The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

PLATES AND PRINTINGS

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is the only undated and unsigned illuminated book besides the early tractate *All Religions are One* and the late broadsheet *On Homers Poetry* [and] *On Virgil.* The paper trail is faint. Blake mentions the *Marriage* only once, sixth in the list of works advertised for sale in 1793: 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, in Illuminated Printing. Quarto, with 14 designs, price 7s. 6d.' (E 693, K 207). In later years he does not list the *Marriage* among the books available for sale in his letters to either Dawson Turner (9 June 1818) or George Cumberland (12 April 1827), where he mentions several other illuminated books.

Without an informative title page, the *Marriage* has had to be dated by other means. Perhaps the most often cited parameters have been c.1790-3. The earlier date is firmly, if not certainly, based on a bit of evidence in Blake's hand. In copy F, reproduced here, above the first line on plate 3 he penned in '1790' in order to anchor a complex allusion to the 'thirty-three years since' 1757, the date of Blake's birth and the Swedenborgian Last Judgment. The evidence for the later dates, usually 1792 or 1793, is far more questionable. Arguments for such dates have been advanced from several hypotheses, including, among others, the pattern of Blake's intellectual evolution, the course of the French Revolution, Blake's differences with the Swedenborgian community in London, his relations with the circle of radicals around bookseller-publisher (and Blake's someútime employer) Joseph Johnson, various literary influences that were only possible after certain dates, the presumably time-consuming requirements of illuminated printing, and so on. Erdman, for example, settles on a completion date of 1792-3 'from evidence of historical allusions in the "Song of Liberty" ' (E 8o1), and Bentley suggests that Blake's 'ambivalent attitude toward the New Jerusalem Church and the rapid progress of political developments after 1790 may have protracted the etching of the work from 1790 to 1793' *(Writings* 1:692).

David Bindman has maintained to the contrary that 'the evidence of artistic style points to the whole book as having been completed about 1790' (*Graphic Works* 470; see also Blunt 52n). Again, sound prima facie evidence supports the 1790 date, while arguments for longer production times are weak. As Bentley's comment indirectly indicates, it is difficult to see why a work of twenty-seven etched plates should take several years to complete, and specific evidence of a late completion date is wanting. There are no positive references to events or literary works later than 1790. The most concrete evidence for a date of 1793 derives from 'Our End is come' (supplementary illustration 1). That print, dated on the plate 5 June 1793, was at some point bound as a frontispiece with copy B, one of the earliest copies of the *Marriage* to be printed. 'Our End' was not, however, 'integrally printed with copy B' as Bentley claims (*Writings* 1:692), nor is this leaf 'conjugate with the succeeding leaf' (Bentley, *Blake Books* 287n). In fact, 'Our End' and the *Marriage* are in different media, intaglio and relief, that require different kinds of printing. They could not be printed together. Blake may have 'intended it to form part of *Marriage*' (Bentley, *Blake Books* 287n), at least part of this one copy. He may have sold copy B - unlike all other copies - with a frontispiece, or an owner may have added the frontispiece later. In either case, 'Our End is come' cannot establish a 1793 date for the *Marriage,* because copy B and its frontispiece were printed separately.

That being said, there are clear indications that the *Marriage* was not begun and finished overnight. Blake's treatment of his lower-case g's - with the serif on the right, on the left, or missing - which Erdman offered as positive evidence for dating the illuminated books has actually turned out to be considerably less dependable, or at least considerably more complex, than it first appeared (see 72, above). All three g's are, in any case, used in the *Marriage,* suggesting etching over some stretch of time. Moreover, on some plates, such as the Argument (plate 2), Blake uses upright roman lettering, and on others, such as plate 4, he uses slanted italic lettering (in both of these, however, the g's all have serifs on the right). Plate 7 - where the Proverbs of Hell begin - has both styles of lettering, and serifs on g's pointing in both directions in a single line (line 1).

The changes in lettering may indicate different etching sessions and materials (a change of varnish solution and pen nib can produce a change in the appearance of letters) without indicating the passage of years. As for the serifs of Blake's g's, they did change over time, but the changes, properly construed, do not support a late date for the *Marriage* but rather a sequence of production - of a first, second, and third group of plates - that happened swiftly and was probably completed in 1790. Blake's methods, too, were far more efficient than his critics have often imagined (see general Introduction 9-11). Altogether, the best evidence suggests that the twenty-seven plates of the *Marriage* took him months rather than years.

The flexible, autographic methods of illuminated printing allowed Blake to work directly on the plate. Without fair copies of his texts,

preliminary sketches of his designs, or mockups (see general Introduction 10 and the discussion of *Thel* 71), he had to compose the plates within discrete textual units, such as chapters, in sequence because he could not know precisely where one would end and the next would begin. Working in short units, however, of a plate or two, he could compose the units in any sequence and arrange them afterward. Several episodes in the *Marriage* are complete on a single plate; others consist of two (plates 12-13), three (plates 25-7), four (plates 21-4), or five plates (plates 16-20), and the longest is six (plates 5-10). The evidence of the g-serifs suggests that Blake composed in three main groups: plates 1-3, 11-13, 21-4 have rightúfacing serifs; plates 5-10 have a mixture; plates 4, 14-20, 25-7 have left-facing serifs. The discrete textual units within these three main compositional groups could have been executed in any order (plates 21-4, for example, before the Argument on plate 2).

'A Song of Liberty', plates 25-7, may have originated as a separate work. It has often been suggested that they are fundamentally different from plates 1-24, which are themselves generally continuous despite their sometimes apparently arbitrary order. The pseudo-musical genre, mythic characters, elemental setting, and diurnal plot of 'A Song of Liberty' are unprecedented in the *Marriage,* and the slightly enlarged script and numbered elements of poetic prose set these plates apart from previous ones. But since the *Marriage* was designed to accommodate a great deal of variety, it is not surprising that Blake decided it could accommodate 'A Song of Liberty'. There is no reason to suppose that it was independently 'engraved in 1792' (Bloom, *Marriage* 22). The mood and matter are at least as appropriate to the French Revolution of late 1789-90 as to the 1792 battle of Valmy with which Erdman wished to connect it *(Blake: Prophet* 152n7, 192). Nor was the 'Song' 'sometimes' included with the 'greater work' (Bloom, *Marriage* 22). Not only is the 'Song' bound with all copies of the *Marriage*; all copies of the 'Song' are also to be found in copies of the *Marriage* except two proof copies of the 'Song' in black ink (L and untraced M). Both sets of proofs were acquired by John Linnell, which indicates that they remained with Blake from 1790 until at least 1818, when the two men met, and were never issued separately.

Blake probably etched and printed the *Marriage* shortly after *Songs of Innocence* and *The Book of Thel* but before he began etching the forty-five plates for Salzmann's *Elements of Morality,* the first eighteen of which are dated 1 October 1790. Unlike the preceding books, *Innocence* and *Thel,* however, and the two succeeding books, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* and *America a Prophecy,* the *Marriage* appears to have been printed in only a few copies in the course of a lifetime. By the time of his prospectus of 1793, Blake had already printed at least copies A, B, C and H. These, along with the proofs of plates 21-4 (copy K) and the proofs of 'A Song of Liberty' (copies L and untraced M), are the only extant copies from the first printing sessions (*c.* 1790). Blake printed the twenty-seven plates, which average about 15.1 x 10.2 cm., on both sides of the leaf, probably two plates at a time on aligned leaves to help him align facing designs such as plates 10 and 11. (He later used the backs of the *Marriage* plates for *The Book of Urizen.)* He printed copy A in yellow ochre and copy C in various greens. He coloured both copies in the simple style of the first copies of *Thel*, *Innocence*, and *Visions.*

Using the same inks and adding four others, he printed the impressions that form copies B and H - the only copies of any illuminated book with pages systematically printed in different coloured inks. Copy B remained unwashed (supplementary illustration 6). He eventually coloured copy H, however, presumably for Linnell, who acquired it in 1821. By rewriting its texts with pen and ink in various colours (supplementary illustration 7), Blake managed both to ornament the copy and to salvage some otherwise illegible passages.

About 1794 he printed copies E and F in a light grey-black ink (except for plates 22, 25-7, in a light brown). Inking both the relief surfaces and the etched shallows, and using heavy pressure on his press, he colour printed the plates on one side of the leaf only (for colour printing, see general Introduction 12). We have reproduced the finer of the two colour-printed copies, F, which once belonged to Thomas Butts, Blake's major patron. The colour-printed copies were followed *c.*1795 by copy D, printed as part of a deluxe set of illuminated books on folio-size paper (supplementary illustration 10). Copy D was printed in various shades of green ink, with black ink for shading in the designs. In 1796 he masked the texts on plates 11, 14, 16, and 20, and colour printed only the designs for his Small Book of Designs.

He did not print the *Marriage* as a whole again, however, until *c.*1818 (copy G) and 1827 (copy I). These two, in Blake's last style of production, were printed in orange (G) and red ink (I), given frame lines, and coloured elaborately. Furthermore, he inked and printed the plate borders that he had wiped clean on all previous copies. On plates 10, 11, 15, and 20 (supplementary illustrations 3-4; see related effects in supplementary illustration 8), these borders add rock and cave formations that mirror the literary imagery of lien as a stony landscape, the human body as a rock penetrated by chinks and caverns, and the processes of relief etching.

Blake printed copy G of the *Marriage* with copies of five other illuminated books, most of which had not been printed in more than twenty years. He used the same inks, paper, printing format, and palette for all the books, and he altered the order of plates in all. In the *Marriage,* he changed the placement of two Memorable Fancies, thus creating a substantially different sequence of plates: 1-11, 15, 14, 12-13, 16-27. The revised

sequence that Blake created by reordering plates 11-16 is reproduced in supplementary illustrations 3-8. This variant order juxtaposes the prophetic voices of Isaiah and Ezekiel (plates 12-13) with the 'Giants who formed this world into its sensual existence' (16: 1-2); and, by changing the placement and reversing the order of plates 14 and 15, creates two new and dramatically different textual units (plates 11 and 15, plates 14 and 12-13). Although Blake's revised plate order in copy G also has visual consequences - chiefly the grouping of rock and cave formations in the designs of plates 10, 11, and 15 - these cannot be seen in supplementary illustrations 3-8 because the plates that we reproduce are not exclusively from copy G but from five different copies (B, E, G-I), chosen to display a range of interesting variants in colouring and printing.

Of the six illuminated books Blake printed in 1818, he reprinted only *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (six times) and the *Marriage* (once). This copy (I) of the *Marriage,* along with *Songs* copy X, were both apparently produced for Thomas Wainewright in the spring of 1827, the year Blake died. Copy I was probably the only copy of the *Marriage,* and one of the few copies of any illuminated book, ever commissioned.

CONTEXTS AND THEMES

Although *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* was virtually ignored in the earliest accounts of Blake, it has held a special place ever since his prestige began to increase under late Victorian sponsorship. In Alexander Gilchrist's 1863 biography, the cornerstone of Blake's modern reputation, the *Marriage* began to attract superlatives, and, in the first book of Blake criticism (1868), Algernon Swinburne raised the appreciation several notches to hail the *Marriage* as the 'greatest of all his books'. He located the special character of the *Marriage* in its odd combination of 'high poetry and spiritual speculation' (204) with audacity and extravagant humour. Among the works reproduced here, its mood is closest to the disputatious confidence of *All Religions are One* and *There is No Natural Religion.* Solutions to the human illusions of several millenia are right at hand: 'the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul, is to be expunged; this I shall do, by printing in the infernal method' (14:11-13). The voice of the enterprising narrator is usually positive to the point of certainty: 'Now hear a plain fact ... And now hear the reason ... Have now another plain fact' (22:2-12). His bold initiative simply overrides the opposition: 'I have also; The Bible of Hell: which the world shall have whether they will or no' (24:9-10). The *Marriage,* provocative, mocking, sexy, pushy, and playful, bristles with such rebellious optimism. Its gumption is never exposed as bravado, and, although it hammers mercilessly on Emanuel Swedenborg and his 'angelic' followers, the mockery is never disillusioned but youthfully, cheerfully antagonistic to foolish conventionality. 'A Song of Liberty', the three plates of triumphant prophecy at the end of the *Marriage,* confirms the narrator's certitude by expelling tyrants from the political order and declaring 'Empire is no more!' and 'every thing that lives is Holy' (27:10,21).

For readers who want to know what they are reading, however, the *Marriage* is less reassuring. Swinhurne seems to have felt no urge to classify it. But at least since 1924, when S. Foster Damon called it a 'scrap-book of Blake's philosophy' whose 'only fundamental unit' is 'the author's coherence of doctrine' *(Philosophy* 88), its genre and structure have been perceived as its most distinctive, most unsettling primary features. It advertises its miscellaneous character in a parade of sixteen assorted units. 'The Arguent' (plate 2) is in verse, the rest (mostly) in prose, which erupts in short bursts, some titled, some not, some theological or philosophical, others proverbial, others variously narrative (myths of origin, interviews, mock travelogues, conversion stories), all highly assertive. The handful of literary headings provide little guidance; they include 'The Argument', 'The voice of the Devil', 'Note' (three), 'A Memorable Fancy' (five), 'Proverbs of Hell', and, to end, 'A Song of Liberty', which shifts to mythopoetic prose and finishes with a 'Chorus'.

'A Memorable Fancy' is a designation shared by five brief episodic narratives that have few if any characters or settings in common. Time and space are freely manipulated: the narrator travels to hell and back, hangs over abysses with an angel, and dines in the approximate present with Isaiah and Ezekiel, while the order of events and the relation of one narrative space to another are seldom specified. And to speak of 'the narrator' is only a convenience, there being in fact several voices, including the 'I' who reports a journey to hell to gather proverbs (plates 6-7), the 'voice

of the Devil' labelled only on plate 4, and the third-person narrators of the opening Argument and closing Song.

Though some readers have not bothered to pigeonhole these 'varied and pregnant fragments' (Gilchrist (1880) 1:78), others have seen the fractured discontinuities of the *Marriage* as a problem. Most solutions have involved some form of the claim that the *Marriage* is far more coherent than it looks. Three years after Damon called the *Marriage* a scrapbook, Max Plowman first identified a structural rhythm: 'a poem as prologue' (plate *2);* 'a prose argument composed in six chapters', each one delimited by pictures (plates 15-16, for example); and 'a song as epilogue' (plates *25-7)* (Plowman xxiii).

Numerous critics have followed Plowman in the attempt to distinguish a structure and classify it: anatomy, bible, manifesto, primer, prophecy, testament. [1] Even in the face of insightful criticism, however, it has proven impossible to shake the impression of the *Marriage* as 'about as heterogeneous as one could imagine', a 'structureless structure' (Ferber, *Poetry of Blake 89-go).* The most help for readers who want to take both its tidy and untidy aspects into account has come from satire, a genre unperturbed by literary impurity and used to operating in the spirit of disruption. [2] Blake had been drawn to satire before. In 1784-5 he drafted *An Island in the Moon,* a raucous sendup of middleúclass London intellectual life in 'Great confusion & disorder' (E 458, K 54)*,* as the narrator observes at one point. Though humour, parody, and satire are never entirely absent from the illuminated books, they show up frequently among his other writings, in the Notebook and elsewhere. The *Marriage* can be a useful reminder, especially for readers prejudiced by expectations of unsullied 'mysticism' and 'prophecy', that wit and irony may be lurking beneath the least likely Blakean surfaces.

As intellectual satire, the *Marriage* fits reasonably well into the category called Menippean or Varronian satire, or sometimes anatomy, and fits best, perhaps, into the subcategory identified with the Greek prose satirist Lucian of Samosata. (AD *c.*125-200), whose works such as *Dialogues of the Dead, Voyage to the Lower World,* and *The True History* (3rd ed. in English, 1781*)* exemplify the Lucianic 'News from Hell' type (Tannenbaum). Satire is parasitic and opportunistic; to drain its victims of their dignity, even the gentler forms will violate rules of literary good behaviour. But Menippean satire flaunts the kind of diversity that is displayed all across the literary and graphic face of the *Marriage.* Its disjointed structure is largely a function of its oppositional stance. The satirist pounds away from this angle and that, with tools of various sizes and kinds; the common factor in the attacks is the object of demolition, Emanuel Swedenborg, Swedish scientist - polymath really - and religious visionary.

Swedenborg died in 1772*,* when he was 84 and Blake was 14. He died not in Sweden, however, but in London, where he found publishers, translators, and followers who, after his death, organized themselves into Swedenborgian congregations of the New Church, or Church of the New Jerusalem. Swedenborg's works circulated widely, first anonymously in Latin and then, gradually, in national languages, not only among Swedenborgians *per se* but also, as early as the 1760s and 70s, among advanced European intellectuals, including Kant, Lavater, and Goethe. Swedenborg developed a considerable following among French Illuminati, who added his works to a heady mixture of Freemasonry, alchemistry, animal magnetism, and magic. But in Blake's time the most significant groups of organized Swedenborgians were in England. In the late 1780s they founded the first independent congregation - the origin of the international New Church that still exists today- and in 1789 held a General Conference that William and Catherine Blake attended (Bentley, *Blake Records* 35).

In his early career Swedenborg was absorbed with scientific and technical issues in astronomy and mathematics, physiology, biology, and psychology. But these empirical investigations were always crossed with philosophy and religion and a deep speculative concern with ultimate questions, such as how the existence and immortality of the soul might be demonstrated to the senses of the body. In 1749, at the age of 61, he began his new career as a visionary and spiritual leader with the anonymous publication of the first of eight volumes of *Arcana coelestia* ('heavenly secrets', 1749-56) in London.

In 1748 he saw the number 57 in a vision that he did not understand until, in 1757, he beheld a Last Judgment involving the destruction of 'Babylon' (signifying the degenerate Christian church) in storms and fire, the expulsion of its population into a black lake, and the formation over them of a dark cloud in the shape of a gigantic dragon (compare *Marriage* plates 3, 18-19). In the place of the old church emerged the New Church, new especially in its insistence on the individual and mental constitution of spiritual events 'there is a last judgment when He comes to any man whatever in particular' *(Arcana* n. 900). In terms like those of the Book of Revelation, he conflated the New Church with the opening of a new heaven, the appearance of the New Jerusalem, and the second coming of the Messiah. [3]

The dates aligned fortuitously: 1757 was the year of Blake's birth; 1790, the probable year of the *Marriage,* was the year of his thirty-third birthday and also an especially lively year among the London Swedenborgians. The first number of the *New Jerusalem Magazine* was published; in a dispute over concubinage the London congregation expelled six members, including the editors of the magazine; and Swedenborg's London tomb was probably opened twice that year to see whether he had left the normal human remains (he had, and they smelled very foul) (Paley, 'New Heaven'). By 1790 Blake was ready to move beyond Swedenborg, so the coincidence of events became a satirical opportunity. In the year of Swedenborg's unresurrection, Blake, at the age of Jesus's resurrection, could reveal (in the manner of Swedenborg) that 'the Eternal Hell revives. And lo! Swedenborg is the Angel sitting at the tomb: his writings are the linen clothes folded up' *(Marriage* 3: 2-5).

Blake's intellectual divorce from Swedenborg followed intense efforts at union. Three of Swedenborg's translated works with Blake's annotations are extant; he very probably read more. In addition, though Blake's indirect knowledge of Swedenborg is diflicult to estimate, we may reasonably presume that he gleaned a great deal from informal conúversations (such as those satirized in *An Island in the Moon),* formal meetings (a Theoúsophical Society preceded the Church - 'as was asserted in the society', Blake writes (E 608, K 96)), and the General Conference of 1789. [4]

Much about Swedenborg's later work would have appealed to a free spirited, unchurched, but profoundly religious mind such as Blake's. Swedenborg's project had the air of intellectual daring: Enlightenment rationalism and science consort shockingly with vision and religious enthusiasm. Swedenborg ventured to think in titillating combinations - sex and religion - and he domesticated intimidating topics, such as hell and heaven, by dramatizing them as scenes of intellectual engagement. His visions had the power to compensate readers for their (considerable) patience with the vicarious thrills of all-you-ever-wanted-to-know interviews with experts, including the inhabitants of hell, heaven, and other planets. He struck many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century intellectuals as a revolutionary thinker to be reckoned with, and he had a powerful stake in several of the provocative issues that roused Blake. No wonder Swedenborg gave Blake pause, no wonder Blake thought he might have found a kindred spirit.

The Marriage of Heaven and Hell explicitly presents itself as an attack on Swedenborg. Even Blake's title conjugates two of Swedenborg's, *De coelo ... et de inferno* and *De amore conjugiali.* [5] In the latter an angel shows Swedenborg a paper inscribed *The Marriage of Good and Truth,* which deteriorates (n.115). Nonetheless, the extent to which the *Marriage* is saturated with Swedenborg has never been properly estimated or understood. [6] Unfortunately, we have only enough space to provide suggestive traces of documentation.

Blake's chief fascination with Swedenborg's system lay in the perception that it was anchored in human beings, that the master-terms of Swedenborg's 'correspondences', his comprehensive analogy between the natural and spiritual world, were human terms. As his London follower, translator, and publisher Robert Hindmarsh wrote in 1788, 'some great Change for the better has taken Place in the Spiritual World, or what amounts to the same Thing, *in the Minds of Men' (Last Judgment viii). 'That Heaven and Hell are from Mankind' (Last Judgment* 21) was an intellectual position that Blake very much wanted to secure for himself. Swedenborg's visions are so quotidian and so worldly that they are easily read as an allegory of human mental processes - a psychological allegory worked out by analogy with Christian doctrine and imagery. Indeed, the humanizing impulse in Swedenborg was no doubt what made him seem a distinctly modern seer, attuned to the secularizing tendencies of the age in his emphasis on the likeness of the human to the divine. The elevation of the human by means of transcendent religious metaphors was a

current of secularization into which Swedenborg's work easily flowed.

Blake concluded, however, that Swedenborg's system of analogy was anchored not in the human mind and human life but in heaven, hell, and the afterlife. By the time Blake annotated *Divine Providence* (translated 1790), he had stopped blaming others for 'perversely' misreading Swedenborg (*E* 606, *K* 94) and had started reading sceptically himself. He was now prepared to charge Swedenborg with self-contradiction, 'Priestcraft', and 'Predestination ... more Abominable than Calvins' *(E* 609-10, *K* 131, 133). As such, Swedenborg's works were an orthodox 'recapitulation' *(Marriage* 22: 9).

Blake's most effective satirical weapon against Swedenborg is best seen as a derivation from his deepest intellectual debt, to the notion of correspondences, which is as much a storytelling formula as a doctrine. Swedenborg's Memorable Relations, parodied in Blake's Memorable Fancies, demonstrate the power of correspondences to generate situations complete with characters, settings, and plots. The boredom induced by large doses of Swedenborg is a product of this system. One soon senses that, once a relatively small set of master-particulars are set in motion, everything on any given level 'corresponds' monotonously to everything on all other levels.

In more orthodox versions of the contest of heaven and hell, including Swedenborg's, the impetus of any promising story line is threatened by correspondences and by the ancillary principle of 'perpetual Equilibrium betwixt Heaven and Hell' *(Heaven and Hell* n. 590) and by the morality according to which heaven must always win: 'the Hells are continually plotting against Heaven, and exerting their hostile malice for its destruction; ... whereas the Heavens, on the contrary, make no assault on the Hells, the divine sphere proceeding from the Lord being an efflux for the salvation of all' *(Heaven and Hell* n. 595).

The satire of the *Marriage* is based largely on the proposition that Swedenborg is a sheep in wolf's clothing, the first in a long line of Blakean characters condemned for serving orthodoxy in the name of resistance. The fundamental contention is that Swedenborg amputated the dynamic principle of opposition that his system requires, leaving only the shell of original thought found in Paracelsus and Boehme, Shakespeare and Dante (all named on plate 22). It follows that the way to envigorate Swedenborg's system of analogy is to add 'contraries' (announced on plate 3) to 'correspondences' - to liberate the opposition and let it speak.

'Contraries', which are 'necessary to Human existence' and without which 'is no progression', may be accounted for variously: as Blake's contribution to a noble philosophical tradition of 'polar metaphysics' (Nurmi 73) extending from Heraclitus to Marx, for instance; or, more pragmatically, as an economical way of authorizing and structuring the adversarial resistance needed to launch this satire - contraries as the devil's version of Swedenborg's correspondences. As employed in the *Marriage,* the principle of contraries is rather paradoxical. [7] In theory, as many readers have noted, it promises a kind of dialectical symmetry, as if to provide an improved sacred code; in satirical practice, however, by undercutting the rigid orders of Swedenborgian correspondence, it chiefly serves to give the other side a voice and an opening. Christian tradition knows much of the marriage of Jerusalem and the Lamb of God; of the marriage of heaven and hell it knows not. Blake's title proclaims an impossible absurdity. Centuries of Christian story show why heaven and hell are the very prototype of opposition, founded on an absolute, universal morality. To propose a marriage is both to scandalize the name of the virtuous and to put the unalterable superhuman on a human scale where it becomes subject to revision- the aim of Blake's project.

A narrative that can lead to such a marriage has to start from disequilibrative elements in the situation. And there are such elements, because heaven and hell are less immutable and symmetrical than they may seem. As Milton tells the story in *Paradise Lost*, heaven is truly eternal, but hell is occasioned, so to speak, by a new need to house rebel angels. The duty of those new devils, furthermore, is to wreak havoc in heaven, whereas no angels ever want to re-take hell, the whole point of which, from the angels' perspective, is to accept the unacceptable forever and ever.

Under the pretext of equal treatment, the principle of contraries destabilizes the tales of torpid equilibrium generated by Swedenborg's

correspondences and creates the shift of perspective that is basic to satire. Only hell is capable of taking the view that repulsion, energy, and hate are as necessary as attraction, reason, and love, or of redefining evil as 'the active springing from Energy' (3: 12). The marriage of heaven and hell, then, would seem to be an event imaginable only from the perspective of hell. Indeed, that is how the narrative is played out in Blake's *Marriage*, which is reported from a set of infernal perspectives, as many readers have noticed. From these, Blake's narrators can exploit the unstable elements in the orthodox accounts of the dealings of heaven with hell.

The result is a kind of topsy-turvy Swedenborg, in which hell is not a degenerate mirror-image of heaven but the dynamic prototype by comparison with which heaven seems feeble, oppressive, and, most important, derivative. Angels and devils appear not in separate spheres as they do in Swedenborg but together, comparing ideas and objects of perception. Both sides may agree that Jesus is worth arguing about, but they will disagree violently over the interpretation, and the devil will win - and convert the angel to devilhood, as never in Swedenborg (plates 22-4).

The striking visual and verbal diversity of the *Marriage is* a condensed, imaginative exaggeration of the literary conglomeration deployed by Swedenborg, typically a mixture of rational discourses with biblical exegesis and visionary reports in a framework of particulars that often draw on his scientific knowledge. A small sample of passages will give some sense of how intervolved the matter and manner of the *Marriage* are with the ideas and language of Swedenborg's theosophical speculations.

In the *Marriage,* the list of three numbered 'Errors' and their 'True' 'Contraries' - '2. That Energy. calld Evil. is alone from the Body. & that Reason. calld Good. is alone from the Soul' (4:7-9) - recalls such Swedenborgian passages as the opening of *The True Christian Religion,* which baldly states that 'The Particulars of Faith on the Part of Man are these:' and then lists five numbered particulars of faith entirely devoid of contrariousness:'(3.) That evil Actions ought not to be done, because they are of the Devil, and from the Devil. (4.) That good Actions ought to be done, because they are of God, and from God' (n. 3). When Blake's 'voice of the Devil' proclaims that 'Mary has no Body distinct from his Soul for that calld Body is a portion of Soul discernd by the five Senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age' (4:13-16), lie is recollecting the Swedenborgian counter-claim that 'As all vital power ... appertains solely to the spirit, and in no wise to the body, it follows, that the spirit is truly and properly the man . . .' *(Heaven and Hell* n.433).

The rhetoric of the Memorable Fancies is likewise modelled closely on Swedenborg's Memorable Relations: 'I was once meditating about the Dragon, the Beast, and the false Prophet mentioned in the Revelations, when an Angelic Spirit appeared before me, and asked ...' *(True Christian Religion* n.188 (i.e., 187)); 'An Angel came to me and said O pitiable foolish young man! ... consider the hot burning dungeon . . . to which thou are going in such career' *(Marriage* 17:11-14). '[T]hen he said, come with me, and I will lead to the Place of their Abode, who are signified by the false Prophet . . .' *(True Christian Religion* n.188 (187)); 'I said. perhaps you will be willing to spew me my eternal lot . . .' *(Marriage* 17:15-16). Apparently inexplicable visions are transformed and decoded by similar rules: '... but suddenly at that very Instant, his interior sight was opened, whereby lie saw the same Appearances that I did, whereupon he cried out with a loud Voice, What and whence is all this! And I said, This is in consequence of Light from Heaven, which discovereth the Quality of every Form, and thus bath disúcovered the Quality of your Faith separate from the Spiritual Principle of Charity' *(True Christian Religion* n.188 (187)); '... I found my Angel, who surprised asked me, how I escaped? I answerd. All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics; for when you ran away, I found myself on a bank by moonlight hearing a harper ...' *(Marriage* 19:11-15).

Even such cursory sampling shows that Blake had mastered Swedenborg's repertory of discourses, narrative strategies, and nuances of tone and mood, and that he was prepared to compile, compress, and exaggerate them, but also to generate at a deeper level, beyond pastiche, a mock-Swedenborgianism that resists one-to-one comparisons with the source. From this mastery Blake earns literary permission, as it were, to make other voices audible - the Bible's, of course, but also Bunyan's and Milton's - without weakening his parody. The Argument's 'just

man' (2:5,17), accordingly, is a pilgrim figure less like Swedenborg's characters than like Bunyan's Christian, and the narrator's interview with Isaiah and Ezekiel (plates 12-13) is less like one of Swedenborg's Memorable Relaὐtions than like Christian's experiences in the House of the Interpreter *(Pilgrim's Progress* 161-9).

Similarly, Milton's poetry surfaces in the *Marriage* where the Bible would surely be in Swedenborg's works, which show virtually no interest in poetry. That substitution is one of the oddities of the satire on plates 5-6, which invokes 'the Devils account' as the authority for a radical inversion of the story of Satan's fall into hell: 'the Messiah fell. & formed a heaven of what he stole from the Abyss' (5:15-6:2). This episode is offered as a flashy demonstration of what can happen when some pious texts - the Book of Job, the Gospel of John, but especially Milton's *Paradise Lost* - are put through the ordeal of reading-by-contraries. Though Swedenborg is never mentioned, the rhetoric of reinterpretation here is highly reminiscent of yards of Swedenborg, compressed and presented at a dizzying pace. The satire implicitly mocks his way of portentously reexamining biblical texts with a great show of arriving at new truths only to leave readers holding 'all the old falshoods' (22:4). As reinterpreted by the fiery light of contraries, *Paradise Lost* yields an increasingly familiar tale of usurpation exposed by a series of relabellings. 'Without knowing it', Milton has hidden the tale in a code. If we can understand that 'Reason *is call'd* Messiah', 'the original Archangel ... *is call'd* the Devil or Satan', 'his children *are call'd* Sin & Death', and that in the Book of Job 'Miltons Messiah *is call'd* Satan', then we can see that the underlying expropriation of power - when 'the restrainer or reason usurps its [desire's] place and governs the unwilling' (6:13, 5:7-12,2-3) - is the outcome of a historical conspiracy that the *Marriage* intends to expose. The episode on plates 5-6 closes with a 'Note' (6:10-13) that introduces a core theme of the *Marriage,* the arts of 'poetic genius' or imagination. Reading *Paradise Lost* alongὐside Job and the Gospels hints at a meritocracy of the imagination where a 'true Poet' like Milton is 'of the Devils party', and where poets replace priests and their hierarchy of faith. The contrary of religion, then, is not atheism but art. Heaven composes the 'Bibles' that the devil blames for error; hell composes works like *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.* As plate 3 might have added: 'Note: heaven is religion, hell is art'. This productive line of thought leads in several directions: to the story of the Ancient Poets on plate 11, which accounts for religion as an illegitimate derivation from poetry, to the treatment of Isaiah and Ezekiel on plates 12-13, which reveals the true identities of these two prophets (along with King David) as ancient poets, to the elevation of Dante and Shakespeare over Swedenborg and even over Paracelsus and Boehme on plate 22. But first, in an odd turn which is one of the most interesting in the *Marriage,* the message that Milton wrote 'at liberty' when he wrote 'of Devils & Hell' leads straight back to the author, whom we left as the resurrected Jesus of the revived hell on plate 3. In the context of the true-poets theme, that scene shows one author, Blake, identified with Jesus arid Hell, revive and leave another, Swedenborg, identified with discarded cerements and an abandoned guardian angel, behind.

Thus, the mastery of Swedenborgian rhetoric that allows Blake to introduce un-Swedenborgian voices such as Bunyan's and Milton's also makes room for Blake himself. The self referential aspect of the *Marriage* is most noticeable in his resort to allegories based on human physiology and on engraving technology. These otherwise odd devices come off as inspired strokes of invention rather than peculiar distractions in part because they serve as Blake's replacement for the scientific knowledge that characteristically textures Swedenborg's accounts of the spiritual universe. Moreover, these allegories advance several of the central themes that converge on the *Marriage's* fundamental reὐdirection of attention from religion, which is cast as derivative, external, and oppressive, to art, cast as original, internal, and liberating.

Blake's graphic processes take over the allegory at least twice in the *Marriage,* on plates 6-7 and 14-15, and perhaps more (it is sometimes hard to tell, simply because the terminology of printing tools, materials, and processes is so extensive). The first Memorable Fancy (plates 6-10) is a paramount instance. Speaking a mock-Swedenborgian tongue - 'whilst I was meditating on conjugial love' *(Conjugial Love* n. 75), 'As I was walkὐing among the fires of hell' - the narrator, on a trip to hell, collects souvenirs of 'Infernal wisdom' (6:15, 20) in the form of proverbs. The satirical strategy is to put into effect Swedenborg's countless suggestions that heaven and hell are mental states. When the narrator is 'walking

among the fires of hell, delighted with the enjoyments of Genius' (6:15-16),this signifies (as Swedenborg would say) that he is engaged in creative thought. When he conies 'home; on the abyss of the five senses. where a flat sided steep frowns over the present world', he turns from the inward world of imaginative thought outward to the everyday world - opens his eyes, as it were. The flat-sided steep 'frowns' over this 'present world' because the 'abyss of the five senses' (6:22-4) is the head, the only part of the body where all five senses are located, and is thus metaphorized as a cliff - the face - with 'the chief inlets of Soul in this age' (4:15-16) figured as crevices in the rock through which the soul peers, hears, smells, tastes, and touches (see the note on 15:17-18).

The narrator sees a devil - which, under the terms of the metaphor, one would expect to find in hell, that is, inside the head - in the present world because he sees a reflection of himself, the enjoyments of whose genius he has been witnessing. The facial cliff is the border between the inner conceptions of genius and their outer executions. At this point Blake recruits his artistic medium, relief etching, to model artistic execution, which he imagines as the movement of the devil's cognitive workshop into the external world. Once there, it instantly defies that very distinction.

Metaphorically the narrator is a devil because he has hell in his head. He is 'hovering on the sides of the rock'- as if clinging to his own forehead - because he is bending over an engraver's copper plate, which is imagined as reflecting the face of the engraver. The devil is 'folded in black clouds' probably because Blake used a dark acid-resistant fluid to draw his designs; seeing his own face reflected through the patterns of dark varnish on the copper is like seeing the devil through cloud formations. He writes a sentence 'with corroding fires' (6:25-7:1) as Blake etched sentences in copper with acids.

As Blake's allegory takes a self-reflexive turn inward to his own mind, the devil's sentence pivots suddenly outward to interrogate the reader's mind: 'How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way, / Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your senses five? (7:3-4). In this challenge, as in many others like it in the *Marriage,* the narrator reframes an implicit Swedenborgian correspondence to goad the reader's assumptions: if my imagination, which your five senses hide from you, is as full of the enjoyments of genius as I am demonstrating, how do you know that all creatures on earth are not (correspondingly) delightful worlds that your five senses are too closed to perceive?

The Proverbs of Hell (plates 7-10), which include some of Blake's most often quoted words, are then offered as further provocations to the reader. The Proverbs are presented as an extension of the familiar Swedenborgian narrative logic that produces answers to the question, What do the inhabitants of [heaven, hell, Germany, Saturn] think? The satirical technique is the equally familiar one of extending the victim's logic *ad absurdum.* Swedenborg had no more use for proverbial wisdom than he had for poetry, and the Book of Proverbs is excluded from his canon of the inspired books of the Bible that he called the Word. [8] The Proverbs of Hell are at the very core of the *Marriage's* opposition to Swedenborg. They virtually define that opposition insofar as they are offered up as the literary products of hell, that is, of inspiration itself - as evidence, then, of Swedenborg's very ignorance of inspiration.

Blake's 'proverbs' are an eclectic mixture of several classifiable types of sayings, and not, by and large, proverbs in the stricter sense, though many are formulated as witty contraries to lumps of worldly wisdom of the kind that proverbs condense into unforúgettable morsels. Whereas proverbs typically counsel caution and moderation (cross that bridge when you get to it), the Proverbs of Hell operate on standards of fulfilment, hyperbolized as excess. Many of the proverbs in the Old Testament are directed at the education of young men in the devious ways of a tempting world, warning of the hazards ahead and recommending the virtue of knowing when to stop. Developing the potential, including the enticing sexual potential, in the themes of energy, delight, and desire broached in earlier plates, Blake's proverbs recommend learning by doing, including doing 'Enough! or Too much' (10:17), and doing it spontaneously with faith in an inner gospel that what one wants is what one needs.

Lest the Proverbs of Hell appear at a glance to be an unmanaged arsenal of provocations, it is worth noting how carefully constricted is their imagery, which operates in counterpoint to their ethical norms. Unexpectedly, not one of the proverbs makes any use of the supernatural imagery

associated with hell or heaven, angels and devils. Furthermore, there are no poets or painters, no printers or manufacturers, no schools, and only one hint of institutional urban life ('Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion', 8:2-3). When the proverbs are not composed in abstractions ('Exuberance is Beauty', 10:8), then they employ the spectrum of natural imagery: the human body, animals, plants, the elements, the landscape. Human life is depicted principally in terms of an agricultural or pastoral society that works out of doors ('Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead', 7:7), overlaid with an appreciative, human-centred version of contemporary aesthetics ('The head Sublime, the heart Pathos, the genitals Beauty, the hands & feet Proportion', 10:2-3). The temperance of the imagery of the proverbs seems, in fact, to be an aspect of their contrary nature, as if to say, how do you know but that a mighty devil writing with corrosive fires is an immense world of delightful wisdom? What angels perceive as the 'torment and insanity' (6:17) of hell turns into the flowers, fruits, plows, and harvests of the proverbs, just as, later, the fiery, bloody leviathan that comes roaring down on the angel and narrator in plates 17-20 turns out to be a harper singing on a river by moonlight after all - and singing another Proverb of Hell.

Blake was able to accomplish the complex rhetorical and intellectual feat of mastering, expanding, and redirecting Swedenborgian discourse with the requisite pitilessness of the satirist because lie felt intellectually betrayed, foolish for having allowed himself to be drawn so far in, annoyed at the sight of others still under the Swedenborgian spell, and superior to the lot of them. The first three are negative reactions that fortify the side of the *Marriage* that is devoted to confident rejection. But the fourth requires the development of a positive new perspective. The daring morality of the Proverbs, along with flamboyant terms such as 'energy', 'contraries', and 'progression', imparted to the *Marriage* a shock of the new that was fitting for an impertinently titled work created in the progressive spirit of a revolutionary year. In fact, the turning point may have been the early events of the French Revolution. At least the revolutionary mood of the *Marriage* - which produces the framing Argument and 'A Song of Liberty' and exuberant underúcurrents in between - is different from anything anywhere in Swedenborg. The contrast with Blake's earlier satire *An Island in the Moon* is again instructive. It concentrates its burlesque energies on criticism through ridicule; the *Marriage* carries on beyond intellectual highjinks and beyond criticism to intellectual reform and dares to appoint itself to the very position of special knowledge and spiritual authority that it denies to the Swedenborgians.

Blake's chief strategy for managing this double movement of condemnation and remedy is to create a three-way alliance between the forms of satire, sacred discourse, and, as the connecting middle term, Swedenborg's works. The forms of sacred discourse are evident in the prominence given to sacred places, characters, and language; and, most revealing, to sacred codes such as the decalogue and counter-sacred books such as 'The Bible of Hell' (24:9). The twofold thrust of the *Marriage* is reflected in its double literary heritage among the satires and the sacred books. Filing folk tales, laws, proverbs, letters, songs, life stories, prophecy, and apocalypse in one literary envelope, the Bible is as tolerant of mixtures as any Lucianic satire. In Blake's time, the most enlightened biblical criticism made two major advances: the discovery, by such scholars as Bishop Robert Lowth, of fundamental principles of literary coherence that allowed the Bible to be advertised as a literary model, and the discovery, by such scholars as Alexander Geddes, of rifts and contradictions that led to a new sense of fundamental incoherence (Essick, 'Blake, Paine'; McGann). Digesting these contraries, the *Marriage* attempts satire in the sacred manner. By assimilating the standard aims of satire, condemnation and remedy, to a Judeo-Christian pattern of fall and redemption, it becomes a kind of holy satire.

In the 1790s, that conjunction of aesthetics and religion opens rather than closes the door on a political programme. Because the languages of public debate were 'theo-political' (Essick, 'Blake, Paine' 198), the sacred discourses at the basis of Blake's satire could support his revolutionary politics. Richard Price's famous pro-Revolution sermon of 4 November 1789, answered in thunder the next year by Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* emanated from only the best remembered of many politicised pulpits. In the *Marriage*, Blake's bid to distinguish the sacred discourse of a Swedenborg from that of a Milton, or a bible of heaven from a bible of hell, becomes an attempt to distinguish radical

religious language disguising reactionary politics from radical religious language delivering radical politics.

The satirical techniques that dominate the *Marriage* are reversal and inversion, utterly familiar and conventional but superbly effective in this context because so well integrated not only with the characters, settings, and plots of the work but also with its thematic structure. Reversal is both means and end, a negative technique for condemning Swedenborg and a positive remedy for his intellectual deficiencies. Reversal and inversion provide the foundation for character alignments ('devils' and 'angels'), settings ('fire' and 'cloud'), literary genres (raising the lowly proverb to the zenith of inspiration), and plot lines: the narrator converts an angel - conversion in the *Marriage* is chiefly a matter of inversion -- into a devil by convincing him that Jesus, as a man of virtue, had to break the ten commandments (plates 22-4). (Jesus's association with reversal qualifies him for such treatment; he both predicts it - 'So the last shall be first, and the first last' (Matthew 20.16) - and exemplifies it.) Such revised appraisals are governed by the underlying metaphors of reversal, which enforce an all-or-nothing rule. By the terms of the satirical contract, as it were, Jesus cannot be revaluated as somewhat less well-behaved than the angel he is sometimes represented as being. To be truly virtuous he must be a bad boy indeed, because 'bad' is 'good'.

The approach and result are quite different from satires that mock the excesses of enthusiasts against a standard - or satirical 'norm' - of moderation. Swedenborg fails not by being excessively visionary but insufficiently visionary. The standard against which he is measured is not a sound English Christian but a Swiss alchemist-physician and an obscure German cobbler-mystic, Paracelsus and Boehme, who would normally fall among the objects of satire, not among the paragons.

Swedenborg's pretence, the main point of attack, is that lie is a true visionary with something new to tell the world when he is a mere imitation. At worst, as a pretender he is the type of hypocrite we call a plagiarist. This fundamental concern with telling originality from imitation, generally embedded in conspiratorial explanations, was always deeply characteristic of Blake's way of looking at the world. It profoundly structures the *Marriage,* as the Argument, with its villain now living in disguise as a human sneaking serpent, indicates. Plate 11 presents the heart of Blake's conspiratorial argument, that institutional religion is the powerful vestige of an ancient intellectual coup that installed an illegitimate priesthood and sent true poets into exile. Religion and art are thus presented as fundamentally hostile to one another, but they relate as counterfeit to original, where the interest of the counterfeiters is in hiding the original. They are like Jacob and Esau-Edom, brother claimants, one illegitimate and one legitimate, for the same birthright. The return of art would threaten the livelihood of priests because it would remember the forgotten 'mental deities' and expose priests as hypocrites, plagiarists who choose 'forms of worship from poetic tales' (11:10,12).

The compelling paradox of this insight, by which originality and imitation are simultaneously most alike and most different, eventually led Blake into some very winding ways. As he came to favour darker conspiracy theories to explain the dilemma of original artists (victims) in a world ruled by imitators (thieves), he produced the fantastically intricate hall-of-mirrors effects of *Milton* and *Jerusalem*. Thinking in precisely such conspiratorial terms, Blake later recast Swedenborg more sympathetically as 'strongest of men, the Samson shorn by the Churches!', a 'visionary' whom painters and poets had ignored under the malevolent influence of 'corporeal demons' (*Milton*, E 117, K 506; *Descriptive Catalogue*, E 546, K 581). In 1790, however, satire was perfectly suited to Blake's optimistic outlook. Expose a pretender like Swedenborg, the narrative suggests, for the self-deluded boaster he is revealed to be on plates 21-2; replace false labels that tell only what things 'are call'd' with true ones that say what they are; and the 'infinite' will be revealed, the rift between body and soul will be closed. Ironically, perhaps, this sanguinity may be one of the *Marriage's* most conspicuous debts to Swedenborg - no dark nights of the soul, just magic journeys hither and yon to clear up mysteries of interpretation. In the *Marriage,* no sooner is the satirical diagnosis made than the cure begins to work and the revolutionary prognosis unfolds : 'A Song of Liberty' is sung, and the enemies of oppression all join in a 'Chorus' of near-final triumph over the world's tyrants.

The prognostic, future-oriented - redemptive - aspect of Blake's narrative centres on what Northrop Frye once called the recovery of projection

('Romantic Myth'). If the problem underlying human history is as diagnosed in the story of the Ancient Poets on plate 11, a problem of externalization and forgetting that all deities reside in the human breast, then the solution is re-internalization and remembering, or 'recovery' of the 'projection' that has been allowed to grow up into a massively oppressive political complex in the outside world. Blake does not concentrate, as Thomas Paine or Edmund Burke might have done, on the absence or presence of a written constitution, or on issues of taxation and political representation. Instead his satire diagnoses the individual human body and mind as distorted in oppressive circumstances. Like the anti-clericalism of the *Marriage,* Blake's emphasis on the imprisoned, shrunken body, the body as its own dungeon, shows him participating in a common strain of pro-Revolutionary politics. In popular representations, the bodies of the Bastille captives were as darkened and narrow as the vaults where they were confined.

But rather than a Bastille-type narrative sequence in which political liberation frees individual bodies, the *Marriage* seems to expect that the liberation of bodies - described in metaphors of perceiving the infinite, for example - will bring about political liberation. Thus 'A Song of Liberty' is afterword rather than prologue. This sequence may be seen as an exasperating perversion of contemporary history, if the political liberation underway in France has, after all, inspired the confident expectation of individual mental liberation that characterizes the *Marriage.* But perhaps this analysis of the politics of the *Marriage* is too simple: the palpable presence of the French Revolution in the *Marriage* may signal the conviction that individual and collective revolutions are interdependent, that the circle of revolution can spread only through the interplay of the body human and the body politic. Perhaps that is why, as elevated as the epic militarism of the 'Song of Liberty' is, the final 'Chorus' brings its conclusions home in ways that the rest of the *Marriage* has made very familiar. The final words are not about the people and their political arrangements but about the liberation of the body from the 'bound' laid and the 'roof' built by repressive 'Priests'. As political repression registers here in bodily repression, and anti-authoritarianism in anti-clericalism, so tyrannical conspiracy registers in debauched language: let priests withdraw their 'hoarse ... curse[s]'. When what the 'tyrant ... *calls* free' and what 'religious letchery *call[s]* ... virginity' are given their real names - when they are read in the diabolical sense - then it will be possible to understand the wisdom of the *Marriage's* definitive proverb: 'every thing that lives is Holy'.

THE DESIGNS

In the opinion of Anthony Blunt, Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell is* 'not one of the most successful examples of his illumination' (50). Blunt was looking for characteristics that the *Marriage* does not offer. It is not a lavishly pictorial work, even in the most elaborately finished copies, nor does it seem to aim at beauty, though it does not lack handsome or even striking features. The proportion of illustration to text is relatively low: it has one full-page design (the title page), no frontispiece, twelve plates that combine designs and texts, and fourteen plates - more than half the total - with no designs other than small interlinear and marginal ones.

By comparison, in *The Book of Thel* two plates of eight have no designs, and in *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* none of the eleven plates lacks a design. In format the *Marriage* seems to draw on the conventions of printed books of prose rather than, say, of a series of coloured prints. With rare exceptions, such as plate 2, the Argument, the designs in the *Marriage* are enclosed in well-defined rectangular areas above or below larger blocks of prose text that run from one edge of the plate to the other. Although the unit of narration is frequently the single plate - the Argument on plate 2, for instance, and the two subsequent plates, among others - the layout of text and design is usually worked out with some attention to the appearance of facing pages, as in a bound book. Plates 14 and 15 are good examples of facing-page layout; Blake used the format, which calls for recto-verso printing of the leaves, in the first four copies of the *Marriage.* Both *Thel* and *Visions* have a larger proportion of designs to text and are far more generously laid out on the page. The bookish density of the *Marriage* is in certain respects more like that of *The Book of Urizen* (1794), whose cramped, double-column text parodies printed Bibles, though *Urizen* compensates for its crowded text with a plethora of dazzling pictures, including ten full-page ones. In the *Marriage,* though the designs

do reinforce a structural pattern (117), they do not counteract the textual farrago. Often they contribute to it, with several pictures depicting unnamed characters in unidentified places with seldom a clear relation to each other or to the characters or places of the text. The text itself is written in at least two visually distinctive scripts, one roman and the other italic. And bookishness has the last word: 'A Song of Liberty' comprises three final plates of continuous text without a major design.

Frontispiece, supplementary illustration 1: In copy B only, 'Our End is come' appears as a frontispiece. The caption presumably expresses the consternation visible on the faces of this trio of male authority figures, who are based on the similar group in *Tiriel Denouncing His Sons and Daughters,* a sketch of *c.*1789 (Butlin no. 199r). The figure on the left wears military regalia and holds a spear, the central figure wears a crown, and the figure on the right holds a sword. In connection with the *Marriage,* they dread the marriage signalled on the title page, the restoration of the 'just man' (2:17) to his rightful place - a revolution foreseen and celebrated in the fall of the 'jealous king' and 'thunderous warriors' of 'A Song of Liberty' (26:14-15).

Plate 1, title page. The frankly erotic embrace of the nude couple, presumably an angel and a devil, in the lower foreground of the design - not like anything in Swedenborg, though his writings are not without a few powerful strains of sexual fantasy - reinforces the title's promise of shocking things to come. The title-page design capitalizes on the conventional imagery of heaven and hell - such as clouds and fire for supernatural bedding - that will turn up in several other plates of the *Marriage.* But there are also several less conventional touches. The angel and devil are unclothed, unfledged, and without flute, harp, or pitchfork. 'Up' and 'down' are not clearly assigned to the top and bottom of the design. Either heaven is below the earth (like both the words 'heaven' and 'hell' in the title), alongside hell and thus its peer rather than its superior, or the clouds and flames are meeting in front of the earth, as it were, rather than distinctly above or below it. The visual cues here, as often in the *Marriage,* are ambivalent. That ambivalence, both visual and linguistic, is one of Blake's most effective satirical tools - an infernal tool, because heaven is riot built on ambivalence.

The imagery of the title page anticipates the rest of the *Marriage* in another important way. The composition of the design suggests a human head seen from the front, with trees arching to outline the top (with hair). At ground level, where earthly couples stroll and sit, a tree near the centreline suggests the bridge of a nose that separates two eye cavities; a mouth is implied by the circled 'and'. The three nouns in the title mark the progressively narrower positions of forehead, cheeks, and chin. The human figures embracing in the lower foreground, below the face, anticipate the dominant theme of the *Marriage*: '... All deities reside in the human breast' (11:15-16). The angel and devil on the title page may represent the deities, or spirits - plural and contrary, rather than the single, one-sided deity of orthodoxy - in the human breast. The direction of movement in the design, as other floating figures demonstrate, is from breast to head.

The imagery and composition of Blake's title page make further connections with Swedenborg. In visual terms, for example, the 'marriage' depicted appears to be something like a Last Judgment, an event that Swedenborg treated distinctively, not as a singular, universal happening at history's end - according to Swedenborg history and humanity go on forever - but as a special event that can occur in any human mind (and occurred in his in (1757). Instead of depicting, like Michelangelo's *Last Judgment, a* cosmic intersection that forever separates the traffic to hell from the traffic to heaven, the Last Judgment suggested by the title page of the *Marriage* joins the unjoinable.

Furthermore, the human face and form in the composition of the title page are a visualization, with satirical implications, of Swedenborg's Grand Man (*Maxiinus Homo*), the ultimate human form of the universe, comprising all harmonious societies along with the planetary systems and the fixed stars. The title-page design also seems to incorporate Swedenborg's notion that 'every Man has both angels and evil spirits attending him in the world' (*Heaven and Hell* n. 599). Thus, to the question implicit in the title - how and where could heaven and hell marry? - the design answers that their marriage would be a Last Judgment in the human mind, beneath the surface of outward events. That explains why the title is written within the

outlines of a human head that holds all of nature, and why 'heaven' as well as 'hell' is inscribed below the surface of the natural world marked by the horizontal line that runs from ear to ear, as it were.

Plate 2. The vertically organized composition of the design, though seen occasionally in other illuminated books of this period, is unique in the *Marriage,* whose plates of solid prose generally leave no side margins to accommodate major designs. The imagery of a natural physical world is also seen in no other major designs in the *Marriage* except the top third of the title page (where the vegetation seems, however, starker and perhaps stunted), which this design seems to elaborate, perhaps to suggest that such a natural world is the product of the marriages taking place beyond it, in the spiritual or mental world depicted on the title page. On the other hand, in Blake such scenes often send mixed signals: this one might depict the situation in the second stanza of the Argument - or in the fourth and fifth, after the just man has been exiled to the wilderness, leaving the villain on the planted path. Three nude figures recline among vegetation at bottom left, while in the right foreground one figure hands fruit down from the tree to another figure on the ground. She is female, but the genders of the other figures are difficult to determine. In copy C the figure in the tree appears to be female (supplementary illustration 2). But in this copy the figure may be male. Given Blake's penchant for visual personification (compare the human lily, cloud, clay, and worm in *Thel* plates 4, 6, and 7), the serpentine clothes and position may suggest the serpent handing fruit to Eve. The positions of the figures at the top and the bottom right of plate 3 are interesting variations on the position of the figure in the tree - as if to imply that they are contraries, or, more likely, that the figures on plate 3 tell the imposing 'infernal', or mental, story behind the otherwise unimposing figure on plate 2. The design for the second plate of 'The Ecchoing Green' in *Songs of Innocence* shows two figures similarly arranged, one handing grapes down to the other; Blake's later pictures of the brothers in Milton's *Comus* are also comparable in several respects. In the Thomas version, Comus watches the two boys climbing in a tree-like grapevine; in the Butts version, one brother hands grapes down to the other (Butlin nos 527.3, 528.3). Stephen Behrendt suggests that the scene represents 'developing sensual (and sexual) enjoyment' (96). In any case, the cloudless serenity of the scene is distinctly contrary to the burdened air, hungry clouds, and roaring Rintrah of the poetic text.

Plate 3. The designs revert to the elemental infernal world. At the top of the plate 'the Eternal Hell', who suggests both Blake and Christ in the text, 'revives' pictorially in the unexpected form of a nude woman in flames, her arms outspread with palms up, the flames raking high between her open legs. (In Swedenborg, similarly, angels *are* heaven, which is *in* them. See, for example, *Heaven and Hell* nn. 8, 33, 54. The angels of the inúmost heaven are nude *(Heaven and Hell* n. 178).) At bottom a woman on the left gives birth; a youth, nude and probably male, running to the right, kisses another nude figure who is lying on her(?) back against a cloud. The designs emphasize the erotic aspect of 'the active springing from Energy' that is only implicit in the text at this point but will become prominent later (in the Proverbs of Hell, for instance, and the 'sensual enjoyment' of plate 14). The positions of the figures are intricately related to those on the previous two plates (the bottom design, for instance, recalls both the foot-to-foot symmetry of the figures at bottom left on plate 2 while it reverses the head-to-head composition of the lower part of the title page). One way of reading the designs on plate 3 is as another revelation of the energetic mental world *behind* the physical world depicted on plate 2. The *Marriage* makes a great deal of 'the infinite which was hid' behind 'apparent surfaces' (14:15-16), as in the intense activity stored in the books that sit quietly on library shelves (plate 15). Seen in that light, the major designs at the top and bottom of plate 3 disclose the fiery mental life of the couple who stand against a pale blue sky at the end of line 9.

Plate 4. The design repeats the strong left-right divisions of the lower title page and the lower design on plate 3, but now with a landscape divided between water and fire rather than clouds and fire. Perhaps continuing the saga begun at the bottom of plate 3, the design shows a human figure,

apparently male, against a background of flames and in a position related to that of the female at the top and the male at the bottom of plate 3. While the latter is superimposed over his female counterpart, the male on plate 4 is divided from his counterpart and apparently trying to close the distance, but with one ankle shackled and chained (the chain, which was not etched on the plate, was added during colouring in copies E-I; it also appears in the watercolour and the two colour prints of this subject). On the left, over water, with a blazing sun behind, is a figure with a child in arms. If the implicit ideal is a potential family of female and male with child, then the imagery here of fearful female, tightly held child, and chained male in apparent pursuit may be read as a metaphor of the 'Errors' listed in the text of this plate: energy divided from reason; or body, evil, and hell divided from soul, good, and heaven. The implicit ideal in that case would be, pictorially, an integrated family of female, male, and child, representing the reintegration of body with soul. Henry Crabb Robinson records Blake as saying, in a late interview, that '"Men are born with an Angel & a Devil" - This he himself interpreted as Soul & Body' (Bentley, *Blake Records* 548). The notion of being 'born with' an angel and a devil is Swedenborgian.

In *c.*1790-3 (most probably *c.*1790-1), Blake produced a watercolour of this design (Butlin no. 257). In 1795 he worked up the design as a large colour print and pulled at least two impressions, one of which he inscribed 'The Good & Evil Angels' (Butlin nos 323-4).Because the division between the two is an error, both figures, good and evil, are angels. Their battle for possession of the child is one of the stock nightmares of the Christian religion.

Plate 5. In a work full of journeys through space, and a space where all directions are morally charged, this design is the first to show a falling figure (compare the several rising couples of the title page). Falling, of course, is not the way to go in orthodox religious doctrine, but in the inverted world of the *Marriage* it may be. The nude male with outspread limbs, falling into flames with his sword, robe, chariot, and horse is most probably meant to represent 'the Devils account' of the war in heaven: that 'the Messiah fell. & formed a heaven of what he stole from the Abyss' (5:15-6:2). Since 'fell' and 'heaven' here pull against one another, it is difficult if not impossible to reconcile all of Blake's dizzying inversions. Did the Messiah fall from the Abyss above into a heaven of his own making below? The flames in the design leave that in doubt. Several other identifications are possible: the 'starry king' of 'A Song of Liberty' falls, along with his warriors, chariots, helmets, and shields (plate 26), for example, in the manner, perhaps, of 'Pharaoh's chariots and his host' (Exodus 15.4; Helms, 'Song' 289); or some other mythical falling figure, such as Phaeton or Prometheus or Hippolytus, who do not otherwise appear in the *Marriage*. A round object, perhaps a cannonball, planet, or sun, can be seen just over the flames in the lower centre. In copy I another orb, visually echoing the sun in the sky of plate 4 but flaming at top and falling like a meteor, has been drawn in at the far left.

Plate 6. As 'The voice of the Devil' on plate 4 *is* bracketed by a pair of heralds with trumpets, 'A Memorable Fancy' is bracketed by an upright figure rising from the flames (left) and an upside down figure falling into them (right), the latter recalling the falling figure of plate 5. Both sets of figures add to the substantial body of Last Judgment imagery, both textual and pictorial. There are of course myriad small interlinear and marginal designs in the *Marriage* (plate 4 is particularly busy with them) that we lack space to discuss systematically; for fuller treatment, see Erdman, *Illuminated Blake* 94ú124, Erdman *et al.,* 'Reading the Illuminations', and Keynes, *Marriage*.

At the bottom of the plate, out of a strip of arcs and lines that may suggest the cliff ('flat sided steep', 6:23) of the text and even a bolt of lightning, some letters seem to be emerging on the left: most likely HOW, which begins the devil's question, 'How do you know but ev'ry Bird ... Is an immense world', as written with corroding fires on the sides of the rock and 'now percieved by the minds of men' (7:1-4). In copy H the capital letters at the bottom of the plate are mostly obliterated by watercolour.

Plates 7-9. By and large, the imagery of the interlinear and marginal designs in the Proverbs of Hell corresponds to the literary imagery (see introduction to the *Marriage,* 126), which is to say, we see displayed the animal, plant, and human life of a recognizably natural world, not the fires, rocks, and abysses that we might expect proverbs gathered in the nether regions to reflect. This implicit contrast between expectation and fulfilment corresponds to the explicit contrast on plate 15, where the products of hell's exuberant printing house end up on library shelves, and plate 19, where the aggressive leviathan turns into a harper playing and singing by a moonlit river. Instead of bloodúred skies and lakes of fire, we are presented with an assortment of flora and fauna and jewel-like vignettes such as the one on plate 8, where ships sail on a blue sea sheltered by a blue sky, with birds overhead. The margins are washed predominantly in a light blue, with some yellow (as at the top left of plate 9) suggestive of sunlight. [9]

Plate 10. Below the final proverb, beneath the assortment of leafy vegetation and leaping human figures scattered through the text of the top half of the plate, the terrific sublime of the nether regions re-emerges to end the episode - as a kind of reminder that these are *all* mental, hence infernal, events, and that behind even the pastoral simplicity of the proverbs is the voice of a devil of imagination. In a setting of spiky vegetation and streaky, splotchy terrain that shows off the mottled effects of Blake's colour printing, a kneeling male devil with bat wings points to the scroll in his lap, while a seated figure (probably male) to the left writes down what he says and a second seated figure (probably male) to the right looks over his shoulder and copies from the scroll to the tablet in his lap (for scrolls, books, and scribal authority in Blake, see Mitchell, 'Visible Language' especially 71-5). The copying process is analogous to the printing process dramatized on plate 15 to show how 'knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation' (3-4). The transmission of knowledge is also at issue on plates 11 and 13, where the Ancient Poets and King David are grievously misunderstood. Insofar as the scene recalls depictions of Milton dictating to his daughters (such as those painted by Fuseli, as Wittreich (269-70) suggests), it draws on the earlier identification of Milton as 'a true Poet and of the Devils party' (6:12-13) and reasserts the theme of originality versus imitation. (Compare the scene of dictation in *Milton, E* 110, *K* 498, where Milton's body is Mt. Sinai and his wives and daughters 'wrote in thunder smoke and fire / His dictate'.) Or the group might represent the proverb-gathering narrator's mental activity - as his word-making ear (left) and picture-making eye (right) consult with his infernal imagination. This image of two activities in one mind reappears in the title page to *The Book of Urizen,* where Urizen writes on two tablets at once, one with each hand. Several critics have assigned a positive value to one of the side figures and a negative value to the other, usually to the detriment of the visually-oriented figure on the right (see, e.g., Erdman, *Illuminated Blake* 107).

In copies H and I the dry foreground is replaced by a stream; in copy G, by flames; in copies G and I cave and rock formations are present to suggest that the activities depicted are within the mind and, by extension, within the relief-etched plate that made the book we are reading. In other copies the landscape is indeterminate.

Plate 11. Above, 'all sensible objects' in a landscape have been 'animated' with 'Gods or Geniuses' as the 'ancient Poets' did before 'mental deities' were 'abstract[ed]' from 'their objects' (11 :1-2,10-11). Against a sky streaked with colours of dawn, a sun-goddess rises, a tree-god sprouts, and, in the manner of illustrations to *The Book of Thel,* a maternal earth-goddess nurses an infant flower-spirit (compare *Thel* plate 7). These identifications are tentative. The sun-goddess may be a flower-goddess; the tree-god may be a plant-god of another sort or a water-spout (see copy I). Usually the scene appears to be an island; in the copy reproduced here, the surrounding water disappears (though water remains in the background). At the bottom of the plate, just below the word 'deities', the head and outstretched arms of a bearded male god, abstracted from his object and far larger than human scale, has terrified a tiny human figure at the left who flees - or floats on dark waters - into the murky darkness (compare Lavater aphorism 552, quoted in the note to 11:8-11). Just above 'deities' is a tiny vignette showing worshippers kneeling before a tall standing figure who may be holding a sword. Behind the

worshippers looms a shadow, perhaps a ghost. The mother-child pair at the top and the fleeing figure at bottom recall earlier images, such as those at the bottom of plates 3 and 4. The hovering bearded figure at the bottom anticipates the top figure on plate 14 (compare the similar figure on *All Religions are One* plate 4).

Supplementary illustration 3, from copy I, shows the cave forms (etched on the plate, but wiped clean of ink in all copies except G and I) that create the effect of peering at the animated scene through one of the 'chinks' of a bodily 'cavern' (14:21), here an eye socket. The chink and cavern may be our own or the poet-artist's, and the scene may be interior or exterior, but it is a scene of mental action in any case. (See also plates 10, 15, 16, 20, and *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* plate 2).

Blake colour printed the top of the plate for impressions in the Small Book of Designs copies A and B. One is appropriately inscribed, in Blake's hand, 'Death & Hell / Team with Life' (Butlin no. 261.2; *E* 673, *K* 261).

Plates 12-13. The plates of this Memorable Fancy bear only the usual assortment of decorative birds, scrolls, and flying and leaping figures. On a long scroll at the bottom of plate 13, Ezekiel is lying on his side to raise 'other men into a perception of the infinite', as he says (13:22).
Supplementary illustration 6, plate 12 from early copy B, was printed in a reddish brown ink and is without washes. Copy B was printed in six different inks. Copy H was printed in the same inks, but, as supplementary illustration 7 shows, Blake much later rewrote its texts with pen and ink of various colours (see Plates and Printings 115). As this example shows, he could radically alter the printed image - text as well as design - by colouring.

Plate 14. A grey male body, arms at his sides, is stretched horizontally across the plate. The colour and arrangement suggest a corpse. Hovering in flames, arms fully outstretched (compare plate 3, top), is a female body at right angles to the male. The text describes the consumption of the world by fire at the Last Judgment and the consumption of copper by acid as two stages in the same project of human liberation. The design plays on those metaphors. As dead bodies rise up while the world is consumed by fire at the Last Judgment, so the etcher uses 'corrosives' to liberate the 'infinite which was hid' in dead copperúplates. The inversions that are an inevitable part of relief etching and printing (as when backward writing prints forward) are pictured in the inverse movement from death to life, as well as in the movement from lower to upper, the alteration from male to female, and the rotation of the figure through 90 degrees. The flames are the 'medicinal' agent that has revived the dead copper by liberating the infinite hidden in it.

At least twice Blake colour printed the plate, with its text masked, to produce impressions for his Small Book of Designs (Butlin nos 260.5, 261.3). His inscription for one of these, 'a Flaming Sword /Revolving every way' *(E* 673, *K*261), relates the design to the so-called covering cherub, or guardian angel, whom God posted to keep humanity away from the Tree of Life after the expulsion from Eden. The top (rotating) figure in the design would then seem to be a personification of the sword-as-angel who is keeping the dead figure below away from the Tree of Life.

This design has often been retitled to emphasize its relation to the conventional iconography of soul and body (such as, for example, *The Soul Hovering over the Body,* Butlin no. 261.3). Compare Blake's very literal depictions in, for instance, *The Gates of Paradise* plate 13 *(E* 266, *K* 768), and his illustration to Robert Blair's *The Grave,* 'The Soul Hovering over the Body' (Bentley, *Blake Books* 530-1). The design for plate 14 stands between 'The Soul Hovering over the Body', where body and soul are horizontally parallel to one another, and 'The Re-Union of Soul and Body' (Bentley, *Blake Books* 531), where the soul descends vertically to meet the body, rising from horizontal to vertical. In the *Marriage* design, both figures are horizontal but at right angles to one another, an unusual deviation from the conventional iconography of body-soul relations.

The arms and orientation of both the upper figure in this design and of the male god on plate 11 lower right are reminiscent of the (bearded male) Jupiter Pluvius figure discussed with plate 1 of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (235) and of the George Romney drawing 'Providence Brooding over Chaos' (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge), where Providence - who is perhaps actually Ariel emerging from a tempest - is youthful

and unbearded. Several of Blake's designs depicting moments of close contact between the divine (or infernal) and the human, or the spiritual and material, are also relevant. Compare the colour prints *Satan Exulting over Eve* and *Elohim Creating Adam,* as well as *Pity* and *The House of Death* (Butlin nos 289, 292, 310, 320-2).

Supplementary illustration 5 is from colour-printed copy E, which, although colour printed along with our copy F, shows how different two sequential pulls can be when the plate is painted (in opaque colours) as well as inked, and the impressions then finished in watercolours (see Plates and Printings 115).

Plate 15. In the text vipers occupy the second chamber of the printing house, eagles the third. In the design, the two appear together: an eagle holds a serpent in its talons. According to Désirée Hirst, in alchemy eagles holding serpents symbolize 'the union of sulphur and mercury, matter and spirit' (135). Certainly, in any event, Blake's serpents have strong connections with matter, as his eagles do with spirit (as genius, or imagination; see 9:20-1). The composition thus mirrors the design on plate 14: the over-andúunder arrangement of two horizontally aligned figures, the lower with its head to the left, the upper with its head centred between outstretched wings. In those terms, the eagle is the redeemed, infinite form of the serpent in its traditional role as representativeof the mortal body - the 'generation to generation' (15:3-4) referred to in the text and followed by a line of loops very like those of the serpent below. The eagle and serpent also recall the prominently winged devil and serpentine scroll on plate 10.

Supplementary illustration 4, from copy G, shows the cave forms printed (see the comment on plate 11, above), thus strengthening the suggestion that the redeemed body, like an etched plate passed through hell's printing house, involves the cleansing of the doors of perception and the opening of chinks in a closed cavern.

Plate 16. The first lines of the text - 'The Giants who formed this world into its sensual existence and now seem to live in it in chains' (16:1-3) - seem to describe the design, which depicts five human figures, seated, limbs tightly compressed, all crowded into a dark chamber. The heads of all except the bearded central figure are bowed. Though the limbs of the figures are drawn tightly together as if chained, no chains are in evidence - in line with the sentiment of the text that the giants only 'seem' to live in chains. In the context of cave imagery for the body and its senses, the design suggests the cramped and confined senses of 'the cavern'd Man', as Blake phrases it in *Europe a Prophecy (E* 60, *K* 237). The old man in the centre may be the sense of sight - he looks directly at the viewer - or the sense of touch, the only sense not confined to specific chinks in the bodily cavern (see note to 15:17-18) to which Blake gives special recognition in *Europe.* Blake based his design on treatments of Ugolino and his sons from Dante's Inferno, of which he created quite a different version in *For Children: The Gates of Paradise* (1793) but appended an anti-clerical inscription in the spirit of the *Marriage*: 'Does thy God O Priest take such vengeance as this?' *(E* 33, 265, *K* 768; see also Blake's early Ugolino drawings, Butlin nos 201.59, 207-8). The more general visual conceit - a triangular group comprising a prominent parent-figure seated at the centre of symmetricallyúarranged children or associates - Blake employed repeatedly.

Supplementary illustration 8, from copy G, again shows the cave-like enclosures - in this instance a cave-like cell for the giants - that are aspects of the designs on plates 10, 11, 15, 16, and 20 in copies G and I. Making the border of the plate the walls of a prison recalls the earlier metaphors of relief etching - of copper plates as places where the infinite awaits liberation. In that respect the depiction of confined perception on plate 16 is the counterpart of the depiction of emancipated perception on plate 11.

Plates 17-19. In general, the interlinear ornaments extend the natural imagery of the Proverbs of Hell. Instead of the intimidating abysses, giant spiders, nether suns, and fiery darkness of the text, we are given pleasant vignettes of such comforting elements as trees, birds, grass, and sky. The

birds are sometimes accompanied (as on 19: 9, 26) by flying human figures. An eagle appears prominently over 'A Memorable Fancy' (17:10) and the eagle and serpent of plate 15 reappear above 19:26, perhaps as reminders that these Memorable Fancies emanate from hell's printing house, which is to say, from 'an Eagle, ... a portion of Genius' (9:20-1), the etcher's contrary imagination.

Plate 20. In the 'void boundless' (17:22) to which the angel has taken the narrator to show him his eternal lot, Leviathan appears, 'with all the fury of a spiritual existence' (19:1). Above him to the right, on an oak branch extending from Aristotle's 'works' (20:18), sit at least one and perhaps two tiny human figures, the angel and/or the narrator. We see the 'scaly fold of a monstrous serpent' (18:22), but otherwise Leviathan does not look a great deal like the creature described in the text (18:20-19:1). When the cave-like borders of the plate are printed (in copies G and I), Leviathan roiling in tumultuous seas, like the viper of plate 15 grown large, may suggest the action of corrosive fires in copper caverns. Blake inscribed one of the two colour-printed impressions of the design that he made for his two Small Books of Designs 'O revolving serpent O the Ocean of Time and Space' (Butlin no. 260.6 and Butlin, 'A New Color Print').

Plate 21. An upward-looking nude male, his legs drawn up and spread wide apart toward the viewer, sits on a grassy area with a human skull under his left knee. In other copies, such as C and I, and other versions of the design (see below) the man usually sits on a prominent hilltop, but it is at most only a small rise on a stretch of level ground here. A strong nimbus, suggesting a sunrise dispelling clouds, is added in the last three copies coloured (G, H, and I; see supplementary illustration 11). He should be compared to several of his predecessors among the *Marriage* designs, perhaps especially the central figure in the group at the top of plate 16. If those clothed, constricted figures are depicted *as if* chained by the 'cunning of weak and tame minds. which have power to resist energy' (16:5-6), this one is liberated from their repressive power - as if he is a newly resurrected form of the male corpse on plate 14, with his old self buried beneath him. This beardless youth also recalls the kneeling, nude, beardless devil at the bottom of plate 10. If one juxtaposes the designs on plate 15 (eagle holding serpent) and 20 (Leviathan) with this design, the similar head positions become suggestive. In the presence of the narrator, after all, Leviathan changes from a reptile of the mind to a human being. In the terms of the *Marriage,* behind every leviathan is the human imagination that creates it.
Blake kept the design in his repertory and retrieved it for reuse on several occasions. It reappears on plate 8 of *America.* Later - working on the illustrations for Robert Blair's poem, *The Grave* (1808) - he makes one design out of two by combining, vertically, the nude youth with a contrasting subject on *America* plate 14, producing the design known as 'Deaths Door' (Bentley, *Blake Books* 531) : below, a robed old man with long beard and crutch enters a tomb; above, on a knoll on the top of the tomb sits the nude youth, a figure of the resurrected body - in the *Marriage,* a reintegrated body and soul. Blake also used the resurrected youth in an experimental relief plate that Essick dates *c.* 1805-22 (*Separate Plates* XIV).

Blake altered plate 21 significantly in several copies. Supplementary illustration 9, from copy K, shows the first state of the plate, with no white-line shading on the hill, the male figure, or the vegetation above line 1. Supplementary illustration 10, from copy D, shows two pyramids added in ink and watercolour. The pyramids, not mentioned in the text but presumably associated with Egyptian tyranny from which the Israelite slaves were liberated, provide a stark geometrical contrast to the human form - a contrast Blake would repeat in the famous 'Ancient of Days' frontispiece to *Europe a Prophecy.* The pyramids are of course themselves tombs. Supplementary illustration 11, from copy I, shows the design extended with cave-like clouds in watercolour outlined in pen and ink. The nude figure sits in the position of a sun rising and dispelling the clouds.

Plates 22-3. To the right of 'A Memorable Fancy' (plate 22) one human figure shoots another with a bow and arrow. Swedenborg indicated that

swords, spears, and bows in the Bible signify the combat of truth (e.g., *True Christian Religion* n. 86), and Blake adopted these images of 'Mental Fight' (*Milton, E* 95, *K* 481). To the left, a figure lies on his side, Ezekiel-like, comparable to figures at the bottoms of plates 13 and 23.

Plate 24. A bearded man (recalling the head of the abstract god at the bottom of plate 11 and the central figure on plate 16), looking out at the viewer with an expression of apprehension and dismay, crawls against a heavily mottled background that suggests gigantic tree trunks on the floor of a dark forest. The points of a crown can be seen on his head. This is apparently Nebuchadnezzar (not mentioned in the text), king of Babylon, enslaver of the Israelites, whose fall and exile are described in the apocalyptic Old Testament Book of Daniel: 'he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws' (4.33). In the apocalyptic New Testament Book of Revelation and Christian tradition he becomes a symbol of (defeated) worldly tyranny, counterúpart of Pharoah, Herod, and the Roman emperors. Swedenborg heavily emphasizes the symbolism of Babylon in his accounts of the Last Judgment.

This crouching, crawling figure seems to be the negative counterpart of the upright youth in the previous major design (plate 21). Stacked vertically, the designs on plates 21 and 24 would make an interesting composite not unlike the one Blake later constructed for 'Deaths Door' (see the discussion of plate 21, above). In *There is No Natural Religion* the figure on his knees with a compass, like Blake's 'Newton' (Butlin no. 304), is also similar; the associated sentiment seems applicable here: 'He who sees the infinite in all things, sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself only' *(There is No Natural Religion* b11, 'Application'). About five years later, Blake paired Nebuchadnezzar with Newton in two very symmetrical colour prints (Butlin nos 301-7). Although there is no evidence in copy F, reproduced here, of the sinews, feathery hair, and talons that are prominent on the figure of Nebuchadnezzar in the much larger colour prints of 1795 (Butlin nos 301-4), Nebuchadnezzar's position on all fours in the *Marriage* nonetheless ties him to the bestial imagery of the epigram below the design : 'One Law for the Lion & Ox is Oppression'.

Supplementary illustration 12, from p.44 of Blake's Notebook (Butlin no. 201.44), is probably a preliminary sketch for the Nebuchadnezzar design. 'There can be no reasonúable doubt', according to Kenneth Clark, 'that it derives from a German engraving, probably a wood-cut illustration of a werewolf by [Lucas] Cranach' (168). Supplementary illustration 13, from copy K, shows the first state of the plate, before the design was added (see the note for 24:11).

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[1] Hirsch finds a 'discursive manifesto' as well as an 'artistic dead end' (66); Bloom, an anatomy (*Blake's Apocalypse 69*); Eaves and Lipking, a bible in microcosm ('Blake's Artistic Strategy' *78, Life* 34, 41, 47); Taylor and Lipking, a primer ('Revolutionary Primer' 141; *Life* 39); Wittreich and Behrendt, a prophecy *(Angel* 189, *Reading William Blake* 93); Howard and Lipking, a testament *(Infernal Poetics* 61-3, *Life* 34). For Pechey the *Marriage* is a prose satire with 'solid contemporary hearings' in several popular discourses, especially chapbooks and political pamphlets (52-3); though he allows that the *Marriage* is 'not a narrative sequence in any ordinary sense', he offers a complex analysis of the sequence based on RomanJakobson's principle of parallelism (60-2).

[2] Some readers resist the notion that satire is primary in the *Marriage,* as for example Behrendt 93.

[3] Biographical information about Swedenborg comes chiefly from Jonsson; information about the London Swedenborgians comes chiefly from Paley, 'A New Heaven'.

[4] The question of precisely what Blake might have read of Swedenborg is vexed by the fierce complicaútions of the publishing history: Swedenborg was immensely prolific; he repeated himself, often at length, from work to work; his followers published translations in many forms - extracts, digests, etc. - under titles that are often confusingly similar for works that are different or confusingly different for works that are similar or the same.

[5] *A Treatise Concerning Heaven and Hell, and of the Wonderful Things Therein, as Heard and Seen, by Emanuel Swedenborg* (1758, English translation 1784), and *Marital Love* (1768, traditionally rendered *Conjugial Love).* According to Paley, 'New Heaven' 88n40, a partial English translation of *De amore conjugiali* was published in 1790 both in serialized form in the *New Jerusalem Magazine* and as a separate volume.

[6] The subject has not been ignored; Paley has laid much of the necessary groundwork in his 'New Heaven'; Howard, 'Audience', has attempted to understand the *Marriage* in terms of a presumed audience of London Swedenborgians; Scrivener has succinctly corrected Howard's hid to align Blake's

attitude to Swedenborg with the quite different attitude of Joseph Johnson's radical circle. It is important, moreúover, not to overstate Swede nborg's influence. Kathleen Raine's claim that 'it is, in essence, the doctrines of Swedenborg that Blake's works embody and to which they lend poetry and eloquence' ('Blake, Swedenborg' 76) is a wild exaggeration, repeated in her introduction to the 1991 Everyman edition of Blake (see especially xv-xxi). The improbable merger of Swedenborgianism with Marxism in Sabriú Tabrizi's 1973 study similarly strains credibility.

[7] Hence there have been many attempts to make philosophical and literary sense of contraries as a fundamental concept in the *Marriage;* see, for example, Bloom, 'Dialectic', and Miller.

[8] An anonymous follower of Swedenborg compiled *Aphorisms of Wisdom... from the Words of Various Writers upon Divine Subjects,* a digest of Swedenborgian theology that, despite the title, seems to be drawn almost entirely from Swedenborg. These are 'aphorisms' in an earlier, now unfamiliar sense of brief's statements of principles - seldom witty or proverbial - as in the aphorisms of Hippocrates. Some of Lavater's aphorisms are of this type.

[9] Descriptions of colouring pertain to the copy reproduced (F) unless otherwise indicated.