



Blake

AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY 64
VOLUME 16 NUMBER 4 SPRING 1983

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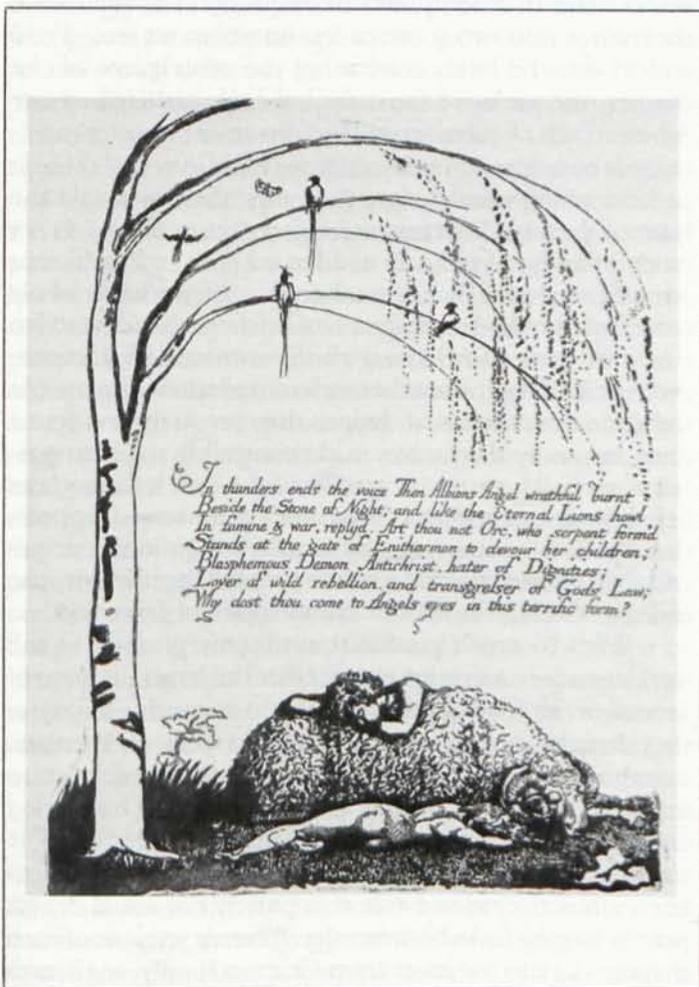
Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly is published under the sponsorship of the Department of English, University of New Mexico.

Subscriptions are \$15.00 for 1 year, 1 volume (4 issues). Special rates for individuals, \$12.00 for 1 year surface mail subscriptions. Air mail subscriptions are \$10.00 more than surface mail subscriptions. U.S. currency or international money order if possible. Make checks payable to *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly*. Address all subscription orders and related communications to Marcy Erickson, *Blake*, Dept. of English, Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131, USA.

Some back issues are available. Address Marcy Erickson for a list of issues and prices.

Manuscripts are welcome. Send two copies, typed and documented according to the forms suggested in the MLA Style Sheet, 2nd. ed., to either of the editors: Morris Eaves, Dept. of English, Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131; Morton D. Paley, Dept. of English, Univ. of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

International Serial Number is 0006-453x. *Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly* is indexed in the Modern Language Association's International Bibliography, the Modern Humanities Research Association's Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature, *English Language Notes'* annual Romantic Bibliography, ARTbibliographies MODERN, American Humanities Index, and the Arts and Humanities Citation Index.



The Changing Order of Plates in *Jerusalem*, Chapter II

BY V. A. DE LUCA

As everyone knows who has ever gone from a text of *Jerusalem* edited by Keynes to one edited by Erdman, the second chapter of the work exists in two arrangements of plates. Certain inconveniences have attended this fact—a clutter of bracketed numbers to designate the variant plates, confusions in the classroom when students show up with the differing texts, difficulties for readers of the Doubleday edition when they use the Concordance and Damon's *Dictionary*. More troubling, the existence of these widely differing arrangements tends to feed the still common suspicion that the order of *Jerusalem* is arbitrary, capricious, and perhaps incoherent. Blake criticism, however, has generally shied away from this textual problem, troubling or not. It remains, in the words of one important critic, "a vexing question that deserves a complete analysis never accorded it."¹

A complete analysis is perhaps not feasible; the external record is barren of pertinent information, and we still know too little about the principles that inform Blake's architectonics to settle the matter conclusively by an appeal to those principles. The best we can do is to interpret the available data with hypotheses that are plausible, consistent, and widely applicable to the art of *Jerusalem*. Mindful of the speculative nature of the enterprise, I will venture in this essay to provide such hypotheses along with the evidence that supports them. If the following arguments are detailed, it is because I believe that the question of Chapter II is important enough to warrant close pursuit, not only for its intrinsic interest but also for the suggestive light it sheds on the creative forces that shape *Jerusalem* as a whole.

The questions raised by the reordering of plates in Chapter II are questions of form and structure, not questions of thematic meaning. What kind of work is it, we are forced to ask, that can suffer its internal sequences to become transposed without any radical disturbance to the equilibrium of the whole? Among the possible answers to this question are two that fit the particular characteristics of *Jerusalem*: it is a work composed of sub-units that are discrete and autonomous,² and it is a work where coherence of visual design often rules arrangements at the expense of narrative and thematic continuity. In Chapter II these characteristics are somewhat easier to observe than they are

elsewhere in the poem. In transposing pls. 29-41 with 43-46 (as numbered in the First Order³ of copies A and C) when he assembled copies D and E, Blake revealed the seams and faultlines of the chapter, the boundaries of its tectonic components, units that remain undivided themselves in either arrangement. Three extended sets of plates emerge to view, 29-41, 43-46, and 47-50 (I refer to them hereafter, respectively, as Sequences 1, 2, and 3). Once we become aware of the seams between these internal units, we are quick to notice other seams even where the "stitching" has remained intact. The thirteen plates of Sequence 1 soon resolve themselves into two more or less autonomous sets, 29-32 and 33-41, the latter containing the centerpiece of the chapter, the parley of the cathedral cities gathered to save Albion. Each of these separable units in the chapter maintains its own autonomous coherence both in verbal content and in framing visual design. As poetry, these units take the form of detachable dramatic setpieces, as in pls. 33-41, or more typically, of radically condensed epics, self-sufficient synoptic visions of Blake's total myth;⁴ the work as a whole comes to look like a compilation of brief epic lays devoted to the same cycle of myths, with the inevitable variations, overlaps, and repetitions that such compilations display.⁵ At the same time the visual designs that penetrate and frame these lays array themselves in demonstrably coherent patterns, and each pattern is specific to the unit it frames, the key signature, as it were, of that unit's autonomy. It appears that the small narrative units acquired their visual shapes and their etched state long before they fell together into the order we find in the earliest extant copies of *Jerusalem*.

With so much potential autonomy granted to the work's smaller units it is a wonder that the larger divisions of *Jerusalem*, its four chapters, maintain as much stability as they do from copy to copy. Critics often speak of "thematic juxtaposition" as the principle that binds sequence to sequence within the poem,⁶ and that principle has fueled enough commentary to make further elaboration of it superfluous here. Less well recognized and more in need of attention is the massive role that patterns of visual design play in forging links between the different sections of each chapter. To cite instances from Chapter II only, sequences

rich in large designs⁷ are juxtaposed for the sake of balance with sequences that are relatively poor (e.g., pls. 33-41 and 29-32, respectively); iconographically related designs belonging to independent sequences gravitate to one another and bind their respective sequences together (as in the ironic juxtaposition of illuminations on pls. 46 and 47, portraits of Jerusalem and Vala in composure and disarray⁸); visual echoes and correspondences appear widely dispersed in the chapter (as in the four half-page illuminations in the chapter, on pls. 28, 37, 41, and 50, the first and the last posted at the extremes of the chapter, the middle pair standing like sentinels on either side of its center—pl. 37 nine positions removed from pl. 28, pl. 41 nine positions removed from pl. 50). Such evidence recalls us to the necessity, splendidly demonstrated by W. J. T. Mitchell in *Blake's Composite Art*, of considering the Blakean illumination "as a picture in a world of pictures,"⁹ a world that is essentially independent of the world of text. No attempt to account for the ordering or reordering of plates in a poem as richly illuminated as *Jerusalem* can afford to proceed without that insight as a guide.

Nor may we content ourselves merely with tracing iconographic relationships. The true autonomy of Blake's designs inheres not in the likelihood that they "mean" something that the text also means, but that they break the text, provide it with spacing, that is, open spaces within it to an antitextual universe. Indeed a study of his work from a purely visual standpoint must see the text itself as a visual element, just as the walls between windows are part of the visual facade of a building. Thus we must attend to the formal layout of Blake's plates¹⁰ and consider the location of the design on the plate, the proportions of text space and picture space, and patterns in the distribution of these spaces within the plates taken collectively. Independent of the sense of the texts they accompany, these purely formal patterns often seem to follow laws of their own. As Blake reshapes his work and new patterns arise in his mind, they are quite capable of encroaching on the domain of verbal sense and interfering with its continuity. At the same time local patterns of design become subject to effacement by new influxes of verbal invention. To quote Mitchell again, the "relationship [of text and design] is more like an energetic rivalry, a dialogue or dialectic between vigorously independent modes of expression."¹¹ Out of this rivalry (with design often getting the upper hand) come the shape of Chapter II as initially found in the first printed copies and the subsequent changes in order as well. To pursue this argument further, however, and to enforce the general observations made so far, one needs to take a closer look at particulars.

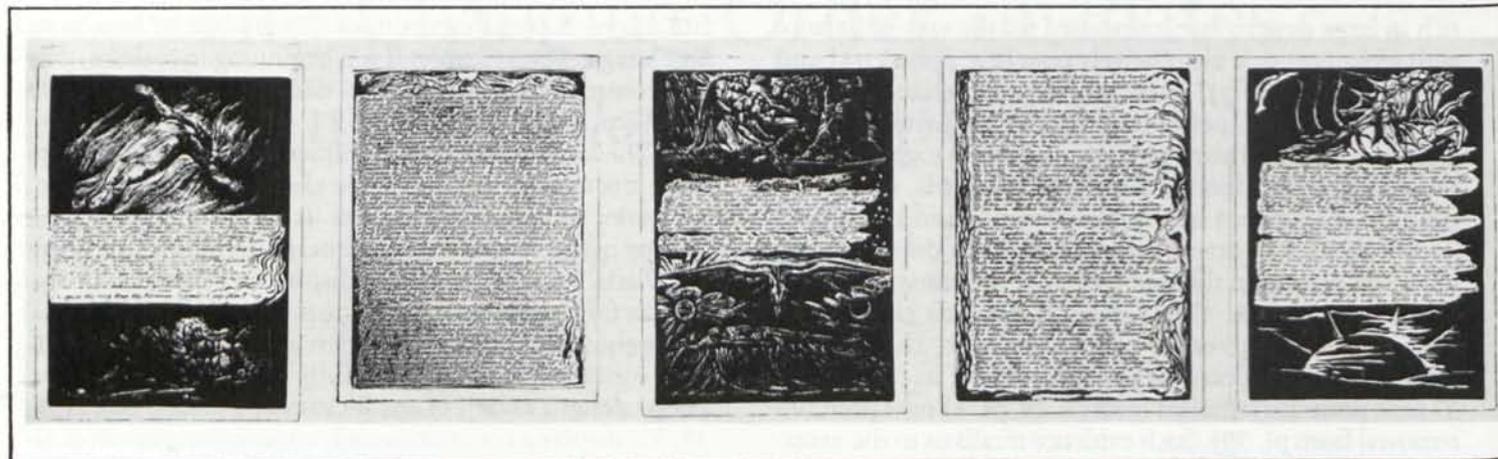
The Early Core of Chapter II: A Reconstruction

One useful way of approaching the changes that Blake introduced into the order of Chapter II when he printed copies D and E is to view these changes as the last visible manifestation of an evolutionary history lost to record except in its very

late stages. A certain amount of that history, at least in its latter stages when Chapter II was beginning to coalesce, may be reconstructed, however, from what is actually available to analysis in copies A-C.

The long thirteen-plate Sequence 1 is a good place to start. It contains the center of the chapter's dramatic action, the parley of the cathedral cities. It also contains the most striking example of extended visual patterning in the chapter. Plates 31-37 in particular display as a group a conspicuously formal regularity in the distribution of their designs. Throughout this series plates laden with illuminations alternate consistently with plates fully covered by text (peripheral designs aside); of the illuminated plates, three (31, 33, 35) display a common layout, a miniature pattern of alternation, designs above and below divided by a central band of text; the fourth (37) completes the series on a balanced note, all text in the upper half, all illumination in the lower. Intricacies of correspondence in the size of various blocks of text and illumination in the series augment its visual formality.¹² There is no need to attempt a reading of the various illuminations in the series 31 to 37 in order to discover patterns in their arrangement; one has only to imagine these plates laid side by side to observe a display of visual order that Blake must have devised deliberately (see illus. 1). Once we notice the pattern, however, we soon realize that it raises as many problems about the nature of its devising as it appears to solve, that it conceals anomalies in the continuity of text and perhaps effacements of earlier patterns. Though unified by its pattern of layout, the series of plates from 31 to 37 proves not to be coextensive with any continuous narrative unit but, rather, overlaps two adjacent units (29-32 and 33-41) that differ in subject matter and in script (an indication that these units were designed independently). Linked to pls. 33 and 35 in its visual design and style of lettering, pl. 31 is lodged in the middle of the adventures of Reuben on pls. 30 and 32, even though the text of 31 has no more self-evident connection with that story than the Reuben episode itself has, graphically or thematically, with the series beginning on pl. 33. Elsewhere in Sequence 1 other oddities appear: the continuous narrative that begins at pl. 33 and includes the parley of the cathedral cities fails to end where the visual pattern of formal alternation does, at pl. 37, but flows on to pl. 41, passing through a distinctly different pattern of layout. In the instance of pl. 31, a formal pattern extends itself at the expense of continuity in subject matter; in the second instance, subject matter spills beyond the confinements of formal pattern apparently designed to contain it.

To account for this apparent misalignment of subject matter and containing formal design, we must attempt to recover what we can of earlier stages in the evolution of the middle plates of the chapter towards their final form. Only if we understand the principles that shaped and modified Blake's early material into the form we now possess can we begin to hypothesize the reasons for such later revisions of



1. Layout, *Jerusalem*, pl. 31-37 (First Order). Copy D, Harvard University Library.

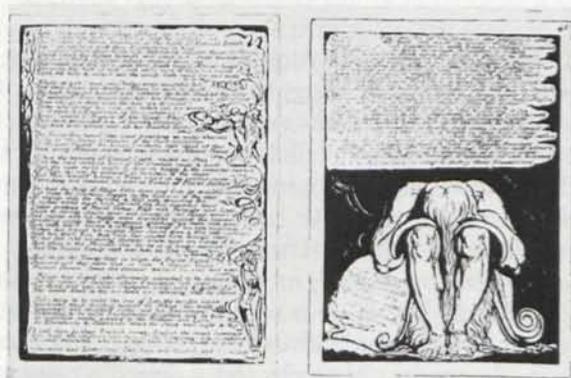
2. Layout, hypothetical "core" sequence of *Jerusalem*, Chapter II, pls. 33-36, [37-40], 41 [46]. Copy D, Harvard University Library.

Chapter II as the rearrangement of plates in copies D-E. Assuming that *Jerusalem* grew out of small, self-enclosed units, brief bardic songs internally unified in subject matter and design, we might try to reconstruct the early form of the unit that became the dramatic and visual center of Chapter II, namely, the tale of the Divine Family, particularized in England's cathedral cities. It is likely that this scene, which in its final form occupies nine plates, was once considerably shorter and more unified in its tone and its visual design. There is convincing evidence that Blake composed, designed, and etched the scene as a unit of five plates, the first four still found together as pls. 33-36 in copies A and C, and the fifth found as pl. 41. In all printed copies there are anomalies in the transitions from pl. 36 to pl. 37 and from pl. 40 to pl. 41, evidence which leads us to suspect alteration and patchwork. A proofsheets of pl. 40 in the Morgan Library lacks the final line present on that plate in all the finished copies of the poem. Since this added final line is needed to make the extensive listing of cities that follows at the top of pl. 41 intelligible, it is clear, first of all, that when 40 and 41 were originally etched they were not intended to form a sequence, and, second, that some other plate at one time did introduce 41 intelligibly.¹³ Now on pl. 36, a catalogue of cities, announced at the outset as "the Twenty-four in whom the Divine Family Appeared" (*J* 36. 45-46), begins to unroll, but it remains incomplete, indeed seems forgotten, on pl. 37. The lost complement of the twenty-four turns out to be the cities listed on pl. 41. All available evidence, then, including a probable catchword tie, "Bath," points to a perfect continuity between pls. 36 and 41, a continuity that, as we shall see, is lacking in several respects between 36 and 37.¹⁴

The aesthetic integrity of the early five-plate version of the "Divine Family" scene is manifest on several levels (see

illus. 2). The tone is sustained in its mildness. The narrative, typically synoptic, tells a tale of Albion "turning from Universal Love" (*J* 34.7) and of Los summoning the twenty-four cities of the Divine Family in emergency session, and it culminates in a catalogue of the cities and a momentous point of crisis. The designs tell a tale of humanity seemingly in the Spectre's power though actually reposing in the arms of divine love (pl. 33), of the apparent triumph of the Spectre as he rides on high (pl. 35), and of the timely arrival of an apocalyptic chariot (pl. 41), immensely complex in its iconography, but certainly carrying the Bride in the arms of a God that is "Not an Avenger" (see 41.28).¹⁵ But the most striking pattern of these plates is found in their visual layout. Here are five plates, five blocks of text in strict alternation with five blocks of design, a study in doublings and synoptic concentration: a doubling of doubly-illuminated plates, a doubling of full-text plates, and a final plate that visually emphasizes the duality of the two modes.¹⁶

It is pleasant to speculate that this miniature illuminated epic, so internally perfected, was the grain about which the rest of Chapter II crystallized.¹⁷ But if Blake once intended the five-plate core to cohere as an aesthetic unit, clearly this intent did not survive into the printed copies. Blake's second thoughts habitually impinge on and dislocate older stable forms (witness the textual crisis that overtakes *The Four Zoas* between the Sixth and Ninth Nights). Four plates, 37-40, in Copies A and C, now separate the once adjacent 36 and 41. This situation is apparently the product of two distinct interpolations, pl. 40, first, and then, possibly much later, pls. 37-39 (these latter plates go together as a unit; their script is uniform, syntactic parallels connect pls. 37 and 38, and a catchword, as well as continuous sense, ties 38 to 39). As far as one can reconstruct these revisions, sometime after etching the core unit Blake decided to add pl. 40, possibly to augment the role of Bath (perhaps under the sway of Richard Warner's *War Inconsistent with Christianity*).¹⁸ Blake linked the new plate to pl. 36 via the catchword there but left it detached from 41. Possibly he considered using 40 as a replacement for 41. To do so would avoid the non sequitur of the list of cities on 41, now dis-



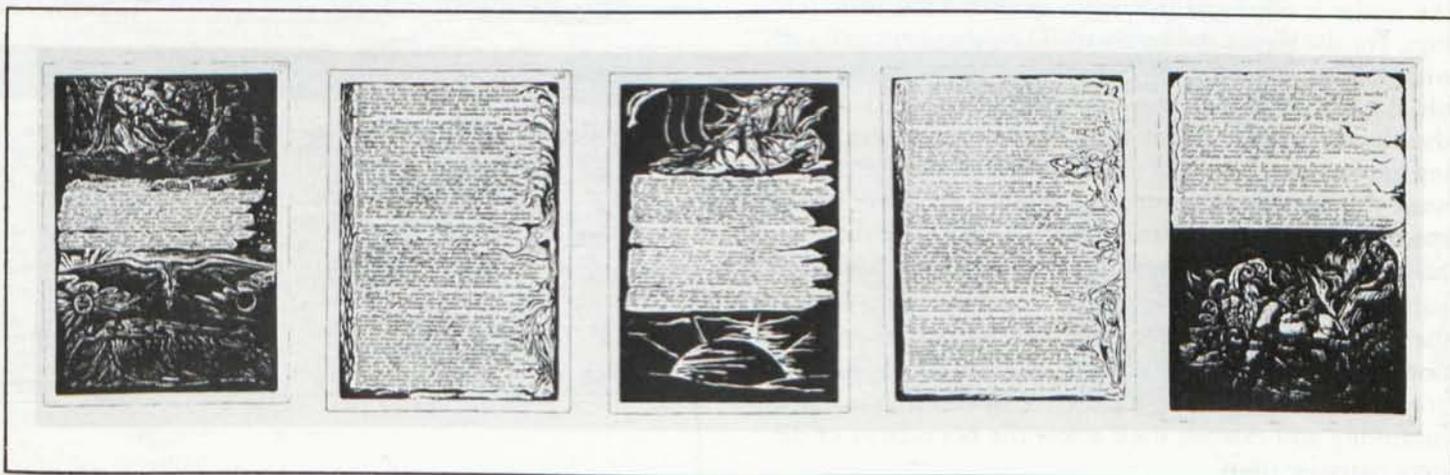
visual layout, for it is relatively homogenous with its surroundings. By contrast, pls. 37-39 massively intrude on the continuity of the core unit as originally ordered, drastically altering its visual form and noticeably modifying its tone. Although Blake is careful to provide a narrative link to pl. 40 at the bottom of pl. 39, the sequence 36-37 is markedly disjunctive. The script changes abruptly on pl. 37 from the smaller, more graceful, more cursive style of pls. 33-36 and 41; Bath, "benevolent" in the last line of 36, becomes "the poisoner: the best and worst in Heaven and Hell" in the second line of 37; and pls. 37-39 introduce a harsh, congested mass of Blake's late mythic paraphernalia — the Spectre, the Four Zoas, an infusion of biblical names into English settings — matter virtually absent from the more sweetly rendered account of the Divine Family on adjacent plates and only loosely related to it. Plates 37-39 differ more strongly in these respects from pl. 40 than 40 does from 33-36, 41. It is likely that pls. 37-39 allude to a rather different set of historical circumstances from those which inform the original account, circumstances by no means clear but probably reflected in such things as the darker treatment of Bath and the curious account of an attempt to bear Albion back to Eden "against his will" (39.3). These plates may be very late indeed; if the evidence of early suppressed numbers scratched on the copperplates provides any clue, Blake may have already adopted a tentative order for Chapter II before he even etched 37-39.²⁰

So large an interpolation as that of pls. 37-39 now quite effectively obliterated the early verbal-visual design once intended for the episode of the cathedral cities, but it also provided room for new elements of visual design to integrate themselves with patterns established in plates already etched. Thus the large half-page illumination on pl. 37 of Albion seated in despair occupies the same niche, with respect to preceding plates, that was once filled by the marginally smaller design of the apocalyptic chariot, now displaced; in size, the design on 37 is precisely equal to the sum of the designs on pl. 35; its subject continues the theme of humanity in the Spectre's power that was displayed in the designs of 33 and 35 and is explicitly enunciated in the

joined from its beginnings on 36. By summarizing all the essential matter of 41 in what were then the last three lines of 40,¹⁹ Blake might close the sequence on a declaration more chiseled, more final, and more sublime than the final lines of 41 afford: "And the Seventeen conjoining with Bath the Seventh/In whom the other Ten shone manifest a Divine Vision/Assimilated and embrac'd Eternal Death for Albions sake" (40.37-39).

By bypassing pl. 41, Blake might also obtain a smoother link with 42. The first line of 42 ("Thus Albion sat, studious of others in his pale disease") might appear to proceed from 40.36 ("[Albion] frown'd on All his Friends, counting them enemies in his sorrow"). At the same time, however, the sacrifice of pl. 41 would mean the loss of Oxford's speech there, and, more seriously, the disappearance of the conclusive half-page design of the apocalyptic chariot. Blake apparently decided finally to include both plates, engraving the present final line of 40 to give the opening lines of 41 a new rationale. There was still a cost, however: a disturbance in the symmetrical layout of the five-plate core unit, now grown to six. Here then is an instance, one of many, where Blake's matter and verbal expression managed to override the claims of his form.

The insertion of pl. 40 into the core sequence has relatively few aesthetic consequences other than its effect on the

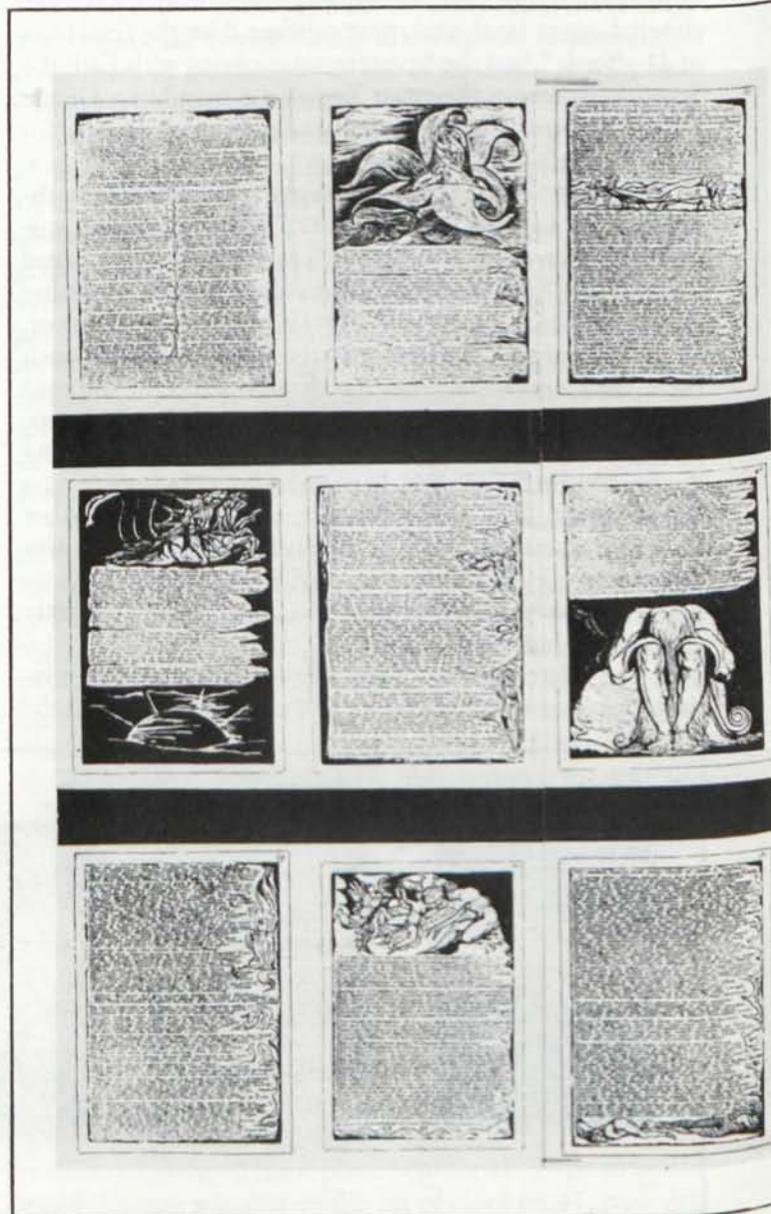


mirror-script on 37. Next, by etching pl. 38 as a monolithic block of text, Blake continues a pattern that has prevailed in the even-numbered plates since pl. 30. Further, the designs at the top of 39 and 40 are identical in size and contrapuntally related in subject; both are water-visions, one conveying redemptive possibilities, the other fallen states.²¹ Thus a new five-plate pattern of layout, 37-41, is added to the old, and the whole episode grows to nine plates. In this expanded sequence, plate 37 becomes a new pivotal fifth; in the thematic sequence, it provides a nadir vision of despair, equidistant from images of the savior at the beginning of the sequence (pl. 33) and the apocalyptic chariot at the end (pl. 41); as an element of visual structure, it anchors 41, the ninth plate, as well as 33 and 35, (the first and third). Thus new patterns supersede old without wholly effacing them, like the overlapping rings of lunar impact craters. Blake's mode of introducing new matter in his work is often nearly as violent, yet at the same time his instinct for form persists.

How the rest of Chapter II fell into the arrangement extant in Copies A-C is a matter for conjecture only. At some point Sequence 2 (43-46) locked into place with Sequence 3 (47-50) through the nexus of the great designs of Vala and Jerusalem on 46-47. How this series of eight, with its powerful visual center, attached itself to the core sequence is not clear. The somewhat rough connections between pl. 42 and its immediate neighbors suggest a more complex history of joining than we can now recover (42 may be the residue of a longer series of plates pared down at both ends). Meanwhile the five-plate central core had at a relatively early stage incorporated pl. 40. Somewhat later, probably, the augmented core acquired the three-plate sequence 29-30, 32, as a proem.²² The chapter now had the form of a double set of nines, anchored together at what became their medial pivot, the appropriately encompassing design of the apocalyptic chariot on 41, equidistant from the beginning and end of the chapter. The latest developments presumably were the interpolation of pls. 37-39 and of pl. 31. The case of pl. 31, long recognized as an intruder,²³ bears further comment. A self-contained doctrinal passage, its text may never have formed part of any extended sequence in the poem, and for the reader it continues to remain aloof from its surroundings. For the viewer, however, pl. 31 coheres very well with what follows it: it displays precisely the same visual layout as pls. 33 and 35 and certain iconographic connections with these as well (particularly in the repetition of flying or hovering figures). By placing 31 where he does, Blake extends forward the pattern of alternating textual and illuminated spaces so that every plate from 30 to 36 (and, with the eventual addition of 37-39, every plate to 38) is made part of the pattern. Here then is evidence that it is often not the sense of the text but the look of the page that determines the location of some plates in *Jerusalem*. In form, like apparently gravitates to like, creating a pattern that cuts into narrative continuity and extends itself across the boundaries of discrete narrative units.

The Rearrangement of Sequences in Copies D-E

This hypothetical reconstruction of some stages in the prehistory of Chapter II brings us finally to the order of the first printed copies. But Blake's concern for visual form, for a handsome distribution of illuminations, could not have ceased once these printed copies came into being. Certainly Blake's previous treatment of successive copies of longer works—his rearrangement of full-page illuminations in *The Book of Urizen* and *Milton*, for example—suggests the opposite. Indeed, *Jerusalem* is actually conservative in the general stability of its order from copy to copy. Yet Chapter II, already the product of much careful designing and many disruptive second thoughts, gets substantially rearranged in copies D and E. In these copies Blake moves pls. 43-46 to the front of the chapter, just after the chapter opening on pl. 28, and he inserts plate 42 between what were in the First Order

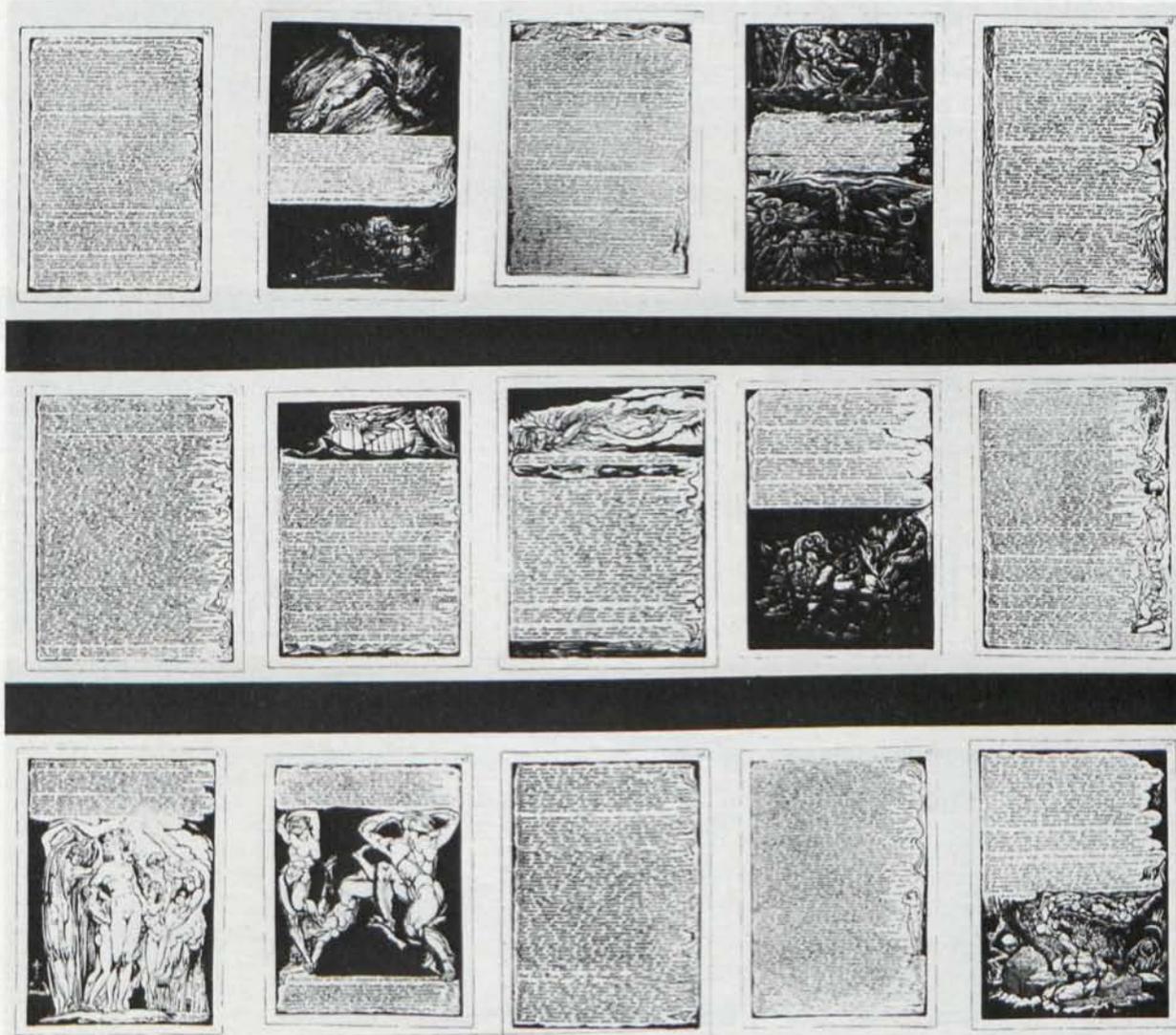


pls. 37 and 38. Any explanation of these changes should base its inferences on the same principles that seem to have motivated Blake's earlier planning in the chapter.

A quest after possible thematic motives for the rearrangement of the chapter seems to me the least promising way of explaining the problem. Commentators on this point have generally pronounced both orders thematically satisfying, and indeed they are. In one order (A-C-F), after the proem of plate 28, the narrative begins with Albion repudiating the Divine Vision; in the other (D-E), it begins with the Divine Vision proclaiming its early intimacy with Albion. The narrative in the earlier order shows Los undertaking a solitary quest to save Albion after the group effort of the cathedral cities fails; in the later order the cathedral cities appear to convene (though not immediately — the Reuben episode and other matter come first) after Los's individual failure. In terms of thematic significance, these alternatives

offer little to choose from, since they both yield the same gloomy outcome, a stubbornly unredeemed Albion. But when we turn our attention from theme to visual form, very different consequences attend the two orders. The rearrangement of narrative sequences demands rearrangement of illuminations as well and an altered set of relations between blocks of illumination and blocks of text. Given Blake's evident concern for such matters, we may plausibly suppose that he found the distribution of illuminations in copies A and C unsatisfying, even though the arrangement of sequences formed a reasonable, even a desirable, narrative order. If this motive did in fact figure significantly in the shifting of sequences, it provides us with a magnified in-

3. Layout, *Jerusalem*, Chapter II (First Order). Copy D, Harvard University Library (rearranged).



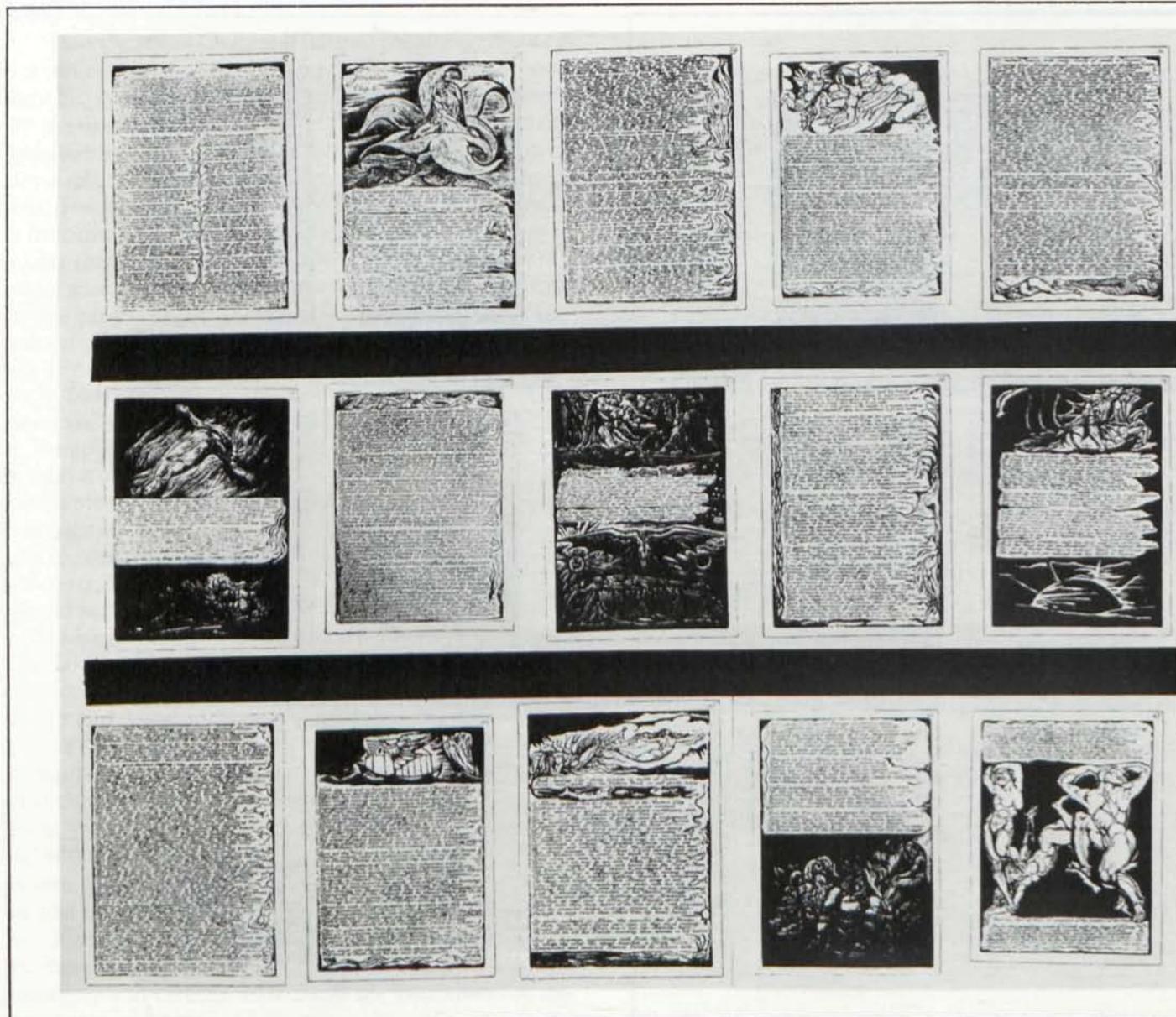
stance of Blake's tendency to allow concerns for form to prevail over an earlier coherence of content.

The concern for form in this instance may, however, signal only a desire to rectify imbalances in layout that earlier intrusions of content may have caused in the first place. In planning the layout of the smaller units of the chapter, Blake seems to have pursued a kind of medial symmetry as his goal, sequences with strong pivots at the center and balanced elements flanking it on the imaginary left and right. The same goal appears evident in the plan of Chapter II as a whole. If we visualize its order before the interpolations of pls. 31 and 37-39, we find a series of nineteen plates (omitting the address to the Jews) with large illuminations

so distributed that their center of gravity falls in the middle (an appropriate distribution for a middle chapter: large illuminations in Chapter I cluster towards the beginning of the chapter; in Chapter IV they cluster towards the end²⁴). The half-page illumination of the apocalyptic chariot occupies the tenth position (pl. 41), the exact center of the series, flanked at opposite ends by the half-page illuminations on the first (pl. 28) and the nineteenth plates (pl. 50). The other large illuminations are distributed on either side of the center at roughly corresponding intervals from it, five before and four after (the greater massiveness of the designs on the later plates balances out the slightly greater frequency of designs on the earlier). A well-balanced visual order would thus have prevailed at one time in the chapter as a whole as well as in its individual illuminated units.

When Blake expanded the parley of cathedral cities by three plates (none massively illuminated except pl. 37) and

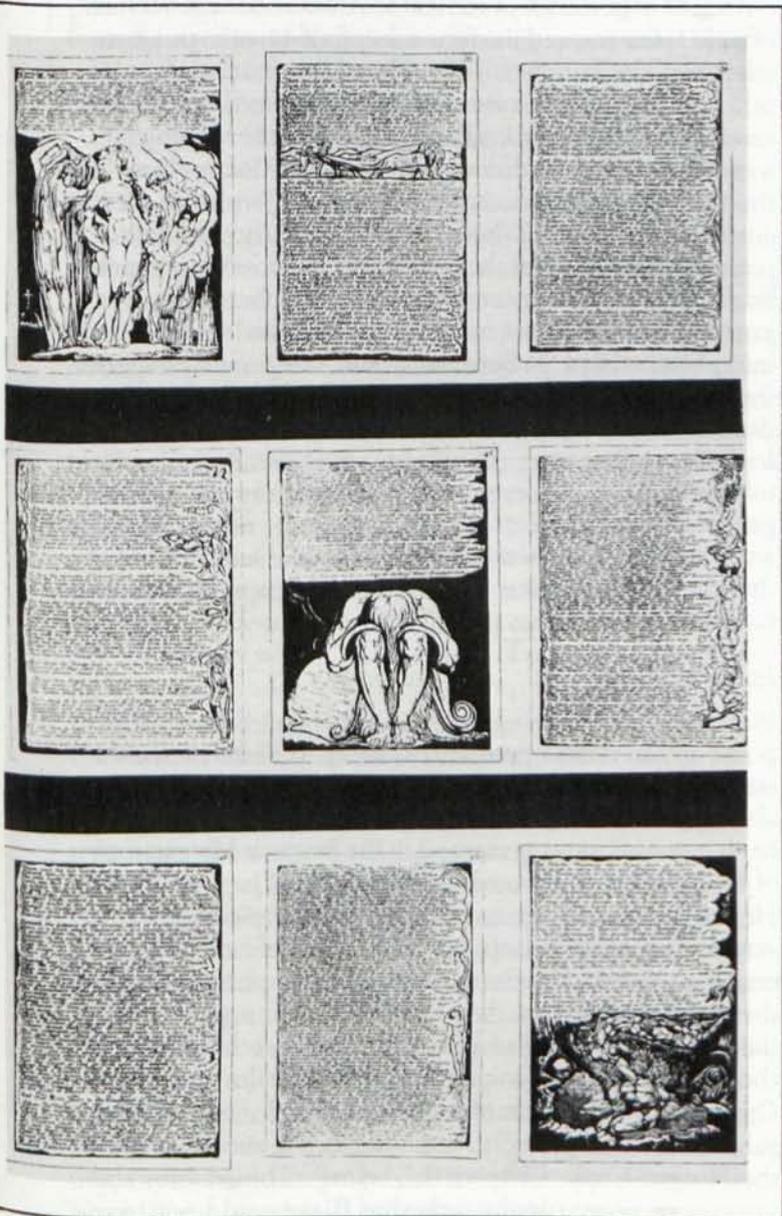
4. Layout, *Jerusalem*, Chapter II (Second Order). Copy D, Harvard University Library.



interpolated them between the eighth and ninth plates (36 and 40) of an earlier nineteen-plate sequence, he inevitably displaced the center of gravity in the distribution of illuminations forward in the chapter. The interpolation of pl. 31 near the beginning of the chapter only served to make the shift in balance more pronounced. Thus in the order of copy A, the reader encounters eight large blocks of illumination in the first half of Chapter II and only five in the second (the median of the 24 plates is found between pls. 38 and 39).²⁵ In addition, the very conspicuous pattern of alternation and repetition observed in pls. 31-37 makes the distribution of illuminations in the rest of the chapter seem ungainly, even random. A massive clot of design on pls. 46 and 47 relieves the relatively heavy weight of printed text in the second half of the chapter, but these designs are too powerful in themselves and too isolated from other powerful clusters of design to create an effect of balance.

For all the presumed defects of Chapter II as a visual sequence, Blake nevertheless produced two printed copies of the chapter in this order before he began to have second thoughts. The second thoughts seem to have coincided with his plans for a full-color version of *Jerusalem* (copy E), a version in which the claims of visual design would have preeminence.²⁶ If any perceived deficiencies in the sequential design were to be remedied, a project such as the production of copy E would certainly have provided the appropriate occasion, and Chapter II, which is particularly rich in large designs, would be likely to have received special attention. An inspection of the new order of plates in the D-E version of this chapter indeed assures us that the imbalances present in the A-C order have been rectified. If we divide the twenty-four plates that compose the enlarged chapter at its median, we find seven large designs in the first half and six in the second, a considerably more even distribution than the eight and five split of copy A. If we divide the chapter in thirds, the effect of medial symmetry is even more pronounced (see illus. 4). In the first eight plates there are three large designs, in the next eight, seven, and in the final eight, three (a similar calculation applied to copy A yields five, four, and four, even-sounding enough, until we observe that the distribution sequence within the middle third is itself considerably lopsided [see illus. 3]). The medial symmetry that may have been present in an earlier hypothetical nineteen-plate chapter is now restored.

In the transformation of pls. 43-46 into pl. 29-32 there is one other consequential gain in pictorial symmetry. With the migration of the former plate 46 towards the beginning of the chapter, Vala and Jerusalem no longer change at the turn of a page from elegant aloof emblems into fleshy women, falling with and falling for a man as contorted as they. An ironic narrative sequence loses the link between its two parts, but at the same time, by undoing this heavy conjunction of massive designs, Blake restores a balance. In D and E the two versions of this female pair, one version depicting eternal states and one depicting fallen vegetative selves, are as symmetrically disposed in their locations in the chapter as the emblems of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey are on the first of the panels themselves. Plate 32, formerly 46, now concludes the *first* movement in the chapter, an epyllion of four plates (not including "To the Jews" and pl. 28); it is more than ever the mirror image of pl. 47, which introduces a *final* movement of four plates. Both plates are nearly equidistant, on opposite sides, from the midpoint in the chapter (if one leaves "To the Jews" and 28 out of the reckoning, 32 and 47 are precisely equidistant). The mirroring effect is particularly apparent in E, where Blake employs an identical color scheme for the bodies, clouds, and background sky in both pictures.²⁷ The parallels and the radical contrast of these pictures are enforced by the symmetrical relations of their location. They are fit panels to flank the chapter's visual center, itself filled with symmetrical doublings and oppositions, visual displays of hard choices, of succor and disease,



of soaring and sinking, where the "best and the worst, Heaven and Hell" often inhabit identical pictorial frames.

The Status of Plate 42

One curiosity in Blake's rearrangement of Chapter II remains to be discussed. Why is pl. 42 the forty-second plate of *Jerusalem* in both Orders, even though the plates adjacent to it shift radically? This plate once directly followed the nine-plate sequence on the cathedral cities that ended with the picture of the apocalyptic chariot. In the Second Order it appears deep within the nine-plate sequence between plates numbered 37 and 38 in A-C. Since pl. 37 moves four places back with the transpositions of Sequences 1 and 2 and 42 moves four places forward, the latter needs no renumbering. It is hard to imagine why this one plate should remain fixed in its place like a rock in a stream while a total of seventeen plates before and after shift around it. Fond as Blake is of symbolic numbers, the number 42 does not seem to be among them. The plate has no large block-design. Although it presents a powerful speech by Los and some fairly typical rumblings from Albion, there is nothing in the content that marks it as demanding singular treatment. Finally, most curious of all, to remain pl. 42 in the Second Order it must interrupt the continuity between pls. 41 and 43 without supplying any new plausibility; indeed it interrupts a series of parallel clauses in apposition:

They saw Albion endeavoring to destroy their Emanations
(41:31)

They saw their wheels rising up poisonous against Albion
(43:1)

In the Second Order, two non sequiturs in the sense appear where there were none before.

In its original location in the First Order, this plate had no inevitable connection to the plates immediately adjacent to it. It cannot have been conceived as part of the scene of the twenty-four cathedral cities that preceded it, for on 42 the parley abruptly disappears, and Albion states that Hand and Hyle "have seized the Twenty-four rebellious ingrati-tudes" (42:48), though nothing of the sort occurs in the previous nine plates.²⁸ Nor does it connect obviously with the succeeding plate, since 42 concludes strongly on a line of summary finality ("This is the Net & Veil of Vala, among the Souls of the Dead" [81]), and 43 presents a powerful fresh scene with its first line ("Then the Divine Vision like a silent sun appeared"). Even in the First Order, then, pl. 42 is inessential to narrative continuity. The most that might be said for its earlier location is that its text provides at least an adequate transition from the collective effort of the cities to the individual effort of Los to redeem Albion. What it does not provide, however, is a fit introduction to that last, immensely powerful synopsis of Blake's historical myth that bursts upon us on pl. 47, as "Luvah [tears] forth from Albions Loins . . . in rivers / of blood over Europe" (47:3-4). Yet this is precisely what pl. 42 must introduce when Sequence 2 is moved

to the beginning of the Chapter in the Second Order. Far better is the juncture that actually appears in D-E, "O God thou art Not an Avenger" (41 [46]) implicitly judging "that Holy Fiend / The Wicker Man of Scandinavia" on the next plate (47:5-6), just as the design of the apocalyptic chariot on 46 implicitly judges the disarray of Albion, Vala, and Jerusalem on 47's adjacent design.

Once again Blake seems to cater to the claims of coherent sense. In that case pl. 42 must be removed, but where? It cannot be pushed further back, since 47-50 form a single, sweeping, unbroken movement from the first line of 47 right up to the etched words "End of Chap. 2" on 50. Thus it must move forward. Oddly, it comes to rest at a point where it severs a scene in the middle and interrupts a passage of verse previously bound together by syntactic parallels; no catering to sense here. But from a pictorial standpoint, the resting place is not so odd. What appears to have happened is that the large design of the seated Albion on the lower half of 37 [41] has arrested the forward drift of 42, or to put it another way, the first lines of 42, "Thus Albion sat, studious of others in his pale disease: / Brooding on evil," gravitate toward their precise illustration, tugging the whole plate with them. That the dislodged plate finally locates itself in the forty-second position of the reordered *Jerusalem* turns out to be fortuitous. What is important, rather, is that the power of a design appears, once again, sufficiently compelling to Blake to determine the position of a plate. Moreover, just as the claims of narrative continuity failed to deter the interpolation of pl. 31 between 30 and 32 at an early stage of the chapter's arrangement, these claims once again fail to deter the interpolation of 42 between the former 37 and 38. In the latter case, more than purely visual elements enter into Blake's choice, but even here, the continuity or bond that prevails is one between word and picture, not word and word. In the tug of war between the visual and the verbal that goes on throughout the evolution of Chapter II, the visual element appears to prevail.

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In the long run, however, no one component of Blake's composite art can claim a permanent victory. If Blake altered the arrangement of the second chapter in copies D and E, arguably on grounds of felicity of design, not long before his death he changed his mind again, and in the Pierpont Morgan copy of *Jerusalem* (F) he restored the First Order of page numbers. His deliberations on the matter evidently occupied him to the very last, for many of the pages in Chapter II of F show signs of erased or altered numbers, inscribed after the printing (one of them on paper watermarked 1826²⁹) but now superseded by the extant numbers. As far as we can decipher these erasures they invite us to believe that they are the remains of a Second Order foliation like that of copies D and E (for more on this subject, see the Appendix, "Emendations in the Foliation of the Morgan Copy, Chapter II," below). The erasures and alterations prove conclusively that Blake could not have

stumbled back into a First Order foliation accidentally but must have done so deliberately.³⁰ A decisive endorsement of the First Order seems to have been Blake's last word on the form of *Jerusalem*.

We cannot know for certain why he took this last step. Perhaps the restoration of the original order reflects Blake's tendency to commemorate the firstlings of his conception and belongs with such manifestations of the tendency as the restored "12" on the title page of *Milton* and the date 1804 on the title page of *Jerusalem*. But it is also possible that verbal and narrative continuity asserted new claims for Blake's favor. Certainly copy F, though elegantly touched up with China white, is a drab thing compared to the extravagance of E, but as a reading text it is far clearer.³¹ We may surmise that Blake considered E the viewer's *Jerusalem* and F the reader's *Jerusalem*. In that case, a sequence agreeable to the viewer might cause discomfort to the reader. The location of plate 42 in the Second Order, for example, is wholly illogical from the standpoint of narrative continuity, a point that Blake might have perceived more forcefully as shapeliness of visual design receded somewhat in importance to him.

Although we can only speculate about Blake's motives for restoring the First Order in F, we can refer to the evolutionary history of *Jerusalem*, where a competition of two autonomies, the visual and the verbal, goes on continually. Perhaps modern editors of *Jerusalem*, faced with the choice of the two variant orders, should first consider what sort of choice Blake himself was making as he moved from one order to the other, what alternative goals he had before him, and they should make their own editorial decisions accordingly. To establish a "preferred" order of plates on extrinsic, mechanical grounds—the order represented in the majority of copies, the one with the most colors, the one produced last—is to neglect the principles of ordering that would have mattered to Blake himself and to evade their problematic nature. If there are such things as a reader's *Jerusalem* and a viewer's *Jerusalem*, then perhaps the wisest thing a future editor might do is to follow the order of plates that best suits the alternative adopted. If, for example, the edition is to be furnished with reproductions of the illuminations (as in the recent Bentley edition)³², then the order of copy E, with its superior disposition of designs, would be the one to follow; but if the edition is an unilluminated letterpress text, then the order with the greatest verbal coherence, such as we find in copy F, would be more appropriate. There is no abstract "correct" order to the second chapter of *Jerusalem*, but neither should our choice be arbitrary; the appropriate order of the poem is profoundly related to the medium of its transmission.

It may be disquieting to some to propose, in place of "the" poem or "the preferred" poem, a plurality of *Jerusalem*s offering faces that accord with the differing desires of viewers and readers. But differing desires, pluralities, unfinished competitions, these are the elements in which Blake breathes. The ordering and reordering of se-

quences would be impossible in the first place if the poem were not composed of dozens, perhaps scores of smaller poems, internally autonomous but often covering portions of the same ground as the others do: in short, competing with one another to tell the same story, to offer the reader alternate versions of the same truth. And as scene competes with scene, designs come to compete with text, new conceptions with old conceptions, late copies with early copies, and the surface of the poem is dislocated but then reorganized each time. Organization becoming firm in one part often means disorganization somewhere else. This process is perfectly imaged in the figure of "Golgonooza the spiritual Four-fold London eternal . . . ever building, ever falling" (*Milton* 6.1-2), evading a petrified order. In most of *Jerusalem* the building and rebuilding has arrested itself, leaving only archeological traces of its earlier turbulent development. Chapter II is a gate into the place where the building and rebuilding goes on, allowing us to clarify our conjectures about what the process as a whole must have been like. It is the place where Blake still allows a glimpse of his unappeasable appetite for an unending conversation between strong text and strong design. "Go on, builders in hope" (*J* 12.43), it seems to proclaim.

Appendix: Emendations in the MS Foliation of the Morgan Copy, Chapter II

The matter of erased pen numbers in F needs a somewhat detailed exposition, for the erasures and other emendations have not been completely reported hitherto. Not all the plates subject to shuffling in earlier arrangements of Chapter II show evidence of emendation beneath the extant page numbers, but the mendings are more extensive than previously realized. Erdman finds an erased number, "possibly '33'" and mendings in the digits of "30," "31," and "32" ("Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 51). Close attention to scouring marks on the paper, aided by an ultraviolet lamp, has enabled me to collect more complete information (I am also indebted to Thomas Lange and the staff of the Morgan Library for help in deciphering the evidence presented here).

The listing below follows the Second Order arrangement of copy F's present binding (of Victorian date):

pls. 28, 43[29], 44[30]	no evidence of earlier numbers
45[31], 46[32]	beneath extant First Order numbers
29[33]	extant "29" written over 2 erased digits, almost certainly "33"
30[34]	"0" written over an erasure and in lighter ink than the "3"
31[35]	"1" written over an erasure
32[36]	"2" written over an erasure and in lighter ink than the "3"

33[37]	no apparent emendation beneath extant "33"
34[38]	"4" written over a heavy erasure
35[39]	no apparent emendation
36[40]	<i>both digits</i> written over severe erasing; to the left of the extant "3" the imprint of a "4" left by the pressure of the pen is distinctly visible in ultraviolet light; a second earlier digit to the right of the "4" illegible beneath the extant number
37[41]	no apparent emendation
42	written in heavy black ink (unlike emended numbers, written mostly in a grayer ink)
38[43]	"3" written over an erasure; the "8" is mended in gray ink from an earlier "3" written in black ink
39[44]	no apparent emendation
40[45]	faint evidence of erasure under "0"
41[46], 47, 48, 49, 50	no apparent emendation; numbers inscribed in gray rather than black ink

None of this information violates the hypothesis that the erased numbers were those of the Second Order, and all tends to support it. The probable "33" once inscribed on pl. 29, the "4[?]" detectable on pl. 36, and the "[?]3" detectable on pl. 38 raise no barrier to the supposition that these fossil numbers were once the actual Second Order numbers of those plates, 33, 40, and 43, respectively. If Blake was changing Second Order numbers to First Order, where the plate number was in the 30's in either Order, we would expect him to erase only the second digit; both digits would need altering for 40 to become 36; where the First Order catches up to the 40's, as 45 becomes 40, Blake again would need only to change the second digit. All these expectations are confirmed by the physical evidence of the text. That they all point to Second Order numbers beneath the extant mendings and superimposition seems beyond the reach of coincidence.

As the table above makes clear, not all the plates show evidence of early fossil numbers beneath the extant First Order numbers. But although the early patterning of numbering was intermittent it was by no means random. Plates 43[29]-46[32] and 47-50 show no signs of earlier numbers; pl. 29 [33]-32[36], on the other hand, display such signs on every plate; pl. 33[37]-41[46] show a pattern of early numbers on *alternate* plates in the series (pl. 42 is included here as the fifth in the series), with the odds (assuming a likely Second Order arrangement) skipped in the first half and the evens in the second. One plausible way of accounting for

these variations is to assume that Blake numbered these plates in different batches and at different times. It is interesting to note that these different batches of plates, 29-32, 33-41, 43-46, and 47-50 are virtual replicas of our old acquaintances, those pre-fabricated units that came to form Chapter II of *Jerusalem* in the first place: respectively, the four-plate introductory unit of Sequence 1, the nine-plate central panel of the cathedral cities, the highly mobile Sequence 2 that ends with the tableau of Vala and Jerusalem, and the immobile concluding Sequence 3. Did a sense of the autonomous integrity of these units persist so distinctly in Blake's mind, even to the last, as to influence the way he initially went about compiling copy F?

I wish to express my gratitude to Morton D. Paley, David V. Erdman and G.E. Bentley, Jr., for stimulating and enlightening exchanges on the subject treated in this essay and for other generousities during its preparation.

¹ Stuart Curran, "The Structures of *Jerusalem*," in *Blake's Sublime Allegory: Essays on The Four Zoas, Milton, and Jerusalem*, ed. Stuart Curran and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1973), p. 334.

² Karl Kroeber has cited Blake's penchant for repetition to account for *Jerusalem's* structure: "Reiteration permits a fluidity of structure; to a degree plates can be rearranged because re-ordering does not upset patterns of allusion" ("Delivering *Jerusalem*" in *Blake's Sublime Allegory*, p.352n). I would put the matter the other way around: fluidity of structure permits repetition. Because the units are discrete, not enchaind in a consecutive argument, they tend toward internal comprehensiveness, and comprehensiveness within the part virtually guarantees repetition in the whole.

³ The terms "First Order" and "Second Order," used in this essay to refer to the plate orders of copies A-C-F and copies D-E, respectively, are borrowed from G.E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), p. 234. Plate numbers belonging to the First Order are printed in roman type, Second Order numbers in italics, but only when they vary from the First Order numbers. All editors agree that the arrangement of Chapter II found in copies A-C-F is the earlier. For more on the subject, see the seminal essay of David V. Erdman, "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's *Jerusalem*," *Studies in Bibliography*, 17 (1964), p. 40 ff.

⁴ I use the term "synoptic" here in its sense of "constituting a synopsis," not in its New Testament sense of a story harmonizable with other accounts, the sense employed, for example, by Joanne Witke in "*Jerusalem: A Synoptic Poem*," *Comparative Literature*, 22 (Summer 1970), 265-78. To document extensively the conception of the individual sequences within *Jerusalem* as autonomous synoptic visions would take more space than can be spared here. A brief glance at Sequence 2 (pls. 43-46 in the First Order) may suffice for the time being as an illustration. The sequence starts with a memory of the prelapsarian Eden ("I elected Albion for my glory," the voice of the Divine Vision begins [43.6]), but Albion turns into "darkning rocks" (43.28) and there ensues a long account of the initial strife of Albion and Luvah (43.33-82), quoted directly from *The Four Zoas*, Night

III, followed by the escape of Enitharmon and the Spectre of Urthona from the wreckage of the fall (44.1-4) and their assimilation in the bosom of Los (44.16-17)—here we see a quick synopsis of much of the action in the five middle nights of *The Four Zoas*. The sequence then quickly moves us into the present: fortified by his spiritual reunion, Los (Blake) explores London in search of the Minute Particulars (45.2-38) while European war rages ("the strife of Albion & Luvah is great in the east" [45.55-56]), and Albion's sons aggregate ominously into Druidic powers, bringing the cycle back to where it started: "All things begin & end, in Albions Ancient Druid Rocky Shore" (46.15). Quotations of Blake are from *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), henceforth cited within the text in parentheses.

⁵ *Jerusalem*, considered as a collection of synoptic tales, would have ample precedents in an age filled with compilations and redactions of mythic cycles and bardic remains. The antiquary Edward Davies, whose influence is evident in *Jerusalem*, thought that Genesis itself might be regarded as a "collection of documents" (with Moses as inspired redactor), especially the first few chapters with their overlapping considerations of the same events and introductory tags that "point out the beginning of detached compilations" (*Celtic Researches on the Origin, Traditions & Languages of the Ancient Britons* [London: J. Booth, 1804], p. 40). Curran, in "The Structures of Jerusalem," p. 331 ff., is illuminating on the repeating events and overlapping sequences in the work. See also Witke, "Jerusalem: A Synoptic Poem," *passim*.

⁶ See Harold Bloom, *Blake's Apocalypse: A Study in Poetic Argument* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963), p. 432.

⁷ By "large" designs, I refer in this essay to illuminations individually occupying a quarter of a plate or more, set off from the text in black (copy E excepted), heavily inked backgrounds, as opposed to small, unframed interlinear or marginal designs. The latter, though often attractive and iconographically significant, do not intrude on the text or strongly demarcate its boundaries as a visual block and are thus left out of my arguments here. There are thirteen large designs, as defined here, in Chapter II of *Jerusalem*: two each on pls. 31, 33, 35, and single blocks on pls. 28, 37, 41, 44, 46, 47, 50. The interlinear design of the plowman on pl. 29 and the headpiece of the blacksmith on 32 are too narrow by far to counteract the visual effect of overwhelming textual presence. The somewhat larger headpieces on pls. 39 and 40 are borderline cases, but I do not consider them to have a significant effect on the balance of distribution in Chapter II's illuminations.

⁸ Leopold Damrosch, Jr., in *Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980), p. 174, notes that Jerusalem is shown as "Michelangelesque" on pl. 46 and as "contorted in mannerist extremity" on 47.

⁹ *Blake's Composite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1978), p. 5 (Mitchell's italics).

¹⁰ A start in this direction is provided by Kay Parkhurst Easson, "Blake and the Art of the Book," in *Blake in His Time*, ed. Robert N. Essick and Donald Pearce (Bloomington & London: Indiana Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 35-52.

¹¹ *Blake's Composite Art*, p. 4.

¹² The proportionate measurements of the illuminations in *Jerusalem* is a matter that has not been adequately studied. The proportions of text to illuminations on some plates show clear de-

liberation, e.g., pl. 35, which is vertically symmetrical, the upper and lower designs 2½" in height each, the middle block of text 3¾". There are apparent relations in proportion between different plates as well. Another 3¾" block of text appears on pl. 37 and the single 5" illumination on that plate equals the combined total of the two illuminations on pl. 35. The middle block of text on pl. 35 (3¾") is roughly twice the height of the middle block on pl. 33 (1¾"). The headpiece design on pl. 31 exactly fits the text space on 37, and the text and tailpiece on 31 fit the space of 37's large design. This sort of correspondence is evident elsewhere in Chapter II: in Sequence 2, for example, pls. 44 and 46 are like positive and negative images; where text takes up the bulk of pl. 44, a design of nearly identical height assumes its place on pl. 46, and where a design appears at the top of 44, on 46 we find a residue of text. Like any good designer, Blake apparently strives for regularity without rigidity: pleasing variation and harmonies sometimes unobtrusive, sometimes bold.

¹³ Both Erdman and Bentley comment on the variation between the Morgan proofsheets and pl. 40 as found in the finished copies, with its added line. According to Erdman, "the added line does show that [pl. 40] was made before the present arrangement of plates, that it was first made for one position and later made to fit another" ("Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 25). Bentley, on the other hand, reasons that plate 41 must be later in origin than 40 and "presumably contemporaneous" with the line added to the previous plate to introduce 41 (*Blake Books*, p. 225). Bentley's reasoning does not explain, however, why Blake, if etching 41 as an afterthought to the sequence, would place its introductory line at the bottom of the previous plate when he could, with less trouble, etch it with the rest of the new lines that were to make up pl. 41. Nor does it explain why pl. 41 completes the unfinished catalogue of cities begun on pl. 36 (see n. 14, below).

¹⁴ On pl. 36 Blake names Selsey (Chichester), Winchester, Gloucester, Exeter, Salisbury, Bristol, and Bath. Seventeen more cities appear on 41.3, 5-7, 18-19. Erdman, in "Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 25, argues that "Bath" is not a catchword, but Blake himself appears to have read it as such. On three different plates, 37, 40, and 41, which other evidence suggests as having at various stages followed pl. 36 directly, he takes pains to insure that the first word is "Bath."

¹⁵ A critical tradition is beginning to form that considers this design parody, indeed as self-parody. Thus in *The Illuminated Blake* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974), David Erdman is equivocal; he notes the presence of apocalyptic emblems—the beasts are "ox-hooved, lion-maned, man-headed" (p. 320), but at the same time "Blake knows that the whole contraption would look ridiculous beside a fiery Pegasus" (p. 321). Mitchell, in *Blake's Composite Art*, goes further: "The chariot is an impossible rattletrap of old mythologies. . . . This monstrosity is a self-parody, a satiric vision of Blake's epic machinery" (p. 216). See also John E. Grant, review of Damon, *A Blake Dictionary in Blake* (Winter 1980-81), p. 132. Grant considers the design "pessimistic and parodistic." These views are invigorating and perhaps correct. But in reading Blake's designs we may be wise to prefer a cautious approach, separating that which is indisputably there, such as the presence of a combination of apocalyptic emblems, from what is critical inference, based on notions of the grotesque that may not be Blake's. The iconography of the chariot is not without its precedents in sources available to Blake, as Morton

Paley points out in "Wonderful Originals"—Blake and Ancient Sculpture," in *Blake in His Time*, p. 175.

¹⁶ Plate 33 is in itself a symphony of doublings and oppositions: there is of course the vertical symmetry of designs above and below a medial text, and within the designs there are the upper pair of wings and the lower pair of wings, a scene of spiritual support above and spiritual disease below, two figures in the upper design, two in the lower, a tree on the left and a tree on the right in the upper, sun on the left and moon on the right in the lower.

¹⁷ There is some evidence to suggest that this series cohered as a unit from a relatively early period in the coalescence of *Jerusalem's* plates. On plate 34 of copy A, in the upper right corner, there is a residual trace of a still earlier stage in the assembling of the poem, a small engraved "6" that Blake has only partially managed to cover over. Versions of pl. 34 that lack this "6" are likely to date from an earlier stage still, and in the Rosenwald Collection of the Library of Congress there is in fact a proofsheets of the plate, printed in black, lacking the "6" (a second proofsheets of pl. 34 printed in green, also in the Rosenwald Collection, shows the "6" clearly). Yet even this proofsheets with the missing "6" shows the catchword "By" that links it to pl. 35. These two plates probably cohered from a distinctly early period then, nor can we doubt that pl. 33, which is needed to make the start of 34 intelligible, also cohered to it at that time; context guarantees the connection of 35 and 36. For discussion of the "6" on pl. 34, see Erdman, "Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 49; see also n. 20 below.

¹⁸ See David V. Erdman, *Blake: Prophet Against Empire*, rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), pp. 476-77.

¹⁹ One piece of evidence for supposing that pl. 40 is later than 41 is the adventitious nature of the numerical categories on pl. 40, "The Seventeen," "Bath the Seventh," "the other Ten." Blake's curious reification of "7" and "17" comes simply from a count of cities named on pl. 36 and a count of their complement on pl. 41. The collectivity of "seventeen" is a nonce-creation, like "Bath the Seventh," brought in to disguise the interruption that pl. 40 makes in the continuity of 36 and 41. "The other Ten" is an even bolder improvisation. This is a grab bag category composed of the first six cities mentioned on pl. 36 mixed with the four supreme cities "in whom the twenty-four appear'd four-fold" (41.23). Blake is in short effacing his original symbolic scheme and improvising another as part of necessary patchwork. By the time we get to what I take to be the even later interpolation of pls. 37-39, the "Seventeen" have attained an institutional status, Blake causing Los to say, "Bristol & Bath, listen to my words, & ye Seventeen: give ear!" (38.55). "The other Ten" are quite forgotten here. Blake's references either to "twenty-four" cities or to "twenty-eight" may help to establish the relative dates of certain passages. In the core sequence 33-36, 41, the collective number is always "twenty-four," as it is in Chapter I (19.20) and in its place of probable origin, *Milton* 42.16 ("I beheld the Twenty-four Cities of Albion"). But in the presumably later pls. 37-39, the collectivity grows to "twenty-eight" (37.23) and remains so in Sequence 2: "The Twenty-eight Cities of Albion" (44.26).

²⁰ Some impressions and proofsheets of *Jerusalem* show faintly engraved numbers that differ from and were superseded by the numbers added in pen in copy A. In Chapter II, Erdman reports besides the "6" on pl. 34 (see n. 17 above) a "10" or "18" or "12" on pl. 28, a "31" (pl. 31), "36" (pl. 33), "9" (pl. 40), and

"19" (pl. 50) ("Suppressed and Altered Passages," pp. 48-49). Recently the Morgan Library has acquired an early proofsheets of pl. 28 (a reworked version of the well known first-state pull of that plate already in the Morgan's possession) which confirms the engraved number there as "12." I cannot read any number on pl. 33 in the copies I have consulted but have been able to corroborate the "6" in various copies, the "9" in copy A, and the "19" in copies D, E, and (faintly) the posthumously printed copy I. These numbers may shed light on the early order of the chapter, for the latter three appear in the same order and at roughly the same intervals as the plates themselves do in the extant First Order (the engraved number on pl. 31 is irrelevant to the early order, since it is likely that this plate is a quite late interpolation in the sequence, and the "36" on 33, if it exists, must belong to a different bout of numbering from the one that produced "6" on pl. 34, for it is highly improbable that 33 was ever physically separated from 34). Indeed, if one numbers Chapter II, starting with pl. 28 as the first and leaving out the probably late arrival pl. 31, one discovers that pl. 34 is indeed the sixth plate in the sequence; plate 40 is indeed the ninth plate if pls. 37-39 are omitted as a late interpolation, and if 40 is "9" it is easy to see why pl. 50 would be "19."

The "12" which we now know that Blake inscribed on a plate already designated as the start of Chapter II supports Erdman's suggestion that "at one time the chapters were under ten pages in length" ("Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 49)—or, more precisely, it suggests that the first chapter once consisted of ten plates exactly ("To the Jews" would be pl. 11). This "12" does make the early "6" on 34 and the "9" on 40 problematic, though not insolubly so. At some early point Blake may have provisionally situated the six plates of the extended core sequence, 33-36, 40, 41, in a ten-plate Chapter I, following the extant pls. 1-4 (a workable combination; pl. 41, moreover, has both the visual appearance and the rhetorical effect of a *Jerusalem* chapter end-plate); in this case, pl. 34 would still be the sixth and pl. 40 the ninth in the series. Alternatively, the numbers "6," "9," and "19" may simply have provided Blake with a private guide to the internal ordering of the plates that make up Chapter II (before late interpolations) without regard to their ultimate numerical place in the poem as a whole. Since this alternative makes better sense of the "19" on 50, ten plates after the "9" on 40, it seems to me more likely that the early engraved numbers represent, for the most part, the internal ordering of Chapter II and that at the time of the numbering the plates had already assumed much the same arrangement as we find in Copy A. By this reckoning the interpolation of pl. 37-39 would not be merely late but very late.

²¹ See Erdman, *The Illuminated Blake*, pp. 318-19.

²² Plates 29-30, 32 do not appear to have been etched at the same stage as pls. 33 ff., for the style of script on these three plates is uncharacteristically large and elaborate compared with the *Jerusalem* norm. This script appears in J56 and J61, palpable interpolations both, leading Bentley to describe them as "apparently late" (*Blake Books*, p. 225). A more telling argument for lateness is the close resemblance of this script to that of *The Ghost of Abel* (1822). Although Erdman describes the script on J29-30 as "an early format" (*The Illuminated Blake*, p. 309), the evidence leans slightly toward a relatively late date for these plates in the etching of *Jerusalem*. But even a very early date of etching is no obstacle to relatively late attachment to the core se-

quence of the cathedral cities, with which pls. 29-30, 32 share little in subject matter.

²³ See Erdman, "Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 21.

²⁴ Six of the nine large block-illuminations in Chapter I occur in the first half of the chapter, indeed within the first eight plates of actual verse; eight of Chapter IV's thirteen large illuminations appear, in crescendo fashion, on its last seven plates of verse, less than a third of the whole chapter. Large illuminations are infrequent in Chapter III. (The five full-page designs in *Jerusalem* are excluded from this count.) For a table showing the distribution of large designs in *Jerusalem*, see Bentley, *Blake Books*, p. 231.

²⁵ For convenience of division I include pl. 27, "To the Jews," in this reckoning. Unadorned, it does not affect the distribution of illuminations in any measurable way. The eight large blocks of illumination in the first half of the chapter are on pls. 28, 31(2), 33(2), 35(2) and 37. The five blocks in the second half are on pls. 41, 44, 46, 47, and 50.

²⁶ Copy D, uncolored and sometimes poorly inked, of course also displays the Second Order. But there is little reason to suppose that D is earlier than E. Both are watermarked 1820, and the length of time that the production of E would need for completion argues for an early start on its planning.

²⁷ This repetition of the color scheme is more exact in the

Mellon copy itself than in the Trianon Press facsimile.

²⁸ The plate must have been etched relatively early, however. The "rebellious ingrattitudes" are twenty-four, not twenty-eight or eighteen and ten (see n. 19 above). Plate 42 may owe its oddly disconnected character to the loss of a plate or plates once adjacent to it.

²⁹ Plate 30[34].

³⁰ The evidence of Blake's painstaking emendations to produce First Order numbers invalidates Bentley's hypothesis that Blake intended the Second Order scheme for the plates of Chapter II in copy F "but carelessly copied the former order when he numbered them with a pen" (*Blake Books*, p. 234).

³¹ "The retouching of rude mendings . . . is carried through more conscientiously in the Morgan than in any other copy and rather less conscientiously in the Mellon than any other. . . . Blake took more pains to make the text legible in the Morgan copy than in the Mellon" (Erdman, "Suppressed and Altered Passages," p. 41). Many plates are faintly printed, some (e.g., pl. 15) scarcely legible, in copy E. The orangish ink also contributes more to the visual splendor of the book than it does to ease of reading.

³² *William Blake's Writings*, ed. G.E. Bentley, Jr., 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978).



“Both Turk and Jew”: Notes on the Poetry of Henry Fuseli, with Some Translations

BY A. M. ATKINS

As Detlef W. Dörrbecker points out in “Fuseli, the Swiss, and the British: Some Recent Publications,” the 1973 Zurich edition of Fuseli’s poems, although not entirely complete, is nevertheless a valuable addition to the expanding fund of knowledge concerning the poetic output of the celebrated painter.¹ Unfortunately, except for occasionally quoted passages, the poems have not been translated and have received relatively little critical attention. To convey something of the flavor of these poems, I have attempted to translate a few representative samples, appended below.

Modern critical evaluations of the poems, made largely by German or Swiss commentators, are rather negative; usually, “the other side of his art, the literary, is judged with a certain hesitancy” and considered “time-bound, manneristic classicism.”² Eudo Mason, the scholar most instrumental in the mid-twentieth-century Fuseli revival, reminds us, however, that Fuseli “can never be fully understood, unless his writings are also taken into account” and acknowledges Fuseli’s talents as translator, aphorist, and critic while being somewhat less than enthusiastic over his poems.³ Yet although critical strictures seem justified, the poems are nevertheless of interest to the historian as well as to the comparatist, especially the latter, inasmuch as they permit insight into the mind of a man who, like Faust, is of a divided soul, imbued by “the passion for everything grand and cutting contempt for everything mean,”⁴ a man “in whose daemonic personality exaltation was forever at war with an almost cynical shrewdness,”⁵ a man who was wrestling with two languages and two artistic media.

To attempt an explanation of why Fuseli largely abandoned poetry in favor of the visual arts must, of course, ultimately remain a matter of speculation. Yet certain events in his life and in the culture of his time, as well as a consideration of his personality, may serve to shed some light, at least, on why he chose to concentrate on the representative arts. All signs in Fuseli’s early life pointed to his becoming a man of letters. As a youngster, he was bred to the ministry and seems to have shown promise as a teacher of considerable rhetorical power. Indeed, “he regarded poetry as his true vocation”⁶ and, having attained considerable proficiency in several languages, devoured not only the ancient classics but also Shakespeare, Milton, and certain eighteenth-century Eng-

lish poets. It was Fuseli’s good fortune to grow up in Zurich, then one of the fortresses in the Germanic revolt against French neoclassicism. Johann Bodmer—poet, translator of Milton, and one of the leaders of the movement—introduced young Fuseli to the English poets considered such admirable models in the fight against convention. Among contemporary German poets, Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, the “German Milton,” was young Fuseli’s favorite. He tried his hand at a Shakespearean tragedy, *The Death of Saul* (now lost),⁷ and, when barely twenty, created a sensation with his, at first anonymously circulated, odes in the manner of Klopstock. Indeed, it was thought that these odes were actually Klopstock’s; among those who knew better, Johann Georg Zimmermann went so far as to claim that “compared to Fuseli’s odes, many of Klopstock’s are like ‘water.’”⁸ And Johann Kaspar Lavater, one of Fuseli’s best friends, ranks him equal to Goethe.⁹

If such praise nowadays seems exaggerated, even stranger is the fact that it is based on a mere handful of poems. According to Martin Bircher, of the 46 poems in the 1973 Zurich edition, only 11 were published during Fuseli’s lifetime. And although Fuseli never seems entirely to have given up writing or at least revising his poetry, the bulk, 28 poems, was written prior to 1780, with the decade from 1760 to 1770 being the most productive. Only 14 of Fuseli’s poems can be assumed to have been written after 1800, and only one after 1812.¹⁰ Thus, after 1770 Fuseli turned his back on poetry, except for a brief resurgence in late 1779 and early 1780, occasioned by an abortive love affair.¹¹

In terms of events, the years between 1762 and 1779 are the stormiest in Fuseli’s life and artistically no doubt the most critical. Having denounced a powerful Zurich official, Fuseli fled in 1763 from his native land, spent some time in Germany, and in 1764 settled in England. There he was initially very active in literary matters but also painted a great deal. In 1768 Sir Joshua Reynolds advised Fuseli to go to Italy and concentrate on painting. Fuseli stayed in Italy from 1770 to 1778 and, after a brief visit to Switzerland, returned to England in 1778, settling into a “golden exile”¹²—golden certainly as far as painting was concerned but not so propitious, it seems, for his poetry.

To add any new insights to Dörrbecker's evaluation of the poems and his succinct presentation of their critical reception by others is impossible, except that I should like to plead for a certain freshness and noble cadence in Fuseli's "Ode to His Friends Left Behind" (see below), which seems to adumbrate that of Hölderlin. Elsewhere, to be sure, Fuseli virtually never descends from the heights of rhetoric, indulging in a great deal of hyperbole and excessively metaphoric language, especially in his penchant for non-functional personification. At the time, of course, this was in perfectly good taste, and even where he is irregular and strident, Fuseli moves safely within the confines of *Sturm und Drang* language.

Ironically enough, the impressions conveyed by the original poems do not always come across in the translations. Thus I have refrained from rendering the simple, lovely "Nannas Auge," which would fall rather flat — not surprising, of course, if one considers the untranslatable quality of lyric poetry. On the other hand (but unfortunately I have no way of proving this), the odes, so bombastic in the original, may actually seem somewhat less so in English.

Beyond the formal aspects of Fuseli's poetry, its most salient characteristic, as Dörrbecker points out, is the conventionality of thought.¹³ Although, as one can readily see, Fuseli often sounds dreadfully daring, revolutionary, and even irrational, such tactics were fast becoming conventional. His ideas are firmly rooted in Enlightenment philosophy, for example, the Great Chain of Being mentioned in "Patience."¹⁴ And even while he strikes a Satanic pose in "Hell," his seemingly impressive attack nevertheless validates the great system; despite being overtly "determined to be a villain," Fuseli sanctions traditional values. As with Blake, Milton's Satan is Fuseli's hero too, but, according to Gert Schiff, Fuseli's Satan is merely a convenient "carrier of humanitarian protest against the suffering of the world,"¹⁵ which at the time of the poem (after 1803) is not an overwhelmingly novel idea. Fuseli may simply have been "more inclined with Milton's hand to open the gates of Hell than the gates of Heaven"¹⁶ because he liked dramatically impressive, horrible situations¹⁷ eliciting in the reader the sensation of the sublime so fashionable at the time. Unlike Turner, a painter whose poetry suffered from the fact that "he had only an eighteenth-century diction to express a vision that had passed far beyond all eighteenth-century limitations,"¹⁸ Fuseli had in due time come to lack both the diction and the vision.

Yet although the merit of Fuseli's poetic endeavors is at best debatable, one cannot help but concede his obvious potential. If any artist thus doubly gifted abandons one form of expression for the sake of the other, what may have been his reasons? There are several possibilities. One of these may have been that Fuseli acquired a second language. While English presents no overwhelming difficulties to a native speaker of German, to attain polish and full sensitivity to the new language does require time. (Here, of course,

one is immediately reminded of exceptions, such as that of Joseph Conrad who successfully crossed a language barrier far more formidable than that between German and English.) It may be remembered that Fuseli had begun to study English at an early age, and throughout his life in England he wrote a good deal of critical prose, as well as lecturing at the Royal Academy. His English prose style has been deemed "assured, learned, lively, and economical, never betraying the fact that German and not English was his native tongue."¹⁹ On the other hand, he virtually never attempted writing English verse.²⁰ Perhaps he was too proud to engage in a pursuit in which he must have feared to come out second best or worse, a humiliation difficult to accept for one who, like Satan, had been pampered and flattered in his youth. Even such an intimate friend of Fuseli's as Mary Wollstonecraft was forced to tell him on a certain occasion "I hate to see that reptile Vanity sliming over the noble qualities of your heart";²¹ no doubt Fuseli's pride and vanity led him to drink in Reynolds' lavish praise and consequently to change vocations. In painting, of course, one does not have to wrestle with accent and other verbal obstacles to communication. But the objection that his new involvement may simply have left him neither time nor inclination for poetry can be countered easily enough by ample evidence of double talents functioning quite satisfactorily, of which Blake's is of course one of the best cases in point. And even though Fuseli rejected English poetry as a vehicle of expression, he might at least have continued to write German poetry.

Of all the commentators, Eudo Mason puts his finger most precisely on what seems to have been the heart of Fuseli's poetic problem, namely, that he turned his back on literature at the very time when exciting breakthroughs were being made by German and English poets. Fuseli not only turned traitor to his own culture: "he lists, bragging a little on occasion, the names of English poets and learned men against whom the Germans fall far short"²²—this could be explained as some sort of overcompensation for culture shock, but "throughout his life, down to his old age, he seems to have clung to certain quasi-orthodox ideas about the nature of God, the relationship of God to man, and the metaphysical reality of sin, evil, and damnation." This, according to Mason, kept Fuseli from becoming a "real" romantic.²³

What happened to Fuseli is an instructive example of what Morse Peckham calls "neo-classic disintegration,"²⁴ a state perhaps less painful to the visual artist for, as E. H. Gombrich suggests, "the terms 'true' and 'false' can only be applied to statements. . . . a picture is never a statement in that sense of the term."²⁵ Had Fuseli mustered the courage, even at the risk of losing face, to continue to break through Enlightenment restraints and to keep up with the romantic avant-garde, he might have developed into a poet of significance at least equal to that which he attained as a painter.

In light of these considerations, one is tempted to see in Blake's epithet "both Turk and Jew," though jocular and friendly on the conscious level, additional and even rather sinister meaning. Can Blake have sensed somehow that Fuseli was an infidel of a different sort, having refused to grow as a poet and thus having betrayed the splendid gift he demonstrated in his youth, that he stonily ignored the progress made by poets at the highest cultural level? Of course it is hardly possible that Blake was aware of the existence of Fuseli's poems, but Blake the clairvoyant was a man hard to fool. There is something Urizenic in Fuseli's pride, in his resolution to slam the door on what was truly creative in the poetry of his time. The ideas expressed in the following poems, as well as their style, would seem to lend credence to such speculations.

Ode To His Friends Left Behind [Essex, 1765]²⁶

Like the childish brook in its glistening bed
Of mossy rocks, nurtured with the fragrance
Gathered of the breathing grove, with your dew,
Spring, by the motherly Naiad;

Once more, the storms poured out by thundering 5
Summer, Autumn's never-dried tears,
The host flocking round winter—
Now they have swelled him into a manly stream:
Tearing himself from his mother's embraces
And swiftly escaping the echoing narrower urn, 10
He rolls down the cliffs,
Hastens through groves, meadows, and valleys;
Groves, meadows, and valleys he never saw before
He swiftly traverses in eagle's flight,
Now playfully winding his course, now moving
imprisoned, 15
Now lordly attracting others with his victorious
trumpet.

Yet of the blossoms his young mouth once lovingly
kissed
As he flowed down the meadows, none drifts on his
waves;

Never to see them more, he rushes toward the ocean—
Falls—dies, dissolved in it. 20
Oh country I fled from! Bonds I have broken!
Friends wept for but seldom! Did I not rush thus from
you?

May my day roar and play, lost to you;
It drives me toward the sea of eternity!

Patience [Second Version] [London, 1766]²⁷

Exalted Being, from whose countenance
Streameth eternity, queen of all those
Who strive, wandering through the labyrinth
Of His time, to find the father of all spirits;

Patience, of Providence the sadly smiling, 5
Gentle-eyed and submissive daughter, you
From whose healing hand balm trickles
Upon the wounds your mother inflicts;
At whose bosom of rising hopes the
Children of law subdued by power, of 10
Expectations betrayed, the myriads
Whom Hell pursues with iron stride,
Fling themselves, tired and parched, and drink
Instead of true promises often but new expectations
And the bliss of dreams, often deceived, seeing 15
Suns in the delusive light of midnight.
Oh come, Consoling One! me, too, approach me,
A son of grief! Yet when you come,
Leave behind all vain consolation
That but gleams to be extinguished. 20

If the tear of despondency moistens my gloomy eye,
Oh, to dry it do not call her who
Regards inexorably the purple of rulers, too,
Surrounded by kneeling slaves.

Do not call her who mixes loathing 25
With the wine of joy's sparkling cup;
Do not rend asunder the amaranth bowers
Of Eden because flowers also give shelter to snakes;
Nor let me dream of beauty's lily-breasts,
Of lips' love-dew whispered 'round with kisses, 30
Of cheeks rosily dawning, of the eye's
Soul, of voluptuousness' secret treasures
And of what wafts from Sappho's side—
If the Father gave it me, he took it back,
Gave it to others—but not to turn the sublime
arrow 35
Into a source of whining lament.*
Deem gold more than dung, and laurel-wreathed
fame
More than cymbals to the deaf; do not merely say
To Knowledge: "You are vain—wander on Saturn
Or creep with the lowly hyssop." 40
From life's sunlit heights
Do not exile me to its night-valleys, where
Misery rests its leaden frame
Against the crumbling hut of poverty;
Where sickness, its daggers heavy, embraces with
ailing arm 45
Job on the pallet withered by agony
And teaches him with pain-winged lip
To curse the day he was born!
Grief and loathing stifle my harp—
Shall pale hatred of men with its dagger eye 50
Give me consolation mixed with envy? Oh, if so,
Traitor, thrust first my dehumanized heart
Into some savage's tiger-breast, to whom fetters sing
of repose,

Did Agn[i]olo unlock the gates of heaven
 And bid the gods stride among men
 In order now to arbitrate the quarrel
 Of French and Britons about nature and style?
 Here in the halls of Leo, did Urbino's son
 Athens evoke and spread the vast, magnificent tent
 Of faith to lend the Teuton's hordes
 Draperies and heads to carry home?
 If this be art, may night eternally 25
 Seal this, my eye, and cause to shrivel
 This hand, extended formerly to help others—
 Lamed thus, but nevermore defiled."
 Thus cried I, and a slumber shut my lids;
 And a vision, such as my soul 30
 Would hardly have dared to wish for,
 My genius sent me in a dream.
 I thought I stood in Sixtus' temple-hall
 For as long as the time of shifting evening light
 Pours trembling beauty and majesty 35
 Over the many pictures of gods.
 I think I saw the veil of eternity
 Torn: Time and space and matter gave birth:
 From the Almighty's finger streamed
 Life, and Adam leaped from the dust. 40

Hell [after 1803]³⁰

The theologian's blasphemous chimera,
 Phantom of superstition, faith's dream,
 Snarling of the mob, scourging of the clergy,
 Nonsense to the thinker, mockery to the
 free-thinker,
 Ghastliest sister of a most beautiful brother, 5
 Religion bore you to State in twin-labor,
 Lifting him high and calling him Heaven,
 Lowering you into the abyss
 And contemptuously calling you Hell! I hail you,
 Hell!
 True, you were not given golden light over
 meadows of amaranth, 10
 Nor ambrosia and streams of nectar,
 Nor infant angels yawning in cloud cradles,
 Choirs of psalmodizing harps,
 Saints of fable and by decree — your throne
 Flames out amid the roars of 15
 Agonized hosts eternally cast out,
 Where the waves of mute light and darkness visible
 Encircle the poets' terrifying realms, where
 The Great wrestles with the Monstrous,
 And Horror with Loathing, 20
 Where Styx wallows, a thundering water of curses,
 Where Phlegethon's vortices gleam red, where

Cocytus howls, Lethe slumbers —
 There, amid thunder, lightning, and howls your
 verse falls asleep. 25
 Cliff-bound by you in adamant chains,
 Friend vainly pleads for friend's helpless arm!
 In you, the flood-encircled thirsty one's lip
 Yearns, and will forever yearn!
 Up on the mountain, Sisyphus, in a cloud of dust,
 Strives to push the boulder's weight and 30
 strives in vain;
 Reversed by the thrust of your powerful hand,
 The exultant boulder whirls down to the plain.
 Odin departs from Walhalla's starry halls
 To propitiate you — Niflheim mutely refuses the god,
 From the abyss your finger rises; 35
 Death puts his seal on Balder's brow.
 It was you that dropped the lindentree's leaf
 On the hero's breast, who, thinking himself
 invulnerable,
 Bathed in the worm's blood, and who,
 Without armor, defied battle sword, bow,
 and spear. 40
 Fanned by your breath, the flame of Dante
 Blinds us, grows pale at the dawning summit
 On a cliff, and is extinguished
 In the slumber of paradise suns.
 Unsexed by you, the thane's wife inspires 45
 Her husband's hesitant hand to murder Duncan;
 Somnambulant, guided by you,
 She roams through the frightened hall.
 You flung Satan's fire-pyramid up high;
 Yours is the billowing night-tent of the anarchist; 50
 Yours is the sister's unnatural son, yours
 The thousand forms of the lazar-house.
 Like sand on the seashore, gathered around
 The foot of your throne, there trembles the
 dwarfish host
 Of nation-stranglers, mob-gods, 55
 Imperial vermin, and the bandits of hierarchy.

¹ Johann Heinrich Füssli, *Sämtliche Gedichte*, ed. Martin Bircher and Karl S. Guthke (Zürich, 1973), reviewed by Detlef W. Dörrecker in "Fuseli, The Swiss, And The British: Some Recent Publications," *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly*, 15 (Summer 1981), 53-56.

² Heinrich Füseli, *Briefe*, ed. Walter Muschg (Basel, 1942), p. 13. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

³ Eudo C. Mason, *The Mind of Henry Fuseli: Selections from his Writings with an Introductory Study* (London, 1951), pp.14, 26-29.

⁴ Muschg, p. 19.

⁵ Mason, p. 32.

⁶ Mason, p. 15.

⁷ Muschg, p. 19.

⁸ Letter to Herder, 13 April 1775, in Heinrich Düntzer and Ferdinand Gottfried von Herder, eds., *Aus Herders Nachlass*, vol. 2 (Frankfurt, 1857), p. 348; here quoted from *Sämtliche Gedichte*, p. 108.

⁹ Letter to Herder, 4 February 1774, in *Aus Herders Nachlass*, p. 89; here quoted from *Sämtliche Gedichte*, p. 103.

¹⁰ Significantly, this is the English "Petrarca Fragment," *Sämtliche Gedichte*, p. 100.

¹¹ Dörrbecker, p. 53, summarizes critical opinion on "Nannas Auge" ("Nanna's Eye").

¹² *Gedichte*, p. 106.

¹³ Dörrbecker, p. 54.

¹⁴ Ursula Ditchburn-Bosch, *Johann Heinrich Füsslis Kunstlehre und ihre Auswirkung auf seine Shakespeare-Interpretation* (Zürich, 1968). Her entire essay concerns itself with the conventionality of Fuseli's ideas.

¹⁵ Gert Schiff, *Johann Heinrich Füsslis Milton-Galerie* (Zürich, 1963), p. 6.

¹⁶ Geoffrey Grigson, "Painters of the Abyss," *Architectural Review*, 108 (1950), 217.

¹⁷ Ernst Wirz, *Die literarische Tätigkeit des Malers Johann Heinrich Füssli* (Basel, 1922), p. 83.

¹⁸ Jack Lindsay, ed., *The Sunset Ship: The Poems of J. M. W. Turner* (London, 1966), p. 13.

¹⁹ Marcia Allentuck, "Henry Fuseli's 'Queen Katherine' and Macklin's Poets' Gallery: A New Critique," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 39 (1976), 267.

²⁰ "Dunciad of Painting—Four Fragments" and the "Petrarca Fragment," *Gedichte*, pp. 80-81, p. 100 and "The Kings of Earth," Mason, pp. 117-18.

²¹ John Knowles, *The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli, Esq. M. A. R. A.* (London, 1831), vol. I, p. 363.

²² Muschg, p. 30.

²³ Mason, pp. 14-17.

²⁴ Morse Peckham, *The Triumph of Romanticism: Collected Essays* (Columbia, S. C., 1970), p. 24n.

²⁵ E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (New York, 1961), pp. 67-68.

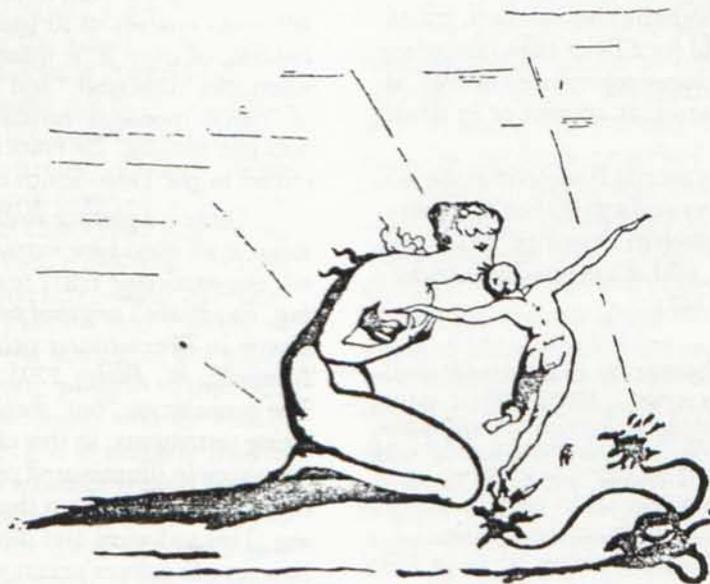
²⁶ *Gedichte*, p. 44.

²⁷ *Gedichte*, pp. 49-51.

²⁸ *Gedichte*, p. 54.

²⁹ *Gedichte*, pp. 67-68.

³⁰ *Gedichte*, pp. 93-94.



Two Forged Plates in *America* Copy B

BY THOMAS V. LANGE

For nearly a century, copy B of William Blake's *America*, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, has been considered by dealers, auction houses, and scholars as a complete and uncolored copy with the full complement of eighteen plates on eighteen leaves. Detailed examination of this copy has revealed that two plates are, in fact, facsimiles, and were inserted in copy B between 1874 and 1878, most probably with intent to deceive.

In his *Blake Books*,¹ G.E. Bentley, Jr. discusses the provenance of copy B, which was presented to the Morgan by Mrs. Landon K. Thorne in 1973.² The earliest evidence of ownership of this copy is a penned inscription on the recto of the frontispiece (mistakenly located by Bentley on the verso of the title-page), reading, "From the author / to C H Tatham Oct. 7 / 1799." While this inscription was once thought to be in Blake's hand, later authorities have dismissed this claim. Bentley suggests that copy B might be the one listed by Lowndes as having been sold by "Sotheby, 1855, 2 £. 7s.," described only as a folio with 18 designs.³ This otherwise unidentified sale at Sotheby's has not been traced. Evidently copy B was again sold for £18 in 1874 (according to the note in the 1878 sale catalogue reproduced below), although no trace of this transaction at auction or in dealer catalogues has been found.

The first printed reference to copy B appears in the sale catalogue "of a very choice library and a small but rich collection of ancient engravings & modern drawings" belonging to Albert George Dew-Smith, sold at auction by Sotheby's on 29-30 January 1878, as lot 247:

247 BLAKE (W.) AMERICA, A PROPHECY. *Engraved throughout by this extraordinary artist. EXCESSIVELY RARE, presentation copy with author's autograph inscription, splendidly bound in citron morocco, ornamented with variegated leathers and gold tooling, g.e. by F. Bedford; two leaves said to be wanting, but Blake's original prospectus says—'America, a Prophecy in illuminated printing,' folio, with 18 designs, Lambeth, W. Blake, 1793*

* * * This copy, unbound, sold for £18 in 1874.⁴

According to the notes in the Sotheby master catalogue deposited at the British Library, lot 247 was sold to the London dealer John Pearson for £16.5.0. The next traced appearance of copy B occurred twelve years later, on

23 April 1890, when it was again offered by Sotheby's, as lot 189 in the sale of the library of Thomas Gaisford,⁵ who had presumably acquired the book from Pearson. At the Gaisford sale it fetched £61 to the London firm of Bernard Quaritch, which added its customary pencilled note to the rear flyleaf, "Collated and perfect / Ap^l 24 90 / J.T."⁶ Quaritch included copy B in catalogue 104, May 1890 (no. 460), from which it was purchased for £68 by Bernard Buchanan MacGeorge. Interestingly enough, MacGeorge had attempted to purchase copy B at the Gaisford sale and had given his bid of £30 to Quaritch; it was not until the appearance of Quaritch's catalogue 104 the following month that the collector was persuaded to pay more than twice his earlier bid.

Let us return to the Dew-Smith sale catalogue, which contains the first printed notice of copy B. There is no doubt that the copy under consideration is the one described in the catalogue: the unusual inscription and the readily-identifiable binding are both unique to this copy. The Dew-Smith sale entry enables us to supply an approximate date for the binding of copy B: it must have been done between 1874 when sold "unbound," and 1878 when the elaborate binding of "citron morocco, ornamented with variegated leathers and gilt tooling" by Francis Bedford was so carefully described in the Dew-Smith catalogue.

There is a glaring ambiguity in that catalogue entry: it is not at all clear how many plates were in copy B. As printed, the catalogue entry reads, "two plates said to be wanting, but Blake's original prospectus says—'America, a Prophecy in illuminated printing,' folio, with 18 designs, Lambeth, W. Blake, 1793." This phrase makes little sense. The conjunction "but" should be used to connect two countering statements; in this case, the second part, "America, a Prophecy in illuminated printing" in no way contradicts or counters the statement that two leaves are said to be wanting. This awkward and illogical sentence can be explained by a simple printer's error which removed the words "folio, with 18 designs" from the quotation of Blake's prospectus text and made the words appear a part of Sotheby's sale entry. The printer, evidently accustomed to setting type in the auction house's style, assumed that the number of leaves was Sotheby's description of the copy at hand rather than a part of the quotation. The meaning of the sentence is obvious

when one repairs Blake's prospectus description. It thus becomes clear that the Sotheby cataloguer could not determine why two plates had at some earlier point been described as lacking, when the copy before him agreed with the prospectus in having the full 18 plates. While the meaning of this description is clear, it has not proven possible to locate any statement of imperfection: a note (since lost or erased) in the volume, or a catalogue entry for the untraced 1874 sale are equally plausible sources.

The Sotheby cataloguer's insecurity about the number of plates in copy B can be explained by the fact that two plates are not a part of the original volume: careful examination has revealed that plates 4 and 9 not only are not original to this copy, but are facsimiles. Neither plate is sewn into the binding as an integral leaf; instead, both leaves (in their correct positions) are tipped in, pasted to adjacent leaves deep in the gutter of the volume. This is most evident when turning pages: when plates 4 and 9 are turned, plates 5 and 10 obediently follow since they are joined by adhesive at the inner margins. The remainder of the leaves in the volume, as one would expect of single bound leaves, turn quite independently of their neighbors. Further, the two leaves in question do not display the gilt edges of the rest of the volume, but form minute gaps at the top, fore, and bottom edges; both plates are shorter than the remaining leaves. As it is virtually impossible to apply matching gilt to a single leaf, inserted leaves could never display the flawless gilding of the edges of the bound leaves. It might be argued that the paper of plates 4 and 9 was merely shorter when bound than the remainder of the volume, and thus escaped gilding; two suggestions can be made to show that this is unlikely. Before gilding the edges of this book, the binder was scrupulously careful in cutting and smoothing the edges to provide a perfectly flat surface for the gilt. A binder of Francis Bedford's reputation and ability would certainly not have permitted these two leaves to remain shorter, but would have trimmed down the remainder of the volume to even all edges. While we would gasp at giving a binder such freedom today, brutally trimming all uncut edges and elaborately gilding the edges was a perfectly normal—in fact, a desirable—way of achieving a finer copy for the nineteenth-century collector.

Another argument against plates 4 and 9 being an original part of copy B concerns the sewing of the plates before binding. Once again, Bedford, a binder of the highest quality, would have sewn the two leaves with the bulk of the volume (on stubs, if necessary); it is unlikely that he would have simply glued them to adjacent leaves. There is nothing to indicate that the original plates 4 and 9 were ever present: there are no stubs, and the binding is extremely tight. If Blake's original plates 4 and 9 were at some time extracted from copy B, they are nowhere recorded as existing today. Since the binding was executed between 1874 and 1878, the false plates 4 and 9 must also have been inserted between those years.

Further evidence to demonstrate the alien nature of plates 4 and 9 is found in their hard and smooth wove paper,

in general appearance similar to the wove Whatman handmade paper used in the remainder of the volume.⁷ But the surface of plates 4 and 9 is far smoother and does not show the fibrous surface of genuine Whatman paper; the paper of these two plates is without a doubt machine made and is considerably stiffer than Whatman paper. When viewed in a strong light, the paper is also considerably browner in tone than the surrounding Whatman paper. Bentley's description of copy B in the Thorne catalogue⁸ notes that (only) "plate 9 seems to be on stiffer paper than the rest"; Joseph Viscomi noticed the same difference in thickness of plates 4 and 9 when examining copy B in 1978, suggesting in conversation with me that these two plates were from another copy of *America*. After more detailed examination it became clear to me that the two plates were not authentic. It is interesting to note that Bentley deleted his question about the thickness of the paper when incorporating the Thorne catalogue description into *Blake Books* and evidently felt no doubts as to authenticity. This is not at all surprising, since both facsimile leaves are of very high quality.

Copy B has been variously foliated in pencil—not by Blake—at the upper right corner of each sheet (1-18) and at the lower left corner of each design. Both foliations have been erased and rewritten at various times, all before acquisition by the Morgan. Written below the upper right foliation on plates 4 and 9 appear what could be described as a penciled European "7" with a crossbar, but which may more plausibly be described as a capital "F," perhaps indicating the word "Facsimile." It is telling that no other plates in copy B display these markings. Further evidence is provided by the foliation at the lower left, which omits plates 4 and 9 entirely, resulting in a count of 16 plates.⁹

The printing ink of the two plates is a dull, dark brownish-black, similar in color to the ink used in the remainder of copy B. When compared with original Blake pulls, however, the printing ink of the spurious leaves appears flat and without surface. Both the flatness of ink and the quality of impression make it evident that these two plates were not printed by Blake's method of relief etching. Authentic pulls show the ink impressed into the surface of the sheet to such an extent that a clear blind impression of both design and text is visible on the verso of each plate. The versos of plates 4 and 9 are smooth and unblemished.

Perhaps the most conclusive evidence against the authenticity of plates 4 and 9 is an obvious platemark, measuring 22.8 x 17 cm. (plate 4) and 24.7 x 17.5 cm. (plate 9). There would be no justification for such a platemark on an original pull by Blake, since the size of the artist's copper plates generally determined the size of his image: for him, margins were undesirable, whether on financial or aesthetic grounds. Bentley and others have discussed the likelihood of Blake using both sides of some of his copper plates, as evidenced by close similarities in size and by the presence of maker's stamps (usually found on the backs of copper plates).¹⁰ The only instances of substantial margins in Blake's colorprinting occur in *The Book of Los* and

The Book of Ahania, both conventionally etched (in-taglio) works.

The impossibility of the platemark dimensions on plates 4 and 9 can readily be shown on plate 4, where the lower portion of the design was masked by Blake in the printing of most copies, so the area beneath the crouching figure is without the four-line sentiment (so masked in copies C-F, H-M, R, a, and the single Morgan pull). In genuine impressions of this plate, an examination of the surface of the paper will demonstrate that this area was masked by placing a slip of paper over the inked plate; under raking light one can, in fact, see the blind impression of its deckle edge in the single Morgan pull. There is abundant evidence that the original copper plate was not simply cut off to delete this part of the plate. On genuine impressions the copper can be shown to extend 40 mm. below the tip of the man's foot; in copy B the platemark is clearly visible 24 mm. below the foot, locating what would be the bottom of the copper plate in the middle of the text lines.

Facsimiles—particularly Blake facsimiles—deserve more study. In general, the earliest facsimiles of printed book pages were pen-and-ink facsimiles, often sophisticated redrawings of type. In the case of Blake, such work (as in *Works by William Blake*) is readily identifiable by comparison with known originals. In the field of early printed books, the most accomplished and annoying facsimilist was John Harris, who worked in England in the mid-nineteenth century, primarily on sixteenth-century religious works. His earliest method was to prepare a tracing of the original leaf to be copied, to transfer the design with a stylus or carbon-like paper to a sheet of appropriately old paper, and to fill in the letters by hand with pen-and-ink. His later technique involved the use of a very lightly printed photolithograph of the page to be reproduced, which was darkened by hand with ink, to form a remarkable facsimile. It is said that he was at times unable to tell his facsimile leaves from originals, and he therefore later insisted on signing his facsimiles with his initials in a lower corner.

Facsimiles relying on photographic means can be divided into two types: those printed planographically (as lithographs, printed from one surface) and those printed relief (as from zinc blocks). There is no indication that in-taglio technique was used for the facsimiles in copy B. Photolithographic prints could be printed from litho stones, or from zinc plates (known as photozincographs). Photo-relief blocks were, confusingly enough, also known as zinco-graphs, but the difference in printing is crucial.

Whichever process was used for plates 4 and 9, there is no doubt that it was rooted in photography. Photolithography is, I feel, the more likely process used for these leaves: that process was executed by photographing an original design, transferring the photographic image to a photosensitive litho stone or zinc plate, and printing that plate or stone through the lithographic (planographic) process. Photolithography was in common use by the 1860s when Henry

James instituted the use of "photozincography" for the reproduction of detailed ordnance maps for the British government.¹¹ The extreme detail obtained was "such that the greatest error in a photozincographic reduction did not amount to 1/400 part of an inch, a quantity quite inappreciable, and much less than the error due to the contraction of the paper on which the maps were printed."¹² Because of James' successful use of the process and at his urging, a photozincographic facsimile of Domesday Book appeared, demonstrating that the process was already considered suitable for the making of exact facsimiles. By the 1880s the technique was totally accepted: William Griggs employed it for his esteemed series of Shakespeare quarto facsimiles, the principal feature of which was exact duplication, barring the variations inherent in paper shrinkage and stretching, and the vagaries of the photographic process. The exact dimensions of the images on plates 4 and 9 of copy B vary somewhat from those of originals, but such variation amounts to less than 2% and can be explained by any of the factors mentioned above. The smoothness of impression argues for a photolithographic process; I have not encountered a craftsman or artist able to differentiate between impressions from stone and those from zinc plates.

It is also possible that the two plates were printed from relief zinc blocks (also known as linecuts or lineblocks), which are made by transferring a photographic image to a photosensitive sheet of metal. The unexposed areas are etched away, leaving a raised metal surface from which to print with a normal printing press. The plate is mounted on a type-high block of wood for printing. This process is suggested by the overinking on plate 9 around the periphery of the design; on the other hand, there is no trace of impression on the versos of plates 4 and 9 to indicate a relief process.

Neither process would explain the presence of plate-marks on these two impressions. If printed lithographically from stone there would be only a slight smoothing of the surface of the paper from the stone; if printed from zinc plates there might be a slightly more defined platemark, but barely visible. There is no justification for any platemark if the plates were printed from relief blocks. It may be that in a mistaken understanding of Blake's technique, a false platemark was applied by running the dampened sheets through a rolling (etching) press next to a sheet of metal, the edges of which would impress a noticeable indentation into the paper.¹³

In any case, it is virtually certain that a photographic process was used in the preparation of these facsimile leaves, for minute flaws and printing spots quite incidental to Blake's designs are reproduced with astonishing fidelity. It would, in fact, serve little purpose to illustrate the two facsimile leaves in their entirety here, since they would appear virtually indistinguishable from originals. Some small details, however, are lost in the reproductions, most noticeably the two small birds hovering in the sky on plate 9, between text and tree boughs in the center of the plate.

It has not proven possible to identify positively the copy (or copies) of *America* from which these two facsimile leaves were made. Plate 4 in copy B shows certain affinities with that plate in copy F (British Museum Print Room), which is uncolored, and which has been available since 1859. In particular, the broken flourish of the top of letter "S" beginning the text appears to be an identifying feature, as are other spots and printing flaws. Such a close relationship does not appear between the facsimile of plate 9 and that plate in copy F, where there are distinct differences. The birds beneath the tree boughs are absent in the facsimile, and other details of inking also differ.

When the dubious nature of plates 4 and 9 in copy B was pointed out to Robert N. Essick, he informed me that in his Blake collection are impressions of the same two plates, purchased by him as facsimiles. The ink, impression, and images are identical to plates 4 and 9 in copy B. Essick acquired these leaves from the London firm of antiquarian booksellers, Walter T. Spencer & Co., in whose stock they were found without further identification, and where it is believed they had lain for many years.

I have not been able to identify the maker of the two facsimile leaves in copy B. The facsimiles were certainly made in England, where (if, indeed, it was the model) copy F was available to scholars, collectors, and dealers during the period of 1874-1878. I have no doubt that photographic services were available at that time, although I have not examined the records of the British Library to verify this. No known facsimilist of Blake's works can be connected to copy B.

William Muir, the leading facsimilist of Blake, was active beginning only in the 1880s; in fact, no facsimiles of any of Blake's works are known to date from the 1870s. It appears that those involved with Blake's illuminated printing were less concerned with completing individual copies than they were in making Blake's works available to a wider audience (this in spite of the fact that the reviewer of a Muir facsimile wrote in the *Times* of 29 July 1886, "All the world does not admire Blake, but then [Muir's] edition of fifty copies is not for all the world").¹⁴

It would be tempting to associate John Pearson, the first recorded dealer to handle copy B, with the making of these facsimiles, as he is known to have been responsible for various other facsimiles. Pearson was active in the London Book trade from about 1870, and is known to have handled at least three copies of *America* between 1878 and 1896: he owned copy B in 1878, copy D between 1886 and 1888 (he had difficulty in disposing of this copy, offering it in catalogues for £52, later for £45, and finally auctioning it off for £23 in 1888), and copy E in 1896. But evidence shows it is unlikely he was involved with the facsimiles since they were both present in copy B when he purchased it at auction in the Dew-Smith sale in 1878. If the shadowy sales of 1855 and 1874 could be identified, further light might be shed by the names of sellers and purchasers. It would also be tempt-

ing to associate the firm of Walter T. Spencer with the preparation of these facsimiles, since Essick purchased his two leaves from their stock, and, as Bentley has shown, the firm was responsible for the fraudulent coloring of *Europe* (L) and *America* (Q).¹⁵ In collecting circles it is generally known that the firm was less than careful in informing customers about the presence of facsimiles, and it handled a fair number of works by Blake. However, no evidence connects Spencer with the facsimiles in copy B; it is not known whether company records exist.

It is also somewhat obscure why these facsimile leaves were made, other than the obvious desire to complete an imperfect copy. It seems unlikely to have been for financial reasons, as the sums involved were never great. Copy B (uncolored) sold for £16.5.0 in 1878, copy L (uncolored) sold for £21 in 1879, copy R (colored) sold for £31.10.0 in 1880, and poor copy D finally fetched £23 in 1888. One wonders if the relatively small sums merited the production of what must have been expensive facsimiles. It is only possible to surmise that an English dealer or collector was responsible for the facsimiles; the fact that the two plates were nowhere described as facsimiles can only lead one to the inescapable conclusion that they were intended to deceive.

One further — and puzzling — inscription in copy B should be noted. On the free front endpaper, an unidentified hand has written in now-smudged pencil, "Lowndes gives 18 designs. There are two more in some copies but I believe these to be supplementary numbers and that the book as published had only 18." No copy of *America* is known to have had more than eighteen plates, nor are the three known proof plates likely to be what is meant in the inscription.¹⁶ They are unique proofs, one heavily corrected by Blake, and must represent false starts on Blake's part: the images are much improved in the published versions. There is, in fact, no copy of *any* of Blake's work in illuminated printing with twenty plates. While it might be argued that the Sotheby cataloguer for the Dew-Smith sale incorporated this curious note in his description for the catalogue, the above evidence demonstrating the insertion of plates 4 and 9 make this unlikely.

It thus appears that these two facsimile leaves, reproduced by a fundamentally photographic process, were inserted in copy B of *America* between 1874 and 1878 and have escaped detection by all owners and scholars before identification by Joseph Viscomi and myself in 1978. The quality of reproduction is so deceptive that the facsimiles went undetected in exhibitions at the National Gallery (1913), Manchester (1914), Nottingham (1914), the National Gallery of Scotland (1914), the Fogg exhibition (1930), the Philadelphia exhibition (1939), and at various exhibitions at the Morgan Library, including that of the Thorne Collection (1971), in the catalogue of which both facsimile leaves were reproduced as genuine. One can only wonder what other facsimiles have for so long remained undetected.

¹ G.E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 100 et seq.

² Morgan Library accession number 63938.

³ W.T. Lowndes, *The Bibliographer's Manual...* (London, 1856), I, 215. There appears to be no justification for this suggestion.

⁴ Reprinted with the kind permission of Sotheby, Ltd.

⁵ Thomas Gaisford, 1799-1855, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford. See De Ricci, *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), p. 165.

⁶ In a letter of 10 January 1978, Mr. Nicholas Poole-Wilson of Bernard Quaritch, Ltd. kindly informed me that there were two employees of the firm at the time with the initials J.T.; it has proven impossible to differentiate between them: J. Tuckett and J. Thorowgood.

⁷ Watermarks appear on only five of the sixteen genuine plates, but measurement of paper thickness has demonstrated that Whatman paper was used throughout. Were it not for matching stabholes I would be tempted to suggest that the titlepage was substituted from another copy: it alone has an obvious central horizontal crease, and it alone is touched—unconvincingly and with disregard for the design—with grey wash.

⁸ G.E. Bentley, Jr., *The Blake Collection of Mrs. Landon K.*

Thorne (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1971), pp. 26-27.

⁹ Further examination of the foliation of the sixteen genuine plates may reveal a different arrangement of the plates before binding, as some erased numbers quite out of sequence are still discernible at the lower left.

¹⁰ *Blake Books*, pp. 381-82.

¹¹ See the biography of James in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, XXIX, 210-13.

¹² For exhausting details of the anastatic and photozincographic processes see Geoffrey Wakeman, *Aspects of Victorian Lithography* (Wymondham: Brewhouse Press, 1970).

¹³ A curious example of false lithographic platemarks is described by Michael Twyman, "A Note on some Lithographic Stones relating to Alken's *Ideas and Notions*," *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*, 14 (1979/80), 82-88.

¹⁴ Unnumbered advertising brochure of Blake materials issued by Bernard Quaritch, dated Nov. 1886.

¹⁵ *Blake Books*, pp. 105-06.

¹⁶ These proofs are reproduced in David V. Erdman, *The Illuminated Blake* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 392-95.

¹⁷ I would like to thank Herbert Cahoon, Barbara Prince, and Lisa Vercollone for their assistance.

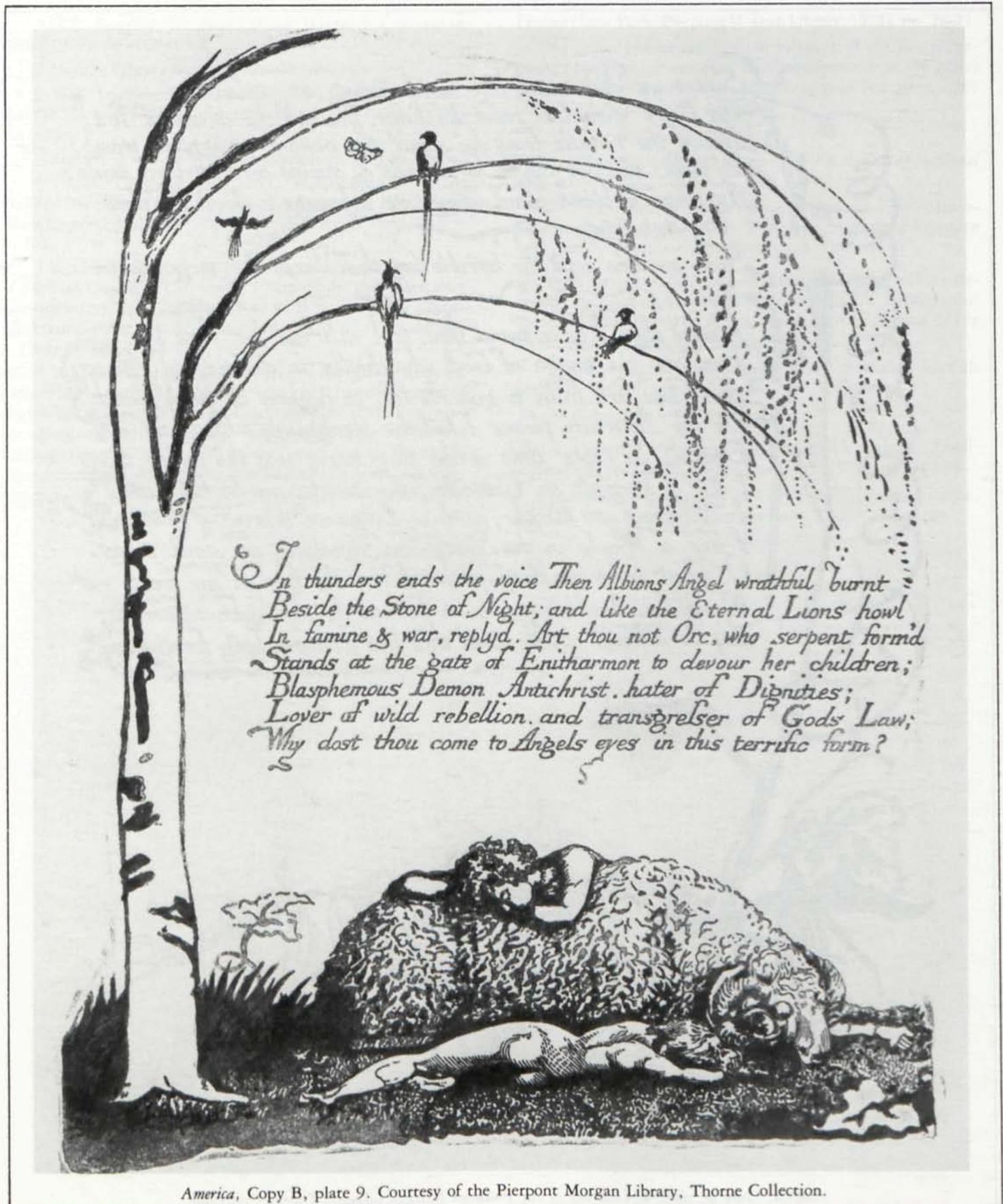


Silent as despairing love, and strong as jealousy.
 The hairy shoulders rend the links, free are the wrists of fire;
 Round the terrific loins he seiz'd the panting struggling womb;
 It joy'd: she put aside her clouds & smiled her first-born smile:
 As when a black cloud shows its lightnings to the silent deep.

Soon as she saw the terrible boy then burst the virgin cry.

I know thee, I have found thee, & I will not let thee go:
 Thou art the image of God who dwells in darkness of Africa;
 And thou art fall'n to give me life in regions of dark death.
 On my American plains I feel the struggling afflictions
 Endur'd by roots that writhe their arms into the nether deep:
 I see a serpent in Canada, who courts me to his love:
 In Mexico an Eagle, and a Lion in Peru;
 I see a Whale in the South-sea, drinking my soul away.
 O what limb rending pains I feel, thy fire & my frost
 Mingle in howling pains, in furrows by thy lightnings rent;
 This is eternal death: and this the torment long foretold.





America, Copy B, plate 9. Courtesy of the Pierpont Morgan Library, Thorne Collection.

Facsimile or Forgery? An Examination of *America*, Plates 4 and 9, Copy B

BY JOSEPH VISCOMI

In 1927 the copy of Blake's *America* we now know as copy L was sold as a "facsimile reprint" for £4, though it is quite genuine.¹ It is not unheard of for an original work of art to be sold as a facsimile, but it is certainly more common for a facsimile to be sold as an original. The authenticity of plates 4 and 9 of *America* copy B, in the Pierpont Morgan Library, has never been doubted in print. But in fact neither one is an original impression. Although both are facsimiles photo-mechanically reproduced on wove paper, very little about either image appears suspicious. Indeed, both are reproduced in *The Blake Collection of Mrs. Landon K. Thorne*.² The true technical and historical origins of plates 4 and 9 are not easily identified. What information we have is supplied only from the plate measurements and foliation, the binding, and the inscription on the front flyleaf of copy B. From these few facts, and with much caution, we can begin to speculate about who executed the plates, when, how, and why.

Plate Measurements

Plates 4 and 9 are printed on the same paper, the feel, weight, and texture of which are, from the verso, noticeably different from the other sheets in the book. The paper—which called to mind Murillo, an etching paper I had printed on before—and not the image, made me suspicious enough to check some measurements.³ As in most copies of *America*, the last four lines of plate 4 have been masked out. Unlike all other copies, however, the bottom platemark is only 2.4 cm. from Orc's foot, instead of the usual 4.1 cm. If this bottom platemark were caused by the material used to mask out the four lines, then, because 2.4 cm. is not wide enough, half of line 3 and all of line 4 would have printed. If this were the platemark of an authentic impression, then Blake's plate had been cut in about the middle of the third line, a possibility not yet to be ruled out since the plate could have been pulled posthumously and there is precedent for such plate tampering.⁴ To make sure I was not looking at a late impression or posthumous pull, I also checked the distance in plate 4 from the top platemark to Orc's toe: 19.5 cm. in copies A and L, but 20.4 cm. in copy B. In plate 9, the distance from the top platemark to the first line is 11.6 cm. in copy L, but 12.0 cm. in copy B; from the bottom of the

text to the bottom platemark is 8.4 cm. in copies A and L, but 9.15 cm. in copy B. Because the relation of image to platemark did not check out, I measured the distance between parts within the image. For example, line 4 of plate 4 is 12.6 cm. long in copies A and L, but 13.0 cm. in copy B. Line 7 of plate 9 is 11.5 cm. long in copies A and L, but 11.9 in copy B.⁵ More revealing than incorrect measurements within the image and between image and platemarks, however, are the plate measurements themselves. Plate 4 of copy B is 22.9 x 16.9 cm. vs. 23.8 x 16.6 cm., and plate 9 of copy B is 24.9 x 17.5 cm. vs. 23.5 x 16.8 cm.⁶ These and other differences are too great to have been the result of one paper shrinking less than the others. Damp printing paper shrinks only 1 to 2.5% of the sheet size,⁷ which could not, for example, account for the 1.4 cm. difference between the length of plate 9 of copy B (24.9 cm.) and of copy A (23.5 cm.).

Except for the platemarks, plates 4 and 9 are free of the embossment that is characteristic of a relief etching, or a process block. Instead, the ink lies flat on the paper, which is characteristic of lithography. The platemarks are themselves suspicious, as I'll explain later, and do not positively identify the kind of lithography used. But whether these impressions were pulled from stone or metal plates, whether produced from a transfer or directly from a reverse negative, one thing is certain: they are photolithographs. The proportion of the parts to each other is correct, which indicates the work of a camera. But compared to the originals, the overall dimensions are slightly distorted, or elongated, which indicates either the slight distortion in the negative caused by the camera lens or in the contact between the transfer paper and the stone. In any event, with a photomechanically reproduced image, a good solid black ink (and not the thinner greyish black of tonal lithography), an impression that has been touched up in black water color (like the other prints in copy B), and platemarks, it is little wonder that these two plates have escaped detection.

Plate Numbers

America copy B was stabbed through two different sets of three holes. Plates 4 and 9, however, have no stab holes, though both plates are numbered. Copy B has two sets of

numbers: 1-16 and 1-18. Both sets are in pencil and start on plate 1, and neither set is by Blake or C.H. Tatham, the first owner of copy B.⁸ Numbers 1-16 are written just below the platemark on the left hand side; numbers 1-18 are written at the top right corner of the leaf. Plates 4 and 9 are the two plates not in the 1-16 sequence, which indicates that 1-16 is the set of numbers first given to the plates.⁹ Plates 4 and 9 are numbered in set II, and just below "4" and "9" is a "7".¹⁰ That plates 4 and 9 are not included in the first set of numbers, and that neither sheet has stab holes, suggest that copy B had for a time only sixteen plates to number and stitch.

Binding

America was "splendidly bound in Citron morocco" when it sold in 1878 with the library of A.G. Dew-Smith at Sotheby's for £16.5 (lot 247) to John Pearson. According to the Sotheby catalogue, copy B sold in 1874, unbound, for £18. Being bound by 1878 would seem to imply that the facsimiles were executed before this date, but this is not necessarily the case, because plates 4 and 9 are not in the binding but are tipped in. They are glued to plates 5 and 10, are without gilding, and are slightly lower than the rest of the pages, noticeable only when looking along the fore-edge. The facsimiles enter after, not before, the binding.¹¹

The tipping-in of plates 4 and 9 indicates that one of the owners after 1878 could also have been responsible for their execution and insertion. Three of these owners had access to facsimilists and to models, and had reason enough to complete an incomplete copy. John Pearson, the bookseller, published the excellent *Jerusalem* facsimiles with 100 photolithographs in 1877, and was William Muir's first agent, issuing four of Muir's Blake facsimiles in 1884-85. Bernard Quaritch, who owned the book in 1890, was Muir's agent in 1885-94, and issued a series of facsimiles by William Griggs from his own and other collections, including *Poetical Sketches* (1890) and *The Book of Abania* (1892). He also owned another copy of *America* (R), which he lent Muir for his 1887 facsimile. Bernard Macgeorge, who owned the copy from 1892 to 1924, also knew Muir; Macgeorge lent Muir *Europe* copy A, which was then missing five plates, and which were "all supplied in facsimile by Muir."¹² Macgeorge also owned *Songs* copy A, which entered the British Museum in 1927¹³ with photolithographs of plates 51, 52, 53, and b.

The Inscription

Before eliminating suspects, we must examine a pencil inscription on the front flyleaf:

Lowndes [pens?] 18 designs¹⁴
 There are 2 more in some copies
 but I believe these to be a supplementary number
 & that the book is perfect & is only 18

Assuming "is only 18" refers back to "designs" and not to £18, the price the 1878 Sotheby catalogue says it sold for in

1874, the inscription can still be read in one of two ways, depending on whether "designs" refers to pictures or pages. In the Prospectus, Blake uses the word "design" to mean picture, not plate or page.¹⁵ *America*, minus plates 4 and 9, would still have eighteen designs if, as Blake himself did with the *Marriage*, one were to separately count the top and bottom pictures on two plates as separate designs. By counting in this way, there would, indeed, be "some copies" with "2 more" designs, whereas in fact there are no copies with twenty plates. If, on the other hand, "designs" is referring to pages, then the inscription is referring to a copy in which the two facsimiles have already been inserted, a copy, in other words, with eighteen plates. In this second interpretation, the statement "There are 2 more in some copies" is probably a reference to Gilchrist's description of *America* as "a folio of 20 pages."¹⁶

The inscription is written on a flyleaf, thus written after the book is bound.¹⁷ The insertion of plates 4 and 9 also follows the binding, but may precede or follow the inscription. There are only two possible combinations of these three bibliographical facts: binding, inscription, insertion, or binding, insertion, inscription. If the inscription precedes the insertion, the inscription refers to a copy that still has only sixteen plates. If the inscription succeeds the insertion, the inscription refers to a book with eighteen plates. Neither combination rules out the possibility of the inscription and/or insertion occurring after 1878—unless we can date the inscription.

The Sotheby catalogue entry for the 29 January 1878 auction and a comparison of the numbers in set II with those in the inscription make me believe that the inscription followed the insertion of the plates. The catalogue entry describes copy B as:

... presentation copy with author's autograph inscription, splendidly bound in Citron morocco, ornamented with variegated leathers and gold tooling, e.g. by F. Bedford; two leaves said to be wanting, but Blake's original prospectus says "*America*, a prophecy in illuminated printing, folio, with 18 designs, Lambeth, W. Blake, 1793." This copy, unbound, sold for £18 in 1874.

The cataloguer's "two leaves said to be wanting" seems to refer to the assertion in the inscription that "There are 2 more in some copies." If so, the inscription was already written by 1878. And his "*but* Blake's original prospectus says" clearly implies that two leaves are not wanting, that this copy of *America* has 18 plates, the number that the prospectus says it should. The idea that the cataloguer is counting pages rather than illustrations is supported by internal evidence. As I mentioned, the two sets of plate-numbering are by different hands, but the "8" in the inscription—a very distinct δ —is, I believe, the same "8" in numbers "8" and "18" of the second set of plate-numberings.

If the inscription is pre-1878 and is written by the same person who renumbered the plates, then the two facsimiles

must have entered *America* copy B between 1874, when it is reported to have been unbound, and January 1878, by which time it was bound and in Dew-Smith's library. Who bought copy B in 1874 is unknown; it may or may not have been Dew-Smith. Thus plates 4 and 9 could have been inserted either before or during Dew-Smith's ownership.¹⁸ In the first case, someone other than Dew-Smith purchased copy B in 1874, had it bound, inserted plates 4 and 9, and, possibly, even wrote the inscription and renumbered the plates. In the second case, Dew-Smith bought the volume either bound with sixteen plates, or unbound in 1874 and had it bound, only to find out later that it was missing plates 4 and 9. He had the two plates made, inserted them, and described his copy as perfect. But it is also possible that Dew-Smith wrote the inscription and renumbered the pages in good faith, having bought a bound volume with plates 4 and 9 already inserted.

Reproductive Process Used to Make Plates 4 and 9

In the 1870s, photolithographs could be printed from fine-grained limestones and from specially grained zinc plates. To use stone, the negative of the copy to be reproduced is placed in contact with paper coated with a light-sensitive gelatine film. The areas exposed to light become insoluble in water, so that when the sheet is covered with a transfer ink and soaked in a bath of water, all the soluble (unexposed) gelatine lifts off the paper, leaving only the inked image ready to be transferred (counterproofed) onto the prepared stone. To use zinc plates instead of stone, a reverse negative is exposed directly on a sensitized zinc plate, which, because it eliminates the intermediate step of transferring the image, is "much more likely" to retain "the finer qualities" of the original.¹⁹ The fine details of plates 4 and 9, including subtle traces of ink along the sides of the text, suggest—as do the platemarks—that these two prints were pulled from zinc plates. Lithography is a planographic method which, at least theoretically, should not leave platemarks. But because a press and a scraper bar are used, printing with too much pressure and with a bar wider than the plate will emboss the shape of the stone or metal plate into the print. The platemarks on plates 4 and 9 reveal the even edges of a metal plate, not the irregular edge of stone. But, as I mentioned, these marks are suspicious.

Robert N. Essick has in his collection what are possibly the proofs of plates 4 and 9. His two impressions were printed on larger sheets (40.3 x 28.5 cm. for plate 4, and 44.5 x 28.5 cm. for plate 9, vs. 36.3 x 26.1 cm.), on different paper ("thin, hard, ivory colored, machine made"),²⁰ and in a dull black ink. Neither of his prints has any trace of side platemarks, while the side platemarks are the ones most noticeable in plates 4 and 9 of copy B. In plate 4, the bottom, top, and left platemarks are sharply defined, while the right side is slightly beveled. In plate 9, the plate lines forming the two bottom corners and top right corner intersect; the bottom platemark, for example, is 18.5 cm. long, while the

distance between the platemarks is only 17.5 cm. In Essick's plate 9, this bottom platemark is "about 20 cm. long."²¹ This slight crossing of plate lines in copy B and the fact that the side platemarks are heavier while altogether absent in Essick's two prints mean that the side platemarks in plates 4 and 9 of copy B are faked.

Such platemarks can be made with a stylus along a metal ruler with a bevel, or along a metal plate. The top and bottom platemarks, however, appear to have been produced by a metal plate in the process of printing, and they are the same distance from the image in Essick's two prints as they are in copy B. Thus, plates 4 and 9 are either printed from zinc plates, or the same blank metal plates are registered *exactly* on both sets of impressions.²² Pulling a lithograph face down on a blank metal plate through a rolling press would give platemarks, but such a trick doesn't explain why side platemarks are absent in Essick's two prints, or how platemarks can intersect, or why the length of a platemark from the same plate is different in two impressions. Perhaps plates 4 and 9 were printed on a litho press using scraper bars of two different sizes, neither of which was as wide as the plates, and thus not able to force paper over the sides, but which came onto and off the plates with enough pressure to catch the top and bottom edges. The missing side platemarks, therefore, had to be added with a stylus. In any event, because lithographs from zinc and stone would ordinarily have been printed without platemarks, the platemarks, however they were made, were made to deceive, to make a flat image appear slightly embossed like a relief etching. The intention to deceive makes plates 4 and 9 forgeries, not facsimiles.

The Original Prints Reproduced

For there to be two photomechanically reproduced forgeries, two authentic prints must have been photographed. The bottom four lines of the fake plate 4 are missing, so the prototype plate 4 must have been masked. And because photolithographs of the period could reproduce line drawings or designs only in pure black and white (half-tone screens not yet having been perfected²³), the two authentic prints photographed must have been uncolored. In addition to there being requisites for the models, both fake prints also have distinguishing, albeit, more subtle, marks. Plate 4 has an extra line on the lower right side of the leaf underneath the text, ink splatters on the right side of the tree, opposite line 8, and at the end of the last word, "foretold"; plate 9 is missing the two birds flying under the lowest tree branch, has an ink trail along the left of the tree trunk, a top branch that is lightly extended to the leaves, and ink splatters along the right side of the plate and along the bottom just under the grass.

Of the seven monochrome copies with a masked plate 4, *America* (F), in the British Museum since 1859, comes closest to having these peculiar markings.²⁴ Plate 4 (F) has both sets of ink splatters and an ink trace that could have

been transformed into an extra leaf line, and the two birds in plate 9 are very faint. On the other hand, plate 9 (F) has no ink trail, no completion of the top branch, and no ink splatters along the right side of the text. But just as the ink stain at the bottom of plate 9 (F), the "JY 59" museum accession number (1859), and the birds could have been rubbed off the plate so that they wouldn't show in an impression, the light marks completing the branch in plate 9 (B) could have been added, and the ink traces accidentally printed from the litho plate itself, possibly the result of it not being thoroughly sponged during inking. Because an image on stone or zinc could be altered in such subtle ways, absolute verification may not be possible, but it does seem probable that plates 4 and 9 of copy F were the prints photographed by or for the forger.

Conclusion

We do not know for sure who is responsible for executing and inserting the two forgeries into *America* copy B. The person who wrote the inscription and renumbered the plates is not necessarily the person who inserted the two prints. The inscription may be the hand of an honest owner warding off Gilchrist's implication that his copy with only "18 designs" was incomplete. But, according to my reading of the evidence—and other readings may be possible—we do know when (between 1874 and 1878), how (photolithography), where (London), the probable model (F), and, I believe, why. Plates 4 and 9 are not facsimiles; they are not taken from a lost facsimile edition of *America* made in the 1870s. In short, they are not like Trianon Press facsimiles doctored up to fool the unsuspecting eye. Plates 4 and 9 were executed from the beginning with the intention to pass as originals and thereby secretly complete an otherwise incomplete copy. The plates have done well at both. Many professional bibliographers and bibliophiles have examined this copy of *America*. To their credit, plates 4 and 9 are not only extremely good forgeries, but, and I think this is equally important, as pages in a bound volume, they appear innocent by association. Had plates 4 and 9 been separate prints, it is more likely they would have been detected long ago. As it is, no other illuminated book, bound or loose, is known to contain a facsimile. Do we need to look harder? "Let the collector of prints be cautioned . . . to beware of buying copies for originals. Most of the works of the capital masters have been copied, and many of them so well, that if a person be not versed in prints, he may easily be deceived" (William Gilpin, *An Essay on Prints*, 4th ed., 1792).

¹ G.E. Bentley, Jr., *Blake Books* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), p. 104.

² G.E. Bentley, Jr. (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1971), plates IX and XI. *America*, copy B, was given to the Morgan Library by Mrs. Thorne in 1973. For the complete provenance of copy B, see *Thorne Catalogue*, p. 26, or *Blake Books*, p. 100.

³ Thomas Lange, the assistant curator in charge of books and prints at the Pierpont Morgan Library in 1978, also noticed the difference in paper and suspected the two plates. Bentley seems to have been a bit puzzled by the difference too, but noted only that plate 9 was printed on "stiffer paper than the rest" (*Thorne Catalogue*, p. 26).

⁴ In the posthumous pull of "The Little Black Boy" (pl. 9), the woman's bun was removed and her back narrowed with a burin. *Songs of Innocence* (U) contains such a pull, though it is recorded as an extra impression (*Blake Books*, p. 366). See "Posthumous Pulls in *Songs of Innocence*, copy U" (forthcoming).

⁵ These and a list of other measurements concerning plates 4 and 9 of copy B have been corroborated—and corrected—by Robert N. Essick, who has copies of both facsimiles in his collection, and who has been most generous in sharing information. He and G.E. Bentley, Jr. have read early drafts of this paper and have made valuable suggestions, many of which have been incorporated in this final version.

⁶ *Blake Books*, p. 70.

⁷ Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972), p. 13.

⁸ On the verso of the frontispiece is the inscription: "From the author/C H Tatham Octr 7/1799." Presumably this is Tatham's hand; it is not Blake's. In any case, the "7" and "9" do not resemble the "7" and "9" in either set of numbers. Blake did number two copies of *America* (A and M) 1-16, but he started on plate 3, not plate 1, and numbered, as was his custom, in the right hand corner of the plate in ink.

⁹ The numbers of set I may not, however, have been the first attempt at pagination. Numbers 4, 5, 7, and 11 of set I are written over other numbers, or marks, that were erased; numbers 6 and 8 are very light, and a 7-like mark is written over the 3.

¹⁰ The "7" is the same size (.6 cm.) and in the same position (2 cm.) from the edge of the sheet, right under the number). In plate 4, the bottom of the number is partly erased, or smudged. There is a larger smudge mark just under the "7" on plate 9. This "7" may be a printer's mark rather than a number.

¹¹ The pages were trimmed before insertion. The two leaves are slightly lower at the top, and less so at the bottom. They appear flush with the fore-edge, but are actually a fraction lower, noticeable when the fore-edge is riffled. In short, plates 4 and 9 were cut and trimmed separate from the other sheets.

¹² *A Catalogue of the Library of Bernard Buchanan Macgeorge* (privately printed, 1906), p. 8.

¹³ *Blake Books*, p. 412. The only owner after 1878 whom we cannot suspect is Thomas Gaisford, the Greek scholar, and a major Blake collector (*Thorne Catalogue*, p. 14). Gaisford died in 1855, yet his bookplate is pasted on the inside of the front board, which is why Keynes and Bentley have assumed that *America* (B) was "acquired by Gaisford" after it was bound, and between Pearson, who bought it at Sotheby's in 1878, and Quaritch, who bought it from Gaisford's library, which sold at Sotheby's 23 April 1890. We do not know who acquired *America* (B) for Gaisford's library, when, from whom, or for how much. There are other Blake books with Gaisford's bookplate, four of which may have been acquired before 1855 (*Innocence* [H], *Europe* [E], *Urizen* [C], *Poetical Sketches*

[N]), and at least three, besides *America* (B), acquired after 1874 (*Visions* [I], *Songs* [M], *The* [C]). Apparently, someone familiar with the collector's taste in books continued to build the library.

¹⁴ "America, a Prophecy, 18 designs, Folio, Lambeth, 1793, Sotheby's, 1855, £ 2.7" — *W. T. Lowndes, The Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature* (1857), I, 215.

¹⁵ In the Prospectus, Blake says that *America* has 18 designs, but he also says that *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* has 14 designs (counting top and bottom illustrations on one plate — probably plate 3 — as separate designs), and not 27 plates, and that the *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* has 8 designs, not 11 plates or pages. In other words, Blake is using the word "design" to mean picture, counting illustrations on one plate which are independent of one another as separate designs. *America* has 18 pages and at least 18 designs, and therein lies the confusion.

¹⁶ *Life of Blake* (London, 1863), I, 109. Gilchrist's description of *America* as "a folio of 20 pages" is most likely derived from Richard Thomas's description of *America* in *Nollekens and His Times* (London, 1828), II, 477, as having "18 plates, or twenty pages, including the frontispiece and titlepage."

¹⁷ The inscription is on the verso of the front flyleaf, which is the conjugated part of the end paper pasted to the front board. Because Blake's original "bindings" were simply wrappers of laid paper, and I do not know of any copy of an illuminated book which has its original wrappers plus a leather binding, I am assuming that the inscription, as well as Gaisford's bookplate, are on material supplied by the binder, and thus were added to the book no earlier than 1874.

¹⁸ It is not unlikely that Sotheby's was given the information about the 1874 sale by Dew-Smith, and that he knew it because he was the one who bought *America* unbound in 1874 for £18. But the idea that Dew-Smith was the 1874 purchaser, i.e., the only owner between 1874 and 1878, cannot be proven.

I know nothing about Dew-Smith except that he was "of Cambridge" (*Bibliography*, 1921), and that he also owned *Songs* copy J and Blake's copy of Swedenborg's *The Wisdom of the Angels Concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom*, both of which sold, along with *America* copy B, at Sotheby's, 29 January 1878 (*Blake Books*, pp. 100, 417, 696). His copy of *Night*

Thoughts printed on vellum and without plates sold at Sotheby's 27-30 June 1906 (*Blake Books*, p. 644 n2). Dew-Smith is not mentioned in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Knowing nothing of the man, I cannot ascertain his handwriting or his integrity.

¹⁹ Alfred Seymour, *Practical Lithography* (London: Scott, Greenwood & Son, 1903) p. 100. Reverse negatives were first used in the 1870s with collotypes, and are necessary if the print is to be the same direction as the copy reproduced. Like a counterproof transfer, a reverse negative places the image in reverse on the plate so that the print is in the same direction as the original.

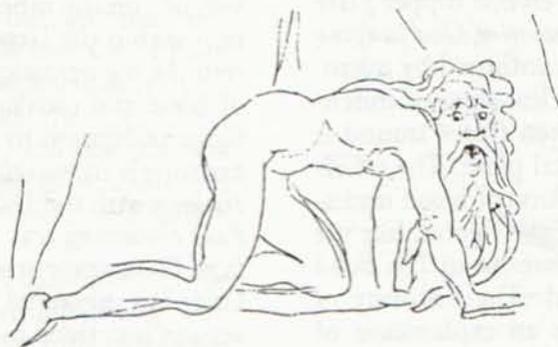
²⁰ Private correspondence.

²¹ Private correspondence. In both plates 4 and 9 there are tiny ink dots slightly outside the right side platemarks. These ink dots seem to be from the border of the relief-etched plates. If so, they are part of the image the camera photographed and are thus on the litho plate or stone. Essick's two prints, however, do not show these ink spots.

²² It seems that a blank plate or a stylus was used to make platemarks in another illuminated book. The leaves of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (J), which are inlaid into larger sheets, were either "provided with artificial plate-marks by putting each print, damped, in press with blank plate" (Keynes and Wolf, *Census*, p. 59) or "carefully indented at the join of the inner and outer leaves . . . to look like platemarks" (*Blake Books*, p. 416).

²³ "The half tones of a negative cannot be reproduced by this method, as they can with collotype." H. T. Wood, *Modern Methods of Illustrating Books*, 4th ed. (London: Elliot Stock, 1898), pp. 64-65. Wood goes on to say: "For this reason the process is applicable for reproduction; it cannot produce a print from a negative taken direct from nature. What it can do is to reproduce in facsimile any picture or design that has been produced by any printing process whatever (in which tints are not employed), type, engraving, wood-cuts, or lithograph, also any line-drawing in ink, pencil, or chalk, anything in fact which already possesses the grain, line, or stipple required to hold the ink."

²⁴ I have checked copies D, E, F, H, and L; Robert N. Essick has checked copy I, and Roger S. Wieck (Houghton Library, Harvard) has checked copy C.



DISCUSSION

with intellectual spears & long winged arrows of thought

An Afterword on *William Blake: His Art and Times* By David Bindman

One of the frustrations and delights of putting on an exhibition is that objects can look different from one's memory of them when seen together on the walls. It is, of course, part of the *raison d'être* of such exhibitions that they enable direct comparisons to be made, but they also inevitably make the catalogue, which has to be written many months before the exhibition, out of date, for it cannot include the experience of the exhibition itself. The following notes are intended as corrections to the text and observations arising from the exhibition, and they center largely around the large color prints.

Martin Butlin's very recent discovery of an 1804 watermark on the Tate version of the *Newton* color print (cat. no. 56b) has already demolished the received picture of the chronology and development of the large color prints, some of which are dated 1795. The presence of seven of these prints in the exhibition from various sources offers a useful opportunity to start thinking about them again and I am glad to report some progress. It was clear from seeing the prints together that we have to abandon any sense of a rigid method in their creation; there was no one way of making them and we should see their creation as part of an organic process of trial and error over a number of years. This is brought home by the discovery of Mr. Patrick Noon, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Yale Center for British Art, that there are definite indications of printing from a relief-etched copper plate on the Metropolitan Museum's impression of *God Judging Adam* (cat. no. 51). This has been confirmed by microscopic examination which revealed clear signs of indentation in the printed area and broken fibres around it consistent with pressure from a metal plate. The relief-etched areas, printed in gray, form a kind of broad underdrawing defining the main shapes of the figures, like the relief-etched areas in some of the plates from *The Book of Urizen* which were color printed. The discovery of relief-etched printing also provides an explanation of the mysterious letters observed on the surface of the New York impression, which appear to be the imprint of part of an embossed address of the kind often found

on the back of copper plates; Blake has evidently used the back of a copper plate to make the relief-etched underprinting and not bothered to burnish down the platemaker's imprint.

This strongly suggests that *God Judging Adam* was the first of the large color prints to be worked on and that at first Blake simply extended the method he had employed for color printing the illuminated books by using a very much larger copper plate. We may surmise that he would have found relief etching on this size of plate to be time consuming and difficult and therefore not worth the labor: certainly none of the other color prints shows any signs of such relief etching but only the direct application of color from an unetched surface. There is every likelihood that he began working on these problems in 1795 when he was probably finishing the last of the color-printed illuminated books; on the other hand the watermark on the Tate *Newton* proves that he was working with a color-printing method as late as 1804, when he was preparing a set of the prints for Thomas Butts. The little known Glen Foerd version of the *Newton* is also in the exhibition (cat. no. 56), and it is clear that the two versions are quite different in handling, and that there are arguments for seeing the Glen Foerd version as predating the Tate version by several years. The differences between the two figures of Newton—the angle of the head, the contour of the back, the relationship of the feet to each other and the angle of the hands—make it unlikely that they were printed from the same surface: it is probable that Blake made a fresh start with the Tate version, presumably to complete the set for Thomas Butts. The differences are compatible with a space of many years between the two versions, and perhaps with the change of style in Blake's art in the years around 1800.

These changes certainly involve a stronger linearity which can be seen in the Tate version in the more incisive contour, and the reduction of broken lines of varied thickness, but the most striking differences are in the modeling. The forms in the Glen Foerd version are built up with a simple plasticity, shadowing from the lower contour leaving the main area without interior modeling. The Tate version, on the other hand, has a high degree of definition within the larger forms so that it is possible to discern the segmentation of the muscles and sense the shape of bone and cartilage beneath. This is achieved in the figure of Newton by a stippling technique applied almost exclusively in watercolor, and it is possible to see here an analogy with the 1803 watercolor in the exhibition of *St. Paul preaching* (cat. no. 75). This technique may derive from Blake's experience as a miniature painter, as Raymond Lister has suggested. The background in the Glen Foerd version is defined by dark washes but in the Tate version it is filled with an intense blue color; in fact color pervades all the darker areas of the later print and the modeling of the figure also picks up the blue from the back-

ground. The curious aqueous anemone-like effect in the vegetation of the Tate version is not present in the Glen Foerd version where Newton is clearly in a cave through which light passes from the top left.

There are also clear differences in the way the color printing is applied; in the Glen Foerd *Newton* it has a thick and pasty quality, applied in broad dabs with occasional areas of aqueous reticulation as if the pressure was applied fairly gently from the printing surface. In the Tate Gallery version the color printing seems more controlled and concentrated in specific areas like the rocky background. The lack of the fluid kind of reticulation led me at first to wonder if it was color printed at all and built up instead with a dabber in the thicker areas, but this does not seem likely on further examination. The thickness and density of the Glen Foerd color printing aligns it with the Whitney *Good and Evil Angels* (cat. no. 53) and I would propose that these two and the Metropolitan *God Judging Adam* can be dated to about 1795. The *Pity* (cat. no. 52) and the *Hecate* (cat. no. 55) from the Tate, however, present more difficult problems. There can be no doubt from a comparison with the Tate *Newton* that they were at least finished off in 1804–05 for sale to Thomas Butts, but the quality of the color printing underneath, as far as it can be discerned under the final stippled coloring, seems to have the density of the presumed 1795 prints. It is still arguable, then, that these were, as was always thought, printed in 1795 and then finished finally in 1804–05 for Butts. If this is right then it would suggest that when Butts commissioned a set of the prints Blake had a mixed group of impressions of the color prints lying about the studio, most of which could be adapted into a harmonious set while others, including the *Newton* for reasons unknown, had to be made anew. This is probably as far as we can go at the moment but we will be able to fill out the account when the other Tate color prints are examined more closely.

Herewith a few notes on other things in the show:

Cat. no. 2. *Joseph of Arimathea* engraving (Trinity College, Hartford, Ct.). This appears to be a more interesting object than I first thought. Apart from touches of wash it has small areas of scraping out, and most unexpected, what appears to be the expressive use of plate tone on the surface to give a greater richness of texture. If this is deliberate then it suggests the use of yet another printing technique by Blake, and one that was hardly ever used in his time. The use of scraping out suggests a date in the 1820s; it is also used in the Mellon copy of *Jerusalem*, pl. 99.

44. *Europe a Prophecy*, copy A. I had hinted in the catalogue that there might be something wrong with the coloring of this copy, and I am now fully persuaded that most of the color washes, apart from the color printing, have been added by a later hand, perhaps in this century.

70. *The Virgin Hushing the Young John the Baptist*. Though a laboratory report states that this work is on paper it looks as if it is on canvas; certainly the weave is very strongly visible. Perhaps it is on very thin paper applied wet to the canvas?

79. *The Repose of the Holy Family in Egypt*. Though magical in quality and drawing this watercolor can be seen to be very badly faded.

The Scholars & A Grain of Sand By Warren Keith Wright

Other readers no doubt immediately recognized the lines quoted by Nelson Hilton in "The Shock of the New Blake" (*Blake* 58, [Fall 1981], 103), from p. 235 of Robert Hughes' *The Shock of the New* (New York: Knopf, 1981):

Seek those images
That constitute the Wild,
The lion and the Virgin,
The Harlot and the Child.

This is the third of four stanzas from Yeats' "Those Images," published in *Last Poems* and written, so Richard Ellmann tells us (*The Identity of Yeats*, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1975, p. 294), "before Aug. 10, 1937" — some dozen decades after Blake's major works were composed. (Hughes's capitalization of Virgin, Wild, Harlot, and Child are especially beguiling.)

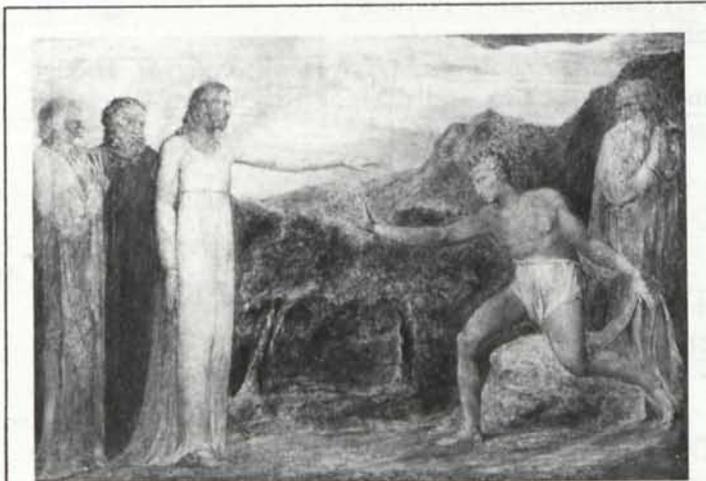
Scholars have long known how strongly Yeats identified with his precursor; but

Lord, what would William Butler say,
That Yeats should pass for Blake today?

[The Yeats lines were also identified by F. S. Corlew, *Ashtabula, Ohio*. Eds.]



REVIEWS



William Blake: His Art and Times, an exhibition organized by David Bindman. Yale Center for British Art, 15 September–14 November 1982. Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 3 December 1982–6 February 1983. Catalogue by David Bindman, pp. 192, 200 illustrations, 21 color plates. \$15.00, paper.

Reviewed by Ruth E. Fine

The exhibition *William Blake: His Art and Times* was organized by David Bindman and jointly sponsored by the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven (where it was very handsomely installed from 15 September to 14 November 1982—the showing on which this review is based) and the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto (3 December 1982–6 February 1983). The exhibition was a rather daring undertaking given the enormous amount of attention already paid to Blake in recent years. For example, G.E. Bentley, Jr.'s *Blake Books* was published in 1977; and since 1978, the year of Martin Butlin's monumental *William Blake* exhibition at the Tate Gallery, accompanied by an excellent and informative catalogue, several other important monographs have been published: among them are Butlin's catalogue raisonné, *The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake*, Robert Essick's *William Blake Printmaker*, and Bindman's own *The Complete Graphic Works of William Blake* together with his *Blake as an Artist*. Of course there had not been a large scale exhibition of Blake's art in this country since the one in 1939 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and that show

had been selected entirely from collections in the United States. One can understand, therefore, the pressures for a grand display on this side of the Atlantic, all the more so because conservation problems are making Blake collectors wary of lending important objects to the repetitious minor exhibitions that have been organized in great numbers in recent years, and also of showing them at home to anyone other than serious scholars.

The germ of the New Haven/Toronto show came in conversations between Bindman and Katharine A. Lochnan, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Art Gallery of Ontario, some years ago. The initial intent was similar to that of the 1939 Philadelphia exhibition: to show Blake in North American collections, a much richer body of material than one could find in 1939, thanks principally to the extraordinary acquisitions of Paul Mellon. Thus the Yale Center for British Art, which houses much of the Mellon Collection, was viewed as a most appropriate cosponsor; and, in fact, well over a third of the show was drawn from various Yale institutions (the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the Yale University Art Gallery, the Lewis Walpole Library at Farmington, as well as the Paul Mellon and other collections at the Center for British Art). Numerous loans also came from Mr. and Mrs. Mellon's private collection; the Pierpont Morgan Library; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Library of Congress, Rosenwald Collection; the National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection; and Robert N. Essick. Despite the richness of American collections, however, certain key pieces were necessarily borrowed from abroad—specifically from the Tate Gallery, the British Museum, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

Major Blake exhibitions must now be compared to the Tate show of 1978; and in this case, the comparison seems apt in terms of differences in kind. The earlier show was very large, comprising 339 pieces, all of them by or after Blake except for a drawing by his brother Robert that was the source of William's relief etching, *The Approach of Doom*. The exhibition emphasized and explored very specifically Blake's greatest accomplishments as a visual artist, in part by virtually ignoring such aspects of his work as the reproductive engravings that were the artist's main source of income. In that exhibition, Martin Butlin convincingly demonstrated that Blake "had an intensity of vision, an imaginative scope, and a multiplicity of means of expression . . . beyond most men."¹ In contrast, the New Haven/Toronto show was considerably smaller, comprising some 200 pieces described in 125 catalogue entries (e.g., cat. no. 115 covers sixteen watercolors and engravings for *Illustrations to the Book of Job*, cat. no. 116 covers thirteen for *Illustrations for Dante*, and so forth).

Accepting the notion that Blake's greatness as a visual artist had been demonstrated by the Tate exhibition,

Bindman set out to explore the intellectual and artistic milieu that helped give this greatness its form. While fewer of the major paintings were here than in the London show, this one was, in fact, more comprehensive, including aspects of Blake's art not considered in 1978 and showing documentary material as well. In addition, Blake's own works of art were interspersed with a number of pieces by his contemporaries; and the inclusion of books of historical and philosophical interest to him and others of the period placed his oeuvre in a broad intellectual context.

Bindman carefully balanced and integrated this material so the focus on Blake was in no way diminished. First, the sections devoted to the art of Blake's time ("The Elevated Style in the 1780s"; "The Revolutionary Background: Blake's Circles in the 1790s"; "*Jerusalem: the Antiquarian Background*"; and "The Linnell Circle") were far fewer than those devoted to Blake's own art; and the main purpose of them was clearly to provide a background for a better understanding of Blake, although the didactic aspects of the exhibition never overshadowed the aesthetic. Much of the ancillary material was quite small, or in the form of books, and was shown in cases, for the most part leaving the walls to feature Blake. The main exception was the section of drawings and prints representing the scope of narrative subjects ("The Elevated Style") prevalent in English art of the 1780s, and in which pieces by or after John Flaxman, Richard Cosway, John Mortimer, Benjamin West, George Romney and Henry Fuseli were hung. In them one found allusions to the art of classical antiquity and the High Renaissance of the sort one sees throughout Blake's own oeuvre.

The basic arrangement of the Blake material was chronological: "The Engraver's Apprentice, 1772-79"; "Radical History Painter: the 1780s"; "Making a Living: Reproductive Engraving"; "Relief Etching and Experimental Printing, 1788-96"; "Illuminated Books and Prophecies, 1788-95"; "Separate Colour Prints, c. 1794-1805"; "After the Prophecies: Illustrated Books"; "An Understanding Patron: Thomas Butts and Paintings from the Bible, 1799-c.1809" (a conscious contrast, perhaps, to the section in the Tate show called "The Hazards of Patronage: William Hayley and 'The Grave,' c. 1799-1806"); "Blake in Felpham, 1800-1803"; "Milton: Prophecy and Illustrations, 1801-c.1820"; "Blake's Exhibition of 1809: The



1. *The Witch of En-dor*, by Sharp after West, cat. 22. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

2. *The Good and Evil Angels Struggling for Possession of a Child*, cat. 53. Yale Center for British Art, Mrs. John Hay Whitney Collection.

3. *Newton*, cat. 56a. Yale Center for British Art.

Descent into Obscurity"; "Jerusalem, 1804-27"; and "The Last Decade, c. 1818-27."

One realized that, given the very large body of work that Blake produced, each piece on display was purposefully selected to function in a number of ways. Some pieces allowed for iconographical comparisons both within Blake's own oeuvre and in relation to the work of other artists. Some made stylistic and technical points. Some had historical or philosophical import. Various threads were woven throughout the fabric of the exhibition, and the viewer was able to perceive again and again relationships between the sections and to sense the totality in a body of work through selected pieces. To mention only a few instances, *The Witch of Endor Raising the Spirit of Samuel* is seen in a 1783 version by Blake (cat. 11), in a later version by him, c. 1800-1805 (cat. 77), and in an engraving by William Sharp after Benjamin West (cat. 22, illus. 1), thus allowing Blake's own evolution to be studied while also comparing his representation of the subject with that of another artist. *Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing* (cat. 16) introduces the theme of fairies which is often picked up in Blake's later work (e.g., as Bindman points out, in the title page for *Jerusalem*, cat. 99b). From Blake's scores of reproductive engravings, Bindman selected works after earlier masters (Watteau, cat. 25), as well as works after Blake's contemporaries (e.g., Fuseli, cat. 27).

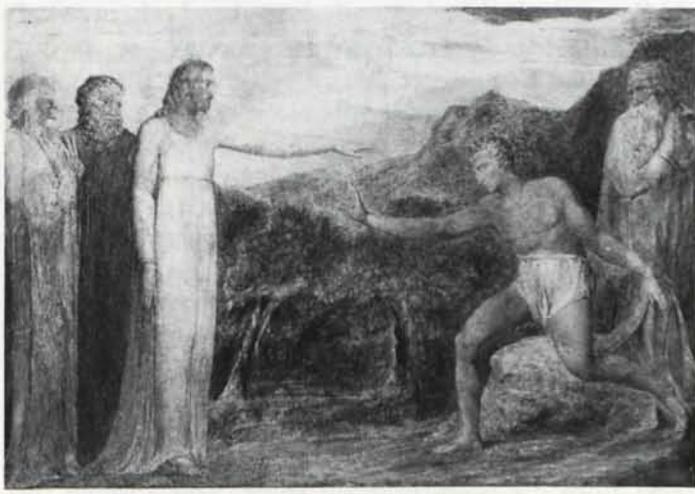
Points about method, too, were well managed. The technical range of Blake's reproductive prints was evident—from the stipple engraving that the artist presumably despised (e.g., *Zephyrus and Flora*, after Stothard, cat. 26), through the dot and lozenge engraving technique at its most spectacular in the exceedingly dramatic *Head of a Damned Soul* after Fuseli (cat. 28). In the "Relief Etching and Experimental Printing" section, the single surviving fragment of an etching plate used by Blake for relief printing (a cancelled plate from *America*) was shown with a proof impression from it (cat. 34, 35), and other trial proofs of various sorts helped the viewer to see and understand Blake's processes. Particularly interesting was a proof of the title page of *The [First] Book of Urizen* with areas of monotype-like color printing, but lacking final watercolor refinements (cat. 37). This section showed initial working phases of Blake's processes, the final results of which were demonstrated in all of their rich variety later in the exhibition. In contrast, a copy of Joseph Ritson's *Select Collection of English Songs* with conventionally engraved illustrations by Blake and others after Stothard (cat. 32) vividly demonstrated the differences between traditional book illustration and Blake's personal inventions and methods.

Among the most rewarding sections of the show, one which explored the development of Blake's conceptual (spiritual) and technical sophistication, was "Illuminated Books and Prophecies." On view were *There is no Natural*

Religion including the unique "Application" plate (cat. 38b) given by Sir Geoffrey Keynes to the Pierpont Morgan Library (important not only because it is unique, but also because it is an early example of the figure which later is seen as *Newton*, cat. 56); *The Book of Thel*; *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*; *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*; and several separately mounted pages from the very beautiful colored copy of *America a Prophecy* in the Mellon private collection, unusual in that it is richly colored, whereas most surviving copies are uncolored. Three copies (F, P, U) of a single page from *Songs of Innocence* (cat. 39) colored at different periods of Blake's career showed his evolution in unifying on the page the image and text relationships. In the earliest (copy F, which Bindman cites as a copy of *Songs of Innocence* to which has been added an incomplete copy of *Songs of Experience*) the delicate washes tend to heighten only the image, while in the latest (copy U, colored 1815 or later), the color is rich, vibrant, and heightened with gold, fully illuminating both image and text. Quite another matter, and equally marvelous to see, the display of five of the seven known copies of *Urizen* (cat. 45), including the only one colored in watercolor rather than color printed, showed the great variety in Blake's handcoloring of one title during a rather concentrated period of time (probably 1795-96 for the color printed versions with the watercolored copy probably dating from the early 1820s).

In the section "Separate Colour Prints, c. 1794-1805," examples from the *Small and Large Book of Designs* were represented as well as six images (in seven impressions) of Blake's series of twelve elaborate monoprints (color printed drawings, as they are more generally known): *God Judging Adam, Pity, The Good and Evil Angels Struggling for Possession of a Child* (illus. 2); *Christ Appearing to the Apostles after the Resurrection, Hecate, and Newton* (cat. 51-56). Until recently, all impressions of the twelve subjects, each known in from one to three impressions reworked with paint to a varying extent and every one unique, were thought to date from c. 1795. When the Tate Gallery *Newton* was removed from its mount in preparation for this exhibition, however, it was found to be on paper with an 1804 watermark. This piece was hung side by side with the one other known version of the subject, a far less familiar one, in the collection of the Lutheran Church in America, Glen Foerd at Torresdale (illus. 3). These two *Newton* prints present quite a challenge: to the 1804 watermark on the Tate sheet must be added the fact that its surface is exceedingly rich and painterly, making it look quite different from the Lutheran Church version (see David Bindman's "Afterword" elsewhere in this issue). The painterly surface caused speculation that the Tate version was entirely a painted rather than a reworked color print of the subject. The present writer, like Bindman, is not at all convinced that this is so.

Another discovery as important as the 1804 water-



4. Christ Giving Sight to Bartimaeus, cat. 72. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

5. The Last Judgment, cat. 98. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Rosenwald Collection.

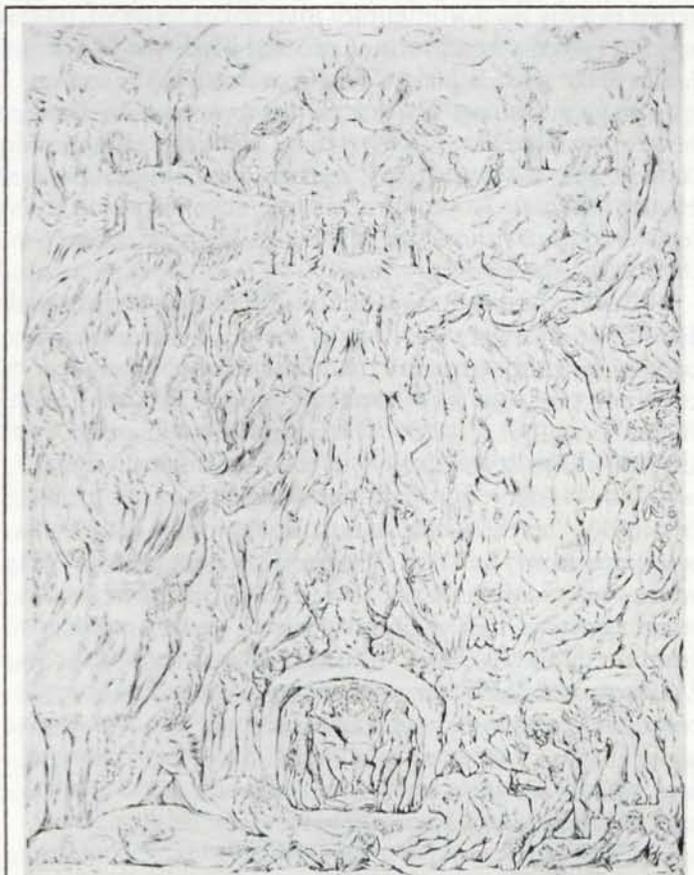
6. Portrait of John Linnell, cat. 117. National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection.

mark was made by Patrick Noon, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Center for British Art, who observed that the printed base of the Metropolitan's *God Judging Adam* was printed from the relief surface of a copper plate into which the image had been etched—quite similar in fact to the plates of the illuminated books (again, see Bindman's "Afterword" for further discussion).

Blake's expressive range in his illustrations for Young's *Night Thoughts*, Blair's *Grave*, and Gray's *Poems* was displayed in the selection of watercolor designs for them. In the section "After the Prophecies: Illustrated Books," one also found a rejected design and the unique proof of Blake's own white line etching (printed relief) for the "Death's Door" plate (cat. 64a,b) in *The Grave*.

Although conservation considerations prevented the loan of many of the tempera paintings that Blake executed under the patronage of Thomas Butts, there were five to be seen. Among them were *Christ Giving Sight to Bartimaeus* (cat. 72, illus. 4) and, in a splendid state of preservation, *The Virgin Hushing the Young John the Baptist* (cat. 70) from a private collection in Chicago; it is always rewarding to see little known works not in the public domain included in exhibitions. In addition to the temperas, the Butts section included a number of watercolors, the most important, perhaps, being those for Revelation, (cat. 80–83) a theme which, as connected with millenarianism, was important to the context that Bindman emphasized in his catalogue (see below).

Hayley's patronage was less successful than Butts' and the section of the exhibition devoted to the Felpham period



relied heavily on documentary material: a letter of 1800 to John Flaxman beside one of two and a half years later to James Blake showed Blake's delight at being in the country turn to great dismay. The star of this section of the show, however, was the very tiny (4 3/16 x 2 1/2 inch) tempera on copper, *The Horse* (cat. 89), related to the illustration in Hayley's *Ballads*. From Mr. and Mrs. Mellon's private collection, dating from 1805-06 or possibly from as late as the 1820s, the piece is a jewel.

During his Felpham sojourn while Blake was helping Hayley with Cowper's edition of Milton, he became preoccupied with the great poet, and the results of this preoccupation were seen in the section "Milton: Prophecy and Illustrations, 1805-c.1820." The earliest Milton illustrations, the 1801 *Comus* watercolors in the Huntington Library, were not available for loan, the same being true for the first (1807) set of *Paradise Lost* illustrations. However, selections from the 1808 *Paradise Lost* were on show (as well as an example of the third [1822] set, seen in the section devoted to Blake's last decade), as were selections from the 1815-20 *Comus* illustrations and from those to *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* of the same period. The concentrated energy in these small images of the late teens as well as their rich coloration foretell the somewhat larger and equally magnificent Dante series that comes at the end of Blake's life. Complementing the Milton watercolors, the single complete copy of *Milton a Poem* (cat. 90), with fifty plates (copy D) was on show. As Bindman pointed out in his catalogue, this most elaborate of the extant copies of *Milton* handsomely complemented the only known colored copy of *Jerusalem*, also on view (cat. 99).

The section devoted to Blake's unsuccessful 1809 exhibition included its catalogue which sets forth the artist's most distinguished writing on his own art. Here, too, most of the relevant surviving temperas ("frescos") were too fragile to travel, and were represented by related material: e.g., a pencil study, *The Bard* (cat. 96) of 1809, *The Canterbury Pilgrims* engraving, accompanied by the original copper plate from which it was printed and the 1809 prospectus for the piece (cat. 97). The star in this section was the National Gallery's *Last Judgment* (cat. 98, illus. 5) drawing. One technical disagreement here: I suspect this sheet probably was not done with pen and ink at all, but, rather, with a very fine brush and watercolor. I suspect this may also be true for many pieces that are recorded in Bindman's catalogue and elsewhere as having been reworked with pen and ink.

Sixteen plates of the one hundred in the exquisite and only colored copy of *Jerusalem* in the Mellon Collection were on view, including the title page and all four full-page frontispieces. *A Description of Jerusalem* by Richard Brothers (cat. no. 101) in the section "*Jerusalem: The Antiquarian Background*" reinforced the belief that the return to Jerusalem was central to millenarianism (as was the idea of apocalypse noted earlier). Other books

dealing with the history (mythological and otherwise) of the British Isles were included here as well.

A diverse group of pieces represented Blake's last decade, among them, his only wood engravings, the illustrations for Thornton's *Virgil* (cat. 106), the Pierpont Morgan Library's marvelous pencil study for Blake's enigmatic *Arlington Court Picture* (cat. 108), one of two known impressions of the *Laocoön* engraving (cat. 110), the late relief-etched treatises *The Ghost of Abel*, and *On Homer's Poetry and On Virgil* (cat. 111, 112). The major emphasis of this section, however, as would be expected, was on the Job and Dante illustrations. The Job display (cat. 115) included six of the early (1805-10) watercolors done for Thomas Butts, now in the Morgan Library, and ten of the series of twenty-one engravings, including all six derived from the watercolors on show. This allowed for comparison of the early and later versions (in different techniques) as well as offering a broad representation of the images. Blake's agreement with Linnell, Linnell's account book of the Job project, and a related receipt were included in the final, "Linnell Circle," section of the show. In the watercolors for Job one sees how specific Blake could be in working studies that later were transformed into another medium, while, in contrast, the Dante watercolors show how freely-handled ideas might take form.

The Dante series (cat. 116) was represented by five watercolors to the "Inferno" (plus four of the seven engravings, all of them for the "Inferno"), three watercolors to "Purgatorio" and, in a sense ending the exhibition, the "St. Peter, St. James, Dante, and Beatrice with St. John also," for "Paradisio." In one instance, "The Pit of Disease: The Falsifiers," the watercolor (one of the more highly finished ones in the series) was shown with the engraving; and the selection of watercolors generally showed the diversity of finish in the set, from subjects that are very loosely worked (e.g., "The Angel Boat"), to highly finished ones like the "Paradisio" scene noted above. For the record, Blake's seven copper plates for the Dante series are not now in the Library of Congress, Rosenwald Collection, as indicated by Bindman, but in the National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald Collection.

"The Linnell Circle" section included Blake's 1825 pencil drawing, *Portrait of John Linnell* (cat. 117, illus. 6), two works by Linnell, and an engraved portrait of the engraver Wilson Lowry, worked jointly by Linnell and Blake (cat. 119). Included, too, were works by George Richmond and Samuel Palmer as well as *George Cumberland's Calling Card* (cat. 125), "the last thing Blake attempted to engrave," according to Bindman, quoting Mrs. Blake.

Exhibitions such as this confirm beyond any doubt the importance of the exhibition form as a carrier of knowledge quite distinct from fully illustrated volumes about the work of an artist. The enormous, if subtle, differences between the two *Newtons* are observable only

with the two works physically side by side. Only in this circumstance can one observe similarities, especially in tactile aspects, between the Tate version of *Newton* and other color printed subjects, similarities that demonstrate (once the question arises) that the *Newton* does have a printed base — albeit one that probably was made later than previously had been thought (one recalls that similar questions and observations arose from viewing three impressions of *The Ancient of Days* in the Tate exhibition). Only when seen side by side with the other color prints can the clearly defined greyish outline in *God Judging Adam* stand out as having been printed in relief from an etched plate. And only in an exhibition of this kind in which Blake is placed next to his contemporaries can one see his extraordinary distinctiveness. For example, Blake's *Job* engraving (cat. 15) practically jumps off the wall as it demonstrates the artist's exquisite understanding of the expressive potential of the burin, all the more so when it is placed just several feet from a piece by one of the most admired craftsmen of the period, William Sharp. Sharp's *Witch of Endor* after Benjamin West, mentioned earlier, is strikingly dull in its repetitious description of form. If one does nothing more than study the edges of the folds of clothing in Blake's *Job* in contrast to similar forms in Sharp's piece, it is possible to glimpse the power of Blake's imaginatively complex world. Although Blake used precisely the same engraver's vocabulary in general use at the time, parallel strokes, cross hatching, dot and lozenge, etc., each of his marks is made with a passion that appears to be without bounds.

Throughout his catalogue, Bindman captures the spirit of Blake, summarizing that "Blake . . . intends us always to go further and find that our certainties have evaporated."² He points out how Blake made use of many of the artistic conventions of his time while rejecting others. Touching upon the ideas that were in the air, so to speak, in Blake's London, Bindman doesn't try to project a cause and effect relationship. The same is so when he mentions possible influences on Blake, of, for example, children's books and satirical political cartoons. He discusses Blake's relationships with and differences from his artist colleagues while touching as well upon aesthetic affinities that are less clearly pinned down (e.g., Bindman makes cogent comparisons of Blake with Goya while pointing out that it is unlikely that the two artists actually knew each other's work). Blake's ambivalence toward confining systems is observable throughout his career. For example, while his relief-etching inventions allowed him to bypass commercial publishers, he continued to try to find both publishers and patrons. As Bindman points out, given Blake's revolutionary stance his obscurity was undoubtedly his protection. Despite this obscurity Bindman offers us remarkably succinct summary accounts of Blake's themes, always maintaining a sense of the complexity that is essential to a true study of Blake in depth, but allowing the

reader to move intelligently through the exhibition knowing the abbreviated catalogue information alone.

One of Bindman's major theses is that Blake's visionary stance had many parallels with the prevailing dissenting philosophical thought of his time, specifically the millenarianism of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcott. A central unifying issue was the prophecy of an apocalyptic, revolutionary, and vengeful destruction of the fallen, corrupt, materialistic world, and the beliefs that true redemption was to be found through Christ and that the meaning of the Bible was available in every age, but only to a few privileged individuals who were guided by an inner light. For Blake, this inner light obviously was the force behind his art which he valued as a form of prayer.

Blake is a difficult artist. This exhibition places him in context; yet, in context, he remains apart. The exhibition rather reinforces one's awareness of Blake's own peculiar grasp of the neoclassical and the horrific (the serene juxtaposed with the bizarre), his placement of almost naive formal generalization next to imaginative particularization. One sees obviously exquisite skill displayed next to offhanded clumsiness; one sees extraordinarily subtle color relationships in contrast to rather obvious use of the primaries. One feels delight and pride and sadness and shame at being part of the human experience.

At home, later, one can review the catalogue, rethink Bindman's ideas on Blake's influences and relationships, can further ponder the narrative aspects of the meaning of images that are graspable from catalogue reproductions, essentially in black and white (although this catalogue does include twenty-one color plates), in which objects of various sizes fit into the scale of a page or a column. One can only try to recall what was understood about the world in a new way having had the privilege of peering from the distance of a few inches at the tiny forms in the Morgan Library watercolors for *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* (delicate, brightly colored, and sprightly drawn) having just been knocked-out from across the room by the powerful, somber, dense, dark, watercolor illustrations to the Book of Revelation which were brought together from Brooklyn, New York City, Washington, and Philadelphia for a rare comparative viewing in New Haven and then Toronto.

Such experiences give one a feeling of elation, and this elation is heightened by awe at the range of this particular human mind. In discussing another intelligence, that of Frederick Hölderlin, Richard Unger made some observations about Blake in a literary context, but they seem equally apt here: "Like Blake, Hölderlin was not adequately valued or even partially understood until the twentieth century. And he has likewise remained permanently esoteric and 'difficult' for us; critics are still grappling with the literal meaning of his major poems. But, also, as in the case of Blake, it is perhaps the very quality of this difficulty which often intrigues us. For these

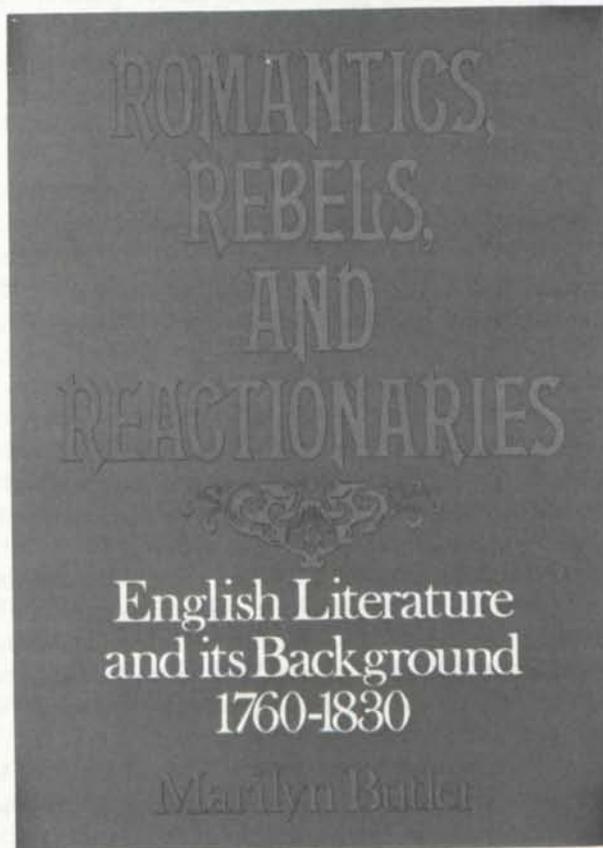
poets sometimes appear to understand more than we do; they admittedly share our problems but we suspect they have seen these problems more clearly and in greater depth. And in our interpretations it may seem that (rather than explaining their 'relevance') we are attempting to discover something which, in the silence of their texts, they already know"³

Notes

¹ Martin Butlin, *William Blake* (ex. cat.), London, 1978, p. 23.

² David Bindman, *William Blake: His Art and Times* (ex. cat.), (New Haven and Toronto, 1982), p. 44.

³ Hölderlin's *Major Poetry: The Dialectics of Unity* (Bloomington and London: Indiana Univ. Press, 1975), p. 7. My thanks to Larry Day for bringing the Unger paragraph to my attention.



Marilyn Butler. *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and its Background 1760-1830*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982. Pp. 213. \$17.95.

Reviewed by Carl Woodring

Several assumptions and theses make up a credo for this work. "A book is made by its public, the readers it literally finds and the people in the author's mind's eye" (p. 9). The democratization of patronage in 1760-1830 consequently affected all the arts. The writers of the period responded as rebels or reactionaries. Dissent provided "the classic stock of the English left," hence Priestley, Paine, Godwin, Hazlitt, and Blake, and hence the defections of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. Conditions and moods changed rapidly, so that literary periods of such short duration as 1790-98, 1800-15, 1817-20, and 1820-23 can be identified in critical reviews, fiction, and poetry.

Marilyn Butler has shown her superior knowledge and control of documentary and intellectual history in books on the novelists Edgeworth, Austen, and Peacock. Her inclusion now of poets and essayists accompanies a greatly increased factor of speculation. Instead of specific citation, she gives for each chapter "suggestions for further reading." (In keeping with this appeal to the younger student, the publisher has reduced the typeface sufficiently to exclude the aged scholar.) Reliance upon unidentified secondary sources makes it difficult to tell when error is typographical, but insistence upon rapid fluctuations in response to public mood makes significant a misdating of Coleridge's *Watchman* and an implication that Keats could have seen a book by Coleridge entitled *Lay Sermons*. Organization and method resemble those of Frederick E. Pierce, *Currents and Eddies in the English Romantic Generation* (Yale, 1918), although Butler subordinates minor authors in a fashion deemed unscholarly in Pierce's day. She refutes an error then current that Romanticism rebelled against an Augustan eighteenth century. Readings in art history and attention to system lead her to say instead that a "revival of Neoclassicism began with Byron's *Childe Harold*" (p. 181).

The bipolar formulas of the book do not impede novel interpretations and in general encourage them: Wordsworth's Preface of 1800 advances Neoclassical precepts in a Neoclassical way (p. 60). Wordsworth was counter-revolutionary in 1796 (pp. 64-65); later, slower than Coleridge, he recognized that a counter-revolutionary stance could bring popularity (p. 68). Of Blake's works of 1790-94 "the corporate author" (in accord with the axiom quoted at the beginning of this review) "is the urban subclass which emerged through its opposition to Britain's national policy" (p. 43). Blake's roots are "in the artisan world, Protestant, radical, Bible-reading, to which the Swedenborgians appealed before they organized themselves" (pp. 48-49); he "conveys no feeling for the English plot of ground" (p. 44). English Blake, made an internationalist by Fuseli, ranges to America, Europe, Africa, Uranus, Creation, and the Last Trump, all in keeping with the public consciousness of changing political events. Shelley wrote for an elite (p. 114, contrast p. 146). Reviving the old argument that *Alastor* attacks Wordsworth, Butler adds that the "fanatics" at the opening of *The Fall of Hyperion* are

Wordsworth and other Christian apologists (p. 152) and that *Mont Blanc* and *Frankenstein* likewise reject Wordsworth's solitaries. Chapter 5, "The Cult of the South," argues that *Lamia*, *Don Juan*, and various works by Shelley and Peacock carry out the anti-Christian sexuality of Erasmus Darwin and Richard Payne Knight. There is a stimulating paragraph on *The Witch of Atlas*; like almost all the assertions concerning individual works, it would be strengthened by development and demonstration.

The method, then, is to show how brief segments within 1760-1830 can be characterized by changed relations between and within literary works of rebellion or reaction. Alert application of the method brings the observation that "the Napoleonic Wars may have cost more lives in proportion to the British population than the 1914-18 war," and that the "failure of literature to reflect the holocaust" illustrates a turning away from the poor after 1800 (p. 115). Setting Germanic Christianity and gloom against liberal Mediterranean classicism, Butler discovers that the early heroes of Byron and Shelley are activists, their later protagonists passive bystanders (p. 125). The same polarization leads to an identification of contradictions in *Manfred* (p. 122).

Many of Butler's past strengths continue in this latest book. I hope that its analysis of rapid fluctuation in taste is accurate enough to predict a short life for this period in which literary historians succumb, at a high price, to the seductions of originality.



The Gates of Memory

GEOFFREY KEYNES Kt.

Geoffrey Keynes. *The Gates of Memory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981, Pp. 428. \$24.95.

Reviewed by Morton D. Paley

When Sir Geoffrey Keynes began working on Blake, there was no reliable edition of the complete writings, no bibliography, and no catalogue of the separate plates. Keynes provided all these and much, much more. Few other scholars can have contributed so much of the fundamental research on a major figure, and yet Blake has been only one of Keynes's numerous literary interests, and those interests coexisted with his brilliant career as a surgeon. *The Gates of Memory* provides us with a fascinating account of the "real Self" of one of the extraordinary figures of our century.

Keynes' editorial interests seem to date back to 1902, when he met Rupert Brooke at Rugby. As a result of their ensuing friendship, Keynes began collecting Brooke's poems; much later he would edit the *Poetical Works* (1946), *Bibliography* (1954), and *Letters* (1968). First authorship also occurred at Rugby with the publication of a prize essay on Roman remains unearthed in a field

in Cambridgeshire. (For his prize, Keynes chose the *Collected Works of Aubrey Beardsley*.) At Pembroke College, Cambridge, another lifelong interest developed: with his friend Cosmo Gordon, Keynes began to collect works by Sir Thomas Browne. His *Bibliography of Sir Thomas Browne* was to be published in 1924, and his Browne collection is almost certainly the greatest in private hands today. Another Cambridge acquisition was Henry James in the flesh. In response to an invitation from Keynes and two other undergraduates the Master replied:

You are all magnificent & I am dazzled, overwhelmed—deeply affected. I subscribe to everything, delight in the prospect of everything, give myself up to you to do with me whatever best suits your convenience—on which, indeed, *through* everything, I shall keep my eyes jealously & devoutly fixed. I shall have to tear myself from you on the Tuesday a.m. — & I exhibit the one invidious preference for Tea in one of your gardens (oh delerium!) over even the sight of your contending crews. But for the rest I am of each & all of you the grateful slave, & have gluttonously marked with rapturous accent the items of the list you have so kindly enclosed. (p. 69)

The visit itself seems to have been remarkably successful, with James exclaiming at Erasmus' tower "How intensely venerable!" and punting on the Cam with Rupert Brooke.

Keynes preparation for the medical profession began in 1910 at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, an institution with which he was to have an enduring relationship. Outside the hospital, one of his early patients was Virginia Woolf, after a suicide attempt.

Leonard Woolf and I dashed through the streets to Bart's in a taxicab waving aside the policemen (in the then absence of traffic lights) shouting 'Doctor! Doctor!' if they tried to stop us. However it was that we accomplished our task, we succeeded. The stomach pump was fetched. (p. 116)

It would not be correct to say that Keynes' medical career was interrupted by World War I, since as a doctor in a field hospital in France he performed thousands of operations and pioneered in techniques of blood transfusion that would later be adopted in peacetime. As a surgeon Keynes no more limited himself to one specialty than he did as a bibliographer. He developed an international reputation for treating both cancer of the breast and myasthenia gravis, the latter a paralytic condition that Keynes learned could be cured by removal of the thymus gland. World War II saw him in uniform once more, this time as Acting Air Vice Marshall in the R.A.F. He retired from medical practice in 1951 and subsequently gave the Harveian Oration to the Royal College of Surgeons and the Oslerian Oration at the Royal College of Physicians. These honors were highly appropriate: Keynes had published his *Bibliography of Harvey*, (based largely on his own great collection) in 1928 (rev. ed. 1953) and would receive the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for his *Life of William Harvey* in 1966, while with Sir William Osler he

had enjoyed a long friendship in which medical and bibliographical interests combined.

It is astonishing to consider that so distinguished a surgeon also became the great pioneer of textual scholarship on Blake. Keynes writes of this combination of vocations:

I wanted to advance British surgery if it were possible and to have a full life, intellectually, aesthetically, and humanly, no matter how hard I had to work. Above all, I wanted the understanding and affection of friends and family. It was asking a great deal of life, but not too much. I had found Blake and his conviction that Imagination was the divine gift to the human race and believed that he was right. The gift must therefore be exercised and appreciated in others to the utmost of one's ability. (p. 221)

The stages of work on Keynes' Blake *Bibliography* (1921) are recounted in *Religio Bibliographici*, a Presidential Address to the Bibliographical Society delivered in 1953 and reprinted as an appendix to *The Gates of Memory*. One cannot help envying the conditions that prevailed when Keynes began his Blake collecting. Before 1914 he obtained the seven Dante engravings from the Linnell family for seven guineas, and even in 1942 he was able to buy eleven major items (including the *Ugolino* recently given to the Fitzwilliam Museum) for £500. But it is not only the early under-valuation of Blake that accounts for the formation of a magnificent collection by a collector of limited means. In acquiring his Blakes, Keynes seems to have combined the astuteness of a detective with the passion of a lover. All those many Blake scholars who have enjoyed the hospitality of Lammas House can testify to the remarkably high quality of each of the treasures there, as well as to the generosity and patience with which Sir Geoffrey shared his knowledge with us, when it often must have seemed to him that we were busily reinventing the wheel.

Readers of *Blake* need hardly be told in detail of the significance of Keynes' *Complete Writings*, first published by Nonesuch in 1927 and still alive and well, after numerous revisions, in the Oxford Standard Authors series. The checklist of Keynes' writings on Blake from 1910 (when he published a note on "Laughing Song") to 1972¹ is a compendious one, and it now needs to be expanded with the works of another decade, including a third edition of the *Letters*. Worthy of special mention are the introductions and appendices for the William Blake Trust's splendid facsimiles. Keynes account of the formation and activities of the Trust also reminds us once more of how much we are indebted to the late Arnold Fawcus, whose Trianon Press produced work of such inestimable quality.

An unusual byproduct of Keynes' Blake scholarship was the ballet *Job: A Masque for Dancing*. With his sister-in-law,² the artist Gwen Raverat (whose delightful *Period Piece: A Cambridge Childhood* should be read along with *The Gates of Memory*), Keynes produced a scenario based on the engraved designs. Ralph Vaughan Williams composed a beautiful score with the under-

standing that there was to be no dancing on point ("which made him feel ill"). The idea was then offered to Diaghilev, who turned it down as "too English and too old-fashioned." In the end, the work was brilliantly choreographed by Ninette de Valois and performed by the Camargo Society in 1931. Thence it passed into the repertoire of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, now the Royal Ballet. A revival of this ballet, so splendidly true to Blake's vision, is long overdue (hopefully with the restoration of the original Raverat sets rather than the rather inappropriate ones by John Piper that were later substituted for them).

Space does not permit more than the mere mention of Geoffrey Keynes' other bibliographies: those of John Donne (1915, 4th ed. 1974), the works published by William Pickering (1924), Jane Austen (1929), William Hazlitt (1931), John Evelyn (1937), and Bishop George Berkeley (1977). His achievement as a book collector is indicated by the catalogue of his library, comprising over 4,000 titles, published in 1964. His remarkable life is symbolized for me by one of the many fascinating photographs in this book, showing G.L.K. aged ninety-two in front of the enormous tulip tree at Lammas House. When he died three years later, many a scholar half a century younger felt the loss of one who was at the same time a founder of our discipline and an invigorating contemporary presence—"a friend with whom he liv'd benevolent."²

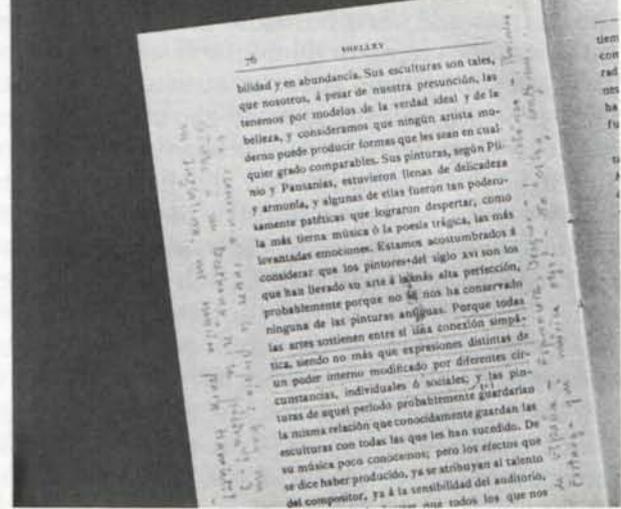
Notes

¹ "Fons et Origo" by G. E. Bentley, Jr., in *William Blake: Essays in Honour of Sir Geoffrey Keynes*, ed. M. D. Paley and Michael Phillips (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 349-76.

² *Milton*, 15:27, *The Complete Writings of William Blake*, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 497.



The Line in the Margin Juan Ramón Jiménez and His Readings in Blake, Shelley, and Yeats Howard T. Young



Howard T. Young. *The Line in the Margin: Juan Ramon Jimenez and His Readings in Blake, Shelley, and Yeats*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1980. Pp. 384. \$22.50.

Reviewed by John Wilcox

Hispanists consider Juan Ramón Jiménez—the centenary of whose birth on 23 December 1881 has just been celebrated—as a major "modern" European poet. For English readers of poetry, however, his cannot be a familiar name, and the appearance of a full-length study of his readings in Shelley, Yeats, and Blake must come as something of a surprise.

The author, Howard Young, explored this aspect of Jiménez in earlier research,¹ but here for the first time he presents a host of hitherto unknown—and inaccessible—details concerning Jiménez's readings in the English poets as well as his attempts to translate them into Spanish. The new information Young painstakingly gathered from the Jiménez archives (in Puerto Rico and in Spain) is used, in effect, to re-read Juan Ramón's poetry. We glimpse a Juan Ramón filtered through the gaze of three English poets. The result is

of indisputable value for Hispanists, especially those with comparatist leanings. The result should also intrigue scholars who study the English poets themselves, and they will certainly interest those of us who believe that insufficient recognition has been given to the contribution made by English Romanticism in the rise of "modern" European poetry.

Juan Ramón Jiménez (1881–1958) is perhaps better known to English readers as a prose-writer. He is the author of *Platero and I*, — a lyrical novel centering around the friendship that develops between a lonely and impressionable young poet and his donkey on their trips in and around the tiny Andalusian village of Moguer (where Jiménez was born and where he resided until 1912). Though this book has been translated into numerous languages, Jiménez's reception abroad as a poet is undoubtedly handicapped by the originality of his style, the unique subtlety of which can be appreciated only in Spanish (despite excellent English translations²). Nor did Jiménez possess the ability — of a Neruda or a Borges — to project himself onto an international audience. He tended to withdraw to concentrate on his work (*Obra*, he called it). He moved to Madrid in 1912, and in 1916 (in New York) married Zenobia Camprubí Aymar, who was fluent in English and who always assisted him with his English readings. Even in Madrid, the couple's life was quiet. Jiménez knew he wrote for a small audience, and in fact dedicated his work "To the Immense Minority." At the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, in 1936, they left Spain to live in North America, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, where Jiménez concentrated on his spiritual and aesthetic concerns. Though he won the Nobel Prize in 1956, his wife's death deprived him of the ability to enjoy it, and he himself died two years later, a pathetic figure in exile in Puerto Rico.

Howard Young is able to show that Jiménez was reading Shelley, Yeats, and Blake throughout these phases in his life. In fact, each move brought with it renewed interest in English (and American) poetry. Young sees Jiménez's reading as an "attachment" and a "lure" and claims that it moved him "beyond the horizon of his Spanish and French literary inheritance to discover confirmation of some of his basic ideas and to delight in a new tone and different perspectives for evoking the ideals and mysteries that beguiled symbolist poets." To appreciate that claim, we need to know something about Jiménez's poetry and its historical situation.

Juan Ramón's first poems are termed *modernista* by Hispanic literary critics. *Modernismo* is not at all what *Modernism* is in the Anglo-American world. In general it is taken to be the style of the latter part of the nineteenth century, a form of Art Nouveau (as Young implies). It has certain similarities with "Aestheticism" and "Pre-Raphaelitism" in England, and "Parnassianism" and "Symbolism" in France. Jiménez's *modernista* poetry appeared in 1900, in two small volumes, *Ninfeas* (*Water-lilies*) and *Almas de violeta* (*Violet-souls*); the former

were printed in green and the latter in purple ink. Here is a stanza from the "Water-lilies' Symphony": "On the lake of blood of my grieving soul, / from the melancholy garden of my weeping soul; / on the lake of blood of a suspiring Love, / on which a most sad swan entones a dying wail. . . ." ³ It must come as little surprise to be told that Jiménez repudiated and systematically destroyed these volumes in later life. The artificiality he rejected, but the aesthetic idealism he internalized. His dominant style, until around 1913, is that of a minor symbolist and impressionist. He is a pantheistic lover of nature, a sentimental sensualist; he is self-absorbed and withdrawn, and at times a bitterly disillusioned idealist. Toward the end of this first period in his work, he wrote: "Even as we return the golden moon is shining on the ramparts . . . / a breath of flowers-cum-moon invades the countryside . . . / the heart becomes melodious and romantic . . . // Even the love complete has a tragic meaning; / in the gaze of impassioned eyes / the dream of life floats, immense and nostalgic . . . // we find slow hands in our hands . . . / we find breasts brushing against our arms, / we find mute lips on our lips . . ." (PLP 1406). This poem is part of the section on *Melancolía* (*Melancholy*, published in 1912) dedicated to Louise Grimm de Muriedas, a cultivated North American who, as Howard Young discovered, introduced Juan Ramón to the work of various English poets.

Jiménez's exposure to English (and American) poetry is certainly one of the contributing factors to the stunning change that overcomes his work after 1913. The dreamy sentimentalism and self-indulgent pessimism are gone, replaced by precision, deliberate control and cerebral rigor. "Intelligence, give me / the exact name of things!" ⁴ is one of his more famous poems of this time. It is as though Juan Ramón reacted utterly against his former poetic personae. Instead of failure, he now encounters (in the figure of his wife Zenobia) a love that is ideal: "All roses are the same rose; / love!, the unique rose; / and all's contained in it, / brief image of the world, / love, the unique rose" (LP 909). He now sees in the real what was before considered eternally elusive.

Jiménez acquired a reputation for the metaphysical (existential) reach of his poetry. His *Diario de un poeta recién casado* (*Diary of a poet newlywed*, 1916) introduced into Hispanic poetry a poetic subject struggling with the chaos and absurdity of contemporary life who nevertheless quests for integration and harmony. We read the sea symbol in his *Diary* as indicative of poetic thought at the beginning of this "modern" age experiencing the disintegration of all cherished values and ideals: "It seems, sea, that you're struggling / — oh endless disorder, unceasing iron! — / to find yourself, or for me to find you" (LP 259).

Jiménez acquired the reputation for being a fastidious elitist in matters poetic. He is a "high-modern," in the

manner of Valéry (and Mallarmé) and Yeats. In this persona, Juan Ramón sees himself as living only for his poetry: "Poetry; dew / of each dawn, child / of each night" (LP 881). He becomes an entity that creates, oblivious to temporal flow: "To create myself, to recreate myself, to empty myself, until / he who goes dead, from me, one day, / to earth, will not be me" (LP 1003).

Related to this ideal is Jiménez's struggle to overcome his fear of death (a frequent topic in the early poetry and one that brought him much attention). Juan Ramón achieved renown by claiming "To die is only to look within" (LP 899) and that "Death is an ancient mother of ours, / our first mother, who loves us through all others, century in, century out / and never, never forgets us." (LP 1088). The poet, in this second phase of his work, appears to be in complete control of all he touches, the master of his universe, and that, in general, is Jiménez's reputation as a poet today.

There is, however, a third Jiménez, one that emerges more clearly in the poetry written in exile after 1936. In this period, we hear, as Yeats might have remarked, the voices of an ecstatic "saint" alternating with those of a sceptic "hunchback." The ecstatic and visionary poetry is encountered in, for example, *Animal de Fondo* (*Animal of depth*, 1949). The vision in the poem "Soy animal de fondo" ("I'm an animal of depth")—an image Ezra Pound used in the *Cantos*—is one of transcendence linked to temporal flow, an immanent transcendence, of the beyond flourishing with the here and now. These two "realities" fuse because the poet has cultivated both throughout his lifetime. The poem begins: "In the depth of air' (I said) 'I am', / (I said) 'I'm an animal with depth of air' (on land), / now on sea; shot through, like air, by a sun / that's a coal up there, my outside, and lights up for me / with its coal my second destined ambit" (LP 1339).

In competition with this ecstatic visionary is the sceptic, the doubter, who in "Río-mar-desierto" ("River-sea-desert"), after Shelley and Yeats, contemplates with equanimity the "detaining of his wave" ("la ola detenida"), who experiences the river of his life changing into desert sand. But such philosophical resignation is absent in 1954, in the "Third Fragment" of a long prose poem called *Espacio* (*Space*); the poetic voice here cries to its consciousness: "Doesn't it pain you to leave me? . . . Didn't you like my life? I searched and found your essence for you. What substance can the gods give to your essence that I couldn't give you? I have already told you: 'The gods had no more substance than what I had.'"⁵

The reader must surely hear Blake in these lines, and indeed this is one of the topics Howard Young discusses in "The Substance of the Gods," one of the seven sections he devotes to his study of Blake in Juan Ramón. Young is able to demonstrate that Blake's impact is still felt by what we termed the "third" Jiménez. Shelley is more important in the first period of his work; then Yeats

takes over (Jiménez read Yeats' essays on Shelley). Though Yeats is present in the third phase, Young amply demonstrates the parallels with Blake.

Young's study begins with Shelley because, as Young discovered, Shelley was the first of the three that Juan Ramón read. He read him in a Spanish translation, published by "the British hispanophile Leonard Williams" in 1904, which contained *A Defence of Poetry*, "On Love," and "A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients Relative to the Subject of Love." Young analyzes the passages marked off by Juan Ramón, and he also discusses his subsequent attempts to translate a few poems (e.g. "Mutability" and "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty"). Young's thesis is that the Platonism of the *Defence*, together with the Platonic idealism prevalent in contemporary schools of Spanish philosophy, encouraged Jiménez to overcome his *modernista* heritage. Shelley is read as helping to convince Juan Ramón that poetry is unquestionably the form "Beauty" chooses to take in this world, and moreover, that the poet, in the moment of the poem, sees "Beauty," and therefore "Good," more clearly than any other sentient being. Jiménez was dimly aware of these ideals when he first began writing, as the "Water-lilies' Symphony" (the first quatrain of which is cited above) implies in the image of a poet suffering to create Beauty and Love. Later, the idealism becomes clearer to him and he expresses it more subtly, as a poem from *Laberinto* (published 1913) reveals: "Like a quiet river, on the paper, the brow / reflects, sadly, the words, / that vibrate in its heavens, like the golden notes / of a labyrinth of bells. . . ." Words have become musical notes that form a vague piece of architecture that contains "something from the beyond, that reaches life / along a path of nostalgia" (PLP 1273). The style here more befits a symbolist, and the idealism is recognizably Platonic.

Howard Young shows that Shelley's thoughts on love also impressed Jiménez. He goes on to note that the Spanish poet shared Shelley's ideals about woman, and he proposes the fascinating interpretation that the Spanish poet's numerous maidens be read as ideal projections of the elusive antitype. There is indeed an array of "beloveds" in Juan Ramón's early phase, and to read them as a desire to fill the vacuum within, to suggest that they are part of the narcissistic search for the "other," is to stimulate future readings of the poet's work.

In addition, Young maintains that Shelley's transcendental attitude toward love, in a "Discourse on the Manner . . .," would have helped free Jiménez from the "unadulterated sensuality" that was part of his poetic patrimony (through the Nicaraguan, Rubén Darío) but with which Jiménez never felt at ease. Young also suggests that in Jiménez's poetry there is a development of the "veiled maiden" symbol; the veils are removed and "ideal nakedness," not disillusion, is experienced. At the end of one of his famous poems "Vino, primero, pura, /

vestida de inocencia" ("She came, first, pure, / dressed in innocence"), whose parallels with Yeats's "A Coat" are taken up later by Young, the poet exclaims: "And she took off her tunic, / and appeared completely naked . . . / O passion of my life, naked / poetry, mine forever!" (LP 555). This "lifelong quest for the spirit of beauty," Young notes, reaches a "joyous conclusion" in *Animal of depth*.

If Juan Ramón's interest in Shelley faded around 1920, his fascination with Yeats and Blake increased. Yeats, of course, was more or less a contemporary, and Jiménez certainly considered him, with reverence, as a peer whose interests were compatible (witness their enthusiasm for Tagore). Jiménez bought and read Yeats's dramas, his essays and his poems. He read them in English with the help of his wife, who translated Yeats's early plays into Spanish with Yeats's permission. (Nothing was ever published, but *The Countess Cathleen* survives.) Jiménez himself translated about a dozen poems, some of which were published (in the 1940s). Juan Ramón liked a little known "Preface" Yeats wrote for three of his plays, and adapted from it the notion of "spontaneous simplicity" when he was trying to explain his own "naked poetry." For Jiménez, "spontaneous simplicity" is captured in art only after prolonged and intensive reworking.

Like Yeats, Jiménez was fascinated by the "rose" and its connotative power. Young shows that he knew "The Rose of All the World" and Yeats' essay on "Magic." Jiménez used the rose much more extensively than Yeats but was never as committed to the occult (despite, as Young has discovered, being a sensitive medium when he was a student). In later life Jiménez would refer to "Destiny," and Young shows that Yeats discussed this in *Per Amica Silentia Lunae*, a work the Spanish poet knew. Jiménez must in fact have read more of Yeats than we can know (that is, more than his libraries hold today). He cites from "Crazy Jane Talks to the Bishop," for instance, in *Space*, but we have no record of his having read this poem. "Love in the palace of excrement" is how he recalled the lines, as though they had been transfixed in his mind for some time. My own suspicion is that the impact Yeats made was stronger than Young would allow in his study.

But with Blake, Young's perspective broadens—he sees Jiménez as bringing to a conclusion, in the 1950s, the tradition of the poet as visionary humanist, which Blake began at the dawn of the nineteenth century. Young writes that "Blake is the Modern prophet of the imagination divine, who also worshipped *lo desnudo* (the naked)," and adds that "Just as Blake signals the opening of modern phase of this tradition of the poet qua divinity, so the *dios deseado y deseante* (god desired and desiring) announces its conclusion. For as Pablo Neruda said in Stockholm some twenty years after the publication of *Animal of depth*, 'El poeta no es un 'pequeño dios.'" ["Poets are not 'little gods.'"] For this reason, Young offers in his final sixty pages a comparison of parallel concerns in Jiménez and Blake.

Young acknowledges that Jiménez would have been a naive reader of Blake, as he could not have deciphered the symbolism. Despite this, he "carefully read nearly all the lyrical canon of Blake," beginning around 1916 with Quiller-Couch's *Oxford Book*, and continuing in 1927 when the Cambridge Hispanist J. B. Trend gave him Blake's collected poetry and prose. Young shows that Juan Ramón translated "The Tyger," "To the Muses," "A Poison Tree," "The Sick Rose," and "The Little Black Boy," as well as intending to translate two dozen or more (including nothing less than *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*). We also learn that Juan Ramón valued Blake's "bold nudes" and that on a copy of "The Temptation of Eve" he wrote "Influencia de Blake" ("Influence of Blake").⁶ Jiménez himself drew nude figures and found in the naked woman a symbol of complete fulfillment.

For Hispanists, all of this information is novel. It was known that Jiménez translated a few poems and made a few references to Blake, but the extent of his interest is astounding. It confirms, at least for this reader, a point that Howard Young is tacitly making: that Jiménez was far too original a poet to remain satisfied with his own "latin" poetic tradition (Jiménez's word). His passion for exploring this alien tradition—Young is more circumspect, for, as we noted, he calls it an "attachment"—was dictated by his need to survive as a poet. His Spanish and French literary inheritance stifled him, and he discovered in the "northern" lyric (his word) sufficient inspiration to keep him alive poetically. The "anxiety of influence" begins to take on strange proportions. We mention only the poets, but there are the real individuals from this alien tradition who also contributed in their incidental ways: Leonard Williams, Louise Grimm, and J. B. Trend we have mentioned; and there was also Lennox Robinson (the director of the Abbey Theatre after Yeats).

Literary history must yield to literary criticism, and that is how the book ends. Young compares Blake and Jiménez, to show, I think, that Jiménez is unjustly underrated as a European "modern." Juan Ramón shared with Blake the belief that "imagination is all." He held this idealism until the last years of his life. He shared with Blake, especially in his later work, "God desired and desiring," the experience of Eternity in the here and now, not in some "indefinite heaven of Platonic abstraction." As in Blake, Young notes, in Jiménez the "childlike" forms an integral part of his final vision, into which, notes Young, Juan Ramón incorporates the "innocence, freshness, and suspicion of divinity . . . that clings to children." As far as nakedness is concerned, Young argues that though the naked human body is put to similar symbolic use by Jiménez, the Spanish poet was never as comfortable with it as Blake was. And finally, in discussing Blake's conviction that the human mind itself creates that which is divine, Young refers to Juan Ramón's cry

that "The gods had no more substance than what I have" and argues that in his later work Jiménez is struggling to integrate such apocalyptic humanism with his earlier and deeply entrenched Platonism. Though we at times see him as "shoring fragments against his ruins," we also see, with Young, Juan Ramón bringing to a successful conclusion Blake's prophecies that art is a religion, that the artist's is a divine calling, that the human form be glorified and life deified, and that man encounter paradise, discover immanent and transcendent gods, within the human mind.

Juan Ramón Jiménez was perhaps the first European in this century to discover Blake's importance. The Spanish surrealists in the 1920s saw Blake as a surrealist, and Jiménez argued against this view. Students of Blake today might be intrigued by what they see as Jiménez's "misreading" of their poet, but students of Jiménez, especially those who see him as much more than a "Peninsular" poet, will be long in debt to Howard Young for this challenging reassessment of a poet who deserves to be read with the major European "moderns" of this century.

¹ "Anglo-American Poetry in the Correspondence of Luisa and Juan Ramón Jiménez," *Hispanic Review*, 44 (1976), 1-26. See also, by Howard Young, *Juan Ramón*

Jiménez, Columbia Essays on Modern Writers No. 28 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), and *The Victorious Expression: A Study of Four Contemporary Spanish Poets* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966).

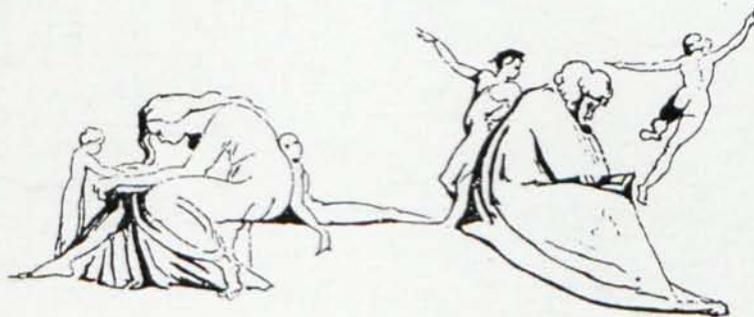
² H. R. Hays, *Selected Writings of Juan Ramón Jiménez* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, 1957); Eloise Roach, J. R. J. *Three Hundred Poems, 1903-1953* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962).

³ Juan Ramón Jiménez, *Primeros Libros de Poesía*, ed. Francisco Garfias, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1967), p. 1467. Further references are included in text and abbreviated as *PLP* followed by page. Translations from Spanish are mine throughout the text.

⁴ Juan Ramón Jiménez, *Libros de Poesía*, ed. Agustín Caballero, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1967), p. 553. Further references are included in text and abbreviated as *LP* followed by page.

⁵ Juan Ramón Jiménez, *En el otro costado*, ed. Aurora de Albornoz (Madrid: Júcar, 1974), pp. 82-83.

⁶ Jiménez's "Temptation of Eve" was a black and white reproduction of this water color, which he cut from *The New York Times Book Review*, 20 Nov. 1927, p. 2. In his discussion of the nude figure, Young refers to "Glad Day," "Urizen Creating" and "Albion Adoring the Crucified Christ" (pp. 220-30). He also notes that Jiménez had a copy of Philippe Soupault's 1928 study *William Blake*, which contains "fifty plates with a wide range of samples from Blake's production."



Anthony Blunt
1907–1983