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Illuminated Instruction

A Paratextual, Intertextual, and Iconotextual Study of William Blake

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Introduction

Traditional Blake scholarship has rarely ascribed value to the materiality of William Blake's illuminated manuscripts.[1] This dissertation will demonstrate the necessity of studying the materiality of Blake's texts by using an interdisciplinary methodological framework to highlight the pedagogical functions of illuminated printing. Exploring the composition, printing, and distribution of Blake's prints in a series of focussed micro-histories and paratextual micro-studies will demonstrate the various ways in which Blake manipulated his media to educate his readers. In unravelling the pedagogical potential of Blake's works, the dissertation will promote an understanding of a material medium which has remained largely unexplored in terms of its print culture contexts, revealing how Blake's unique position as an engraver, artisan, and educator was hinged upon the materiality of his prints.

Blake is unique in the history of English literature because of the creative way in which he presented his works to the public: namely, through a process which he described as illuminated printing. This form of printing relied on the use of numerous technologies (see chapter 1) but the process mostly involved printing in relief from copper-plates. The use of this technology simplified the manufacture of Blake's books by allowing both words and images to be engraved onto one plate, preventing the need for Blake to find a publisher or letterpress printer. According to David Bindman,

> it was very well known at the time that any method capable of genuinely simplifying the manufacture of books and newspapers could ensure for its inventor not only wealth, but also unlimited access to a public platform. Blake was not alone in his search for a new method of stereotype printing, for it had long been felt that the system of printing by movable type was both expensive and cumbersome and had the inevitable effect of putting the author at the mercy of

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[1] Examples of recent works which did not engage with questions of materiality in Blake's work include Laura Quinney's *William Blake on Self and Soul* (2009) and Susan Matthews's *Blake, Sexuality, and Bourgeois Politeness* (2011). While recent discussions of Blake do occasionally use his illustrations as evidence, the materialities of Blake's books are rarely addressed.

the publisher or middleman, who as a man of commerce either might not wish to print his work or, if he did so, would deprive him of all profit. It was widely thought that, if a method could be found of writing directly on to a plate and running off thousands of copies of a text from it, then this would supersede letterpress altogether and secure the inventor's fortune; it would avoid the laborious business of setting up type, and the problem of dismantling it after the printing of each edition. (*Artist* 41)

Blake's process of illuminated printing did not secure his fortune. However, the way in which illuminated printing allowed words and images to be printed simultaneously helped Blake to maintain absolute control over his works. Thus, Blake was responsible for cutting his copper-plates to size, designing and engraving his illustrations, composing and engraving his text, mixing his inks, resizing and dampening his papers, inking and wiping his plates, aligning his plates and papers, adjusting the pressure of the wooden rolling press, and—when Blake was finally ready to begin printing—slowly turning the star cross of the press. After printing, it was Blake who hung, pressed, dampened, and stacked the printed impressions, preparing the prints to be hand-coloured. Blake then gathered and step-stitched sets of impressions in paper wrappers. The completed works were then sold by Blake.

Unfortunately, Blake struggled to find patrons to purchase his books. Blake's works were not widely read or studied during his lifetime. After all, most of Blake's contemporaries thought that he was madman. Robert Hunt, a vigilant reviewer for *The Examiner*, described Blake as "an unfortunate lunatic, whose personal inoffensiveness secures him from confinement" (qtd. in Bentley *Records*: 283). Blake did, however, have his admirers. William Wordsworth had "no doubt" that Blake was "mad" but there was "something in this madness" which he enjoyed "more than the Sense" of Lord Byron (qtd. in Bentley: 313). Samuel Taylor Coleridge believed that Blake was "a man of Genius" (qtd. in Ferber: 189). Unfortunately, the admiration of these popular poets did not initially rescue Blake from obscurity: thus, while individuals such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Byron were being universally studied by nineteenth-century literary critics, gradually grouped together as a result of their Elizabethan tendencies—including their uses of what Charles Grant, in *The Last Hundred Years of English Literature* (1866), described as "the wild melody of the poets of the Elizabethan age" (5)—and eventually categorized as what we now describe as the Romantic poets, Blake's works were being unintentionally hidden from public view, gathering dust in the private collections of friends and art dealers.

It was not until the late nineteenth century that Blake's works started to attract the attention of literary scholars. William Butler Yeats's and Edwin Eliis's *The Works of William Blake: Poetic, Symbolic, and Critical* (1893) and John Sampson's *The Poetical Works of William Blake* (1905) facilitated the growth and development of Blake scholarship, providing critics with the tools necessary to study the works of this obscure poet. The

printing technologies of the period prevented the facsimulating of Blake's illustrations. For that reason, the study of Blake's poetry—and his poetry alone—dominated Blake scholarship during the first half of the twentieth century. It was during this period that the groundbreaking studies of S. Foster Damon, Geoffrey Keynes, and Northrop Frye shaped contemporary understandings of Blake, focusing exclusively on his poetry.

The establishment of the William Blake Trust in 1949 made possible the study of Blake's illustrations. By producing high-quality facsimiles of Blake's illuminated books, the Trust brought Blake's works to the public in a way that had not been attempted previously. The availability of these facsimiles encouraged the simultaneous study of Blake's illustrations and his poetry. Accordingly, a number of monographs which focused on both the poetry and designs of Blake's illuminated books were published in the 1970s and 1980s—including the works of Jean H. Hagstrum and W. J. T. Mitchell—each of which worked to bring together the visual and verbal contents of Blake's books.

Following the popularization of this method of approaching the verbal and visual contents of Blake's illuminated books, further developments in how scholars should read Blake's works did not emerge. Thus, the study of Blake has typically been limited to the exploration of his poetry with some reference to his illustrations. Exploring the ways in which Blake's illustrations contributed to the meanings of his texts is, of course, vitally important to the critical interpretation of Blake's works: as Robert Essick has noted, "the study of William Blake's poetry has evolved" from "commentaries on typographic texts into a confrontation with 'Illuminated Printing,' that composite visual/verbal medium unique to its inventor. . . . It has become increasingly difficult to teach, let alone write about, Blake's poems without considering the appropriate designs" ("Materials" 833). While the depths of these critical considerations vary from study to study (see chapter 2), the importance of studying Blake's designs has been almost universally acknowledged in Blake scholarship. For the most part, however, this acknowledgement has failed to consider the technological processes and material characteristics which were embodied in the composite art of Blake's illuminated books.

Critics such as G. E. Bentley, Essick, Joseph Viscomi, and Michael Phillips have acknowledged the ways in which Blake's understanding of illuminated printing was based on more than just the unity of word and image. A third factor was at work. Blake, as a professional engraver, was constantly aware of the materiality of his prints, and this awareness underpinned the production of his entire illuminated *oeuvre*. However, while Bentley, Essick, Viscomi, and Phillips have collectively revealed the secrets of Blake's technological processes to contemporary scholars (see chapter 1), the importance of these processes to the interpretation of Blake's works have not been

explored in enough detail—identifying the tools and materials used by Blake in illuminated printing only tells half of the story.[2]

Exploring the choices which motivated Blake to select specific materials and considering the importance of those choices to interpretations of his texts can help us to understand the various ways in which materiality contributed to the successful transmission of Blake's ideas. Selecting the appropriate size, quality, and maker of paper ensured that Blake's work reached the desired audience, the members of which—during the eighteenth century—usually held preconceived notions of what to expect from works which were formatted according certain specifications. Moreover, by adopting recognisable iconographies and utilising those iconographies in visible frontispieces, Blake—in addition to encouraging readers to purchase the work in the first place— might have helped his readers to interpret the text according to his wishes. Investigating the material conditions of Blake's illuminated books and identifying the paratextual devices which presented these books to the reader can, therefore, reveal the subtle messages that Blake encoded into the physical surfaces of his illuminations.

In order to engage with the material contexts of specific illuminated books, it is necessary to adopt a methodology which can be applied to the physical evidence of Blake's prints. The methodologies used in the present study, including Jerome J. McGann's *The Textual Condition* (1991), Gérard Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987), and Peter Wagner's *Reading Iconotexts: From Swift to the French Revolution* (1995), were selected because of their tested abilities to analyse the literary, visual, and material components of a work within their appropriate historical contexts. McGann's *Textual Condition* investigated the complex ways in which authors' languages can be materially executed in the form of printed books, highlighting "the inseparability of the medium and the message" (11). Similarly, Genette's *Paratexts* worked to demonstrate the ways in which accompanying productions "such as an author's name, a title, a preface" (1) and other bibliographical elements of a published book can shape readers' interpretations of the text. McGann's and Genette's studies failed to consider the ways in which visual media can contribute to the meanings of a work. Wagner's *Iconotexts*, however, emphasised the importance of studying illustrations by defining prints which conveyed their messages to the reader through a combination of words and pictures as iconotexts. The application of these methodologies to Blake's illuminated books fed into the exploration of interdisciplinary fields of research which have not been addressed in Blake scholarship previously, making possible the reconstruction of a virtual world of print within which the printed objects that Blake

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[2] I discuss the scholarly remits of Essick, Viscomi, and Phillips in more detail in chapter one of the present study.

might have encountered during his lifetime have been identified. Locating the intertexts that Blake carefully integrated into his works facilitates the accurate historicization of Blake's verbal and visual languages. Firmly situating Blake's words and designs in the contexts of eighteenth-century print culture can help us to understand the various significations that Blake associated with certain motifs. Moreover, by uncovering Blake's interpretations of these significations, it is possible to offer tentative reconstructions of how Blake's readers might have understood his works.

The first chapter of the dissertation will explore the textual conditions of Blake's illuminated books. Each stage of Blake's technological process of illuminated printing will be considered. However, the chapter will focus on an aspect of Blake's process which has rarely been considered by Blake scholars: namely, Blake's choices of papers. The chapter will relate Blake's papers' countermarks and watermarks to particular paper-making firms, introducing a series of micro-histories which shed light on the production of paper in the second half of the eighteenth century. Reviewing the roles and reputations of these paper makers in the London marketplace will help the study to identify why Blake repeatedly purchased a specific type of paper during the 1780s and 1790s, situating Blake's illuminated books in an interrelated network of illustrated publications, the fine papers of which were frequently used as promotional tools by booksellers.

Chapter two will use a Genettian framework to investigate the connections between the paratexts of Blake's earliest illuminated book, "There is no Natural Religion" (c. 1788), and ephemeral chapbooks. Exploring the paratextual apparatus and bibliographical features of "No Natural Religion" will reveal the ways in which the small size and limited length of this illustrated text would have resulted in its categorization as a chapbook by contemporaneous readers. Moreover, because "No Natural Religion" condensed the ideas of eighteenth-century educationalists into a twelve-page abridgment, the work would have been identified as a text which could be used in the teaching of literacy or morality. Thus, by relating the format of "No Natural Religion" to contemporaneous traditions of print, the chapter will argue that Blake's manipulations of chapbook conventions in this work made possible the vernacularization of knowledge in an affordable, accessible, and comprehensible format.

Chapter three of the dissertation builds on the foundation of the previous chapters by investigating the ways in which Blake's departure from the chapbook format in the *Songs of Innocence* (1789) indicated that, following the technological success of his original illuminations, Blake's ideas about the potential functions of illuminated printing had expanded to include larger, illustrated texts. By combining the complementary methodologies of Wagner's paradigm of the iconotext and Barthes's ideas about intertextuality, this chapter will offer a systematic analysis of the *Songs of Innocence* which demonstrates how Blake adopted the visual and verbal motifs of contemporaneous children's literature to teach readers about the value of guided

instruction: for instance, in the frontispiece from the *Songs of Innocence*, Blake depicted the *Songs of Innocence* itself being used by a parent or nurse to teach songs to children, calling attention to the ideal conditions under which this illuminated book—as a physical, tangible object—should be read.

The final chapter of the dissertation will explore the ways in which Blake's final illuminated work, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (c. 1804-21), integrated and advanced the instructional techniques of his previous illuminated books into a definitive educational text. The chapter will investigate why Blake divided *Jerusalem* into four prophetic treatises, arguing that Blake fashioned each of these treatises with a specific audience in mind. Isolating the intertextual networks that Blake participated in during the early nineteenth century will contribute to the refinement of the chapter's understanding of the complex and often misunderstood mythologies of *Jerusalem*, making possible the identification of the specific pedagogical messages that Blake wished to convey in his final illuminated manuscript. By relating the paratexts, iconotexts, and intertexts of *Jerusalem* to the traditional iconographies of specific social and religious groups, the chapter aims to demonstrate how Blake's pedagogical tactics were made possible by the textual condition of his works. Moreover, by investigating the original and delayed paratextual devices which were employed in the preface to *Jerusalem*, the chapter will uncover the subtle ways in which Blake worked to educate an exclusive, enlightened audience.

By studying Blake's works in a series of four chapters, the dissertation will demonstrate the various ways in which a focussed methodological consideration of Blake's materiality can contribute to the deeper understanding of the pedagogical functions of illuminated printing. Looking at Blake's works in their appropriate historical and cultural contexts will reveal why Blake's illuminated books would have been immediately recognisable as educational texts to contemporaneous audiences. Moreover, by investigating Blake's manipulations of materiality in a series of micro-studies, ranging from paratextual considerations of format to intertextual explorations of iconotexts, the project will uncover the creative ways in which Blake tried to instruct and delight his readers.

Chapter 1 The Textual Condition: Blake's Process of Illuminated Printing

This chapter will demonstrate the importance that Blake attributed to the materiality of his works. By reviewing Blake's creative output betwen c. 1789 and 1795, the chapter will investigate the ways in which Blake's printing technologies made possible the materialization of his works in the form of published books. Offering an assessment of the textual condition of Blake's illuminated books will lay the groundwork for the subsequent chapters of the study by isolating the base components of Blake's art, helping the project to construct the infrastructure of a methodology which will then be applied to Blake's prints in a series of micro-studies. This approach will demonstrate the necessity of reassessing scholarly approaches to both Blake and his materiality.

1.1 The Textual Condition: Blake's Process of Illuminated Printing

Studying the material execution of Blake's ideas is to study the textual condition of his books. According to Jerome J. McGann in *The Textual Condition* (1991), the textual condition is made up of two parts: the "embodiment of language" and the "idea of Language" (10), the former of which is the conversion of language to text and the latter of which is the interpretation of that text by the reader. Both parts exist individually on either side of the "textual transaction" (McGann *Textual Condition* 10). The materialization of language on one side of the transaction makes possible the interpretation of that language on the remaining side of the exchange. It is this "inseparability of the medium and the message" (McGann *Textual Condition* 11) which necessitates the mapping of "particular investigations along the double helix of a work's reception history and its production history" (McGann *Textual Condition* 16).

The present chapter is concerned with just one of the elements which make up the textual condition: specifically, the technological means by which Blake converted his messages to material media. To understand these processes of conversion and exchange it is necessary to locate Blake's technologies within a set of "determinate sociohistorical conditions," isolating the "different spatial and temporal coordinates" (McGann 9) which informed Blake's use of each technology. Studying these sociohistorical contexts, according to McGann, is "one of the best ways to expose the textuality of meaning. . . . To historicize meaning in this way is to locate it, to materialize it—to give it a local habitation and a name" (*Textual Condition* 15). Historicizing each of the stages involved in Blake's technological process of illuminated printing will help us to understand the means by which Blake's ideas became embodied in his books. It is only by investigating these processes of conversion that we can begin to understand the different ways in which materiality can shape interpretation, permitting the study of the second element of the textual condition in chapters two, three, and four.

The technologies involved in Blake's process of illuminated printing have been investigated in detail by several scholars. Early commentators of Blake's method included J. T. Smith and John Jackson, both of whom offered short but informative descriptions of illuminated printing. For instance, in *Nolkens and his Times* (1828), Smith argued that Blake etched his poetry and designs

> in outline upon the copper-plate with an impervious liquid, and then eating the plain parts of lights away with aquafortis considerably below them, so that the outlines were left as a stereotype. The plates in this state were then printed in any tint that he wished, to enable him or Mrs. Blake to colour the marginal figures up by hand in imitation of drawings. (609)

Jackson's *A Treatise on Wood Engraving, Historical and Practical* (1839) advanced Smith's ideas, offering a more detailed—but still limited—explanation of illuminated printing:

> What is termed metallic relief engraving consists in executing subjects on plates of copper, or any other metal, in such a manner that the lines which form the impression shall be in relief, and thus allow of such plates being inked and printed in the same manner as a wood-cut. Since the revival of wood-engraving in this country several attempts have been made to *etch* in metallic relief, and thus save the time necessarily required to cut out all the lines in a wood engraving. In etching upon copper, in order that the subject may be represented by lines *in relief*,—the reverse of the usual procedure in copper-plate engraving,—and that the plate may be printed in the same manner as a wood-cut, there are several methods of proceeding. In one, the subject is *drawn* upon the plate in Burgundy pitch, or any other substance which will resist the action of aquafortis, in the same manner as copper-plate engravers in the ordinary process *stop out* the parts intended to be white. When the substance in which the drawing is made becomes *set*, or sufficiently hard, the plate is surrounded with a *wall*, as it is technically

termed, and aquafortis being poured upon it, all the unprotected parts are corroded, and the drawing is left in relief.

This was the method generally adopted by William Blake. (715)[1]

Smith's and Jackson's descriptions of Blake's technique, according to G. E. Bentley, were "very knowledgeable and perhaps first-hand account[s]" (*Records* 45). However, these descriptions lacked a number of specifics. These omissions encouraged Robert Essick, Joseph Viscomi, and Michael Phillips to reproduce the technological processes involved in illuminated printing in a series of practical studies which included Essick's *William Blake, Printmaker* (1980), Viscomi's *Blake and the Idea of the Book* (1993), and Phillips's *William Blake: the Creation of the Songs from Manuscript to Illuminated Printing* (2000).

The works of Essick, Viscomi, and Phillips collectively revealed the secrets of illuminated printing to Blake scholarship. Irrespective of their disagreements on some issues, these studies broadened scholars' understandings of how Blake constructed his copper-plates, engraved his designs, and printed his works. For that reason, these elements of Blake's process will not be detailed here. In short, however, these scholars concluded that Blake's method of illuminated printing was a process of printing in relief from copper-plates. He executed text and design directly onto the surface of the plate with a quill pen which was loaded with what Smith had described as an "impervious liquid." Next, "all the white parts or lights, the remainder of the plate that is, were eaten away with aquafortis or other acid, so that the outline of letter and design was left prominent, as in stereotype" (Gilchrist 1: 70). The ink, mixed by Blake, was then applied to the raised surfaces of the plate with a printer's ink ball or a leather dauber: this was a necessarily slow process if the open shallows of the plate were to be avoided.[2] Once inked and transferred to the rolling press, a damp sheet of paper was registered or placed on top of the copper-plate. Plate and paper were then pulled through a rolling press at a low pressure in order to ensure that the image was transferred from the plate to the paper without any embossing on the verso of the sheet. Once dry, the impressions

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[1] For a detailed comparison of Jackson's and Blake's techniques of printing in relief from copper plates, see Michael Phillips's "The Printing of Blake's *America a Prophecy* (2004).

[2] Viscomi and Phillips disagree on this point. Viscomi considers the inking of a relief plate to be a "quick" ("Illuminated Printing" 49) process. Phillips's experiments with relief etching in "the printmaking studio at the Edinburgh Printmakers Workshop" ("*America*" 29), on the other hand, suggest that Blake's process of inking was more time-consuming: "Blake would have become skilled in inking his relief-etched plates. . . . Nevertheless, to ink and wipe a plate like that of the frontispiece to *America* well enough to print more than one impression would be very difficult to accomplish in less than twenty minutes" ("*America*" 32). The difference between Viscomi's and Phillips's conclusions is the result of their uses of different copper-plates, each of which were etched to alternative depths: Viscomi's plates, which were electrotypes produced by Paul Ritchie of the Manchester Etching Workshop, were etched "to a depth of 1.00 mm" to "facilitate 'perfect' printing." These electrotypes were "more than eight times the depth" of the copper-plates which were used by Blake. Therefore, the plates used by Viscomi "are not comparable to Blake's" (Phillips "*America*" 18). Phillips's plates were etched to a depth which matched Blake's: specifically, "plates etched to 0.12 mm" (Phillips "*America*" 18).

were water-coloured by hand (until Blake started colour-printing in c. 1795) and collated.

1.2   Blake's Paper Makers, c. 1789-95

An aspect of Blake's technological process which has not been investigated in detail by scholars is Blake's choices of paper. The papers used by Blake reveal the practical considerations which fed into his understanding of engraving. The following case-study will investigate the connections between Blake's uses of papers and the paper makers who manufactured these media between c. 1789 and 1795. Relating the papers' countermarks and watermarks to particular paper making firms, I will introduce a series of micro-histories that shed light on the production of paper in the second half of the eighteenth century and on Blake's uses of these papers in his illuminated printing. By considering the papers that Blake purchased for his printing ventures, I hope to establish the significance of a group of individuals whose contributions to illuminated printing have been rarely acknowledged. Historicising the papers used in the production of Blake's illuminated books will highlight the difficult processes of conversion which made possible the transmission of Blake's ideas in the forms of material texts.[3]

1.2.1   "J WHATMAN"

Blake's first extant illuminated book, *Songs of Innocence* copy U, was printed in black ink on an undated sheet of wove paper in c. 1789. The countermark on copy U read "J WHATMAN" [Fig. 1]. This paper was manufactured by James Whatman jnr. at Turkey Mill on the River Len in Maidstone, Kent. Whatman jnr. had inherited this millhouse from his father, James Whatman snr., whose knowledge of the new paper making technology had enabled him to transform Turkey Mill into one of the largest paper mills in England by the time of his death in 1759. Whatman snr., who had worked as a paper maker since the early 1730s, entered the market at a time when the demand for common and inexpensive brown papers was met mostly by domestic mills. Approximately three-quarters of the papers consumed in Great Britain during the first

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[3] The research detailed below was published as "Notes on William Blake's Paper Makers, c. 1789-1795" in *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 26.3 (2013): 169-79.

half of the eighteenth century were supplied by these sources. White papers, on the other hand, were still being imported from France, Germany, Italy, and Holland, the latter supplying most of these papers to London.[4] That is not to say that paper makers did not produce white papers in England during the early decades of the eighteenth century: those mills which had been associated with the Company of White Paper Makers in the late seventeenth century had probably continued to manufacture these better-quality papers in the eighteenth century. However, it is certain that these paper mills could not compete with their foreign competitors on the London market because domestic mills were slow in upgrading to the new paper making technologies.[5] The invention and use of Hollander beaters in Holland during the late seventeenth century had helped Dutch paper makers to pulp rags quickly. Therefore, the output and efficiency of native mills—which still employed traditional stampers—was not comparable to the volume of quality papers which were being produced overseas with Hollander beaters. Each of these factors, when coupled with the high duties imposed on white papers and the prejudices of English booksellers (who preferred Dutch and French papers), caused several white paper mills to go bankrupt in the early eighteenth century.[6]

The importation of white papers decreased rapidly after 1740. This decrease is usually attributed to the outbreak of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1738. According to John Balston, this war compelled booksellers "to seek out and make use of English supplies" (*Wove* 179)—supplies which, though generally disliked by native booksellers, had been available in small quantities on the English market since the late seventeenth century. The outbreak of war coincided with the implementation of the new paper making technology in some domestic mills, which led to the more efficient treatment of materials: that efficiency resulted in an increase in both quality and

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[4] Alfred H. Shorter, in *Paper Making in the British Isles: An Historical and Geographical Survey* (1971), writes: "some three-quarters or more of the consumption of paper in Great Britain (about 400,000 reams per annum) was met from these sources, and the remainder from Holland and Italy. In fact in 1713 the imports of all papers into London were 101,405 reams, and nearly all of this was white paper" (48).

[5] British paper makers did, however, have a home advantage in regards to taxation: "The duties imposed on imported paper were heavier than the tax on paper of British make, so the British manufacturers had a measure of protection which gave them a decided advantage over their continental competitors in the home markets" (Shorter *Paper Making* 63). Papers of a higher value were taxed more heavily.

[6] Shorter writes:

> To judge from the number and distribution of bankruptcies which occurred among English manufacturers of white paper in the period 1723-46, several of the master makers in the south-east of the country suffered most financial difficulties. In their attempts to establish and develop the manufacture they may well have overstretched their resources, and their trade may have suffered particularly because of the competition from imported paper in the London market. (*Paper Making* 55)

output.[7] By the end of the eighteenth century native paper makers, the majority of whom now used Hollander beaters, had secured the English market for brown and white papers.[8]

Whatman snr. and his partner, Richard Harris, were some of the first paper makers to install beating engines in England. They fitted Turkey Mill with Hollander beaters in 1739. The technological advantages of these beating engines, which eventually facilitated the installation of five vats at Turkey Mill, helped Whatman snr. to advance the native manufacture of white paper. Balston notes that "Whatman laid papers of this period were the best on the market" (*Elder* 254). Whatman snr.'s reputation in the 1740s and 1750s was mostly established by the qualities of his white writing papers, not his printing papers. The fame of Whatman snr. in the second half of the eighteenth century is usually attributed to his invention of wove paper.

Wove paper was made by replacing the laid wires of the vatman's mould with a woven wire cloth. The use of a wove mould by a paper maker resulted in a paper which had fewer disfigurations. The absence of chain marks in wove paper made the medium a desirable commodity for publishers, engravers, and artists, each of whom—over the next fifty years—adopted wove papers for alternative purposes. Originally, wove paper was used as a medium which enhanced fine types: because letterpress was printed in relief at a low pressure in order to avoid embossing on the verso of the sheet, the impressions of types printed on laid papers were sometimes interrupted by visible chain wires (Balston *Wove* 181). To produce a clear, crisp type, a paper was required which had no chain marks. To this end, John Baskerville used wove paper in his edition of Virgil in 1757 to print a clean impression of his new printing type. The effect of this type on paper, which embellished thick and thin strokes with flowing curves, was enhanced significantly by the use of a smooth, unlined paper.[9] Baskerville and Whatman snr.

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[7] According to Richard L. Hills, "Between 1738 and 1800, paper output rose nearly fourfold but the number of mills only doubled. This was probably due to the higher productivity achieved by the introduction of Hollander beaters" (53).

[8] Balston writes:

> Taking the market side of the equation, it is a fact that the demand for White paper in the British Isles increased steadily between 1740-1789 (more rapidly after 1780) . . . . It is also a fact that imports of White paper fell away rapidly after 1740 and, with the exception of special items like Plate paper, had dropped to negligible levels before the end of the century (~2%); in addition, the situation had so changed that we were not only manufacturing nearly all White paper needed for home consumption (~85% by the mid -1740's onwards: and ~96-97% by the 1770's), but we were exporting not insignificant quantities from the 1770's onwards (albeit it is clear that small quantities of English papers were being used in the American colonies, and possibly in the East as well, as early as the 1750's), a considerable turn around. (*Elder* 264)

[9] Balston speculates "whether this requirement could be achieved with the quality of paper currently available in the English market place. . . . the finest Writing paper might just have sufficed had it not been subjected to

produced several books together until Whatman snr. died in 1759. Whatman snr.'s wife, Anne, maintained the business for three years until Whatman jnr. took over Turkey Mill in 1762. It was Whatman jnr. who extended the use of wove paper to include copper-plate printing in addition to letterpress. Thus, Whatman jnr. manufactured the papers which would later be used in the inaugural copy of Blake's *Songs of Innocence*.

Blake was introduced to Whatman jnr.'s papers during his apprenticeship to James Basire between 1772 and 1779. On 23 November 1772, Basire had completed a proof for the Society of Antiquaries which exhibited "the Interview between Henry the 8th of England and Francis the First, King of France, on 11th Oct. 1532 between the Towns of Calais and Boulogne" (qtd. in Balston *Father & Son*: 28). The work was later titled *The Field of the Cloth of Gold* (1774). The printing of this copper-plate, according to Basire, required a sheet of paper measuring at least 125 x 68.5 cm. No paper of this size was manufactured in England or Europe during this period.[10] The Society of Antiquaries asked Whatman jnr. to resolve Basire's problem. Whatman jnr. responded:

> The Double Elephant which I at present make is 3 ft 4 in. by 2 ft 2 ½ in., and is as large as any Paper I have ever seen manufactured in Europe. Two sheets of that pasted together would be large enough, but I suppose the bad consequences of that method is what they wish to avoid. . . . My present conveniences will not permit of my making any larger than the Double Elephant without alterations of most of the Utensils, and even then it cannot be made by hand, but I have no doubt but a Contrivance I have thought of will enable me to make it, although that will draw on a certain expense. . . .
> If therefore the Society think it worth their while to allow this extra Expense, I will endeavour to accommodate them. (qtd. in Balston *Father & Son*: 29)

Whatman jnr.'s request was accepted by Basire on the conditions that "1st. . . . the Paper be made of a smooth and good Substance with regard to Thickness. 2ndly. That it be not sized with Parchment, nor any Allum used for whitening it. 3rdly. That the sizing be made of Kid-Leather; and the outward Surface of the Paper to approach, as near as may be, to that of the French" (Basire qtd. in Balston *Father & Son*: 31). It can be assumed that these demands were met by Whatman jnr. and, in December 1773, four reams of Antiquarian paper (measuring 135 x 79 cm) were delivered to Basire's workshop at 31 Great Queen Street, a tenant of which was the young apprentice, William Blake. The prints of *The Field of the Cloth of Gold* were completed for publication by January 1775. Collectively, these prints were representative of the first instances of copper-plate

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moistening prior to printing. . . . Baskerville must have sensed this at an early stage and been forced to contrive a glazing process to counteract this effect" (*Wove* 181).

[10] The largest paper in Europe during the eighteenth century was made in Holland. It measured 122 x 70 cm (Hills 73).

printing on Whatman jnr.'s papers. Basire was clearly impressed with the results. In addition to using the remaining stock of Antiquarian in the printing of *The Embarkation of King Henry VIII at Dover, May 31st, 1520* (1781), Basire went on to use a variety of Whatman jnr.'s papers in the production of his commissions during the 1770s.

Blake contributed to a number of Basire's engravings. According to Peter Bower,

> Blake had long been familiar with the high quality of the paper made by Whatman at Turkey Mill: in the 1770s he had used their *Royal* (20 x 25in / 50 x 76cm) and *Writing Royal* (19 x 24in / 48.3 x 61cm) laid writing papers, watermarked J WHATMAN + Fleur de Lys / Strasbourg Bend / GR, for the drawings he executed in Westminster Abbey. These were engraved and published under the name of James Basire, for Gough's *Sepulchral Monuments of Great Britain* (1786) and Ayloffe's *Some Ancient Monuments in Westminster* (1780). ("Vivid Surface" 56)

Blake's familiarity with Whatman jnr.'s papers during his apprenticeship appears to have shaped his choices of paper in the subsequent decade. Much like the way in which the lessons of "Basire my Master" (Blake "Chaucer" 573) shaped Blake's preference for "knife tools" (Blake "Chaucer" 575), it is likely that Basire's ideas about the qualities needed in a paper which was to be used for copper-plate printing guided Blake's selection of wove paper in c. 1788.[11] Moreover, because Blake etched his plates in relief rather than in intaglio (which required less pressure from the rolling press) the use of a smooth, unlined paper was a necessity. Intaglio plates were printed with great pressure on laid papers: this pressure pushed the paper into the incised lines of the intaglio plate, forcing ink onto the surface and into the depressions of the laid sheet until it had been extensively flattened. A pronounced plate mark was usually visible on the verso of an intaglio print. Wire marks, on the other hand, were barely visible. Relief plates, like printing types, were printed with minimal pressure because their images were transferred from the surfaces of the plates and not from their shallows: to print in relief on a laid sheet with little pressure would have resulted in an impression which failed to

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[11] Turner's choices of paper were conditioned in the same was as Blake's:

> In his earliest years he [Turner] was living amongst many of the best stationers and paper suppliers in London, whose premises were clustered around the Strand. Being accustomed to seeing good quality paper from a very young age must have played some part in training his naturally 'good' eye. The earliest papers he chose to work on were all, in their own ways, quality products. . . . Despite Turner's innovative methods and his continuous self-education, it would appear that many of the qualities and characteristics shown by these early papers, continued to condition his choice of paper throughout his career. There are great similarities in the weights, textures and tones of many of the papers used in the first thirty years of his career. Even the development of a greater range of much higher quality coloured painting and drawing papers in the early years of the nineteenth century made little change in the nature of the tones and colours which he chose to work on. (Bower *Turner* 40).

penetrate the chain lines of the paper. Increasing the pressure of the rolling press could have solved this problem. However, an increase in pressure would have resulted in embossing on the verso of the paper. According to Phillips, "Blake tried to avoid" embossing so that he could "print on both sides of the sheet" ("*America*" 24). The production of a clear impression on both sides of the sheet necessitated the use of a paper which had few depressions from chain marks. Whatman jnr.'s wove paper met this requirement.

Few London stationers stocked Whatman jnr.'s wove papers during the 1780s. Whatman jnr.'s papers were sold primarily by "Wright, Gill & Pettiward of 30 Abchurch Lane, James Woodmason of 5 Leadenhall Street, and Fourdrinier, Bloxam [sic] & Walker of 11 Lombard Street" (Balston *Father & Son* 51). Viscomi has argued that Blake's first ream of wove paper was "probably" purchased from Wright, Gill & Pettiward or from Fourdrinier, Bloxham & Walker because both of these stationers were located "near St. Paul's and closer to his house at 29 Poland Street" (*Book* 410n23). However, Viscomi failed to consider the small proportion of sales which Whatman jnr. had made through private people during the 1780s. One of these people was an individual who had direct links with Blake at this time: namely, Stephen Horncastle, a stationer who—in addition to working as one of Whatman jnr.'s chief rag merchants—was located at 29 Broad Street, just a five minute walk from Blake's home in 1789. Moreover, prior to moving to Poland Street in 1785, Blake had lived and worked in close proximity to Horncastle. William Bailey's *British Directory or, Merchant's and Trader's Useful Companion* (1785) documented the tenants of Broad Street as follows:

> Blake, James, *Haberdasher*, 28, Broad-str. Carnaby-Market.
> Blake and Parker, *Print-sellers*, 27, Ditto . . .
> Stephen Horncastle, Stationer, 29 Broad Street, Carnaby Market. (144)

Blake's and Parker's print shop at 27 Broad Street was situated directly besides James Blake's home—the poet's birthplace—at 28 Broad Street. Just across from these Blake residences was 29 Broad Street, a house occupied by Horncastle but—according to the Poor Rates paid from this property between 1784 and 1793—owned by Blake's brother, John. Bentley concludes that Horncastle must have been "a sitting tenant when Blake's brother John paid the rates (1784-93) for 29 Broad Street" ("Appendix" 38). There is a high probability that Blake became acquainted with Horncastle while both individuals were living on Broad Street, possibly as a result of John Blake's relationship with the latter. Alternatively, Blake could have met Horncastle following the former's relocation to Poland Street, doing so while visiting the family home. In any case, Horncastle seems to be the most likely candidate for the stationer who first supplied Blake with Whatman jnr.'s wove papers.

Blake could have bought a ream of Whatman jnr.'s imperial wove (measuring 76.2 x 55.9 cm) for three guineas and nine shillings in 1787 (Balston *Father & Son* 55). The high

price of Whatman jnr.'s wove papers might account for why Blake, after the inaugural issue of *Songs of Innocence* (copy U and untraced copy V), printed his illuminations on both sides of the sheet: a ream of imperial wove cost twenty-one shillings more than the maximum value of a ream of imperial laid paper (Gaskell "Notes" 41). In any case, if we assume that a ream contained 480 sheets and that "the stationer's retail price was 50 to 100 per cent higher" (Viscomi 250), a quire of Whatman jnr.'s imperial wove would have cost approximately eight shillings. A single sheet would have cost approximately four pence. Thus, the paper used in the first copy of *Songs of Innocence*, which divided two sheets of Whatman jnr.'s imperial paper into thirty-two octavo sized leaves, probably cost around eight pence. Subsequent recto-verso copies of *Songs of Innocence*, which divided one sheet of Whatman jnr.'s imperial paper into sixteen octavo sized leaves, probably cost around four pence.[12] Even in the face of the new technological developments in paper making during the nineteenth century such as the inventions of the Fourdrinier and cylinder machines,[13] Blake continued to prefer handmade wove papers until the end of his life. He used at least sixteen types of Whatman jnr.'s wove papers in over fifty illuminated books.[14] Blake did, however, also use wove papers which were manufactured by other paper makers.

1.2.2   "E & P"

While the first copies of *Songs of Innocence* were printed in black ink on a paper countermarked "J WHATMAN," the four copies (F, I, J, and X) from Blake's next printing session—also produced in c. 1789—were printed in green on a paper which was manufactured by an alternative paper maker. The addition of colour to *Songs of Innocence*, as Viscomi has noted, marked the green edition of *Songs of Innocence* as "a significant turning point" in illuminated printing: "the session in which relief etchings became illuminated prints" (*Book* 246).[15] This turning point coincided with the selection of a new type of wove paper which was not produced by Whatman jnr. Several paper

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[12] The next copies of *Songs of Innocence* were printed on both sides of the sheet: therefore, only one sheet of imperial paper was required.

[13] The Fourdrinier paper machine was invented by Nicholas Louis Robert in 1798 but was later developed by Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier (probably the Grandsons of the engraver Peter Fourdrinier), from whom the machine derives its name.

[14] Whatman jnr.'s name continued to be used by the paper makers who took over Turkey Mill in 1794. Therefore, papers countermarked "1794 J WHATMAN" were actually manufactured by William Balston and Finch and Robert Hollingworth (Balston *Father & Son* 119-23).

[15] Viscomi categorises Blake's first illuminated books, "There is No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One," as relief etchings rather than illuminated prints. He does so because the "first pulls" of these texts "were probably printed in black ink without borders, as well as on one side of the leaf," much like in copy U of *Songs of Innocence* Thus, before Blake printed *Songs of Innocence* for a second time, he "still perceived his new relief plates conventionally, as uncoloured black images on one side of the paper" (246).

makers had emulated Whatman jnr.'s wove papers in the early 1780s. Some of these paper makers were connected to Whatman jnr. through their previous employments, tenancy agreements, or local districts. Geographically, the manufacture of wove papers seems to have rippled outwards from Turkey Mill: thus, nearby mills produced wove papers before those mills which were further afield. The gradual spread of the manufacture of wove paper suggests that Kent, and especially the district of Maidstone, functioned as a hub whose various components—including shared apprentices, shared workmen, and shared mould makers (Balston *Wove* 120)—facilitated the growth and development of the wove industry during the 1780s.[16]

The copies of *Songs of Innocence* printed in green were watermarked "E & P" and were produced by paper makers Robert Edmeads and Thomas Pine [Fig. 2]. Edmeads and Pine manufactured white and brown papers at Great Ivy Mill, a mill which was situated in the same district as Whatman jnr.'s Turkey Mill on the boundary between Maidstone and Loose on Loose Stream. The mill had been occupied by the Pine family since 1715, when Thomas Pine snr.—inspired by his brother, John, who was a mould maker—had entered the paper making business.[17] By 1728, Thomas Pine snr. was paying the rent at an additional mill on Loose Stream named Lower Tovil.[18] Upon the death of Thomas snr., in 1757, his three sons—Thomas jnr., Simon, and John, the former two of whom had been working at Great Ivy Mill and Lower Tovil since the early 1740s—worked to maintain both mills. Simon occupied Great Ivy Mill and Thomas jnr. occupied Lower Tovil. Each of the three brothers, as well as their sons, worked at both of the mills during the second half of the eighteenth century. Thomas jnr. joined Simon at Great Ivy Mill before 1763, after which the brothers worked simultaneously at both mills. They presumably continued to do so until John and his son gained occupancy of Lower Tovil in 1781. Meanwhile, Thomas jnr.'s son, also a Thomas, began work at Great Ivy Mill, doing so by 1788 at the latest.[19] Thomas insured Great Ivy Mill with Robert Edmeads in 1788 (Shorter *Paper Mills* 191).[20] It is likely, however, that Edmeads had been Thomas's partner at the

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[16] For more information about the geographical distribution of paper mills in Kent, see Shorter's *Paper Making* (77-92) and *Studies on the History of Paper Making in Britain* (222-51).

[17] The Pine family were previously fullers at Tovil.

[18] However, Shorter notes that "it is not always possible to decide from the available evidence which member of the Pine family was the occupier or master paper maker. . . . In 1728 two paper makers named THOMAS PINE took an apprentice, Joseph Hollis. . . . This probably refers to Thomas Pine of Lower Tovil and Thomas Pine of Ivy Mill" (*Paper Mills* 190).

[19] It must be admitted that the shared names of Thomas snr., Thomas jnr., and Thomas jnr.'s son make it difficult to trace the history of Great Ivy Mill with accuracy. However, the prevalence of Thomas jnr.'s name in the Maidstone ratebooks from 1741 onwards makes it clear that it was not this Thomas Pine who was partners with Robert Edmeads from the late 1780s to the early 1800s.

[20] Prior to insuring the mill under the names of Edmeads and Pine, Great Ivy Mill had been insured by "Thomas Pine" in 1781. It can be assumed that the Thomas Pine who insured the millhouse in 1781 was Thomas Pine snr., who presumably died by the time that Edmeads and Pine jointly insured the mill in 1788.

millhouse since approximately 1785.[21] As of 1791, the name of Thomas's uncle, Simon, no longer appeared in the ratebooks associated with Great Ivy Mill (Shorter *Paper Mills* 191): by that point, the millhouse had become the sole property of Edmeads and Pine.

The partners retained the mill until 1805, having produced an extensive range of fine white papers. It appears that it was Edmeads and Pine who had first produced white papers at Great Ivy Mill. The millhouse had at the earliest only started to manufacture white papers in the mid-1780s when the rateable value of Great Ivy Mill increased from £40 to £50 (Balston *Elder* 318). Prior to this point, the mill had exclusively produced inferior brown papers from rotten rags and old ropes because it specialised in press and shopping papers.[22] The increase in the rateable value of Great Ivy Mill suggests that, during the 1780s, the Pine family had finally modernised their millhouse through the installation of a Hollander beater.[23] It was probably the modernisation of the mill which induced Edmeads and Pine to go into business as makers of fine white papers.

When the approximate start-date of the Edmeads and Pine partnership is considered—c. 1785-88—it becomes clear that the paper used by Blake in the green issue of *Songs of Innocence* in c. 1789 was probably taken from an early ream of white "E & P" wove which had been manufactured by the new partners at Great Ivy Mill. The price that Blake paid for Edmeads and Pines' new product is unknown. According to Philip Gaskell, "records of prices actually paid for paper by eighteenth-century printers are few and far between, and do not as a rule include details of the quality or bulk of the papers concerned" ("Notes" 42). However, "the eighteenth-century retail price in England" was usually "about five times the cost of production" (*Bibliography* 179). Paper was accountable for "about 50 per cent" (*Bibliography* 177) of this cost. Gaskell's model cannot be used to calculate the cost of Edmeads and Pines' papers in *Songs of Innocence*, though, because this work was printed on both "E & P" and "J WHATMAN" papers.[24] Yet, the price tag of *Songs of Innocence*—which remained the same regardless of the paper

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[21] Edmeads took apprentices at Great Ivy Mill in 1785. If Edmeads was working at Great Ivy Mill prior to insuring the mill under the name of Edmeads and Pine, then, it is likely that he started working as Pine's partner before 1788.

[22] After all, the Pines—in addition to working as paper makers—had an additional source of income: they were grocers (Balston *Elder* 317). According to Shorter, "it is not surprising to find that many . . . proprietors depended in part on other sources of income, and that they had additional or alternative interests or employment. These interests were diverse, but the most usual amalgam of trades in this context was that of paper-maker and corn mill owner or corn miller. . . . In 1766 Simon Pine of Otham in Kent was a paper-maker, mill and hop planter" (*Paper Making* 70). Thomas Pine's additional occupation may account for Edmeads' seniority in the name of Edmeads and Pine: Balston suggests that "this may have been because Thomas' main preoccupation was still with the grocery business" (*Elder* 318).

[23] Balston attributes the Pines' delay in modernisation to their "product line" of "inferior papers," arguing that "there was no compelling reason from them to change their processes from the Old Technology. One might conclude that, in view of the unfavourable conditions prevailing then in the market for White paper, . . . there was no obvious incentive for the Pines to modernise" (*Elder* 317).

[24] Using Gaskell's model to calculate the cost of papers in *Songs of Innocence* would provide us with the average cost of all papers rather than the specific costs of individual papers.

used in each edition (five shillings)—suggests that the values of "E & P" and "J WHATMAN" papers were similar.

The argument that "E & P" and "J WHATMAN" papers were retailed at a similar price can be tested through a tentative reconstruction of the production costs of a work which was printed entirely on Edmeads and Pines' papers. The first issue of *America* was printed on "E & P" papers only. Blake retailed *America* at 10s 6d in 1793 (Blake "Public" 693). The production costs of this work, according to Gaskell's model, should have totalled 2s 1d and the cost of the paper used in one copy should have been approximately 1s.[25] Blake used two and a half sheets of "E & P" paper in each copy of *America*, quartered and printed on both sides of the folio leaf: each sheet probably retailed at five pence—a price which is similar to the known retail value of an imperial sheet of Whatman jnr.'s wove (four pence). Therefore, Edmeads and Pines' papers seem to have been of a similar quality to the products of Turkey Mill.[26]

Blake used paper watermarked "E & P" until 1795. This type of paper appeared in at least twenty illuminated books over the course of six years.[27]

1.2.3 "C BALL"

After printing an ochre issue of *Songs of Innocence* (copies A-H, K-M, and Z) during the same printing session of c. 1789 on papers which were alternatively countermarked "J WHATMAN" or watermarked "E & P," Blake produced an entirely new illuminated book: *The Book of Thel* (1789). *The Book of Thel* was printed on a wove paper which had no watermark or countermark. The proofs to this book (copy a), however, were printed on "J WHATMAN" paper. Next, Blake produced seven copies (copies K, L, M, A, C, B, and H) of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790). Only two of these copies bore the marks of their paper makers: copy C was countermarked "J WHATMAN" and copy L, unlike other copies of *The Marriage*, was printed on a laid paper which was watermarked "C BALL." This copy, according to Phillips, was "printed in monochrome on a single sheet, with the three plate sizes approximately 157 X 104 mm or slightly smaller." These plates

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[25] According to Bentley, the twenty-three copper-plates (including cancelled plates) of *America* would have cost £6 17s ("Heavy Metal" 738). The high prices of these copper-plates meant that *America* had a low profit margin. Purchasing copper was, however, a one-off investment: after all, once the copper had been engraved with the poetry and designs of *America*, these plates could have been used to print hundreds of impressions. The sale of more impressions from the same copper-plates would have generated a larger profit.

[26] Bower has noted the similarities between Whatman jnr.'s and Edmeads and Pines' papers, acknowledging that it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a paper was manufactured by "Whatman or . . . Edmeads and Pine" ("Evolution" 66). Similarly, Viscomi has argued that the "Whatman and Edmeads & Pine paper . . . are very similar in weight, texture, and colour" (395n10).

[27] Blake would later use paper watermarked "E & P 1802" and "Edmeads & Pine" in the light-orangish, yellow-ochre edition of *Songs of Innocence* from c. 1804.

contained the "Song of Liberty" only. They were printed "on a single half-sheet of laid paper (measuring 215 X 345 mm), with three deckle edges, the chain lines running horizontally and the watermark C *Ball* at the centre of the fold" (Phillips "Terror" 292). The watermark "C BALL" was used by Charles Ball in the last decade of the eighteenth century. In 1790, Ball had converted the Albury corn mill in Sussex into a paper mill and, upon completing the conversion, he had gone into partnership with William Wilcox. The pair acquired a second property at Chilworth in 1793 before going their separate ways in the same year. Ball ran the business alone until at least 1803, after which he went into partnership with another paper maker named Ashby.

Blake's use of Charles Ball's laid paper in a short, three-page pamphlet (copy L of *The Marriage*) might indicate that Blake was contemplating the idea of producing this illuminated book on a larger scale than he had envisaged for his earlier works. Phillips argues that "such a pamphlet, printed monochrome and making use of a simple form of frisket, could have been inked and printed easily, quickly and in quantity, and sold or distributed at little cost" ("Terror" 292). The production of just two pamphlets on laid paper, however, suggests that Blake soon abandoned the idea of increasing his output in any significant way.[28]

1.2.4 "I TAYLOR"

Between c. 1789 and 1790, Blake primarily used wove papers which had either no watermark, were countermarked "J WHATMAN," or were watermarked "E & P." Blake took a two-year hiatus from illuminated printing between 1791 and 1793, presumably because of his commercial commitments. When Blake resumed illuminated printing in 1793, he used the same papers that he used in the first editions of *Songs of Innocence*, *The Book of Thel*, and *The Marriage*. For instance, *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793) was printed on "J WHATMAN" and "E & P" papers. Towards the end of 1793, however, Blake began to use an additional brand of wove paper which was watermarked "I TAYLOR" or, in the following two years, "1794 | I TAYLOR" [Fig. 3].

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[28] Phillips explores the reasons why Blake might have rejected the mass production of *The Marriage* copy L, writing:

> It would appear that Blake abandoned the idea of producing copies . . . for fear of the consequences. In particular, it would have been difficult for Blake to deny the political import of *A Song of Liberty,* if it had been found in circulation, or for sale at No. 13 Hercules Buildings, as a 3*d.* pamphlet. This may also explain why the only known examples of Blake preparing to produce one of his overtly political works for production inexpensively and in numbers remained in his possession for over twenty-five years. ("Terror" 293-94)

"I TAYLOR" was the watermark which was used by John Taylor at Basted Mill in Wrotham from at least 1786 to 1801. Taylor was the son of Clement Taylor snr., an eminent paper maker who had owned several mills in Maidstone, including Basted Mill and Poll Mill. The latter of these mills was on the opposite bank of the River Len, facing Whatman jnr.'s Turkey Mill: the proximity of these mills might account for why the Taylors were the first paper makers to emulate Whatman jnr.'s wove papers, doing so no later than 1783 (Balston *Wove* 120). Upon the death of Clement Taylor snr. in 1776, Poll Mill was bequeathed to one of his four sons, James, who worked at the mill with his brother, George, until Whatman jnr. acquired the freehold of Poll Mill in 1785. A long and arduous dispute about the ownership of the property and its surrounding farmlands, as leased to John Taylor, ensued. Each of the four Taylor brothers—including Clement Taylor jnr., who had learned about the construction of wove covers from Whatman jnr.'s employees—contributed to the debate, passionately arguing against Whatman jnr.'s claim to the mill.[29] The lawsuit was settled in 1787 when Whatman jnr. acquired the mill but not the farmlands. The Taylors were ejected from Poll Mill and had little success in subsequent years.[30] Clement Taylor jnr. was declared bankrupt in 1797, following the sale of his mill at Upper Tovil. John Taylor, by contrast, continued to make wove papers at Basted Mill until 1802. He was the last active member of the Taylor family.

Blake used paper watermarked "I TAYLOR" and "1794 | I TAYLOR" in copy R of *America* (1793), copy C of *Songs of Experience* (1794), copy B of "There is no Natural Religion" (1794), copies B-G of *Europe: A Prophecy* (1794), copies A and J of *The First Book of Urizen* (1794), and in most of the large paper reprints of 1795. Importantly, "I TAYLOR" and "1794 | I TAYLOR" papers were used alongside "J WHATMAN," "1794 J WHATMAN,"

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[29] According to Balston, "Clement Taylor jnr. had learnt through some of Whatman's employees something about the construction of wove covers that enabled him to make lined wove paper, if not plain wove" (*Wove* 120).

[30] The reputation of the Taylors was tarnished further in 1792 when Clement and George Taylor were granted a patent for the bleaching of papers. Paper makers had been bleaching papers since at least 1788. The process of bleaching, then, was thought to be open to all and, like the invention of wove paper, did not seem to require a patent. Naturally, several paper makers objected to the patent which had been granted to the Taylors. Whatman jnr. argued that

> It is well known to several persons that I viewed it in this light from my first hearing of their having taken out a Patent, and had formed my opinion of its illegality from the same sources your Memorialist has done. . . . And, in consequence of the properties of the Dephlogisticated Muriatic Acid therein stated, I can prove my having had it in contemplation for at least three years since to try its effects in my manufactory, and actually purchased all the ingredients for carrying on the process on the 13th of Oct 1791. . . . Judge then my surprise when I learnt I was no longer to have the right to the free use of articles in my possession (and the effect of which either in practice or theory was so publicly known) without subjecting myself to a threatened prosecution. (qtd. in Balston *Father & Son*: 103-04)

The Paper Makers of Scotland disregarded the patent in light of Whatman jnr.'s protest.

and "E & P" papers throughout this period: in copy R of *America* and copy C of *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, for instance, papers by all three paper makers were present. Similarly, as Viscomi has noted in regards to the two types of paper used in the first edition of *Songs of Innocence*, the "Whatman and Edmeads & Pine paper appears to have been stacked in one pile" (*Book* 395). This evidence suggests that Blake, between c. 1789 and 1795, usually stacked his papers together, doing so regardless of maker. The various papers in this pile would then be used to print impressions from each of the copper-plates in an issue, sometimes resulting in papers from two or three different paper makers being gathered in the same copy. Therefore, it appears that Blake was not concerned with maintaining a consistent watermark across the entirety of a copy, issue, or edition of an illuminated book: instead, it seems that Blake was solely concerned with maintaining a consistent quality of paper.

Blake continued to use "J WHATMAN," "1794 J WHATMAN," "E & P," "I TAYLOR, and "1794 | I TAYLOR" papers until the mid-1790s, after which he took a seven-year hiatus from illuminated printing. This hiatus was eventually broken by the production of approximately fifty illuminated books between c. 1802 and 1827, the papers of which were provided by a variety of both established and smaller firms such as John Buttanshaw at Hamptons Mill, John Hayes and John Wise at Padsole Mill, and Joseph Ruse, Richard Turner, and Thomas Turner at Upper Tovil Mill, to name just a few.

The exploration of Blake's papers between c. 1789 and 1795 helps us to understand the marketplace that facilitated Blake's working with different high-end papers and the paper-makers that increasingly diversified this market by the end of the century. Exploring the manufacturers of these media in a series of micro-histories has demonstrated how the rippling expansion of the manufacture of wove papers in the technological hub of Kent made a variety of wove papers available to Blake between c. 1789 and 1795.

1.3   The Roles and Reputations of Wove Papers in Eighteenth-Century Print Culture

The introduction of wove papers in eighteenth-century print culture made possible the production of high-quality works across a variety of alternative and diverse fields. For instance, wove paper had not been designed as a drawing paper but, by the end of the eighteenth century, it was widely implemented as such. Blake used wove papers for drawings and paintings throughout the 1780s, selecting Whatman jnr.'s papers in a series of watercolour paintings (which focussed on *Joseph and his Brethren*) which were

exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1785. Thus, while Blake was certainly introduced to Whatman jnr.'s papers during his apprenticeship to Basire, it appears that Blake's first uses of wove papers in his own works were in watercolour paintings and not in the production of prints. This distinction is important because it reveals that Blake's selection of wove papers in his illuminated prints was not motivated entirely by the benefits of this paper to printing in relief: because Blake coloured his prints by hand with watercolours, "Illuminating the Manuscript" (Blake *Island* 465) until at least 1795, an exploration of the relationships between the colouring and materiality of Blake's prints might help us to understand why Blake adopted wove papers in his illuminated books.

Viscomi argues that Blake applied a selection of home-made watercolours to his prints "*sequentially*, while still part of a pile of impressions." He illuminated pages in "an assembly-line manner" (*Book* 131) by using the same colours and applying the same stylistic features to each sheet. Thus, similar washes of colour appeared in issues which were printed as a part of the same edition: prints such as "The Little Black Boy" from copies B and G of the *Songs of Innocence* and plate six from copies I and J of *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* were "more alike than different" (Viscomi *Book* 131). For the most part, the washes of colour in these prints had an even finish: that is, their colours were not interrupted by brush marks, uneven textures, or pools of pigments. The clarity of this finish can be attributed to the even surface of the wove page. Watercolours which had been executed on laid sheets sometimes suffered because of the depressions which disfigured the surfaces of laid papers. These depressions were caused by the thick wires of the paper maker's mould, the raised lengths of which disturbed the even distribution of stuff. The use of a laid mould usually resulted in sheets which were thinner at the points were pulp had rested on the raised wires.

The inconveniences of these furrows frustrated artists frequently: in pencil drawings, graphite sometimes failed to penetrate chain lines; similarly, in watercolours, pools of pigment occasionally gathered in these depressions. Thomas Gainsborough's *Travellers on Horseback Approaching a Village with a Spire* (c. 1770) and *Figures in a Wooden Landscape* (1785) [Fig. 4] demonstrate the problems of using laid papers in both watercolour paintings and in pencil drawings. Gainsborough was so disgruntled by the unintentional disfigurations of laid papers that, while corresponding with James Dodsley—brother and partner of Robert Dodsley, publisher of Baskerville's Virgil—he requested that the bookseller send him some quires of Whatman jnr.'s wove paper:

> I should take it as a particular favour if you would send me half a Doz[n]. Quire of the same sort of Paper as the . . . new Bath Guide is printed on, it being what I have long been in search of for making wash'd Drawings upon; I shall be in Town about Xmas & will call to pay you for it. There is so little impression of the Wires, and those so very fine, that the surface is like Vellum.

Unfortunately, Gainsborough's request was not met by Dodsley.[31]

Blake avoided the problems encountered by Gainsborough and other contemporary arists by using wove papers in his works. According to Scott Wilcox, "the Whatman innovation of wove paper seemed a godsend" (15) to artists:

> Wove paper, with its smooth surface free from the chain and laid lines produced by traditional paper moulds, was ideal for an even wash of watercolour. This was unquestionably a major development for topographical artists working in a combination of fine pen lines and pale washes of colour; but at the same time that wove paper was becoming widely used as an artists' paper . . . the watercolor *drawing* of the topographers was being supplanted by watercolor *painting*. (8)

Blake's use of wove papers in watercolour paintings during the 1780s predated the use of wove papers by other contemporary artists such as John Constable and J. M. W. Turner, probably because he had already become familiar with Whatman jnr.'s papers while being trained as a precision draughtsman by Basire. Balston has noted that wove paper "attracted the attention, at any early date, of draughtsmen engaged in precision drawing" and "engineering" (*Wove* 250). There was "a definite shift among draughtsmen away from laid paper to wove during the last two decades of the 18th C" (*Wove* 251). It is likely that Blake's training as a draughtsman made him aware of wove papers earlier than most. Therefore, when Blake started to produce watercolour paintings for exhibition at the Royal Academy in the 1780s, he returned to the medium that he knew best: namely, Whatman jnr.'s papers, a medium which was perfectly suited to watercolour paintings. Thus, Blake's method of colouring his illuminated books from c. 1789 to 1785—by watercolour painting—was made possible by his choices of paper.

Blake's return to using wove papers in copper engravings might have been the result of the growing reputation of these papers in both typographic and illustrated books. Wove sheets had functioned as a symbol of quality in not only material terms but also in literary and artistic terms since the original appearance of this paper in 1757. During the 1760s, wove papers were used exclusively by James Dodsley, Dryden Leach, and Jacob Tonson, each of whom used Whatman jnr.'s papers as a support for their fine typographical works. Other publishers began to use wove papers in the late 1780s and early 1790s. Works such as Richard Shepherd's *The Ground and Credibility of the Christian Religion in a Course of Sermons Preached Before the University of Oxford* (1788) and *A Key to the Old Testament and Apocrypha* (1790) were "Elegantly printed on a fine wove Paper" (*Public Advertiser* April 29 1790). Moreover, following the success of Basire's use of Whatman

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[31] Scott Wilcox acknowledges that "the 'furrows' of which" Gainsborough "complained to Dodsley are evident in the sky of *Travellers*" and Peter Bower has noted that *Figures in a Wooden Landscape* (1785) had "a very prominent laid impression from the mould" ("Evolution" 62).

jnr.'s wove papers in his copper-plate engravings in the late 1770s, publishers began to use wove papers in illustrated books. The most important of these, Josiah Boydell's edition of William Shakespeare's *Dramatic Works* (1791-1805), played a decisive role in popularizing the use of wove papers by engravers. Boydell's folio was published as a part of the Shakespeare Gallery scheme: a project which, according to Morris Eaves, used "the best poet" as the subject matter for "the best painters." Their works were then "engraved by the nation's best engravers" and printed on "the best paper" by "the best printers" (57). Blake was not asked to contribute. In any case, the *Dramatic Works* quickly inspired imitators: the illustrations from Thomas Macklin's folio edition of the Bible (1790) and Robert Bowyer's illustrated edition of David Hume's *The History of England* (1792) were both printed on Whatman jnr.'s wove papers. Much like Boydell's folio, each of these works employed the nation's best engravers.

Blake's use of wove paper during the late 1780s and early 1790s was opportune. While Blake's desire to use wove papers was not inspired by Boydell's edition of Shakespeare, his use of wove papers in copper-engraved illustrated books might have been provoked by Boydell's announcement of the impending Shakespeare Gallery. The production and sale of Blake's illuminated books during the late 1780s and 1790s, then, coincided with the development of a fashion for illustrated books which were printed on wove papers.

1.4   Reading the Textual Conditions of Blake's Illuminated Books

Selecting the appropriate materials was vitally important to Blake's understanding of illuminated printing. Historicizing Blake's choices of paper in illuminated printing reveals the practical, economic, and aesthetic concerns which motivated the engraver. The identification of these concerns demonstrates the difficult processes of conversion which regulated the transformations of Blake's ideas into material texts. Further, highlighting the various technologies involved in the conversion of Blake's languages paves the way for the consideration of of how the physical products of these technologies shaped readers' interpretations of Blake's illuminated books. Reading the textual condition of the illuminated books necessitates the consideration of a number of scholarly lucunae which, while rarely studied by literary critics, made possible the materialization of Blake's ideas. The present study will focus on two of the elements which contributed to the materialization of the illuminated books: first, the formats of Blake's works, the sizes and lengths of which helped Blake to penetrate a variety of predetermined markets; and second, the composite arrangements of his illuminations,

the words and designs of which were presented to the public simultaneously. Exploring the formats and composite arrrangements of Blake's illuminated books will reveal the ways in which these material components helped Blake to educate his readers.

Chapter 2
Cultural Materialism: the Format of "There is no Natural Religion"

Studying Blake's technological processes has demonstrated the ways in which the engraver's understanding of illuminated printing was underpinned by an awareness of the inherent materiality of his prints. The acknowledgement of this awareness encourages the consideration of a significant number of scholarly lacunae which have rarely been identified by Blake scholars, including seemingly inconsequential components of Blake's art such as the size or type of paper used in his manuscripts. This chapter will demonstrate the importance of studying these lacunae by using a Genettian framework to relate the format of Blake's earliest illuminated book, "There is no Natural Religion" (c. 1788), to an eighteenth-century tradition which used chapbooks in the teaching of literacy and morality. By exploring the ways in which the chapbook format facilitated the transmission of Blake's ideas about education, the chapter will promote an understanding of a material medium which has remained largely unexplored in terms of its print culture contexts.

2.1   Identifying Blake's Earliest Illuminations

Examining the formats of Blake's earliest illuminated texts can help us to understand more fully the original functions of the medium. Scholars have struggled to identify Blake's first illuminated works with accuracy. In the concluding line of his final illuminated manuscript from 1822, Blake announced that his "Original Stereotype was 1788" ("Ghost" 272). Blake's colophon called attention to the invention of illuminated

printing thirty-four years earlier when, according to the popular anecdote related by Alexander Gilchrist in the *Life of Blake* (1863), Blake's deceased brother, Robert, had appeared to the engraver "in a vision of the night" (1: 69).[1] Robert then revealed to Blake "the technical mode by which could be produced a fac-simile of song and design" (1: 69). Gilchrist assumed that the first production of Blake's "new revelation" (1: 68) was the *Songs of Innocence* (1789). For over half of a century, the validity of Gilchrist's assumption was not questioned by Blake scholars: it seemed likely that Blake's first use of relief etching was in a work that facilitated his desire to publish poems.[2] After all, Blake's only publication prior to the invention of illuminated printing had been a collection of poems, *Poetical Sketches* (1783), which concluded with some short pieces of prose and drama. The *Sketches*, privately printed in letterpress on eleven quarto sheets of laid paper (at the expense of Blake's patrons John Flaxman and Harriet Matthew), demonstrated Blake's "poetic power" and "luxuriant promise" (1: 25) to the few individuals who read the pamphlet.[3] The text closed with Blake's "daring" attempts to produce prose and drama, though these anachronistic *Sketches*—in Gilchrist's view— were "confined," "halting," and "unsteady" (1: 26). Gilchrist concluded that it was the artistic promise of Blake's poetry and not of his prose or drama which was eventually realized and facilitated through the invention of relief etching and the subsequent illumination of *Innocence*.

Gilchrist's commonly accepted ideas regarding the original motivations of relief etching remained unquestioned by Blake scholars until the publication of the second edition of John Sampson's *The Poetical Works of William Blake* (1913). The first edition of this work (1905) had, for the most part, complied with the chronology of previous editions of Blake's poetry such as those complied by Gilchrist, William Butler Yeats, and Edwin Ellis.[4] Each of these editors had presented the *Songs of Innocence* as the first

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[1] Gilchrist's story regarding the invention of illuminated printing originated in John Thomas Smith's *Nollekens and his Times* (1828). In this text, Smith described the way in which Blake's "brother Robert" had "stood before him [Blake] in one of his visionary imaginations, and so decidedly directed him in the way which he ought to proceed" (609).

[2] These scholars include William Butler Yeats (1893), Arthur Benson (1896), and Richard Garnett (1895), each of whom accepted Gilchrist's identification of *Innocence* as the first illuminated book.

[3] Michael Phillips, in "The Reputation of Blake's Poetical Sketches 1783-1863" (1975), states that "only 23 copies of the poems are known to be extant and of that number it would appear that only 8 were presented to friends and acquaintances by the author during his lifetime" (19).

[4] Yet, in spite of Sampson's initial compliance with the established chronology of Blake's illuminations, the first edition of *The Poetical Works of William Blake* had still sparked a controversy among contemporaneous Blake scholars. It did so because Sampson's detailed commentaries on Blake's poetry had frequently questioned the interpretations which had been advanced by previous critics. Sampson targeted Yeats's and Ellis's edition of Blake's poetry specifically, arguing that this text contained a "somewhat confusing arrangement of the Poems" which

> may perhaps be due to the editors' scheme of interpretation. . . . These editors, in expounding
> Blake's system, lay claim to special knowledge 'produced by the evocations of symbolic magic';

illuminated book. However, in the second edition of *The Poetical Works of William Blake*, Sampson defied the assumptions of his predecessors by expressing an alternative and controversial view regarding the origins of illuminated printing:

> In 1788 Blake, as he tells us in the colophon to the *Ghost of Abel*, engraved his 'original stereotype,' and it has been commonly supposed that the plate to which he here refers was one of those forming part of the *Songs of Innocence. . . .* But as I attempt to show *. . . ,* there seems reason to believe that the undated tracts entitled *There is No Natural Religion* and *All Religions Are One* and not the *Songs of Innocence* were Blake's first experiments in this new art. . . . Presumptive evidence of this may be found in the minute size of the plates and general roughness of execution, which seems to point to an early experimental style. (2: xxiv, xxviii)[5]

The repositioning of "There is no Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" from "probably circa 1790" (Sampson 1: 342) to the forefront of Blake's illuminated oeuvre in 1788 complicated—and continues to complicate—critical ideas regarding the original functions of relief etching. It does so because the verbal contents of these small, illustrated pamphlets were not lyrical: rather, they were philosophical. The widely accepted view that Blake had invented illuminated printing in order to satisfy his desire to publish poems faltered in light of this discovery. Some critics have attempted to resolve this issue through the presumptive claim that the tracts were preparatory experiments which had helped Blake to perfect his printing technique prior to the execution of his original ideas for illuminating the poetry and designs of the *Songs of Innocence.*[6] For instance, S. Foster Damon, in *William Blake: His Philosophy and Symbols*

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and some of their remarks would seem to suggest their belief that the possession of these occult powers enables them to produce a text through which Blake's mind is reflected more accurately than in the MSS. left by himself. (xviii)

Ellis responded to these criticisms in *The Real Blake: A Portrait Biography* (1907). He reproached the way in which Sampson had "stone[d] all editions indiscriminately" (vii-viii, xi), claiming that Sampson had "produced a work which is a monumental record of every error that the hasty pen of Blake himself or any of his previous editors had ever committed. The work shows every ailment from which every text of Blake has suffered, and its long pages of notes are like the words of a hospital" (vii-viii). Sampson's controversial notes did not end here, however. The second edition of *The Poetical Works of William Blake* provoked a similar reaction among contemporaneous Blake scholars.

[5] Sampson went on to write:

> Neither booklet bears a date. In my earlier edition of Blake's *Poems* I had conjecturally assigned the two tractates to 1790 *circa*, guided chiefly by their similarity in doctrine and argument to parts of the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell.* I have since, however, come to the conclusion that the tract *There is No Natural Religion* must have been Blake's first essay in relief engraving, and consequently should be dated 1788, the companion work *All Religions Are One* being perhaps a little later. (xxviii)

[6] Viscomi offers a summary of the dominant theories regarding the origin of illuminated printing:

(1924), argued that "Before Blake began his new book, the *Songs of Innocence*, he experimented by making plates of various mystical aphorisms" (36). Geoffrey Keynes, in his "Description and Bibliographical Statement" from the facsimile editions of the tracts produced for the William Blake Trust (1970-71), similarly proposed that the "imperfect" plates of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" belonged "to a period of experimentation." It was during this period that Blake "mastered a difficult technique" in preparation for "the surer touch of the *Songs of Innocence*" (n.p.). Thus, while neither Damon nor Keynes quarreled with Sampson's re-categorization of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" as the first instances of relief etching, both critics maintained Gilchrist's notion that it was the *Songs of Innocence* and not the tracts which was originally considered for illumination by Blake.

Labeling "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" as experiments has resulted in this pair of tracts receiving little critical attention from subsequent Blake scholars. Even the monumental studies of Northrop Frye and David V. Erdman failed to consider the contents of these works adequately. Joseph Viscomi attempted to amend this omission in *Blake and the Idea of the Book* (1993) when he acknowledged that the widely accepted but improbable ideas regarding the origins of illuminated printing had "quite simply dismissed the thirty extant plates of *No Natural Religion* (series a and b) and *All Religions* as mere practice in the technique" (197). In Viscomi's view, it was the two relief etchings which preceded the tracts—"The Approach of Doom" [Fig. 5] and "Charity" (c. 1788) [Fig. 6]—which should be considered as the "early experiments in relief etching" (*Book* 195). "All Religions Are One" and "No Natural Religion," on the other hand, should be considered as complete works: "that Blake did not stop after *All Religions* but created two more sets of tractates . . . refutes that these small works were exercises in preparation for *Innocence*" (*Book* 197). Viscomi's recognition of Blake's repeated use of the philosophical, aphoristic format on three separate occasions prior to the publication of *Innocence* clearly indicated that "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" were not simply experiments. Rather, they were and should be considered as the first completed works of illuminated printing, regardless of the simple nature of their designs, the small size of their printing, and the philosophical subjects of their contents. That is not to say that the philosophical contexts of "No Natural

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The difference between Blake's technique and engraving or letterpress has led to theories that illuminated printing originated in Blake's rejection of the publishers, in his desire for artistic integrity, financial independence, or the opportunity to show the means of producing an artistic effect . . . The origin has also been found in Blake's rejection by the publishers, rather than vice versa, which forced him to invent an alternative mode of production. Either implicitly or explicitly, these theories of origin presuppose that poems and designs preceded the invention of illuminated printing. (403n2)

Religion" and "All Religions Are One" can offer a clearer indication of the original functions of illuminated printing any more than the lyrical form of the *Songs of Innocence* could. As Blake would inevitably prove, the written form of his texts—which included aphorisms, poetry, prose, and drama—formed just one aspect of a larger matrix of meaning which was inherent in each of the elements which contributed to the artistic composition and material process of illumination.[7]

Acknowledging that Blake's motivation for relief etching was not solely poetic encourages us to reconsider the ways in which we think about and approach Blake's texts. More often than not, critics have restricted the potential components of Blake's art by exploring word and design only, overlooking the inconspicuous bibliographical elements which underpin all of Blake's printed texts. The dimensions of Blake's impressions and the size of his pages have rarely been preserved in twentieth- and twenty-first century editions of the illuminated books: for that reason, the information which is inherent in these neglected components of Blake's art has remained mostly unstudied. The decisions involved in the presentation of word and image and the implications of those decisions to the reception of Blake's texts should not be underestimated. Reviewing the cultures of print within which Blake fashioned his art can help us to identify the overlooked conventions which governed the physical constructions of his illuminated books. The consideration of these conventions in the earliest of Blake's illuminations might reveal the particular markets that Blake initially sought to enter through the products of his new printing process, offering a fresh perspective on the original functions of illuminated printing.

2.2   Paratexts: Original and Delayed

Exploring the materiality of Blake's earliest illuminated books necessitates a framework that decodes the formats of these works according to the terms of Gérard Genette's paratext. The paratext, according to Genette, helps authors to put forward a meaning that is already established at a literal level but is complemented by further textual authoriality. This increased authoriality materializes in a "number of verbal or other productions, such as an author's name, a title, a preface," each of which constitutes "the

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[7] It is often forgotten that Blake's written work was not confined to poetry: the majority of Blake's output between 1789 and 1822 was written as poetry, but he also produced prose in *Poetical Sketches* and *An Island in the Moon* (c. 1784), aphorisms in "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One," treatises in *A Descriptive Catalogue* (1809) and *A Vision of the Last Judgment* (1810), and drama in *The Ghost of Abel.*

work's *paratext*" (1). The function of the paratext is to exert an influence on the public which shapes how the reader receives the text, ensuring that the work is understood according to the intentions of the author. The desired effect of this influence is defined by Genette as the paratextual message. In order to discover the original functions of the earliest illuminations, the contents of Blake's paratextual messages must be carefully decoded and analysed.

Genette's *Paratexts* begins by emphasizing the necessity of studying the "paratextual elements" which appeared "at the same time as the text." He calls these elements "the *original* paratext" (5). Subsequent editions of the text contain what Genette describes as "*delayed* paratexts" (6). The present study will consider the earliest edition of the first illuminated book to be Blake's original paratext: in which case, it is necessary to clarify which of the two illuminated books printed in c. 1788 came first: "No Natural Religion" or "All Religions Are One." Sampson and Keynes position "No Natural Religion" before "All Religions Are One." Erdman, Viscomi, and Phillips reverse this arrangement, agreeing that "All Religions Are One" preceded "No Natural Religion."[8] The proximity between the etchings of each work was marginal. In any case, the original impressions of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" are not extant. The countermarks from the eighty-seven brown and olive duodecimo impressions of copies A, B, C, D, G, and M of "No Natural Religion" reveal that these impressions were printed by Blake in one session during c. 1794.[9] These copies contained the entirety of the (a) text (plates a1-9) and also included three plates from the (b) text (plates b3-4 and b12). The larger, light-green folio impressions of copy L of "No Natural Religion" (plates a2, b1, b3-b4, b6-9, and b11-12) were printed one year later as part of a deluxe edition of illuminated books.[10] The only extant copy of "All Religions Are One" (copy A) was printed as a part of

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[8] Viscomi notes that "*All Religions* was most likely Blake's 'original Stereotype'" (*Book* 194). Similarly, in *The Creation of the* Songs: *from Manuscript to Illuminated Printing*, Phillips states: "In what appears to be the first of these experiments, the plates of *All Religions Are One*, letters are awkwardly formed and sometimes lean toward the left. When they are compared with the plates in the two slightly later series *a* and *b* of *There is No Natural Religion*, there is already a noticeable improvement as well as some plates being written in a continuous or cursive hand instead of in roman lettering" (17).

[9] Copies E, F, H, I, J, and K of "No Natural Religion" will not be considered because these impressions are "facsimiles that inadvertently entered the canon" (Viscomi *Book* 216).

[10] Viscomi contextualises Blake's deluxe edition of illuminated books, writing:

> By the winter of 1794-95, with copies of *Song of Los*, *Book of Los*, and *Book of Ahania* printed and copies of three earlier illuminated books reprinted, numerous and variously formatted copies of *Innocence*, *Thel*, *Marriage*, *Visions*, *For Children*, *America*, *Experience*, *Songs*, *Europe*, *Urizen*, and *Song of Los* were now on hand. As we have seen, these books were printed in small editions, and the copies of each edition share stylistic and material features. Yet there are illuminated books printed on the 1794 papers that were produced separately from the editions and reprintings and that are stylistically and materially similar to one another and unlike the other copies of their kind. All are folio in size, all have wiped borders, and all were printed on one side of the leaf; most were printed in light black ink, and all but two monochrome copies were numbered in pen and ink. Their similarities reveal that they were produced as a set. The set consisted of

this folio edition in 1795. Therefore, because the copies of "No Natural Religion" from c. 1794 predate the only extant copy of "All Religions Are One" from 1795, the present study will consider the c. 1794 edition of "No Natural Religion" to be the earliest example of an illuminated book which was composed in c. 1788.

The few scholars who have studied "No Natural Religion" have faced a number of difficulties. These difficulties were the result of the dubious editorial arrangements of "No Natural Religion" which have been included in twentieth-century editions of Blake's illuminated books. Editors usually compiled the plates from each printing session of "No Natural Religion" into one ideal text which merged the (a) text and the (b) text into one work. This compilation united the frontispiece, title-page, "Argument," and six principles of the (a) text (plates a1-9), printed c. 1794, with the six principles from the (b) text and its concluding materials (plates b1, b3-4, b6-9, and b11-12), printed c. 1795. There is no evidence to suggest that Blake ever intended the two alternative series of "No Natural Religion" to be arranged in this way. Jerome J. McGann describes this type of editorial arrangement as "a polygot formation imagined by the editor" (*Textual Condition* 71).[11] An eclectic, editorial arrangement of "No Natural Religion" is based on the assumption that the extant products of each session are incomplete because both sets appear to be missing at least eight plates. While the missing plates from the only extant copy the c. 1795 edition might be lost, the probability of the same eight impressions being missing from all six copies of the c. 1794 edition of "No Natural Religion" is very low.[12] Viscomi concludes that these twelve-page editions of "No Natural Religion" were arranged by Blake intentionally:

All Religions copy A, *No Natural Religion* copy L, *Thel* copy F, *Marriage* copy D, *Visions* copy G (and possibly Q), *America* copies A and B, *Songs* copies A and R, *Europe* copies A and H, and *Urizen* copy B. (*Book* 290)

[11] Collections of Blake's poetry such as Geoffrey Keynes's *The Complete Writings of Blake* (1966) and David V. Erdman's *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake* (1988) usually compile the (a) text and the (b) text into one work. David Bindman encouraged this arrangement in *Blake As An Artist* (1977), writing: "It has been necessary to reconstruct 'ideal' copies, because all the originals are either incomplete or bound in the wrong sequence" (53).

[12] Viscomi discredits the logic of this concept:

The third assumption, that all extant copies of *No Natural Religion* are incomplete because they are missing at least eight series b plates, is mistaken. It is easy to imagine single impressions being accidentally lost or extracted from an illuminated book, especially when the impressions are small and the books were often collated by owners and printdealers. But the idea that all extant copies of *No Natural Religion* are missing the same eight impressions is problematic. . . . To assume that eight series b impressions (b1, 5-11) are missing is to assume that those plates were part of the edition and thus printed at least five times. To assume, then, that an impression is missing is to assume two things: that the plate was printed, and that *all* the impressions pulled from that plate are missing. (*Book* 219)

Blake's 'original intention' regarding the 'true sequence' of *No Natural Religion* appears to be arbitrary because the missing impressions are presumed to have been printed because their plates had been executed. This circular reasoning results from seeking Blake's intention exclusively in what he *wrote* and not in what he actually *produced*. . . . The set I impressions [copies A, B, C, D, G, and M] were pulled from only twelve plates, which makes the copies formed from them seem to be missing at least eight plates (from series b) [copy L]. But the thematic and structural coherency, along with the exigencies of edition printing, strongly indicates that these twelve plates were selected deliberately. . . . A twelve-plate copy of *No Natural Religion* may not satisfy a criterion for completeness that is textually instead of visually or materially based. But it is the form that Blake intended the book to have. (*Book* 220, 232)

Viscomi urges critics to study "No Natural Religion" as it was printed rather than as "an ideal" which was "never realized" or is "at least not extant" (*Book* 230). Thus, when studying "No Natural Religion," scholars can either investigate the contents of the ideal text or of the printed text. More often than not, scholars have chosen the former. The present study will adhere to Viscomi's suggestion. It will consider the original paratext of "No Natural Religion" to be the earliest extant edition of the work from c. 1794, focusing particularly on copy M because this copy was "finished with care, which suggests that at the very least this copy was deliberately assembled by Blake, either for himself or for a patron" (Viscomi *Book* 232).

2.3 Peritexts: the Format of "There is no Natural Religion"

The first stage of Genette's approach involves an exploration of what he describes as the publisher's peritext: "that is, the zone that exists merely by the fact that a book is published" (16).[13] This aspect of the paratext is composed of the spatial and material characteristics which constitute the typographical and bibliographical features of a book. Genette is interested in the "appearance and effect" of these elements, the "paratextual value" of which he attributes to the "publisher, possibly in consultation with the author" (16). Blake occupies an unusual position in regards to Genette's customary distinction between the author and the publisher and their subsequent

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[13] Genette's understanding of publishing is limited to a twentieth-century view of the relationship between an author and their publisher. However, Genette's understanding of publishing can be extended to include the printed texts of the eighteenth century.

sharing of paratextual responsibility because he acted as both the "Author & Printer" ("No Natural Religion" 2) of his own works. As McGann has noted in *The Textual Condition* (1991),

> Blake is unique in the history of English literature precisely because of his effort to bring every aspect of the signifying process, linguistic as well as bibliographical, under authorial control: in fact, to make the author's intention what many textual critics believe it is and ought to be, the ultimate and sole authority of the entire text. (57)

In other words, the peritext of "No Natural Religion" should be considered as an authorial paratext which has been transmitted from Blake to the reader personally. The result of this unusual authoriality is that Blake's seemingly minute decisions regarding the format of this tract are in fact important paratextual elements which helped Blake to shape his readers' understanding of the text. The identification and assessment of these bibliographical features of the peritext might provide a clearer indication of the original functions of illuminated printing, revealing Blake's premature but ambitious ideas about the physical distribution, economic potential, and literary effects of his texts.

According to Genette, the first of the paratextual elements which constitutes the peritext of a work is "the choice of *format*" (17). The format of a work is composed of the physical features which contribute to the materialisation of the text in the form of a published book. In particular, this term refers to the size of the "original sheet" (17) and the "different choices of paper" (35). The first of these features—the proportions of the sheet—can be used as "a shorthand way of estimating" (17) the contents of a text. Genette illustrates this point through a brief exploration of the paratextual values which were conveyed by the alternative book dimensions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this period, the size of printed texts loosely adhered to a system of paper sizes. This system was governed by the average sizes of the moulds which were being used by contemporaneous paper makers: these moulds, the sizes of which could range from pot (39 x 32 cm) to double demy (100 x 66 cm), produced large sheets of paper which were then folded and sometimes cut into smaller pages by the bookmaker. According to Phillip Gaskell,

> The usual terminology is folio (abbreviated 2°) for sheets folded once across the longer side, giving two leaves or four pages to the sheet; quarto (4°), when a second fold is made across the first, making four leaves, eight pages; octavo (8°), with a third fold across the second, making eight leaves, sixteen pages; duodecimo (12°), folded twice across the longer dimension and three times across the shorter, making twelve leaves, twenty-four pages; long twelves (long 12°), when the sheet is folded once across the shorter side and five times across the longer, again making twelve leaves, twenty-four pages; and sixteenmo (etc.) for the more complex

foldings (16 (etc.) up to 128). Large books of plates were sometimes made up of broadsheets, not folded at all (1), while a handbill might be in the form of a half-sheet or quarter-sheet (½, ¼)

The bookmaker would then gather the folded sheets to form a complete gathering or, in the case of a pamphlet or broadside which used just one sheet, leave the pages unbound. Thus, works which used fewer sheets were generally cheaper. For that reason, Genette concludes that eighteenth-century readers invariably expected the format of a book to reflect the contents of its text. Large volumes were generally "reserved for serious works" (17) and small volumes were typically "used for the cheap editions reserved for popular literature" (18):

> Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, for example, appears in two octavo volumes, but his *Esprit des lois* in two quarto volumes; the *Lettres persanes* is not awarded the honour of a quarto until the big collected edition of the *Oeuvres* of Montesquieu in three volumes (1758). Rousseau's *Novelle Hélloise* and *Emilie* come out in 12mo; the big edition of the 'complete' works of 1765 appears in six quarto volumes. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* likewise goes into quarto for the 'recherché' and illustrated edition of 1806. (17-18)

It is in the reader's expectation of size reflecting content—or, indeed, size reflecting price or envisioned readership—that the paratextual value of size manifests itself. This concept, which was later described by McGann in terms of "the semiotic potential of the text's bibliographical codes" (*Textual Condition* 16), allows the size of a book to "embody a code of meaning which the reader will decipher, more or less deeply, more or less self-consciously" (*Textual Condition* 115). The ways in which eighteenth-century readers would have decoded the bibliographical codes which were inherent in the peritext of "No Natural Religion" can be identified through a consideration of the similarities between the size of this work and the traditions of contemporaneous print culture.

2.3.1   Size: Revaluating the Chapbook

The c. 1794 edition of "No Natural Religion" was printed on duodecimo-sized leaves and was pulled from twelve plates measuring approximately 5. 3 x 4. 5 cm [Fig. 7]. Blake folded one sheet of imperial paper twelve times and printed twelve impressions on the rectos of twelve pages.[14] The distinctive size and number of pages in this text

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[14] Blake only started to print on both sides of the page in 1794. Therefore, it is likely that the first edition of "No Natural Religion," printed in c. 1788 but not extant, economized the paper more fully by using both sides of the leaf. By employing this technique, Blake could produce two duodecimo copies of "No Natural Religion" per sheet.

encouraged David Bindman, in "William Blake and Popular Religious Imagery" (1986), to describe the work as "a kind of chapbook" (712). At Bindman's time of writing, the chapbook was typically defined as a "small paper-covered book" (Neuburg 115) which folded one sheet of paper into quarto, octavo, duodecimo, or sixteenmo sized leaves with eight, twelve, sixteen, twenty-four, or thirty-two pages. According to Lori Humphrey Newcomb, it was this principle—namely, that there was "a direct relationship between format and page count: a chapbook was a text that fitted exactly onto a sheet, a half-sheet, or a sheet-and-a-half" (473)—which functioned as the foundation of most scholars' definitions of chapbooks during the twentieth-century. However, this foundation was frequently complicated by several peripheral elements which restricted the number of works which could be identified and studied as chapbooks. These additional elements, while mostly correct, failed to accommodate the inherent variables which characterised the flexible form of this type of street literature. For instance, it was believed that the chapbook had been priced at "one penny each" (Neuburg 115), was poorly produced with crude illustrations, and was peddled by chapmen to "the lowest classes of adult readers . . . and children" (Neuburg 118). The subjects of chapbooks, while diverse, were usually restricted to the spectacular: medieval romances, folklore, fairy tales, and unauthorised abridgements of contemporaneously popular novels.[15] For these reasons, scholars typically ascribed a low status to chapbooks, arguing that these works—as Mary V. Jackson has noted in *Engines of Instruction, Mischief, and Magic: Children's Literature in England from Its Beginnings to 1839* (1989)—were "repositories of smut; manuals of profligate and shiftless conduct; traducers of rationality and promoters of perilous delusions; and . . . breeders of ugliness and pictorial crudity" (67).

Bindman's identification of "No Natural Religion" as "a kind of chapbook" did not prompt any scholar to produce an extended discussion regarding the relationship between this text and the chapbook. This omission might have been the result of what critics considered to be a number of discrepancies between this work and the chapbook. That is, while critics could not doubt that "No Natural Religion" did assume the format of a chapbook in regards to its size and length, the price, distribution, audience, quality, and subject of Blake's text did not seem to correspond to how scholars had

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[15] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, while reminiscing about his youth, recalled reading ¨little books" such as "the uncovered tales of Tom Hicka-thrift, Jack the Giant-killer, . . . Belisarius, Robinson Crusoe, and Philip Quarles" (11-12). William Wordsworth remembered similar chapbooks in *The Prelude*, including

> . . . the wishing-cap
> Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat
> Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,
> And Sabra in the forest with St. George! (5: 365-68)

contemporaneously defined the chapbook. There was no evidence that this work was retailed for a penny, was distributed by a chapman, or was bought by the lower-classes: it appears that this text was retailed at threepence, was sold personally by Blake or by his employer, and was bought mostly by Blake's middle- and upper-class friends. The quality of "No Natural Religion" complicated this categorisation further. Unlike the supposedly low-grade chapbook, "No Natural Religion" was finely printed on an expensive paper. Moreover, because Blake's first illuminated book was philosophical rather than sensational, the work's subject-matter did not correspond to the texts which, at Bindman's time of writing, had been identified as chapbooks. It seems likely that it was each of these discrepancies which encouraged critics to consider "No Natural Religion" as "a kind of chapbook" rather than an outright chapbook, ceasing the further investigation of Blake's participation in the chapbook tradition.

Recent research into street literature gives us reason to revaluate Blake's relationship with the chapbook. Newcomb, in *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture* (2011), argued that the format of the chapbook should not, as was previously assumed, be understood as a sign of privation.[16] Instead, the deliberate functionality of this format should be appreciated. The minimal dimensions of the chapbook made it "manageable . . . , portable . . . , accessible . . . , and rewarding to diverse readers" (471). The appreciation of this functionality, according to Newcomb, can help scholars to move away from the outdated assumption that the chapbook was primarily a cheap print medium designed by "incompeten[t]" printers for "rural customers" (471), allowing for more variation when evaluating the characteristics which defined this type of literature. With this object in mind, it is possible to identify some factors which diversify rather than restrict our understanding of the chapbook. It is within this diversity that the supposed incongruities of "No Natural Religion" begin to support rather than negate its categorisation as a chapbook.

While the twelve duodecimo pages of "No Natural Religion" were printed on one sheet of paper and could, therefore, be produced cheaply, it is unlikely that Blake retailed this work at one penny. Even if Blake had sold his first illuminated book at this price, it is important to acknowledge that the work would still have been unpurchasable to many. Sheila O'Connell has noted that the low price of a work "is not a clear way of defining whether or not" a print was "popular. Until well into the eighteenth century any print was a relatively expensive commodity" (14).[17] For that reason, it can be argued

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[16] Newcomb's revaluation of the chapbook is focussed on seventeenth-century texts. However, because there are no recent studies which assess the roles of chapbooks in eighteenth-century print culture, the present study uses Newcomb's research as a means to highlight the established functions of the chapbook during the eighteenth century.

[17] O'Connell's statement refers to the prices of mezzotints. However, her argument remains valid because the prices of chapbooks, while low, would still have been considered as expensive to some.

that chapbooks were not the exclusive property of the lower-classes: the recent work of Matthew Grenby has shown that educated readers, including Blake's patrons, did participate in popular culture by purchasing chapbooks. Peter Burke concludes that chapbooks "seem to have been read by rich and poor, educated and uneducated" (53). An inability to purchase cheap works did not always alienate potential consumers, however: alternative avenues of cultural consumption did exist for eighteenth-century readers. The reading of a chapbook often took the form of a communal event which allowed diverse audiences to listen to popular tales free of charge. Loose sheets from chapbooks were frequently displayed in the windows of print shops[18] and whole texts were pinned to the walls of homes and taverns.[19] It is known that Blake was fond of reciting his works at public gatherings and it is likely that some of Blake's illuminated books were on display at Johnson's bookshop.[20] Thus, irrespective of the price that Blake eventually allocated to "No Natural Religion," its format made possible avenues of consumption which were not available to traditionally bound books. For that reason, retailing chapbooks above one penny was not necessarily a troubling issue for Blake or for other booksellers. Several contemporaneous catalogues, including H. Turpin's "Entertaining Books for Children, and grown Persons" (1780?), reveal that publishers issued a host of chapbooks which were priced above one penny: "Christmas Holidays" and "Nixon's Cheshire Prophecy" were priced at sixpence. The means by which Blake sold "No Natural Religion" could also be considered as an unusual method of distribution for a chapbook. However, evidence suggests that chapbooks were not sold by chapmen exclusively: several shops, including those of the Marshall, Dicey, and Dias families, sold hundreds of chapbooks.[21] Therefore, the sale of Blake's chapbook from his

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[18] Displays in print shop windows "served to encourage purchasers, but also brought prints to the attention of many people who could not have afforded to buy prints; at the same time they would have made some of the coarser products [chapbooks] familiar to those who might have thought them beneath their dignity" (Connell 175).

[19] Tessa Watt, in *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (1991), investigated the roles of what she described as "Stories for walls" in the home and in the alehouse, arguing: "Even the labourer . . . , if he could not afford ballads to decorate his own walls, was likely to come into some contact with printed or painted 'stories' at the local alehouse" (196). Thus, in "oral and visual forms," chapbooks "had the potential to reach a much wider audience than its original buyers and its 'literate' readers" (7).

[20] Richard Twiss, writing to Francis Douce in 1795, stated that "You will see several more of Blakes books at Johnsons in St. Pˢ. Ch. y." (qtd. in Bentley *Blake Records*: 65). Concerning Twiss's statement, Bentley writes: "The reference to Blake books exhibited at Joseph Johnson's in St Paul's Church Yard is particularly intriguing, for this is the only such reference known. . . . It seems likely that the Blake books to be seen at Johnson's were display copies" (*Blake Records* 66).

[21] According to O'Connell,

> The probate inventory of the publisher Charles Dias . . . lists reams (i.e. bundles of five hundred each) of 'pictures' and hundreds of titles of chapbooks and ballads: there were thirty-five thousand ballad sheets, more than nine thousand copies ready for sale of books under 6d. (most under 4d.) and a further eighty thousand awaiting binding. . . . Such figures give an

workshop or Johnson's bookshop should not have been considered as unusual. In short, pricing chapbooks above one penny and selling these texts from a static location did not restrict the accessibility of chapbooks to eighteenth-century audiences: readers could—regardless of whether a work was bought, seen, or heard—gain access to chapbooks. Therefore, the retail price and means by which "No Natural Religion" was sold would not have negated its categorisation as a chapbook by contemporaneous readers.

Thus, the price, distribution, and audience of "No Natural Religion" would not have discouraged readers from identifying this work as a chapbook: it was the paratextual features of its format—that is, the small size and limited page number of the text—which would have resulted in its initial categorisation as a chapbook. There was, however, one noticeable difference between the format of "No Natural Religion" and most eighteenth-century chapbooks. This difference can be identified through a consideration of the second paratextual feature which characterised the format of Blake's work: specifically, the "choices of paper" (Genette 35).

2.3.2 Paper: High Quality Chapbooks

During the eighteenth century, chapbooks were usually printed on laid paper. This paper was produced by dipping a laid mould of thick wires into a vat of rags and water. The result of this process was a sheet that contained disfigurations which had been caused by the wires of the mould. Paper makers could reduce the intensity of these disfigurations through the selection of clean linen rags, the product of which contained fewer wiremarks. This type of laid paper was described as white. Alternatively, a random selection of unclean rags could be used, the product of which was disfigured. This type of paper was described as brown. Chapbooks were printed on a variety of white and brown laid papers. For the most part, these papers have been described as "very cheap" (Preston xiii) and, as Newcomb has noted, "recent accounts of chapbooks continue to imply that survivals are rare because chapbooks were 'flimsy'" (483-84). Blake's chapbook, "No Natural Religion," cannot be described as such: this work was printed on a new type of high-quality paper which was significantly stronger than laid papers. Therefore, because the high-quality paper used in Blake's chapbook did not correspond to the accounts which—during the twentieth century—described chapbooks

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indication of the scale of trade in popular prints and cheap illustrated texts. The numbers sold by the leading publishers of the day must have been even higher. (175)

That publishers issued chapbooks in such large quantities demonstrates that the sale of chapbooks could be a reliable and profitable enterprise. Cluer Dicey of the infamous Dicey publishing business was described by Hannah More as living "like a prince" (49; vol. II) as a result of his family's considerable contributions to the chapbook industry.

as cheap, it is likely that the contrasting qualities of "No Natural Religion" and traditional chapbooks such as "Guy, Earl of Warwick" and "The Seven Champions of Christendom" encouraged Blake scholars to disregard Blake's involvement in chapbook traditions. Exploring the papers used in Blake's text can, however, help us to identify an alternative market which, in contrast to most scholars' understanding of the chapbook, did produce chapbooks of a high-quality. The exploration of this market can help us to understand more fully the types of reader that Blake was trying to reach with his high-quality chapbook, "No Natural Religion."

Blake printed "No Natural Religion" on what he described as "the most beautiful wove paper" (693): in this instance, a wove paper whose watermark read "I TAYLOR."[22] Blake's attention to maintaining a high-quality in his illuminated books might seem unusual when compared to the traditional descriptions of works which were produced by chapbook publishers. As noted, scholars have usually described chapbooks as cheap, disposable products which made use of crude illustrations, bold types, and coarse paper. While this assessment can be applied to a large number of chapbooks, it is also possible to identify some overlooked chapbooks which were printed on fine papers.

High-quality chapbooks began to emerge in c.1785. These fine chapbooks typically maintained the size and length of a traditional chapbook. However, unlike traditional chapbooks, high-quality chapbooks frequently abandoned the use of woodcuts in favour of copper-engravings. The woodcuts used in traditional chapbooks rarely illustrated the story. Instead, as Michael J. Preston noted in "Rethinking Folklore, Rethinking Literature: Looking at *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* as Folktales, A Chapbook-Inspired Inquiry" (1995), the illustrations in traditional chapbooks usually depicted scenarios "far different from the words of the chapbook on the facing page" (27). The engravings which adorned the pages of high-quality chapbooks, on the other hand, successfully illustrated the story. Importantly, the use of copper-engravings in fine chapbooks demanded a higher quality of paper. The chapbooks issued by publishers such as T. Maiden and Dean and Murray, for instance, included copper-engraved frontispieces that were printed on wove papers. Further, some of the chapbooks published by Thomas Richardson—including the lengthily titled "The Affecting History of the Duchess of C–, who was Confined Nine Years in a Horrid Dungeon Under Ground, Where Light Never Entered; A Straw Mattress Being Her Only Resting-Place, and Bread and Water her Only Support, Conveyed to her by Means of a Turning Box by her Inhuman Husband"—were printed on high-quality papers with fold-out frontispieces. These high-quality chapbooks—irrespective of the expensive materials employed in their printing—were sold cheaply, with prices ranging from sixpence to a shilling.

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[22] The paper maker who used this watermark, John Taylor, is discussed in chapter one.

Additionally, during the last decade of the century, Hannah More's *Cheap Repository* (1795) was published "on two different sorts of paper; the one of a superior kind for Gentry . . . ; the other of a kind-very inferior" (2).[23] Similarly, in 1795 Brash and Reid began to issue chapbooks under the title *Poetry; Original and Selected*, each of which was printed on a superior type of white laid paper [Fig. 8].

The examples listed above demonstrate that, in addition to producing cheaper chapbooks, there was a desire among late eighteenth-century publishers to issue chapbooks of a high quality, furthering the argument that chapbooks should not be solely understood as a cheap print medium. Thus, the use of a high-quality paper in a chapbook was not unheard of in eighteenth-century print culture: in which case, Blake's adoption of wove paper in "No Natural Religion" was not too unusual. Moreover, the ways in which the publishers of high-quality chapbooks worked against the established conventions of traditional chapbooks by experimenting with the formats of street literature shows that Blake's use of an experimental printing technique—illuminated printing—was not especially surprising.

2.3.3   Subject: Chapbooks and Education

"No Natural Religion" was formatted according to the paratextual features which characterised a variety of eighteenth-century chapbooks. It combined the traditional elements of sensational chapbooks with the specialised qualities of high-quality chapbooks, offering a work which was accessible and desirable to a number of alternative, diverse audiences. Irrespective of the work's material similarities to contemporaneous chapbooks, the philosophical subject-matter of the text does not seem to correspond to the sensational subjects which have usually been attributed to street literature. However, according to Newcomb, there is reason to believe that chapbooks were not exclusively sensational: "if a work is polemical, controversial, propagandistic, or pornographic it is a pamphlet; if not, it may be considered a chapbook" (482). Newcomb's classification opens up the possibility of "No Natural Religion" being identified and studied as a chapbook. Thus, while Blake's work might

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[23] G. H. Spinney, in "Cheap Repository Tracts: Hazard and Marshall Edition" (1939), explained why the *Cheap Repository* was printed on two types of paper: "The gentry wanted the tracts printed on better paper, so that they could bind them up; whereas the hawkers wanted them cheaper. . . . To meet these difficulties the tracts were . . . printed on two qualities of paper: those on coarser paper were sold to hawkers at the rate of 24 penny tracts for *6d.*, those on better paper being sold to the gentry at 24 for *1s. 6d.*" (303). Similarly, Gary Kelly, in "Revolution, Reaction, and the Expropriation of Popular Culture: Hannah More's *Cheap Repository*" (1987), noted that "Very soon after they began to appear, the Cheap Repository tracts were demanded in editions on "superior" paper and with finer printing, suitable for binding for the libraries of the middle and upper ranks in society" (154).

not be considered as a text which engaged with the sensational subjects of folklore or fairy-tales, it can still be considered as a chapbook because it does not meet the criteria of a pamphlet. Instead, the educational agenda of "No Natural Religion" should be understood as an attempt to participate in an emerging pedagogical tradition which, during the last two decades of the century, used chapbooks in the teaching of literacy or morality. In order to demonstrate the rise of the pedagogical chapbook in the late eighteenth century, the instructional capabilities of these small texts need to be considered in detail.

Chapbooks were frequently used for educational purposes during the eighteenth century. However, before the middle of the century, the use of these ephemeral works in instruction was usually implicit, assuming the form of additional reading materials which focussed on delight rather than instruction. For instance, the parents of John Clare were barely literate but his father did procure some learning from supernatural chapbooks and printed ballads:

> Both my parents was illiterate to the last degree, my mother knew not a single letter, . . . my father could read a little . . . and was very fond of the superstitious tales that are hawked about a street for a penny, such as old Nixon's Prophesies, Mother Bunches Fairy Tales, and Mother Shipton's Legacy, &c., &c.; he was likewise fond of Ballads, and I have heard him make a boast of it over his horn of ale, with his merry companions, that he could sing or recite above a hundred. (31)

The literacy of Clare's father was increased as a result of his contact with street literature. This example reveals the role of chapbooks in the rising literacy of adults in England, demonstrating the implicit instruction that these texts could offer to their readers.[24] Moreover, chapbooks sometimes fulfilled a similar role in the instruction of children. While the use of chapbooks to teach children was usually frowned upon by the educated, some individuals did believe that chapbooks could fulfill an educational purpose. A conversation between Richard Steele and his godson in number 95 of *The Tatler* (1709) demonstrates the ways in which the vulgar reputation of chapbooks could sometimes be altered through a consideration of the effects that these texts had on children:

> I found upon Conversation with him, though he was a little noisy in his Mirth, that the Child had excellent Parts, and was a great Master of all the Learning on t'other Side Eight Years old. I perceived him a very great Historian in *Aesop*'s Fables: But he frankly declared to me his Mind, That he did not delight in that Learning, because he did not believe they were true; for which Reason I found he had very

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[24] According to Neuburg, "the production and distribution of chapbooks, in response to what proved to be a growing public demand, is a . . . reliable guide to the extent and increase of literacy amongst the poor" (127).

much ruined his Studies for about a Twelvemonth past, into the Lives and Adventures of Don *Bellianis* of *Greece*, *Guy* of *Warwick*, the *Seven Champions*, and other Historians of that Age. I could not but observe the Satisfaction the Father took in the Forwardness of his Son; and that these Diversions might turn to some Profit, I found the Boy had made Remarks, which might be of Service to him during the Course of his whole Life. He would tell you the Mismanagements of *John Hickathrift*, find Fault with the passionate Temper in *Bevis* of *Southampton*, and loved *St. George* for being the Champion of *England*; and by this Means had his Thoughts insensibly moulded into the Notions of Discretion, Virtue, and Honour. I was extolling his Accomplishments, when the Mother told me, That the little Girl, who led me in this Morning, was in her Way a better Scholar than he: *Betty* (says she) deals chiefly in Fairies and Sprights; and sometimes in a Winter-Night, will terrifie the Maids with her Accounts, till they are afraid to go up to bed. (*Tatler* 315-16)

Thus, while Steele does initially express his disapproval of chapbooks, he later acknowledges the ways in which "these Diversions" could be turned to "Profit." No doubt, the godson's comments regarding chapbook heroes such as John Hickathrift (probably Tom Hickathrift, a giant-killer) and St. George demonstrated the inquisitive capabilities of the child to Steele, leading him to believe that chapbooks were responsible for his godson's understanding of "Discretion, Virtue, and Honour." Moreover, the godson's sister, Betty, was described as a "Scholar" by her Mother as a result of her abilities to paraphrase supernatural fairytales from folklore. In short, chapbooks had a tested ability to increase literacy and to teach morality to the readers who engaged with the verbal and visual contents of the text: the sensational contents of these works frequently imparted learning to both adults and children, doing so regardless of their preoccupations with delight rather than instruction.

Irrespective of the educational potential of some sensational chapbooks and the contributions of these texts to the rising literacy of the nation, a number of writers—especially following the radical pamphlets of the early 1790s—expressed concern that chapbooks were corrupting the lower classes. For that reason, chapbooks needed reformation. Such reformation sought to make the contents of chapbooks more explicitly educational, serving evangelical ends which supported the balance of the status quo. No doubt, stories such as "The Renowned History of Giles Gingerbread" (1766) and "The Famous History of the Valiant London 'Prentice" [Fig. 9] had encouraged poorer readers to be dissatisfied with the lowly conditions of their births, teaching them that the previously impenetrable barriers of class or wealth could be

overcome through the correct applications of ambition, industry, and action.[25] According to Gary Kelly, an "early acquaintance and infatuation with chapbooks" usually led to "Methodism, New Dissent, and/or political radicalism" (150)—three ideologies which could jeopardise the hegemony of the established order. Hannah More, in the *Cheap Repository for Moral & Religious Tracts* (1795-97), attempted to counter the rise of these dangerous ideologies by offering a series of chapbooks which reinforced the supremacy of Church and State [Fig. 10]. These chapbooks worked "to supplant the corrupt and vicious little books and ballads which have been hung out at windows in the most alluring forms, or hawked through Town and Country, and have been found so highly mischievous to the Community" ("Prospectus" 1). The *Cheap Repository* attacked the vices that More believed were being promoted in sensational chapbooks, the contents of which were frequently described as poisonous by the characters in her works:

> He was shocked and grieved to see that these young girls were about to read, to sing, and to learn by heart such ribaldry as he was ashamed even to cast his eyes on. He turned about to the girl, and gravely, but mildly said, Young woman, what do you think should be done to a person who should be found carrying a box of poison round the country, and leaving a little at every house? The girls all agreed, that such a person ought to be hanged. . . . Mr. Simpson, turning to the other girl, said, Which is of most value, the soul or the body?—The soul, Sir, I have heard you say in the pulpit, the soul is to last for ever.—Then, cried Mr. Simpson, in a stern voice, turning to the fiddler's woman, are you not ashamed to sell poison for that part which is to last for ever? Poison for the soul? Poison! said the terrified girl, throwing down the book, and shuddering as people do who are afraid they have touched something infectious. . . . Yes, said Mr. Simpson to the woman, I do again repeat, the souls of these innocent girls will be poisoned, and may be eternally ruined, by this vile trash you carry about. ("Sunday School" 13-14)[26]

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[25] Giles's father encouraged his son to value learning, describing the way in which a child called Toby who, "from being a little ragged boy and living in that Hut, . . . now rides in this fine Coach. Think of this, my Dear Giles, and learn your Book, and say your Prayers, and go to Church, and be honest and good and industrious, that you may get a Coach also" (n.p.)

[26] In the same chapbook, Mrs. Jones criticizes the reading materials of a local farmer:

> There is a proneness in the heart to evil, which it is our duty to oppose, and which I see you are promoting. Only look round your kitchen; I am ashamed to see it hung round with loose songs and ballads. I grant, indeed, it would be better for your men and maids . . . not to be able to read at all than to read such stuff as this. But if, when they ask for bread, you will give them a stone, nay worse, a serpent, your's [sic] is the blame. . . . The farmer grinned, and said, It is hard if a man of my substance may not divert myself. . . . I like to take up a bit of a jest-book, or a comical story, to make me laugh;—O, Mr. Hoskins, replied Mrs. Jones, when you come in to rest from a burning sun or shower, do you never think of him whose sun it is that is ripening your corn? or whose shower is filling the ear, or causing the grass to grow? I could tell you of

The *Cheap Repository* offered a healthy alternative to what More considered to be the poisonous chapbooks of popular culture. Her stories countered what she believed were the impractical ideals which had been prolific in most chapbooks. In their place, More offered a series of tales which demonstrated the value of modest aspirations and realistic limitations.

More's reinvention of the chapbook demanded a reformation of its content rather than a transformation of its format. Therefore, the paratextual features which characterised most eighteenth-century chapbooks remained intact in More's chapbooks. G. H. Spinney argues that the *Cheap Repository* was

> decked out with rakish titles and woodcuts in the guise of the genuine chapman's pennyworth, and sent out, like sheep in wolves' clothing, to be sold by hawkers. . . . The peculiar merit of Hannah More's scheme was that it was designed to meet the enemy on his own ground by the production of tracts and broadsides, in outward appearance as nearly as possible resembling the chapman's wares. (295, 298-99)[27]

Accordingly, the tracts were printed on single sheets of laid or wove papers, folded into twenty-four duodecimo pages or sixteen octavo pages. They were decorated with illustrative woodcuts. Moreover, the works adopted a simple diction which mimicked the languages of most chapbooks.[28] Characterisation was uncomplicated and plots were straight-forward.[29] By adopting the paratextual features of the chapbook, More's *Cheap Repository* could infiltrate the readerships of contemporaneous chapbooks and covertly alter their outlooks.

Blake's "No Natural Religion" functioned in a similar way to More's *Cheap Repository*. That is not to say that Blake's work should be considered as an attack on contemporaneous chapbooks. Nor should it be considered as an attempt to reform the contents of these spectacular texts. Unlike More, Blake never expressed distaste for

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> some books which would strengthen such thoughts, whereas such as you read only serve to put them out of your head. ("Sunday School" 10-11)

[27] Susan Pederson, in "Hannah More Meets Simple Simon: Tracts, Chapbooks, and Popular Culture in Late Eighteenth-Century England" (1986), argued: "The Cheap Repository tracts were born in an attempt to replace popular with religious literature in the packs of rural hawkers. Yet however transparent More's intentions, it is important to stress again that the tracts travelled in disguise. Their attack on popular recreations and communal life was concealed in a product that was not, at first glance, distinguishable from a chapbook. This similarity was deliberate" (106).

[28] According to Neuburg, chapbook versions of novels were "presented in simpler words" and the "quality of the prose and the vocabulary were such that anyone who had attended an elementary school and shown some aptitude for basic instruction would without too much difficulty have followed the general sense of the tale" (120).

[29] Kelly writes: "Characterization in *Cheap Repository* also expropriates both orality and formal elements of popular chapbook fiction. The characters in *Cheap Repository* tales are simple, as in popular chapbooks, with no interior life, but they are usually given Character or humour names. . . . Character is reduced to name" (152).

street literature: in fact, in Blake's poems, marginalia, and correspondence, there are no explicit references to chapbooks. However, according to John Adlard in *The Sports of Cruelty: Fairies, Folksongs, Charms, and Other Country Matters in the Work of William Blake* (1972), Blake's poetry frequently abandoned "literary models for those of the broadsheet and the spoken or sung rhyme or ballad. . . . Financial and social pressures kept him close to the common people, so he can hardly have been indifferent to the poetry of the streets" (17). Accordingly, Adlard highlights the ways in which Blake appropriated street-cries in *An Island in the Moon* (c. 1784), manipulated the imageries of traditional English chapbooks in the *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790), and adopted the symbolic languages of contemporaneous dream-literature in *America: A Prophecy* (1793) and *Europe: A Prophecy* (1794).[30] Blake's repeated use of the metres, images, and languages of street literature suggest that he was not, in contrast to More, adverse to the contents of chapbooks, broadsides, and other ephemeral publications. However, while Blake's and More's understandings of the values of street literature seem to have been wholly conflicted, the ways in which Blake adopted the paratextual features of the chapbook in order to reach specific audiences were similar to the covert agendas of More's *Cheap Repository*. Blake was not inspired to produce chapbooks as a result of More's stealthy project but it is important to acknowledge that, during the last two decades of the century, the educational potential of chapbooks was being recognised in a way that it had not been previously. This potential could easily be exploited and, while More's *Cheap Repository* sought to educate readers on a scale grander than any other pedagogical chapbook, the idea had already been attempted—albeit, on a smaller scale—by a number of contemporaneous publishers, including Blake.

2.4   Blake's High Quality Chapbooks

A paratextual exploration of the size and type of paper used in "No Natural Religion" reveals that Blake's first illuminated book was formatted according to the conventions of eighteenth-century chapbooks. Moreover, this chapter has demonstrated the ways in which the philosophical subject-matter of "No Natural Religion," while offering a stark

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[30] Blake's work frequently included the fairies and giants of contemporaneous chapbooks. For instance, Adlard establishes connections between Blake's "A Dream" and "The Fairies," the latter of which was available to Blake in a chapbook of "Christmas Entertainments" or in Joseph Ritson's *A Select Collection of English Songs* (1783) (a work which was engraved by Blake). Further, the giants of *The Marriage* are related to Cornish giants, Somerset giants, and the giants who "inhabited Britain before the arrival of Brutus" (82).

contrast to the sensational subjects of most eighteenth-century chapbooks, would not have discouraged readers from identifying the work as a chapbook. Evidence reveals that chapbooks were not exclusively sensational: a variety of alternative subjects were available in chapbook form, including works which sought to educate their readers. Importantly, these alternative chapbooks were usually formatted according to the same criteria as traditional chapbooks, appropriating, vernacularising, and condensing information from different branches of knowledge into short booklets which were both accessible and comprehensible to a variety of audiences. By considering the ways in which the format of "No Natural Religion" facilitated Blake's attempts to regulate self-awareness and promote self-education in a series of concise aphorisms, the chapter has demonstrated Blake's participation in a pedagogical tradition which used chapbooks as tools of instruction and delight.

Chapter 3 Iconotexts: the Composite Art of "The Little Black Boy"

This chapter will undertake an investigation of Blake's debts to eighteenth-century children's literature, uncovering the means by which the *Songs of Innocence* (1789) incorporated dissenting ideas about education into its composite methodology.[1] It will decode the ambiguous and often misunderstood elements of Blake's composite art by studying the *Songs of Innocence* according to the terms of what Peter Wagner has described as an *iconotext*. This methodological framework will provide the tools necessary to explore the complex interrelations of word and image in the *Songs of Innocence.* Moreover, by highlighting the intertextual nature of a specific composite print from the *Songs of Innocence*—namely, "The Little Black Boy"—the chapter will reveal Blake's clear immersion in and negotiation between a variety of pedagogical traditions which he utilised, transvalued, and appropriated to generate an educational programme which was engendered in his illuminations.

3.1 *Songs of Innocence* and the Evolution of Illumination

Following the production of the high-quality chapbooks, "There is no Natural Religion" (*c.* 1788) and "All Religions Are One" (c.1788), Blake began work on a new project: namely, the *Songs of Innocence* (1789).[2] This work, much like its predecessors, was

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[1] The present study will follow W. J. T. Mitchell's definition of composite art: "a single, unified aesthetic phenomenon in which neither form dominates the other and yet in which each is incomplete without the other" ("Composite Art" 57).

[2] While *Innocence* was engraved in 1789, the twenty-three poems contained in this work were composed earlier. "Laughing Song" had been included in Blake's first publication, *Poetical Sketches* (1783). Moreover,

engraved, furnished with designs, and illuminated with watercolours. In spite of the similarities between the printing techniques employed in both the illuminated chapbooks and the *Songs of Innocence*, it is the latter of these works which has been usually described as the first of Blake's illuminated books. Anthony Blunt described the *Songs of Innocence* as the earliest example of an illuminated book in its "complete and mature form" (44).[3] The *Songs of Innocence* can be identified as such because of a number of subtle but significant characteristics which distinguished this work from "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One." These characteristics, as Joseph Viscomi has made clear, marks Blake's third illuminated book as "a significant turning point" in illuminated printing: "the session in which relief etchings became illuminated prints" (*Book* 246).[4] In order to understand why Blunt, Viscomi, and other Blake scholars have highlighted the significance of the *Songs of Innocence* in regards to its contribution to what would eventually become the staple form of Blake's illuminated books, the differences between the *Songs of Innocence* and its predecessors should be carefully considered and analysed.

The differences between the *Songs of Innocence* and the illuminated chapbooks can be divided into two alternative but complementary categories. The first of these categories focuses on the alternative formats of each text. Unlike the small, pocket-sized formats of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One," the *Songs of Innocence* contained thirty-one plates, which measured between 12.3 x 7.7 cm and 10.9 x 6.3 cm, and was printed on Whatman jnr.'s and Edmeads and Pines' wove papers. Blake's departure from the chapbook format in his third illuminated book indicates that, following the technological success of his original illuminations, Blake's ideas about the potential functions of illuminated printing had altered. More specifically, Blake's understanding of what constituted the essence of illuminated printing had expanded. Thus, in addition to producing small, cheap chapbooks[5] whose profits would have been made through

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"Holy Thursday," "Nurse's Song," and "The Little Boy Lost" had appeared originally in *An Island in the Moon* (c. 1784).

[3] Blunt's categorization of the *Songs of Innocence* as the first "mature" example of illumination does not necessarily disparage "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions." In contrast to those studies which have simply ignored Blake's earliest illuminations, Blunt's work did offer an exploration of these texts. However, according to Blunt, the chapbooks were "little more than variants of the type of Emblem book familiar since the sixteenth century" (44). The *Songs of Innocence*, on the other hand, was "something entirely new and personal in the way of book production" (44).

[4] Viscomi categorizes "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" as relief etchings rather than illuminated prints. He does so because the "first pulls" of these texts "were probably printed in black ink without borders, as well as on one side of the leaf." Thus, in 1788, "Blake still perceived his new relief plates conventionally, as uncoloured black images on one side of the paper" (*Book* 246). Viscomi's claim cannot be substantiated, however, because the first impressions of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" are not extant.

[5] While larger texts would dominate Blake's future in illuminated printing, he would continue to produce chapbooks. Following the production of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One" in 1788, Blake produced—or, in the very least, intended to produce—three additional chapbooks: *For the Children: The Gates of*

larger print-runs,[6] Blake's concept of illuminated printing had now expanded to include larger texts—in both size and page number—whose prices could be slightly higher and whose print-runs could be significantly lower.[7] Blake's desire to offer two types of illuminated books to the public within just one year of inventing relief etching is significant because it reflects what Viscomi has described as Blake's growing "enthusiasm for and hope in" his "new project" (*Book* 242)—an enthusiasm which would eventually culminate in the production of a complete catalogue of illuminated books, ranging from cheap chapbooks to finely produced folios.[8]

Blake's early enthusiasm for his new project, when coupled with an increased experience of relief etching, encouraged him both to construct new texts and to develop the artistic configuration of their contents. These developments resulted in the second of the differences between the *Songs of Innocence* and the illuminated chapbooks: specifically, the refinement, enhancement, and maturation of the composite form of illumination. Each element of this form—word, design, and the interrelation of word and design—developed during the composition of the *Songs of Innocence*. The text of the *Songs of Innocence*, unlike its predecessors (which had been written as a series of

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Paradise (1793), which was begun in 1787 and completed in 1793; *The History of England* (1793), which was not completed or is at least not extant; and, finally, "A Song of Liberty" (c. 1793). The latter of these texts, according to Michael Phillips, was "printed in monochrome on a single sheet, with the three plate sizes approximately 157 X 104 mm or slightly smaller" ("Terror" 291), and was the only one of Blake's illuminations to be printed on laid paper. The format of this text, Phillips concludes, represented Blake's "ambition to produce . . . works of a manifestly political nature in an accessible and inexpensive format" ("Terror" 291).

[6] As detailed in chapter one, Blake's method of printing in relief was a slow process: inking the plates with a leather dauber while avoiding the shallows was a time-consuming exercise. Each plate of Michael Phillips's facsimiles of *America: A Prophecy* took thirty-five minutes to ink. Thus, a complete copy of *America: A Prophecy* required over ten hours of labour. Viscomi has argued otherwise, writing:

> I have printed such open etched plates and have inked them as quickly as those with tight line systems. . . . The way it would have been done in Blake's day was to print the plate face down like a stamp; no matter how blemished the shallows are, if the paper is placed on the bed of the press and the plate face down on it, like a stamp, then it will print clean. This is the method used to print on silk and is described in the second edition of Faithorne's art of engraving. In fact, the amount of ink on the proof of [*America*] plate a is so substantial that it tells us that Blake did not take 35 minutes to ink the plate but probably printed in the ordinary way, with plate face up and paper onto it. (qtd. in Bentley "Heavy Metal": 748n100)

In either case, applying ink to a collection of smaller plates would have taken considerably less time. According to G. E. Bentley Jr., "Small, densely filled designs . . . can be printed fairly briskly without picking up irrelevant ink from the hollows" ("Heavy Metal" 748). For that reason, the twelve plates of "No Natural Religion" (the majority of which were dense with designs) could have been printed fairly quickly.

[7] Some critics attribute the change in Blake's formats and the reduction of his print runs to the difficulty of illuminated printing. Northrop Frye argued: "It is clear that Blake expected this process to be more efficient and less laborious than it was" ("Poetry and Design" 35). However, according to Viscomi, the argument that "illuminated printing was difficult" is "mistaken" (196). Blake's decision to limit the number of impressions in editions of larger texts must have been motivated by an alternative aim.

[8] Moreover, by the end of 1789 Blake had completed an additional illuminated book which did assume a larger size than those produced previously: *The Book of Thel*.

philosophical aphorisms), was presented as a collection of twenty-three poems.[9] Further, the technique of mirror-writing which Blake had implemented in the etching of his illuminated books (between 1788 and 1789) had progressed from an awkward, slanted lettering to a confidently executed cursive and roman font. The designs which furnished the pages of the *Songs of Innocence* had also become visibly richer than those which had been presented in "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions." They exhibited a finer series of engraved, coloured illustrations. Moreover, whereas the illuminated chapbooks had adopted a standard approach to text and design which imitated the typical layout of an eighteenth-century book (as practiced by Blake in his commercial engravings [Fig. 11]), the *Songs of Innocence* had attempted to move away from the conventions of contemporaneous print culture by integrating text and design more fully.[10] Therefore, the *Songs of Innocence* should be considered as marking a significant turning point in the development of illuminated printing because its publication signaled both an increased production for Blake and the maturation of his composite form of illumination.

It was the latter of these developments—specifically, the maturation of the interrelation of text and design—which prompted Blake scholars to acknowledge the importance of the *Songs of Innocence* in the development of illuminated printing. This acknowledgement has usually been made to the detriment of "No Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One," both of which are generally reduced to the status of prefatory experiments (see chapter 2). Yet, in spite of the critical acknowledgement of the balanced union of poetry and design in the composite form of the *Songs of Innocence*, the specific attributes which constituted this form in both the *Songs of Innocence* and Blake's later illuminations have been rarely explored by Blake scholars. A brief consideration of

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[9] The number of poems in the *Songs of Innocence* would later be reduced to nineteen. Poems such as "The School Boy," "The Little Girl Lost," "The Little Girl Found," and "The Chimney Sweeper" were transferred to *Songs of Experience* (1794). The present study will use copy I of the *Songs of Innocence* as its study text.

[10] While it is true that "All Religions Are One" adopted a standard approach to text and design by presenting a series of images which appeared above or below the text while illustrating its contents, the same cannot be said of "No Natural Religion." The images in this work did appear as tailpieces to the text, but the relationship between the verbal and the visual was not illustrative: rather, it was ironic. By offering a series of propositions which in no way distorted the principles of natural religion, Blake's work could easily—without its accompanying designs—have been interpreted as an affirmation of this type of epistemology: no doubt, as Viscomi has noted, "when series a is read as an independent book," the irony of the text can be "too easily misconstrued as affirming" (2221) rather than negating the principles of natural religion. However, because each of the principles documented in "No Natural Religion" appears in conjunction with an image whose intertextual connotations are primarily negative, it is clear that the illustrations were designed to undermine or to undercut the contents of the text: thus, throughout the (a) text of "No Natural Religion," eighteenth-century audiences witnessed familiar images of popular, contemporaneous subjects such as the elderly victim of Death in principle one, the physical chastisement of Cupid by his mother, Venus, and Father Time in principles two and three, an image of an idle dunce with a plumed hat in principle four, the emblem of a child whose narcissistic desires will result in his drowning in principle five, and an individual clothed in darkness in principle six. In each case, the ironic interrelation of text and design reveals Blake's opposition to the principles of natural religion.

the development of Blake scholarship over the last two centuries can help us to understand why Blake's composite art has been and continues to be handled with reluctance by critics. Moreover, by highlighting and examining the rationale behind this reluctance, the present study will attempt to formulate a new approach and method of reading Blake's art which unites each of the elements which made up his composite form.

3.2   The Study of William Blake's Composite Art in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

The general lack of understanding and appreciation of Blake's composite art in recent literary criticism can be attributed to the trajectory of Blake scholarship over the last two centuries. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Blake scholarship was hindered significantly by an initial unavailability and subsequent insufficiency of printed facsimiles of Blake's illuminated books. Transcripts of select poems had been printed in magazines, miscellanies, and biographies, but for the most part, Blake's poetry remained obscure until the beginning of the twentieth century. These limitations forced nineteenth-century scholars to consult Blake's illuminated books directly, interacting with these works primarily in their original forms. For that reason, the research of early Blake scholars such as William Michael Rossetti and Richard Garnett—the former being a Blake collector and the latter being an assistant keeper of printed books at the British Museum—displayed an appreciation of the composite form of Blake's art which, following the publication and popularisation of William Butler Yeats's and Edwin Ellis's *The Works of William Blake: Poetic, Symbolic, and Critical* (1893) and John Sampson's *The Poetical Works of William Blake* (1905), became a rarity.[11] The sudden availability of Blake's poems in the early twentieth century made possible the study of

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[11] Jean H. Hagstrum, in *William Blake Poet and Painter: An Introduction to the Illuminated Verse* (1964), noted how the study of Blake's composite art was "one of the earliest insights into Blake's art" (3). Rossetti, in his "Prefatory Memoir" to the *Poetical Works of William Blake, Lyrical and Miscellaneous* (1875), argued that "one may truly say, the art is made to permeate the poetry, insomuch that the union of the two becomes something different from what either of them would be alone, or both in mere mechanical juxtaposition" (xcvi). Similarly, in *William Blake: Painter and Poet* (1895), Garnett argued: "not only do the artistic and the poetical monuments of his [Blake's] genius nearly balance each other in merit and in their claim upon the attention of posterity, but they are the offspring of the same creative impulse, and are indissolubly fused together by the process adopted for their execution" (5).

Blake's poetry without reference to his designs.[12] A consequence of this text-only availability was that studies of the literary components of Blake's art quickly gained precedence and considerations of Blake's designs—while usually acknowledged in a biographical context—swiftly fell into obscurity.[13]

The study of Blake's poetry dominated Blake scholarship from the beginning to the middle of the twentieth century.[14] It was at this point that two works emerged which, while focusing mostly on Blake's poetry, altered the ways in which contemporaneous audiences thought about and understood Blake's poetry. These works made possible the reintroduction of Blake's pictures into literary scholarship. Jacob Bronowski's *William Blake 1757-1827: A Man Without a Mask* (1944) brought attention to the various ways in which the political and social problems of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries shaped the composition of Blake's poetry. It brought about a new, historical means of approaching Blake which would later be adopted to great success by David V. Erdman in *Blake Prophet Against Empire: A Poet's Interpretation of the History of His Own Times* (1954). Northrop Frye's *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* (1947) offered a critical analysis of Blake's poetry which decoded, analysed, and structured the symbolic contents of the illuminated books into a coherent mythological system. The work demonstrated how a

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[12] Arthur Symons, in *William Blake* (1907), noted how these collected editions of Blake facilitated his study of Blake's poetry: "It was when Mr. Sampson's edition of Blake came into my hands in the winter of 1905 that the idea of writing a book on Blake first presented itself to me. From a boy he had been one of my favourite poets, and I had heard a great deal about him from Mr. Yeats as long ago as 1893, the year in which he and Mr. Ellis brought out their vast cyclopaedia" (vii). Symons quotes the collections of Sampson, Yeats, and Ellis at length, studying Blake as a poet primarily, the designs being acknowledged but not studied.

[13] Northrop Frye noted the scarcity of good reproductions of Blake's illuminated books, writing:

> The only complete edition of Blake's engraved poems is the third volume of *The Works of William Blake* edited by Ellis and Yeats. . . . it is increasingly difficult to obtain, and the reproductions, which are in black and white and done from lithographs, . . . are not very satisfactory, to put it mildly. There are passable colour reproductions of the lyrics and a few of the shorter prophecies, but so far as I know there has been no good edition, with or without colour, of *America, Europe, Milton*, or *Jerusalem*. ("Poetry and Design" 42)

[14] Studies of Blake's poetry which were considered important by contemporaneous audiences included Max Plowman's *An Introduction to the Study of Blake* (1927) and John Middleton Murry's *William Blake* (1933). The introduction to the former of these texts enthusiastically highlighted the composite form of Blake's art, arguing that "there is something of the mediaeval magician about Blake's manner of presenting his poetry" (30). Yet, the remainder of Plowman's monograph focussed primarily on "Blake's written words" (xxi). Murry described his text as "an attempt to elucidate the doctrine of William Blake, using only his written works as evidence," admitting that he "confined" himself "strictly to his written work, for the simple reason that the evidence is more easily marshalled, more susceptible of presise examination and, above all, more capable of reproduction within the book itself." Considerations of reproduction were an important concern for early Blake scholars. Murry notes how "An attempt of the same kind made on the evidence of Blake's designs would be involved in innumerable technical difficulties; and, even if these were overcome (and I, personally, would be quite incapable of overcoming them) the ensuing book would be inordinately expensive" (7). No doubt, this practical, financial concern would have shaped and limited the studies of numerous critics, indirectly pushing Blake scholarship down a circumscribed route of study which—while possibly against the will of the scholars involved—necessitated the analysis of Blake's poetry alone.

critical, systematic approach to Blake's symbols—which would later be adopted and developed by Peter F. Fisher and Harold Bloom—could illuminate the complex philosophies of his poems.[15] *A Man Without a Mask* and *Fearful Symmetry* represented a climax in the study of Blake's poetry. These texts significantly advanced contemporaneous understandings of Blake's poetical language, doing so in spite of their refusal to consider the visual components of Blake's art: Bronowski admitted that "This is not a book about Blake's designs" (6), and Frye acknowledged that his text made "no effort" to "deal at all adequately" with Blake's work as a "painter and engraver" (3).[16] However, in altering how scholars thought about and understood Blake's poetry, the historical and systematic approaches of Bronowski's and Frye's monographs concluded the era of Blake scholarship that had focused on poetry. They prepared the Blake community for the next phase of its development: namely, the study of Blake's composite art.

The composite form of Blake's illuminated books was reintroduced to Blake scholarship by Frye. In "Poetry and Design in William Blake" (1951), Frye worked to explore all of the elements which contributed to the composite form of Blake's illuminations. He acknowledged that "For one reason or another, many literary students of Blake have only the vaguest notion of what sort of pictorial basis underlies his poetry. A good many foolish ideas about Blake have resulted from staring at the naked text" (42). Frye insisted that if critics hoped to understand the "total meaning" (41) of Blake's illuminated books, they first needed to "expose" themselves to the "whole impact of Blake at once" (42). Scholars needed to study word and image simultaneously. The progress of Frye's incitement was expedited by Jean H. Hagstrum in *William Blake Poet and Painter: An Introduction to the Illuminated Verse* (1964). In this text, Hagstrum extended Frye's manifesto in a short introduction which sought to encourage the further study of Blake's composite art. He argued that the "time has come to ask whether we can properly assess Blake's intentions or respond appropriately to his art if we confine our attention to his words alone in interpreting a form that consists of words, designs, and borders, integrally combined" (3). For the most part, the Blake community agreed with Frye and Hagstrum—the time had come for scholars to offer a detailed exploration of the relationships between text and design in Blake's illuminations.[17] This exploration was facilitated by the publication of a complete set of facsimiles of Blake's illuminated

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[15] Most Blake scholars believe that Frye altered the course of Blake scholarship indefinitely. *Fearful Symmetry* has been described as "the best critical work on Blake's poetry," the "one which has set the course of Blake criticism up to this day" (Mishra 147).

[16] Likewise, Bloom consciously "slighted Blake's illustrations to his engraved poems," claiming that "the poems are usually quite independent of their illustrations" (*Apocalypse* 9).

[17] Upon reviewing Hagstrum's text, Martin Butlin claimed that a "detailed examination of the relationship between Blake's writings and his designs as they appear together in his illuminated books has long been wanted" (101).

books by the Blake Trust during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These facsimiles, released some twenty years after the publication of Frye's "Poetry and Design," marked the reestablishment and reintegration of the study of Blake's composite art into the Blake community.[18]

Revitalising the study of Blake's composite art made possible a number of publications which significantly advanced contemporaneous understandings of Blake's form. This revitalisation was best displayed in Erdman's and John E. Grant's *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic* (1970). In this collection of essays, Blake scholars showed that, following the "recent advances in the filming and facsimulating of Blake's songs and prophecies," critics were "learning at last to read Blake's pictorial language: to read his hieroglyphics, to see, to hear, to follows its choreography, its music, its mental drama" (vii). Unfortunately, however, the reintegration of this branch of study into Blake scholarship was short-lived. Other than W. J. T. Mitchell's *Blake's Composite Art: A Study of the Illuminated Poetry* (1978), few studies in the late twentieth century worked to investigate the interrelation of text and design in Blake's art. Independent studies of Blake's poetry or of his pictures continue to emerge, it is true, but the importance of studying the interrelation of text and design in the analysis of Blake's illuminations, while universally accepted, is typically highlighted when convenient. The omission of this consideration in twenty-first century studies of Blake seems surprising when the accessibility of *The William Blake Archive* (1996-2014), which has made Blake's illuminated prints available to all for free via the internet, is considered.

The present investigation intends to reestablish the validity of studying Blake's composite art by picking up where Frye, Hagstrum, and Mitchell left off. The systematic, historical approaches of these scholars will be extended through the careful integration of a variety of complimentary methodologies which consider both verbal and visual media. To this end, Wagner's concept of the iconotext will be used to facilitate the simultaneous study of both text and design in Blake's composite art. This methodology will resolve Mitchell's concern that "talking about complex poems and pictures at the same time is like trying to carry on two conversations at once" (*Composite Art* xvii). Additionally, Roland Barthes's concept of intertextuality will be used to situate Blake's illuminations firmly within the intellectual, literary, and print cultures of the eighteenth century: following Barthes, it is possible to offer a contextual analysis of the *Songs of Innocence* which adheres to the historical sympathies of both Frye and Hagstrum. The application of these combined methodologies to the composite form of

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[18] Martin K. Nurmi anticipated this result in a review of Hagstrum's *Introduction*, writing: "Hagstrum's modest but valuable introduction to Blake's composite art will be able to achieve its desired effect, that of sending readers to the illuminated page for the part of the story that is often not to be found in the text alone" (101).

the *Songs of Innocence* will reveal the underlying pedagogical principles which motivated, governed, and made possible the union of text and design in this work.

3.3 Blake and the Iconotext

Blake's thoughts regarding the composite form of his illuminated books have occupied scholars frequently. Throughout his career, Blake described his process of illuminated printing in terms of a technique which combined the "Labours" of the "Painter and the Poet" (692). When asked to separate these media, Blake claimed that the sale of his designs "without the Writing" would be "to the Loss of some of the best things." When "Printed perfect" as a union of word and image, the pictures "accompany Poetical Personifications & Acts," without which they "never could have been Executed" (771). Clearly, Blake believed that to understand his illuminations readers required an equal consideration of both poetry and design: the refusal to consider both of these media, in Blake's view, would result in "the Loss" (771) of an important component of interpretation.

With Blake's own assessment of the relationships between the visual and the textual in mind, scholars should study the illuminated books in terms of what Wagner, in *Reading Iconotexts: From Swift to the French Revolution* (1995), has described as an iconotext. An iconotext is a print which conveys its message to the reader through a combination of words and pictures. This combination usually assumes the form of a design and its caption but can be extended to include the existence of verbal texts within visual texts or the relationship between a story and its illustrations. According to Wagner, the image would "not make sense, or rather it would be open to many interpretations or readings," (9) without its verbal accompaniment. Interpretations of the image must be guided by the text and vice versa.[19] Moreover, the iconotext generates meaning through the signifying attributes of each of its elements, the interplay of which brings attention to a number of utterances which allude to other "texts and contexts" (26). The connotative function of these signifiers is described by Wagner as intertextuality, a concept which was coined originally by Julia Kristeva in "The Bounded Text" (1969) and

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[19] Roland Barthes describes this type of relationship between text and image in terms of what he defines as "*anchorage*," writing: "All images are polysemous; they imply, underlying their signifiers, a 'floating chain' of signifieds, the reader able to choose some and ignore others. . . . Hence in every society various techniques are developed intended to *fix* the floating chain of signifieds in such a way as to counter the terror of uncertain signs; the linguistic message is one of these techniques. . . . the caption . . . helps me to choose *the correct level of perception*, permits me to focus not simply my gaze but also my understanding" ("Rhetoric" 39).

was later developed into a methodological system of interpretation by Barthes in *S/Z* (1970). Importantly, the methodological framework of *Iconotexts* allows for a series of intertextual analyses which, by following Barthes's system, individually assess the visual and verbal contents of any given print. Once this series of intertextual case studies has been completed, the results of each analysis are compounded, compared, and contrasted in order to identify how the reader creates "some sort of meaning" (28) from this plethora of discovered signifieds. Before analysing Blake's iconotexts, the roles, functions, and effects of intertextuality need to be considered in more detail.

For the most part, Wagner's intertextual analyses of the visual and verbal contents of an iconotext adhere to Barthes's ideas in *S/Z* and in the "Rhetoric of the Image" (1977).[20] In these studies, Barthes offered an approach which worked to highlight the plurality which constituted the meanings of a variety of verbal and visual texts. The fabrics of these texts should be considered as "a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds" (*S/Z* 5). According to Barthes, the instrument necessary to interpret the plurality of these signifiers is connotation: "a determination, a relation, an anaphora, a feature which has the power to relate itself to anterior, ulterior, or exterior mentions, to other sites of the text (or of another text)" (*S/Z* 8). In other words, each signifier in a work connotes a signified which is either local or foreign to the text.[21] Barthes describes these connoted signifieds as intertexts. The identification and assessment of these intertextual utterances, which function collectively as a "fictive dialogue between author and reader" (*S/Z* 9),[22] can help critics to understand how the connotations of a text work together to form what Barthes has described as a "coherent whole" ("Rhetoric" 35) or as a "system of meaning" (*S/Z* 8).

The application of Barthes's interpretive system to each component of Blake's iconotexts can help us to understand how Blake participated in and negotiated the conventions of eighteenth-century print culture. In particular, the identification and assessment of the intertexts which were connoted in the illuminated books can help us to appreciate the plurality of signifiers which constituted the "coherent whole" (Barthes "Rhetoric" 35) of Blake's visual and verbal texts. It is important to appreciate the plurality of these texts because, like so many eighteenth-century writers and artists who implemented contemporaneous iconographies in their works (see Chapter 4), Blake used intertextuality as a rhetorical tool which facilitated the transmission of his message to eighteenth-century audiences. Some critics—and particularly early Blake

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[20] Wagner admits that he "cannot deny" his "debt" (23) to Barthes.

[21] In *Iconotexts*, connotation is described in terms of allusion: "Meaning, in other words, becomes a matter of (recognizing the allusions to) texts and contexts" (26).

[22] The dialogue between author and reader is described in similar terms by Wagner. He argues that intertextuality is a "rhetorical strategy" which appeals "to the spectator's *mentalité* and knowledge of discourse and images" (25).

scholars such as Alexander Gilchrist and Yeats—actually worked to reduce the plurality of Blake's texts through the argument that Blake was a solitary mystic who defied contemporaneous influence. Others have argued that the attempt to situate Blake within the culture of the eighteenth-century could potentially extinguish the magic of his work. Yet, by demystifying the compositional processes of Blake's art we can, in Barthes's words, gain access to the "magic of the signifier" (*S/Z* 4), opening up the systems or networks of meaning which constituted the building blocks of the illuminated books. Considering these signifiers according to their connotational rather than denotational significations will permit—and, in the studies of Anthony Blunt, David Bindman, and Jon Mee, has permitted—a more fruitful exploration of the signifying dimensions of Blake's art. Unlike previous studies of Blake's sources which focussed exclusively on the connotations of just one element of his composite art, the present study will offer an intertextual analysis of both aspects of Blake's form—the visual and the verbal—by adhering to the methodological framework of Wagner's *Iconotexts*. It will do so through an exploration of a deceptively complex illumination whose message has frequently been confused by scholars: namely, "The Little Black Boy."

Scholars who have attempted to decode the visual or verbal contents of "The Little Black Boy" have faced a number of difficulties. These difficulties can be attributed mainly to the title of the poem, the significations of which have been identified by Yeats as mystical, by Erdman as racial, and by Kathleen Raine as Swedenborgian.[23] Moreover, because the colouring of the visual contents of the poem vary from copy to copy— depicting the child of the title as black or white alternatively—commentaries of "The Little Black Boy" have struggled to reconcile their interpretations of the verbal with the visual contents of the illuminated page. The key to resolving these conflicts lies in resisting the temptation to allow a single unit of signification to overpower the whole: in other words, the colour of "The Little Black Boy" should not shape our interpretations of the whole poem, shaping how its verbal and the visual contents fit together. In Barthes's view, each unit of signification should be considered individually

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[23] According to Yeats, "The Little Black Boy" "cannot be understood, unless it be taken as part of the general mystical manifesto that runs through all" of the *Songs of Innocence*. The dark colour of the boy is symbolic of the body or the "dark things of the five senses with their seemingly solid and opaque world around." This body has been "paradoxically" provided by God. By "death or by inspiration we shall presently be free of it" (2: 9). Erdman interprets "The Little Black Boy" within the contexts of "The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, formed in 1787. . . . Blake's *Little Black Boy* coincided with the early phase of this campaign" (*Prophet* 228-29). Erdman argued that the "skin colour" of the "Little Black Boy" was "a cloud that cannot obscure the essential brotherhood of man in a fully enlightened society, such as Heaven" (*Prophet* 239). Raine, in *Blake and Tradition* (1968), describes "The Little Black Boy" as "Blake's most completely—and most successfully— Swedenborgian poem" (1: 10). She argues that the "black boy and the white boy are evidently related to Swedenborg's good and evil angels, each in his ambient sphere; but already Blake is calling in question Swedenborg's moral dualism, for it is the black child who teaches the white, a foreshadowing of his later full-scale defense of the 'devils' in the *Marriage*" (1: 11).

and without preference. It is only then that "each kind of criticism (if it should so desire)" can "come into play, to make its voice heard" in order to affirm "the plural" (*S/Z* 14-15). Thus, an intertextual analysis of the iconotexts of "The Little Black Boy" needs to isolate each of the units which are present in the visual and verbal contents of the poem, studying how each of these components might have been interpreted by eighteenth-century audiences.[24] These units of signification can then be reconnected to form what Barthes has called a "starred text" (13): the interconnected points of the starred text can then be explored, assessed, and analysed in the form of a critical appendix which offers an informed interpretation of the poem

3.4   The Visual Iconotext

According to Wagner's paradigm of the iconotext, the first element of a print to be considered is the visual. The visual contents of "The Little Black Boy" can be isolated into two categories: first, the headpiece, which includes a woman with a child, a pair of overhanging trees, and a sun [Fig. 13]; and second, the tailpiece, which depicts a man who is seated with two children, an overhanging tree, some sheep, and a river [Fig. 14].[25] Barthes argues that each of the signifiers identified should be analysed according to the principles of two types of connotation: first, the sequential function of the signifier should be considered, identifying the ways in which "meaning proliferates by layering" (*S/Z* 8) within the text itself; and second, the agglomerative aspects of the signifier should be addressed, revealing how the signifier correlates with "other meanings outside the material text" (*S/Z* 8). The consideration of the sequential and agglomerative spaces of the signifier might reveal the ways in which eighteenth-century audiences would have interpreted each aspect of Blake's iconotext.

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[24] It must be admitted, however, that methodologies are not sophisticated enough to reconstruct eighteenth-century reading practises.

[25] The order in which these units should be considered is not, according to Barthes, important. Rather, the consideration of these signifiers should be "a matter of convenience" because the "cutting up" of the text is "arbitrary in the extreme" (13). Inevitably, an order will be imposed upon our interpretation of each of the visual and verbal signifiers in "The Little Black Boy," but it is important to stress that this ordering is not hierarchical: our "reading must also be . . . without order of entrance: the 'first' version of a reading must be able to be its last, as though the text were reconstituted in order to achieve its artifice of continuity, the signifier then being provided with an additional feature: shifting" (Barthes *S/Z* 15). The shifting feature of the signifier is especially apparent in images for which, quite obviously, there is no linearity.

3.4.1   Woman and Child: A Lockean Scene of Instruction

The first signifier to be considered is the female who is seated on the ground. There is a book in her lap. She sits beside a child who, while looking at her, points upwards. The connotative function of this image consists of both sequential and agglomerative spaces. Sequentially, this image alludes to a number of images in the *Songs of Innocence* which adopted the same visual motif. A similar image introduced "Spring," for example, and this motif also adorned the title-page to the *Songs of Innocence.* The sequential space which contributed to the meaning of this design from "The Little Black Boy" relied on the repetition of this motif throughout the *Songs of Innocence*, the layering of which produced an intertextual field which connotatively united these images, their poems, and their meanings. Both "Spring" [Fig. 15] and the title-page to the *Songs of Innocence* [Fig. 12] depicted the relationship between a child and a female, the latter of whom is unidentified in "Spring" and the title-page but is identified as a nurse in "Nurse's Song" [Fig. 17].[26] In each case, the female—who may or may not be a nurse throughout the *Songs of Innocence*—acts as a guardian who is or has been instructing the child. When considering the motif of woman and child in "The Little Black Boy," the collective meaning or theme of these sequentially connoted poems are naturally invoked and affixed to the reader's interpretation of this image: thus, from a sequential perspective, it appears that the female is instructing the youth.

Interpreting the image of woman and child in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" as a scene of instruction is supported by its agglomerative aspects. Countless eighteenth-century books adopted a similar visual motif. Most notably, the frontispiece to John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book, intended for the Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly with Two Letters from Jack the Giant Killer* (1744) depicted a scene of instruction whose primary components—namely, the seated woman reading aloud to a boy and a girl—were almost identical to those included in the title-page of the *Songs of Innocence* [Fig. 19]. Assessing the functions of Newbery's image within the sequential and agglomerative spaces of his text can help us to understand how eighteenth-century readers would have interpreted this motif in both the *Pocket-Book* and other contemporaneous works, many of which—following the popularity of Newbery's publication—had adopted a similar visual trope which was connotative of the *Pocket-Book.* By considering each of these works in terms of an intertextual network of

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[26] "Nurse's Song" could also be identified as a sequential intertext to "The Little Black Boy." The former of these illuminations pictures both a woman and some children; however, rather than reading to the children, the nurse sits beneath a tree while the children play an eighteenth-century game--specifically, thread the needle, a game which is identifiable through its inclusion in John Newbery's *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (1744)—on a hillside.

shared, pedagogical significations, the connoted role of the image of woman and child in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" can be identified.

According to Newbery, his frontispiece was illustrative of what he described as the "grand design" of his text: namely, that a child cannot become "*strong, hardy, healthy, virtuous, wise,* and *happy*" without "some care and management in their infancy" (5). Newbery had adopted this view in light of the growing popularity of the pedagogical principles which had been advanced by John Locke—in Newbery's words, "the great Mr. *Locke*" (6)—in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693). In this text, Locke had compounded, reworked, and popularised the pedagogical theories of a variety of seventeenth-century educationalists such as Obadiah Walker and John Milton which offered a programme of education to the public which sought to replace the "strange, unnatural and disagreeable" methods which had been adopted in contemporaneous "grammar-schools" (109).[27] The educational programme of *Education* was built upon the thesis of Locke's previous work, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), in which Locke had proposed that the mind of a child was, "as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas" (2: 109), and it was upon this blank slate that knowledge was etched into the understanding (see Chapter 4). Accordingly, Locke argued in *Education* that it was the responsibility of the parents to govern and direct the information which was "painted" upon the "vast store" (*Essay* 2: 109) of the child's mind:

> The well educating of their children is so much the duty and concern of parents, and the welfare and prosperity of the nation so much depends on it, that I would have everyone . . . set his helping hand to promote everywhere that way training up youth, with regards to their several condition, which is the easiest, shortest and likeliest to produce virtuous, useful and able men in their distinct callings. . . . I think I may say that of all the men we meet with nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. (*Education* 2)

This type of education—which necessitated the supervision of a parent—could not be provided by a school. Instead, Locke was convinced that "he who is able to be at the charge of a tutor at home may there give his son a more genteel carriage . . . and ripen him up sooner into a man than any school can" (*Education* 81).[28] Locke's ideas about

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[27] Margaret J. M. Ezell, in "John Locke's Images of Childhood: Early Eighteenth Century Responses to *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*" (1983), argued that "Most of Locke's ideas on education were not new. Evelyn, Aubrey, Eachard, and Milton had urged similar reforms in curriculum and teaching methods; the reading public, however, had a different response to Locke's theories" (141). Ezell attributed the success of *Education* to Locke's previous works, writing: "His reputation as the author of *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* gave his views a respectability and authority not enjoyed by most of his seventeenth-century predecessors, who, nevertheless, had laid the vital groundwork for the acceptance of these ideas" (155).

[28] Blake, like Locke, was opposed to schooling. Throughout his writing, Blake's railed against schools: "Thank God I never was sent to school / To be Flogd into following the style of a Fool" ("Satiric" 510).

education, for the most part, were accepted favourably by contemporaneous audiences: early eighteenth-century educationalists such as Joseph Addison and Isaac Watts openly cited Locke as an influence on the development of their ideas, contributing to the further popularisation of Locke's pedagogical principles. Moreover, because Locke's ideas and metaphors appeared regularly in a variety of contemporaneous poems, novels, and letters, it is clear that his works had, by the mid eighteenth century, penetrated every aspect of popular culture, shaping how eighteenth-century audiences thought about, understood, and educated children.[29]

Newbery's *Pocket-Book* was a product of this Lockean culture. According to Mary V. Jackson in *Engines of Instruction, Mischief, and Magic* (1989), "Locke's treatise shaped [Newbery's] ideas about the kinds of books children needed, the proper themes to stress," and "the best methods to use" (86). Thus, by following the model of instruction which Locke had advanced in *Education*, Newbery argued that the management of children should be provided by a parent or a nurse, either of whom could use the *Pocket-Book* as a study-aid. Accordingly, while addressing Master Tommy and Miss Polly in a prefatory letter, Newbery—in the guise of the "legendary chapbook hero" (Klemann 223), Jack the Giant-Killer—says: "I have added, for your . . . amusement, a Collection of pretty Songs, which your nurse will take care to teach you; and I must insist upon your getting them perfectly, because the knowledge of these Songs will recommend you to the favour of all the gentleman and ladies of *England* who sing in that manner" (14). By using the fictional character of Jack to call attention to the conditions under which the *Pocket-Book*—as a physical, tangible object—should be read, Newbery skilfully dramatised and made desirable the Lockean precept that youths should learn their books "perfectly by heart; but, I think, not by reading them himself in his primer, but by somebody's

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[29] An example of an eighteenth-century novel which cited Locke was Samuel Richardson's *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740), in which the title-character discussed and criticized Locke's *Education*: "It is hardly possible for anyone, of Talents inferior to those of Mr. *Locke* himself, to come up to the Rules he has laid down upon this Subject; and 'tis to be question'd, whether even *he*, with all that vast Stock of natural reason and solid Sense, for which, as you tell me, Sir, he was so famous, had attain'd to these Perfections at his first setting out into Life" (341-42). James Thomson's *The Seasons* similarly integrated Locke's ideas about education into its section on *Spring*:

> Delightful Task! to rear the tender Thought
> To teach the young Idea how to shoot,
> To pour the fresh Instruction o 'er the Mind,
> To breathe th'enlivening Spirit, and to fix
> The generous Purpose in the glowing Breast. (l. 1150-54)

Moreover, Locke's influence can also be seen in a variety of eighteenth-century letters, including a letter from Sir Roland Winn to Reverend Bird at Nostell Priory which demonstrated how a number of contemporaneous ideas seemed "absurd" until they were "explained by Mr Lock."

repeating them to him" (*Education* 227).[30] This ideal pedagogical scenario, as envisioned by Newbery, Locke, and a variety of contemporaneous educationalists, was illustrated visually in the frontispiece of the *Pocket-Book*, the design of which depicted the *Pocket-Book* itself being used by a parent or nurse to teach songs such as "The Wolf and the Kid" and "The Shepherd's Boy" to Master Tommy and Miss Polly. Therefore, Newbery's introductory design functioned as a paratext which encouraged parents, tutors, and children to fulfil the roles which were pictured in the image.

The success of Newbery's paratextual manoeuvre can be measured through a consideration of the alarming rate at which similar designs emerged in contemporaneous works of children's literature.[31] For instance, a number of John Marshall's publications adopted this technique: Lady Ellenor Fenn's *Fables in Monosyllables by Mrs. Teachwell* (1783) [Fig. 20] and *Goody Goosecap* (1788) [Fig. 21] were decorated with woodcuts which demonstrated the delight that could be procured if parents used Marshall's books to teach their children how to read. Similarly, Mary Cooper's *Tommy Thumb's Song Book, for all Little Masters and Misters, to be Sung to them by their Nurses, Until They Can Sing Themselves* (1788) [Fig. 22] was prefaced with a frontispiece which depicted Nurse Lovechild using *Thumb's Song Book* to sing a variety of children's street songs to a group of youths. These images, as in Newbery's works, were designed not only to stimulate youths' interests in reading but also to encourage parents to participate in and appreciate the necessity of educating their children. The technique inherent in this motif was not confined to illustration. Anna Barbauld's *Lessons For Children of Three Years Old* (1778-79) presented a series of written dialogues which offered a model for how mothers should educate their children. Similarly, Sarah Trimmer's *The Family Magazine; or, a Repository of Religious Instruction and Rational Amusement* (1788-89) encouraged mothers to imitate the characteristics of heroines such as Mrs. Andrews, the Dutiful Daughter, and the Good Nurse. These characters formed a collection of "Moral Tales" which demonstrated the necessity of adhering to the prefatory argument of the *Magazine*:

> It is certainly a very desirable thing to learn to read; and never was there a time when this advantage was so generally enjoyed in ENGLAND. Every parent who has a proper regard for their offspring, is desirous of having them taught; and with this view, numbers put themselves to an inconvenient expense to procure learning for their children. (iii)

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[30] According to Jackson, the authors of children's literature frequently used chapbook heroes to render Locke's pedagogical principles desirable to youngsters: Jackson notes how Mary Cooper's "efforts to make amusing chapbook characters serve Locke's formula for luring the young to read and to learn might have succeeded, for soon others were following her lead" (79).

[31] That is not to say, however, that Newbery was the first to adopt the visual motif of woman and child. Charles Perrault's *Tales of Mother Goose* (1700) had adopted a similar design.

Clearly, the motif of woman and child dominated children's literature during the second half of the eighteenth century. It was used by a variety of authors for a host of alternative—and often contrasting—ends. The inclusion of this motif in a work was, nonetheless, consistently representative of how authors desired their texts to be used by contemporaneous audiences: namely, as an aid to instruction.

Taken together, each of the works which adopted the motif of woman and child during the eighteenth century formed an intertextual network of pedagogical texts which worked to reform the ways in which parents educated their children. The woman and child used in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" and throughout the *Songs of Innocence* can be identified as a product of this pedagogical network. Thus, the connoted, agglomerative signified of Blake's design does not—and could not, according to Barthes's model—have a specific source. Rather, Blake's image should simply be considered as one of the products of a rich network of interrelated signifiers whose shared, primary signification was representative of a particular type of pedagogy in eighteenth-century culture. As a commercial engraver, Blake would undoubtedly have been aware of the popularity of this motif in works of children's fiction—indeed, he would later contribute to the popularity of this trope through his engravings for Christian Salzmann's *Elements of Morality, for the Use of Children* (1791).[32] While it is possible that Blake was inspired to adopt this trope as a result of his contact with a particular image in a specific text, it seems more likely that Blake's understanding of what constituted a healthy instruction had been subtly shaped and nourished by the widespread presence of this image in an intertextual network of contemporaneous texts. More to the point, it is clear that Blake would have expected his readers to recognise and to understand the sequential and agglomerative significations of the woman and child in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" and throughout the *Songs of Innocence*, the function of which was to encourage adults and children to imitate the Lockean scene of instruction which was pictured in the design.[33]

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[32] In Salzmann's *Elements of Morality*, Blake was employed to engrave a frontispiece which illustrated how Salzmann had desired his text to be used: namely, by "Parents and teachers" who—rather than allowing their children and pupils to "read" the text "just as they please[d]"—had chosen to follow Locke's pedagogical model by "relat[ing]" the stories which were contained in Salzmann's book to the children themselves, doing so at "unexpected moments, after dinner, during a walk" (Salzmann xvi-xvii). Accordingly, the scene of instruction which was engraved by Blake in the frontispiece of *Elements of Morality* took place in a garden, much like the pedagogical scenarios which had taken place in the *Songs of Innocence*.

[33] Whether Blake understood that the motif of woman and child had originated in Locke's *Education* cannot be ascertained. No doubt, while early participants in this pedagogical tradition did openly cite their debts to Locke, later participants either failed to do so or referenced other eighteenth-century educationalists who had put their own slants on Locke's theories. Therefore, it is possible that Blake became acquainted with the motif of woman and child at a time when this image had become divorced from its original significations: or, more specifically, at a time when this motif had assumed its own independence and had become a self-sufficient network of signification which, by simplifying the epistemological theories of Locke into a compact visual motif, focussed exclusively on the pedagogical relationship between a mother and her child. It is noteworthy,

3.4.2   The John Gesture: Baptism and Salvation

The child in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" is pictured with the index finger of his left hand pointing upwards. At a glance, there appears to be no other instances of this signifier in the *Songs of Innocence*. When the agglomerative aspects of this gesture are considered, however, some sequential connotations do emerge, through their invocation of the same figure, whose connotations unite the "The Little Black Boy" with "The Shepherd" [Fig. 18] and "Spring" [Fig. 16]. In order to understand the connotative function of the pointed finger, the symbolic role of gesture in illustration needs to be considered.

   According to Rudolf Wittkower in *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols* (1987), gestures can be "descriptive, symbolic, rhetorical," or "automatic" (148):

> Descriptive gestures, like pointing, elucidate a story or narrative and are therefore
> needed when painting or sculpture have to deal with a literary theme. Rhetorical

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however, that the *Songs of Innocence* was littered with references to the model of education which Locke had advanced in *Education*. For instance, in much the same way that Locke had produced an antagonism between home teaching and schooling, Blake's *Songs of Innocence* highlighted the benefits of a maternal instruction in "The Little Black Boy" while damning the catechistic techniques of schools in "The School Boy," arguing that

> To go to school in a summer morn
> O! it drives all joy away.
> . . .
> Ah! then at times I drooping sit
> And spend many an anxious hour
> Nor in my book can I take delight
> Nor sit in learnings bower. (31)

Moreover, both Blake and Locke celebrated the pedagogical potential of recreation. Throughout *Innocence*, Blake depicted children playing a variety of popular eighteenth-century sports which had appeared previously in pedagogical texts such as Newbery's *Pocket-Book* and William Lily's *A Short Introduction of Grammar* (1702). Children played rolling-hoop, shuttle-cock, cricket, and fruit-picking while "On the Echoing Green" (l. 10). A group of youths played thread the needle "on the hill" before "the sun is gone down" ("Nurse's Song" l. 2-5). The teenagers who were seated at the "table with cherries and nuts" were pictured drinking, singing, and being "merry" ("Laughing Song" l. 10-11), connoting an illustration which Blake had engraved for a drinking song in Joseph Ritson's *A Select Collection of English Songs* (1783). Considered sequentially, it appears that these recreational activities had taken place before or following the scenes of instruction which had occurred in "Spring," "The Little Black Boy," and in the frontispiece of the *Songs of Innocence*, emphasizing how recreation could facilitate—or even be perceived as a type of—instruction. Locke, like Blake, had included recreation in his programme of studies:

> He that is wearied either with study or dancing does not desire presently to go to sleep, but to
> do something else which may divert and delight him . . . it may relax and refresh the part that
> has been exercised and is tired. . . . An hour in a day, constantly employed in such a way of
> diversion, will carry a man in a short time a great deal farther than he can imagine. (298)

The similarities between the *Songs of Innocence* and *Education* indicate that Blake endorsed Locke's pedagogical principles. However, because—as noted above—Locke's ideas had penetrated every aspect of eighteenth-century culture by the mid eighteenth century, filtering through a large number of essays, novels, and poems, it seems unlikely that Locke's *Education* had influenced Blake directly.

(and implicitly automatic) gestures reflect and illuminate emotional conditions. . . . Symbolic gestures . . . are, as a rule, confined to such attitudes as blessing. I call this a symbolic gesture because, in contrast to the rhetorical ones, we are faced with a code which must be known in order to be understood. (148-49)

The gesture performed by the child in "The Little Black Boy," therefore, "points" to a descriptive and symbolic meaning. The descriptive function of the pointed finger would have encouraged audiences to follow the vertical axis of the child's index finger upwards, directing their gaze towards the overhanging tree. It would have been assumed that the child's gesture was descriptive, elucidating the conversation which was taking place between the woman and the youth: perhaps the woman was teaching the child about nature or wildlife, much in the same manner as Lady Ellenor Fenn had used an illustration of Mamma pointing at a bird in a tree in order to teach readers about the birth and growth of animals.

A number of eighteenth-century texts suggested that pointing upwards might have assumed a symbolic function in some illustrations. No doubt, the gesture could have been decoded according to two interrelated vocabularies which assumed different levels of iconographical knowledge in the viewer. The first of these vocabularies indicated that the child's finger was pointed in the direction of Heaven—an interpretation which required little knowledge of symbolic gestures. After all, most contemporaneous conduct books had encouraged readers, "when thou spekyst of any hevenly or godly thyngs," to "loke up and pointe towards the skye with thy finger" (Mertz n.p.). The second of the iconographical vocabularies which could have been used to interpret the child's pointing finger was more specific: more often than not, the use of a gesture which pointed the index finger upwards was included in depictions of John the Baptist. The most famous example of this motif is Leonardo da Vinci's *St. John the Baptist* (c. 1513-16) [Fig. 24], though there is no reason to assume that da Vinci's oil painting was the source of Blake's use of this gesture or even that Blake was aware of da Vinci's work. Blake was, however, familiar with the John gesture. The frontispiece to "All Religions Are One" (c. 1788), for instance, captioned the image of a figure pointing from the recto to the verso of the work with the words of John the Baptist: "The Voice of one crying in the Wilderness." Moreover, the arrangement of the illustration echoed Raphael's painting of *St. John the Baptist in the Desert* (1520). Picturing the seated child with the John gesture opens up a number of sequential associations: the standing boy in "The Shepherd" mimics the iconographical arrangement of St. John in a number of seventeenth-century engravings; similarly, in the verso of "Spring," the seated child assumes the position of a young St. John in Simone Cantarini's "The Infant St. John the Baptist Seated with Cross and Lamb" (1630-48) [Fig. 25]. Moreover, the John gesture remained popular in eighteenth-century engravings, including an illustration in Sarah Trimmer's *A Set of Prints Taken from the New Testament* (1986) [Fig. 23].

It is likely that the agglomerative and sequential significations of the child's pointing finger would have helped eighteenth-century audiences to identify the subject of the lesson which was being taught to the child in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy." A basic acquaintance with religious iconographies would have encouraged readers to identify the child's gesture as an allusion to heaven. An advanced knowledge of iconographies might have resulted in the child being identified as or associated with St. John the Baptist, an identification which would have been supported by the sequential significations of neighbouring *Songs of Innocence*. These agglomerative and sequential intertexts might have helped readers to refine the contents of the mother's lesson further. Rather than simply discussing the concept of heaven, the mother and child were exploring the ideas which had been frequently associated with St. John: namely, baptism and salvation.[34]

3.5   Interfigurality

The visual motifs used by Blake in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" suggest that the seated mother is teaching the child about religion. The intertexts of each motif might have encouraged eighteenth-century readers to interpret the headpiece according to the same—if not the identical—terms of similar intertexts. However, according to Wolfgang G. Müller in "Interfigurality: A Study of the Interdependence of Literary Figures" (1991), identifying re-used figures as identical characters is problematic:

> Ontologically and aesthetically, it is . . . impossible to have entirely identical characters in literary works by different authors. For if we do not simplistically regard a fictional character as a mere sum of qualities (character traits), but, rather, understand it as a constituent of an artistic whole, related to a plot and

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[34] The illustration from the tailpiece of "The Little Black Boy" echoes the visual arrangement of the headpiece. However, in the tailpiece, the mother is replaced by a bearded man, and the little black boy, instead of sitting with the adult, is pushed to the left. The boy makes room for an additional child who, while leaning into the lap of the man, puts his hands together in prayer. The positions of the children in relation to one another evoke a number of contemporaneous paintings which pictured white owner and black servant: Joseph Wright's *Two Girls and Negro Servant* displayed an African child kneeling and offering flowers to some English girls; Peter Lely's *Charlotte Fitzroy* pictured an Indian Boy serving fruit to a young English child. David Dabydeen argues that "What emerges from such paintings is a sense of the loneliness and humiliation of blacks in white aristocratic company" (30). The arrangement of the children in the tailpiece of "The Little Black Boy" evokes a similar but not identical sense of loneliness for the African child: he yields to the white boy but does not seem to begrudge doing so.

part of a constellation of characters, we realize that is cannot reappear in its identical form in another author's work. (107)

The critical term used by Müller to describe this aspect of intertextuality is interfigurality. Müller defines interfigurality as any instance when a "figure is extricated from its original fictional context and inserted into a new fictional context" (107). Interfigurality differs to intertextuality because the former signals the re-use and absorption of an existing figure "into the formal and ideological structure" of a new "product." Within this product, the figure becomes more than a "mere duplicate" because it is "marked by a characteristic tension between similarity and dissimilarity" with its model "from the pre-text" (109). The causes of this tension "may range from parody and satire to a fundamental revaluation or re-exploration of the figure concerned" (107). Therefore, when studying the intertexts of a literary or visual motif, it is necessary to investigate the interfigural differences which discriminate the re-used figure from its original. These differences can be identified through a consideration of the ways in which the re-used figure's new contexts deviate from the original contexts of the pre-text.

Identifying the interfigural differences between the original pre-texts and the new contexts of the figures used in the headpiece of "The Little Black Boy" necessitates an exploration of the illumination's literary contents. The literary contents of "The Little Black Boy" contextualise the scene of instruction which is pictured in the headpiece. By comparing the visual contents of the headpiece with the historical contexts documented in the literary contents of the poem, the functions of the interfigural devices used in Blake's iconotext can be identified.

3.6   The Verbal Iconotext

The next stage of Wagner's approach to the iconotext focuses on the verbal contents of the print. Analysing the verbal discourse of an iconotext is similar to analysing its pictures: "we encounter a similar variety of allusions to co-texts, contexts, and subtexts" (Wagner 27). These allusions, when studied according to the methodologies of Barthes's intertextuality, prove each signifier "to be complex semantic nodes . . . verbal texts with several layers of meaning" (Wagner 30). The layers of meaning which make up the verbal contents of "The Little Black Boy" will be unpacked systematically, demonstrating the creative ways in which Blake subtly used intertextuality and interfigurality to introduce eighteenth-century readers to a series of ideas which promoted religious dissent.

3.6.1 "Little"

The first signifier of the verbal contents of "The Little Black Boy" is its title. The title of the poem allocates two adjectives to one noun, describing the "Boy" as both "Little" and "Black." Littleness plays a prominent role in the sequential narrative of the *Songs of Innocence*. In "The Lamb," a "little child" offers religious instruction to a "Little Lamb," and in "The Chimney Sweeper" "little Tom Dacre" has "his head . . . shav'd." Moreover, in *Songs* such as "The Echoing Green" and "Nurse's Song," "little ones" can be seen playing on the fields of *Innocence*. Thus, children in the *Songs of Innocence* were usually described as little or, more specifically, this adjective was used to describe the youth of a human, animal, or personified object. The agglomerative significations of littleness support this conclusion. During the second half of the eighteenth century, littleness was frequently used as an adjective in the titles of books whose protagonists were children: these works included *The Renowned History of Giles Gingerbread: A Little Boy Who Lived Upon Learning* (1766) and *The History of Little Jack* (1790). The agglomerative significations of littleness indicate that this adjective usually functioned as an intertextual paratext which invited children to identify their own littleness with the littleness of the works' protagonists. This identification encouraged children to understand that works which included the adjective "little" in their titles were probably crafted for them personally. Considered together, the sequential and agglomerative significations of "Little" suggested to eighteenth-century readers that "The Little Black Boy" would focus on and be catered towards children.

3.6.2 "Black"

Identifying the possible significations of the second adjective from the title of "The Little Black Boy" is complicated by modern preconceptions of the term black which associate colour with race. However, according to Roxann Wheeler in *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (2000), colours had a range of meanings for eighteenth-century readers:

> Colours, especially embodied in black and white skin tones, functioned on several registers during the eighteenth century: climate, humours, anatomy, Christianity, and neutral description were all available paradigms. The ancient Greeks and Romans believed that climate was responsible for the complexion of a nation's inhabitants. . . . Eighteenth-century Europeans maintained great faith in the strong effect of climate on the body. Their other traditional frame of reference for skin colour derived from Christian semiotics, which combined moral and aesthetic meanings, primarily in the binary pair pure white and sinful black. This powerful

colour construction referred to internal turmoil, actions, spiritual states, and external colouring. (2)

Therefore, the blackness of "The Little Black Boy" could have been interpreted in various ways by eighteenth-century audiences. The sequential and agglomerative significations of this adjective demonstrate the range of significations which contemporaneous readers might have associated with the colour black. Sequentially, "The Little Black Boy" is comparable to "The Chimney Sweeper" because both boys were characterised by their blackness. The latter of these boys, the sweeper, slept in "soot" and was covered in a film of blackness. Thus, the black of "The Little Black Boy" could simply refer to a dirt which had been indirectly imposed onto the child. However, because the parents of the chimney sweeper had sold him into slavery when he was very young—while his "tongue, / Could scarcely cry weep weep weep weep"—the blackness of the sweeper could also be metaphorical, representing his tarnished innocence. After all, the imposition of a black mark upon a white body had frequently been used as motif for a variety of curses, each of which—in one way or another—was representative of corruption. Arguably, the title of "The Little Black Boy" might have encouraged eighteenth-century readers to assume that the poem described the plights of a child who, like "The Chimney Sweeper," had lost his innocence as a result of his own misdeeds or as a result of the imposition of slavery.

In fact, the agglomerative significations of blackness are so various that, without the consideration of additional materials from the poem, it is not possible to pin down the possible readings that eighteenth-century readers might have associated with "Black": blackness could have been used to describe darkness, a skin colour, a dissenter, a victim, a criminal, or even a curse. Fortunately, the consideration of the signifiers from the first quatrain of "The Little Black Boy" can reveal the subtle ways in which this poem, rather than adhering to a single system of signification, worked to compound a number of contradictory readings of blackness.

3.6.3   Verso: Climate Theory and Christian Semiotics

> My mother bore me in the southern wild,
> And I am *black*, but O! my soul is white;
> White as an angel is the English child:
> But I am *black* as if bereav'd of light. (10)

Exploring the signifiers from the first stanza of "The Little Black Boy" reveals the subtle ways in which this poem incorporated alternative significations of blackness into an interlaced network of intertextual and interfigural utterances. This network worked to question the legitimacy of religious epistemologies by negotiating between the terminologies of climate theory and Christian semiotics. The tenuous relationships

between geography, skin colour, and salvation in "The Little Black Boy" can be demonstrated through the consideration of three groups of signifiers: the first of these groups, which is made up of the alternate rhymes of "southern wild" and "English child," exhibits the hierarchical conception of geography which characterised contemporaneous accounts of foreign lands; the next group focuses on the contrasting colours of the quatrain, both of which are described according to the terms of climate theory; and the final group, the components of which included religious expressions such as "soul" and "angel," revealed the underlying associations between skin colour and Christian symbolisms. In a series of intertextual case studies, the consideration of each of these groups of signifiers will demonstrate the ways in which eighteenth-century conceptions of race were shaped by religious texts.

The locations cited in "The Little Black Boy" are described according to their significations in eighteenth-century works of natural history. The speaker of the poem states that he was born in the "southern wild." This expression was rooted in the languages of contemporaneous climate theory. According to Wheeler,

> In the eighteenth century, proximity to Europe and to temperate climates generated a theoretical hierarchy—not a scale of horizontal differences—that placed Europeans, and a few groups from the Middle East and North Africa, at the top and Africans and Laplanders at the bottom. Because of the excessive heat that was believed to enervate the body, mind, and morals, commonplaces about the torrid zone being the home of dark-skinned people who were indolent, lascivious, and subject to tyranny often seemed confirmed when Englishmen confronted social and political life as well as labour arrangements that were alien to them. (23-24)

"Southern wild," then, describes the country at the bottom of this geographical hierarchy; in addition, this statement assumes that the temperaments of the country's inhabitants were "wild." If so, it is likely that the speaker in the "The Little Black Boy" was born in the "southern" country of Africa and that, at the time of writing, he understood that the inhabitants of his country were typically described as "wild." *The Compleat Geographer* (1723) sketched the behaviours of Africans according to this stereotype:

> Those people in general are the most unpolish'd of the three ancient Parts of the World. Along the Coasts of the Mediterranean, where the Arabs formerly extended their Conquests, they are most civiliz'd; that Nation, renown'd in those Days, having still retain'd something of their former Government, and more human Way of Living. The inner Regions, less known to us, as scarce ever frequented by other Nations, continue in greater Ignorance, and entire Deprivation of all politeness; and the most Southern are altogether brutal and savage. (137)

The little black boy's understanding of the geographical hierarchy of the globe suggests that he was in close contact with the individuals who lived in temperate, rational regions: no doubt, the way in which Blake contrasted "southern wild" with "English child" through the use of an alternate rhyme suggested that the speaker had recently emigrated from Africa to England and was currently adjusting to the ways in which Englishmen perceived those who had alternative complexions.

The reasons why the child was relocated from Africa to England are not stated in the poem. However, according to Peter Ackroyd,

> Africans arrived as the slaves of plantation owners, or as sailors free and unfree, or as 'presents' for affluent Londoners. . . . Black servants also became popular, and fashionable, in the households of the nobility. So the population grew and, by the mid-seventeenth century, blacks had become unremarkable if still unfamiliar members of the urban community. Most of them were still indentured or enslaved. (711-12)

Thus, it is likely that the child was—in one form or another—a slave. The slave narratives of the eighteenth century document the various ways in which African children were coaxed, kidnapped, or bought into slavery by Englishmen. For example, James Albert, whose original name was Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, was bought by an iron merchant who promised that, after Albert had seen "*houses with wings*" and "*white folks*" (11) on the Gold Coast, he would be returned to his parents. However, Albert was soon sold to a Dutch captain as a slave and was shipped to England. Similarly, Olaudah Equiano was kidnapped from his home in Nigeria by "two men and a woman" (48) and was sold to slaveholders. The child from "The Little Black Boy" does not reveal the details of his emigration to England. Moreover, the child does not state his current status: he could be a slave, a beggar, or—though unlikely—free.

The remaining signifiers from the first stanza can help us to identify the boy's position in English society. The child states that he is "*black* as if bereav'd of light." This statement expresses the speaker's anxieties about his skin colour, the various significations of which resonated with the alternative and often contradictory conceptions of blackness which had been advanced in scientific treatises, natural histories, and religious sermons. The colour black was typically described as an absence of light. Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia* (1728) described black as "something opake and porous, that imbibes all the Light falling on it, reflects none, and therefore exhibits no Colour" (105). Natural histories extended this concept to include black as a skin colour. John Mitchell's "An Essay upon the Causes of the Different Colours of People in Different Climates" (1744) argued that "the Power of the Sun in hot Countries is the principal, if not the only, Agent in producing" the "Colours of Negroes" (132). The "scorching Heat of the Sun in a perpetual Summer" (133) caused a thickening of the epidermis which made the skin a "darker colour" (135), meaning that it could "refract and absorb Light

more strongly" (134). An increase in absorption helped the skin to "defend the Body" (133). Yet, in spite of the high absorption rates of black skin, the little black boy believed that he was "black as if bereav'd of light." His understanding of blackness ran contrary to the scientific analyses of skin colour which were readily available in contemporaneous texts: rather than absorbing light, the boy believed that his skin colour was void of light.

The reason for this absence of light, according to the little black boy, was bereavement. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "bereave" as "to deprive, rob, strip, dispossess," "to rob, plunder, despoil (a possessor); to deprive of anything valued; to leave destitute, orphaned, or widowed," and "to snatch away (a possession); to remove or take away by violence." Clearly, the "Little Black Boy" believed that his "light" had been stolen. This light was of value to the boy and its absence renders him destitute. The identity of the thief who robbed the boy's "light" is not stated in the poem explicitly. However, by considering the languages used by the boy to describe his situation, the thief's identify can be ascertained.

The little black boy used the languages of Christianity to declare that his "soul is white." This declaration reveals that the child had acquired some religious instruction, further emphasising his position as a slave to white men. During the seventeenth century, some Christians believed that the blackness of Africans had been caused by their heathenism: "The Inhabitants here . . . know no God. . . . Howbeit, the divell (who will not want his ceremony) has infused demonomy and prodigious idolatry into their hearts, enough to rellish the divells pallat and agrandize their own tortures, when hee gets power to fry their soules, as the raging Sunne has scorcht their bodies" (8). However, following the discovery that all humans—irrespective of skin colour—were anatomically identical, the Christian tradition had encouraged Englishmen to convert Africans to Christianity.[35] For that reason, the little black boy was familiar with the functions of the "soul" and was aware of its supposedly "white" appearance, the colouring of which indicates that the boy considered himself to be a Christian.

During the eighteenth century, it was not unusual for Africans, though "Black as Coal," to "account themselves White Men" because of "Custom, (being Christians)" (Stibbs 182). However, while the child did consider his soul to be white as a result of his Christian beliefs, the colour of the child's skin and—perhaps more importantly—his position as a slave complicated the extent to which white men were willing to consider the boy as a Christian. No doubt, the slavery of the boy had marked him as black in the same way that a dissenter or criminal might be described as black by a Protestant:

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[35] For instance, Mitchell concluded that "From what has been said about the Cause of the Colour of black and white People, we may justly conclude, that they might very naturally be both descended from one and the same parents, as we are otherwise better assured from Scripture, they are" (145).

Richard Steele, writing in number 262 of *The Spectator* (1711), described a degenerate individual as a "black Man" (193), referring exclusively to habits rather than to complexion. Thus, while complexion did play a role in the prejudices of Englishmen, it is likely that alternative variables such as social position or religious affiliation played a larger role in Protestant prejudices than has been assumed previously. The boy's position as a slave marked him as black irrespective of his skin colour or of his religion. According to Winthrop D. Jordan in *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (1968),

> The obligation of English Christians to convert Indians and Negroes was as obvious and undeniable in the eighteenth century as it has been two hundred years earlier. Yet many . . . proved reluctant or downright unwilling to meet this obligation. Inescapably, however, since conversion was the necessary outward manifestation of the assumption of inner sameness in all men, any opposition to conversion—even when grounded on "necessity"—represented direct denial of inner similarity between the master and his lowly slave. . . . The first hurdle in the path of conversion was the vague but persistent notion that no Christian might lawfully hold another Christian as a slave. (180)

Converting black slaves to Christianity implied an equality between master and servant which, in the view of white men, could have yielded dangerous consequences. Samuel Davies, in *The Duty of Christians to Propagate Their Religion Among Heathens, Earnestly Recommended to the Masters of Negore Slaves in Virginia: A Sermon Preached in Hanover, January 8, 1757* (1758), expressed his concern that "Christianising the negroes makes them proud and saucy, and tempts them to imagine themselves upon an Equality with white People" (qtd. in Jordan: 183). Yet, the fundamental tenets of Christianity forced Englishmen to educate their African slaves. Thus, if the first stanza of the poem makes it clear that the little black boy had received the rudiments of a religious instruction, it is also clear that this instruction was balanced in the favour of white men because the boy laments over his black skin. Some bishops supported the Christianisation of African slaves through baptism. David Dabydeen, in *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth-Century English Art* (1785), notes that "those who were most vociferous about the need to baptise and Christianise blacks were among the same people who gave respect and moral authority to slave trade" (119). They did so by using "the Bible to give authority" (119) to the enslavement of Africans, teaching slaves that their imprisonment was the will of God. Accordingly, Bishop Berkeley declared: "Slaves would only become better Slaves by being Christians" (qtd. in Dabydeen: 120).

Thus, it is likely that the little black boy did receive a Christian education. This education, however, was probably balanced in favour of his white masters, encouraging the boy to understand that, from his position as a slave, he was by no means equal to the "white . . . English child." Instead, the speaker of the poem was both physically and

metaphorically marked as a "Little Black Boy," and it is for that reason he believes that he is "*black* as if bereav'd of light"—that is, the divine light of God did not shine on his body in the same way that it shone on the English child. "The Little Black Boy" believed that this inequality was manmade: his "light" had been stolen from him and the thief was his white Christian teacher.

3.6.4   Recto: Slavery and the Afterlife

The verso of "The Little Black Boy" is organised into two sections: the first of these sections documents the mother's understanding of the afterlife and the second section demonstrates the child's inheritance of these ideas. In both cases, the inaccuracies of the mother's education—which had promoted white supremacy and black inferiority—tainted the speakers' visions of the afterlife, encouraging them to anticipate the continuation of their servitude to white masters while in heaven. Some scholars have argued that Blake's depiction of heaven in the concluding section of "The Little Black Boy" was representative of his own ideas about white supremacy. However, the remaining signifiers from the verso of this poem advance an alternative view which—irrespective of the views expressed by the satiric personas of mother and child—supported the inherent equality of all complexions. The juxtaposition of these ideas within the same narrative highlighted the unhealthy consequences of a crooked religious education to contemporaneous readers, demonstrating the unfair mental torment that might have been enforced on individuals who were considered as other in eighteenth-century society.

When the little black boy and the English child are "from black and . . . white cloud free," they will "joy" "round the tent of God like lambs." It is within this afterlife that the little black boy intends to "shade" the English child "from the heat till he can bear, / To lean in joy upon our fathers knee" (10). Regardless of the bodies of the children being discarded at death, the African boy still believes that he will serve the English child while in heaven. The inequalities imposed by skin colour on Earth persevere in the afterlife in spite of the absence of corporeal complexions—the white Christian souls of both children do not result in equality. It is likely that the little black boy believed that he would always be lesser than an English child because his mother had taught him that this was the case: her white masters, who taught her the tenets of Christianity, probably echoed the views of one of Reverend Francis le Jau's patrons, who had exclaimed: "Is it possible that any of my slaves could go to Heaven and must I see them there?" (qtd. in Jordan: 183). The patron's disgust at the thought of sharing an afterlife with her slaves suggests that some slaves might have been taught that, even in heaven, they would not coexist with their masters—at best, they would continue to serve. The little black boy's

attempt to shade the English child from the heat of the sun, therefore, is representative of the continuation of his servitude.

3.7   Combining the Visual and the Verbal: the Iconotext

When the visual and verbal signifiers in "The Little Black Boy" are considered collectively, it becomes clear that the verbal contents of the poem work to create a historical framework within which the visual contents of the print should be understood. This framework divorces the interfigural image of mother and child from its original signification in a way that renders the motif as both familiar and dissimilar: the significations evoked by the intertexts of the re-used motif remain intact—thus, the significations of a guided instruction which is focussed on salvation is still in place—but these significations are adapted to a foreign context. This context substituted the races and social positions of the mother and child to that of African slaves while retaining the positive qualities associated with guided instruction. Therefore, Blake's adaptation of Newbery's popular motif in the iconotexts of "The Little Black Boy" worked to encourage the revaluation of guided religious instructions in an interracial society.

Chapter 4 Paratexts, Intertexts, and Iconotexts: the Textual Condition of *Jerusalem: the Emanation of the Giant Albion*

This chapter will explore the ways in which Blake's final illuminated work, *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (c. 1804-21), integrated and advanced the instructional techniques of his previous illuminated books into a definitive educational text. *Jerusalem* compounded and reworked the aims, methods, and motifs of Blake's previous illuminated books into a collection of 100 illuminated impressions—that is, 100 copper-engraved colour plates using Blake's particular technologies. These plates were organised into five sections, including an introductory preface and four prophetic treatises. The chapter will argue that Blake fashioned each of these sections with a specific audience in mind. It will do so by adopting a comprehensive methodological framework which integrates the methodologies which were used to study Blake's previous works in chapters one, two, and three of the present study. By relating the paratexts, intertexts, and iconotexts of each section of *Jerusalem* to the traditional iconographies of specific social and religous groups, the chapter will demonstrate how Blake's pedagogical tactics were made possible by the textual conditions of his works. Further, by exploring the original and delayed paratexts which were included in the preface of *Jerusalem*, the chapter will highlight Blake's changing choice's of public.

4.1 The Composition of *Jerusalem*

Following the production of the black, green, and yellow issues of the *Songs of Innocence* in 1789, Blake entered an intense period of productivity which would not be broken until 1795. It was during this period that Blake produced several editions of the *Book of Thel* (1789), *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790), the *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*

(1793), *For the Children: The Gates of Paradise* (1793), *America: A Prophecy* (1793), the *Songs of Experience* (1794), *Europe: A Prophecy* (1794), *The First Book of Urizen* (1794), the *Song of Los* (1795), the *Book of Los* (1795), the *Book of Ahania* (1795), and the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* (1795). These works were printed on a variety of papers and were cut to a variety of sizes.[1] Moreover, the techniques used to print and colour these books were various, ranging from intaglio printing to relief etching and from water colouring to colour printing. Blake took a seven year hiatus from illuminated printing in 1795. During this period, Blake focussed mostly on commercial enterprises, moving to Felpham in 1800 and—following a brief resumption of illuminated printing in 1802—returning to London in 1803.[2] When Blake's hiatus from illuminated printing was finally broken, he produced approximately fifty illuminated books between c. 1802 and 1827. The majority of these books were new editions of old works. However, Blake did print some new works, including *Milton: a Poem in Two Books* (1804-10), *On Homer's Poetry* (1822), *On Virgil* (1822), and *The Ghost of Abel* (1822). The grandest and most ambitious of these new works was *Jerusalem*.[3]

The composition history of *Jerusalem* is shrouded in mystery. Its title-page is dated 1804. However, the watermarks of the papers used in *Jerusalem* indicate that the work was not printed until the earliest of 1818.[4] Joseph Viscomi, in *Blake and the Idea of the Book* (1993), argued that "for a book of only one hundred pages to take fourteen (actually

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[1] For more details on the papers used in these works, see chapter one.

[2] Blake's commercial projects during this period focussed mostly on a series of 537 engravings for an edition of Edward Young's *The Complaint: or, Night-Thoughts on Life, Death, & Immortality* (1797) and to a number of William Hayley's projects, including *Designs to a Series of Ballads* (1802), *Life of William Cowper* (1802-04), and *Triumphs of Temper* (1803).

[3] The ambitous nature of *Jerusalem* has been acknowledged frequently. Jean H. Hagstrum argued that the "relation between text and design" in the iconotexts of *Jerusalem* were "as close as any Blake ever achieved—as when a verbal metaphor is translated into boldly original lines and rich colours" (113).

[4] The watermarks in copy B of *Jerusalem* read: "J WHATMAN | 1818." Subsequent copies of *Jerusalem* (copies A, C-F) were printed on a variety of papers, the watermarks of which included "J WHATMAN | 1818," "J WHATMAN | 1819," "J WHATMAN | 1820," "J WHATMAN | 1824," and "J WHATMAN | 1826." It is important to note that the watermarks of the papers used in a work do not necessarily coincide with the year of the work's production: according to Viscomi, "*Milton* copies A-C and the ca. 1818 Ruse & Turners copies of illuminated books were printed around three years after the date of their dated paper. . . . The assumption, in other words, that books were printed the year of their paper's watermark—the assumption underlying the dating of *Jerusalem*—is unfounded" (*Book* 346). Viscomi concludes that "copies A, C, and D were the first copies of *Jerusalem* printed" (*Book* 354), probably in 1820, and these early copies were followed by copies B and E in 1821 and copy F in 1827:

> *Jerusalem* was . . . first printed in three copies in black ink, with two copies (A and C) numbered alike and the third (D) reordered (without erasures) and given frame lines. The fourth copy (E) was printed one or two years later in orange ink and was ordered like copy D because it, too, followed the plate numbers. It too was given frame lines but was also richly coloured. . . . *Jerusalem* had a fifth copy (F) printed in 1827, which initially followed Blake's second order, the order of the plate numbers and of copy E, the copy on hand. (*Book* 360)

Copy F of *Jerusalem* was the last work that Blake printed before his death on 12 August 1827.

sixteen) years to complete would mean that Blake was not consistently or continually occupied with it at all. . . . Not only was *Jerusalem* not laboured on year in and year out, but it may also have sat for years without being worked on" (339). In the very least, Blake had completed over half of *Jerusalem* by 1807 because, in the summer of 1807, George Cumberland visited Blake and noted that "Blake has eng.[d] 60 Plates of a new Prophecy!" This prophecy must have been *Jerusalem* because, as G. E. Bentley notes, the "only poem by Blake with more than '60 Plates' is *Jerusalem*" (*Records* 246n). Moreover, Crabb Robinson, in his diary entry dated 24 July 1811, stated that Blake "showed S. [Robert Southey] a perfectly mad poem called Jerusalem" (qtd. in Bentley *Records*: 310). Thus, in the view of Viscomi, "if Cumberland's comment can be trusted, then as much as 60 percent of the work had been completed within three years, and 40 percent occurred over eleven or more years, written and rewritten no doubt as inspiration struck" (*Book* 339).

Blake began the composition of *Jerusalem* in 1804 and worked on the poem in a number of sessions until the first printing of the book in 1820. During this period, Blake's ideas about the contents, functions, and readership of *Jerusalem* changed considerably. After all, the long duration of the ambitious project—sixteen years—meant that the composition of the text took place alongside a number of events which might have changed Blake's attitudes towards both *Jerusalem* and his audience. Exploring the peritexts of *Jerusalem* will reveal the original and delayed functions of the work, highlighting Blake's originally inclusive and subsequently exclusive attitudes towards his readership.

4.2   Peritexts: the Frontispieces and Preface of *Jerusalem*

The importance of investigating the formats of Blake's works was demonstrated in the second chapter of the current study. Exploring the size of Blake's first illuminated book, "There is no Natural Religion," revealed the engraver's participation in the chapbook tradition. However, according to Genette, the format of a work constitutes just one aspect of its peritext. In addition to the material characteristics of the work, the peritext is also composed of a number of localised items of information that exist within the physical boundaries of the printed book but are positioned outside of the main body of the written text. Genette identifies a variety of verbal and iconographic items of information that can be categorised as elements of the peritext. These items include staple publication features such as "the cover, the title page, and their appendages," each of which present the work of an author "to the public at large and then to the reader" (Genette 23). The peritexts shape the numerous ways in which audiences of

various types can receive and interpret the main body of the text. These readers can include the author's envisioned reader, the actual reader, and the "people who do not necessarily read the book . . . but who participate in its dissemination" (Genette 74-75). An analysis of the specific ways in which an author constructs the peritext can help critics to identify the intended influence of the peritext on the envisioned reader's reception of the text. It is in this authorial attempt to control the reader's reception of the text—regardless of whether this attempt is successful—that the literary goals of the author can be uncovered.

The peritexts of *Jerusalem* included a series of frontispieces and a preface. In addition to the preface, *Jerusalem* was divided into four sections: "To the Public," "To the Jews," "To the Deists," and "To the Christians." Each section of the work was introduced by a full-page design which, in David Bindman's view, served "to introduce the substance of the text which follows" (*Artist* 178). For that reason, each of Blake's full-page designs should be studied as frontispieces. The present study will focus on two of the frontispieces included in *Jerusalem*, each of which will be considered chronologically in order to reconstruct the way in which Blake intended his envisioned readers to receive the verbal and visual iconographies of these pages. Investigating the paratextual devices employed in the frontispieces of *Jerusalem* will reveal the creative ways in which Blake intended to manipulate his readers' understandings of the text. Further, by exploring the original and delayed peritexts in the preface of *Jerusalem*, the chapter will uncover the changing—and perhaps surprising—identities of Blake's ideal readers.

4.2.1   The Night Watchmen and the Tree of Life: Reading the Iconographies of Blake's Frontispieces

Genette's consideration of the paratextual functions of frontispieces is slim. He notes that the frontispiece usually takes "refuge on the left-hand page facing the title page" but has disappeared "almost completely in modern times" (33). However, Genette does admit that a prefatory illustration "can—or rather *cannot not*—serve as a paratext" (25). Genette's slim commentary on the paratextual functions of the frontispiece will be extended through a consideration of the frontispiece's appropriate historical contexts: Robert Essick has warned Blake scholars that "the context in which" Blake produced his works "may not be the same as the one in which we now perceive them" ("Materials" 859). The present study will heed to Essick's warning by situating Blake within his full working life as a designer, engraver, and artisan, acknowledging Genette's reminder that, "in principle, every context serves as a paratext" (8). Therefore, before an interpretation of the frontispieces of *Jerusalem* can be constructed, it is necessary to extend the compass of Genette's *Paratexts* through a consideration of the working practices and reading habits of eighteenth-century artists and their audiences.

Eighteenth-century artists communicated their ideas through what Vincent Carretta has called "a shared iconographic vocabulary" (xiii). This intertextual vocabulary was composed of a large number of verbal and visual signifiers which had established significations in contemporaneous print culture. These significations had been standardised by Cesare Ripa in *Iconologia: or Moral Emblems* (1593) when he documented what Pierce Tempest's English translation of the text (1709) described as the "images" that the "Ancients" had used as "Representatives of our Notions" (n.p):

> For Example, by the Image of Saturn they represented Time, which devours its own Children; that is to say, Days, Months, and Years. By Thundering Jove, they signified that Part of the Heavens where the greatest part of the Meteors are form'd. By Venus they express'd the Union of the Materia Prima, with the Form; from whence springs the Beauty and Perfection of all created Beings, &c. (n.p.)

Ripa systematised these images and their significations into what could be described as an emblematic dictionary.[5] According to its subtitle, *Iconologia* was "useful for *Orators*, *Poets*, *Painters*, *Sculptors*, and all Lovers of *Ingenuity*" (n.p.), each of whom could use Ripa's work to "help their invention" (n.p.). These individuals could do so by integrating the annotated illustrations of *Iconologia* into their art, facilitating the clear expression of their subject through the adoption of a set of signifiers which were recognisable to contemporaneous audiences. The popularity of this method of composition with eighteenth-century artists prompted a large number of publishers to produce a variety of works which functioned in the same way as Ripa's *Iconologia*: for instance, Joseph's Spence's illustrated folio of ancient art, *Polymetis* (1747), presented readers with "descriptions and representations" (v) of Roman deities; similarly, in John Huddlestone's edition of *Riley's Emblems, Natural, Historical, and Divine* (1779), readers observed "the Emblematical Hieroglyphic Devices of the Hebrews, Egyptians, and other Ancients," each of which was offered to the public "under a modern habit" (x). These collections of iconographies altered not only the ways in which artists designed their works but also effected the ways in which these artists envisioned the reading habits of their audiences: that is, artists expected readers to be familiar with the particular

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[5] George Richardson's edition of *Iconology* (1779) described Ripa's work in exactly these terms, writing:

> The artists, whose genius leads them to the allegorical species of painting, would require a repertory, or work, in which all the sensible figures and symbols, under which, in different ages, abstract ideas and qualities have been poetically represented, were carefully collected. The materials of such a collection must be derived from a variety of sources, from Mythology, Poetry, the occult Philosophy, Gems, Medals, and other monuments of antiquity. A collection of this nature, might be divided into various classes, and the artist might draw from this magazine, representations and symbols, which by an ingenious modification, he might happily apply to the subject he should have occasion to treat. (n.p.)

iconographies which had been integrated into their art, the knowledge of which would enable the reader to interpret the work of the artist accurately.[6]

Blake, like most of his contemporaries, adopted the dominant views of iconography. Anthony Blunt has demonstrated Blake's and his contemporaries' indebtedness to a variety of iconographic traditions, arguing that "the essential point is that there were certain motives and certain images which were, one might almost say, the common property of the whole group to which Blake, Fuseli, Flaxman, Romney, and Stothard belonged" (41). This "common property" was rooted into contemporaneous iconographies and became an important part of eighteenth-century print culture. Blake's adoption of this method of composition and his expectation of recognition from the reader will be demonstrated through a paratextual and intertextual analysis of two of the frontispieces from *Jerusalem*: specifically, the frontispiece which introduced the first section of the work, "To the Public," and the frontispiece which introduced the final section of the work, "To the Christians."

The engraving which introduced *Jerusalem* displayed the image of a man entering an arched doorway [Fig. 26]. He held a ball of light in his right hand, the rays of which illuminated the frame of the gothic doorway but not the contents within. The individual wore a broad-brimmed hat and a great coat which was worn to knee length.[7] Morton D.

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[6] Demonstrations of this expectation can be seen clearly in innovative hieroglyphic works such as "Delights For Young Men and Maids" (1754?) and *A New Hieroglyphical Bible* (1794), each of which experimented with the established significations of text and image by placing these forms side-by-side. The result of this arrangement was a page of information which was composed of a linear sequence of verbal and visual signifiers. If the reader was familiar with the relevant iconographies—as the artist assumed he would be—the contents of the sentence could be deciphered easily. The influence of hieroglyphic letters on Blake's method of composition is best seen in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

[7] The frontispiece could also be identified as an iconotext. Above the doorway, Blake engraved the following text:

> There is a Void, outside of Existence, which if enterd into
> Englobes itself & becomes a Womb, such was Albions Couch
> A pleasant Shadow of Repose calld Albions lovely Land
> His Sublime & Pathos become Two Rocks fixd in the Earth
> His Reason his Spectrous Power, covers them above
> Jerusalem his Emanation is a Stone laying beneath
> O [Albion behold Pitying] behold the Vision of Albion.

On the left of the doorway, Blake wrote "Every Thing has its Vermin O Spectre of the Sleeping Dead!" in reversed writing. On the right, Blake resumed normal text, writing:

> Half Friendship is the bitterest Enmity said Los
> As he enterd the Door of Death for Albions sake Inspired
> The long sufferings of God are not for ever there is a Judgment.

These passages of text, however, were deleted by Blake. David V. Erdman, in his "Textual Notes" to *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake* (1988), states that "entire text" was deleted from the frontispiece "both by incised lines emphasizing the texture and mortar-lines of the stonework and by sold inking of the plate" (809).

Paley has argued that each of these elements would have encouraged eighteenth-century readers to identify the individual as a night watchman: "The dark coat, broad-brimmed hat and lantern identify" the man "as a London night watchman" (*Jerusalem* 130).[8] Charles Williams's *Burning Shame or Throwing a Light on the Practice of Pidgeon-Plucking* (1804) [Fig. 27] illustrated the standard uniform of the night watchman. There is no doubt that the clothing worn by the individual in the frontispiece of "To the Public" and the clothing worn by the night watchmen in Williams's *Burning Shame* were similar. Exploring the roles and reputations of night watchmen in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries might help us to understand why Blake decided to include the image of a night watchmen in the frontispiece to his final illuminated book.

Night watchmen were voluntary workers who policed the city of London after dawn. The functions of watchmen, according to James Barry Bird in *The Laws Respecting Parish Matters, Containing the Several Offices and Dutiesof Churchwardens, Overseers of the Poor, Constables, Watchmen, and Other Parish Officers* (1799), were

> to prevent the disturbance of his majesty's subjects by disorderly people in their repose, and to apprehend all rogues, vagabonds, and night-walkers, that they may be made to give account of themselves. . . . In the city of London in particular, . . . the watchmen of the city and liberties are directed to apprehend night-walkers and vagrants, persons going armed and disguised, and all others of suspicious appearance. (87)

It was also necessary for the watchmen—as pictured in the frontispiece to *Jerusalem*—to "keep watch at every gate in all cities" (85). The necessity and usefulness of night watchmen was stated clearly in the act for Martin-in-Fields, in which it was argued that "the keeping of a sufficient and well regulated Watch in the Night Time [was necessary] for the Preservation of the Persons and Properties of the Inhabitants . . . and very necessary to prevent as well the Mischiefs which may happen from Fires, Murders, Burglaries, Robberies, and other Outrages and Disorders" (qtd. in Reynolds: 24). Clearly, the documentation which stated the legal regulations of the period valued the profession of night watchmen. The value attributed to night watchmen was also demonstrated in some works of fiction. *The Midnight-Ramble: or, the Adventures of Two Noble Females, Being a True and Impartial Account of Their Late Excursion through the Streets of*

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[8] Jean G. Hagstrum, in *William Blake Poet and Painter: An Intoduction to the Illuminared Verse* (1964), described the night watchmen as "a very human figure, dressed humbly in contemporary dress and wearing the hat of the earthly pilgrim, showing fear on his simple, Cockney face" (118). Bindman identifies the figure as the character of Los or possibly even Blake himself: in *Blake as an Artist* (1977), Bindman argued that "the nightwatchman is obviously an archetype of the poet, and in a unique early proof of the plate he is specifically identified as Los himself. One of Los's many roles in *Jerusalem* is to keep watch over the furnaces of creation, and the idea of the prophet as watchman over his people can be found in the Old Testament prophets" (177-78).

London and Westminster (1754) [Fig. 29] offered a description of an exchange between a constable, some watchmen, and a gentleman accompanied by two ladies:

> On their meeting together, they found it was the Constable of the Night and his Watchmen going their Rounds. He immediately stopped them, and enquired very loudly who they were, what they did out so late (it being now past Three o'Clock) and where they were going. . . .The Constable; who taking them to be three of the bettermost sort of *Steet-Walkers*, . . . was willing to make a *Penny* of them: And, therefore, directly told them, that if they could give no better Account of themselves, he and his Men must see them safe to the Round-house 'till Morning, when he should have them before a Magistrate, who might discharge them if he pleased; but, for his Part, he did not think proper to do so, as it was his Duty to keep the Streets clear of People, that had no real Business in them. (20)

The depictions of night watchmen in both eighteenth-century legal documents and in some contemporary works of fiction were frequently positive, highlighting the effectiveness of these individuals in helping the city to remain both peaceful and safe. Exploring the designs of night watchmen in eighteenth- and ninteenth-century engravings, however, offers an alternative view of these individuals which captures the reception of watchmen more effectively.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, night watchmen were considered to be somewhat ineffective: the volunteers were not trained and, irrespective of their lack of pay, the watchmen were expected to supply their own materials for work. Elaine A. Reynolds, in *Before the Bobbies: The Night Watch and Police Reform in Metropolitan London, 1720-1830* (1998), writes:

> The residents of the parishes of St George and St James found the quantity and quality of watchmen and beadles deficient and the Burgesses unresponsive to complaints. Mr John Garland, of Bond Street, who had been robbed of lead three times in the past four to five years, said 'he generally finds the Watchman drunk, and wandering about with lewd Women. . .' Mr Lambert, the JP, related 'That he has frequently spoke to Beadles, and desired them to remove Beggars; but to no Purpose.' He also wrote to one of the Burgesses about this problem, but received no answer. (18)

Several eighteenth-century engravings document the failings of night watchmen. These engravings usually criticised the drinking habits of night watchmen while poking fun at their elderly dispositions and consequent frailty. George Morland's *The Midnight Magistrate* (1779) [Fig. 28] highlighted the hypocrisy of night watchmen: the constable sits "mid his Myrmidon Band, / With his powerful Peace-keeping Staff in his Hand,"

when "some of his Cruisers" bring in an "Amarous Couple surpriz's Catterwaling."[9] The ape-headed gentleman "loudly Complains" of how the youth "broke" his "Lanthorn . . . and half beat out his Brains." The constable convicts the youth with only a mild punishment, stating:

> And to shew I'm a Magistrate fare from severe,
> Give the Man half a Crown for a Lanthorn & Plaister,
> And somewhat for Drinking & then good Night Master.
> Thus one Cull aquited Confederate Whores
> Is Dispatch'd with a Charge to Decoy in somemore.

The laziness and subsequent leniency of night watchmen was a popular theme in eighteenth-century prints. *The Night Constable* (1785) [Fig. 31] illustrated the same idea which had been presented in *The Midnight Magistrate*, with a foolish watchman attempting to convict a "wicked dog" of breaking his lanthorn. The elderly constable, frustrated by the stupidity of his watchman, responds: "begone you prating Elf." Similarly, in George Bickham's popular ballad, *The Riot occasion'd by the Burning of the Meeting Houses* (1737-38) [Fig. 32], a group of watchmen surround a drunken man on the street, questioning from "whence he came." The watchmen do so instead of attending to the riot which, during the interrogation, was taking place at Daniel Burgess's meeting-house. A lottery sheet published by Bowles and Carver in c. 1793 [Fig. 30] took the incompetent nature of night watchmen to new levels, portraying the image of a night watchmen being beaten by a gang of youths. It was for these reasons that the role and effectiveness of the night watchmen was soon explored, after which regulations were enforced and the occupation was taken more seriously. Unfortunately, however, the iconographical intertexts associated with night watchmen had already been integrated into popular print culture.

Blake's use of a recognisable public figure in the frontispiece of *Jerusalem*, the night watchmen, made the contents of the print comprehensible "To the Public." The reader's knowledge of life in London would have encouraged them to interpret the figure in this frontispiece according to the same criteria which had been typically associated with night watchmen, doing so in the same way that a knowledge of iconography would have aided their interpretation of emblems. Blake's presentation of the night watchman, however, did not correspond to those prints which had depicted watchmen negatively. Instead, Blake's watchman remains neutral, inviting "the Public" to read his text in order to discover the true disposition of the pictured individual.

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[9] Morland's design was appeared in a number of engravings throughout the eighteenth century. Engravers who implemented the design included William Tringham (1754), William Dickinson (1772), and Elisha Kirkall (1779).

The frontispiece which introduced the final chapter of *Jerusalem*, "To the Christians," presented the image of Christ being crucified on a large tree [Fig. 33]. Light emanates from the forehead of Christ, casting shadow over the tree and its fruits.[10] An additional figure stands in front of the tree. He mimics the posture of Christ, stretching his arms outwards. Identifying the possible names of the tree pictured in the design are complicated. Essick, in "*Jerusalem* and Blake's Final Works" (2003), writes: "One motif compicates the picture. Which of several trees named in *Jerusalem* are we to associate with the one pictured? It may be the 'Tree of Life' . . . but could it be the 'Tree of Good & Evil'?" (263). The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil grew in the Garden of Eden: "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and three of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:9). It was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil which bore the fruits that Adam and Eve ate, allowing them to understand "good and evil. . . And the eyes of them both were opened" (Genesis 3:5-7). God then banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, "lest he put forth his hand, and take also the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Genesis 3:22).

Interpretations of plate 76 typically identify the pictured tree as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the bark of which—as a result of Adam's and Eve's transgeression—had become what S. Foster Damon described as a "huge dead trunk" (*Symbols* 473). Bindman, in *Blake as an Artist* (1977), also identified the tree in plate 76 as the "Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, for through Christ's sacrifice Albion is able to achieve Redemption" (179).[11] Bindman later retracted this claim. In "William Blake and Popular Religious Imagery" (1986), Bindman wrote: "It has been assumed up to now by all Blake scholars including myself, that the tree upon which Christ is suspended is

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[10] Regarding the composition of plate 76 of *Jerusalem*, Paley writes: "Particularly striking are the designs in white line, a technique in which the plate is prepared so that etched or engraved lines appear white against a dark or coloured background. It is particularly appropriate for effects of light shining out of darkness, as in the magnificent . . . plate 76" (*Jerusalem* 14).

[11] The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil appeared in several guises in Blake's mythology. Blunt, in *The Art of William Blake* (1959), argued that the tree pictured in plate 76 was a variation of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This variation described the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil as the Tree of Error:[11]

> The plate of the *Crucifixion* illustrates one of the culminating passages in the poem, the dialogue between Albion, or Man, and Christ on the Cross, in which Blake sums up his doctrine of self-sacrifice and forgiveness of sins. . . . In the design Christ hangs crucified on the Tree of Error, the evil fruits of which are almost concealed by the rays that stream from him. Below stands Albion, in a pose exactly echoing that of the crucified figure, a detail which is meant to emphasise Blake's doctrine of the identity of God and man and also the fact that, to obtain salvation, man must repeat in himself the sacrifice of self and love of others which are shown forth by Christ in the Crucifixion. (81)

Additional variations of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil include the "Tree of Moral Virtue" (Damon *Symbols* 473) and the "Tree of Mystery" (Damon *Dictionary* 410).

the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and that Albion is depicted still in a fallen state, worshipping not the redemptive Christ but merely His 'vegetated' body" (714-17). By relating the motifs used in plate 76 of *Jerusalem* to the iconographies used in eighteenth-century religious prints, Bindman identifies both the possible source of the design and the likely identity of the pictured tree:

> The print known as *The Tree of Life* first makes it appearance in a print catalogue of 1775 with its two companions, entitled *Hieroglyphicks of a Christian* and *Hieroglyphicks of the Natural Man*, and they were also published by Bowles and Carver. . . . Their worn state suggests that a great many were printed. *The Tree of Life* seems to have outlasted its companions and was issued by Catnach in woodcut; copies of this version were current until almost the end of the nineteenth century. Each of the three prints has an allegorical tree, either the Tree of Life or the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, its hanging fruits labelled respectively with heavenly virtues and rewards, and with sins and false beliefs. (714)

The print published by Bowles and Carver [Fig. 34] bears a striking resemblance to Blake's design. For that reason, the tree pictured in *Jerusalem* is probably the Tree of Life. Exploring the visual and verbal contents of *The Tree of Life* might help us to understand the paratextual functions of Blake's print more accurately.

The caption from *The Tree of Life* reads: "*A View of the* New Jerusalem, *and this present* Evil World *with the Industry of* Gospel Ministers *in endeavouring to pluck* Sinners *from the Wrath to come*." This scenario is illustrated visually in the design, with ministers (identified as John Wesley and George Whitefield) guiding wandering individuals away from the "Broad Way" and the "Bottomless Pit." The individuals ask the ministers, "What shall I do to be saved?" The ministers, pointing towards the Tree of Life, respond: "Behold the Lamb" and "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ."The crowds are encouraged to believe in and follow the teachings of Christ, the tenets of which—everlasting love, perseverance, good will, eternal redemption, and peace—are personified in the fruits which grow from and hang upon the Tree of Life in the garden of the New Jerusalem. If the individuals listen to the ministers and emulate Christ, they can make their way towards the door of the New Jerusalem. At the door, they are greeted with a sign which reads: "Knock and it shall be open'd." Once inside, the individual meets Christ, crucified on the Tree of Life.

While it is true that "Blake's image does not, of course, contain any of the other details of the city of Jerusalem found in *The Tree of Life* print, . . . the contrast between the sunrise on the right of Christ and the radiance emerging from His head confirms the direct connection" (Bindman "Religious" 714). Moreover, when the episodes depicted in *The Tree of Life* are related to the frontispiece of "To the Christians," the scenario illustrated by Blake becomes clear: the individual who stands before Christ in Blake's design, Albion, has accepted the teachings of Christ. He mimics the gesture performed

by Christ and, in doing so, assumes the identity of an individual who, in *The Tree of Life*, had accepted the axioms which were growing on the pictured tree. Bindman concludes:

> Plate 76 essentially acts as the frontispiece to the final chapter of *Jerusalem*, which culminates in the final prophecy of Albion's redemption and his entry into Jerusalem or spiritual existence: by recognising the true meaning of Christ's sacrifice, as he appears to do in plate 76, Albion may be said to enter the domain of the Tree of Life which is the city of Jerusalem. ("Religious" 717)

In the frontispiece of "To the Christians," then, Blake used the religious iconographies of contemporaneously popular prints. The use of these iconographies would have been immediately recognisable to Christian readers. Using the intertexts associated with the Tree of Life and the New Jerusalem encouraged these readers to emulate the teachings of Christ which had been documented by Blake in *Jerusalem*.

Taken together, the frontispiece from "To the Public" and the frontispiece from "To the Christians" illustrate what Blake considered to be his role as both an engraver and an educator. Blake, possibly in the guise of Los, assumes the role of the night watchman, monitoring the individuals who attempt to pass through the gate or door which leads to the New Jerusalem. The way in which Blake relates his role as the night watchmen to that of Christ at the Last Judgement, dividing the sheep from the goats, may seem surprising. However, when the original and delayed prefaces to *Jerusalem* are explored, analysed, and contrasted, it becomes clear that Blake—unlike most contemporaneous night watchmen—was anything but lenient.

4.2.2   Original and Delayed Prefaces: Blake's Changing Choices of Public

The third plate of *Jerusalem* is titled "To the Public" [Fig. 35]. This section of the work, according to Genette, should be described as a preface: "I will use the word *preface* to designate every type of introductory (preludial or postludial) text, authorial or allographic, consisting of a discourse produced on the subject of the text that follows or precedes it" (161). The functions of the preface are many. Blake's preface to *Jerusalem* adhered to most of the conventions which characterised this type of introductory text in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature. For instance, Blake placed a "high value on the *subject*" of *Jerusalem* while acknowledging the "inadequacy of its *treatment*" (Genette 198). The high value of the subject was demonstrated by Blake when he compared his "energetic exertion" in *Jerusalem* to the avocations of the ancients, reminding the reader "that the Ancients acknowledge their love to their Deities, to the full as Enthusiastically as I have to Acknowledge mine for my Saviour and Lord" (145).

Moreover, the inadequacy of the poet's treatment of the subject was acknowledged by Blake when he wrote: "Reader, forgive what you do not approve, & love me for this energetic exertion of my talent" (145).[12] In each case, Blake assumes an intimacy with his audience, describing the reader as both a "lover of books!" and a "lover of heaven!" (145). The identity of the reader is not stated explicitly in the text. However, the title of Blake's preface to *Jerusalem*—"To the Public"—suggests that the intended audience of the work was all of humanity, the members of which were later divided by Blake into "the Jews," "the Deists," and "the Christians." After all, according to Blake, his "former Giants & Fairies" had "reciev'd the highest reward possible" from "the Public": namely, "love and friendship" (145).

Blake's vague, all-encompassing conception of his audience corresponds to Genette's ideas about the potential identities of a preface's addressees. The majority of these addressees "may be roughly defined as 'the public,' but this is much too loose a definition, for the public of a book extends potentially to all of humankind" (9).[13] To reach "all of humankind" was, no doubt, attractive to Blake. Regardless, Blake's intimate descriptions of his audience in the preface to *Jerusalem* were eventually deleted from the copper-plate.[14] Paley, in his introduction to the first volume of *The Illuminated Books* (1991), stated that, "at some point, Blake attacked the copper plate, gouging out words and entire passages that suggested intimacy with the reader" (11).[15] Thus, Blake's statements regarding the high-value of his work and, more importantly, his apologies to and complimentary descriptions of the reader were scratched away:

> From the second sentence the words 'love,' 'friendship' and 'blessed' were removed. . . . Even when the subtractions involved other subjects, they were made in contexts where reference to the reader was prominent. The no longer [Dear] Reader was not going to be asked to '[forgive] what you do not approve, & [love] me for this energetic exertion of my talent,' although the missing verbs reduced

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[12] Additionally, the usefulness of *Jerusalem* is highlighted when Blake states his intention: namely, to use his books to facilitate a harmonious union between "Heaven, Earth & Hell" (145). This "statement of intent," as Genette describes it, renders it "impossible after that to read the story without having the authorial interpretation hang over your reading, compelling you to take a position, positive or negative, in relation to it" (224).

[13] Genette argues that "determining the addressee of a preface" is quite "simple" because "it all boils down almost to this truism: the addressee of the preface is the reader of the text" (194).

[14] Erdman, in "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's *Jerusalem*" (1964), explained the method by which Blake deleted text from *Jerusalem*, writing: "His method of erasure was to run a sharp tool across the raised surfaces of the copper, the printing surfaces of his relief etching. A vigorous gouging could level these surfaces beyond recovery, as it did on Plate 84. But in many instances Blake did not carry his negating beyond a few strokes, leaving a stubble of metal that would print broken outlines of letters and ghosts of words when the plates were inked and pressed" (2).

[15] Viscomi notes that "the deletions of plate 3 . . . were all made before the first copies of *Jerusalem* were printed" (339). The deletions, in Viscomi's view, "almost certainly were made after Blake's failed exhibition and estrangement from Cromek, Stothard, and possibly even Butts. It appears to have been especially disturbing to Blake to have his works owned by people he no longer liked or trusted" (*Book* 339).

the statement to meaninglessness; now the reader was neither '[lover] of books!' nor '[lover] of heaven.' (Paley *Illuminated Books* 11)

Blake's decision to edit his preface forces scholars to study the third plate of *Jerusalem* as both an original peritext and a delayed peritext.[16] As noted above, the original peritext of Blake's preface seemed to adhere to the conventions of most eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prefaces: Blake demonstrated the high value and usefulness of the subject while acknowledging the inadequacy of its treatment, forging an intimate relationship with the reader which was based on "love and friendship" (145). Yet, in the delayed peritext, the traditional elements which suggested an intimacy between author and audience were deleted. These deletions complicated the identities of Blake's envisioned readers ever further. Exploring the visual components of the delayed peritext can, however, help us to identify the ideal readers of *Jerusalem*.

The way in which Blake presented his preface "To the Public"—namely, through illuminated printing—transformed the plate into an iconotext. In the original peritext, the iconotexts of the preface were limited to four unidentified winged females. However, in the delayed preface to *Jerusalem*, Blake added some words to the top of the print: the word "SHEEP" was engraved on the left and the word "GOATS" was engraved on the right. Studying the intertextual connotations of these words, in addition to their visual placement on the page, will reveal the connections between Blake's deletions and additions.

Agglomeratively, the additions to the preface of *Jerusalem* alluded to the division of the sheep and the goats at the Last Judgement: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 31-33). The way in which Christ separated humanity "one from another, as a shepherd divided his sheep from the goats," is described visually, with the sheep being set "on his right hand" and "the goats on the left." This image of contrariety was incorporated into the preface of *Jerusalem*. Hagstrum argued that Blake's use of

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[16] Robert Essick, in "William Blake, William Hamilton, and the Materials of Graphic Meaning" (1985), acknowledged the importance of studying the differences between each copy of an illuminated book, writing;: Some scholars deeply committed to the art of the illuminated books have moved beyond the study of text-design relationships in a single copy and begun to consider the differences among two or more copies of the same title. Such studies proceed on the eminently reasonable assumption that each copy of each book is a unique work of art. As Blake continued to print his relief etched works and colour them, from about 1788 to 1827, he is believed to have signalled different interpretations of those works through variations in design, inking, and colouring. Each volume is thus a performance of the fundamental text-design drama on the copper-plates, which are themselves subject to purposeful (and hence, one can assume, meaningful) alterations. (833)

these words of division point to one of the most successful artistic qualities of *Jerusalem*, its massing of powerful contrasts—antithetical visions grandiose in outline and at the same time dense with vivid details. On one side Blake indicts the present dispensation; on the other he recalls Eden, anticipates the new Jerusalem, and celebrates the presence of imaginative vision in the dark night of man's soul. The first side, which we recognise as Urizenic, Satanic, and Babylonian, is here called spectral, the spectre being the lower or rational or selfish side of one's nature—what in biblical terms would be called the old Adam or the flesh and what Blake sometimes calls Selfhood. In contrast to the spectral self is Blake's equivalent of the biblical 'spirit,' the emanation that arises from both man and men, the breath and finer spirit of our being and all of our nature, the dreams of the poetic imagination, the intellectual vision of a purified society. (114)

Tracing the history of contrariety in print culture can reveal Blake's motivations for visually dividing his preface into two contrary opposites.

The tradition of contrariety originated in Greek philosophy. Both Plato and Aristotle had advanced a system of ideas in which the cosmology of the universe was hinged on the harmonisation or warring of contrary entities. Plato's *Phaedo* (n.d.), for instance, presented an argument which supported the universal opposition of all things while Aristotle's *Categories* (n.d.) refined Plato's principles of opposition through its identification of the four classes of opposites. The metaphysics of the Christian religion was similarly founded on principles of dualism. Individuals such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas had advanced theories of contrariety which endorsed what Stuart Clark, in *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (1977), described as "the contrasting and correlative aspects of good and evil" (45), presenting accounts of morality which justified the existence of evil through a consideration of good.

Principles of contrariety quickly began to be integrated into the various areas of modern intellectual life. As Clark notes, "since contrariety was thought to characterize the logic of the Creator's own thinking, there was nothing to which it could not in principle be applied" (49). Thus, contrariety became the principle by which the natural world functioned, with natural philosophers such as Pierre de La Primaudye and Lambert Deneau making contrariety central to their hypotheses. Further, physicians such as Paracelsus and Robert Bostocke also adopted the language of contrariety in their inquiries, advancing theories which emphasised the necessity of harmony between opposing elements in the human body. The diversity of the possible applications of contrariety was captured effectively by Loys Le Roy who, in *Of the Interchangeable Course, or Variety of Things in the Whole World* (1576; trans. 1594), offered a list of contraries which sought to demonstrate the necessity of duality in the natural constitution of the universe:

> There are found in the bodie of the world, Earth, Water, Aire, Fire; Sunne, Moone, and other starres: There is matter, forme, privation, simplicitie, mixtion, substance, quantitie, qualitie, action, and passion. In mans bodie, bloud, flegme, choler, melancholie; flesh, bones, sinewes, vains, arteries, head, eies, nose, eares, hands, feete, braine, hart, liver, and splene. In the oeconomical bodie, husband, wife, children, Lord, slave, master, and servant. In the politike bodie, Justice, Fortitude, Prudence, Temperance, Religion, warfare, judgement, young and olde, weake and stronge, good and evil, labourers, artificers, merchants, retaylers, and cariers: which are all dislike parts, and the most of them contrarie, conjoyned together by due conveniency. (6)

Le Roy's exhaustive list went on to include the arts, music, grammar, science, ethics, the seasons, nationality, and a whole host of equally diverse subjects, each of which existed in a state of perfect equilibrium.

It is clear that, for the most part, early considerations of contrariety usually valued the equilibrium between opposing elements. Blake had adopted this view in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (c. 1790-93).[17] However, Blake's annotations to contemporaneous texts suggested that the engraver's views of contrariety were subject to change. As Blake's annotations to Johann Caspar Lavater's *Aphorisms on Man* (1788) made clear, "Man is bad or good" (600). There can be no middle ground: "man is either the ark of God or a phantom of the earth & of the water (596). Aphorisms which championed the absolute incompatibility of these moral poles were marked by Blake with phrases such as "True Experience" (599) and "would to God that every one would consider this" (590). Blake's notation concluded with the statement that every man must attempt to initiate what he referred to as a "regeneration" by "casting out the evil" (594) and embracing "his leading Virtue & his good Angel" (601). These annotations reveal that Blake did not value the equilibrium between opposing elements and was instead interested in the annihilation of vice in favour of virtue.

It is this perspective of contrariety which was integrated into the eighteenth-century works which used contrariety as a rhetorical tool. The essence of this tradition originated in the sixteenth century. It was during this period that a dominant shift in outlook took place which altered popular understandings of contrariety as the equilibrium between opposing forces. According to Clark, this shift was made possible by the religious rivalries of the century:

> The occasion for this way of talking was . . . the onset of fundamental confessional rivalry and the development of ever more intensive programmes of religious purification. Whatever the antecedents of the conflict may have been, the

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[17] In *The Marriage*, Blake argued that "Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence" (34).

emergence of Protestant churches, the Catholic reaction to this, and the working out of the subsequent hostilities, divided Europe on an unprecedented scale. . . . Thus writers tended more and more to take up extreme positions and defend them extravagantly; they became preoccupied with the poles of religious and moral debate. (62)

The adoption of these "extreme positions" by contemporaneous religious groups had encouraged Protestants and Catholics to describe one another in terms of a binary opposition. This opposition warranted little subtly in its categorisation: as François de la Noue pronounced, any individual who was of a religion "contrarie to ours" was a "wicked heretik" (qtd. in Clark: 62)—a view which was later repeated by Blake in his annotations to Lavater when he claimed that "I cannot love my enemy for my enemy is not man but beast & devil" (589). This perspective of absolute contrariety and the complete incompatibility between religious groups was expressed clearly in the print culture of the period. For instance, Lucas Cranach's woodcuts to Philipp Melanchton's Protestant picture-book, *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), offered a series of contrasting but correlative scenes which demonstrated the virtues of a Protestant Christ while damning the vices of the Papal Antichrist [Fig. 36].

It was during this period of religious rivalry in the sixteenth century that educationalists began to integrate principles of contrariety into their works on good conduct. Rather than seeking to form an equilibrium between common contraries such as reason and passion or the body and soul (as Plato and Aristotle had done), these works emulated the approaches of contemporaneous religious texts and called for what Abraham Fleming's *A Monomachie of Motives in the Mind of Man* (1582) described as "a Battell betweene Vertues and Vices of contrarie qualitie" (n.p.). Fleming's battleground rejected the Aristotelian principle of an intermediary position between the contraries and instead advanced a hypothesis of absolute opposition, encouraging readers to follow virtue and to reject vice. Readers should do so in the same manner that religious foes had rejected one another in contemporaneous religious debates. Fleming assisted readers in this battle by organising the "names of such Vices & Vertues . . . with the manner of their opposition or contrarietie" (n.p.) into a two-column table which pitted humility against pride, charity against hatred, and honesty against dishonesty [Fig. 38]. Similar works followed Fleming's example. Nicholas Breton's *The Goode and the Badde, or Descriptions of the Worthies, and Unworthies of this Age.* (1616) followed Fleming's example by employing of a number of verbal contrasts in opposing sections which encouraged one state of being while discouraging its contrary. George Downame's *An Abstract of the Duties Commanded, and Sinnes Forbidden in the Law of God* (1620) similarly imitated the structure of Fleming's text through its presentation of the "Affirmative" and "Negative" attributes of the ten commandments on opposing pages [Fig. 37], informing readers that when "any duty is commanded, there the contrary vice is forbidden; and where any vice is forbidden, there the contrary duty is commanded" (n.p.).

Contrariety as rhetorical strategy in pedagogical texts and instructional prints continued well into and throughout the eighteenth century. The tradition even gained its own genre-indicator, described by most contemporaneous writers as "The Contrast."[18] Blake's interest in "The Contrast" tradition has three possible sources: first, in his habit of collecting religious and satirical prints, some of which may have been designed according the structural template of "The Contrast" tradition; second, his association with Johnson, who—just one year before Blake invented his process of illuminated printing—published *The Contrast; or, The Opposite Consequences of Good and Evil Habits* (1787), in which an anonymous author had attempted to "recommend just principles" to his readers by placing "orderly conduct" in a "striking contrast with extreme wretchedness" (v-vi), encouraging readers to follow virtue and to reject vice through a series of opposing incidents which rewarded the virtuous Sarah Meanwell for her sincerity and punished the villainous Richard Coreworm for his crimes; and third, through his work in commercial engraving, an example of which included Blake's engraving of G. Morland's *The Industrious Cottager* [Fig. 39] and *The Idle Laundress* [Fig. 40] in 1788, the divided structure of which was typical of "The Contrast" tradition.[19] It is likely, however, that it was a combination of each of these factors which encouraged Blake to adopt a view of contrariety which valued virtue and abhorred vice, admitting no equilibrium between the two.

The addition of contrary signifiers at the top of the preface to *Jerusalem* suggest that Blake was forging a connection between the "SHEEP," the "GOATS," and his readers. According to David V. Erdman in "The Suppressed and Altered Passages in Blake's *Jerusalem*" (1964), the words engraved at the top of the preface were "added to Plate 3 with the same tool, perhaps with the same impulse, that deleted his expressions of love and friendship" (2). The possible proximity of Blake's deletions and additions suggest that, in removing his expressions of intimacy with the reader, he was assuming—or, in the very least, anticipating—the role of Christ at the Last Judgement. The suggestion,

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[18] Works that participated in "The Contrast" tradition during the eighteenth century usually contained a clear boundary or point of division that separated each side of the contrast: for example, in Isaac Basire's *The Contrast* (1737), viewers observed a pair of separated compartments that captured the contrary dispositions of depression and joviality; similarly, in Robert Dighton's *Life and Death Contrasted* (1784), audiences viewed the boundary that separated the living from the dead.

[19] A number of Blake's works were composed according to the conventions of "The Contrast" tradition. For instance, in the concluding plate of the (a) text and the opening plate of the (b) text from "There is no Natural Religion," a number of the words on each plate appear in the same position. For instance, the words "perceptions" and "Organs of" appear in the same location on both engravings and the term "sense" maintains its position on the left of each image. These accentuated terms effectively established a visual parallel between each print and collectively highlighted the shared theme of these illuminations: specifically, the role of the sensory organs in perception. There is also a notable correlation between the visual contents of each image because both prints presented their audiences with the silhouette of a woman who was lying on the ground. These verbal and visual similarities encouraged readers to consider the concluding plate from the (a) text and the opening plate from the (b) text as a contrasted pair.

then, is that Blake was dividing the public who he had addressed in the original peritext of the preface. Their division and identification as sheep or goats was hinged upon their reception of Blake's work: as Viscomi notes, "Blake's audience was select, but also made select through reading and owning Blake's works. The problem is that bad people sometimes own good work" (339).

Considering the original and delayed peritexts of the preface to *Jerusalem* demonstrates Blake's changing attitudes towards his audience. In particular, the deletions and additions to the preface highlight who Blake was and was not willing to educate with his work. Further, these alterations reveal the merciless way in which Blake eventually understood his role as the watchman at the gate of the New Jerusalem. The particulars which motivated Blake's understanding of this important role can be identified through an investigation of the poetic contents of the preface to *Jerusalem.* Exploring Blake's introductory poem will uncover the connections between Blake's role as a watchmen and his profession as an engraver, highlighting the educational functions of the printed book.

4.2.3   Inspirations for Illumination: Engravers, Educators, and Prophets

The poetic contents of the preface to *Jerusalem* focus on the history and roles of engraving in the western world. Blake writes:

> Reader! [*lover*] of books! [*lover*] of heaven,
> And of that God from whom [*all books are given*,]
> Who in mysterious Sinais awful cave
> To Man the wond'rous art of writing gave,
> Again he speaks in thunder and in fire!
> Thunder of Thought, & flames of fierce desire:
> Even from the depths of Hell his voice I hear,
> Within the unfathomed caverns of my Ear.
> Therefore I print; nor vain my types shall be:
> Heaven, Earth & Hell, henceforth shall live in harmony. (145)

In this short poem, Blake highlights what he considered to be the roles of the engraver. Blake's education as an engraver taught him that the art of engraving was valued above all other imitative arts. A number of eighteenth-century scholars had worked to highlight the importance of engraving to both the advancement of art and to the advancement of mankind as a whole. Joseph Strutt's "An Essay on the Art of Engraving with a full Account of its Origin and Progress" from *A Biographical Dictionary; containing an Historical Account of All the Engravers* (1785) argued that,

Of all the imitative arts, painting itself not excepted, engraving is the most applicable to general use, and the most resorted to form the necessities of mankind. From its earliest infancy, it has been called in, as an assistant in almost every branch of knowledge; and has, in a very high degree, facilitated the means of communicating our ideas. . . . From the facility of being multiplied, prints have derived an advantage over paintings by no means inconsiderable. (1)

The reproductive abilities of engraving facilitated "the advancement of science" because, before the invention of printing, "the accumulated wisdom of ages was confined to the leaves of a few moldering manuscripts too expensive to be generally obtained." According to Strutt, printing "broke down the barriers, which had so long obstructed the diffusion of learning; and the rapid progress in civilization, which immediately took place, is itself the happiest testimony of the great utility of the invention" (8). Moreover, Strutt also highlighted the relationships between the history of engraving and Christianity, documenting the ways in which histories of printmaking had chronicled the role of engraving in religious texts. These texts identified several prophets—and even God—as engravers. Strutt writes:

There is no art, that of music excepted, which can positively claim a priority to that of engraving; and though its inventor cannot be discovered, there is little doubt of its existence long before the flood. Tubal Cain, the son of Lamech, according to Moses, was the first *artificer* in metals. It is said of him . . . that he was . . . *the . . . sharpener of all instruments of copper and of iron. . . .* The tables which God delivered to Moses are said . . . to be *the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God . . .* engraved *upon the tables.* (7-8)

Blake's poetic preface to *Jerusalem* echoed the connections which Strutt had established between engraving and Biblical figures.[20] In his preface, Blake argued that "all books" were "given" to man by God, "Who in mysterious Sinais awful cave / To Man the wond'rous art of writing gave." It was at Mount Sinai that "the LORD descended . . . in fire" (Exodus 19:18) and gave Moses the "tables of stone, and a law, and commandments." Moses broke the stone tablets which were engraved by God but later engraved his own tablets, the verbal contents of which were dictated to him by God. The Lord then instructed Moses to "teach" what he had "written" (Exodus 24:12) to the Israelites. In the poetic preface of *Jerusalem*, Blake related his role as an engraver to that

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[20] It is likely that Blake, during his apprenticeship, had learned the history of engraving. During his studies, he probably discovered the biblical importance of engraving, helping him to understand what he believed was his role as an engraver. After all, inspiration for Blake's process of illuminated printing, according to Gilchrist, had come from St. Joseph: "He ground and mixed his water-colours himself on a piece of statuary marble . . . with common carpenter's glue diluted. . . . Joseph, the sacred carpenter, had appeared in vision and revealed *that* secret to him" (1: 70).

of Moses. Blake engraved the languages of God into his copper-plates in the same way that Moses had transcribed the ten commandments, arguing that, "Even from the depths of Hell his voice I hear, / Within the unfathomed caverns of my Ear. / Therefore I print." By forging a connection between God and the engraved works of prophets, Blake gave Biblical importance to both his profession and his books.

Identifying God as an engraver might have encouraged Blake to locate further connections between the history of engraving and Christianity. For the most part, Blake's ideas about the relationships between engraving and Christianity were metaphorical, forging a connection between the ancient languages which described engraving as the act of ploughing and the biblical languages which used ploughing as a symbol of the Last Judgement:

> There are several words, used by the sacred historian to express the works of the engraver; among which the following are more particularly applicable to my purpose. . . . One of the original senses of the root is to *plough up*; so that he is called the *plougher*; and frequently the word . . . *in stone*, is added for distinction, and both together may be properly translated the *plougher* or *engraver in stone*. No word can express more perfectly the operations of the engraver on copper or other metals in the present day, when performed simply with the graver,) which is of all modes the most ancient,) than the verb *to plough*. (Strutt 8)

Ploughing copper and ploughing field were preparatory activities: the engraver prepared the copper for printing and the ploughman prepared the field for seed, cutting furrows into the surface of each plane. Ploughing played an important role in Blake's mythology. Indeed, ploughing was illustrated by Blake frequently: for instance, in plate 33 of *Jerusalem*, Blake presented the image of an old man ploughing behind two human-headed animals [Fig. 41]. According to Damon, ploughing "symbolized the preparation for a New Age" (*Dictionary* 329) to Blake—an idea that the poet had probably inherited from Christian semiotics. Ploughing is used as a symbol of preparation throughout the Bible. For instance, when Christ sends his disciples to "preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9: 2), he argues that "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9: 62), encouraging his followers to plough the land: in other words, by using the metaphor of the plough, Christ instructs his disciples to preach the word of God to humanity, preparing the world for the Last Judgement. In Blake's mythology, then, Blake became the ploughman and the contents of his works became the seeds of an Age of Enlightenment, a precursor to the coming of a New Jerusalem.

Blake's understanding of engraving was also shaped by Enlightenment philosophies. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790), Blake promised to "expunge" false religious notions by "printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was

hid" (39). Blake describes the removal of intellectual error from the minds of his readers metaphorically, using the languages of print culture to unite the history of engraving with the ideas of both the Enlightenment and of Christianity. The way in which an eighteenth-century engraver used acids to burn shallows into the surface of a copper plate is compared by Blake to the re-education of the reader: in other words, Blake intended to purify the minds of his readers in the same way that he prepared his copper-plates—by removing unneeded foreign materials from both the copper-plate and from his readers' minds, preparing them for his words of instruction. This idea was popular in the works of Enlightenment thinkers. For instance, Francis Bacon reformed the sciences by encouraging philosophers to question the received knowledge of authorities such as Aristotle and Plato, removing falsehood in preparation for progression: "It is idle to expect any great advancement in science from the superinducing and engrafting of new things upon old. We must begin anew from the very foundations, unless we would revolve for ever in a circle with mean and contemptible progress" (66). In order to "begin anew from the very foundations," Bacon argued that the philosopher must reject "the most general axioms" which were considered to be "settled and immoveable" such as those championed by the Greek philosophers. Instead, philosophers must derive their knowledge "from the senses and particulars" (64). Falsehood needed to be removed from the sciences in the same way that metal needed to be ploughed from the surface of the copper-plate. Moreover, according to John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), knowledge needed to be etched into the understanding:

> Let us suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy boundless fancy of man has painted on it, with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from *experience*: in that, all our knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself. (109)

Blake's metaphorical understanding of engraving echoed the founding principles of Lockean empiricism. However, the languages that Blake used in conjunction with these Enlightenment principles—in both the preface to *Jerusalem* and in *The Marriage*—were Christian: that is, Blake's Enlightenment understanding of engraving as a means of "melting apparent surfaces away" (*Marriage* 39) in order to remove intellectual error from the minds of his readers was identical to his Christian understanding of God using

the tablets to instruct the Israelites or Christ ploughing the land in preparation for the coming of the New Jerusalem.[21]

4.3   The Paratexts, Interexts, and Iconotexts of *Jerusalem*

Studying the paratextual devices employed by Blake in the frontispieces and the preface of *Jerusalem* reveal the engraver's ideas about the functions and readerships of his final illuminated book. In the frontispiece for "To the Public," Blake pictured himself in the role of the night watchman, guiding his readers towards the New Jerusalem which was pictured in the frontispiece for "To the Christians." The identities of these readers, however, were subject to change: when Blake first engraved the text of his preface into the copper-plate, he offered an inclusive description of his audience which expressed a desire to guide all of his readers to enlightenment. Subsequent revisions to the text reduced the number of readers that Blake was willing to educate. By adding the words "SHEEP" and "GOATS" to the top of the plate, Blake divided his audience into contrary groups which were both exclusive and absolute. Blake could only save the readers who accepted the lessons included in *Jerusalem* favourably: to this end, Blake combined Enlightenment philosophies with Christian epistemologies, assuming the role of an enlightened prophet who guarded the gates of the New Jerusalem.

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[21] For that reason, Blake's ideas about engraving were more than metaphorical. In plate 44 of *Jerusalem*, a figure is depicted sitting beside a stone tablet [Fig. 42]. This print, in Viscomi's view, demonstrates the authenticity that Blake attributed to his role as an enlightened, Christian engraver:

> The scroll is also a tablet or stone, suggesting that Blake's writing is permanently inscribed and that the technique is divinely inspired, even of biblical importance. The connection between the production of scrolls (or illuminated manuscripts) and Blake's illuminated texts may have been more than metaphorical. Blake and illuminators may have used similar writing supports and techniques for filling the pen. . . . By '*illuminated* printing,' then, Blake appears to have referred not only to hand-coloured prints, or prints in imitation of manuscript, but also to the *activity* of executing a page as an illuminator would have. In this sense, the term reflects Blake's perception of himself as working in a method characteristic of more Christian, that is, more Imaginative, times, and it reveals the symbolic significance that this mode of production held for Blake. (*Book* 59)

Conclusion

Exploring the technological production and physical evidence of Blake's prints in a series of methodological case-studies has demonstrated the creative ways in which Blake's process of illuminated printing facilitated the transmission of his ideas about education. The use of methodologies such as those employed by Gérard Genette in *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987) and Peter Wagner's *Reading Iconotexts: From Swift to the French Revolution* (1995) has made possible the identification of how Blake's manipulations of materiality helped him to shape his readers' interpretations of his works. In particular, the present study worked to identify and analyse the paratexts, intertexts, and iconotexts of Blake's illuminated books. Genette's understanding of the paratextual features of a work—that is, the "accompanying productions" which enable "a text to become a book" (1)—helped the project to explore the physical boundaries which separated the inside and outside of Blake's books. Exploring paratextual features such as the sizes, printings, and papers used by Blake in the illuminated books demonstrated the ways in which the bibliographical elements of a work can shape readers' interpretations of the text. Blake united verbal and visual media throughout his illuminated books. Wagner defined the iconotext as a work which "welds texts to images" (162). Therefore, the investigation of Blake's illuminated books demands the use of Wagner's paradigm, the methodologies of which can structure and facilitate the study of both words and pictures. Additionally, the investigation of Blake's intertextual influences and the interfigural manipulations of these intertexts within the illuminated books highlighted the ways in which Blake used contemporaneously popular iconographies to instruct and delight his readers. Blake's manipulations of the technological productions, material formats, and creative compositions of his illuminated books were demonstrated in the present study through a series of case-studies which, individually in chapters one, two, and three and then collectively in chapter four, used Genette's and Wagner's methodologies to unpack each of the components which contributed to Blake's processes of illuminated instruction.

Investigating the textual conditions of Blake's works necessitated the consideration of his technological processes. The present study highlighted each stage of Blake's

printing method but focussed mostly on an aspect which has received little attention in Blake scholarship: specifically, Blake's choices of paper. Historicising the papers used in the illuminated books revealed the practical, financial, and aesthetic concerns which motivated Blake's choices. Blake's training as an apprentice engraver to James Basire taught him the value of using high-quality materials, especially when printing from copper-plates. It was during his apprenticeship that Blake first used wove papers and it is this experience which seems to have motivated his later use of wove papers in both his watercolour paintings and in illuminated printing.

Blake's manipulations of paratextual features of format such as the sizes and lengths of his books helped readers to distinguish and classify his texts according to the established conventions of eighteenth-century print culture. For instance, the duodecimo format of Blake's earliest illuminated manuscripts of c. 1788, "There is no Natural Religion" and "All Religions Are One," encouraged readers to identify the small books as chapbooks. Blake was interested in the chapbook market because of its tested abilities to educate and entertain a large and diverse audience. However, unlike most contemporaneous chapbooks, Blake's chapbooks were printed on high-quality wove papers which made possible the use of finely-engraved copper-plates. In using fine materials, Blake signalled his participation in a growing market of high-quality chapbooks which, following the emergence of this market in c. 1785, included the publications of T. Maiden, Dean and Murray, Thomas Richardson, and Brash and Reid. Blake's use of the chapbook format facilitated the transmission of his ideas about education in the same way that Hannah More's *Cheap Repository* had sought to covertly educate its readers.

Blake's process of engraving text and design directly onto the surface of the copper-plate allowed him to produce a composite art which united both media. Studying Blake's composite art, however, requires a methodology which gives equal weight to both words and pictures: considering Blake's work as what Wagner has described as an iconotext makes possible the simultaneous study of the verbal and the visual components of Blake's illuminated prints. Historicising these components demands an exploration of Blake's uses intertextuality and interfigurality, two devices which helped Blake to adopt and then manipulate the established motifs of contemporanous print culture in "The Little Black Boy." Popular motifs such as the woman educating the child and the John gesture were complicated through their use in a poem which opposed slavery and advocated the equality between all races. Blake's uses of interfigurality made possible the manipulation of established motifs. By divorcing motifs from their original significations, Blake was able to promote the educational agends of his own texts.

The 100 plates of Blake's final illuminated book, *Jerusalem: the Emanation of the Giant Albion*, were engraved over the course of sixteen years. During this period, Blake's ideas about his role as an educator changed, encouraging him to limit the types of reader that

he was willing to educate with this work. In the original peritext of *Jerusalem*, Blake expressed a desire to educate the entirety of "the Public," including "the Jews," "the Deists," and "the Christians." Blake later removed this inclusive sentiment. In its place, Blake etched the words "SHEEP" and "GOATS." By dividing his audience into contrary, exclusive groups, Blake expressed his desire to instruct and delight the enlightened only, guiding them—and them alone—to the New Jerusalem.

Thse use of Genette's and Wagner's methodologies facilitated not only the simultaneous study of both word and image but also the exploration of the materiality of Blake's works. Moreover, the use of these methodologies helped the dissertation to situate Blake's illuminated books in their appropriate historical contexts, making possible the tentative reconstruction of the ways in which Blake's readers might have interpreted the verbal and visual contents of his prints. It is hoped that the approaches used in the present study will pave the way for further studies of Blake's material texts. Applying paratextual methodologies to additional illuminated books might reveal why Blake, during the nineteenth century, increased the sizes, lengths, and prices of his illuminations (multiplying them by ten) when he stopped considering them as illustrated books and started to consider them as series of finely produced prints or paintings. Further, the identification of Blake's selections of intertexts in continental prophecies such as *America: A Prophecy* or *Europe: A Prophecy*—the pages of which were crowded with political caricatures depicted in apocalyptic landscapes—might reveal how a combination of political caricature and millenarian imagery, as used by Blake and other contemporaneous visual satirists such as James Gillray and Thomas Rowlandson, could change the political allegiances of eighteenth-century readers. Finally, by studying Blake's illuminated prints as series of complex iconotexts instead of separating the contents of these works into independent media, it might be possible to understand more fully the ways in which Blake's designs made the meanings of his texts more precise.

Investigating the paratexts, intertexts, and iconotexts of Blake's illuminated books opens up interdisciplinary fields of research which have rarely been addressed in Blake scholarship. By focusing on the textual condition of Blake's prints, the dissertation has shown how the paratexts, intertexts, and iconotexts of Blake's illuminated books contributed to the successful transmission of Blake's ideas about education. It revealed why Blake believed that education was a vital force in establishing Jerusalem—that is, an enlightened nation—in "Englands green & pleasant Land" (*Milton* 96). Further, the study explained how Blake's method of composition was rooted in a biblical network of prophets, engravers, and educators, each of whom had expressed a desire to educate and enlighten the nation.

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Illustrations

Figure 1   James Whatman jnr., countermark (1794). Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson General Correspondence.
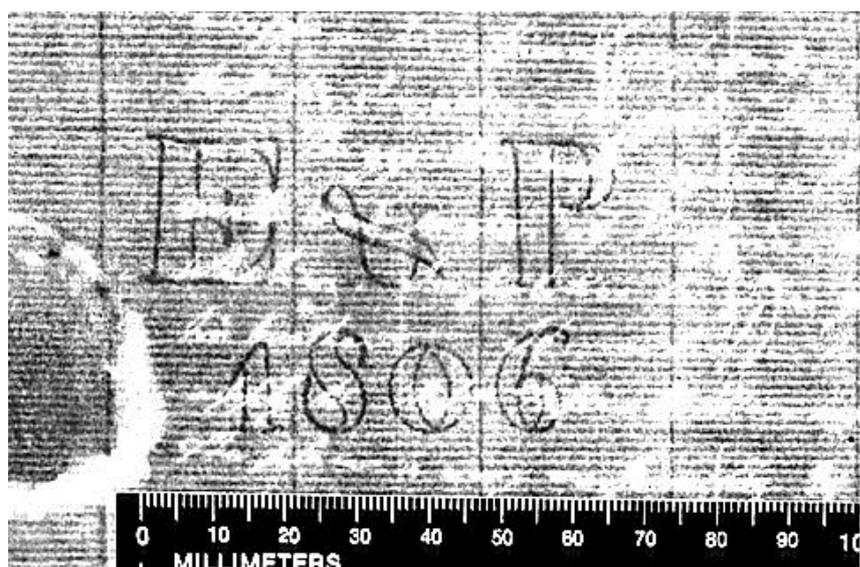
Figure 2   Edmeads and Pine, Watermark (1806). Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson General Correspondence.
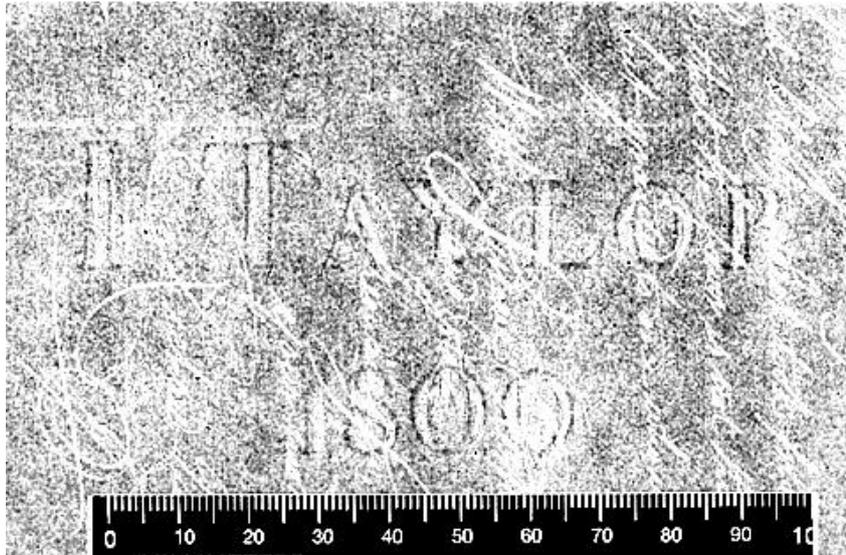
Figure 3   John Taylor, watermark (1800). Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson General Correspondence.

Figure 4   Thomas Gainsborough, *Travellers on Horseback Approaching a Village with a Spire* (c. 1765-70). Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Figure 5   William Blake after Robert Blake, "The Approach of Doom" (c. 1787). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.
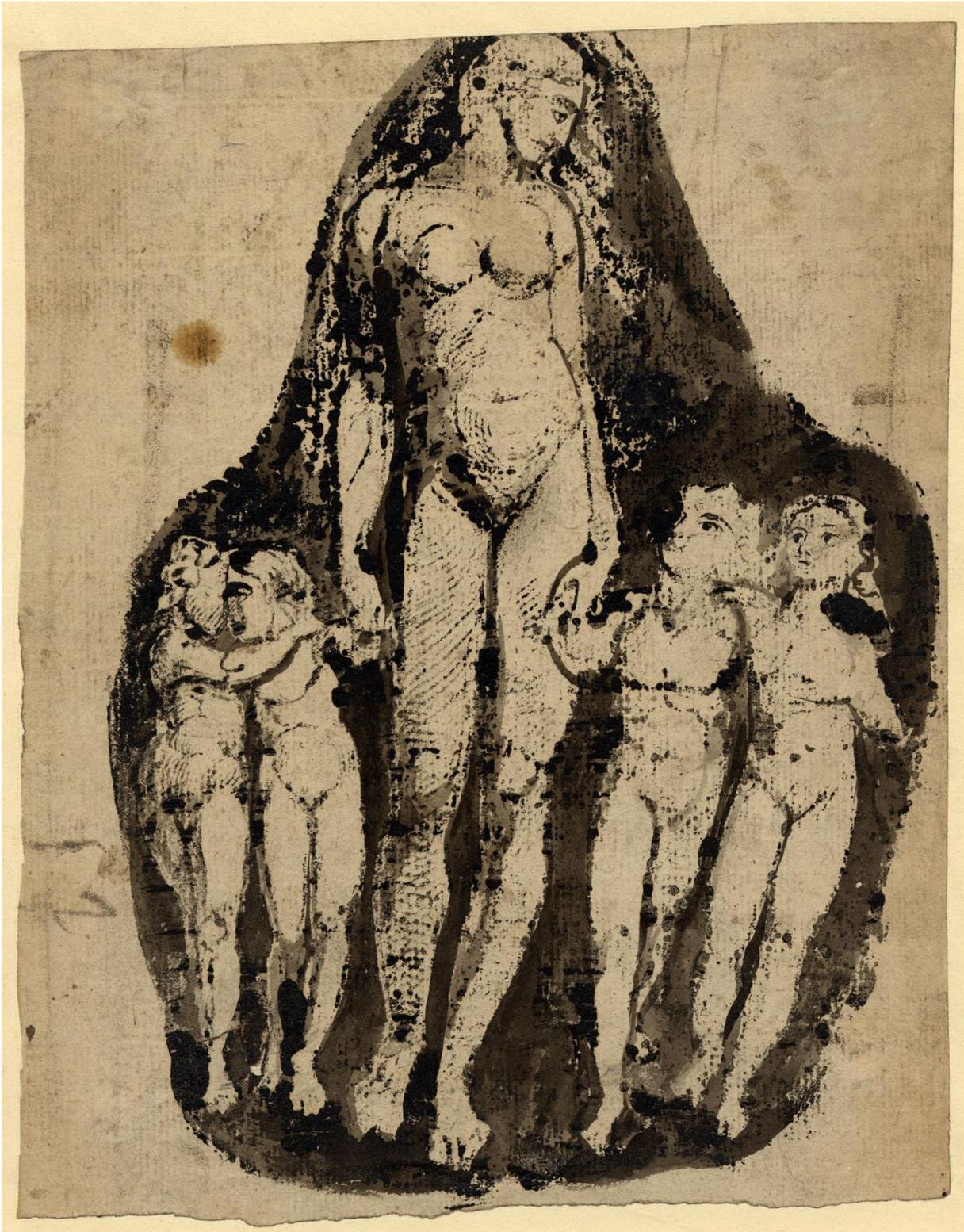
Figure 6   William Blake after Robert Blake, "Charity" (c. 1787). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.
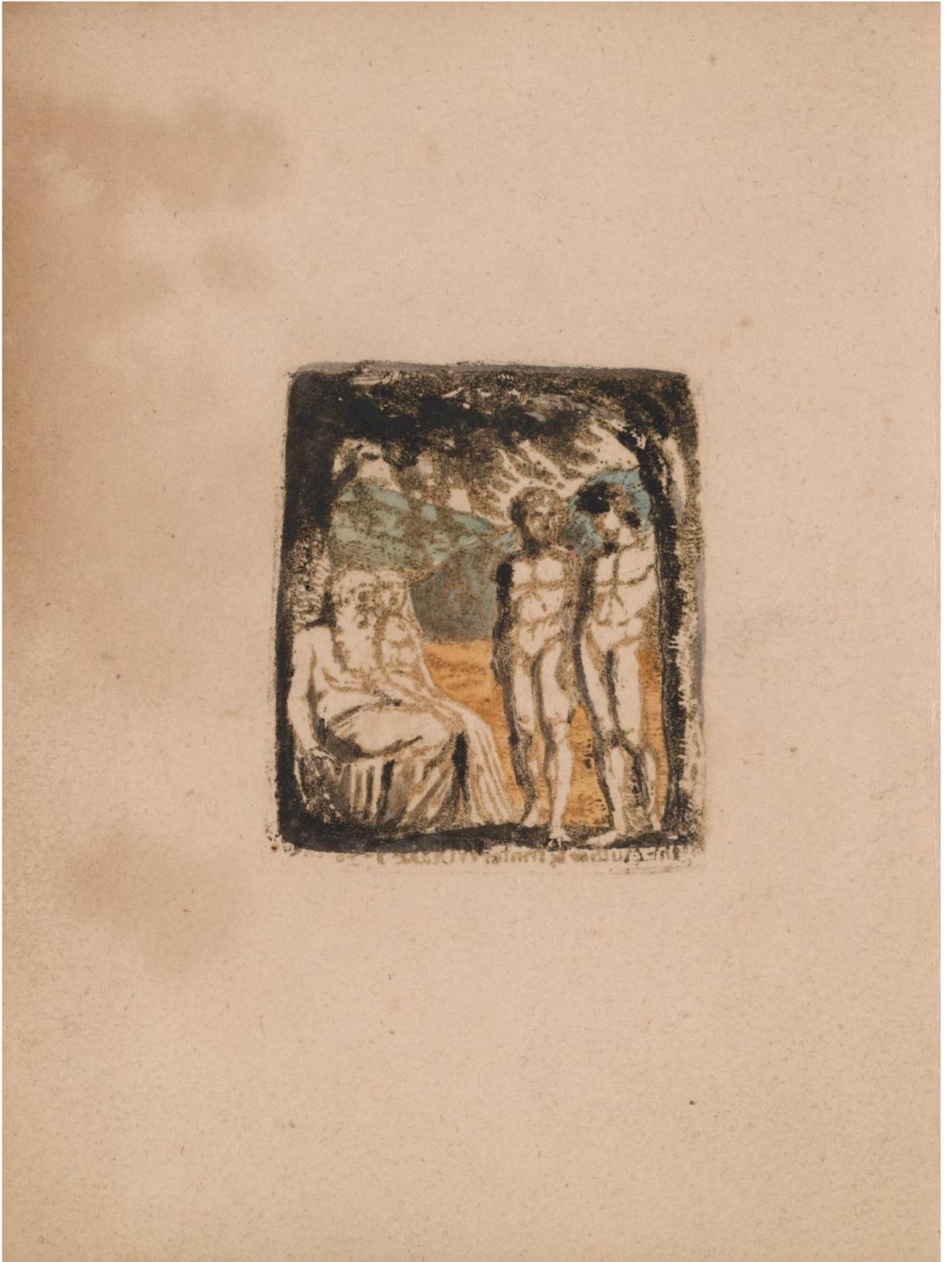
Figure 7   William Blake, "There is no Natural Religion" (c. 1788), Plate 1, Frontispiece. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.
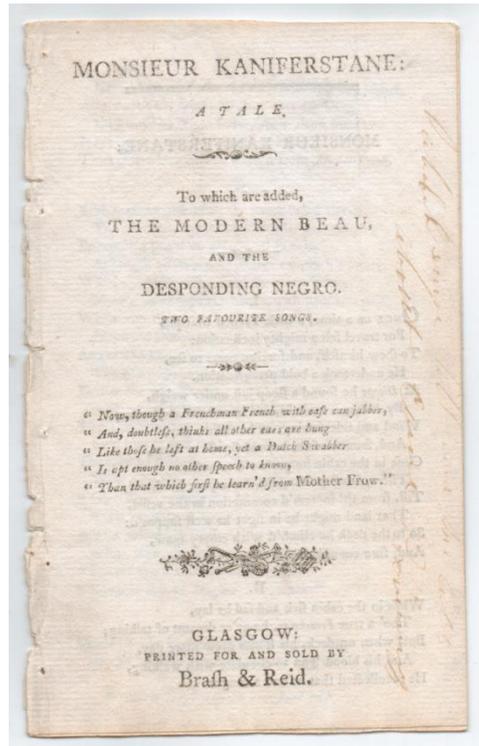
Figure 8   "Monsieur Kaniferstane: A Tale. To which are added, The Modern Beu and the Desponding Negro. Two Favourite Songs." Glasgow: Brash & Reid, 1796. Print.
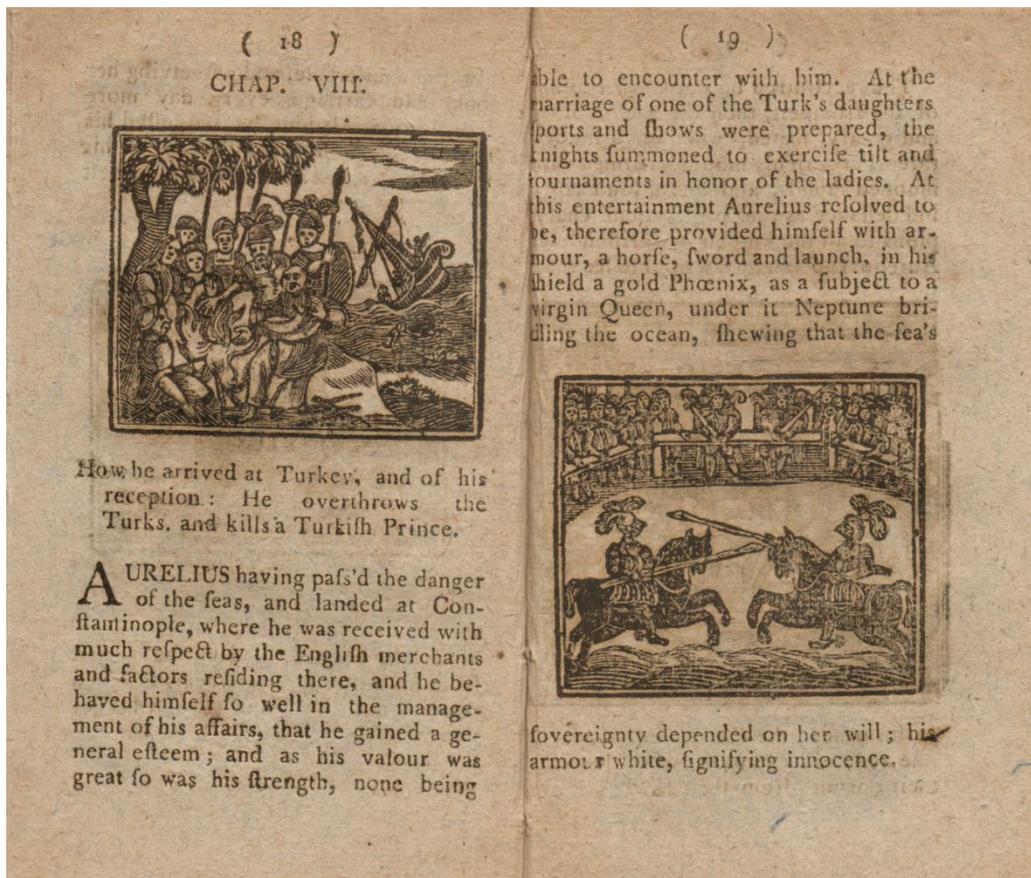
Figure 9   "The Famous History of the Valiant London 'Prentice." n.p.: Printed for the honourable Company of Walking Stationers, n.d. Print.

Figure 10 Hannah More, "The Riot; or Half a Loaf is Better Than No Bread," *Cheap Repository for Moral and Religious Tracts* (c. 1800). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.
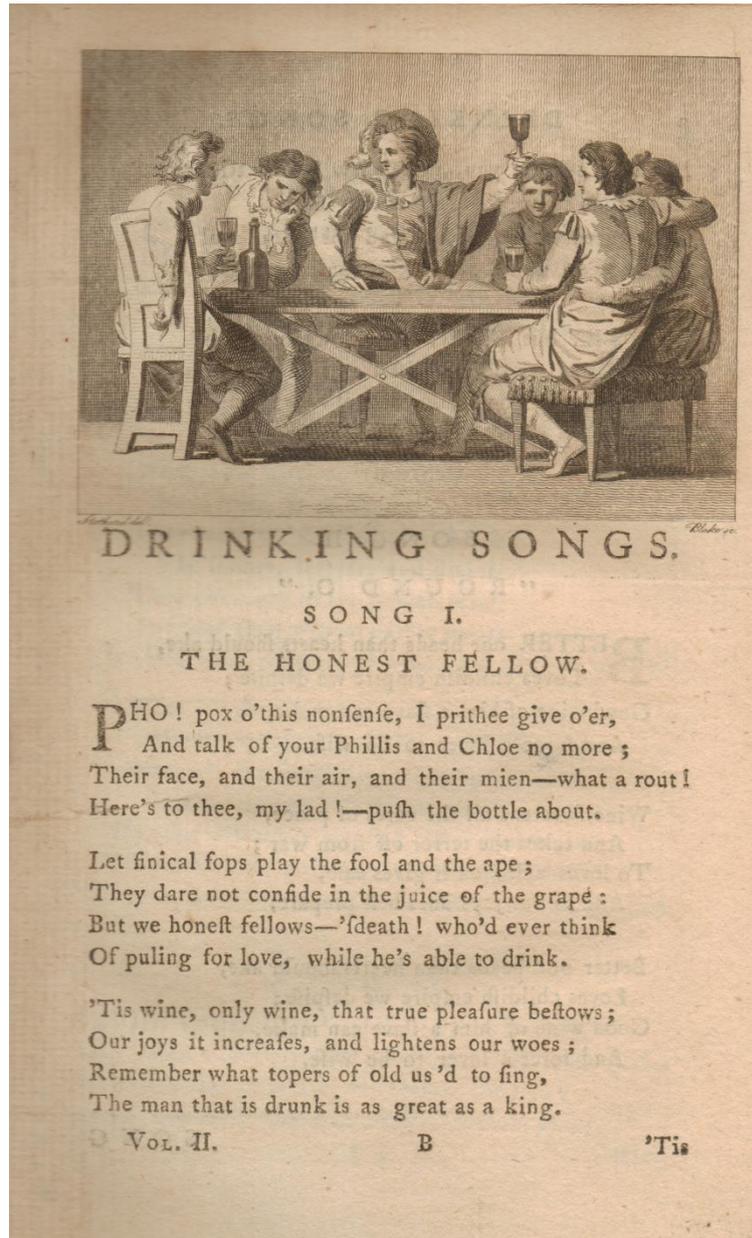
Figure 11 William Blake after Thomas Stothard, "Song I: the Honest Fellow," *A Select Collection of English Songs.* Vol. 2. London: Joseph Johnson, 1783. Print.

Figure 12 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Copy L, Plate 3, Title-page. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Figure 13 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Copy L, Plate 8, "The Little Black Boy."
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Figure 15 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Copy L, Plate 11, "Spring." Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.
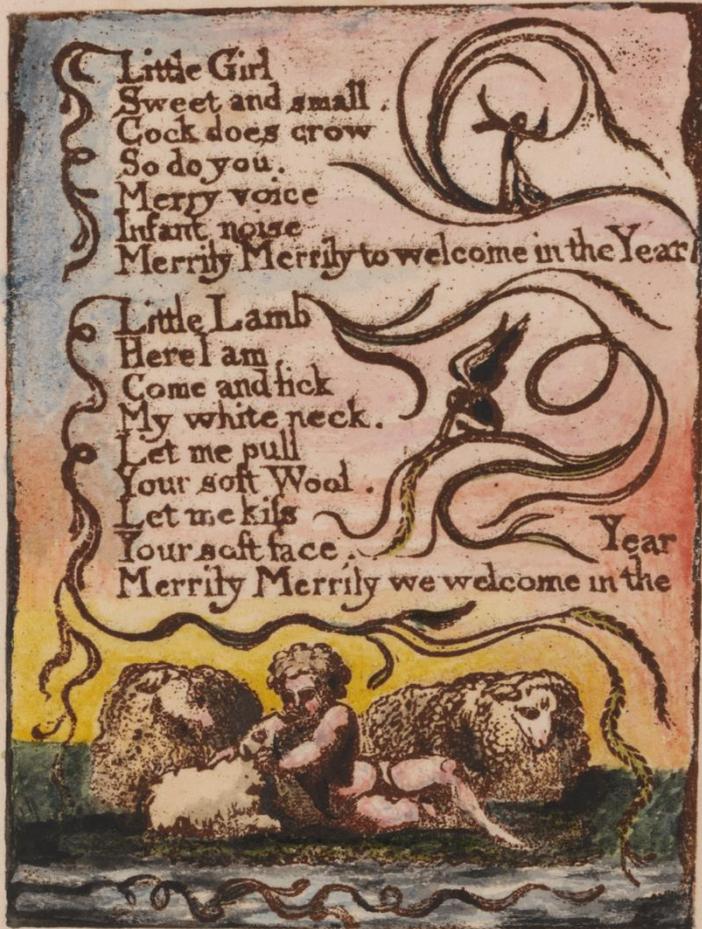
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Figure 17 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Copy L, Plate 13, "Nurse's Song." Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Figure 18 William Blake, *Songs of Innocence* (1789), Copy L, Plate 14, "The Shepherd." Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Instruction with Delight.

Figure 19 John Newbery. *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book, Intended for the Instruction and Amusement of Little Master Tommy and Pretty Miss Polly. With Two Letters from Jack the Giant-Killer.* Frontispiece. London: John Marshall, 1790. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.

Figure 20 Lady Ellenor Fenn, *Fables in Monosyllables.* Frontispiece. London: John Marshall, 1783. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.

before related. The woman in her hafte had dropped her fhoe and garter, which were the caufe of her being found.

Mrs. *Bountiful* faid her punifhment had been equal to her folly, and hoped it would be a leffon to her for the future not to truft to the ftories of ftrangers, or to ftray out of the fight of her parents.

Poor *Betfey* hung down her head over-come with fhame, when, falling on her knees, fhe begged pardon, and promifed ne-

ver to be guilty of the like again; and in-deed, to tell the truth of her, fhe was a very good girl, notwithftanding her late folly.   2

Figure 21 Lady Ellenor Fenn, *The Entertaining History of Little Goody Goosecap. Containing a Variety of Adventures Calculated to Amuse & Instruct the Lilliputian World*. London: John Marshall, 1783. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.

Every pretty moral Tale,
Should o'er the infant Mind prevail.

Figure 22 Mary Cooper, *Tommy Thumb's Songs Book, For All Little Masters and Misses, to be Sung to Them by their Nurses, Until They Can Sing Themselves.* Frontispiece. Worcester: Isaiah Thomas, 1788. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online
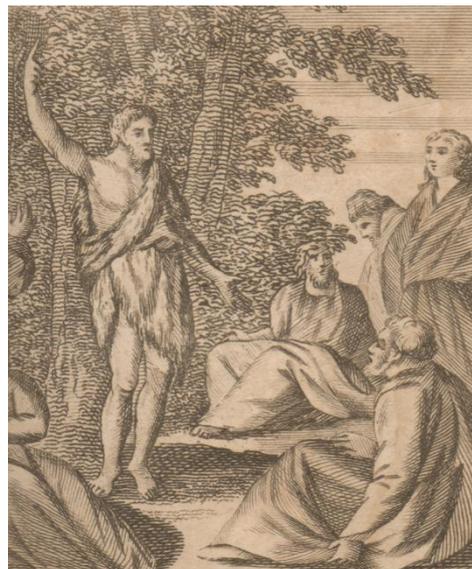
Figure 23 Sarah Trimmer, "X: John the Baptist," *A Set of Prints Taken from the New Testament.* London: John Marshall, 1786. Print.

Leonard. da vinci pinx.   Boulange. Sculp. Cum priuil Regis.

Figure 24 Leonardo da Vinci. *St. John the Baptist* (c. 1513-16). British Museum, Prints &
Drawings.

Figure 25 Simone Cantarini. "The Infant St. John the Baptist Seated with Cross and Lamb" (1630-48). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.

Figure 26   William Blake, *Jerusalem: the Emanation of the Giant Albion* (c. 1804-20), Copy E, Plate 1, Frontispiece. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Figure 27 Charles Williams, *Burning Shame or Throwing a Light on the Practice of Pidgeon-Plucking* (1804). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.
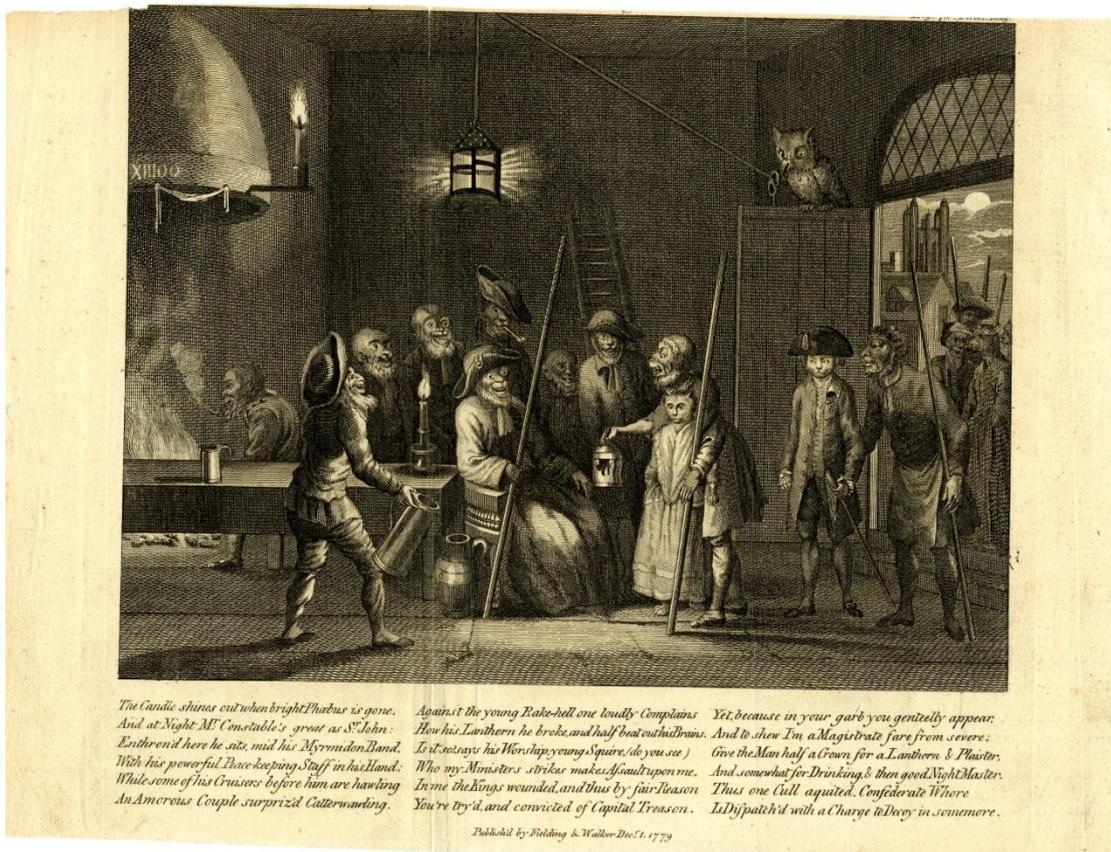
Figure 28 Elisha Kirkall after George Morland, *The Midnight Magistrate* (1779). The British Museum, Prints & Drawings.

Figure 29 *The Midnight-Ramble: or, the Adventures of Two Noble Females, Being a True and Impartial Account of Their Late Excursion through the Streets of London and Westminster. Wherein is exemplified from Jealousies, Doubts, and Fears, the various Misfortunes which the two Ladies, accompanied by their Milliner (whom they artfully engaged to attend them in Disguise in this Frolick) met with, in Pursuit to discover their Husbands Intrigues. Interspersed with The Humours of Mr. Constable and his Watchmen, who took them into Custody in Covent-Garden, about Three in the Morning,* Frontispiece. London: B. Dickinson, 1754. Web. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.

Figure 30 Bowles & Carver, Lottery Sheet (c. 1793). British Library, Prints & Drawings.

THE NIGHT CONSTABLE.

WATCHMAN.

This wicked dog did lift his hand,
First knock'd me down, then bid me stand;
The peaceful neighbours he awoke,
And then the Knave my lanthorn broke,
At which the Villain loud did Laugh,
So down I knock'd him with my staff.

CONSTABLE.

If so: — you Justice did yourself,
Therefore begone thou prating Elf.

Publish'd as the Act directs July.10.1785.by G.M.Woodward N°.28.Carey Street Lincolns Inn LONDON.

Figure 31 Richard Cooper II after George Moutard Woodward. *The Night Constable* (1785). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.

Figure 32 George Bickham the Younger. *The Riot occasion'd by the Burning of the Meeting Houses* (1737-38). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.

Figure 33 William Blake, *Jerusalem: the Emanation of the Giant Albion* (c. 1804-20), Copy E, Plate 76. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Figure 34 Bowles & Carver, *The Tree of Life, which bear Twelve Manner of Fruits* (c. 1793). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.
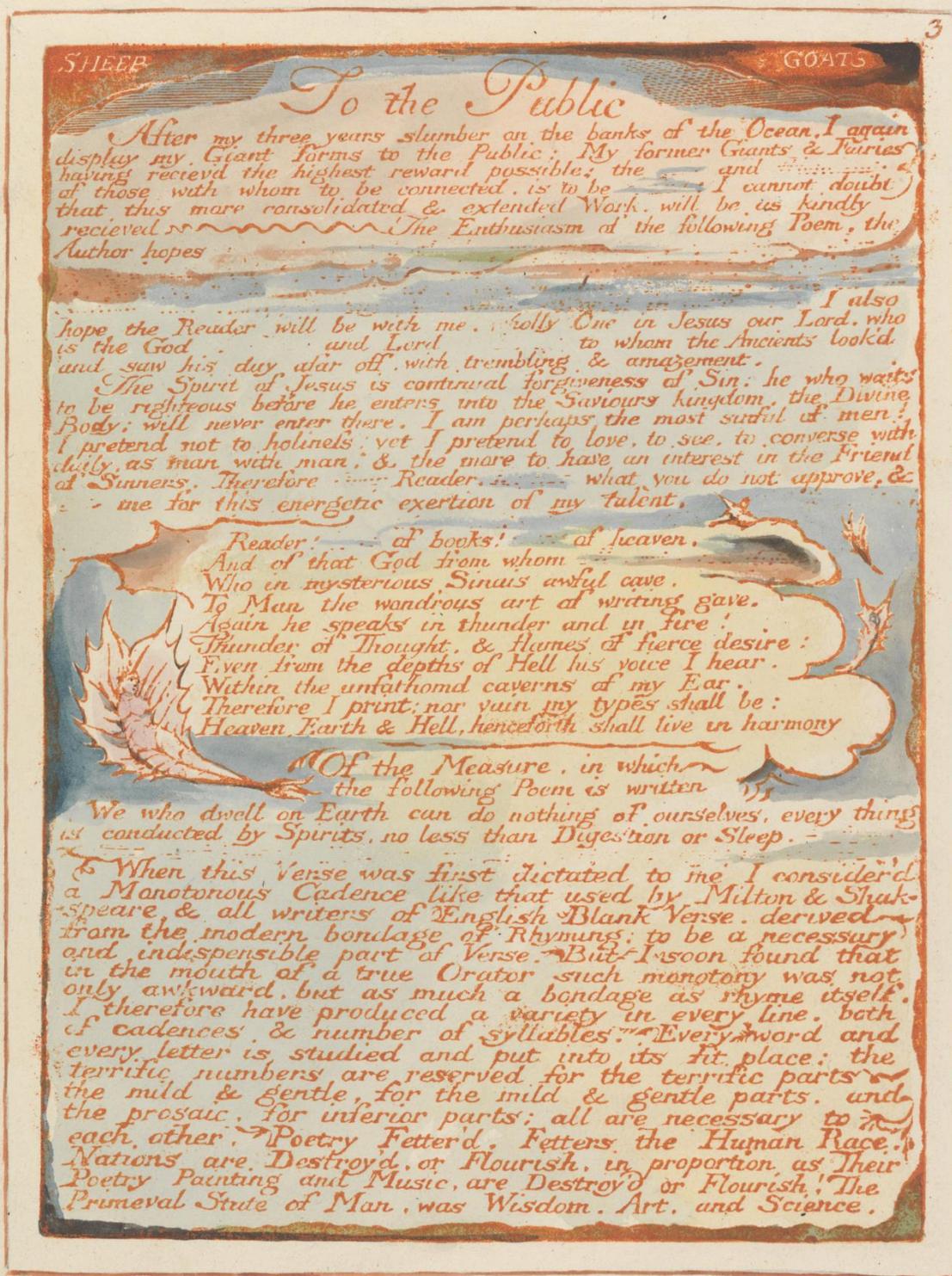
Figure 35   William Blake, *Jerusalem: the Emanation of the Giant Albion* (c. 1804-20), Copy E, Plate 3, "To the Public." Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Figure 36 Lucas Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Eisleben: Urban Gaubisch, 1564. British Library.

Figure 37 Downame, George. *An Abstract of the Duties Commanded, and Sinnes Forbidden in the Law of God. By the Right Reverend Father in God, George Downame, Doctor of Divinity, and Lord Bishop.* London: Felix Kyngston, 1620. Web. Early English Books Online.

The names of such Vices & Vertues, as are specified in this booke to be at mutuall hatred and strife : with the maner of their opposition or contrarietie, set foorth in fiue Sections, and fiue and twentie seuerall Combats, for order sake.

The first Section of Assalts and Repulses, pag.5.

Combat
1 Pride, pag.5.
2 Vaine glorie, 17.
3 Hypocrisie, 26.
4 Disobedience, 37.
5 Malicious enuie, 48.

against

Humilitie, pag.11.
Feare of God, 21.
True religion, 32.
Submission, 42.
Brotherlie agreement, 52.

Fiue

The second Section of Assalts and Repulses, pag.56.

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7 Excusing of sinne, 66.
8 Wrath and rashnes, 78.
9 Malapert controlling, 91.
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Fiue

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13 Loose libertie, 135.
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17 Deceitfull dealing, 194.
18 Lieng & dissembling, 200.
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20 Excessiue reioicing, 233.

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Compassion, 187.
Plaine dealing, 201.
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22 Dishonestie, 258.
23 Filthie lecherie, 275.
24 Whoredome of hart, 291.
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Figure 38   Abraham Fleming, *A Monomachie of Motives in the Mind of Man: or a Battell Betweene Vertues and Vices of Contrarie Qualitie*. London: n.p., 1582. Web. Early English Books Online.

Figure 39 William Blake after George Morland, *Industrious Cottager* (1788). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.

Figure 40 William Blake after George Morland, *The Idle Laundress* (1788). British Museum, Prints & Drawings.

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