

EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES



Shakespeare's Musical Reformation: Sounds of Silence?

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Five hundred years after Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to a church door in Wittenberg, scholars are greatly concerned with theological changes in the intellectual revolutions of the past.¹ Imitating perhaps an academic debate between a Karlstadt and an Eck, they neglect, however, the *experience* of the Reformation by ordinary people, full-bodied and communal as it was. To them, the Reformation was less a matter of quarrelling over texts than of the practicalities of everyday life: was it permissible to invoke saints? Would there still be cakes and ale? What would the church service now look and sound like? A scholarly care for the lived experience of Reformation ideas, however, does not mean dismissing the expert theological knowledge ordinary people possessed – after all, at stake was nothing less than salvation of one's soul – but it is time to foreground an enquiry into how the new religion actually impacted on daily life. To the ongoing discovery of the Reformation, this article will contribute a consideration of its sonic dimension as it bears on William Shakespeare's plays. Drama's multimedia nature was perfectly equipped to represent and scrutinize the visual and aural reality of confessional change or conservation. Traces of the heard which are left in plays offer us today access to what it felt like to live in early modern Reformation England in all its full corporeality.²

¹ See the lack of references to music in recent publications, e.g. Alec Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms 1485-1603* (London: Routledge, 2017), or John McCallum (ed.), *Scotland's Long Reformation: New Perspectives on Scottish Religion c. 1500- c. 1660* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

² For the connection between the development of English drama and the Church (e.g. mystery plays, the liturgy, or the church as playing space), see John Cox, and David Scott Kastan (eds.), *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

The textual bias of Reformation scholarship is understandable: once issued into the ambient air, sound dissolves into nothingness at worst and human memory at best, phonographic recording being a mere century old. A lack of evidence, however, should not preclude an imaginative approximation of what could and would have been heard in the past. Bruce Smith's seminal *Acoustic World of Early Modern England* offers methodological reference points based on social and material circumstances that enabled and realized literary works, such as an investigation into the sonic conditions provided by the Globe's architecture, or the reach of actors' voices.³ To rely on written records for the reconstruction of sound seems fraught, but Smith's holistic approach which includes non-linguistic factors of sound creation and reception is a legitimate attempt at listening again, while remaining conscious of its own limits:

An awareness among various media, can help us to reconstruct distinctive experiences of speech communities that happen to be known to us only through written records of other communities. The intersection of voice, media, and community offers a way of recovering the subjective experience of people who did not have direct access to print.⁴

Oral traditions are readable in texts, and textual habits filter into oral practices.⁵ Similarly, music, even when improvised and 'popular', is despite its ephemerality not lost, but can be re-played by examining notated music: in his ground-breaking study of musical quotations, *Shakespeare's Songbook*, Ross Duffin extracts popular tunes from their elaborate instrumental notations, offering a credible, and above all singable, resource of songs with which Shakespeare would have been familiar. It is possible after all to piece together the sonic mosaic of early modern England, recapturing the 'soundscape' Shakespeare would have moved in, that is, the 'aural identity of a geographical place', what and how sounds are heard in a specific place by a specific community.⁶

³ Bruce R. Smith, *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999). While Smith has set the tone for an enquiry into the aural world of the Renaissance, few similar studies have followed suit, testifying to scholarship's continuing premium placed on text. For another book-length study of the theme see Wes Folkerth's *The Sound of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 2002) which investigates Shakespeare's metaphors crowding around sound rather than sound itself.

⁴ Smith, p. 26.

⁵ See Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England: 1500-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000).

⁶ 'Soundscape' is a porte-manteau word from 'sound' and 'landscape'. R. Murray Schafer proposes a demographic acoustics that conceives of places through the sounds that can be perceived in them, resulting in an active shaping of the inhabitants' identity, see *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester: Destiny Books, 1997).

Sounds envelop individuals, immersing them in their environment in a way that is (literally) more profound than images: we have no ‘earlids’, after all, to shut sound out when it penetrates our body and mind, and lodges itself into our ear canals in an eternal loop, effecting its change inside of us, often imperceptibly so. Reformers and traditionalists alike were well aware of sound’s ability to affect us, and both tried to harness its subtle power in their rivalry for souls.⁷ By vying over the public ear, the Reformation introduced fundamental changes in sonic worship, innovations which Shakespeare registers in his plays in rare but telling instances. Rather than reflecting on theological points, however, those moments in the plays to be discussed – *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Winter’s Tale*, *Henry IV, Part 1*, as well as *The Merry Wives of Windsor* – instead serve the playwright as a springboard to think about connected issues of senses of self, memory, music and belonging. Remembering does not follow a neat logical trajectory; instead, it is rather messy, often inexplicable, and deeply personal owing to its associative nature, a circumstance that Erin Minear explores in her book on music in Shakespeare and Milton.⁸ She is particularly interested in how music can conjure up the past in unsettling ways, an uncanny ability with which the present article engages throughout. Minear also concerns herself with the fraught relationship between music and language, resulting, however, in a missed opportunity to consider how these come together not in antagonistic but co-creative fashion in those Shakespearean plays which negotiate communal and individual identities through music. The present article will step into this gap and explore senses of self and Reformation music in Shakespeare’s plays, attempting to sound those presumed silences once more if ever so fleetingly. It will suggest that music is uniquely capable of negotiating theological paradoxes and social anxieties spun around religious belief and its changes in the sixteenth century.

⁷ The reformers believed faith, in the form of the Bible’s words heard for example in sermons, would fall through the ear into the soul of the sinner. Compare e.g. Luther’s 1518 commentary on Hebrews 10:5: ‘Solae aures sunt organa Christiani hominis.’ Luther pitches hands and feet (doing the works of faith) against the ears, passively receiving faith that is given freely by God. See *Luther’s Works* 29: Lectures on Titus, Philemon, and the Hebrews (Philadelphia, 1968; first published 1518). For understanding the act of hearing as more active and engaged, see Gina Bloom, *Voice in Motion: Staging Gender, Shaping Sound in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 111-59. For the Protestant debate over music during the Renaissance, see Hyun-Ah Kim, *Humanism and the Reform of Sacred Music in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

⁸ Erin Minear, *Reverberating Song in Shakespeare and Milton: Language, Memory, and Musical Representation* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

Old Orisons to New Notes: Music Before and After the Reformation in *Hamlet*.

Pre-Reformation aurality was a well-developed set of sounds the congregation would listen to rather than participate in. During the liturgy, priest and chantry singers performed pre-determined texts at specific times of the day with elaborate polyphonic settings in Latin, weaving voices into a beautiful blooming tapestry of music at the expense of understanding the words, that is, sacrificing supposed depth for surface.⁹ Reformers attacked both professional choirs, and polyphony, emphasizing lyrics over music, and abolishing the ecclesiastical professionalization of music by closing down chantries and choir scholarships. Dismantled organs and disbanded choirs suffered less from what I call a violent ‘sonoclasm’, than from a starving off through mere lack of means. Christopher Marsh describes this process, emphasizing the gradual nature of the changed treatment of church music.¹⁰ The most radical novelty certainly constituted the performance of psalms and hymns by the congregation rather than designated priests and singers (discussed in detail below). By Shakespeare’s time, psalm-singing was a well-established phenomenon of evangelical worship, so much so that it became associated to Puritanical sympathies. The Reformation soundscape in the parish church and beyond, then, is one of an absence of elaborate instrumental music and Latin song, replaced by a presence of a single melodic line of vernacular human voices, including female ones.

The life of one of the most significant English composers of the sixteenth century, William Byrd, epitomizes the relatively permissible attitude of Reformation England towards church music: a known Catholic and ‘Reliever of Papists’, Byrd produced music connected to the old faith like Masses and contrapuntal motets throughout the

⁹ See Peter le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England, 1549-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), pp. 135-40. The preference for words over music, however, was not entirely clear-cut: the issue was also less the beauty of sounds themselves (though that too), but also the perceived inability of sound to *mean*, that is, to be understandable to the rational mind. In that supposed unintelligibility, music skirted dangerously close to idolatry, a charge which evangelicals levelled at Catholics. There were, however, discussions around sound and hearing which took the onus to mean away from the art and towards the receiver of the same. In that sense, it is not the music which is immoral or meaningless, but the ethical and intellectual disposition of the hearer that is responsible for the right kind of reception and interpretation. For a theatrical exploration of this attitude see Joseph M. Ortiz, ‘Making Music Fit for Kings: Reforming and Gendering Music in Samuel Rowley’s *When You See Me, You Know Me*’ in *Gender and Song in Early Modern England*, ed. by Leslie C. Dunn and Katherine R. Larson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 93-106.

¹⁰ See Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 21-8. Organ music as well as choir singing continued to thrive in big cathedrals such as in York, but were almost eradicated in London.

1580s and '90s.¹¹ A gentleman of the Chapel Royal, he remained protected by the Queen and composed pieces for such Protestant patrons as Elizabeth Bacon whose keyboard music book contains songs by Byrd, corrected in his own hand.¹² Among these is the Walsingham song, the first of Ophelia's string of song quotations in her 'mad scene' in *Hamlet*:

*Ophe. How should I your true loue know from another one?
By his Cockle hat and staffe, and his Sandal shoone
(Folio, 2769-70).*¹³

Folio italicizes all of Ophelia's musical quotations, clearly demarcating them as external to the play text, suggesting their status as song, rather than spoken word.¹⁴ Quarto One

¹¹ See Craig Monson, 'Byrd, William (1539x43–1623)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4267>>; accessed 9 September 2017. Likewise, the life and work of John Bull, first professor of music at Gresham College, are another case in point for the relatively blurred borders between Catholic and evangelical attitudes towards, and enjoyment of, music. A Catholic and skilled composer of polyphonic music, Bull was under constant attack by Protestant reformers, but was appointed to the professorship by the Queen herself. Under King James, however, Bull's fate was over-shadowed by obstacles amongst others owing to his confession.

¹² See John Harley, "'My Ladye Nevell" Revealed', *Music & Letters* 86 (2005), 1–15.

¹³ All quotations from Shakespeare's works are taken from *Early English Books Online*. In the case of quartos, signatures are cited. For folio quotations, Through Line Numbers are added based on the Norton facsimile; see Charton Hinman (ed.), *The First Folio of Shakespeare* (New York: W.W. Norton 1999). Italicizing song may be a habit of the specific type-setter, or a concerted strategy in the Folio to detach song from speech, since similar typographical distinction, though by no means the rule, occurs throughout the Folio. See also the italicization of 'Come thou monarch' in *Anthony and Cleopatra* p. 6, and the discussion of *The Tempest*'s italicization of songs and stage directions in Michael Neill. "'Noises, Sounds, and Sweet Aires": The Burden of Shakespeare's *Tempest*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59 (2008), 36–59.

¹⁴ That music is extraordinarily important to the play performed or read is evidenced in the almost complete survival of song quotations across all different textual stages: ten of the eleven songs reproduce themselves in both Quartos of 1603 and 1604, as well as in the 1623 Folio, conferring a highly intact recognizable aural identity on *Hamlet*. Only the reference to the ballad of *Damon and Pythias* is missing from Q1 in comparison to Q2 and F. Scholarship has traditionally assumed Ophelia to sing and Hamlet to speak his songs, resulting in studies linking music and female madness, as well as language and male melancholy, see Maurice and Hanna Charney, 'The Language of Madwomen in Shakespeare and His Fellows', *Signs* 3 (1977), 451–60. It is not necessarily clear, however, why that should be so, although the textual history does seem to support this division: Hamlet's quotations are neither italicized nor separated from the body of the verse in either Q1, Q2, or F, while Ophelia's (and the gravedigger's) are clearly demarcated as different through italicization and indentation in Q2 and F, though not in Q1. The relationship of the three versions of the play is still being disputed, ranging from Q1 being a first draft (of Shakespeare or another playwright) that has later been revised and expanded by Shakespeare, or a memorial reconstruction of a Hamlet performance, or, as Lukas Erne argues, a memorial reconstruction of

(1603), while slightly departing from Folio and Quarto Two (1604) in terms of lyrics and lineation, adds the telling stage direction ‘*Enter Ophelia playing on a Lute, and her haire downe singing*’ (G4v). It is likely, then, that Ophelia would have burst on the stage with a song, indeed with the first line of a song that explicitly refers to a journey to one of Britain’s most important shrines, Our Lady of Walsingham.¹⁵ The ballad version of the song was first printed in Thomas Deloney’s *The Garland of Good Will* in 1592, one year after the assumed recording of the music by Byrd, suggesting the currency of and pleasure in the song’s music and lyrics among a broad range of social and confessional groups.

As ye cam from the holy Land
of Walsingham,
Met you not with my true loue,
by the way as you came?
How should I know your true loue,
that haue met many one,
As I came from the holy Land,
that haue come, that haue gone?¹⁶

Crucially, Shakespeare adds the common objects denoting pilgrims, shells and sandals, affirming the reference to outlawed practices yet more fully.

a performance based on the Folio which itself constitutes a partial abridgement of Q2, the longest and earliest text; see *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 216-43. For an exploration of current bibliographical theories around *Hamlet*, see Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (eds.), *Hamlet* (London: Arden Shakespeare, Thomson Learning 2006) pp. 80-6. The lute which Ophelia carries onto the stage in Q2 may therefore originate in general stage practice rather than being a stage device inserted by Shakespeare.

¹⁵ See John Dickinson, *The Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956). In *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) Philip Edwards discusses further references to pilgrimage in Shakespeare’s works without, however, exploring the musical aspects. Other references to pilgrimage in Shakespeare’s oeuvre either pertain to scattered metaphorical references across plays and poems like *Romeo and Juliet*, or *The Rape of Lucrece*, or to the plot or theme, including the *Passionate Pilgrim* miscellany (1599). Its second edition curiously links pilgrimage and music by promising ‘sundrie notes of music’, but which are lacking.

¹⁶ See Thomas Deloney, *The Garland of Good-Will*, first published in 1596, the first extant edition used here is from 1628 (G5^v -G6^f). The poem is attributed to Sir Walter Raleigh, and is also extant in numerous manuscripts before the publication date. The adjective attaching to Walsingham is ‘holy’ in all versions except for its publication in Thomas Percy’s 1765 *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* which marks it as ‘blessed’. Traditional ballads, in Shakespeare’s time and beyond, were consistently imagined as old, galvanising feelings of community anchored in a shared past.

The Walsingham song is, of course, not the only musical fragment which Ophelia offers. Rather than echoing scholarship on Ophelia's mad loneliness through her choice of songs, however, I suggest considering her music as an attempt to knit sonic links between herself and her audience within the play as well as the playhouse.¹⁷ This mechanism, familiar from comedies, is doomed to fail in a tragedy which explores the flipside of comedic narratives and values such as family bonds and budding love, turning them upside down as much as it turns the communal function of music on its head. Frederick Sternfeld alleges Ophelia's 'outpouring [...] mingles a requiem for her father's death with unrelated and incongruous burdens of popular songs'.¹⁸ The issue is not so much the congruity or incongruity of Ophelia's mish-mash quotations, but the community she seeks to set up through them. Songs like *Tomorrow is St Valentine's Day*, *And will he not come again*, and *Bonny Sweet Robin* tell, to varying degrees of sexual explicitness, about faithless love and were popular widely-known songs.

Wearing the sonic mask in a prosopopoeia of old music, the abandoned Ophelia expresses as representative and participant of a greater aural community. She shows an 'inner world that isn't really inner',¹⁹ or rather, makes the audience hear themselves, that is, a community of listeners who share aural material. Ophelia, then, is desperate not to assert but to lose her painfully segregated selfhood in the collective memory of the past.

It is Gertrude who provides the coda to Ophelia's musical madness consumed aurally and visually by the audience. Announcing her watery death, the Queen reports Ophelia's distracted state of mind: she is 'chaunt[ing] snatches of old tunes' (3169) which, tellingly, become 'snatches of old lauds' (M1v) in the second quarto printing. Narrowly defined, lauds are daybreak prayers sung to God by monks in the Divine Offices, and, after the Reformation, also by laymen and women.²⁰ Alison Chapman

¹⁷ For the nexus between female madness and dramatic song see Linda Austern, "'Sing Againe Syren": The Female Musician and Sexual Enchantment in Elizabethan Life and Literature', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 42 (1989), 420-48. For women and early modern song see Leslie C. Dunn and Katherine R. Larson (eds.), *Women and Song in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

¹⁸ Frederick Sternfeld, *Music in Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Routledge, 1963), p. 57.

¹⁹ Minear, p. 114.

²⁰ See Hannibal Hamlin, *Psalm Culture and Early Modern Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 39-40. In *The lives of Dr. John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Mr. Richard Hooker, Mr. George Herbert* (London, 1670), Izaak Walton describes the all-around-the-clock sonic worship of the family of Nicholas Farrer, a friend of George Herbert's: 'and in case the Psalms were not all read in the day, then Mr. Farrer, and others of the Congregation, did at Night, at the ring of a Watch-bell, repair to the Church or Oratory, and there betake themselves to prayers, and lauding God and reading the Psalms that had not been read in the day; and when these, or any part of the Congregation grew weary, or faint,

takes lauds as reference to praises sung by nuns, evoking a by-gone religious world through the memory of its sonic identity.²¹ She discusses Ophelia as primary accumulator of references to the Catholicism of the recent past, making her a foil to Hamlet who doffs his personal malaise once the ghost from Catholic purgatory disappears.²² It is certainly intriguing to consider Ophelia's scattered references to saints and religious oaths as allusions to theological points such as transubstantiation.²³ For an exploration of the Reformation's sonic experience, however, it is more useful to think about her Walsingham quotation as a marker of memory. The crucial point is less whether her song snippets are 'tunes' or 'lauds', but that they are 'old', a modifier which remains intact across all bibliographical manifestations of the play. A sense of the past, tapped by the evocative power of old music, though not without explosive potential, inoffensively mingles with the present.²⁴ Ophelia has lost her mind, but not because of the music. While being a symptom of her madness, disconnected singing also soothes Ophelia's agitation when she floats in the river 'as one incapable of her own distresse' (3170).

Ortiz reads the Queen's poetic formulations as 'a revisionist history that [...] neatly places the songs in a distant rustic environment'.²⁵ Instead of banning Ophelia's noisy presence (albeit now only present through report) into a by-gone time, Gertrude seems rather to realize and tacitly recognize Ophelia's attempts to knit up aural links by invoking communal memory. Gertrude's telling choice of 'tunes' or 'lauds' rather than songs, or even merely poems, acknowledges the sonic fullness of Ophelia's quoting as well as the particular strength of music to activate memories and meanings.

the Watch-bell was rung, sometimes before, and sometimes after Midnight; and then a part of the Family rose, and maintain'd the Watch, sometimes by praying, or singing Lands to God, or reading the Psalms' (E3v). Walton stresses the participation of all the family, including women, and is careful to distinguish hymns, anthems, matins, and psalms.

²¹ See Alison Chapman, 'Ophelia's "Old Lauds": Madness and Hagiography in *Hamlet*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 20 (2007), 111-35.

²² *Ibid.*, 130.

²³ *Ibid.*, 115.

²⁴ Music's elusiveness complicates the authorities' attempts to censor and control it. That there was a sensitivity to music's power to signify is attested e.g. by Horatio's comment of the effect of Ophelia's mad singing on the Danish people: she 'speakes things in doubt/ That carry but halfe sense: Her speech is nothing,/ Yet the vnshaped vse of it doth moue/ The hearers to Collection; they ayme at it,/ And botch the words vp fit to their owne thoughts'. Music encourages *interpretation* potentially destabilizes the commonwealth. See also the anonymous history play *Thomas of Woodstock* which has a character 'whistle treason' by whistling the tune of a ballad connected to current political events (cited in Marsh, p. 323).

²⁵ Joseph Ortiz, *Broken Harmony: Shakespeare and the Politics of Music* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), p. 64.

To the audience, too, music is capable of conjuring up past ways of life without the necessity of choosing between the one or the other. The sound of Walsingham, then, is a gentle reminder of the complexity of the times in which post-Reformation Englishmen and women found themselves, where the past can reach into the present with a few bars of music, and one can remain Protestant while listening to (and enjoying) a Catholic soundscape.

Shakespeare, acutely aware of how sound vanishes as quickly as it appears, allows the audience to relive the past in a temporary fashion that is safe from accusations of recusancy. Tudor authorities knew of music's ability to slip through the nets of censorship, precisely owing to that ungraspable but all the more powerful immateriality which makes it difficult today to reconstruct the sonic world of the sixteenth century. Representing Catholicism not as a corrupting Continental influence (a trend in other contemporary plays like John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*), but with a sympathetic and nostalgic resonance, Shakespeare points towards the ability of music to mitigate seemingly confrontational confessional boundaries.²⁶

New Wine in Old Bottles: Contrafactum Practices in *Antony and Cleopatra*

If Ophelia's songs are an attempt to establish community, however fragile and transitory, through a shared sonic past in a play which dramatizes the collapse of the collective, the only vocal music in *Antony and Cleopatra* sets up similar expectations to song through its genre and narrative frame. Aboard his galley, Pompey and the Roman triumvirate seek to cement a more than brittle alliance by performing a song together. After Lepidus has been carried off the ship drunk, Enobarbus tries one last time to affirm the coalition before Caesar and Antony depart:

Eno. All take hands:

Make battery to our eares with the loud Musicke,
The while, Ile place you, then the Boy shall sing.
The holding euery man shall beate as loud,
As his strong sides can volly.

²⁶ There are only two ballads with the rubric of 'to the tune of Walsingham'. The ballad 'Frauncis New ligge', intriguingly, sets part of its poetry 'to the tune of the Iewish Dance' (via <ebba.english.ucsb.edu/>). I have not been able to find information on the Jewish Dance tune, but its placement with a specifically Catholic reference is striking, and suggests the fostering of inter-confessional tolerance through music.

Musicke Playes. Enobarbus places them hand in hand.

The Song.

Come thou Monarch of the Vine,

Plumpie Bacchus, with pinke eyne :

In thy Fattes our Cares be drown'd,

With thy Grapes our haires be Crown'd.

Cup vs till the world go round ,

Cup vs till the world go round. (1459-1471)

It is not entirely clear what kind of song this is. If the boy sings the stanza, the 'holding' (the last two lines) could be intoned by the men, contrasting the different pitches between adult and boy voices, yet sharing the quadruple rhyme sound. The lines' indentation, as well as the characterisation of a 'holding' suggests their refrain-status in the song. It is also possible, however, that the song is a round, that is, at least the last two lines: rounds or catches were popular drinking songs, often improvised, in which participants sang the same melodic line in different time intervals, potentially *ad infinitum*. Such songs demanded communication and coordination between the participants, creating if not an actual at least 'a musical emblem of togetherness' which the politically volatile situation of the play at that moment desperately needs.²⁷ *Antony and Cleopatra* uniquely includes the allusion 'Come thou monarch', suggesting a Shakespearean invention; owing to the lack of indications of an original tune, Ross Duffin sets the lines to another round, 'Hem boys', printed in John Hilton's rounds collection *Catch that Catch Can* (1652), thereby opening up musical possibilities to belong to either or both song kinds.

Hand-in-hand with the generic hybridity of the song is its potentially religious ancestry: Frederick Sternfeld is the first to identify a possible connection of the song to the Pentecostal hymn 'Veni creator spiritus'.²⁸

Come Holy Ghost, eternal God

Proceeding from above,

Both from the Father and the Son,

The God of peace above. [...]

²⁷ See David Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), p. 187.

²⁸ See Sternfeld, p. 86. Although hymns and psalms were sometimes conflated to mean any kind of spiritual song, psalms refer to songs from the psalter, hymns to other scriptural texts set to music.

This version is a translation of the Latin by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, first printed in a 1550 text on the reformed ordination of churchmen.²⁹ Peter Seng has contested the attribution of the Shakespeare song to this particular hymn, proposing another Whitsunday hymn with elaborate settings from Byrd and John Dowland. It is less relevant, though, quite *which* hymn the song might be modelled on, but that it alludes to a liturgical piece *at all*.³⁰ Since the lyrics recall the phrasing of the hymn, it is perfectly possible Shakespeare's Romans could intone the praise of Bacchus to the sounds they knew from church service.³¹ Ever since the Elizabethan settlement, singing sacred texts was not only a prerogative of the clergy, but (more or less) encouraged by the official line on ecclesiastical matters. Both players and playgoers, then, would recognize the old melody to which the new words were set, potentially even joining in.

Such contrafactum practices, mapping fresh lyrics onto previous sound, were (and still are) a wide-spread mechanism of imitative musical creation on the spot. Musical recognition and memory evoke associations to earlier encounters of the melody, creating something like an 'aural palimpsest' that merges two disparate frames of reference. 'Come thou monarch of the vine' is, then, a pastiche of the Biblical hymn, skirting dangerously close to a perhaps inappropriate mingling of the sacred and the secular, but managing to defuse any such accusations by belonging to both and neither at the same time. As with Ophelia's inter-confessional singing, the song in *Antony and Cleopatra* suggests that music manages to negotiate impossibilities, whether between faiths, or between the godly and the lay world, without necessarily disempowering them. The differences, rather, become tolerable, something to acknowledge tacitly; as long as the music is playing, Rome can celebrate the Egyptian way, knowing full well the momentary nature of this lapse. Yet, the lapse *has* happened and attests to the proximity of the two worlds falling into each other at the stroke of a lute.

²⁹ See *The forme and maner of makynge and consecratynge of Archibishoppes Bishoppes Priestes and Deacons*. For a discussion of the translation see Robin Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), pp. 134-6. The hymn is in the Sternhold and Hopkins metre of alternating 8 and 6 syllables per line familiar from the eponymous psalter and early modern balladry.

³⁰ See Peter Seng, 'Shakespearean Hymn-Parody?', *Renaissance News* 18, (1965), 5-6. The 'Veni Creator' hymn, however, has something of a history of mixing: its version in the psalter by John Day, first printed in 1562, retains its Latin title followed by the English translation of the verse, mingling native and learned languages.

³¹ All 4 mono-rhymed lines of 'Come thou monarch' have 7 syllables, i.e. 14 per couplet; Cranmer's hymn is in the 'common metre', a quatrain of alternating 8 and 6 syllables, so also 14 per two following lines, which enables contrafactum mapping.

‘Psalms or Anything’: Congregational Singing in *Henry IV, Part 1* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

As suggested by the hymn-parody in *Antony and Cleopatra*, congregational singing sneaks its way into Shakespeare’s use of music. Indeed, congregational singing is undoubtedly the most striking innovation of the musical Reformation. Rather than the priesthood, it was the people, including women, who worshipped sonically. Metrical psalmody particularly flourished in the Renaissance, attesting to a curious turn towards the aural quality of devotion as opposed to the medieval psalter that was read in private rather than intoned in public by the community. In a 1559 letter to Peter Martyr a mere two years after Elizabeth’s accession, John Jewel Bishop of Salisbury describes the political and theological assets involved in congregational singing:

Religion is now somewhat more established than it was. The people are everywhere exceedingly inclined to the better part. The practice of joining in church music has very much helped this. [...] You may now sometimes see at St Paul’s Cross, after the service, six thousand persons, old and young, of both sexes, all singing together and praising God. This sadly annoys the Mass priests and the devil. For they perceive that by these means the sacred discourses sink more deeply into the minds of men, and that their kingdom is weakened and shaken at almost every note.³²

The reformers exploited the catchiness of melodies, hooking themselves into people’s minds. Luther strongly supported congregational song as beneficial for his evangelical programme, encouraging hymn collections in German.³³ If he is innovative in terms of public participation, Luther remains, however, rather more conservative regarding the musical realization of his lyrics: contrafactum habits take effect here, too, as he translates old Latin hymns in plainchant and strips their harmonic and rhythmical complexity down to a single melodic line.³⁴ Reformation sound was, then, not so newly formed after all, giving the lie to Jewel’s assertion of the evangelical sonic superiority over the old religion.³⁵ Calvin, having heard German tunes during his exile in

³² Quoted in le Huray, p. 375.

³³ See Leaver.

³⁴ The new Protestant songs did not only originate in music of the old faith, but also included current secular tunes, see Bernhard Leube and Helmut Lauterwasser, ‘*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*’, in Wolfgang Herbst, Ilsabe Seibt (eds.), *Liederkunde zum Evangelischen Gesangbuch* Nr. 17 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2012).

³⁵ Reformers were aware of the double-edged sword that was using old tunes to new words, see a letter from Bishop John Hooper to the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger on singing in English but with Latin

Strasbourg, has his French metrical psalms frequently modelled on the German material which itself often goes back to pre-existing music. Working amongst others with the poets Marot and Bézat, Genevan psalm translations in French with and without music begin to appear from 1539 onwards, culminating in the complete 1562 psalter.³⁶

The English reformers in Continental exile under Mary inherited this psalmodic soundscape mixed together from old-religion Latin, as well as German, and French tunes. Added to this European sonic community was the native psalm sound evangelicals carried in their ears and books: the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter. First published in the early years of Edward VI's reign, the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter long exerted an influence on the ears of Englishmen and women, most of all, perhaps, owing to its then popular versification. The 'common metre' of quatrains alternating eight and six syllables (see note 31) which was also the default metre of street ballads particularly recommended itself, so much so that the first complete English psalter, the hugely successful *Whole Booke of Psalms*, printed in London in 1562 by John Day, advertises itself as being 'collected into Englysh metre by T. Starnhold, I. Hopkins, & others, conferred with the Ebrue, with apt notes to synge the[m] with al'.³⁷ If the metre was 'Englysh', the melodies certainly were international hybrids from both secular and sacred environments, newly attesting to music's elastic border control. Perhaps realizing the fit of music's permissive nature to her programme of religious inclusivity, the Queen neither encourages nor disallows congregational song during service in her 1559 Royal Injunction for Religion, stating that songs *may* be sung in moderation.

Psalm singing was then a common phenomenon of the Protestant Church, not necessarily connected to any specific nationality, particular reformist spectrum, or occupation.³⁸ It is curious, therefore, that psalm singing is attached to the Puritans in *The Winter's Tale*: the rustic's first entrance has him repeat to himself the shopping list for the sheep-shearing festival, including the expenses for the 'three-man-song-men all', specifying, 'and very good ones; but they are most of them means and bases; but one

sounds: 'And that popery may not be lost, although they are compelled to discontinue the use of the Latin language, yet most carefully observe the same tone and manner of chanting which they were heretofore accustomed in the papacy' (quoted in Leaver, p. 132).

³⁶ See Bernard Reymond, *Le Protestantisme et la musique, musicalité de la Parole* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2002).

³⁷ See Beth Quitslund, *The Reformation in Rhyme: Sternhold, Hopkins and the English Metrical Psalter, 1547-1603* (Aldershot, Ashgate: 2009).

³⁸ The sixteenth century, it seems, did not yet have a terminology for the malleable metre that would become associated to ballads and psalms. 'Common measure' is an eighteenth-century name, see Nigel Fabb, *Language and Literary Structure: The Linguistic Analysis of Form in Verse and Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 140.

puritan amongst them, and he sings psalms to horn-pipes' (1767-70). It is not so much psalmody itself which is at fault, but the Puritan who, as Beth Quitslund suggests, 'insists on thrusting psalms where they don't belong'.³⁹ She argues that sound which used to signify a collective activity and shared identity creates division when performed outside the social context. In *The Winter's Tale*, it seems public singing is more at stake than the possible inappropriateness of scriptural words to profane dance tunes like hornpipes. Reformers consistently wished to replace secular with sacred song, as proclaimed on the title page of *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, containing songs which are 'very mete to be vsed of all sortes of people priuately for their solace & comfort, laying apart all vngodly songes and ballades, which tende only to the norishing of vyce, and corrupting of youth'. The emphasis is on private use, but this might well be a relic of the volatile situation of the early Reformation phase.

If the Puritan participates in the social music, providing the treble to complete the harmony as Quitslund suggests, it would seem that he does include himself in the community after all. Additionally, although it is questionable whether to trust the rather simple-minded rustic, he does not voice any kind of judgment on the supposed contextual mismatch of psalmody in profane places sung to profane sounds: the double qualifying conjunction 'but' points on the one hand to the Puritan's welcome addition to complete the consort of 'means and bases' with his treble (i.e. tenor) voice; on the other, the joke is entirely on him, singing the highest voice, and considering himself better than those 'means and bases'. Puritans, potentially seditious evangelicals, desired a greater reformation than the relatively conservative English Church at the time practised, for which they received bad press as self-righteous religious hypocrites around the turn of the sixteenth century.⁴⁰

Shakespeare, too, persistently chooses 'puritan' in his plays as suggestive of a disjunction between substance and outward show. For that reason, perhaps, Falstaff has often been linked to Puritanism, and Puritanism, post-Falstaff, to psalm-singing.⁴¹ In an early tavern scene of the first Quarto of *Henry IV, Part 1* (1598), Falstaff launches into a brilliantly eloquent rant on the unfair treatment of others towards him in spite of his reverence and goodness, ending on a sigh: 'I would I were a weauer. I could sing psalmes or any thing' (D4r). Folio replaces the specific reference to psalms with 'all manner of songs' (1093-4). The substitution divides scholars: some argue Falstaff

³⁹ Quitslund, p. 272

⁴⁰ See Quitslund, p. 270.

⁴¹ See Quitslund, pp. 268-9. For some playgoers, Falstaff might still have retained a connection to evangelicalism owing to the Oldcastle controversy, see Kristen Poole, 'Saints Alive! Falstaff, Martin Marprelate, and the staging of Puritanism', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 46 (1995), 47-75.

alludes to a common perception of zealous Protestants from the Netherlands, often weavers, whose perceived radical identity mockingly embraced psalm singing. Others like Quitslund dismiss the reference as a non-issue: Folio's substitution is accidental, referring to the 'psalmes or *any thing*' (my italics), which means exactly that, a placeholder for 'all manner of songs' without any particular connotation. Indeed, she contends, polemics against Puritan psalm-singing were unknown before the 1620s, and proposes that Shakespeare 'inaugurates' satire on the nexus of weaving, psalm-singing Puritans and hypocrisy.⁴² His 'attack [is] not on psalm singing as ridiculous or puritanical per se. Rather, it is a sign of Falstaff's false self-representation that he can't even express a desire to sing without implying that his recreation would be holy'.⁴³ And yet it is music which mediates hypocrisy, and psalms-singing which seems to galvanize the aural irony of someone not being who he or she projects.

In the Folio of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Mistress Ford shows her friend the identical love letter both received from Falstaff, musically figuring the knight's falseness:

[he] gaue such orderly and wel-behaued reproofe to al vncomelinesse, that I would haue sworne his disposition would haue gone to the truth of his words: but they doe no more adhere and keep place together, then the hundred Psalms to the tune of Greensleeues (603-8)

There was no English translation of the Psalms that contained only one hundred of the psalms rather than the accustomed 150. Mistress Ford's remark has therefore exercised editorial opinion ever since Nicholas Rowe emended 'the hundred Psalms' to 'the hundredth Psalm' in his 1709 *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*. Some editions, such as *The New Cambridge Shakespeare* (2010) follow Rowe; others, like the *New Arden Shakespeare* (2000) remain with Folio.⁴⁴ The textual mystery is likely to remain unsolved, but it is clear Mistress Ford likens Falstaff's hypocrisy to the inappropriateness and maybe impossibility to fit a scriptural text to a worldly song. As much as godly words will not be made to fit the sound of worldly songs, Falstaff's superficial meekness does not express his real character. Sound, Mistress Ford seems to say, goes deeper than words, representing the true nature of the song or person. At the same time, sound lacks the semantics of words, taking over connotations transferred

⁴² Quitslund, p. 270.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 271.

⁴⁴ For a detailed review of editions and new evidence for the authority of the Folio reading, see my 'Psalms or Anything: New Evidence for Psalm Allusions in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*', *Notes and Queries* 65 (2018), 71–4.

onto it by listeners. Sound, in combination with lyrics, transcends categorizing into form and substance, dissolving Ford's witty reasoning. The more obvious irony, however, is that it is perfectly possible to map new words onto old tunes as described above. Shakespeare gently mocks the wives themselves for their rigorous sonic exigencies, encouraging a more inclusive understanding of song culture, one that Falstaff is sensitive to, hyperbolically wishing it to 'thunder, to the tune of Greenesleeues' (2500-1) shortly before he is cozened at the oak.

As judgment of his character, Mistress Ford's musical metaphor certainly holds, but in relation to the manifold contrafactum practices of Reformers, it was both appropriate *and* possible to match psalms and hymns to secular sound. English balladry and psalmody shared versification, enabling melodies to wander from one to the other spectrum. Since Sternhold was a minor courtier, one could locate the origins of his tunes in courtly song under Henry VIII, an ancestry corroborated by a psalm in the Lumley music book assembled around 1547-58 which resembles the secular court song 'Blow thy horn, hunter', extant in the older Royal Manuscript (ca 1510-1520; BL Add.31922).⁴⁵ Both 'Greensleeves' and the hundredth psalm are in the long common metre (8 syllables per quatrain), rendering a contrafactum mapping neither unlikely nor unacceptable as such.⁴⁶ Whether the Windsor wives like it or not, music *can* be turned inside out to serve other purposes. It is likewise foolish of the lively Puritan from Bohemia (as much as of all-too godly Reformers) to hijack old sound for new words and their supposed confessional power, and underestimate the subtlety of music to evoke previous connections. A dance tune will always be a dance tune.

In his engagement with the psalms, as with music during the Reformation in general, Shakespeare does not, I argue, show preference for any one religion or treatment of music over another. Rather, Reformation music echoes through his plays as a catalyst to reflect upon the experience of human memory, and the ability of music to exercise our negative capability, letting one thing be another, and itself, all at the same time.

⁴⁵ See Austern, p. 121, and Judith Blezzard, 'The Lumley Books: A Collection of Tudor Church Music' *The Musical Times*, 112, (1971), 129.

⁴⁶ Compare 'A newe northern dittye of the ladye of Green Sleeves' shortly after followed by 'Green Sleeves moralized to the Scripture', see Andrew Pettigree, *The Reformation: Critical Concepts in Historical Studies*, Vol. 3 (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 356.

Making Psalms and Posies: Exploring Memory Through Reformation Music

What Quitslund and others neglect in their search for the reception and practice of psalmody in Shakespeare is the presence of psalms in a less obvious, less formalized way. An exploration of an individual's experience of psalm singing falls through the cracks of neatly explicit mentions of tunes and psalms in *The Merry Wives*, but can tell us much about Shakespeare's attitude and treatment of Reformation music. Shakespeare's curiosity about the minute process and *feeling* of what it means to remember – and to remember *in* and *through* sound. Memory is not monolithic, but includes stages of perfect and imperfect retrieval such as misremembering and false starts. Forgetting is integral to memory itself, complimentary rather than oppositional in an occasionally messy *process* rather than a fixed 'thing' or mental faculty.⁴⁷

Music, as Shakespeare employs it, offers an especially fruitful medium to explore the different manifestations of memory. Sir Hugh is inspired by the location around him: nervously waiting for Doctor Caius in a wood clearing in order to perform their duel, he sings to himself for relief:

Enter Syr Hugh and Simple.

Sir Hu. I pray you do so much as see if you can espie
Doctor *Cayus* comming, and giue me intelligence,
Or bring me vrde if you please now.

Sim. I will Sir.

Sir Hu. Ieshu ples mee, how my hart trobes, and trobes,

And then she made him bedes of Roses,

And a thousand fragrant poses,

To shallow riueres.

Now so kad vdge me, my hart

Swelles more and more. Mee thinkes I can cry

Verie well.

There dwelt a man in *Babylon*,

To shallow riuers and to falles,

Melodious birds sing Madrigalles.

Sim. Sir here is M. *Page*, and M. *Shallow*,

Comming hither as fast as they can.

⁴⁷ If memory is not a stable entity but rather a process dispersed across several brain structures. Conscious and unconscious memories are a continually changed and changing phenomenon. See Larry Squire and Adam Dede, 'Conscious and Unconscious Memory Systems', in *Cold Spring Harb Perspect Biol* (2015);7:a021667.

Sir Hu. Then it is verie necessary I put vp my sword,
Pray giue me my cowne too, marke you. (Q1 1602, D2v)

Sir Hugh is quoting Marlowe's popular (and often parodied) poem 'The Passionate Shepherd to his Love' printed in 1599 (here in bold). The *locus amoenus* setting inspires the parson to mention or sing the pastoral lyric. Surrounding space, rather than surrounding words, both unearths and interrupts the poem, as his roving mind flits from perception of the clearing to a memory fragment back to his present forebodings. Interpolated between a return to the poem is a ballad on the biblical story of Susannah and the elders whose first line Sir Hugh speaks or sings ('There dwelt a man in Babylon'), perhaps connecting the psalm's rivers of Babylon to the poem's pastoral rivers (see Psalm 137 'By the riuers of Babel we sate, and there wee wept, when we remembred Zion', Geneva Bible, 1560).⁴⁸ Interrupting this second line of thought, he reverts to the Marlowe poem, continuing at the place he had stopped.

Sir Hugh garbles the Marlowe poem, misremembering 'And then she made him bedes of Roses' (which should be 'And I will make thee'); his muddled associative mind grasps at poetic repetitions to hold onto, while he reflects on the conundrum he finds himself in: comparing himself ever so remotely to Susannah makes sense, since she, too, is falsely accused and put to trial, reminiscent of Doctor Caius' rash challenge against Sir Hugh. Additionally, the Babylon ballad was often sung to the tune of the amorous King Solomon ballad, both connected by their shared refrain of 'lady, lady'. Caught in an unfair duel dependent on chance, Sir Hugh may aurally hope for the famous wise judge King Solomon through the intermusical link, unaware that the Host of the Garter is busy defusing the situation in the background. Sir Hugh draws from several sources in fits and starts, turning and returning to previous lines. His mind unconsciously chooses, discards, then chooses again scraps of known poems and songs in a bid to make sense of his situation through musico-literary examples, an attempt he is not quite aware of, shown by his distracted self-interruptions. Erin Minear calls this power of music to infiltrate a person's mind 'random' and 'invasive', a sneaky invasion which is part of the reason it was considered suspect and untrustworthy by early modern thinkers.⁴⁹ Shakespeare, however, Minear writes, relishes the 'idea of one song slipping

⁴⁸ It is also possible that Sir Hugh *sings* the Marlowe poem too for which exists a setting from at least 1612 onwards as in William Corkine's *The Second Booke of Ayres*.

⁴⁹ Minear, p. 12. For the ambivalence with which music was regarded in general, as well as its theatrical exploration in terms of gender, see Katrine Wong, *Music and Gender in English Renaissance Drama* (London: Routledge, 2013).

into another song, the idea of words tangled together by musical association'.⁵⁰ The Folio version, however, has crucial differences, most strikingly the psalmic reference no longer refers to the ballad as in Quarto, but has been replaced by the actual psalm in its metrical version ('When as I sat in Pablon' [1178-9]).⁵¹ Sir Hugh's cognition is, here, fully embodied and embedded in his environment. The material world around him prompts and shapes Sir Hugh's thinking, and evokes the psalm while also realizing its several verses of, for instance interrupted song (the Hebrews hanging their harps on trees) or revenge ('how melancholies I am? I will knog his Vrinalls about his knaues costard, when I haue good oportunities for the orke' [1172-4]).

Psalm 137 as a whole offered a ready expression of the experience of exile and loss, as well as a negotiation how to figure these. It constituted the 'go-to' psalm of the Renaissance whose actual and metaphorical exile ranged from religious banishment to a loss of the perceived homelands Rome and Greece. Sir Hugh, by quoting from the actual psalter in the framing of Ovidian erotic love poetry, fuses these multiple senses of early modern exile, adding to the comically mangled but realistically faithful exhibition of memory. Shakespeare perfectly manages to explore the various tonalities of the psalm while uniting the various strands of Reformation music and its relationship to individual and collective memory.

⁵⁰ Minear, p. 61. See also Winifred Maynard, *Elizabethan Lyric Poetry and its Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 181.

⁵¹ *MW* Folio text is longer and substantially different to the Quarto version (composed between 1597-99, printed as Q1 in 1602, and a nearly identical Q2 in 1619), particularly in terms of musical quotation and number and quality of stage directions. Folio mentions or features nine rather than six songs. Since the influential edition of *MW*'s 1602 Quarto in 1910 by W.W. Greg, scholars have been struggling with the two states of the play: early editors of *MW* have been unduly judgmental about Quarto's 'inferior' state as belonging to the 'bad quartos', proposing memorial reconstruction (Greg) and abridgement (William Bracy). For a critical summary of *MW*'s editorial history see Laurie Maguire, *Shakespeare's Suspect Texts: The 'Bad' Quartos and their Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.73-94. Quarto is shorter and looks less clean, which may suggest a performance version. Folio includes Mistress Quickly as the Faery Queen, a circumstance that has inspired critics to suggest a revision for courtly performance; see Richard Dutton, *Shakespeare, Court Dramatist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 245-58. Leah Marcus and Peter Grav argue for subsequent revision of Quarto by Shakespeare, making Folio more interested in the economic aspect of the marriage subplot concerning Anne Page; see Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp.68-100, and Peter Grav, 'Money Changes Everything: Quarto and Folio *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the Case for Revision', *Comparative Drama* 40 (2006), 217-40. For an exploration of how far music helps us to understand the relationship between the different versions, see my forthcoming "'Let the sky rain potatoes": Music, Memory and Sonic Nationhood in Shakespeare' in Christopher Wilson and Mervyn Cooke (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare in Music*.

Ophelia, Antony, Falstaff, and Sir Hugh realize the power of sound nurturing an expansive state of mind that, though conscious, is capable of encompassing mutually exclusive circumstances. In this state, various forms of knowledge and histories past and present are simultaneously and interchangeably valid, rather than moving linearly from one bounded state of being into the next, from one confession to the other. Human mental and emotional involvement flits between fuzzy-edged zones of potential meanings, creating a cognitive shimmering that tolerates dissonance (that which cannot be yet is), a phenomenon enabled by music.⁵² Shakespeare's treatment of Reformation music is, I argue, both an index of, and an antidote against, possible anxieties emerging from the profound alterations brought about by the new religion. Traces of practical music in Shakespeare's plays are difficult though not impossible to recover. Reformation music echoes through his work in muted but pointed ways, channelling notions of loss as well as recovery, if only for the fleeting moment that the music plays in the air and in our ears.

⁵² See Nabuo Masataka, and Leonid Perlovsky. 'The efficacy of musical emotions provoked by Mozart's music for the reconciliation of cognitive dissonance', *Scientific Reports* 2 (2012), 694.