in academia, you are not expected to have many essays—refereed or not. It is simply because Japanese scholars wish to please themselves that they have contributed publications which, according to Bentley, account for fully one-fifth (71 essays) of the total essays in the world written on Blake (380 essays) during the past two decades.²³ Despite the profusion of these kinds of essays, Bentley is puzzled to discover that “there are very few dissertations” (xxii). Doctoral dissertations have a special meaning in Japan; they are regarded not as a prerequisite for the beginning of an academic career but as the final monumental lifework in such a career. This explains the small number of Ph.D. holders in Japan. There are only seven Ph.D. dissertations on Blake, despite the total of 285 Japanese scholars listed in Bentley’s bibliography. Two Ph.D. degrees out of the seven were obtained from North American universities, one from Yale University in 1985 and the other from the University of Manitoba in 1991.²⁴ More and more Japanese scholars go abroad for higher education or intellectual exchange and make efforts to write essays in English. One of the up-and-coming scholars, Masashi Suzuki, for example, has been publishing his essays in English since he returned from his one-year stay in the West in the late 1980s, though he wrote all of his former essays in Japanese.

The indigenous reading of Blake established by Yanagi and Jugaku has not entirely lost its power. It is characterized by an assimilation of the West (other) into the East (self), expressive of a romantic ideology of self-sanctification or indulgence in subjectivity. Yanagi explained that “to understand Blake is to locate Blake in myself, to discover myself in Blake.”²⁵ Jugaku, too, was concerned with “a Blake that is meaningful to me.”²⁶ This subjective temperament, with an emphasis on “myself” and “me,” was shared by all the members of the White Birch School. They regarded self-fulfillment as a way to human improvement, the term “self” being crucially important to them. “Self-annihilation does not mean self-denial,” Yanagi wrote, “It is a total expansion of self, unlimited expression of individuality, and unity of self and universe.”²⁷ The characteristic emphasis on “self” in the writings by Jugaku and Yanagi is also pointed out by Kimiyoshi Yura, who concludes that Yanagi was “able to read, or rather appropriate, Blake’s world as his own.”²⁸

The most remarkable and promising descendant of Jugaku/Yanagi is Narumi Umetsu, listed as one of the prodigious postwar scholars by Bentley. Umetsu was happy to

be identified as a follower of Jugaku.²⁹ It is Umetsu who carried out Jugaku’s “long cherished wish to render Blake readable in Japanese by every one.”³⁰ Umetsu translated all of Blake’s writings into Japanese, publishing in 1989 a majestic book in two volumes, *The Complete Works of William Blake*.

Two special Blake issues of *Faunus* in 1976 paid homage to the traditional Japanese way of reading Blake established by the White Birch School. They reprinted essays written in the 1910s through the 1930s by Yanagi, Jugaku, and Makoto Sangu, and devoted many pages to an interview with Bernard Leach concerning the Blake-related activities of the school. But the publication of these special issues can be also understood as taking the final retrospective look at the indigenous reading of Blake, because Japanese scholars have been increasingly practicing Western theoretical methods in the 1980s and 1990s.

Bentley’s reverence for the early Japanese scholars—particularly for Jugaku—is explicitly stated: “The most prodigious scholar of them [Japanese scholars] all, Bunsho Jugaku . . . has thus far (1927-1990) produced some fifty-five works related to William Blake” (xxi). Bentley continues to remark that “the only western scholar who approaches this productivity is Sir Geoffrey Keynes” (xxi). Thus brought into comparative perspective with Western scholars, Bentley’s high estimation of Jugaku might be disturbing to Western scholars, as it is at least to D. W. Dörrebecker, who regards the comment by Bentley as an “evident mistake”: “Since the times of Sir Geoffrey Keynes, members of a younger generation of western Blake scholars, such as Essick and Bentley himself (the latter with more than 80 Blake-related publications to his credit) have established new standards.”³¹ Bentley’s passage, however, pays homage to the long span of Jugaku’s continual efforts to contribute to Blake scholarship by drawing our attention to the range of more than six decades of Jugaku’s activity, “1927-1990,” thus observing a very Japanese institution called seniority. The length of time matters. Speaking of Keynes’s activity, Bentley equally makes a special point of his longevity: “Sir Geoffrey’s first article on Blake was published in 1910, and his last (thus far) appeared almost three-quarters of a century later in 1984.”³² Both Jugaku in Japan and Keynes in the West began their studies on Blake as pioneers when Blake was still a madman whose voice was not heard on the desolate heath, and both continued their studies until recent years, when we are well advised not to be “swept away or drowned in seas of speculation and accomplishment”³³ of Blake-related work.

²³ G. E. Bentley, Jr. *Blake Books Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) 23-24.

²⁴ Yoko Imaizumi, *Brotherhood in Blake: Psychology and Poetics* (diss. 1985, Yale University) and Yukiko Imamura, *Vision and Language of Prophecy in William Blake’s Poetry* (diss. 1991, University of Manitoba).

²⁵ Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 4: 22.

²⁶ Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 4: 627.

²⁷ Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 4: 306.

²⁸ Kimiyoshi Yura, “The Starting Station of Yanagi’s Thought,” in Yanagi, *Complete Writings* 4: 699.

²⁹ Narumi Umetsu, “On Man’s Mental Ability,” *Faunus* 5 (special issue, 1976): 53.

³⁰ Bunsho Jugaku, “Miscellaneous Notes,” *Blake and Whitman* 1 (1931): 36-37.

³¹ D. W. Dörrebecker, “Blake and His Circle: An Annotated Checklist of Recent Publications,” *Blake* 26 (1993): 83.

³² Bentley, *Blake Books Supplement*, 24.

³³ *Ibid.*

It was in fact Jugaku's speculative remark on the significance of Japanese Blake scholarship for Western scholars that triggered Bentley's decision to venture to Japan for the first time in 1970 to acquire information about Japanese publications. The remark runs as follows:

The day will come before long when, I believe, every Western student of Blake will have to learn the Japanese language if he does not wish to remain ignorant of the fruitful works of Japanese scholarship in the field of Blakean literature.³⁴

Bentley's trip in 1970, together with his second trip in 1990, resulted in the publication of *Blake Studies in Japan*.

On the second trip, Bentley had an opportunity to see two exhibitions of Blake's works in Japan. He does not conceal his perplexity to have found that "at the Mingeikan exhibition . . . almost all the enlarged reproductions of Blake's works were themselves made from reproductions, sometimes not very persuasive reproductions, rather than from originals" (xxiii). The Mingeikan is a folkcrafts museum founded by Yanagi, who became more and more involved, after the termination of *Blake and Whitman*, in collecting folkcrafts and preserving his collection in the form of a museum. It is not surprising that Yanagi's museum perpetuates his initial acceptance of reproductions. Bentley notes with regret that "relatively few Japanese scholars work with original Blake books or pictures; Even Dr Jugaku's study of Blake's Notebook was based upon a facsimile rather than the original" (xxii). William Blake and *Blake and Whitman* established a practice of using reproductions, for Yanagi, who recognized the crucial significance of studying Blake's visual art, encouraged scholars to use reproductions, which themselves were not easily obtained.

Bentley's veneration for Jugaku contrasts with his reluctance to value highly current Japanese scholarship. He comments, with surprise, that "very few Japanese works are concerned with feminism or homophobia or deconstruction or Communism or Freud, and [that] many seem to be on subjects which absorbed western scholars forty or fifty years ago" (xxii). This observation cannot apply to the circumstances today, though it may have been true some twenty years ago. At least one Japanese scholar expressed the same kind of discontent at the beginning of the 1970s. Yura pointed out, in 1972, the failing Blake industry in postwar Japan: "Yanagi's masterpiece *William Blake and Blake's Aphoristic Words* have not lost their impact even today. A little later, Jugaku's *William Blake Bibliography* was outstanding in world scholarship in its time. The postwar Blake studies in Japan, however, have not been prosperous."³⁵ Things have changed since Yura wrote this comment. Feminism, for ex-

ample, came into the realm of Blake scholarship in Japan in the 1980s. It has been providing a theoretical basis for examining representations of the female in Blake's poetry. Keiko Hori's essay, "Oothoon and Mary Wollstonecraft: A Study of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*" (1984) analyzes how Blake fortunately swerves from Wollstonecraft though he followed her feminist ideas to a certain extent: "Even Mary [Wollstonecraft], who was marked as a radical feminist, based her ideas on reason. Oothoon neither admires reason nor argues about an educational system."³⁶ Masae Kawatsu's "A Speaking Woman in Blake's *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*" (1989) examines the poet's ambivalence towards woman's right to speak: "Unless Theotormon accepts her, Oothoon cannot fully exist as a woman. But if he turns his attention to her and satisfies her, she will no longer have to argue or speak."³⁷ Yoko Imaizumi's "Illness and the Female in Blake's Pickering Manuscript and *The Four Zoas*" (1991) illuminates Blake's repressed desire to assign a heavier task to the female than to the male: "Illness emerges when the self is fallen. In order for a sick woman to be cured, it is necessary for her to empty herself . . . But a woman is expected to annihilate herself to redeem a sick man, though it is he, not she, who is sick."³⁸

These younger scholars do not acknowledge works of fellow Japanese scholars as if there were no Japanese scholarship on Blake; they refer only to Western scholarship. This unfair practice has been widespread among scholars in Japan. It can be taken positively as an indication of thorough permeation of Western scholarship among Japanese scholars. But it reflects, at the same time, the above-mentioned Japanese publication apparatus, which turns Japanese scholars to easily obtainable Western works rather than to poorly circulated Japanese university journals.

Bentley's *Blake Studies in Japan* is a good start for anyone interested in the early blossoming of Blake studies in Japan in the 1910s, the current Japanese scholarship on Blake, Japanese literature influenced by Blake, and cross-cultural studies. It is a far more comprehensive bibliography than any ever made on Japanese Blake scholarship. Only two Japanese journals are tracked by the bibliographers of the MLA International Bibliography: *The Rising Generation* and, occasionally, *Studies in English Literature*. Even the annual checklists compiled by Dörrbecker in *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly* largely ignore Japanese scholarship.

³⁴ Keiko Hori, "Oothoon and Mary Wollstonecraft: A Study of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*," *Bulletin of the English Society, Osaka Kyoiku University* 29 (1984): 40.

³⁵ Masae Kawatsu, "A Speaking Woman in Blake's *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*," *IVY: The Nagoya Review of English Studies* 22 (1989): 43.

³⁶ Yoko Imaizumi, "Illness and the Female in Blake's Pickering Manuscript and *The Four Zoas*," *Studies in Literature and Linguistics, University of Tsukuba* 19 (1991): 30.

³⁴ Bunsho Jugaku, "William Blake and Japan," *The Rising Generation* 103 (1957): 519.

³⁵ Kimiyoshi Yura, *Odd Lectures on European Romantic Literature* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1972) 142.

Recounting his experiences as a compiler, Dörrbecker emphasizes the significance of an "annotated" bibliography: "In the future, they [annotations] will have to be considered as central to—and, in practice, the *raison d'être* of—the whole endeavor [of compiling a bibliography]."³⁹ If annotated, Bentley's bibliography would be tremendously useful to scholars who are involved in the promotion of global reading of Blake. There is in fact a plan for compiling an annotated bibliography, on CD-ROM, of Japanese Blake scholarship, conceived by Keiko Aoyama, who assisted Bentley in translating/transliterating the material for his bibliography. Bentley is to be congratulated for his commitment to international scholarship in bringing Japanese achievement to attention, and any future bibliographic work of Japanese scholarship will be made on the basis of *Blake Studies in Japan*.

William Blake, *The Early Illuminated Books*.

Edited with introductions and notes by
Morris Eaves, Robert N. Essick, and Joseph
Viscomi. Princeton: The William Blake Trust/
Princeton University Press, 1993. Blake's
Illuminated Books Volume 3. General Editor
David Bindman. 286 pp. \$75.

Reviewed by MICHAEL FERBER

This is an altogether splendid volume of plates and commentary. It covers all of Blake's "illuminated" work from 1788 to 1793 except for the *Songs*, which made up Volume 2. Of the three volumes I have seen (there will be six in all, not five, as originally announced), this is the most interesting and original in its commentary, though like the others it tries to be catholic and fair in its citations of scholarship. Unlike the first two volumes, however, it escapes serious damage from sleepy compositors and proofreaders. It gives us several of the works we are most likely to teach after the *Songs*: *Thel*, *Marriage*, and *Visions*, as well as the early tracts *All Religions are One* and *There is No Natural Religion*. It is too expensive to assign to students, but for almost any course on Blake professors must see that their library has it on reserve; for specialists the commentary alone is worth the price.

I have not tried to compare the plates with the originals, but they seem about as faithful as one could ask. Color variations are subtle, and nothing seems either too bright or too subdued. And the publishers have been generous. Besides the eight plates of *Thel* copy J, for example, we are given six supplementary plates: two proof copies of plates 2 and 3,

plate 6 of copy K, plate 7 of copy I, plate 8 of copy N, and pencil sketches of plates 6 and 7. There are particular reasons for including these (a bit of design or text is added), but it is also good to have them just for the differences in coloring, so a student will see that even in general impact Blake's versions of the same work differ dramatically. So with the other works: there are 14 extra plates for *Marriage* and 11 for *Visions*. We get four versions of *Marriage* 21, the wonderful nude male who reappears in *America* 8, and three versions of the great frontispiece of *Visions*, one of which is reproduced at about twice the original size on the dust jacket of the volume. Even with no scholarly questions in mind it is rewarding to gaze at the different versions of these designs.

The introduction presents the most lucid and succinct summary of Blake's methods of book production that I have seen. It stresses that Blake composed designs directly on the plate and thus did not need a fair copy, though he manifestly had pencil sketches of many if not all of them. The fundamental unit of production was not the individual copy of a work but the printing and coloring "session," which typically involved two copies and sometimes more. Different ink colors might be used in one session. "The products of each printing session correspond to an 'edition' of a book, while each ink colour can be considered a different 'issue' of the edition" (11). These categories reflect the brilliant reconstructive research of Joseph Viscomi, who elaborates his argument in *Blake and the Idea of the Book* (Princeton, 1993).

One result of his researches is a new approach to *There is No Natural Religion*. "Viscomi's recent discoveries" (22), as detailed in his book, showed that 50 of the 153 known impressions of the 20 plates of *NNR* were not done by Blake. The authentic ones represent just two sessions, one c. 1794 and one c. 1795. From the six copies that Viscomi determined stem from the first session, the same eight plates are lacking (that is, the bulk of the "b" series as usually printed now: b1-2, 5-11, including the one missing from all copies, b5). In other words, Blake printed and colored six sets with the same 12 plates, a1-9, b3, b4, and b12. It strongly appears that Blake's intention, at that time, was to make an independent work out of the two sequences he had engraved as early as 1788. Viscomi et al. go on to argue that there is no sharp inconsistency in combining the three "b" plates with the "a" plates, and that indeed "The 'a' part cannot stand alone; without its second half, the irony would not be apparent and Blake would have appeared to contemporary readers as an advocate of the very position he is attacking," namely the rational empiricism of Bacon and Locke (25). We are given a new work, and the plates are here so arranged. (The c. 1795 printing is the "b" series with the "a" title page.)

It is not to question Viscomi's research to wonder if it is so clear that the "a" series cannot stand alone. A *reductio ad absurdum* argument can be quite straight-faced; it needn't

³⁹ Dörrbecker, "Blake and His Circle," *Blake* 26 (1993): 76.