JOB: A MASQUE FOR LIVING: CREATIVITY AS PALIMPSEST

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Abstract: This article draws on an artistic presentation using audio, visual and live artistic elements to explore theodicy through the twenty-two plates for the Book of Job of William Blake dating from 1821 or 1822, Vaughan Williams's *Job—A Masque for dancing* and a song by June Boyce-Tillman drawing in the Wisdom theology of William Brown. It will use the image of the palimpsest as a metaphor for an artist's creative process. This starts with de Quincey's (1998) work on art as resurrection, Plato's and Freud's (1925) work on memory as a wax tablet, Kristeva's intertextuality with the distinction between the geno-text and pheno-text (Johnson 1988) and Buber's (1970) and Williams's (2018) on art as encounter, which are combined with Koestler's (1964) work on the incubation phase in the creative process (Wallas 1926). It will examine the different possibilities and limitations of various art forms. Blake, influenced by Swedenborg and Boehme, used the story to construct a symbolic universe in line with his thinking about the important role of the imagination in the spiritual search, limited for him by the new natural sciences and traditional religion. These illustrations were taken up by the composer Vaughan Williams as the basis of *Job—A Masque for dancing*—from 1931, of which pieces were played in the presentation, such as *Satan's Dance of Triumph* and the *Pavane of the Heavenly Host*. The work of William Brown in *Wisdom's Wonder* (2014) was also included in the thinking behind June Boyce-Tillman's *Forgiveness Song* (2018), which is set out to show how the artistic sources were reworked in a new way that allows the former artworks to shine through. The article intertwines theodicy in Job with explorations of the complex nature of the creative process.

Keywords: creativity, re-membering, palimpsest, intertextuality, theodicy

Re-engraved time after time,
Ever in their youthful prime,
My designs unchanged remain.
Time may rage, but rage in vain,
Far above Time's troubled fountains,
On the great Atlantic mountains,
In my golden house on high.
There they shine eternally.[1]

This poem from William Blake's "Illustrations" *to the Book of Job* sets out the themes of temporality and immortality in art works which runs through this article. The article is concerned with the creation of a multimedia presentation based on the Book of Job. The presentation used the work of a visual artist, a composer and a song writer. The metaphor of the palimpsest is used to analyse the processes involved in the preparation of an artistic performance and the ways in which theology, a literary text and the arts interface in the complexity of the creative process. The way an artist treats such a text is very different from the methods employed by textual critics; they see a text as more stable and are concerned with its accuracy, meaning and origin, whereas creative artists see the text as a generative force capable of birthing new shapes.

PALIMPSEST AS METAPHOR

A palimpsest is a parchment manuscript on which more than one text has been written and is erased, covered or replaced. Palimpsests come from the monasteries of the seventh to the fifteenth centuries, such as Fleury and St. Gall, in a time when vellum was scarce and expensive. Some older manuscripts were considered out of date and needed replacing. Various chemicals were used in the erasing process but exposure to the air later caused the iron in the original ink to turn brown so that previous texts started to reappear in a somewhat ghostly form. Nowadays this can be initiated to unpack the layers of the manuscript.

[1] Poem by William Blake from Online Library of Liberty: https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/blake-blakes-illustrations-of-the-book-of-job/simple. This is the opening of the Blake illustrations to the Book of Job.

It becomes clear how a palimpsest can be used as a metaphor for anything that has been altered in some way but has elements of its previous shape still evident. Culturally, this can be remnants of an older regime in a new society. The result is something which can have different layers of meaning, such as a work of art using a variety of styles, languages and theologies to encompass many levels of meaning. Such a process is called palimpsestic and something created in this way is called palimpsestuous (Dillon 2005: 244–245). So, there are two paradoxical aspects to a palimpsest; one sees the separate texts as distinct and the other as an entanglement of interrelated texts, inextricably intertwined. As the former texts emerge it becomes a model for diversity and heterogeneity, which I will unpack later in relation to the creative process. Thomas de Quincey (1998: 104) called the complex entanglement in experiences involving mixed emotions "involuted."

PALIMSPEST AS RESURRECTION

De Quincey (1785–1859) is often credited with the use of the term palimpsest in the area of the mind.[2] He used it to construct a fantasy to give his departed sister Elizabeth a continuing life. He discussed palaeographic palimpsests, from which he constructed her death as a failed erasure which could reappear as an underlying text. Through this device Elizabeth could live on in a resurrected form:

> What else than a natural and mighty palimpsest is the human brain? Such a palimpsest is my brain; such a palimpsest, O reader! is yours. Everlasting layers of ideas, images and feelings, have fallen upon your brain softly as light. Each succession has seemed to bury all that went before. And yet in reality not one has been extinguished. They are not dead but sleeping [...] there is none of passion or disease that can scorch away these immortal impulses. (De Quincey 1998: 144)

De Quincey saw the palimpsest of the mind as capable of defeating death. The pall covering the coffin could be withdrawn and the person revealed as simply sleeping. He drew on the Greek word *phantasia*, which means to make visible by a process of remembering. His view of the process of

[2] Earlier uses can be found in Plutarch and St. John Chrysostom as explored by Thompson (1912: 64–65) and Russell (1867: 100).

remembering will be very helpful later in examining the creative process as involving "organizing principles which fuse into harmony, and gather about fixed predetermined centres, whatever heterogeneous elements life may have accumulated from without" (De Quincey 1998: 144).

Later De Quincey debated the paradoxical relationship between this tendency towards a "grandeur of human unity" (De Quincey 1998: 144) and the disunity, which meant that our childhood identity is not the same as the multiplicity of our adult identities. De Quincey's concept of heterogeneity within the layers of the palimpsestic mind, characterised by many overlapping and encrypted traces, leads neatly to more contemporary notions of the multiple self in the hands of Judith Butler (1990) and Rosi Braidotti (1994). Olugbenga Taiwo (*s.d.*) also explored this notion in relation to performance as "being able to shift to the appropriate identity at will requires us to be both all of the co-existent identities but also only one identity at the same time."

De Quincey started the process of replacing God with human creativity by substituting an eternal life created by the human mind for the Christian idea of eternal life (about which he was unsure). He saw the human mind as both constructive and destructive and the palimpsestic process as one of preservation by an entangling reconstruction.

PALIMPSEST AS ENSOULMENT

These ideas became further developed as psychoanalytic ideas in the context of investigations into dreams and memory. Freud (1925) developed the notion of the mystic writing pad, which is similar to the palimpsest, revealing how the memory works. In Freud's view this pad is likened to

> a wax layer which lies beneath a sheet of wax paper, and a transparent celluloid sheet. When the celluloid sheet is written on, traces of the writing appear on the wax paper, but when the paper is detached from the wax layer, the traces disappear, leaving the writing pad blank. The traces of writing are nonetheless preserved in the wax layer. The writing pad therefore performs the dual function of the palimpsest; it accepts new information on one end, and it produces permanent traces of memory on the other.[3]

[3] Quote from the website of the Chicago School of Media Theory: https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/palimpsest/ (15.08.2020).

It is a dynamic script (which Freud identifies with the unconscious) that is constantly changed by the processes of both erasing and writing, and also has unlimited capacity for receiving new inscriptions. The use of the image of wax recalls Plato's view of memory in *Thaeatetus* as a wax tablet. Plato distinguishes between wax in the memory that is soft and impressionable (which probably is needed by a creative artist) and wax which is hard and less receptive. Aristotle develops the metaphor in order to explain the puzzles surrounding remembering:

> One might be puzzled how, when the affection is present but the thing absent, what is not present is ever remembered. For it is clear that one must think of the affection, which is produced by means of perception in the soul and in that part of the soul, as being like a picture, the having of which is memory. For the change that occurs marks in a sort of imprint, as it were, of the sense image, as people do who seal things with signet rings. (Ricardo 2020)

Olugbenga Taiwo expresses this well in this poem (1998):

> The Monad, starlit being!
>
> Release me a memory
> held in time's vault.
> As I draw towards
> the picture painted
> in my genes' matrix,
> everything Dances to the
> tune of the Creator,
> an eternal mystery to me
> a fragment.
> Oh! The journey makes
> sweet mockery of possession,
> yet as a memory,
> a memory,
> aching to express:
> Release Me!

Memories are some sort of likeness to an experience or copy of an object that has been perceived. With Julia Kristeva's development of intertextuality this became further explored in her idea of the engendering of a

formula. This referred to her idea of the relationship or leap between the geno-text (the original text) and the pheno-text, which draws on this original text and bears within it the impression of the geno-text (Johnson 1988). The jump between the two produces a differential seal in the pheno-text. The continual birthing and erasing of the formula as its impression is stamped or sealed onto the pheno-text is similar to Freud's idea of the way in which marks are both inscribed on and erased from consciousness. In her thinking Kristeva drew on the Leibniz and Prague schools, but in bringing various strands together she produced a complex description of the relationship between geno-text and pheno-text, which we shall in the artists below. While Julia Kristeva was perhaps the originator of the term in the 1960s, hers is an original version of intertextuality. For her it is not an interface of literary texts but of the texts with the subjectivity of the author with its already imprinted palimpsestic layers—of emotions, unconscious and ideology. This is a helpful view for this article (Johnson 1988: 72).

PALIMPSEST AS RE-MEMBERING

The complexity of this process is clear in the accounts of the creative process in artists. This particular examination of the Book of Job as a geno-text for a visual representation, an orchestral score and a song, also shows how a pheno-text in a different medium from the original words increases the complexity. Kristeva saw how the geno-text may have Cartesian values of linearity but the pheno-text may involve the passage of one form of logic to another. The artist puts together in a new way—re-members—the impressions of seals stored on the wax tablet of the memory. In the accounts of artists' processes, we can see an element (found above in De Quincey 1998) of ordering, with creativity coming from

> personal need to create order and wholeness. Musical works reveal how the composer's craft largely comprises the synthesis and analysis of fragmentary musical ideas. In adopting these contrasting and complementary processes composers bring creative order to chaos, ambiguities, and conflicts within them. In this way they may maintain an equilibrium in their levels of neuroticism and stress… (Kemp 1996: 216).

The model of the creative process (Sparshott 1981, Boyce-Tillman 2016) contains four stages:

1. Preparation, in which the problem is investigated fully in all directions.
2. Incubation, in which the problem is not thought about consciously.
3. Illumination, which is the appearance of a happy idea.
4. Verification, in which the idea is elaborated and tested. (Wallas 1926)

Every creative act involves therefore an initial starting point and a retrieval of ideas from memory. The use of a text like Job represents the introduction of an Other into the memory; this triggers the newness of the created work which constitutes a reorganisation of the personality. In the process of developing this, I used Buber's (1970) idea of encounter with the Other which releases an immense amount of energy. Using points made by Levinas (1969) and Derrida (1972) about the need to maintain the Self/Other difference in the encounter (in this case the interrelationship between the geno-text and pheno-text), the experience also becomes the discovery of alterity within the self (Jackson 1998: 119). A sacred space is created by the dialogue of difference: "consequently, spirituality can be envisioned both as a "dialogue of souls" and as an "incarnating encounter"" (Illman 2012: 60).

The notion of encounter with something or someone Other also flickers through Rowan Williams' thinking about the arts when he talks of the encounter with other perspectives, noting "the interiority and inaccessibility that this entails and the necessary time and understanding in such a light" (Williams 2012: 17). This presupposes "a commitment to looking, thus a self-investment, even self-dispossession, in respect of what is seen or read" (Williams 2012: 17). This, he says, means encountering new perspectives. This results in the chaos of the period of incubation. Koestler (1964) talks of underground games or a dreamlike character (resembling the thinking of De Quincey and Freud):

> The period of incubation represents a *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Just as in the dream the codes of logical reasoning are suspended, so "thinking aside" is a temporary liberation from the tyranny of over-precise verbal concepts of the axioms and prejudices ingrained in the very texture of specialised ways of thought. It allows the mind

> to discard the straitjacket of habit, to shrug off apparent contradictions, to unlearn and forget and to acquire, in exchange, a greater fluidity, versatility and gullibility (Koestler 1964: 210).

Central to Koestler's theory was the bringing together simultaneously of activities occurring at several levels of the mind previously distant from one another, which here can be seen as the geno-text combined with traces already stored in the mind; these traces will overlay the geno-text to produce the pheno-text.

It is in this phase that we have the notions of an element of confusion, madness and dreaming:

> Generally speaking the germ of a future composition comes suddenly and unexpectedly. If the soil is ready—that is to say, if the disposition for work is there—it takes root, with extraordinary force and rapidity, shoots up through the earth, puts forth branches, leaves, and, finally, blossoms … It would be vain to try and put into words the immeasurable sense of bliss which comes over me directly a new idea awakens in me and begins to assume a definite form. I forget everything and behave like a madman. Everything within me starts pulsing and quivering; hardly have I begun the sketch when one thought follows another (Tchaikovsky 1970: 58).

In this process, many scripts interface in the writing over the geno-text producing hetero-glossia. Hybridity in the area of meaning was embraced by the poets as the twentieth century went on and they required more from the reader in terms of the construction of meaning. They embraced ambiguity, improvisation and multiplicity in the area of meaning. Apollinaire, his contemporaries and their aesthetic heirs, abandoned the idea of delivering coherent pre-packaged units of poetry. They played with creative disorientations and disjunctions. "Fragment is the unit; juxtaposition is the method; collage is the result" (Hoagland 2006). These poets set up a "heteroglossaic space" by their inclusion of a multiplicity of voices. The term originated with Bakhtin (1993) in his idea of Carnival, which suspends inequalities: it abolishes "privileges" and "free and familiar contact among people" "between illusion and reality" (Zahlan 1988). It is a meeting place of heterogeneity—polyglossia. The palimpsest process progresses through the accretion of various intertwining heterogenous

texts. In palimpsestic creations, such as those to be examined here, there emerges at least two clear voices as well as many others drawing on the creators' personal experience and the demands of the medium itself. In bringing together a Middle Eastern text with European creators the pieces are multi-languaged, international and interlingual (Bakhtin 1981).

The palimpsest has a chaotic, fractured nature which leads it into carnival. In intertextuality, texts are, in their meeting, both destroyed and accommodated. However, in the end there is no actual separation between the geno- and the pheno-text and they are fully merged in a new order. In this way, the pheno-text has the characteristics of a mosaic:

> This multifarious and diverse vision projected by the palimpsest, despite being the product of an attempt of destruction and erasure, demands a revision of conceptual systems based on the notions of fixity, linearity, centre and hierarchy. It impels us to replace these systems with new foundations that privilege the conceptions of multi-linearity, nodes, links and networks.[4]

Kristeva saw this process of creating as flowing and fluid, a to- and fro-ing between geno-text and pheno-text.

THE PALIMSPEST AS QUEERING

The process of creating a palimpsest, or intertextuality, can be linked to the contemporary processes of queering. Queering explores

> the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically (Sedgwick 1993: 8).

It challenges dominant views in favour of bringing subjugated knowers into the framing of history (Boyce-Tillman 2005). Michel Foucault's (1996) view of history used the term genealogy to describe history as a collection of palimpsestuous documents:

> Genealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents

[4] Quote from the website of the Chicago School of Media theory: https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/palimpsest/.

> that have been scratched over and recopied many times (Foucault 1996: 139).

He saw that the history should be

> the making visible of what was previously unseen either by magnifying the detail of analysis, or by addressing oneself to a layer of material which had hitherto had no pertinence for history and which had not been recognised as having any moral, aesthetic, political or historical value (Foucault 1980: 50–51).

He linked this with archaeological palimpsests which are recognized as the product of the accumulations of various cultures, such as at Angkor Wat where monuments have been reused and re-allocated over time. Built originally as a Hindu temple to the God Vishnu in the early 12th century CE, it became a Buddhist worship site with images combined with Hindu ones in a way that cannot be taken apart. It represents and contains various disruptions and reworkings, erasures and birthings, as does a palimpsest. Foucault wanted to see these multiple voices rediscovered with a view to uncovering colonial enterprises in which the colonised and the colonial were submerged and so freeing suppressed voices.

Feminist criticism has similarly unearthed lost voices, as in the song below, combining autobiography with fiction. This understanding was articulated by Benstock (1987), with reference to the writing of H. D. in *Palimpsest* (1926). Here she argued that the structure is entwined rather than layered and masculine and feminine are inextricably bound together (Benstock 1987: 350). Thus, queer and palimpsestuous both represent the involutedness of identity, which is also constantly being inscribed (Butler 1993). Such readings deconstruct the individualised self in a process called the "spectralization of the self," which inevitably leads to a "spectralization of temporality" (Dillon 2005). The palimpsest combines past and present as well as future possibilities. The present is destabilized by being inhabited by both past and future.

PALIMPSEST AS SAPIENTIAL THEOLOGY

This links the palimpsest with wisdom theology. Barbara Newman charted the presence and absence of Wisdom traditions in the dominant theological landscape:

> Where the feminine presides, God stoops to humanity and humanity aspires to God. [...] A more linear understanding of salvation history [is] cast in the form of a narrative beginning with creation and fall, culminating in the death and resurrection of Christ, and concluding with the Last Judgement [...] The feminine designation, on the other hand, evokes God's interactions with the cosmos insofar as they are timeless or perpetually repeated. Thus feminine symbols convey the principle of divine self-manifestation; the absolute predestination of Christ; the mutual indwelling of God in the world; and the saving collaboration between Christ and the faithful, manifested sacramentally in the Church and morally in the Virtues (Newman 1987: 45).

The palimpsest brings alive the past in the present, as De Quincey suggests. It uses a number of impressions in a process of re-membering—a putting together of a creator's identity in a new way. By queering the preconceptions about the past it points to a change in future perceptions. This bringing together of past, present and future moves a written text into a state that resembles the role of story in oral cultures where there is no definitive form but simply continual reworkings in new contexts. Olugbenga Taiwo (s.d.) examined the relationship between the literate (Western linear time) and oral (Return Beat) time perceptions:

> Western linear time and the curved time of the flux of the Return Beat. My becoming is contained and expressed in my kinesphere or personal space, which prepares me for the unborn/future [...].

According to Soyinka (1993), this idea stretches into the notion of temporal existence, where the world of the living (the present) is seen in a metaphysical sense as sharing the same spatial and temporal context as the world of the ancestors (the past) and the world of the unborn (the future).

Such a view is in line with process philosophers and theologians (Whitehead 1975: 91). It reworks the nature of temporality; past, present and future are fused in a way that differs from linear narratives and museum cultures:

> If music is the most fundamentally contemplative of the arts, it is *not* because it takes us into the timeless but because *it obliges us to rethink time* (Williams 1994: 250).

PALIMPSEST AS ANALYTICAL TOOL

Boyce-Tillman (2016) uses the palimpsest to understand intertextuality in artists working with Job as a geno-text. It will be examined, how this interacts with the domains that characterise the artistic experience:

- Expression—the emotional and feelingful domain.
- Values—the context of the artistic work.
- Construction—the way in which it is put together, the structural principles.
- Materials—the materials used to make the sound, the voice in the body, the instrument, the paint and paper.

This article unpicks an artistic presentation using audio, visual and live artistic elements that explores Job through the eyes of three people: an artist, a musician and a songwriter. It examines how Job can function as a living text reinterpreted by pheno-texts in a variety of media. It is an interdisciplinary weaving together of visual art, theology and music in the form of a crystallisation project (Richardson 2000). The author has gradually moved towards this methodology and way of presenting in a performative mode; it sees truth as a crystal with different facets acting as lenses to reveal different aspects of it:

> Crystallization combines multiple forms of analysis and multiple genres of representation into a coherent text or series of related texts, building a rich and openly partial account of a phenomenon that problematizes its own construction, highlights researchers' vulnerabilities and positionality, makes claims about socially constructed meanings, and reveals the indeterminacy of knowledge claims even as it makes them (Ellingson 2009: 4).

The three people whose work was combined within the presentation were:

- William Blake (1757–1827) who produced twenty-one plates for the Book of Job dating from 1821 or 1822.
- Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) who used the illustrations as the basis of an orchestral work, *Job—A Masque for dancing*—from 1931.
- June Boyce-Tillman (b. 1943) who used Job in a song relating to suffering (Boyce-Tillman 2018).

THE DOORS OF PERCEPTION—WILLIAM BLAKE

If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man [sic] "as it is, infinite. Infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern" (Keynes 1975: 14).

William Blake used the geno-text of Job to generate a pheno-text of engravings. Job's story was used to construct a symbolic universe in line with his thinking about the important role of the imagination in the spiritual search in the context of a world increasingly concerned with scientific truth. He brought the text into relationship with the art of engraving, in the process using some actual words from the geno-text. Expressively he overlaid the original ancient text with the Gothic architecture of his engraving apprenticeship which appears in Plate One, perhaps to embody the theme of worship for his audience. The buildings become more shapeless as the drama unfolds although shadows of a cross are apparent in some of the ruins. There are Gothic elements in the decorative stars of Plate Twelve and the Leviathan and Behemoth of Plate Fifteen, which resemble a woodcarving in a church. The panelled room in which Job talks to his daughters has Gothic echoes as well as the trumpets in the final engraving. Other symbols such as the cross to express woundedness and suffering. In the Construction of the set he selected some of the episodes, thereby erasing some of the geno-text and also adding one new episode—erasure and addition. His valuing of the visionary shaped the text into various contemporary shapes in figures like angels and Satan. Each illustration takes the observer deeper into the geno-text. He saw Job's testing as essential for him to begin his search for the true God, overlaying it with his own search which he saw as limited by the new natural sciences as well as traditional religion:

> Now I a fourfold vision see
> And a fourfold vision is given to me;
> Tis fourfold in my supreme delight
> And threefold in soft Beulah's night
> And twofold Always. May God us keep
> From Single vision and Newton's sleep![5]

[5] William Blake, letter to Butts, 22 Nov. 1802 (Keynes 1968: 59–63).

For Blake, everyone is created in God's image, and the divine and human faces are intertwined in a way essential to visual art. Blake overlaid the text initially with at least two series of watercolours that he painted between 1805–1821; the second set is related to the first but with thicker lines and darker colours and including two new images. These were then engraved directly onto plates using Blake's unique method. In this way, the text was reinterpreted in paint and on engraving plates from which they were printed. In these Materials, the text of Job is overlaid by Blake's own search which he saw as that of every person. He used the geno-text to set out his view of a misconceived God who needed to be replaced by an understanding of true divinity. The illustrations represented Blake's vision overlaid on visions from Job that the Divine becomes incarnate in humanity.

Blake—a poet, theologian, engraver, painter and illustrator—lived at the time of a plethora of English poets: Burns, Scott, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, Byron. As the son of a hosier he did not go to school, for which he was grateful:

> Thank God, I never was sent to a school,
> To be flogged into following the style of a fool![6]

Even as a child he was a visionary, relating how he saw a tree full of angels. Visions, especially of angels, continued throughout his life; he came to view them as an experience of another reality, which was to be embraced rather than analysed. This was achieved through poetry and painting. His early drawing talent was recognised and from the age of ten he went to a drawing school. He also undertook verse writing and song composition. At fourteen, he learned engraving skills as an apprentice. He was heavily influenced by Michelangelo, Shakespeare, the Bible and Gothic architecture, all of which are important strands in the palimpsest. For his etching, he mixed the colours himself. His *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* brought his skills in visual artistry and poetry together, yet they brought him little income. He saw himself as a poet-prophet in the lineage of Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah with a spiritual intention in all his work. He planned a series of prophetic books, which started with *The*

[6] Verse lines from https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Life_of_William_Blake_2,_Gilchrist.djvu/188

Book of Thel and continued with *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. These constitute an imaginative and poetic exploration of his problems with rational ways of knowing. His spirituality blended Pantheism with historical Christianity which underpinned the values of the set. He saw the potential of all human beings to incarnate the Divine and critiqued the judgmental theology of the Divine with its associated sense of guilt. As an artist, he saw himself as initiating a new Golden Age by pointing to the essence of things rather than their superficial appearance. To do this, he created his own unconventional language of form, light, shade and colour. He used the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg and Jacob Boehme to construct his symbolic universe and as overlays on the geno-text of Job. All these characteristics play out in the illustrations to the Book of Job, a story which fascinated him for much of his life. For Blake, it was a soul's journey through the difficulties that are a necessary part of the search for the True God (Tongue, s.d.).

His encounter with Job started in the early 1800s as two series of watercolours commissioned by two patrons, Thomas Butts and John Linnell, who in 1823 drew up an agreement for a set of engravings. The illustrations were not received well by his contemporaries. Various earlier commissions had not worked out, but his failure to get recognition did not change his sense of vocation to reveal what he saw as the truth about the Divine. The plates are marked March 8th 1825 but were probably published in the following year (Norton 1875). Blake was at the same time working on producing another pheno-text, engravings of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which remained unfinished at his death in 1827.

Figure one: Illustrations of the Book of Job showing the erasing of the sections of the Job text.

TITLEPAGE		
-PLATE I.	"Thus did Job continually"	Ch. i. 1–5.
II.	"When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me"	Ch. i. 6–12.
III.	"The fire of God is fallen from heaven"	Ch. i. 13–19.
IV.	"And I only am escaped alone to tell thee"	Ch. i. 14–19.
V.	"Then went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord"	Ch. ii. 6.

VI.	"And smote Job with sore boils"	Ch. ii. 7.
VII.	"They lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not"	Ch. ii. 11–12.
VIII.	"Let the day perish wherein I was born"	Ch. ii. 13; iii. 3–7.
IX.	"Then a spirit passed before my face"	Ch. iv. 15.
X.	"The just, upright man is laughed to scorn"	Ch. xii. 4.
XI.	"With dreams upon my bed thou scarest me, and affrightest me with visions"	Ch. vii. 14.
XII.	"I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid"	Ch. xxxii. 6.
XIII.	"Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind"	Ch. xxxviii. 1.
XIV.	"When the Morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy"	Ch. xxxviii. 7.
XV.	"Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee"	Ch. xl. 15; ch. xli.
XVI.	"Thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked"	Ch. xxxvi. 17.
XVII.	"I have heard thee with the hearing of the ear, but now my eye seeth thee"	Ch. xlii. 5.
XVIII.	"And my servant Job shall pray for you"	Ch. xlii. 7–9.
XIX.	"Every one also gave him a piece of money"	Ch. xlii. 11.
XX.	"There were not found women fair as the daughters of Job in all the land"	Ch. xlii. 15.
XXI.	"So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning"	Ch. xlii. 12–17.

> The Inventions to the Book of Job […] belonging, as they do, in style, to the accepted category of engraved designs—consist of twenty-one subjects, each highly wrought in light and shade, and each surrounded by a border of allusive design and inscription, executed in a slighter style than the subject itself. Perhaps this may fairly be pronounced, on the whole, the most remarkable series of engravings on a scriptural theme which has appeared since the days of Albert Dürer and Raphael, widely differing, too, from either.[7]

[7] Quote from Online Library of Liberty: https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/blake-blakes-illustrations-of-the-book-of-job/simple.

Blake situated the story in the past by using Hebrew characters on the Title page. Each engraving is surrounded by biblical text, some from the *Book of Job* and others from both Old and New Testaments—so the geno-text is subjected to erasures and additions. These surrounds also include symbolic representations of the scene in the engraving. In Plate Five, the upright angels of Plate Two are replaced by weeping angels and a serpent winds itself around the tree branches. In the scene of Job's cursing, fungi are depicted growing on the trees. In the whirlwind scene, a tree is blown over in the border. Job's early security is well expressed in the complex border of Plate Two, with carefully shut gates guarded by shepherds, birds and flowers in the trees and guardian ages reaching to a sky filled with God's words. In these changing visual images he portrays the expressive character of the original.

In Plate One, Job[8] the patriarch sits with his family kneeling under trees, on which are hung musical instruments. The sun has almost set (perhaps indicating that there is an ending to this pattern of life). Here we see the overlaying of other texts on the Job text. On the altar is inscribed: "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life. It is spiritually discerned." Above it, is the opening of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." In Plate Two, the family are joined by the angel of Divine presence seated on a throne. Blake adds in the top left and right margins the words: "We shall awake up in thy likeness." The angel looks like Job, setting out Blake's model of humanity created in God's image. Blake draws on another revelatory Hebrew text, *The Book of Daniel*: "I beheld ...the Ancient of days." But Satan is intruding on the scene in a whirlwind and Job and his family are being caught up in his fiery energy. Job has to find his true Divine self from the Satanic ego-self.

In Plate Three, a black-winged Satan has taken God's place. Here, Blake has added more description of Satan compared to the original text, a requirement of the move from text to visual representation. Hence, a halo characterised by lightning and thunder replaces the Divine clear peaceful halo. Wind and fire are destroying Job's house and killing his sons. In the frame flames and smoke appear, along with serpents' scales and scorpions. Everything is in Satan's power. In Plate Four, a grieving

[8] In the ensuing description of the plates, the Scripture quotations used by Blake are in quotation marks and left with his use of upper- and lower-case letters and punctuation.

Job and his wife, sitting in a grim landscape, receive more disastrous news in the context of a less well-shaped building than the Gothic cathedral of Plate One. In Plate Five, the compassion of God is combined with Satan's fire. Job and his wife are giving money to the poor, surrounded by angels, while God surveys them with pity with a half-hidden halo. Meanwhile, Satan pours a phial of fire over Job. In Plate Six, Job is further oppressed by a plague of boils from Satan and new texts are overlaid. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb & Naked shall I return thither. The Lord gave & the Lord hath taken away, Blessed be the Name of the Lord." A flashing sun is descending into a black sea and his wife is overwhelmed by grief. The frame contains symbols of brokenness in the way in which expressive elements are represented visually: a broken pitcher, bat winged angels holding a dangerous spider and a slime-engulfed frog.

In Plate Seven, Job's patience is portrayed as three sinuous figures offer advice. Exhausted, he rests his head on his wife. A piece of architecture resembles a cross, while light illuminates forbidding mountains. In Plate Eight, this landscape is burdened with heavier cross-like architecture—the bringing into the story of a Christian overlay, larger mountains and smoke in place of light. A solitary Job, with friends cowering in silence, has hands upraised and curses the day on which he was born. In the visual image, it is his face that portrays his torment. In Plate Eight, a now kneeling Job is mocked by his friends who point at him aggressively. The dark cross still lurks in the architecture, but the black hills are lit again: "for though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." The torment continues in Plate Nine with the terrifying visions of Job's dream and text:

> Why do you persecute me as God & are not satisfied with my flesh? Oh that my words were printed in a Book that they were graven with an iron pen & lead in the rock for ever For I know that my Redeemer liveth & that he shall stand in the latter days upon the Earth & after my skin destroy thou This body yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for Myself and mine Eyes shall behold.

In Plate Twelve, the landscape is transformed with stars and more light appearing, although the ruined house is still in the background. His friends look somewhat confused, but Job is less tormented. Although his wife's face is still hidden, Blake's skill in drawing portrays her as more calm

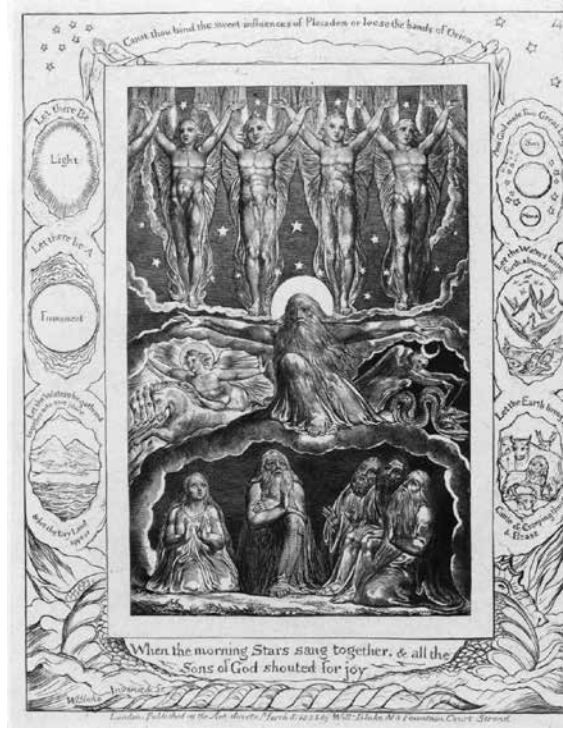

Figure two: Plate XIV. "When the Morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for Joy."

and peaceful, representing her more clearly than in the original text and so queering the text by making new figures more visible. "For his eyes are upon the ways of Man & he observeth all his goings [...] all these things worketh God oftentimes with Man to bring back his Soul from the pit to be enlightened with the light of the living." Plate Thirteen has a whirling quality even in the frame. God, surrounded by a whirlwind, addresses Job and his wife who are now peaceful, looking upwards with folded hands while his friends cower in wonder. "Who maketh the Clouds his Chariot & walketh on the Wings of the Wind" (from Psalm 104).

Plate Fourteen is perhaps the most famous of the set with a design that has been compared with early Tuscan painters, thereby overlaying another style in the entanglement of the pheno-text. The texts are intertwined, drawing on the creation texts of Genesis. Job, his wife and three

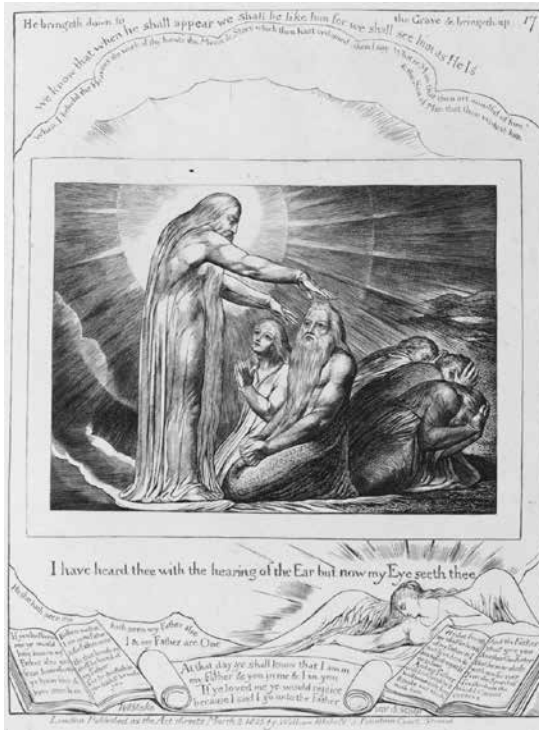

Figure three: Plate XVII. "I have heard Thee with the Hearing of the Ear, but now my Eye seeth Thee."

friends look upward to where God is creating the world with angels dancing behind him in a star-studded sky. The angels are substantial figures with clear faces, bodies and wings, all portraying power, not the floaty indistinct figures of other artists' portrayals. They are clearly part of Blake's reality and he is making the angels of Job in his own style.

Job disappears from Plate Fifteen, in which Blake uses his skills in managing light, shade and architectural proportion and balance to portray God touching two magnificent creatures: "Of Behemoth he saith, He is the chief of the ways of God. Of Leviathan he saith, He is King over all the Children of Pride." "Can any understand the spreadings of the Clouds the noise of his Tabernacle?" A peaceful Job and his wife reappear in Plate Seventeen, receiving God's blessing in a dazzlingly radiant light. Meanwhile their friends cower behind them, although one of them looks

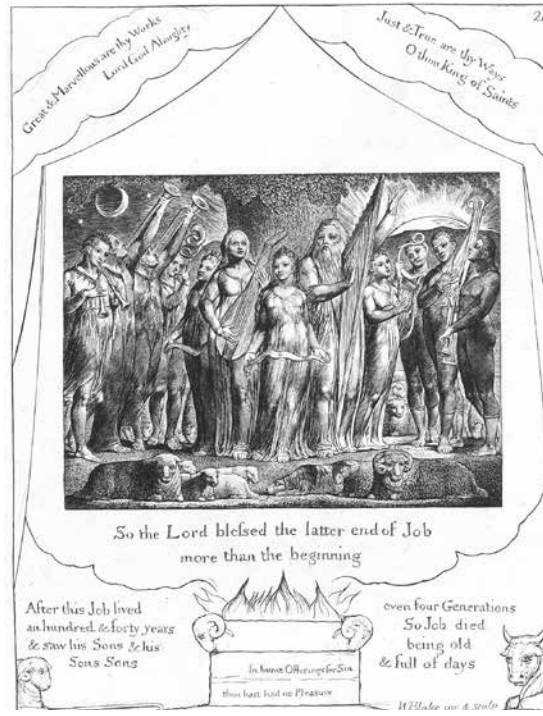

Figure four: Plate XXI. "So the Lord blessed the Latter End of Job more than the Beginning."

with concern at the Divine figure. Again, their reaction is made clearer here than in the original text. This illustration—the central theme of the story—entangles texts from the Book of Samuel, St. John's first letter and Psalm 8: "He bringeth down to the Grave & bringeth up. we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see him as He Is. When I behold the Heavens the work of thy hands the Moon & Stars which thou hast ordained, then I say, What is Man that thou art mindful of him? & the Son of Man that thou visitest him?"

In Plate Eighteen, Job finds God's acceptance. In visual representation, God has to appear in a shape rather than just a word. Angels and corn fill the surrounding frame alongside a painter's palette and brushes in which the artist paints himself into the palimpsest. Between them, Blake has inscribed "W. Blake inv. & sculpt." On the left, light filters through

tree trunks to reveal a lighter sea. It is the left (sinister) side in Blake's thinking that often represents the evil. Job is portrayed larger than before, illuminated by surrounding light and surrounded by the smoke of incense rising from an altar. He is praying for his friends kneeling at his feet, which is illustrated by Jesus' words: "I say unto you Love your Enemies bless them that curse you do good to them that hate you & pray for them."

In Plate Twenty, Job is telling his story to his daughters against the background of pictures from that story. His daughters are strong women with substantial arms and powerful eyes, with a dignity equal to men, thus queering the original text by presenting the images of women as strong and powerful. The frame is filled with vegetation and musical instruments. Blake hints at Job's take on the story by choosing a text from Psalm 139 to add to the story: "If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there If I make my bed in Hell behold Thou art there." Plate Twenty-one recapitulates Plate One; but now the instruments are being played. It is sunrise and the stars and moon are appearing. The flocks graze peacefully in their fields. The texts are different and confident. Texts from Revelations are added: "Great & Marvellous are thy Works Lord God Almighty Just & True are thy Ways O thou King of Saints." The scene is filled with joy epitomised by the musicking.

In sum, in his illustrations Blake used a number of devices and overlays to portray his own interpretation of the narrative: the opening up of humanity's doors of perception, which enables them to live more fully because they can see more clearly the Divine within. The Blake palimpsest effectively combines the Job geno-text with the complexity of Blake's engraving skills, experiences and understanding as well as other thinkers contemporary with Blake.

WONDER: A MASQUE FOR DANCING—VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

In Vaughan Williams's work, the text has to be overlaid by music which requires a number of adjustments to accommodate the new medium, as in Blake's move to visual images. Vaughan Williams was born in Gloucestershire where his father was vicar. This would result in a Christian overlay. This was coloured by Vaughan Williams' own agnosticism which did

not, however, stop him from editing *The English Hymnal* and writing many works with Christian themes. He was fascinated by the English folk tradition and collected folk tunes from an early age. These play an important role in the musical pheno-text. Another overlay in terms of values and expression was the composer's service in the First World War. During the war his hearing was damaged, which led him to assume a near pacifist position. The piece contains many of the characteristics of the composer's work: idioms from English folksongs, pastoral scenes similar to those in his well-known piece *The Lark Ascending* and harsh dissonant passages in the style of his later symphonies. Thus, in every domain the pheno-text overlays the Job geno-text. Michael Kennedy (1994) regards it as the composer's greatest work.

Due to the temporal nature of music only certain parts of the original story could be used, but these form an important part in the structuring of the piece and are written into the orchestral score. Some elements of the geno-text are erased, some are added and some re-ordered. The use of an orchestra plays an important part and every performance of the work is again overlaid by the expressive gestures of a particular group of players and also the dancers when it is performed on the stage, all constituting further layers in the palimpsest.

The Blake scholar Sir Geoffrey Keynes initiated Vaughan Williams's meeting with Job. Together with his sister-in-law, Gwen Raverat, they proposed a ballet project based on the Blake illustrations. Vaughan Williams—a member of their family—was approached to compose the music to Gwen's designs. The first performance of the work, conducted by the composer, was in a full orchestral version at the Norwich Festival in 1930. It uses a very large orchestra using an organ. The orchestration had to be scaled down in 1931 for a performance in the Cambridge Theatre in London with Ninette de Valois and the Vic-Wells company. Thus, the palimpsest took various forms as in the Blake story.

In his interaction with Geoffrey Keynes we can see the two disagreeing on the nature of the overlaying strands of the palimpsest. Geoffrey Keynes' scholarship on Blake was set out in his book *The Gates of Memory* (1981), but Vaughan Williams was not happy with the plans that Keynes and Raverat had for the ballet which was to commemorate the 1928 centenary of Blake's death. There are many versions of the scenario (McFarland

1994: 362–367). Raverat's first draft was coloured by an overlay of socialism and a critique of materialism linked to Blake's critique of the Industrial Revolution. Throughout the creation of the piece, Vaughan Williams fought for his voice to be heard—adding a funeral cortege in scene V—thereby erasing some of the book and adding new scenes.

Diaghilev turned the piece down for the Russian Ballet. This was in tune with Vaughan Williams' thinking, as he called the piece a Masque rather than a ballet. The work does not have the speech and song that characterised the ancient form, but the vigour of a balletic overlay was changed into something more stately. The use of the English past links with the palimpsestic characteristic of the retention of past and future in the present. This temporality expresses for the composer the privileging of eternal over temporal truths, situating the piece outside of time. Vaughan Williams had already written two ballets, *Old King Cole* and *On Christmas Night*, which included English tunes such as the beautiful Playford tune *Hunsdon House* that provided the inspiration for the first scene of Job. He did not like the balletic dancing "on points" and this piece is sometimes seen as the start of a distinctive English dance tradition. The composer writes:

> I amused myself with making a sketch of Job—I never expected Djag w[oul]d look at it [...] but it really w[oul]dn't have suited the sham serious [...] decadent and frivolous attitude of the R.B. [Russian ballet] toward everything—can you imagine Job sandwiched between "Les Biches" and "Cimarosiana"—and that dreadful pseudo-cultured audience saying to each other "My dear, have you seen God at the Russian Ballet." No—I think we are well out of it—I don't think this is sour grapes—for I admit that it would have been great fun to have been a production by the R.B.—though I feel myself that they w[oul]d have made an unholy mess of it with their overdeveloped calves.[9]

The Tudor dances he used—Saraband, Pavane and Galliard—represented an old metaphor of dance as worship in its association with acts of homage in aristocratic houses. His desire to have a particular style of choreography was written into the orchestral score:

[9] Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum MS 1250–1985.

> Enter Job's sons and their wives and dance in front of the curtain. They hold golden wine cups in their left hands which they clash at + (each time). The Dance should be formal, statuesque and slightly voluptuous, it should not be a minuet as far as choreography is concerned (Vaughan Williams 1969: 40).

Keynes, in his contribution to the palimpsest, changed the three comforters into three wily hypocrites. It is the three messengers that wake Job from the terrifying visions which Vaughan Williams described in the score, showing the composer's desire to relate the movement closely to his music:

> Enter Satan. Tableau as in Blake VI. Satan stands over Job and calls up terrifying Visions of Plague, Pestilence, Famine, Battle, Murder and Sudden Death who posture before Job (see Blake XI). Each of these should be represented by a group of dancers. The dance should be wild and full of movement, and the stage should finally be full (Vaughan Williams 1969: 50).

In terms of values, whereas Blake set the story in the context of the cleansing of human beings' perception, Vaughan Williams set it in the recurring struggle between good and evil. In Blake, it is the figure of Elihu who confronts Job with his sin of self-importance in a compassionate way that convinces him, unlike the three so-called Comforters. The centrepiece for Vaughan Williams is Job's enlightenment in the cursing of the day in which he was born. In this, Elihu is simply more of a gentle befriender and consoler. In the hands of Vaughan Williams, Keynes and Raverat the story became about a much more cyclical view of an eternal struggle between good and evil, thus putting a number of new images over the geno-text and looking towards an iterative future.

In addition, Vaughan Williams's expressive interpretation was based on his experience in the First World War, which precipitated the deafness that was to increase as his life progressed. The issue of suffering became simply part of the cyclical play of good and evil. So, the nature of the journey in the Blake illustrations and the Book of Job was changed. Because of the temporal nature of music—which uses time in a different way from visual art—only a few of the illustrations were used (see Figure Five). In Vaughan Williams's drama, Behemoth and Leviathan and the episode

with the boils are omitted. It is clear, not only from correspondence but also from the orchestral score itself, that there were different opinions of the ordering of the piece. Instructions were added to the score to indicate his modifications of the original text, such as:

> In the Blake illustrations Scene V Messengers follows here. Producers who wish to follow Blake's order exactly can do so by taking a pause at the double bar here and go straight to Scene V (Vaughan Williams 1969: 48).

Figure five: Table of Correspondences between Vaughan Williams's score and Blake's plates[10]

Vaughan Williams		Blake
Scene 1	*The Saraband of the Sons of God*	3, 1–2, 5
Scene 2	*Satan's Dance of Triumph*	5
Scene 3	*Minuet of the Sons of Job and Their Wives*	3
Scene 4	*Job's Dream*	9, 6, 11
Scene 5	*Dance of the Three Messengers*	4, 6
Scene 6	*Dance of Job's Comforters*	7, 10, 8, parody of 2, 11
Scene 7	*Elihu's dance of Youth and Beauty*	18, 12, 14
Scene 8	*Pavane of the Sons of the Morning*	14, 5 + 16, 21, 18
Scene 9	*Epilogue*	21, 19–20

Although there is a symphonic quality to the work, the breaks between the sections are short and there are no breaks between scenes 4–5, 6–7, and 8–9. The twenty-one Blake plates were reduced to six sections in effect and, as we have seen, this reduced some of the paradoxes in the Blake version:

> The composer's use of the triplet, triple and duple metre, and modes intermixed with diatonic keys creates a musical complexity comparable to Blake's (Weltzen 1992:311).

[10] Based on Weltzen (1992).

The musical construction uses complex musical representations of the people in the illustrations and motifs. These were printed in the Norwich festival programme[11] and are based on Wicksteed's (1971) identification of Heavenly, Earthly and Satanic elements in the narrative. In this way, Vaughan Williams was influenced by another person's palimpsestuous reading of the text. It is this motivic construction that gives the work its symphonic character (McFarland 1994). The composer has to move words and images into musical elements in his palimpsest. Satan has four musical elements: a staccato figure with a leap of minor 7th, a brass fanfare, a quartal figure and the tritone. It also uses alternating major and minor thirds, perhaps contrasting with the security of the more heavenly music. Satan's music is highly dissonant and lacking tonal centre. His virtuosic dance is tritonal. His motives appear in three comforters' piece, while the three messengers also include the quartal motif. God and the angels are homophonic and major, melodic rather than motivic. Elihu, who is identified as heavenly, is melodic in a way that resembles English folksong. His scene is full of gentleness and minimally accompanied, alternating between major and pentatonic. Between the extremes of heaven and hell is Job who has two themes in the introduction and the dream music. These are either modal or pentatonic, expansive and lyrical. Job's music is related to the heavenly in lyrical content but to Satan in its contrapuntal treatment. In Scene Three the modal flute melody becomes chromatic when Satan intervenes. Therefore, the figure of Job embraces both the heavenly and the satanic,—and thus a new entanglement with the geno-text.

The first scene starts off as a peaceful pastoral idyll during which:"Here the distant landscape lights up suggesting the far-off sound of flocks and herds" (Vaughan Williams 1969: 3).

It leads to a skipping dance and reaches a climax as Job blesses his children saying: "it may be my children have sinned" (in the score). Stabbing motifs on bassoons and basses herald Satan's intrusion on the scene. The heavens opening to reveal God who, as in Blake's second engraving, is portrayed in the *Saraband of the Sons of God*. Into this Satan intrudes and the rest of the scene, alternating serenity and aggression, illuminates Satan's dialogue with God. God majestically leaves his throne.

[11] Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum MS 3-1987, fol. 12.

Scene Two—*Satan's Dance of Triumph*—is a lengthy vigorous and violent dance (danced originally by Anton Dolin)—the only one of its kind in the Masque, where Satan needs to be painted musically rather in than the single word of a literary text. It is marked Presto leading to Con Fuoco (with fire) with a march-like passage (possibly reflecting Vaughan William's military experience). In the score, the composer gives the possibility of making it shorter. The words *Gloria in excelsis Deo* are written over the brass section in the score as Satan usurps God's throne using brass playing fortissimo with four *f*'s using the distorted sound of the mutes. The peace of the Minuet of Scene Three is disrupted by Satan entering on the wind instruments and killing everyone. The texture thins and softens into a lament ending on low empty octaves on bassoons, bass clarinet, pizzicato low strings and timpani. Scene Four is Job's lurid dream. Each of the groups of dancers—plague and pestilence, famine and battle (to which is added etc., again reflecting the composer's war experiences and very aggressive)—is carefully drawn and they finally join in a threatening ring dance. In Scene Five the three messengers awaken Job with bad news and the episode has the character of a lament into which intrudes the funeral cortege of Job's sons and their wives (which the composer says can be omitted). A free cadenza-like oboe passage, as Job is thinking, leads to him to turn to God: "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The section ends with a gentle viola melody. Job's comforters in Scene Six—the wily hypocrites of Geoffrey Keynes—are portrayed on sinuous saxophones. Initially sympathetic they become increasingly angry. They return to pseudo-sympathy before Job curses the day he was born, which is accompanied by a parody of the *Saraband of the Sons of God*:

> Heaven is now lit up. The figures throw off their veils and display themselves as Satan enthroned surrounded by the hosts of Hell (Vaughan Williams 1969: 77).

The solo tam-tam—a huge gong—precedes the entry of the full organ with "solo reeds coupled," which adds a sharpness to the sound representing Job's curse, which is now a massive soundscape overlaying the verbal statement of the geno-text. The organ leaves the texture as Job and his friends cower in fear and shivering motifs on the strings descend until

only cellos and double basses remain. Elihu's entry in Scene Seven is marked by a rhapsodic violin solo:

> Heaven gradually shines behind the stars. Dim figures are seen dancing a solemn dance. As heaven grows lighter, they are seen to be the Sons of the Morning dancing before God's throne (see Blake XIV) (Vaughan Williams 1969: 84).

A solemn Pavane appears, diatonic and stately, in which the two harps play significant parts. Scene Eight—*The Galliard of the Sons of the Morning*—starts jaggedly with Satan claiming victory, but God's dismissal happens very quickly in a rapidly descending figure. The harps again play a significant part in the Galliard (based on a military march), which drives Satan to fall from heaven. This leads to the *Altar Dance*, in which the heavenly and the earthly combine, including *Gregorian Mass VIII, the Kyrie de Angelis*. Christian elements are entangled with the original text. There are three thematic layers with the altar tune on the high wind instruments, the heavenly Pavane on the wind and brass and Job's theme on the strings. Job's theme is reconciled to the altar theme to portray his reconciliation to God, showing how music is able to entangle polyglossaic themes simultaneously, unlike words. In Scene Nine, fiends visit the old man Job with gifts and they receive a blessing in a peaceful landscape. At the end, a string chord diminuendos into niente (nothing) as if the performance vanishes into eternity.

In *Job*, Vaughan Williams followed Wicksteed's view (1971) that Job resembles God and Satan—a distinct layer on top of the genotext—depending on what he is doing at any given time. In Scene Six, when Job curses the day he is born, the music descends into chromaticism, which makes him like Satan. As in Blake, the final *Epilogue*—"So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning"—is like the introduction but moves from the tonal centre of G to B flat, maybe reflecting the minor third of Satan or perhaps a change of heart in Job. Satan is driven out in stately manner, but there is the hint that he will reappear. In the end, Job resembles God with a Jesus-like quality. The end is different from Blake—Job is old and humbled—a passive, resigned and enduring figure caught up in the eternal contest between good and evil. He is not playing an instrument; Satan is still present. Vaughan Williams

de-emphasized a person's role in their redemption, seeing a person caught up in an eternal cycle. The Masque is thus 'a personal vision to rival Blake's (McFarland 1994:362). Here we are having the interlocking of two different palimpsests with many other strands entangled. The *Pavane, Galliard* and *Epilogue* were played at the composer's funeral at Westminster Abbey in 1958, testifying to the centrality of the work to his musical and personal identity.

THE GIFT OF DARKNESS—AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

The final case study is an autoethnographic account of a song written by June Boyce-Tillman. The author of this article is the creator of the song in this section and so is referred to in the first person throughout. The monophonic song form is a much less complex and pared down form than that used in the previous two case studies, based on my experience as a hymn writer (Boyce-Tillman 2006). My thinking about theodicy was an important strand in my palimpsest, contemplating its relationship to abuse and forgiveness in the contemporary world. The materials I used are a simple single line melody using a well-known tune—very simple and limited. Writing a metric text involves condensing ideas into a very limited range of words, substantially less than a literary text, and so much is erased or rather condensed. This makes the construction profoundly different and quite constraining compared with the long geno-text. The notion of the gift of darkness in the title came from Mary Oliver's writing about the death of a loved one: "She gave me a box full of darkness and it took some time for me to realise that it too was a gift."[12] I found that my own box full of darkness—of childhood abuse and mental illness—was a gift (Boyce-Tillman 2017). This personal element of self-awareness and self-reflexivity shapes the expression. Rowan Williams draws on Raimond Gaita (1999) to see art as a loving encounter with a subjectivity not one's own (Williams 2012: 17)—in this case the encounter with the geno-text of Job. In my inner processing, the psyche opened up to the notion of exploring inner landscapes through the encounter with the landscapes of the Job text but also the engravings of Blake. Susan Shooter (2016) linked

[12] I am grateful to Mairin Valdez for this quotation given to me at a Womanchurch meeting at Carol Boulter's house in Advent 2011.

the survivor's journey to Job whom she saw through his sufferings as having a special experience of God's timeless presence which led to a challenging of injustices, particularly the abuse of power (Shooter 2016: 81–112). In this way, she queered some traditional readings of the text. The values set out in the song queer cultural values in the Church's preaching of a simple and immediate forgiveness and psychotherapies' doubts about the possibility of forgiveness (Walrond-Skinner 1998).

William P. Brown's work on Job in his interrogating of the Wisdom texts—the others being Proverbs and Ecclesiastes—was an important strand in my palimpsestic process. His collection of texts was a source for rediscovering sapiential theology, not least in a feminine dimension to the Divine. He linked the emphasis on the character formation with creation spirituality. Titles of his chapter on Job are *The Wound of Wonder* and *Wonder Gone Wild* (Brown 2014:67–135). He saw Job as leaving the security of patriarchy which he compared with the journey in Proverbs, so queering patriarchal culture in a way in which the song author could identify:

> But unlike the Proverbial son's journey, the movement of Job's anomalous character is much more subversive, requiring a deconstruction of the traditional norms and marks of patriarchal character. Through circuitous deliberations, Job replaces his initially submissive posture with one of grievance and bitter protest. Job's chutzpah becomes a crowning mark of his integrity on transition. Yet his journey does not end with impassioned protests against his friends and God. Like Wisdom leading the son outward into the community, YHWH leads Job into a frighteningly wondrous, quintessentially strange cosmic community (Brown 2014: 190).

There are parallels here with the widening of Job's cosmic vision. Here, however, there is a sense of the power of the marginalized in Brown's time of migration and the treatment of those who are different, a value system the song author shared:

> Estranged from family and friends, Job finds himself in a world whose horizons embrace the very margins of the perceived orders of creation, far beyond human control. As the periphery becomes the center, Job finds himself on the edge. The strange, wild creatures become his new community, and in them Job is afforded a new moral

> vision that embraces the margins, as humanly perceived of the cosmic community. No longer based on mechanical laws of creation and retribution, creation is the Creator's cosmic ark, with all creatures living fully and freely. Job's odyssey deliberately blurs the boundaries between the familiar and the strange in wonder's liminality (Brown 2014: 191).

So, if Behemoth and Leviathan were absent from Vaughan Williams's representation of the Book of Job, they formed a central part of William P. Brown's exposition and my song, showing how different parts of the geno-text are erased in various palimpsests. His conclusion was in tune with this literature and with the desire for a reconnection with the natural world:

> Like the son-turned family-man at the conclusion of Proverbs, Job, the patriarch-turned-citizen of the cosmos, returns to his domicile [...] It took an alien world and a boastful God to show Job the common bond of life that embraces both ostriches and kings, the foolish and the wise, the stranger and the friend, the rich and the poor, monsters and daughters. God has made them all (Brown 2014: 135).

This rediscovery of wonder potentially restores the innocence that may have been taken away quite early. The religious/theological search might be seen as an attempt to "delimit" wonder by "comprehending the source of the wondrous" (Miller 2016), which Sam Keen (in tune with Blake) saw as lost in much religious thinking (Keen 1973). To surrender to wonder means:

> allowing oneself to be cast into the abyss of the unknown instead of trying to find a way to secure oneself from that vertiginous possibility [...]. Inquiry is limited to figuring out how to bring the unknown inside the parameters of the known, how to disarm its difference, how to remove its transcendent dimension so as to reduce it to something manageable (Miller 2016).

This raises the possibility of a deeply authentic spirituality from the refinement of suffering (Shooter 2016: 52). This was certainly my experience from the very beginning; it was my grandchild (an Elihu like figure in the Vaughan Williams style) who led me back to gratitude and an authentic

spirituality, linking it again with the natural world. This is how I saw, in Vaughan Williams and Brown, God comforting Job. God reveals Job's place in a greater cosmic scheme, a place that can be reached in this life not only via dying (through suicide), which had been my way out for so many years, Now, the rediscovery of the liminal space in this life and a relationship with the cosmic—embracing it and finding ways to access it—became an important part of my journeying into the Divine loving and an important construction principle in the song. The song's unusual temporality fused past, present and future and accessed a cosmic dimension. In this space, I became comfortable with uncertainty and able to embrace paradox. But it had been a long journey (Boyce-Tillman 2018) and I felt that a song would encompass this most clearly because of its narrative structure.

The song is a pheno-text bearing marks of various pre-existent palimpsests on the Job geno-text. I was asked to prepare the song for a conference for everyone to sing so I used the well-known tune *My Bonny lies over the ocean*, a tune with an original text that embraced a longing that might be seen as a longing for an authentic interiority/spirituality (O'Sullivan 2016). This table shows the entanglement that characterises the palimpsest.

Figure six: Table of June Boyce-Tillman's song (2018) *The Gift of Darkness* with its origins in Blake, Vaughan Williams and Brown

June Boyce-Tillman's song. *The Journey to Forgiveness—The Gift of Darkness*	Origins of the ideas overlaying the Job geno-text
1. A tear has appeared in the cosmos, A tear is appearing in me; A tear has appeared in the cosmos; Forgiveness will set us all free. CHORUS *Letting go, letting go,* *Let loose healing mercy in me, in me;* *Letting go, letting go,* *Forgiveness is setting us free.*	God made everything in right relationship (Hildegard in Boyce-Tillman 2000 drawing on Pythagoras and St. Clement of Alexandria). Our task is to restore right relationship which may be correcting wrong relationship as in Blake's interpretation of Job—Plate Four of the Blake illustrations.
2. This tearing invites us to journey; A journey begins within me; This tearing invites us to journey; Forgiveness will set us all free. CHORUS	As in Job, the journey can be long and complex—a tension between religious and therapeutic thinking on forgiveness (Walrond-Skinner 1998).

3. This journey will lead us through anger; Is leading to anger in me; This journey will lead us through anger; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	I found Job cursing the day he was born particularly stunning both in Blake's and Vaughan Williams representations—dazzling expressions of naked anger.
4. Fierce anger is calling for justice; Fierce anger is calling in me; Fierce anger is calling for justice; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	William Brown sees in the end of Job a renewed view of the world as unjust and needing prophets for justice, this relating to Blake's calling to produce prophetic books and the need for cultural queering.
5. Injustice is shouting for vengeance; Injustice is shouting in me; Injustice is shouting for vengeance; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	We do not see vengeance in The Book of Job although lurks in some of the Blake illustrations and is present in the literature on theodicy.
6. Our vengeance will rest in refining Will rest in refining in me; Our vengeance will rest in refining; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	What we do see in Blake's illustrations is the refining of Job's powerful feelings by his encounter with the wildness of nature (Brown 2014).
7. Refining will lead us to courage Is leading to courage in me; Refining will lead us to courage Forgiveness is setting us free.	"[Job's] integrity is anchored not so much in the traditional categories of moral virtue as in his newfound freedom and courage, founded upon his vulnerability" (Brown 2014:102).
8. This courage will set free our grieving Will set free the grieving in me; This courage will set free our grieving Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	There is much grieving in Vaughan Williams' music and the expressions in Blake's engravings—around the loss of his sons and the destruction of his security.
9. Our grieving will turn to lamenting Lamenting is deep within me; Our grieving will turn to lamenting; Forgiveness is setting us free.	Lamenting, in my thinking, places this in a wider cosmic lament heard in Vaughan Williams.
10. Lamenting will reach out for comfort, Is reaching for comfort in me; Lamenting will reach out for comfort; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	Vaughan Williams' view of Elihu is very consoling, and compassionate.

11. That comfort brings deep understanding; Brings deep understanding in me; That comfort brings deep understanding; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	The vision of Behemoth and Leviathan develops Job's wider understanding of the cosmic scheme into which he fits.
12. Our deep understanding restores us; It starts that restoring in me; Our deep understanding restores us; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	We see, in the final Blake illustration, a restoration for Job and his family, more jubilantly in Blake than in Vaughan Williams.
13. Restoring can bring reconciling; Can bring reconciling in me; Restoring can bring reconciling Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	There is a sense in Vaughan Williams' *Epilogue* of a reconciliation of the Satanic and Divine within Job himself. "Restoration requires risk, the risk to give and receive love in an ever-threatening, grief-dispensing world" (Brown 2014: 131).
14. That deep reconciling brings wonder; It brings a great wonder in me That deep reconciling brings wonder Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	This is the serious theme of Brown explaining the role of the great creatures which cannot be grasped but only gazed upon with amazement.
15. That wonder will trigger thanksgiving Will trigger thanksgiving in me; That wonder will trigger thanksgiving; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	There is a strong sense of thanksgiving in both Blake and Vaughan Williams.
16. Thanksgiving will heal the deep tearing; Will heal the deep tearing in me. Thanksgiving will heal the deep tearing; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS	The last Blake engraving sees the family restored in joy and a sense of seeing the hard times as blessings, as gifts—the gift of darkness.

17. A tear is repaired in the cosmos; A tear is repairing in me; A tear is repaired in the cosmos; Forgiveness is setting us free. CHORUS[13].	The story has a timeless quality shown in Blake's use of the Gothic architecture and Hebrew characters on the title page and Vaughan Williams' embracing antique forms and contemporizing them. Past, present and future are fused.

CONCLUSION

This article's title brings together the metaphor of the palimpsest as a way of understanding how creative artists work from a geno-text to produce various pheno-texts; these include the changes necessary when a different medium is used from literary to visual, musical and metrical. The intertextuality embraces an entanglement of diverse, often paradoxical and polyglossaic, ideas as the various seals on the surface of the soul are integrated into a new order. Certainly, in Blake's and Brown's thinking, Job had to undergo the trials in order to get a wider vision. It is less true of Vaughan Williams, who portrayed the story as but one cycle in the endless struggle of good and evil. But the title Masque is from Vaughan Williams, the linkage of the present with the past and the future. This is where the word living in the title comes from. Artists contemporise texts rather than historicising them.

Each of the three artists in this article have produced palimpsests on the original Job text, including their own experiences (in the expression), value systems which often queer contemporary culture and reinterpret the text, using different materials with different ways of construction. Blake challenged a world that was giving up imaginative ways of knowing in favour of rational, scientific knowing. Vaughan Williams was deeply affected by his war experiences and shaped the story to see these as part of an eternal cosmic cyclical contest between good and evil. I used the story and the work of Wisdom theologian William Brown to shape a song with the Job text as companion; in it I rework the possibility of redemption which motivated early theorists in this area, such as De Quincey. The palimpsestic process is seen as resurrecting the past, drawing on traces

[13] Written by June Boyce-Tillman March 29th, 2018 (Maundy Thursday) finished on Easter Sunday April 1st for Amanda Edwards and Annie Blampied (unpublished).

imprinted on the soul, re-membering the self and identity and potentially queering a culture and pointing to a new future. Its fusion of past, present and future causes people to access a different form of temporality which some would regard as spiritual and can be linked via process philosophy to sapiential theology and oral cultures which this poem hopes to portray:

> Time like an ever-flowing stream
>
> The river is flowing;
> Opposite my bank a small stream intrudes
> Reflecting a medieval Abbesses' diversion to purify her infirmary;
>
> Two daffodils on the bank trumpet in the spring
> While beside them a purple crocus raises its head.
> The snowdrops are fading
> Or is it white fluff from the passing swans?
> Shedding their winter feathers
> I am warm, secure, secluded,
> Solitudinous;
> I give thanks for this liminal moment
>
> Still present, I honour you.
> Composted past, I rejoice in your fruits.
>
> Unborn future, I trust you
> (Boyce-Tillman 2018: 481).

This article has illuminated the strength of the Job geno-text because of the elements it provides for palimpsestuous works that are appropriate for personal and cultural needs. It is this enduring characteristic that makes the Book of Job *A Masque for Living*; it may well provide many future mergers of past, present and future—to bring Wisdom alive in new cultures and contexts.

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