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"I WYL POURE OUT THE WORDES OF SORROWE":
POLITICS IN THE PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC SETTINGS OF PSALMS 51 AND 79
DURING THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

The music of the Tudor era in England reflected the period's political instability. This instability had its roots in, among other things, the religious movement known as the Reformation. Protestant and Catholic factions relied upon biblical texts, sermons, tracts and other circulating works to spread their propaganda, with musical settings of the Psalms also finding a part in this dissemination. Beginning in the reign of Edward VI, the metrical psalters of the Anglican Church functioned as personal devotional instruments aimed at laity possessing limited musical and academic training. They provided, in their simple tunes and metricized texts, an easy means of memorizing the Psalms. Latin motets, on the other hand, especially those circulating in copied manuscript collections in the latter half of the sixteenth century, reflected the political situation of English Catholics who were legally unable to worship openly by incorporating such texts as Psalm 50 [51] (*Miserere mei, Deus*) and Psalm 78 [79] (*Deus, venerunt gentes*) into laments of persecution. These motet collections may have served dual roles as repositories for the music of esteemed English composers and methods of reeducating and supporting underground communities of Catholics.

This study examines Psalm 50 [51] and 78 [79] settings by Protestant and Catholic composers in Tudor England and the circumstances surrounding the implementation of political indoctrination associated with these settings. Included in the discussion are excerpts from the metrical psalters, including those of Miles Coverdale (1488-1569) and Sternhold and Hopkins (1549-end of century). Psalm motets by William Byrd (1540-1623) and his setting of *Infelix ego*, the prison meditation on Psalm 50 [51] by 15th-century

Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola are also explored. Along with the Byrd motet, English settings of the same text by William Hunnis (d. 1597) and William Mundy (1529-1591) are shown as examples of Savonarola's influence on both Catholic and Protestant English Reformation thought.

In considering the metrical psalters and Latin motets of the Tudor period as religious educational propaganda, this project offers a fresh look at sacred music in the time of the Tudors and its role in the socio-political environment of 16th-century England, with implications for historians as well as choral conductors. Through the information given here, the study aims to provide conductors with impetus for new ideas regarding performance of these motets and anthems while also delivering a unique historical perspective on the political role of sacred music in Tudor England.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Of Christen bloude so moch she shed/That she was dronken withall
But now Gods worde hath broken her head/And she hath gotten a fall
God hath raysed/some men in dede/To utter her great wickednesse
Let go the whore of babilon/And her ungodlynesse.

-Myles Coverdale, "Let Go the whore of Babilon," 1535¹

For when he was cut up and his bowels cast into the fire, and his heart pulled out and showed unto the people with these words, that are ever used in such cases, 'Behold the heart of a traitor', there was not heard any applause, or those that cried, 'God save the King', which is always usual when the heart or head is held up in that kind.

-an account of the execution of Jesuit priest Fr Henry Garnet on 3 May 1606²

In times of great political and social division, expressions of oppression, suppression, and propagandistic display are commonly observed. These expressions can take the form of written propaganda, both for and against a particular "side" or ideology; spoken criticism or mocking of the opposition; even physical torture. Consider the case of Fr Girolamo Savonarola, tried for heresy in late 15th century Florence. Savonarola, the Dominican friar who dared to question the actions of Pope Alexander VI, was tried by papal inquisitors before being executed as a heretic.³ The 19th-century writer Pasquale Villari gave a vivid account of the torture visited upon Savonarola, based upon examination of contemporary accounts:

¹ Miles Coverdale, *Goostly Psalmes and spirituall songes drawn out of the holy Scripture, for*

² Philip Caraman, *Henry Garnet (1555-1606) and the Gunpowder Plot* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Company, 1964), p. 439.

³ Savonarola's influence on music and details of his life are discussed in Chapters 2 and 6.

[...] and after being again interrogated, threatened, and insulted, [Savonarola] was roped to a pulley, and put to the question. He was hoisted some distance from the floor, the allowed to fall rapidly, and the rope being suddenly checked with a jerk, his arms were forced back until they described a half-circle, his muscles lacerated, and all his limbs quivering with pain. The torture of the rope and pulley, when slightly applied was by no means one of the most cruel, but could sometimes be used in a way to overcome the strongest frame and the firmest endurance. When continued for any length of time it invariably produced delirium, sometimes ending in death; consequently the sufferer could be made to confess anything. It was only a question of time.⁴

Savonarola's torture and eventual execution seem exceedingly horrific and brutal, but these methods were not unusual for religious inquisitors and this is certainly apparent in the Reformations of the next century. Savonarola's prison writings, composed after extensive periods of torture, offer a glimpse of the persecution suffered by those deemed heretical. One of these documents, an exposition on Psalm 50 [51], had an afterlife far beyond 15th-century Florence (per its elements of penitence and suffering) and has application for this project due to its influence on English composers of the next century as well as its larger influence on English Reformation thought.

To interpret the anthems and particularly the motets of 16th-century England requires a basic knowledge of Reformation history as it applies to the Tudor reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I. As performers, limiting ourselves to perceiving these pieces solely in the narrow function of ascribed liturgical practice ignores their equally important place in the Tudor political milieu, for they hold a mirror to the socio-political atmosphere in which they were created. By remaining open to this new view, conductors can through such a historical lens realize significance for modern performance that offers both musicians and audience an exciting and thought-provoking interpretation. In part, this study aims to enlighten conductors and historians on the

⁴ Pasquale Villari, trans. Linda Villari, *Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola, vol. 2* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1888, reprint edition New York: Scribner and Welford, 1890), p. 348.

political environment surrounding these works and their composers and the effect that such an environment may have had on musicians and worshippers, both Protestant and Catholic.

Music and politics in the Tudor reigns

“The Reformation” is a term broadly used to describe the historical period c. 1517- c. 1600. This period encompasses multiple movements of the Protestant reformers and the various reformation movements in the Catholic Church, some of which were reactionary to the Protestant faction and some of which had been instigated by earlier reformers such as Savonarola. The enormous changes in religion that took place in the late 15th and 16th centuries resulted in a narrative that is densely packed with people, places and events. England felt the growing pains of reform particularly strongly, as the country struggled to define itself as Catholic, Protestant, or something in between.

In popular historical imagination, this period is marked by towering political and religious figures, and behind these figures is an artistic polemic that exists into the present day with the works of Tudor composers such as Thomas Tallis and William Byrd so affective that they are programmed on a regular basis in our current time. During the time of such influential people as Martin Luther and John Calvin (or, indeed, Savonarola) on the Continent, or the English Henry VIII and Thomas Cranmer, we find musicians and composers such as John Merbecke or the reformer Myles Coverdale directly influenced by the religio-political situation in which they found themselves. These so-called towering figures are now surrounded by both mythology and fact, and it is often difficult to separate

the two when faced with accounts of events that occurred either to them or because of them.

The most effective record we have of musical socio-political consequences lies in the works of Reformation-era composers, especially those who worked in the Elizabethan era such as Tallis, Byrd, Robert White or William Mundy. Whether stimulated by directive or emotional response, the music of these composers allows us a glimpse into what for them was not mythology, but intense reality. As in the politically-driven music of following centuries, there is a commentary beyond the emotional affect of the piece, and perhaps by looking back to the religious upheaval of the Tudor eras we can look forward with the intent of furthering messages meant for contemporary society but which are applicable yet today.

To comprehend the magnitude of musical politics in the English Reformation and the implication for our interpretation of the works of the above composers we must first explore the era from multiple viewpoints- political, social and musical- and begin with the historical. The purpose of this document is to examine and interpret aspects of English Reformation sacred music, particularly that with penitential or persecutory texts based on the book of Psalms, that have been heretofore unexplored; aspects that, along with the observations of previous scholarship, will color and shape our perception and performance of these works. Although one might assume that geographical limitations had much to do with shaping the English Reformation and its music, in actuality there was a great deal of interaction with the Continent in the form of European composers serving the English Court, later-century Jesuit missionaries ministering to lay Catholics and the many entanglements of Tudor royalty, especially those of Henry VIII.

While conflict in European countries and the Holy Roman Empire was rife, the situation in England was unique, reflecting both a monarchical desire for political alliance and personal justification in the form of the Tudor king Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547). Henry's relationships with Pope Clement VII, the German princes and rulers in France and Italy shaped his country politically and triggered the creation of a new church, the Church of England. The pope had named Henry "defender of the faith," but Henry crowned himself Supreme Head of the Church in a move calculated to show the world that England was no longer subject to the strict confines of the Roman church and its head.

In fact, there is agreement among modern scholars that the Protestant movement in England did not truly begin until 1547, the year of Henry's death and the beginning of his son Edward VI's (r. 1547-1553) reign. It was during this time that the Church of England became more defined in its Protestantism and its liturgical identity. A new order of service, *The booke of common prayer*, was drafted in 1549 to replace the Sarum rite so familiar to English Catholics. Just four years later, however, Edward was dead and his Catholic sister, Mary I (r. 1553-1558), took the throne.

Mary's reaction to the Protestant leaders whom she felt had wronged her mother, Katherine of Aragon, in the divorce scandal was swift and brutal. Her torture and execution of Protestant martyrs earned her the nickname, "Bloody Mary," and she was determined to restore England to its Catholic roots.

After Mary's death in 1558 the throne passed to her sister, Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603), due to Mary's inability to produce an heir. Elizabeth's religious tastes echoed those of her father: she was decidedly not Catholic in her beliefs, but loved the pomp and circumstance of the Mass, especially its music. Elizabeth, like her sister and father before

her, was a trained musician who appreciated the beauty of Renaissance polyphony and the “old rituals.”⁵

English Reformation music

Meanwhile, musicians and composers struggled with the changes imposed upon them during the Tudor reigns. With the abolition of the Mass and its associated music, English composers and other musicians were often relegated to minor positions within the new Anglican Church, or released from their duties altogether. Composers who were accustomed to writing extensive Latin polyphony were suddenly required to write service music that was far less complex; in addition they were expected, as was everyone, to conform to the new religion regardless of their personal beliefs.

Some composers such as John Merbecke wholeheartedly embraced Protestantism and had no difficulty conforming to the new expectations placed upon them. It is plausible to consider the English Protestant music of Merbecke and other Protestant-leaning composers as part of the propaganda used to indoctrinate English worshippers into Anglicanism, both in the form of private devotional books known as metrical psalters and in the service music used in churches and cathedrals throughout England. The music of the metrical psalters in particular strongly echoed Anglican values in its simple, easily remembered tunes and verses that could be sung or played both in the home and (later) as part of the church service.

⁵ Joseph Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 29.

Meanwhile, other composers such as Thomas Tallis, William Byrd and William Mundy apparently held to their Catholic beliefs, overtly or covertly, composing in the new English style but also continuing to write polyphonic Latin motets with often-controversial texts. It is difficult to ascertain what the exact purpose of these motets was, although there has been much speculation on the subject. For Tallis, Mundy and Robert White, we have little or no information about their personal or religious lives, making it nearly impossible to determine their compositional intent.

Modern scholarship has argued at length about Byrd's Catholicism and recusancy. The common thread of this scholarship is that Byrd was unique among English Renaissance composers in his adherence to the old faith. I argue that Byrd's Catholic faith and sympathies were not an anomaly among English composers in the latter part of the 16th century and that indeed, controversial Latin motets such as those by Byrd, Tallis, White, and Mundy could have been part of a large-scale plan, engineered by Jesuit missionaries, to reeducate Catholics who had (whether willingly or under duress) conformed to the Protestant faith. The existence of multiple manuscript collections that circulated among wealthy recusant nobles in the outlying areas of London is particularly noteworthy for the inclusion of motets based on biblical texts that would have been strongly resonant with recusant Catholics suffering under the persecution of the Elizabethan reign.

Significance of project

In this project, the politics of these musical collections, both Protestant and Catholic and their uses as instruments of either indoctrination or reeducation are explored through

an examination of the collections at the macro- and micro-levels. Included here are books of private devotion that preceded the Protestant metrical psalters; politically derived material from several metrical psalters; and individual psalter tunes and their eventual harmonizations.

The topic of Elizabethan patronage and the libraries of wealthy Catholic nobles as influences in the text choices of composers devoted to continuing the Latin motet tradition is addressed, allowing the reader to gain greater understanding of the motivation to compose in a style no longer acceptable to the Anglican Church. In this topic, motets common to circulating manuscript collections are identified and two settings of Psalm texts or meditations thereupon that correspond to their Protestant counterparts examined in closer detail.

In order to accomplish analysis of the political components of English Reformation music, it is also necessary to consider extramusical compositional influences such as the writings of the aforementioned Fr Girolamo Savonarola. The prison meditation on Psalm 50 [51] was smuggled out of his cell prior to his execution on 23 May 1498 and immediately sent to his publisher. Once printed in Latin and dispersed in the area around Florence, where Savonarola had spent most of his professional life, it was quickly translated into multiple languages including English, and was a common component of English primers until 1545. The original Latin text, *Infelix ego*, was the source for several musical settings, including one by Byrd that may or may not have been influenced by Continental settings by well known composers such as Adrian Willaert and Orlando di Lasso. Savonarola's writings were seemingly even more popular with Protestants, as they viewed him as a proto-reformist, and both William Hunnis and William Mundy set portions

of the English translation of *Infelix ego* (as *Ah, Helpless Wretch*) in the last decade of the 16th century.

Order of chapters

This study looks at the educational propagandistic possibilities of Protestant metrical psalters and Catholic polyphonic motet collections in an attempt to determine if settings of Psalms 50 [51] and 78 [79] were utilized in a similar manner, although they were theologically oppositional. In order to accomplish this, we begin in Chapter Two with the books of personal devotion that shaped worship forms in 16th-century England, such as medieval Latin books of hours and, later, primers written in English, which contained prayers, psalms and other writings deemed crucial to the religious edification of the laity. These instruments represent a line of propagandistic dissemination that eventually, thanks to the advent of printing in England and a move toward documents in the vernacular, rendered private devotion more accessible to lay people regardless of their level of literacy.

It is in this chapter that we are first exposed to the prison meditations upon Psalms 50 [51] and 30 [31] by 15th-century Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola, which would appear first in prose and then musical form, set both in the original Latin and in English. Savonarola's impact upon the church in England, both Protestant and Catholic, is discussed briefly here and in more detail in Chapter Six.

After an examination of early service music in the form of John Merbecke's *Book of Common Praier Noted*, we move to Chapter Three, which takes an in depth look at the history and music of the metrical psalter and its role in Protestant political dissemination. Certain elements of the books of hours and the primers were incorporated into an

instrument that would shape English Protestant devotions both at home and in the church, with the purpose of educating worshippers in the knowledge of scripture, particularly the psalms, by putting them in an easily learned format that included metricizing the texts and setting them to simple tunes. In this chapter we will examine two forms of the metrical psalter: Miles Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes* (1535); and the multiple editions of the psalter that had the most impact on Anglican worship and is now referred to simply as the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter (1549-1828)⁶. Both of these psalters show the influence of German Lutheran psalters and French/Genevan Calvinist psalters, and it is possible to see political inference in both versions.

This chapter also considers translators and the controversies surrounding the texts; as an exemplar of the provocativeness of certain psalm texts, we will study the tunes and harmonizations used in setting Psalms 51 and 79, which represent, respectively, penitential and persecution texts that were meaningful to both sides of the religious divide. As a contrast to the Protestant psalm tunes, William Byrd's Latin setting of Psalm 78 [79], *Deus, venerunt gentes*, which appeared multiple times in contemporary manuscript collections as well as in his published *Sacrae Cantiones* of 1589 is examined.

Chapter Four focuses on Reformation-era English Catholicism and the composers, patrons and nobles who were opposed to conforming to the state religion. Many Catholics did conform, willingly or not, but others refused and continued to celebrate Mass covertly,

⁶ According to Glass, the last edition of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter, from 1828, is the "Cambridge stereotype edition," and is bound with a Tate and Brady psalter, which is the psalter that finally replaced the S & H in 1696. It resides in the British Library. See Henry Alexander Glass, *The Story of the Psalters: A History of the Metrical Versions of Great Britain and America from 1549 to 1885* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1888), p. 22, and Timothy Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody in Print and Practice: English 'Singing Psalms' and Scottish 'Psalm Buiks', c. 1547-1640* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014), p. 231.

an objection known as *recusancy*. During the reign of Mary I the effort was made to restore England to Catholicism and Catholics enjoyed a brief period of religious supremacy, but once her sister Elizabeth I took the throne recusants could be fined, imprisoned or executed for their refusal to attend Anglican services.

It is unknown if the Latin motets composed at this time were meant specifically for underground recusant use, but I theorize that not only was this music used in recusant estates, it was intended as a means of re-educating Elizabethan Catholics in the “old faith”. Young Jesuit missionaries assigned to their English homeland were sent to revitalize and reestablish Catholicism, and the underground movement seems to have mainly involved wealthy gentry willing to harbor priests and hold secret Masses. In addition, composers such as Byrd, Thomas Tallis and William Mundy not only continued to write Latin motets, but chose as their texts politically-driven scriptures that depicted the desperate situations in which some recusants found themselves.

With this influence in mind, the study goes beyond the motets to an examination in Chapter Five of patronal libraries such as that of the Arundel/Lumley family, which may have influenced text choices made by Catholic-leaning composers. It is known that several of the landed gentry outside of London were harboring priests in order to continue worshipping at Mass, and there are multiple manuscript collections of motets that circulated during the latter part of the century and may have been a part of these underground meetings. In addition, this chapter looks at two of Byrd’s motets, *Deus, venerunt gentes* and *Infelix ego* and the controversial elements of their texts with the intent of comparing them to their Protestant psalter counterparts.

Chapter Six explores politically driven motets and anthems, especially those influenced by Fr Girolamo Savonarola, whose influence on Byrd and other Catholic composers may be greater than originally thought. Therefore, we will make a deeper investigation into Savonarola's life and his impact on music, both in his time and in the following century. Savonarola had strong opinions on music and its ability to affect people's beliefs and actions, and this can be seen in his use of *contrafacta* with the youth of Florence in a successful attempt to elevate the morality of the city.

What is less obvious is Savonarola's impact upon composers of the 16th century. Patrick Macey has observed that Josquin's setting of *Miserere mei, Deus*, commissioned by Duke Ercole I d'Este of Ferrara c. 1504 was likely in support of the friar's political and religious agenda, and there are other settings of Savonarolan writings and favorite scriptural texts by Continental composers such as Gombert and Willaert, as shown by Macey and also by H. Colin Slim.⁷

Three English composers set the text of Savonarola's prison meditation on Psalm 50 [51], *Infelix ego (or Ah, Helples Wretch)*, in the latter part of the 16th century: William Byrd, William Hunnis, and William Mundy. I propose that Byrd, and possibly Mundy, could have been exposed to Continental settings of the text through patronal libraries and, if they also had contact with Savonarola's sermons and other writings via the same libraries, may have found them politically relevant to English Catholics. Byrd's motet *Infelix ego* occurs in most

⁷ See Patrick Macey, *Bonfire Songs: Savonarola's Musical Legacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), especially pp. 6, 184-5; Macey, ed., *Savonarolan Laude, Motets, and Anthems*. In *Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance* series, vol. 116 (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, Inc., 1999); and H. Colin Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets: Volume I- Description and Analysis; Volume II- Transcriptions* (Chicago: Published for the Newberry Library by the University of Chicago Press, 1972).

of the manuscript collections that circulated throughout the areas around London, possibly with the intent of use by recusant worshippers.

The Savonarolan meditation provides an excellent means of comparing Protestant and Catholic settings of a politically driven text. Both Hunnis and Mundy set the text in English for Protestant use, one as pious chamber music and one as service music, while Byrd retained the original Latin for his Catholic motet. We shall look at all three settings in textual and musical analysis, bearing in mind always the political aspects as they exist in both words and music.

Scholarship and sources

Reformation scholarship is comprehensive and far ranging. This project draws upon both primary and secondary sources, including the original versions of documents such as the metrical psalters, the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* and its 1550 musical counterpart *The booke of common praier noted*; in addition, both digital and physical manuscript collections of Latin motets as well as early print copies of the motets of Byrd, Tallis, White and Mundy and print and manuscript versions of English service music have been examined.

Any exploration of the English Reformation would be incomplete without the work of recent scholars Eamon Duffy and Diarmaid MacCulloch, whose books on the subject serve as substantial ground upon which to begin any project. Neither of these authors devotes more than a bare minimum of space to music, but the comprehensive scope of their work is invaluable. Lucy Wooding has written a thought-provoking book on 16th-century English Catholicism that provides a new vision of what being Catholic in England actually

entailed, and the books of Philip Caraman were invaluable in understanding the Jesuit phenomenon in Elizabethan England. Donald Weinstein, John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., Roberto Ridolfi, Desmond Seward, and Pasquale Villari have provided invaluable resources on Savonarolan history and Savonarola's impact on future generations, again a basis upon which to develop an understanding of Savonarola's life, philosophy and theology.

The premier authority on Savonarola and music is Patrick Macey, who has examined in detail both 15th-century Florentine laude attributed to the friar as well as later works inspired by his writings. Additionally, H. Colin Slim, in his survey of the Newberry-Oscott partbooks, discussed Savonarola and Savonarolan politics and their influence on motets included in the partbooks. These motets may well have served as an influence for Byrd and even Mundy in the next century, as the possibility exists that the composers could have had access to them in the expansive library of their patron John, Lord Lumley. Both scholars left the door open for further exploration of Savonarolan influence on music and the political usage of his *Infelix ego* text, which this project shows was represented quite differently by English Catholic and Protestant composers of the Tudor eras. While Macey has chosen to focus primarily on Savonarola's involvement with the *laude* which were contrefacta of Florentine carnival music and Slim the influence of Savonarolan politics on composers working in Florence, it is highly doubtful that English musicians of nearly a century later would have been cognizant of the implications of these musical phenomena and therefore this project focuses solely on the 16th-century reception of the prison meditation as it applied to Tudor composers and performers.

Scholars such as Henry Glass, Rivkah Zim, Robin Leaver, Jeremy Smith, and Timothy Duguid have written extensively on metrical psalters, from their creation and history to the

implications of contemporary performance practice. Beyond the obvious political circumstances surrounding their creation, however, these authors have refrained from making political associations in the texts or music contained in the psalters. This project continues their work by adding the political element of anti-papalism and by examining the political views of certain translators, versifiers and composers who contributed to the psalters.

It is essential, when studying English Renaissance music, to read the works of Philip Brett, Joseph Kerman and Nicholas Temperley; Edmund Fellowes deserves special mention for his scholarship on both William Byrd and John Merbecke, although, unsurprisingly, given Fellowes' position as lay clerk at St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle (a position also held by Merbecke), he devotes far more attention to the religio-political views of Merbecke than those of Byrd. None of these scholars considered the possible use of Latin motets as implements of reeducation in the recusant Catholic community, which is a primary objective of this study, although Kerman was one of the first modern scholars to definitively assign strong political associations to the Latin motets of the Elizabethan era. This project reassesses the function of polyphonic Latin motets (particularly those incorporating Psalms 50 [51] and 78 [79]) within the confines of the recusant population, paying special attention to possible politicization in the text choice, text setting, and musical elements of these works. As previous scholarship is now more than two decades old, it is time to reexamine the ambient elements of this music and the composers who created it.

In the chapters to follow, these works and others provide a ground on which to extend the findings of previous musical scholarship into the religious and socio-political

arena of the English Reformation, thereby presenting the reader with a fresh take on the historiography, compositional influences and performance practice of both Catholic motets and Protestant service/devotional music.

By situating these works in the socio-political environment of their composers and performers, they transcend their liturgical function and offer multifaceted commentary on church and state in Tudor England. This opens new possibilities for those wishing to perform this music, especially the Byrd motets, and gives new perspective on the circumstances surrounding its composition and possible motives for its original usage. In turn, this new perspective aids in making educated programming choices for modern performances. Finally, we see that this music is a reflection of the political and social maelstrom that was the English Reformation and that those responsible for its existence were not mere bystanders but active participants in a troubled and dangerous time.

Chapter Two

Propaganda and Education in a Newly Created State Church: Precursors of the Metrical Psalter

There was neuer any thing by the wit of man so well deuised, or so surely established, which (in continuance of time) hath not been corrupted [...]

-Thomas Cranmer, in the preface to *The booke of the common prayer* [...] (1549)⁸

English Reformation composers and their music were a reflection not only of the politically charged environment in which they worked but also of greater societal change throughout Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. In order to examine their music and its underlying political thread, we must look not only at its compositional elements but also at the circumstances surrounding its creation. The early Protestant movement in England from c. 1547 spawned enormous liturgical and musical changes, with few of those changes having as much effect upon the lay population as the metrical psalters. These books, along with the primer, were part of a greater governmental plan to establish and regulate a state religion, but were also intended to provide laity with participatory worship elements for use in the home and later in the church service. Additionally, they were part of the means by which the Henrician and Edwardian regimes hoped to eliminate what were perceived by Protestants to be the superstitious and mysterious segments of the Mass and focus worshippers' attention solely upon Scripture. As will become evident, this was met with

⁸ Thomas Cranmer, *The booke of the common prayer and administration of the Sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the Churche; after the use of the Churche of England* (London: In officina Edouarde Whitchurche. Anno Do. 1549, Mense March. Facsimile copy privately reproduced for Mr G Moreton, 1896), p. i..

varying degrees of success, but ultimately the metrical psalters would be one of the most crucial components of Protestant propaganda in England.

This chapter is devoted to two documents that were contemporaneous with the English metrical psalter: the primer, which was the successor of the Roman Books of Hours and was intended for private devotion (with emphasis on the included prison meditations of Fr Girolamo Savonarola); and John Merbecke's short-lived *The Booke of Common Praier Noted* (1550). While not meant for private devotional use or as a congregational songbook, the *BCPN* illustrated the changes in English service music that were echoed in the music of the metrical psalters.

An examination of these books will allow us to observe the early stages of Anglican worship and the tools used by the English Protestant movement to encourage worshippers to embrace this new faith, as well as to gain further understanding of the political and educational goals of the reformers. Additionally, this chapter will give us a background for the metrical psalters, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

The primer and expositions on Psalms 50 [51] and 30 [31]

The metrical psalters were only one step in the evolution of books of private devotion, which began well before the dawn of Christianity with the writing of the Hebrew psalms. The psalms were intended as devotional instruments for public and private use, and were used as prayers of confession, penitence, praise, and thanksgiving. Early

Christians continued this tradition, and the psalter “became the Christian’s earliest book of private devotion and source of fresh devotional creation.”⁹

In the Medieval period, educated Europeans with a knowledge of Latin who were able to afford items beyond those of mere necessity often possessed Books of Hours, which included the psalms, prayers for various occasions and to various deities and saints, a calendar of holy days, and other devotional items. The advent of the printing press meant that the increasing middle class (with greater income at their disposal) could more readily own these books, which due to their small size could be carried to Mass as well as used at home. Psalters continued to be an important means of worship, and with the increasing call for reform in England, a new document would replace the Roman church’s Books of Hours: the primer.

Even those illiterate in Latin could use a Book of Hours, as multiple images in the form of hand drawn illustrations or woodcuts were included in the manuscript versions of the books. These images were intended to illustrate various prayers or meditations, but often became objects of veneration in their own right. Along with other devotional iconography in churches, such images became the means by which the illiterate could gain some understanding of the scriptures and the liturgy.¹⁰ Illuminated illustrations and leather bindings often rendered these books cost prohibitive, however.

The English primer was essentially a print version of the Book of Hours intended for middle class readers but with some important changes, such as the inclusion of English

⁹ Helen C. White, *The Tudor Books of Private Devotion* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1951), p. 32.

¹⁰ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400-c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 231. Duffy gives an expanded description of the primers and books of hours in section C, entitled “Prayers and Spells,” encompassing chapters 6-8.

alongside once solely Latin texts. By the middle of the sixteenth century, most of the primer was in English, with Latin used mainly for titles or presented in parallel alongside the vernacular text. This rendered the elaborate illustrations found in medieval Books of Hours somewhat unnecessary.¹¹ In addition, many saints' feasts were eliminated due to the huge number of saints that had been canonized during the medieval period as well as those saints deemed to be politically troublesome, such as Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury or even the Virgin Mary.¹² Beginning in 1534, in accordance with the statute of that year, Protestant primers no longer identified certain saints (e.g., Gregory) as popes, but rather as bishops of Rome.

A new addition to the primers appeared, in 1505, bound in with the traditional devotional material: meditations on Psalms 50 [51] and 30 [31] by fifteenth-century Florentine Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498). While a more extensive discussion of Savonarola and the meditation texts, especially that of Psalm 50 [51], will occur in chapters 5 and 6, it is worthwhile to include some brief biographical information on Savonarola here.

Savonarola came from the city of Ferrara, in what is now modern-day Tuscany. His grandfather was a well-known physician and urged Savonarola toward medicine, but during his studies the grandson became dismayed by what he perceived as “neopaganism” in Italian Renaissance culture, and discarding his plan of study entered the Dominican

¹¹ The advent of printing and the primer did not obviate Books of Hours: in fact, they became more, not less Catholic in nature and many print versions had illustrations as elaborate as their manuscript counterparts. See Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People and their Prayers, 1240-1570* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 121. In the primers, however, iconography became increasingly more important as an “interpretive scheme” for whole sections of text rather than as images for each individual segment (e.g., the Seven Penitential Psalms). See Duffy, *Stripping the Altars*, p. 227.

¹² White, *Tudor Books*, pp. 70-1, 73-4.

novitiate in 1475.¹³ Eventually he was assigned to the convent of San Marco in Florence, where he was a teacher and textbook writer. He was deeply interested in the workings of government and its implications for society, but he was also invested in developing his inner faith, a course that would eventually result in prophesying in his sermons due to his constant examination and interpretation of the Scriptures.¹⁴

Savonarola was known for his fiery sermons, many of which were directed towards the citizens of Florence, their government, and the dangers of a lack of moral direction, which Savonarola felt would be the downfall of the city-state. He revitalized the city by gathering together young men who were known to be troublemakers and teaching them moralistic songs, which they sang in the streets.¹⁵

Eventually Savonarola's prophesying attracted the attention of Roderic Borgia, better known as Pope Alexander VI (r. 1492-1503), who first insisted that Savonarola cease preaching and then, after Savonarola either ignored or made excuse for repeated demands to come to Rome, excommunicated him. Savonarola was discovered preaching about clerical and papal abuses, which incensed the pope, and Alexander finally turned the case over to the Florentine authorities who then arrested Savonarola and two of his Dominican brothers. The pope appointed inquisitors, who were told to use whatever means necessary

¹³ John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., ed., *Prison Meditations on Psalms 51 and 31 by Girolamo Savonarola, O.P.* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1994), p. 11.

¹⁴ Donald Weinstein, *Savonarola: The Rise and Fall of a Renaissance Prophet*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 31-3.

¹⁵ The *fanciulli*, or youth, and their songs by Savonarola will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5. For those wishing to delve deeper into Savonarola's life, there are multiple biographies of Savonarola. Three of the most authoritative are Weinstein (as cited above) as well as Roberto Ridolfi's *Vita di Girolamo Savonarola* (Roma: Angelo Belardetti, 1952), in both Italian and an English translation by the author; and Pasquale Villari, trans. Linda Villari, *Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola*. (London: T. F. Unwin, 1888).

to convince Girolamo to confess to being an impostor, and the trial and its connected torture began.¹⁶

After the fact, Savonarola was mortified by his forced confession of wrongdoing and dictated two meditations, one on Psalm 50 [51] and the other (unfinished) on Psalm 30 [31]. These had the twofold purpose of alleviating his guilt and begging God for mercy.¹⁷ However, as Patrick Macey has shown in his 1998 landmark work on Savonarola and music, for sixteenth-century Protestants the psalm instead often functioned as a recitation before execution, known as a “neck verse,” and “the Protestant reading of the psalm supplants the normal Catholic meaning and emphasizes consolation at the time of death, not penitence as in the Catholic tradition...”¹⁸

Both of Savonarola’s prison meditations were translated into numerous languages from the original Latin and circulated throughout Europe in the early- to mid-16th century. Musson writes that the two meditations had the “widest circulation of any texts of Savonarolan authorship in England in the early sixteenth century,” and that “between 1498 and 1502 they had been printed in Augsburg, Antwerp and London, and during the next forty years they were translated from the Latin into Italian, Flemish, German, English, and Spanish.”¹⁹

¹⁶ Weinstein, *Savonarola*, pp. 276-79.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 261. Psalm 50 [51], one of the seven penitential psalms, has traditionally been used as a psalm of confession and a plea for mercy.

¹⁸ Macey, *Bonfire Songs*, p. 278.

¹⁹ Jeremy Gibson Dixon Musson, “The development of Reformation thought and devotion in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with particular reference to the works of, and those associated with, Fra Girolamo Savonarola [1452-1498]” (unpublished MPhil dissertation, University of London, June 1989), p. 30.

The early English print and manuscript versions of the expositions do not name a translator,²⁰ but in the 1534 primer credit for translation was given to a printer and publisher named William Marshall (d. 1540?)²¹. Marshall's primer was a printed book, and it includes only the meditation on Psalm 50 [51].²²

White assumes that these meditations were included with the primer as a means of demonstrating to the reader how one might meditate upon the Psalms.²³ It is entirely possible that there may well have been a much more political reason for their inclusion in editions beginning in 1534, if one considers the Lutheran sympathies of some prominent early English reformers such as Miles Coverdale, Thomas Cromwell or Thomas Cranmer. Luther's admiration for Savonarola's writings was great, and he proclaimed Savonarola a "forerunner and martyr of the Protestant Reformation."²⁴ Luther showed his appreciation for the meditations when he published what was probably the first German translation of them in 1524.²⁵ Given that Savonarola was considered a reformer in his own right, and that the new Protestant reformers agreed with the Savonarolan ideas on papal abuses and other

²⁰ White, *Tudor Books*, chapter V. For more in depth information on English primers, see also Charles C. Butterworth, *The English Primers (1529-1545)* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953); Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (New York: Viking, published for Penguin Books, 2003), pp.72-3; and Nicholas Temperley, *Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 13.

²¹ The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography gives only a questionable death date for Marshall: no birth date is included.

²² Charles C. Butterworth, *The English Primers [1529-1545]* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953), p. 53. This primer was the first to be published in London, by Marshall himself, and printed by John Byddell.

²³ *Ibid*, p. 52.

²⁴ Weinstein, *Savonarola*, p. 306.

²⁵ Desmond Seward, *The Burning of the Vanities: Savonarola and the Borgia Pope* (Phoenix Mill, Gloucestershire, England: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2006), p. 274. Seward also points out that Savonarola's surviving Catholic followers were not happy with Luther's description of Savonarola as a proto-Protestant who agreed with Luther's concept of faith by salvation alone.

church malpractice that were found in his other writings, these meditations that were meant to be prime examples of private devotion became instruments of Protestant indoctrination.

It is notable that other writers' meditations on the Psalms were not found in English primers; conversely, Savonarola's meditations in English translation were not (based on extant documents) printed separately by English printers. One can only speculate on the reason behind this, but I suspect that Cranmer, an influential member of Henry's inner circle, was instrumental in ensuring that Savonarola, rather than other writers, was included with the primers due to Cranmer's admiration of Luther. Perhaps Cranmer had first become aware of Savonarola through Luther's translation of the meditations, and because the reformers considered Savonarola a proto-reformist, his work was more appealing than that of other, "Catholic," writers. The meditations were readily available in the original Latin, printed by Josse Bade in Paris early in the century, but once translated into English they were primarily seen (in parallel translation) with the primers. It would not be impossible that, in their Latin form and as a separate document, they were regarded as inaccessible to and unusable by those who were only literate in English.

The Savonarolan meditations are found in every edition of the primer printed between 1505 and 1545; however, by the time a standardized version of the primer (*The primer in English*, often called "The King's Primer")²⁶ was printed in 1545, the Savonarolan meditations had disappeared.²⁷

²⁶ This primer, unlike its predecessors, was reflective of Henry's final rejection of Lutheranism and return to a more "Catholic" viewpoint. The prayers and devotions therein were quite traditional, and this primer was ordered for use in schools by Henry. Sixteen editions were produced in a two-year period, and although school use was responsible for much of this output, Haigh views the popularity of this book as proof of the continuing

When King Henry's primer was released, the religious situation in England had turned back somewhat toward traditional Catholic ritual, although this did not include a desire to mend fences with Rome. The more extreme reformers included Cranmer and Cromwell; figures like Bishop Stephen Gardiner, on the other hand, were far more orthodox. It was this duality that allowed Protestant activists to be arrested and charged with heresy while, concurrently, churchmen of a more Catholic bent were arrested and executed for being "papiste."

Henry's desire was to develop, as quickly as possible, a uniform version of all books of devotion- litanies, primers, and a bible in English- that would prevent the radicals from turning England into a Lutheran and/or Calvinist country while at the same time avoiding anything in the liturgy, Mass or written materials that appeared Roman.²⁸ Henry was occupied with military difficulties with France, and therefore unable to devote much time to the issue of uniformity in 1543 and 1544; consequently, only a few primers were issued during that time, and those few were somewhat perfunctory in nature. Perhaps, as Butterworth suggested, the printers were expecting a new primer to be released in the very near future and so were reluctant to print much that would be out of date immediately after its release, or perhaps those in power were also preoccupied with the French situation.²⁹

It was not until Henry returned from France that a standardized primer was issued, in May 1545 (fig. 1).

devotion to traditional religion. See Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 162-64.

²⁷ A further discussion of Savonarola and his influence on reformers and English composers will be found in Chapter Six.

²⁸ See Haigh, *English Reformations*, chap. 9; and Butterworth, *The English Primers*, chap. 18.

²⁹ Butterworth, *The English Primers*, p. 250.

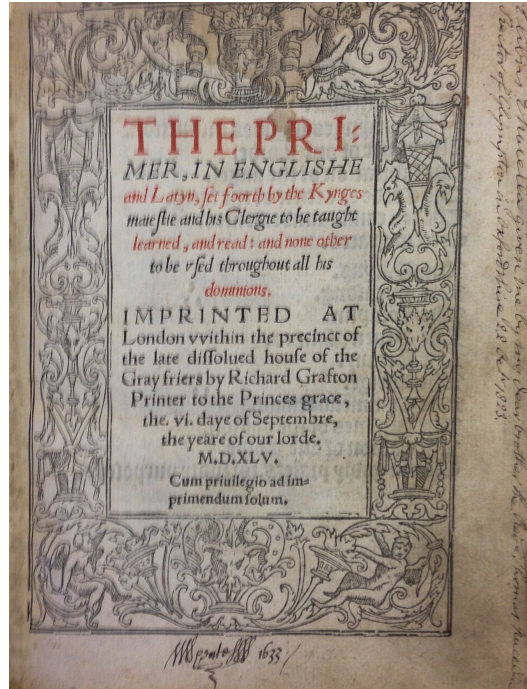


Fig. 1. Titlepage, *The King's Primer*, 1545. Image courtesy of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Like the Great Bible of 1540, this primer was designed for distribution throughout the realm with the intent of the edification and education of all of his subjects. Henry's distaste for the Lutheran/Calvinist style of reform is evident in these words from the preface to the primer:

And fynally, for the auoydyng of the dyuersitie of primer bookes that are nowe abroad, wherof are almost innumerable sortes whiche minister occasion of contentions & vaine disputations, rather then to edifye, and to haue one vniforme ordre of al suche bokes throughout all our dominions, bothe to be taught vnto chyl dren, and also to be vsed for ordinary praiers of al our people not learned in the Latin tong: haue set furth this Primer or booke of praiers in Englishe to be frequented and vsed in an throughe our al places of our said realmes and dominions [...] ³⁰

The preface goes on to discuss the importance of teaching the youth of England their prayers, psalms and other important devotional material as well as their ABCs. Henry was particularly sensitive to this subject, as he wanted to make sure that his son, the future

³⁰ Ibid, p. 257.

Edward VI, was well educated even though he was in fragile health.³¹ Perhaps this view of the primers as primarily an educational tool explains the omission of the Savonarolan meditations, or perhaps they were perceived by Henry to be too reformist, in the vein of Luther and Calvin. It is entirely possible that the meditations were also considered old-fashioned: and yet, the Savonarolan meditations were later discovered by at least two composers who obviously saw value in their words and emotions and chose them as texts for motet and anthem settings, as will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

It is important to note that all of the primers, regardless of religious stance, were vital devotional aids and were probably considered (along with the psalters) as treasured possessions in every home library. Until the Geneva Bible of 1560, bibles were not considered books to be owned by individuals, at least not those with modest incomes, but smaller devotional books could be bought by nearly anyone (and upon the advent of the King's Primer, were expected to be in the homes of all worshippers). The primer would be supplanted somewhat by the Book of Common Prayer in 1549, and after this date was issued in slightly different form than the pre-Edwardian versions,³² but these books plus the psalters were considered essential items in homes throughout England.

The Booke of Common Praier Noted

Another document worth considering for its role in the distribution of Protestant political ideology is John Merbecke's *Booke of Common praier noted* (1550). While it had limited use due to the revision of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1552, it still presents us

³¹ Ibid, chaps. 18, 19.

³² White, *Tudor Books*, chap. VIII.

with a template for Reformation service music and therefore its inclusion here is relevant to this study.

It was Archbishop Thomas Cranmer who was primarily responsible for creating a service order for the new Edwardian Anglican church, in the form of the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*. While keeping the basic elements of the Mass, it eliminated almost all of the fast and feast days (with the exceptions of Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, and the octaves of apostolic feast days), the Elevation of the Host, the Pax, and the Processional. In addition to the purging of these expressions of lay piety, it also changed the language of the Mass from Latin to English, which rendered most if not all of the existing Latin music unusable.³³

Presenting a standardized worship plan for churches prompted the immediate need for a standardized form for English service music, especially in the cathedrals. The person chosen to fulfill this need was John Merbecke, [Marbeck, Marbecke, Marbeke] (c. 1510-c. 1585), a composer, lay clerk, organist, and master of choristers at St Georges' Chapel, Windsor.

Although Henry VIII had separated from Rome and had become increasingly supportive of replacing Latin with English in all aspects of the Mass, he still viewed those with reformist tendencies as suspect due to his dislike of the Lutherans and Calvinists. Merbecke, a radical convert to Protestantism, had in 1543 been arrested for heresy (based

³³ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, pp. 464-66. An excellent source for the history of the *Book of Common Prayer* is Edward C. Ratcliffe, *The booke of common prayer of the Churche of England: its making and revisions, 1549-1661* (Watford, Herts, England: Sun Printers, Ltd., 1949).

on his Calvinist sympathies), tried and sentenced to death, in part for his “writing against the Sacrament of the Altar.”³⁴

That the holly masse when the preist [sic] doth consecrate the body of our lord is pollutyd difformyd sinfull and open robbery of the glory of God from the which a Xpan (Christian?) harte ought both to abhore and flee : and the eleevacion of the sacrament is the symylitude of the setting upp of Images of the calves in the temple buylded by Jeroboam and that it is more abhominacion then the Sacrifices don by the Jewes in Jeroboams temple to those calves ; and that certayne and sure it is that Christ himselfe is made in this masse mens laughinge stocke’.³⁵

In the preface to Merbecke’s concordance to the Bible (the first completed concordance in English), he wrote about the difficulties he encountered in trying to finish the work and get it published: due to his imprisonment and conviction, the concordance was seized and destroyed in its nearly completed state, a certain devastation to Merbecke who had spent countless hours compiling this list of each word found in the scriptures:

And as I had almoste finished the same, my chaunce amongst others was, at Windsore to bee taken in the labirynth and troublesome net of a lawe, called the Statute of .vi. articles, where, by the meanes of good woorkers for my dispatche, I was quickly condempnd and Judged to death, for the copiyng out of a worke, made by the greate Clerke Master Jhon Calvin, written against the same sixe articles, and this my concourdance was not one of the least matters, that then thei alleged, to aggravate the cause of my trouble: but the same tyme was my greate worke, among other, taken and utterly lost, whiche (beside my labor) I had spent no small tyme in.³⁶

Although three other men condemned to death with Merbecke were executed at Windsor in late summer 1543, Merbecke was granted a reprieve and then a full pardon later in that same year due to the intervention of Bishop Stephen Gardiner. After this

³⁴ P.C. Buck, E.H. Fellowes, et al. *Tudor Church Music: vol. X (Hugh Aston, John Marbeck, Osbert Parsley)* (London: Oxford University Press for the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, 1929), p. 157.

³⁵ Quoted in Buck, et al, *Tudor Church Music*, p.158. The original source for this quote is the *Domestic State Papers, Henry VIII*, vol. xviii, p. 164.

³⁶ John Merbecke, *Concorda[n]ce : that is to saie, a worke wherein by the ordre of the letters of the A.B.C. ye maie redely finde any worde conteigned in the whole Bibl* ([London] : Richardus Grafton, typographus regius excudebat], Anno. M.D.L. [1550 (July)]), A.iii.r

incident, Merbecke appears to have abandoned musical composition in favor of devoting his time to reformist activities, although it is assumed that he was working closely with Thomas Cranmer on service music and was influenced by Cranmer's 1544 *Litany* and its borrowing of plainsong tunes as well as tunes from the Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox liturgies.³⁷

While Merbecke's vehement Protestantism caused him great trouble in Henry's reign, the more evangelically-minded Edwardian period and the institution of Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* allowed him to create the work for which he is best known, the *booke of Common praier noted* (1550).

The *booke of Common praier noted* differs from the metrical psalters in that it was not intended for private devotion or fostering congregational singing, but was rather a service guide for priests and lay clerks that set the newly minted Book of Common Prayer to music (figs. 2, 3). In order to put this new worship book into service as quickly as possible, the music attached to it had to be easily read and understood. There is no preface to the book other than a brief note of less than a page that outlines the mensural system that Merbecke devised for the singers, consisting of only four types of notes of various durations.³⁸ This system was likely an aid to implementing the abrupt procedural change involved in the new service.³⁹

³⁷ J. Eric Hunt, *Cranmer's First Litany, 1544, and Merbecke's Book of Common Prayer Noted, 1550* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939), pp. 16, 22.

³⁸ John Merbecke, *The booke of Common praier noted* ([London]: Imprinted by Richard Grafton Printer to the Kinges Maiestie. 1550. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum), A. ii. r. Also in Hunt, *Cranmer's and Merbecke's*, p. 123.

³⁹ John Heighway, lay clerk at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, private conversation, 16 June 2015.

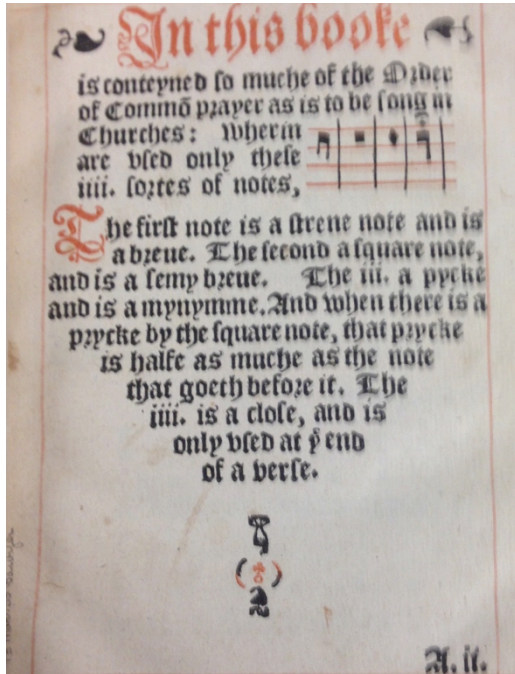


Fig. 2. Directions for use, *Booke of Common praier noted*, 1550.

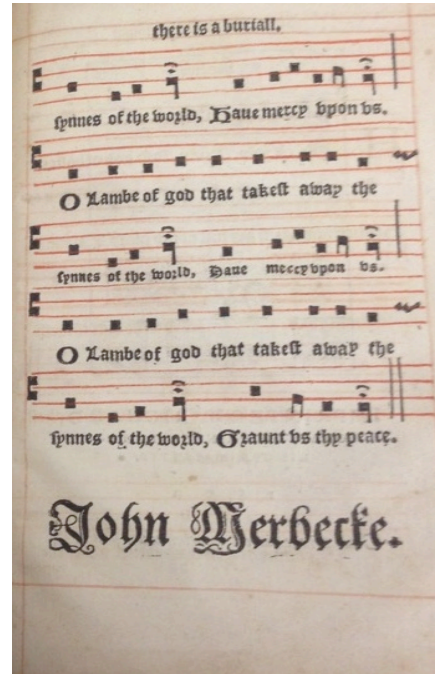


Fig. 3. Excerpt from the Agnus Dei, *Booke of Common praier noted*, 1550. Both images courtesy of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

What renders the *Booke of Common praier noted* applicable to this study is its similarities to the metrical psalters (which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter). Like the psalters, the *BCPN* was intended to delineate a new way of worship that used English rather than Latin as its primary language. It followed Cranmer's suggestion that there be "for every syllable a note," as found in the metrical psalters. It included familiar canticles such as the *Nunc dimittis* and prayers such as the *Pater noster*, still with the recognizable Latin names but with texts newly formed in English.

The *Booke of Common praier noted* also reflected a humanist desire to return to what was considered the ancient practice of music in worship. Rivkah Kim's study of humanism in the *Booke of Common praier noted* focuses on the great 16th century humanist Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) and his disapproval of current Christian (i.e. Roman)

worship as opposed to patristic practice. Erasmus explained that congregational singing was important in the early church, in limited form, in a manner that did not detract from the vital parts of worship, such as the Lord's Prayer. He contrasted that with contemporary practice:

In many churches water is consecrated publicly and a responsory is sung before the Introit of the Mass. It is usual that the psalm, the whole of which is to be sung, is abbreviated. Before the gospel unlearned prosas are sometimes sung and the creed is sent on ahead. An extended preface is sung before the canon of the Mass, and the sanctus is sung during the consecration. When the mysteries of the ceremony are shown, a song imploring the help of the blessed virgin or saint Roch is heard, and the Lord's Prayer is suppressed.⁴⁰

Merbecke, then, was presented with a particular challenge that compounded the problem of putting out a book of service music in an incredibly short period of time: the music needed to reflect a return to worship that focused solely on the prayers, psalms, and scriptural elements of the Mass; it must be simple and easily understood; and it must incorporate plainchant, the music of the early Church, rather than other tune sources such as folk song. Wulstan theorizes that Merbecke's use of dotted rhythms was due to their association with Calvinist tunes;⁴¹ I would add that Merbecke's notational system was also quite compatible with the English language. If we look at the situation from a humanist angle, knowing Merbecke's strong reformist tendencies, his notational system served as a "cleansing" or purifying of Roman musical practice, eliminating all but the most essential notes and words. This accomplished several goals: it accommodated the use of the vernacular; it simplified a melodic structure that had become increasingly dependent upon melismatic material; it was easily understood by both performers and congregants; and it

⁴⁰ Hyun-Ah Kim, *Humanism and the Reform of Sacred Music in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008), pp. 85-6. The above quote (in translation) comes from Erasmus' *Evangelium Cap.2.Secundum Lucam Cap.2 [LBVI233F]*.

⁴¹ David Wulstan, *Tudor Music* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1986), p. 289.

satisfied the humanist desire for a return to the perceived starkness of the ancient worship service.

The simplicity of the notational system in the *BCPN* left it very open to interpretation in performance. The fact that the book's use was so short-lived, due to the replacement of the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* just three years later by a new revised edition, means that we have no idea what the performance practice actually was. As Edmund Fellowes stated:

[...] it is open to anyone to express his views as to whether or not Merbecke was successful in the task that he undertook; as to whether his 'noting' can be improved by a free treatment and a redistribution of the note-values; as to whether, while his melodic outline is retained, it may be more conveniently represented in a uniform succession of single notes (quavers or crotchets in modern notation) to be freely interpreted in the manner of plainsong; or again, whether the note-values may be literally interpreted, either with or without that kind of elasticity and rhythmic variety such as are now recognized as essential in the interpretation of all Tudor music.⁴²

Here Fellowes seemed to be commenting upon only the actual written notes in Merbecke's service, but the "free treatment" is most likely a reference to faburdening, or "a method of harmonising the simpler kinds of chant, especially psalm chants, by improvisation governed by certain rules."⁴³ This was a method probably practiced only by trained singers, such as cathedral or parish clerks who would make up the majority of those using Merbecke's book; but in upper and upper-middle class homes where music education was available it is possible that singers with choral experience could faburden on psalter tunes.

⁴² Edmund H. Fellowes, *The Office of the Holy Communion as set by John Merbecke* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 18.

⁴³ Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p. 9. Temperley continues the definition by stating that "The basic pattern was for the chant (usually in the cantus or upper voice) to be followed a 6th below by the tenor, with a 7-6 suspension just before the cadence and an octave for the last note. In the fifteenth century a third (altus) part sang largely in strict parallel 4^{ths} below the cantus. By the 16th century a free bass was usually added, and the altus, if present, also moved freely so as to amplify the harmony."

Merbecke was certainly not the only composer writing service music for Communion at this time--there are settings in the Wanley manuscript, as Fellowes points out⁴⁴--but these are four-part settings in which all parts are written out. The "plainsong" in Merbecke's service would have lent itself very well to faburdening. This open-ended notational treatment of the Communion service, in addition to reflecting the need for music that could go into print and practice immediately, may also show us that the necessity for music performed by skilled musicians (with improvisational capabilities) in the cathedrals, if not necessarily the parish churches, still existed.

In introducing a new state religion, it was essential for Henry VIII and his Protestant-leaning churchmen to reform not only the basic tenets of the faith but elements of faith practice, including documents of personal devotion and communal worship and the music associated with both personal and private religious practice. We have observed the development of the primer in the Henrician and Edwardian eras as well as the institution of a service order in Thomas Cranmer's *The Booke of Common praier* and its musical counterpart, John Merbecke's *The booke of Common praier noted*. All of these played a role in the dissemination of Protestant ideologies; all display elements of controversy in the struggle to define what English religion was and would be.

While these were monumental advances in forming what would become the Anglican Church, there is yet one instrument to be discussed that would be a vital tool in the religious education of every English Protestant worshipper: the metrical psalter. The psalter had been a fundamental component of worship practice since antiquity, but the

⁴⁴ Edmund H. Fellowes, *English Cathedral Music*, 5th ed., rev. by J.A. Westrup (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1969), pp. 36-40. See also James Wrightson, *The "Wanley" Manuscripts: A Critical Commentary* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), pp. 58-65.

new metricized version was to serve as more than simply a devotional instrument: in fact, Diarmaid MacCulloch refers to it as “the secret weapon of the Reformation.”⁴⁵ While multiple scholars have discussed the political aspects of the psalter, it is difficult to assess said politics without using modern rubrics, which makes for an uneasy political definition of the music within. Lydia Goehr states that Western political theory tells us that, “art music (like religion and philosophy) should stay quarantined from the ordinary world, and thus from politics.”⁴⁶

However, the music found in the metrical psalters is not art music. As we shall see, it was music most likely meant for indoctrination and education, and therefore can be perceived as a political instrument. The politics and propagandistic possibilities of the metrical psalter would render it essential to both the establishment and maintenance of English Protestantism for more than a century, and it is to the psalter’s story and how it informs us that we turn next.

⁴⁵ MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, p. 571.

⁴⁶ Lydia Goehr, “Political Music and the Politics of Music.” (*The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52, no. 1 (1994): 99-112), p. 103.

Chapter Three

The Metrical Psalters

...the verye meane to attaine to the perfecte gouvernement of thys your realme...

-Thomas Sternhold

Thomas Sternhold, in the preface to his 1549 *Certayne Psalmes* (dedicated to Edward VI), wrote the words above as a suggestion to his monarch that the best way to maintain a strong nation was to educate the people in the Scriptures, especially the Psalms. While Sternhold's motivation may have been more moral than political, the development of one of the most successful instruments of English private devotion, the metrical psalter, was surely grounded in the religious politics of the Protestant reformers.

The metrical psalter was not a purely English invention, and there are strong similarities between the English versions and those of the Calvinist and Lutheran traditions in Geneva and Germany. This chapter examines two versions of the English metrical psalter: the so-called Coverdale psalter, entitled *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes* (1535), and three editions of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter, which made its first appearance in 1549 as a partial psalter by Thomas Sternhold and would be expanded by John Hopkins beginning in 1553. Editions of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter would continue on for the remainder of the 1500s and into subsequent centuries.

In studying these psalters, it becomes evident that *aides memoire* such as memorization and metricization were essential to the learning of the psalms, prayers and other devotional elements included therein. Complementing this, the creators of these

psalters are discussed, including the possible motivation of these men to contribute to the spread of Protestant propaganda and education through their versions of the metrical psalters. A crucial aspect of this project is to address the appeal of the metrical psalters to the individual worshipper, including possibilities for “performance” in both home and church.

In addition, this chapter includes a deeper analytical study of the tunes and harmonizations of Psalms 51 and 79, in the process searching for possible political influence on text and music. The penitential and persecutory elements of these two texts make them particularly applicable to a study of the politics of English Reformation music, whether Protestant or Catholic.

By tracing the history of English metrical psalters and examining these exemplars, it will become evident that they were crucial tools in educating congregants in the new method of worship foundational to the Church of England. Their size and price, thanks to the thriving print industry, meant that they were accessible and affordable to nearly everyone and therefore the church expected that its congregants would own copies and use them at home. The contents of these books disseminated reformist thought in a concise and practical manner, and the music therein was as effective a means of propagandizing as the texts.

Memorization and metricization

A noteworthy feature of early primers was the inclusion of devices intended to assist readers in memorizing such important items as saints’ feast days or determining the date of Easter. In the 1545 primer printed by Richard Grafton, for example, doggerel verses

were given in the calendar to help with the memorization of important saints for each month. To illustrate, in the month of March the verse is as follows:

Da.uyd, of,wales, lo,ueth, well, lekes. That, wyll, make, Gre,go,ry, lene, chekes If Ed,warde,do,eate,some,with,them, Ma,ry,sende,hym,to,Bed,lem. (David of Wales loveth well leeks, That will make Gregory lean cheeks. If Edward do eat some with them, Mary [will] send him to Bedlam.)⁴⁷

As is evident by the placement of the punctuation, the verse has been set in four phrases, three with eight syllables and the fourth with seven, a clever way of learning the order of the most important saints of that month: David of Wales, Gregory (pope/bishop of Rome) and Edward (the Confessor), as well as the Annunciation of Mary.

Using verse as a memory aid was most likely one catalyst for the development of the metrical psalter, a document that became immensely popular during the reign of Edward VI (1547-1553) and continued in popularity for over two centuries. The 1549 Book of Common Prayer contained the Psalms in prose as translated by Miles Coverdale (1488-1568), and it was required that this translation be sung congregationally in Anglican churches. For private use, however, the metrical psalter was the version of choice, although eventually the tunes and their harmonizations found their way into congregational use.

Metrical psalters were first promulgated in Germany by Martin Luther as a means of fostering and promoting congregational singing; indeed, all of the reformers encouraged people to sing the psalms in their private gatherings rather than current (often bawdy)

⁴⁷ (No author), *The primer, in Englishe and Latyn, set foorth by the Kynges maiestie and his Clergie to be taught, learned, and read: and none other to be vsed throughout all his dominions* (Imprinted at London vvithin the precinct of the late dissolved house of the Gray frieres by Richard Grafton Printer of the Princes grace, the. vi. daye of Septembre, the yeare of our lorde. M.D.XLV [1545]. *Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.*).

popular songs.⁴⁸ In composer Johann Walther's (1496-1570) revised *Wittenberger*

Gesangbuch (1537), Luther lamented the sad state of music in his preface to the hymnbook:

No wonder that music is so utterly despised and rejected at this time, seeing that other arts, which after all we should and must possess, are so lamentable regarded by everyone as altogether worthless [...] Yet, in order that our fair art may not be thus wholly destroyed, I have—in God's praise and in pure defiance of the Devil and his contempt—brought out in print the spiritual songs formerly printed at Wittemberg [sic], setting the greater part anew, insofar as God permitted me, carefully correcting and improving the rest, and further adding several little pieces for five and six voices. So I pray that every pious Christian may bear with this my insufficiency and do the same or better for the glory of God and the furtherance of the art.⁴⁹

We see in this quote that all people (“every pious Christian”), not just trained church musicians, were being urged to “do the same” with these songs in parts, without any specification as to where they should be sung.

The preface to John Calvin's (1509-1564) Geneva Psalter of 1565 (written by Claude Goudimel), however, is quite specific in its language regarding music of more than one part:

To the melody of the psalms we have, in this little volume, adapted three parts, not to induce you to sing them in Church, but that you may rejoice in God, particularly in your homes. This should not be found an ill thing, the more so since the melody used in Church is left in its entirety, just as though it were alone.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ There are multiple sources on the metrical psalters, including the following: Timothy Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody in Print and Practice: English 'Singing Psalms' and Scottish 'Psalm Buiks', c. 1547-1640* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014); Jeremy L. Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Robin Leaver, *'Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes': English and Dutch Metrical Psalms from Coverdale to Utenhove* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); Kenneth R. Long, *The Music of the English Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971); Peter LeHuray, *Music and the Reformation in England, 1549-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); and Glass, *The Story of the Psalters*.

⁴⁹ For a detailed discussion of the Walther/Luther Hymnbook, see Markus Jenny, *Luthers Geistliche Lieder und Kirchengesänger: Vollständige Neuedition in Ergänzung zu Band 35 der Weimarer Ausgabe* (Köln; Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1985). The quote above was found in Oliver Strunk, ed., *Source Readings in Music History from Classical Antiquity through the Romantic Era* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1950), pp. 343-44.

⁵⁰ Claude Goudimel (c. 1505-1572), was a French composer who was a victim of the Huguenot massacres at Lyon in 1572. The Geneva Psalter with Goudimel's preface first

Calvinistic theology proved to be a greater influence on English reformers than Luther, probably partially in response to Henry VIII's aversion to Luther and Lutheran policies, but also because so many English Protestants fled to Geneva and Frankfurt (the cities where Calvinism was strongest) during the reign of Catholic Mary I (1553-58). These exiles brought with them the partially completed metrical psalter of Thomas Sternhold (1500-1549), and the two branches of Protestant thought exchanged both ideas and psalters.⁵¹

English metrical psalters

English reformers wanted to distance themselves from the elaborate music of the Roman church by creating service music that was simpler and more easily understood by laypeople. Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry VIII, Edward VI and (briefly) Mary I wrote in a 1544 letter to the king:

... I have translated into the English tongue, so well as I could in so short time, certain processions to be used upon festival days if after due correction and amendment of the same Your Highness shall think it so convenient. [...] The judgment whereof I refer wholly unto Your Majesty, and after Your Highness hath corrected it, if Your Grace command some devout and solemn note to be made thereunto (as it is to the procession which Your Majesty hath already set forth in English) I trust it will much excitate and stir the hearts of all men unto devotion and godliness. But in my opinion, the song that should be made thereunto would not be full of notes, but, as near as may be, for every syllable a note, so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly as be in the matins and evensong Venite, the hymns, Te Deum, Benedictus, Magnificat, Nunc dimittis, and all the psalms and versicles ... I made them only for a proof, to see how English would do in song.⁵²

appeared in 1565, a facsimile of which was published by Bärenreiter-Verlag in 1935. See Strunk, *Source Readings*, p. 349.

⁵¹ Waldo Selden Pratt, *The Music of the French Psalter of 1562: A Historical Survey and Analysis with the Music in Modern Notation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p. 9; Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, pp. 14-24.

⁵² Quoted in Strunk, *Source Readings*, pp. 350-351. The original letter may be found in the State Paper Office. Domestic Papers. A.D. 1544 Vol. V, as stated in *Miscellaneous Writings*

It is important to emphasize that Cranmer includes the phrase “in my opinion”- this was not a dictum, as has been thought, but merely a suggestion in a private letter to the king. However, his idea of musical simplification seems practical as well as political: if Henry was anxious to implement new elements in the service that would mark it as English, rather than Roman, concessions would have to be made in order for that to happen.

As in Germany and France, the metrical psalms were not a part of the liturgy of the Church of England but rather were intended for private devotion.⁵³ As they were meant for congregants rather than trained musicians to sing, the tunes were artlessly simple and were in fact referred to as “plainsong,” an obvious reference to chant. Some of the tunes were in fact actual chant tunes while others were based on chant and still others on popular tunes. Any newly composed music was also simple and easily learned.

As Nicholas Temperley says, “One of the strongest weapons in the hands of the reformers was popular song.”⁵⁴ While the average layperson may not have understood or cared about church reform, the appeal of learning new congregational songs set to known tunes was great. All Protestant reformers recognized this, and in England, as in France, it was not only the working class who were attracted to the new practice of singing psalms to

and Letters of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556: Edited for the Parker Society, by the Rev. John Edmund. Vol. 16. Cambridge: Printed at the University Press, 1846. *Nineteenth Century Collections Online.* Web. 5 July 2016, p. 412.

URL <http://tinyurl.com/tinyurl/3XHNo8>

⁵³ The exception to this is Psalm 128, *Beati omnes qui timent Dominum*, which was a text often used for weddings (the Solemnization of Matrimony). See Wulstan, *Tudor Music*, p. 284; and James Wrightson, ed., *The Wanley Manuscripts, Parts I, II, III*, in *Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance*, vols. 99, 100, 101 (Madison, WI: A-R Editions, Inc., 1995), pp. 146-149. It is worth mentioning that in the Wanley manuscripts, the text for this setting of Ps 128 (composer anonymous?) comes directly from the Sternhold and Hopkins version of the metrical psalter.

⁵⁴ Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p. 19.

popular tunes, but the social elite as well. In upper circles in the 1540s, metrical psalms replaced courtly verse as the fashion in upper class homes.⁵⁵

Given their vast popularity, it is little wonder that the metrical psalters, beyond their use as devotional devices, were an extremely effective means of propagating reformist sociopolitical thought. The advent of music printing in England allowed any literate person with a bit of money to spend the opportunity to purchase a psalter; in fact, it was expected that most people would own a copy.⁵⁶ Unlike medieval books of hours, which were very expensive to produce and required a reasonable level of literacy in Latin, vernacular metrical psalters could be used by anyone with the ability to read his or her own language.

The metrical psalters could also be perceived as educational material, in the sense that they were used to train congregants in how to worship, privately and publicly. In Chapter Four we will see how manuscript collections of Latin music were used to reeducate English Catholics in the “old faith,” but for English Protestants (especially in the Edwardian period) it was necessary to move worshippers away from Catholic tradition, including its theology, ceremonies and icons, and language. The metrical psalters, with their rhyming vernacular language and simple, often recognizable tunes, not only assisted lay people during the service but also reinforced Protestant tenets at home.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 22.

⁵⁶ Although, as Ian Green points out, “literacy” as we know it today did not necessarily exist in the 16th century, as methods of reading at that time, such as aloud in pairs or groups or being read to by a literate friend or family member, are no longer common. Therefore it was possible for an illiterate person to still make use of printed materials such as the psalter if there was some way for them to hear the text read. Green also makes an interesting distinction between our idea of “readership” and that which existed in the 16th century. See Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 24-5; also Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, pp. 187-88.

The first psalter examined here is pre-Edwardian: Miles Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*. It is noteworthy for its politics but also for the controversy it generated in the hazy religious identity of Henry VIII's era. While its influence on future psalters is questionable,⁵⁷ it fits the criteria of a Reformation-era book that attempted to push an agenda both political and educational.

Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes

Many metrical psalters included a preface (often entitled, "To the Christian reader") in which the author or authors of the psalter sermonized upon the need for such a volume and expounded at length about the evils of the Roman church, "papist" thought and the degradation of society, usually cloaked in scriptural references and stories. Miles (or Myles) Coverdale (c.1488-1568), in the preface to his *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes drawen out of the holy Scripture, for the comforte and consolacyon of soch as love to reioyce in God and his worde* (c. 1535), gives an example of the [societal] temptations facing young singers in England and how the psalter can reform them:

⁵⁷ Rivkah Zim, *English Metrical Psalms: Poetry as Praise and Prayer, 1535-1601* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 112.

Yf yonge men also that haue the gyfte of syngynge, toke theyr pleasure in soch wholsome balettes, as the thre chyldren synge in the fyre, & as Jesus the sonne of Syrac doth in his last chapter, it were a token, both that they felt some sparke of Gods loue vnto hym. [...] Therefore to geue oure youth of Englonde some occasion to chaunge theyr soule & corrupte balettes into swete songes and sprituall Hymnes of Gods honoure, and for theyr owne consolacion in hym, I haue here (good reader) set out certayne comfortable songes grounded on Gods worde, and taken some out of the holy scripture specyally out of the Psalmes of Daud, At whom wolde God that our Musicians wolde lerne to make theyr songes: & that they which are disposed to be mery, wolde in theyr myrth folowe the councill of saynt Paule and saynt James, and not to passe theyr tyme in nayghty songes of fleshly loue and wontonesse, but with syngynge of Psalmes and soch songes as edifye, & corruppe [sic] not mens conuersacyon.⁵⁸

Coverdale was confident that the changing of “corrupte balettes” into “certayne comfortable songes grounded on Gods worde” would have the effect of changing the singers’ soul- a heady promise, and one not made lightly, for Coverdale was an ordained priest, Augustinian friar and one of Henry VIII’s most trusted councillors.

The 16th-century metrical psalters were hugely popular, as evidenced by the massive number of editions and print runs thereof, although whether that was due to their content or the heavy expectation that each household would own one is unclear. However, the songs themselves must have had great appeal, because the Roman church took note of the psalters and the effect they were having upon the populace. One early 17th-century writer criticized the psalters by saying:

There is nothing that hath drawne multitudes to be of their Sects so much, as the singing of their psalmes, in such variable and delightfull tunes: These the souldier singeth in warre, the artizans at their worke, wenches spinning and sewing, apprentises in their shoppes, and wayfaring men in their travaile, litle knowing (God wotte [knows]) what a serpent lyeth hidden under these sweete flowers.⁵⁹

What was the “serpent” lying “under these sweete flowers?” There was much for Catholics to beware in a Protestant metrical psalter. The first was the translation of the

⁵⁸ Quoted in Leaver, *Goostly Psalmes*, p. 287.

⁵⁹ Quoted in White, *Tudor Books*, p. 44.

Psalms into the vernacular, which violated the Roman church's dictum of scriptures being disseminated to parishioners solely in the Latin Vulgate translation of St Jerome. Next, there were prefaces such as Coverdale's, which in addition to affirming the societal benefits of learning the songs also included veiled (or not-so-slightly veiled) references to recent "troubles" with the Roman church-

The chyldren of Israel in the olde tyme whan God had delyuered them from theyr enemyes, gaue thanks vnto hym, and made theyr songe of hym ... why shulde not we then make oure songes and myrth of God as well as they? Hath he not done as moche for vs as for them? Hath he not delyuered vs from as great troubles as them?⁶⁰

-or dissention among Protestant sects, as in this quote from Martin Luther:

Also, I do not share the opinion that all the arts should be struck down by the Gospel, as some false zealots claim. But I do desire to see all the arts, especially music, used in the service of him who gave and created them.⁶¹

Some metrical psalters had additional songs besides those dedicated to the Psalms or the prayers of the church, and these could further the political views of their authors. A particularly contentious example is found toward the end of Coverdale's psalter and is entitled, "Let Go the Whore of Babilon." As Coverdale was a Lutheran sympathizer, having spent much time in Germany during his years as an exile, Lutheran influence is evident in this song. The text echoes Luther's use of the image of the whore of Babylon (from the New Testament book of Revelation) as a metaphor for the Pope.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Leaver, *'Goostly Psalmes'*, p. 288.

⁶¹ From the preface to the 1529 Wittenberg Congregational *Gesangbuch*, referring to reformers such as Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin: quoted in Leaver, *'Goostly Psalmes'*, p. 281.

The song has eleven verses, with the fourth being one of, if not the most political (fig. 4):

Ye ypocrites what can ye saye?
wo be vnto you all
ye haue begyled vs many a daye
heretikes ye did vs call
for louynge the worde/ of Christ the Lorde,
whom ye do alwaye resiste
Let go the whore of Babilon,
that rydeth vpon the beast .⁶²

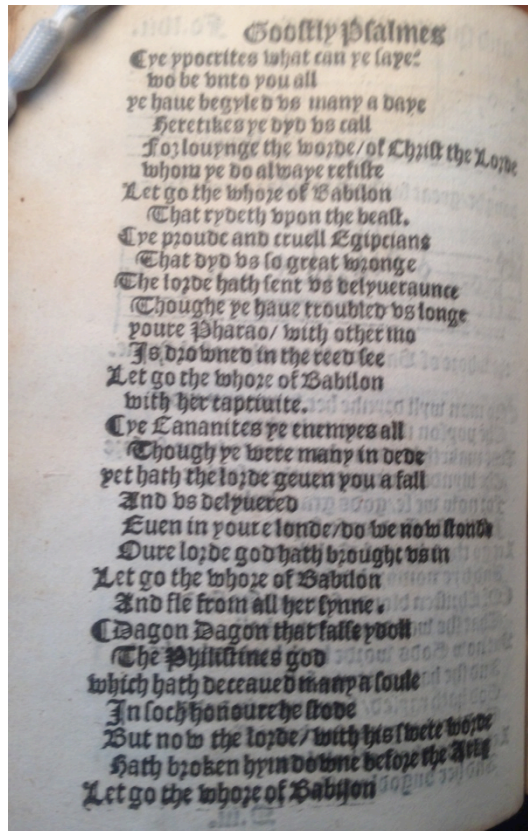


Fig. 4. Excerpt from “Let Go the Whore of Babilon” in *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*, 1535. Image courtesy of the Provost, Fellows and Scholars of the Queen’s College, Oxford.

Coverdale’s volume is undoubtedly one of the most explicitly political of the metrical psalters, due to his association with outspoken reformers such as William Tyndale

⁶²Coverdale, *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*, fo. lvii v.

(c. 1494-1536), translator of the banned 1536 Bible in English, and his own mentor Thomas Cromwell (c. 1485-1540). Coverdale had to leave England for the Continent several times during his career when his Lutheran leanings became problematic, and he, along with Cromwell, served Henry VIII in part by rooting out suspected “popery” after the Injunctions of 1538.⁶³ As stated above, Coverdale was highly influenced by German reformers such as Luther and Melancthon, and he most likely used Luther’s German translation of the book of Psalms as the basis for his English translation. Unlike later English psalters, whose tunes showed great French influence, the tunes in Coverdale’s psalter reflected Luther’s German melodies. However, Coverdale’s are not entirely of German origin: there are also hints of melodies from Strasbourg as well as of Dutch and Danish influences, which led Leaver to the conclusion that Coverdale was working with orally transmitted material.⁶⁴ Coverdale did not include all 150 psalms in his volume, but rather combined 13 psalms with various other scriptural and liturgical texts for a total of 41 songs and hymns. Two of the psalms, Psalm 50 [51] and 127 [128] are presented in two settings.⁶⁵

⁶³ Besides Robin Leaver’s book on the *Goostly Psalmes*, there are several sources for those interested in learning more about Miles Coverdale, such as Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations*; J. F. Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1953. Reprint edition 2005); and George Pearson, ed., *Writings and translations of Myles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter : containing The old faith, A spiritual and most precious pearl, Fruitful lessons, A treatise on the Lord's supper, Order of the church in Denmark. Abridgement of the Enchiridion of Erasmus* (Cambridge: Printed at the University Press, 1844. Accessed on HathiTrust Digital Library, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008726395>, 17 November 2015).

⁶⁴ Leaver, ‘*Goostly Psalmes*’, p. 80.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 70-73.

This early psalter by Coverdale is an example of a problem inherent to metricization: the awkwardness resulting from putting Hebrew poetry into English metre. Not only is the translation affected, the Hebrew words do not lend themselves well to an English poetic style. No matter, one might think, as Coverdale translated the Psalms from the Latin Vulgate and from Luther's German, but this is actually more troublesome given that we are looking at a text that is now four degrees removed from the original.⁶⁶

To illustrate, table 1 shows in the first column Robert Alter's 2007 translation from the original Hebrew of the opening verses of Psalm 50 [51], also known as *Miserere mei, Deus*.⁶⁷ In the middle column is Coverdale's non-metrical translation of the same from his unauthorized 1535 Bible,⁶⁸ and the third column is the opening verse of the metricized version found in *Goostly Psalmes*, which encompasses slightly more than the natural break found in the Alter.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Robert Alter, *The Book of Psalms* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), introduction, III. "The Poetry of Psalms." In the introduction to this translation of the Psalms from the original Hebrew, Alter discusses at length the poetic structure of Hebrew biblical texts such as the Psalms. Ancient Hebrew poetry is not based on rhyme, but rather on traditional images and a syntactic structure in which the two halves of the line create a parallelism in meaning. This is in direct opposition to the concept of metricization for ease of memory, which relies heavily on rhyming such as is found in the metrical psalters.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 180-81.

⁶⁸ Miles Coverdale, *Biblia the Bible, that is, the holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament, faithfully and truly translated out of Douche and Latyn in to Englishe* ([Cologne?: Printed by E. Cervicornus and J. Sofer?] M. D. XXXV [1535 (4 Oct.)], http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:6986:242 [accessed 27 October 2015]), fo.20v.

⁶⁹ Coverdale, *Goostly Psalmes and spirituall songes*, fo. xli r,v; fo. xlii r

Alter	Coverdale non-metered	Coverdale metered
<p>1 For the lead player, a David psalm, 2 upon Nathan the prophet's coming to him when he had come to bed with Bathsheba. 3 Grant me grace, God, as befits Your kindness, with Your great mercy wipe away my crimes. 4 Thoroughly wash my transgressions away and cleanse me from my offense. 5 For my crimes I know, and my offense is before me always. 6 You alone have I offended, and what is evil in Your eyes I have done.</p>	<p>The L. A Psalme of Dauid. Haue mercy vpon me (O God) after thy goodnes and accordinge vnto thy greate mercies, do awaye mine offenses. Wash me well fro[m] my wickednesses, and clesne me fro[m] my synne. For I knowledge my fautes, and my synne is euer before me. Agaynst the only, agaynst the haue I synned, and done euill in thy sight.</p>	<p>O lorde god haue thou mercy on me/ After thy maruelous great pite/ As thou art ful of mercy/ do away all my iniquite./ And washe me fro[m] all flythynesse/ of my great synnes and wantonesse/ for they are many within me/ and euer I fele them heuye/ My synne is always before myne eye/ I haue alone offended the/ before the haue I lyued synfully/ in thy worde stondest thou steadfastly/ thoughe thou be iudged wrongfully.</p>

Table 1. Opening verses of Psalm 50 [51] in three versions.

Taking into account the differences between early modern and current modern English, it can be seen that Coverdale's texts are seemingly more fraught with passion and penitence than the modern, more direct translation. Alter uses only two terms to describe the sinner's actions: "crimes" and "transgressions." Coverdale used several: "wickedness," "sin," faults," "filthiness," and "wantonness." Even removing the last three lines from the metrical version it is still the longest at ten lines, which perhaps begs the question of why a psalm put into this form would be easier to learn.

The answer lies in the rhyming and repetition of the metrical psalm. If a layperson chose to learn Psalm 50 from the Coverdale Bible it would be a somewhat arduous task, considering that bibles at this stage were not yet versified, thereby rendering the text entirely in prose. The metrical version separates the text into lines of either eight or seven syllables, with rhyming syllables at the end of each line. Due perhaps to this psalm's

importance as a penitential text, Coverdale created two versions of it in his *Goostly Psalmes*, with different words and tunes for each.

The melodies Coverdale used are simple, with several of them being Luther's sacralizations of well known popular tunes. They are primarily in stepwise motion, with leaps of the interval of a fourth or less, and these leaps mostly (but not always) followed by more stepwise motion, as one would expect in folk tunes. Generally there is only one note per syllable. Notes of shorter duration (minims and quavers) are used for unaccented syllables. The melodies are short with repetitive phrases that can be easily learned and remembered (fig. 5).

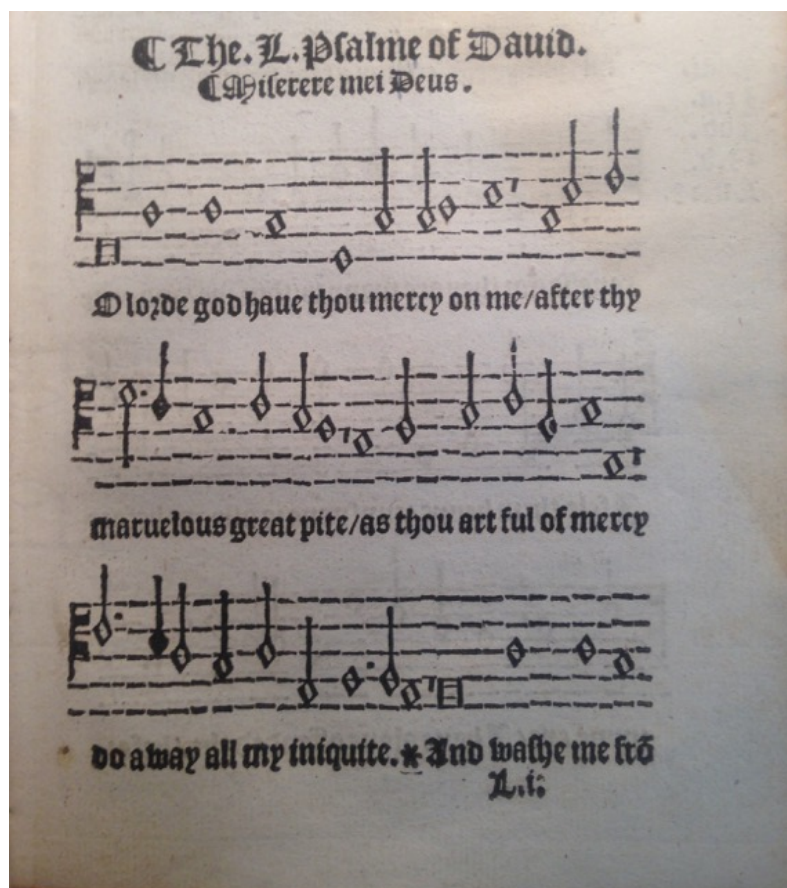


Fig. 5. Opening segment of Psalm 50 tune, *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*, 1535. Image courtesy of the Provost, Fellows and Scholars of the Queen's College, Oxford.

Repetition was an *aide memoire* most likely utilized in the church from its very beginning.⁷⁰ It would only make sense that the repetition so valuable in learning prayers and devotions would extend to music, especially when training a previously mostly silent congregation to sing psalms and hymns. With this in mind, we can compare English metrical psalters such as Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes* to their German and French counterparts, as they share this important component: the melodies are short and the verses designed so that each stanza can be sung to the same melody. In fact, melodies are recycled for use with more than one psalm, as indicated by the words "sing this as the ___ Psalme" at the beginning of the psalm text.⁷¹ This was surely not for economy's sake but rather to expedite the process of learning the psalms. The repetition of these popular tunes was what allowed them to be easily learned with secular lyrics, and it would have been a simple matter to pair sacred text with known melodies. There must have also been an element of self-satisfaction in these contrafacta, especially for the social elites who while reflecting upon the charm of such a novelty could be pleased with themselves and the seeming increase in piety that resulted from this easy method of learning the psalms by heart.

⁷⁰ Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, pp. 222-23. Duffy describes the amazing fact that many people who were illiterate in English at the beginning of the 16th century were likely somewhat literate in Latin, even if they were not educated, due to the repetition of certain prayers and canticles in the Mass. He relates the story of a Protestant convert named William Malden who, in his desire to read and understand Scripture, taught himself to read English by using a primer: "The primer, as its name suggests, was the basic learning book for most people, even before it was available in English [...] the Latin obviously had an autonomous authority of its own, just as it had primacy as written text."

⁷¹ Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins, et al, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes, Collected into English meetre, by Thomas Sternhold, Iohn Hopkins, and others, conferred with the Hebrue, with apt Notes to sing them withall* (London: Printed by Iohn Winder for the Assignes of Richard Day. 1594), p. 33, et al.

Although *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes* was a prime example of the value of repetition and reformist influence through music, its politics were double edged. As one would expect from one so influenced by Lutheran thought, Coverdale was another reformer who valued the idea that people should sing “wholesome and religious songs” in their homes during the course of the day.⁷² It is also entirely possible to suppose that he might have compiled the songs in *Goostly Psalmes* in part for other English exiles who had spent time in Germany and were familiar with the Lutheran tunes, or perhaps the book was merely intended for those with Reformation sympathies, whether or not they had been in exile. But while Coverdale never wavered from his reformist beliefs, Henry VIII did, and *Goostly Psalmes* was placed on the official list of banned books in 1546, with the order that all copies be burned. One complete copy survives, bound in the midst of several other items, and is housed at Queen’s College Library, Oxford.⁷³

An examination of the sole existing complete copy of *Goostly Psalmes* revealed that it was most likely due to its binding with such incongruent items such as a child’s ABC and a New Testament in Spanish that it survived intact. We have no way of knowing what the print runs were for the book or if more than one edition was printed. Leaver believes that *Goostly Psalmes* would certainly have been used for daily devotions by any openly Protestant practitioners,⁷⁴ but due to Henry’s vacillating religious stance it seems likely that the number of open Protestants in England during 1535-1546 would have been relatively small.

⁷² Leaver, *Goostly Psalmes*, pp. 80-81.

⁷³ The last item bound in the book that holds *Goostly Psalmes* is a 1536 Latin/English parallel translation of Savonarola’s prison meditations.

⁷⁴ Leaver, ‘*Goostly Psalmes*’, pp. 80-81.

The Sternhold and Hopkins metrical psalters

Due to the great number of editions of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter,⁷⁵ this study focuses on only three: the 1562 edition by John Day comprised of monophonic psalm tunes from various sources;⁷⁶ the 1592 edition printed by Thomas East with four-part harmonizations; and a 1594 edition printed by John Windet for Richard Day, a later Elizabethan monophonic psalter. It is necessary to begin, however, with an explanation of the original by Sternhold himself.

As was the case in France, the most popular metrical psalters in England had a courtly genesis.⁷⁷ Possibly the most significant English metrical psalter was Thomas Sternhold's (d. 1549) *Certayne Psalmes chose[n] out of the Psalter of David, and drawe[n] into Englishe metre*, published in the year of Sternhold's death.

Sternhold, who served the royal household under both Henry VIII and Edward VI as a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, was a staunch Protestant who was sent to the Fleet prison in March of 1543 for his association with a certain Anthony Parson, a clerk who was indicted and then executed by burning for heresies "against the Sacrament of the Altar."⁷⁸ Sternhold was pardoned in full in September of the same year.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ It has been estimated that there were over 400 different editions of the *Whole Booke of Psalmes* published between 1562-1640. See Green, *Print and Protestantism*, p. 509, and Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, p. 105.

⁷⁶ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, pp. 64-73.

⁷⁷ Glass, *The Story of the Psalters*, p. 6. Glass suggested that it was either the rapid spread of Reformation ideas or the "brilliant rhymes" of French poet Clement Marot that caused the nearly immediate adoption of "*sanctes chansonettes*" in the French court (p. 5).

⁷⁸ Rivkah Zim, "Sternhold, Thomas (d. 1549)." Rivkah Zim In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/26414> (accessed December 17, 2015). Also Glass, *The Story of the Psalters*, pp. 6, 16.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Like the Coverdale and some other early metrical psalters, Sternhold's psalter is not complete. This psalter is a collection of 19 Psalms, metricized but without accompanying music. It may seem odd that there are no tunes included with the psalm texts, but Jeremy Smith observes that the explanation for that might have been that Sternhold expected the psalms to be sung to "courtly tunes known from an oral tradition."⁸⁰ In what would become a common practice, the lines in all but two of the psalms were set as "fourteeners," or lines of eight syllables and six syllables in alternation (8.6.8.6.), also known as common metre.⁸¹ Nicholas Temperley mentions that Sternhold's poetry was not of the quality of others writing at the time: "Because their purpose was moral edification, rather than enjoyment, he frequently omitted much of the vivid imagery in the original psalms, presenting their meaning in a flat and plain manner."⁸²

Sternhold's choice of psalm texts may reflect Protestant politics as well as his own situation. Zim has categorized the texts in this manner:

Psalms 1-5 emphasize instruction and divine support for the godly man facing persecution. These tendencies are reinforced by the further selection of Psalms 20, 25, 28-9, 32, 34, 41, 49, 73, 78, 103, 120, 123, and 128. In the last years of Henry VIII's reign such themes would have seemed important to any convinced protestants; in 1549 they might be most appropriate to supporters of Edward Seymour, the king's uncle. The peace and confidence for the future voiced in Psalm 128 are a fitting conclusion for the early collections dedicated to the boy king.⁸³

⁸⁰ Smith, *Thomas East*, p. 23.

⁸¹ Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, p. 26.

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 23.

⁸³ *Ibid*.

An alternate viewpoint on Sternhold's psalm organization was that of Waldo Selden Pratt, which considered Sternhold's motivation to be somewhat less political:

At a time not precisely known Sternhold undertook making metrical versions of the Psalms, supposedly, it is said, to provide something more edifying than the rough ditties in vogue among the court attendants. These versions attracted the notice of the boy king (Edward) and of others for their simple felicity.⁸⁴

Given that Sternhold had suffered imprisonment for his Protestant views, or at least for consorting with those of radical views, it seems more likely that the picture painted by Zim is the correct one. An examination of a copy of the Sternhold psalter held at the British Library shows on the endpage a woodcut illustration of God looking down upon what appears to be the seven-headed monster from the book of Revelation (which could be a representation of the Pope) as well as this quote: "Thus saith the Lorde, I have hated the malignaunt congregacion. All faire and vvhite art thou my churche, and no spot is in thee."⁸⁵ This may be the printer Whitchurch's addition, and there is no evidence that Sternhold suggested the picture and text for this page, but it does echo outspoken Protestant views and would have been entirely acceptable in 1549, after Henry's death (fig 6.).

⁸⁴ Pratt, *The Music of the French Psalter of 1562*, p. 71.

⁸⁵ Thomas Sternhold, *Certayne Psalmes chose[n] out of the Psalter of David, and drawe[n] into Englishe metre by Thomas Sternhold grome of the kynges Maiesties Roobes* (Excudebat Londini Edouerdus VWhitchurche. Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum [1549]), endpage.

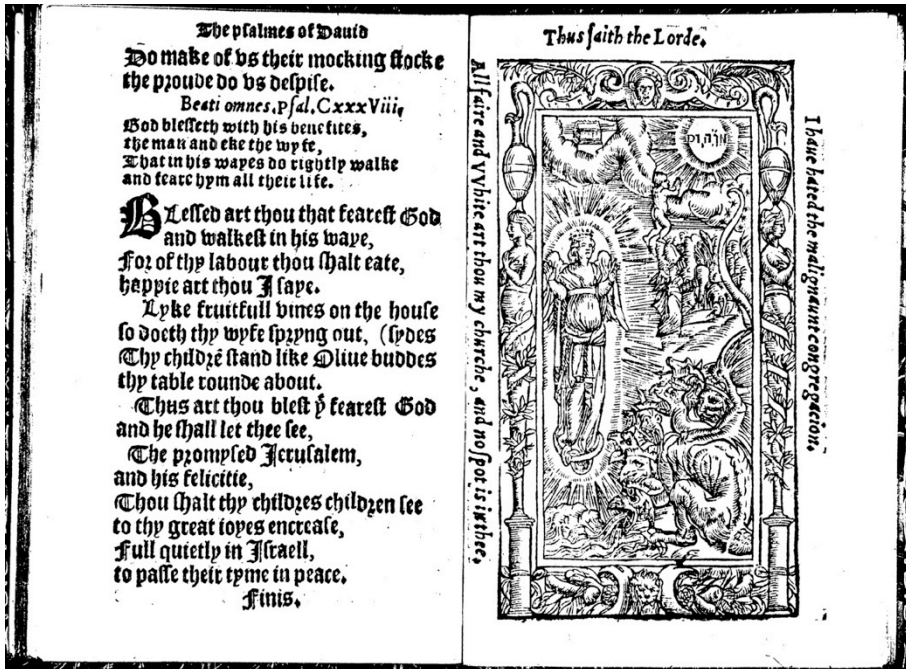


Fig. 6. Endpage of Thomas Sternhold's *Certayne Psalmes*, 1549.⁸⁶

After Sternhold's death, his work was continued and expanded upon by John Hopkins (1520/21-1570). In *All suche Psalmes of Dauid, as Thomas Sternholde, late Grome of the kinges Maisties Roobes, did in his life tyme drawe into Engishe metre* (1553), Hopkins said of his addition of several psalms to Sternhold's original nineteen: "Neither for that they are in myne opinion (as touchyng the Metre) in any part to bee compared with his moste exquisite dooynges. but especially to fill vp a place, which els should haue been voide, that the booke maie rise to his iuste volume,"⁸⁷ which suggests that Sternhold originally meant to have more than nineteen psalms in his 1549 volume (although his death rendered that

⁸⁶ Image accessed at Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/search/full_rec?EeboId=99854797&ACTION=ByID&SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ID=

⁸⁷ Thomas Sternhold, *All suche Psalmes of Dauid, as Thomas Sternholde, late Grome of the kinges Maisties Roobes, did in his life tyme drawe into Engishe metre. 1553* (Imprinted at London by Ihon Kyntston, and Henry Sutton, dwellyng in Poules Churcheyarde), G. i. v.

impossible).⁸⁸ Yet Hopkins was to secure his place in English religious history with his continuance of Sternhold's work, for "[t]his collection, together with further translations of his own and successive additions by John Hopkins, Thomas Norton and others, was destined to become the most famous of all English metrical psalters—Sternhold and Hopkins, later to be known as the 'Old' Version."⁸⁹

John Day's *Whole Booke of Psalmes*

By 1562, when printer John Day gained the monopoly on the printing of the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter, the emphasis had moved away somewhat from the versified texts and on to the musical settings of them. As Jeremy Smith recounts:

Day's emphasis on music is clear. In his *Whole Booke of Psalmes* editions he often included a primer of instruction for musical notation, and he even took the trouble to redesign a music type with sol-fa notation to ease the problem of reading music. Surely many continued to learn the texts and the music of the psalms by rote, yet it is probably some indication of a rise in musical literacy that already by the 1570s Day was reprinting editions in four-part harmonization.⁹⁰

We see, then, that the earliest metrical psalters were monophonic, while later editions often included music in four parts, very likely due to the growing level of music literacy and proficiency in the middle class. This encouraged meditation upon the Psalms to become a truly social activity, and may also have allowed for the use of instruments (if available) to supplement the voices. While the simplicity of these psalters is often noted, it must be

⁸⁸ Rivkah Zim, "Hopkins, John (1520/21–1570)." Rivkah Zim In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13748> (accessed December 18, 2015).

⁸⁹ Long, *Music of the English Church*, p. 27.

⁹⁰ Smith, *Thomas East*, p. 24.

remembered that that same simplicity allowed great freedom for improvisation as well as substitution of parts, whether vocal or instrumental.

As mentioned in the quote above, Day's 1562 psalter included a lengthy preface entitled, "To the Reader: A shorte Introduction into the Science of Musicke, made for such as are desirous to haue the knowledge therof, for the singing of these Psalmes." In this preface he provided a preliminary overview of the basics of music, beginning with the *gamma ut* table, or scale. He clearly explained how the note names were derived from this table and how the most oft-used "kaies" or "cleuis" (clefs) were C, E and B, with their respective "formes" or "signes" indicated at the beginning of the piece. He then continued with a detailed description of note placement on the staff and note and rest values.

The end of the preface expounded briefly upon the things not covered in this basic treatise, such as consonance and dissonance or perfection and imperfection. Day justified the exclusion of these concepts by saying:

These things before taught, seme at this time, for the poore vnlearned and rude, sufficiente and inoughe to the atteyning of such knowledg in singing as shall be requisite to the singing of Psalmes contained in this boke, for which cause only they are set out.⁹¹

It is interesting to note that while early metrical psalters may have primarily functioned as instruments of religious education, the new John Day psalters were also instruments of music education. The Day psalters had not lost their political impetus, however. Included in their prefatory material were two tables: the first, entitled:

⁹¹ T. Sternhold and J. Hopkins, *The whole booke of Psalmes collected in to Englysh metre [...]* (Imprinted at Lo[n]don: By John Day, dwelling over Aldersgate, 1562. Accessed at Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=22743131&FILE), ff. ♣ ii r- ♣ vii r. The concepts discussed in Day's preface were a great help to contemporary "unlearned and rude" users wishing to sing the psalms, but also serve as a resource for modern users who wish to better understand performance practice of the metrical psalters.

*A Treatise made by Athanasius the great, wherin is setforth, how, and in what manner ye may vse the Psalmes, according to theeffect of the minde: of gladnes or sorow: accordingly, which Psalmes ye shall vse for prayer, which for thankesgeuing, which for rehearsal of Gods wonderful actes, to the praise of his name. Also ye may se in them how God hath hopen (helped) his chosen people from time, to tyme, and neuer forsoke them.*⁹²

Athanasius was a fourth-century Church Father, and as the title above suggests, his table encouraged people to use the Psalms as prayers for certain situations that may arise. As he explained, “It is easy therefore for euery man to finde out in the Psalmes, the motion and state of his owne soule, ...”⁹³ Athanasius’ set of directions for psalm use was not in its means of instruction political per se; but the next table included was. Its title is quite generic: *The vse of the rest of the Psalmes not comprehended in the former Table of Athanasius* (fig. 7).⁹⁴ Its contents, however, reflected the current religio-political difficulties experienced by Protestants in the Marian reign, as shown by these examples:

If thou be persecuted without a cause, if thou wouldest haue no affinitie with vice, nor with the vicious, vse the 28. Psalmes.

If thou be banished for religion and art almost in dispayre of returnyng to the cuntry, vse the 42. Psalmes.

If thou wouldest haue Christ to come conquere and beate downe the Sirians, Idumeans, Ammonites, **Papistes**, **Antichristians** [emphasis added], Nullifidians, Neutralles, and ungratious Pelaginas, vse the 68. Psalmes.⁹⁵

⁹² Sternhold and Hopkins, op cit.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

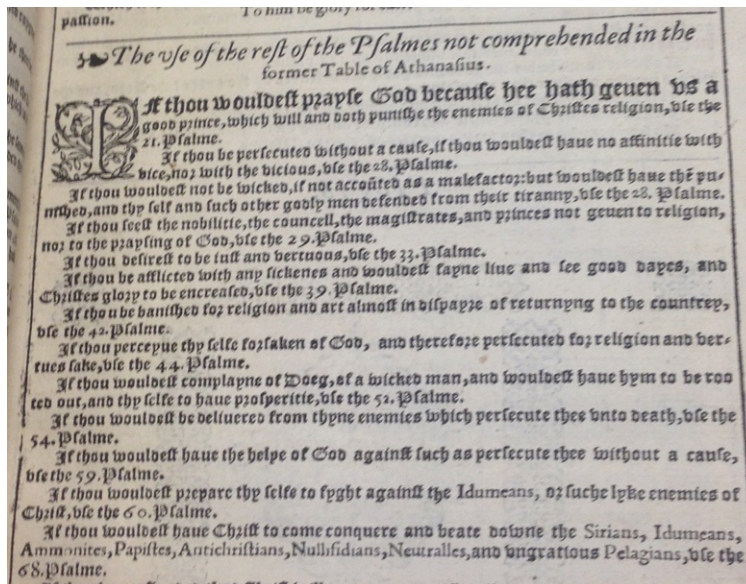


Fig. 7. Excerpt from “The use of the rest of the Psalmes...” in John Day’s *Whole Booke of Psalmes*, 1567. Image courtesy of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

There can be little doubt that these “uses” were meant to remind people of the persecution experienced by the Protestants during the Marian era, and to encourage them to incorporate the Psalms not only into their daily devotions but into a constant and unwavering repudiation of the Catholic rite and rituals.

Athanasius’ treatise gives only one “use” for Psalm 51: “If thou haste sinned & being turned, fallest to repentance, and wouldest obteyne mercy, thou hast the words of confession in the 51. Psalme.”⁹⁶ For Psalm 79, however, Athanasius has two uses:

If thou wilt often call to remembraunce the benefites of God, which be shewed to the fathers bothe in the going out of Egipt, and in the wilderness, and how God was good to them, but they were unthankfull: thou hast the 44. Psalme. the 79.80.102.106.107.114. Psalmes.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Ibid, f. A.i.r.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

If the enemies holde on and continue breaking in. & defilyng the house of God, and killing the saintes and casting their bodies to the foules of thayre, feare not their crueltie but suffering with them that suffer affliction say the 79. Psa:⁹⁸

It is relatively easy to assign a political reading to Athanasius' "uses," particularly for a population that has experienced persecution. While one must be careful not to take this reading too far, it seems that the inclusion of his treatise, as well as the table of other "uses," in the metrical psalters was quite intentional as a means of allowing people to apply these texts to their own situations, whether personally or corporately.

Thomas East's *Whole Booke of Psalmes*

Thomas East (Est, Este, 1540-1608), probably best known as the printer of Byrd's 1589 and 1591 editions of the *Cantiones Sacrae* and both volumes of the *Gradualia* (1607, 1610) as well as the first collection of Englished Italian madrigals, the 1588 *Musica Transalpina*, gained the rights to print the Sternhold and Hopkins psalter in 1592. East's *Whole Booke of Psalmes* is remarkable for its four-part harmonizations of the familiar tunes, but also for the nine tunes added by East that he claimed were not found in previous editions, and for the ten "outstanding composers" who contributed music to the book: John Dowland, Richard Allison, John Farmer, George Kirbye, Edward Johnson, Michael Cavendish, Giles Farnaby, Edward Blancks, William Cobbald, and Edmund Hooper.⁹⁹

East solved a problem that occurred in the Day psalters by including music for each psalm text, which meant that users did not have to search for suggested tunes associated

⁹⁸ Ibid, f. A.i.v.

⁹⁹ Smith, *Thomas East*, p. 74.

with multiple texts. As Duguid remarks in his book on metrical psalmody, this must have been a very welcome change.¹⁰⁰

East wrote a preface for his psalter, but unlike Day's it did not include instruction for singing, possibly on the assumption that those purchasing a volume such as this were already well versed in the art of singing, at least at a competent amateur level. The book was quite successful, going through five editions between 1592 and 1621, a rather remarkable feat given that Day and his successors were still producing monophonic editions of the psalter at the same time.¹⁰¹

John Windet

Another late 16th-century printer of the metrical psalters was Richard Day (b. 1552, d. in or before 1606), son of John. Although they set up business together in 1578, John could not bring himself to relinquish it to Richard and eventually ruined Richard in the printing business. Desperate for a solution, Richard turned to some of his father's rivals for help. This group of men became known as the "Assignes of Richard Day," and their publications of the metrical psalter between 1584 and 1603 were fraught with inaccuracies and changes to John Day's versions, a situation discussed at length by Duguid.¹⁰²

Among these Assignes was a printer for the Stationers' Company, John Windet. Although he is best known for psalter editions in the first decades of the seventeenth century, he acted with Richard Day to produce psalters at the end of the sixteenth century as well. His 1594 version of the *Whole Booke of Psalmes* follows the Days' example of

¹⁰⁰ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, p. 121.

¹⁰¹ Smith, *Thomas East*, p. 75.

¹⁰² Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, p. 112.

psalms set exclusively to monophonic tunes.¹⁰³ Windet is also known for his production of so-called “sol-fa” psalters, particularly in the last decade of the century.¹⁰⁴ The metrical psalter by Windet examined for this project had been bound at the end of the Apocrypha in a Geneva Bible, and included no prefatory matter other than a title page.

The politics and music of the metrical psalters

Duguid is one of few (possibly the only) modern scholars to address the issue of politics in the music of the metrical psalters.¹⁰⁵ He asserts that the “compilers of the *Whole Booke* chose tunes on the basis of their singability, and not a particular religious or political bias.”¹⁰⁶ He bases this assertion on the fact that the sources for the English psalter tunes were wide and varied, including Calvin’s Geneva psalter, German psalters, and the Anglo-Scottish psalter. I counter that the religious and political biases of the psalters are indeed found in their very simplicity and singability. In fact, psalm-singing itself could be a political act, especially for Protestants during the Marian reign; during the Catholic recusant activities of the later Elizabethan period, there was an account of a man named Nicholas Gerard who sang the Psalms in Latin to distract the minister during an Anglican service.¹⁰⁷

An examination of several sixteenth-century commentators shows that reformist commentary regarding the setting of psalms to music was quite political, beginning with Thomas Cranmer and John Calvin. Early Protestants believed that in order to counter the excesses of Roman music it was necessary to return to a mode of prayer and worship based

¹⁰³ Ibid, pp. 126, 128.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 116.

¹⁰⁵ Temperley, in *The Music of the English Parish Church*, somewhat dances around the subject, but most others are silent regarding this issue.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 65.

¹⁰⁷ Haigh, *English Reformations*, pp. 232, 257.

on the ancient Church, and this included musical practice. Cranmer, in his 1544 tract *An exhortation vnto prayer*, stated, “for god doth not regarde neither the swete sound of our voice, nor the great number of our woordes, but the earnest feruentnes and true faythful deuotion of our hartes.”¹⁰⁸ The point here is that it is the simplest act of devotion that attracts God’s attention, rather than a sweet voice or lengthy discourse.

John Calvin called for simplicity in worship as well. While recognizing that beauty in art comes from God, he did not believe that all music was pleasing to God and therefore believers must distance themselves from what he called the abuses of music. Like other reformers, he desired to replace the authority of the Roman church with that of the Holy Scriptures, and these were the texts that were deemed most appropriate for music setting, particularly the Psalms.¹⁰⁹

As Bisgrove stated,

Calvin noted that the praying and singing in his church were designed to please God alone. He denied the use of music for its own sake; and he was indifferent to the effect his new practices of singing in the vulgar tongue, and of allowing participation by both men and women in the service might have had on any who believed and practiced otherwise.¹¹⁰

Calvin believed that a church song should have the traits of weight, majesty and *a moderate melody* [emphasis added], as stated in the preface to his 1543 Psalter:

Touching the melody, it has seemed best that it be moderated in the way that we have adopted [in the Psalter, 1543] in order that it may have the weight and majesty proper to the subject and may even be suitable for singing in the Church, according to what has been said.

¹⁰⁸ Hunt, *Cranmer’s First Litany, 1544*, p. 80.

¹⁰⁹ Mildred E. Bisgrove, *Sacred Choral Music in the Calvinistic Tradition of the Protestant Reformation in Switzerland and France from 1541 to 1600* (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1968), chapter 2.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 61.

Heinrich (Henry) Bullinger (1504-1575), a German Protestant reformer whose works were translated and published extensively in England, went so far as to question the very presence of singing in church:

[...] if, according to that ancient use of singing, nothing had been sung but canonical scriptures; if it had been still in the liberty of the churches to sing or not to sing; truly at this day there should be no controversy in the church about singing in the church. For those churches, which should use singing after the ancient manner practiced in singing, would sing the word of God and the praises of God only; neither would they think that in this point they surpassed other churches, neither would they condemn those churches that sang not at all; [...]¹¹¹

All of these writers stress a simplicity in worship and worship music that they perceived as nonexistent in the Roman Church. Based upon their commentary, it is possible to create a list of goals that the reformers wished to accomplish with their new faith, and we can see how the music and translations/versifications of the texts of the psalters reflect these goals.

One of the primary goals of the reformers was to precipitate *a return to the simplicity and practice of the ancient church, as determined by apostolic and patristic writings and scriptural references (particularly the New Testament)*. Bullinger was especially vehement on this topic, saying:

And truly you shall find many testimonies in the ecclesiastical history written by Eusebius and Sozomenus, declaring the eastern churches, even immediately after the time of the apostles, did use to sing psalms and hymns unto Christ our Lord. Ye shall also find this, that by certain decrees of councils it was ordained, that no other thing should either be read or sung in holy assemblies but only the canonical scriptures.¹¹²

Bullinger did not hesitate to point out, however, that this ancient practice was far different from current church practice, invoking the writings of Erasmus:

¹¹¹ (Heinrich) Henry Bullinger, *The Decades of Henry Bullinger, vol. 5*, Translated by H. I. ...Edited for the Parker Society, by the Rev. Thomas Harding (Cambridge: Printed at the University Press, 1849-1852), p. 195.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 193.

[...] the singing of the ancient church was a far other kind of singing than that which at this day is used. For Erasmus Roter[sic] doth rightly judge, that the singing used in the ancient churches was no other than a distinct and measured pronounciation, such as at this day in some places is used in pronouncing of the Psalms, the Gospel, and the Lord's Prayer.¹¹³

Bullinger and his contemporaries often quoted the Church Fathers, and the patristic influence is seen in bibles and psalters in prefaces that include commentary by St Augustine or, as we have already seen, Athanasius in his tables on the Psalms.

The metrical psalters meet this first goal primarily by the very material therein, as the Psalms are part of the canonical scriptures. The vernacular Psalm translations were completed by men who believed wholeheartedly that placing ancient Hebrew poetry into a metered version (easily understood by the simplest of worshippers) was a means of reaching the simplicity and purity described by the apostles and church Fathers. These translators/versifiers, however, may have had their own religious and political agendas.¹¹⁴

In the metrical psalters chosen for this project it can be seen that Psalm 51, for example, has two versifications, one by William Whittingham and the other by Thomas Norton. Whittingham was a staunch Calvinist with Puritan leanings who, due to his involvement with a tract entitled, *How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed* (which was against rule by the 'regiment of women'), found himself under suspicion of the depth of his loyalty to

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ It falls beyond the scope of this project to discuss all of the tunes and texts of the three chosen psalters. Two psalms that resonated with both English Protestants and Catholics were Psalm 50 [51], the *Miserere mei, Deus/Have mercy on me, O Lord* text that was one of the best-known and frequently used penitential psalms during the 16th century; and Psalm 78 [79], or *Deus, venerunt gentes/O God, the heathen*, a persecution text describing the horrors that had befallen Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity. These texts and their settings are discussed in this chapter as well as in Chapters Five and Six.

Elizabeth. In his later years Whittingham, who was named dean of Durham, deserted his Puritan beliefs for a more conservative stance.¹¹⁵

The Whittingham translation/versification of Psalm 51 opens as follows:

O Lord consider my distres
and now with spede some pitie take.
My sinnes deface, my fautes (faults) redresse,
good Lorde, for thy great mercies sake.
Wash me (O Lord) and make me cleane.
From this uniust & sinfull act:
& purifie yet once againe: my heinous crime & bloody fact.¹¹⁶

Whittingham focuses on the sins of the penitent rather than the act of asking God for mercy, as might be expected of an adherent to Puritan beliefs. His opening to the psalm makes it appear that there is little hope for this sinner; that God can only be expected to “consider the distress” and evident regret of a person who has made huge moral mistakes.

On the other hand, the far more conservative Thomas Norton had no apparent controversy surrounding his life and career. He was a respected translator and poet with a political career that began as secretary to Protector Somerset during the reign of Edward VI. He was married to the daughter of Archbishop Cranmer, and worked on several projects with John Day.¹¹⁷ His translation/versification of Psalm 51 reflected an outlook focusing on God’s mercy rather than the horrific sins of the accused:

¹¹⁵ David Marcombe. “Whittingham, William (d. 1579).” David Marcombe In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by David Cannadine, January 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/29329> (accessed June 14, 2016)

¹¹⁶ Sternhold and Hopkins, *The whole booke of Psalmes* (1562 edition), p. 118.

¹¹⁷ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, p. 62. Duguid suggests that Norton was a possible textual editor for the 1562 *Whole Booke*, along with John Hopkins.

Have mercy on me, God, after
thy great abounding grace:
After thy mercies multitude
doo thou my sinnes deface.
Yet wash me more from mine offense
and clense me from my sin:
for I beknow my fautes, and still
my sinne is in mine eyen.¹¹⁸

Here, then, we have two quite different takes on the same text. Whittingham's text is in what was called "long metre," or 8.8.8.8 (eight syllables per phrase), while Norton's is in what would become one of the most-used metrical schemes for hymns, the so-called "common metre," or 8.6.8.6 (alternating phrases of eight and six syllables). This was the meter most often used by Thomas Sternhold, and perhaps John Day honored that tradition by insisting that most of the psalms in the 1562 *Whole Booke* employ that meter as well.¹¹⁹ This common usage also allowed tunes to be utilized for more than one psalm.¹²⁰

In both of the monophonic metrical psalters examined for this project (1562 and 1594), there is only one tune for Psalm 51, using the "long metre" of 8.8.8.8 (fig. 8). Therefore the Norton translation/versification is not singable to the tune given, and there is no explanation given for that fact: above the Norton text is simply the phrase, "Another of the same by T.N."¹²¹ As there seems to have been some rush to publish the psalter so that Day could turn to a much bigger project, John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*,¹²² it is possible that there was neither the time nor the inclination to find another tune that would fit Norton's common metre text. It is also possible, however, due to the influence of the Anglo-

¹¹⁸ Sternhold and Hopkins, *The whole Booke of Psalmes* (1562 edition), p. 121.

¹¹⁹ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, pp. 63-4.

¹²⁰ John Morehen, "English Church Music," in Roger Bray, ed., *The Sixteenth Century*, in the *Music in Britain* series, vol. 2 (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1995), p. 138.

¹²¹ Sternhold and Hopkins, *The whole Booke of Psalmes* (1562 edition), p. 121; (1594 edition), p. 32.

¹²² Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, p. 58.

Genevan exiles, that the Puritan-leaning Whittingham's version held more weight than Norton's.¹²³

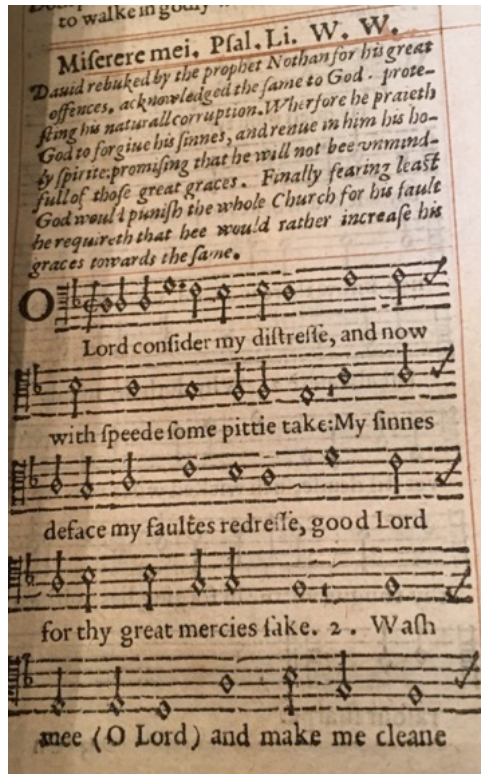


Fig. 8. Psalm 51, "Miserere mei," from John Windet's 1594 psalter. (Image from personal copy)

Whittingham had in fact revised several psalm metricizations by John Hopkins, another orthodox Protestant. Hopkins, the author of 61 of the 150 metrical psalms, was often associated with the more radical Puritan movement due to Whittingham's revisions of his psalms for the Anglo-Genevan psalter. However, by 1562 Hopkins, who was an Anglican priest and preacher in addition to being a translator and poet, had revised texts by

¹²³ By the time of John Windet's 1594 version, the Thomas Norton text was assigned to the tune of the Lamentations, which could be found at the beginning of the psalter.

several of the Marian exiles (including Whittingham), thereby settling any lingering doubts about his conservatism.¹²⁴

Hopkins' version of Psalm 79 is the only one that occurs in all three of the psalters examined for this project. As one might expect in a Protestant psalter, the horrors of this text, which resonated so strongly with the Catholic community during its persecution under Elizabeth, were downplayed. However, the argument presented by Hopkins at the beginning of the psalm might very well have spoken to the Marian exiles in the same manner that the scripture would to the Catholics twenty years later:

The Israelites complayne to God for the greate calamitie, and oppression that they suffered when Antiochus destroyed theyr temple, and citie Jerusalem, desiring God aide against his ragyng tyranny lest Gods name and religion shoulde be contemned amonge the Heathen, whyche should see them thus forsaken and peary she [perish].¹²⁵

Hopkins chose common metre for his versification of Psalm 79, again most likely for simplicity's sake. Both the 1562 John Day edition and the 1594 John Windet edition state that Psalm 79 should be sung to the tune for Psalm 77, which is rather interesting when one compares the texts. The first part of Psalm 77 reads as follows:

I with my voyce to God do cry,
with hart and harty cheare,
my voyce to God I lyfte on hyghe and he my fate doth heare,
in tyme of grief I sought to God, by nyght no rest I toke:
But stretcht my hands to him abrode,
my soule comfort forsoke.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Rivkah Zim, "Hopkins, John (1520/21–1570)." Rivkah Zim In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13748> [accessed December 18, 2015]). One of Hopkins' acquaintances was Henry Bullinger (see above), and Hopkins thought enough of Bullinger to bequeath some of his sermons to him in his will.

¹²⁵ Sternhold and Hopkins, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (1562 edition), pp.ii. v.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 183-84.

The first part of Psalm 79, in contrast:

O Lorde the Gentils doo inuade, Thyne herytage to spoyle,
Jerusalem an heape is made, thy temple the [they] defoyle [defile].
The bodies of thy saincts most dere,
abrode to birdes they cast:
The fleshe of them that doo thee feare,
the beastes deuoure and vvast [waste].¹²⁷

Metrically the texts match, but Psalm 77 is a psalm of thanksgiving that believers can turn to God in times of trouble and receive comfort, whereas Psalm 79 is a persecution text that describes the horrors of what took place in Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity. It is not obvious now how the tunes were assigned, nor is there contemporary material in the psalter that explains said assignments; but perhaps the very act of indicating one melody for two texts of such different meaning (albeit with the same meter) reflects the political choice of attempting a return to ancient simplicity.

A second goal of the reformers' music was to use *simple melodies and rhythms that focused on the subject at hand and gave it the gravity and majesty that it deserved*. Bullinger had nothing good to say about singing in the Roman church:

There are many things in this kind of singing to be discommended. [...] And those things which are sung out of the scriptures are for the most part so wrested and corrupted, that there remaineth no part of the heavenly sense or meaning. Creatures and dead men are called upon. Moreover, this kind of singing is commanded; and they sing not of their own accord or good will, but upon constraint: yea, they sing for money, and to the end that they may get an ecclesiastical benefice, as they term it. [...] A man may well say, that it is that much babbling, which the Lord in Matthew forbiddeth and condemneth as an heathenish superstition. They sing moreover in a strange tongue, which few do understand; and that without any profit at all to the church. There is heard a long sound, quavered (*suspensus*, Lat.), and strained to and fro, backward and forward, whereof a man cannot understand one word.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 196.

¹²⁸ Bullinger, *Decades* (vol. 5), pp. 196-7.

He was, of course, speaking of the trained choristers singing in the German Catholic churches he encountered. His description of Latin singing and melismatic polyphony colorfully captured the current Protestant sentiment.

John Calvin and Clement Marot also sought to avoid Roman elements in the music for their Genevan psalter. Bisgrove summarized Calvin's view of music's role in the church as "servant to religion."¹²⁹ Calvin drew upon Aquinas in his sermonizing on the abuses of music, which distracted worshippers from pure praising of God via the "voluptuousness" of music, including polyphony.¹³⁰ Calvin also commented often upon David and his psalms, recognizing their superiority in musical expression.¹³¹

The tunes corresponding to Psalm 51 in the 1562 and 1594 English psalters are excellent examples of this second musical goal. These tunes are longer than the Psalm 79 tune and fit the first two verses of the psalm; in Thomas East's 1592 psalter, however, there is another tune (found in the tenor voice) that is equally short, with an 8.6.8.6 poetic metre, and not related to the melodies found in the other two psalters. The two Psalm 51 tunes are very similar, with only minor differences, as seen in the first phrase, where the 1594 tune is perhaps slightly more singable given its stepwise descending scale (figs. 9. 10).

¹²⁹ Bisgrove, *Sacred Choral Music in the Calvinistic Tradition*, p. 40.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 53.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p. 59.



Fig. 9. Psalm 51 tune from John Day's 1562 psalter.



Fig. 10. Psalm 51 tune from John Windet's 1594 psalter.

As stated above, the poetic metre of the tunes is 8.8.8.8, and the music is in duple meter. The 1562 version is in D Dorian with no indicated Bb (with the exception of two accidentals marked in lines 3 and 4). Bb is in the key signature in the 1594 version, and so perhaps it was simply understood that Bb was to be used throughout in the 1562 edition, or perhaps it is an error that was later corrected.

The range is an octave, D to D, and the motion is primarily stepwise, with some leaps of a third, fourth or fifth. There are occasional repeated notes, often in pairs, often at (or immediately preceding) cadential points. Here again, we see the goal of simplicity put into practice: the tunes were easily learned and easily remembered due to the characteristics described above.

Although Day mentioned four types of rests in his preface, each corresponding to a note value, the only rest used in these tunes is the third type, “whiche is from a lyne to the halfe space underneth: [is] called a semibreue rest, and requireth the pause or space while a semibreue is in singing.”¹³² These rests are placed at the end of a phrase, and are the only indication of phrase endings, as there are no bar lines in the notation at all (other than a double bar at the end). The final note of each tune is a “long”, a square note with a long stem attached extending the length of the staff; the other note values used are semibreves, minims, and the occasional crotchet.

There is no counterpoint; no Latin text; no melismatic passages. Each syllable is set to one note. The unassuming melody and the use of duple meter give it the required weight and gravity. It is an easily learned and remembered tune with a text that is also quickly learned. It is a tune that does indeed fit the requirements of Calvin, Marot and Bullinger.

The tunes for Psalm 79 in the 1562 and 1594 editions are quite similar, with the only real difference being the musical meter: the 1562 is in duple meter, while the 1594 version is in triple. Both tunes are in the key of F Dorian, with a range of one octave (F⁴–F⁵) that dips down to the subtonic E⁴ at the final cadence (figs. 11, 12).

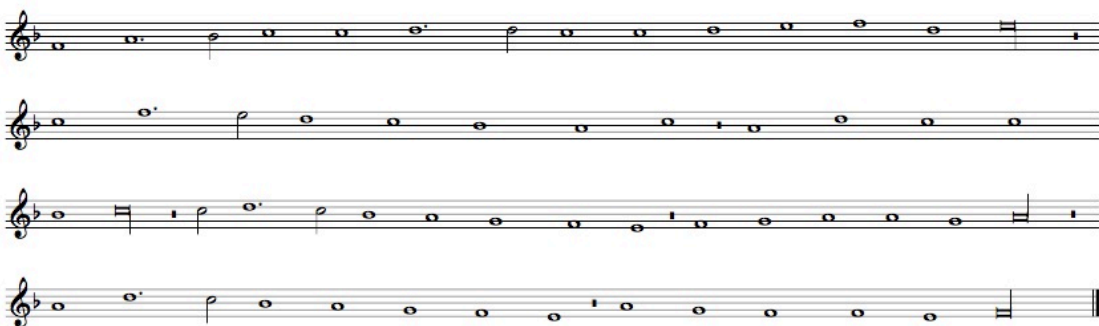


Fig. 11. Psalm 77 tune for use with Psalm 79, John Day’s 1562 psalter.

¹³² Sternhold and Hopkins, *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (1562 edition), preface.



Fig. 12. Psalm 77 tune for use with Psalm 79, John Windet's 1594 psalter.

The 1562 edition gives only semibreve rests throughout to indicate pauses of that length, thereby suggesting that each phrase should be separated by the same length of breath. However, the 1594 tune's phrases are separated by rests of various lengths: semibreves, minims, and possibly breves, although it is difficult to discern exactly which rests are being used at times due to the placement of the type. Perhaps the use of multiple rest values was to accommodate the somewhat awkward transition from duple to triple meter for a text that sits more comfortably in duple. The reason for choosing triple meter in the latter version is impossible to know for sure, but it may be that the meter change further deflects the persecutory elements of the psalm itself (fig. 13).

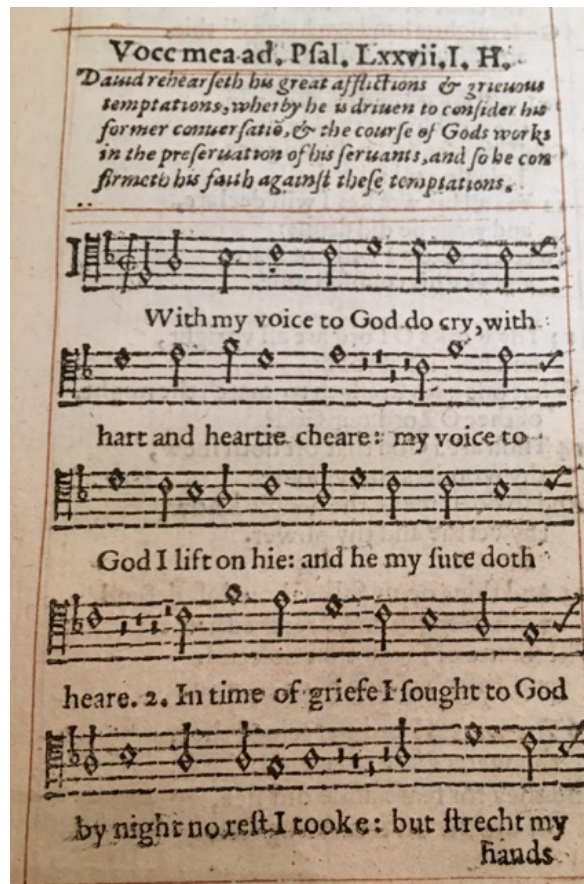


Fig. 13. Psalm 77 tune (to be used with Ps. 79) in John Windet's psalter, 1594.

The motion of both versions is primarily stepwise, with occasional leaps of no larger than the interval of a fourth, and any leapwise motion is mostly ascending rather than descending. In addition, the note values used are similar to the rests, with no use of the longest note values (large) or the smallest (crotchets and quavers). Breves are used only at the midpoint of the tune, and longs occur only at the end of the tune. As one would expect, the text is set one syllable per note, although occasionally there are two notes assigned to one syllable. There are no bar lines except for a double bar at the end of the tune.

According to Duguid, the tune for Psalm 77 was new to the John Day edition of the psalter. He suggests that these new tunes, meaning those not borrowed from another

psalter such as the Genevan, were written specifically for the texts to which they were assigned rather than being former popular tunes or tunes which had another sacred use.¹³³ But if this is the case, it seems that there might have been other, more appropriate choices for the Psalm 79 text. Obviously, using the Psalm 77 tune required less turning of pages than a tune further removed. Looking at the 1562 psalter, one can see that Psalm 78 has its own tune, but the metre is not the same (8.7.8.7) as Psalm 79; Psalm 80, which is another psalm of lament in common metre, is assigned to a different tune. Again, although impossible to prove, the possibility exists that in this music the Protestants chose not to focus on persecutory texts after 1558, a political choice that contrasted sharply with those of the Catholics.

A third goal of the reformers regarding psalm music was that *there should be no counterpoint or other distractions (such as Latin) in the music that would draw focus away from God and the Holy Scriptures*. Erasmus, for example, regarded elaborate polyphony as one of the abuses of the Roman church, and Calvin agreed with this position.¹³⁴ While the monophonic psalters obviously sidestep this issue, East's 1592 version, with its four-part harmonizations, gives insight into how psalter music could move beyond a simple tune to a multi-voice setting that remained pleasing to reformist ideals.

It may seem oxymoronic to talk about harmony in psalm settings, as Calvin, Bullinger and Cranmer all emphasized the supremacy of unison singing, especially in the church service. We must remember that the metrical psalters were intended for use in the home as well as in the church, and the very real possibility exists that East's psalms in four parts were a welcome new addition to the psalter repertory for those with musical training who

¹³³Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody*, pp. 65-66.

¹³⁴Bisgrove, *Sacred Music in the Calvinist Tradition*, pp. 67-8.

were looking for a fresh take on psalm-singing. By 1592, singing psalms in the church service had become more commonplace as well, and the harmonizations in East's psalter were simple and non-polyphonic, just as the reformers intended.

East's psalter gave harmonizations of two tunes for Psalm 51: the original tune found in the 1562 and 1594 psalters, and another shorter tune that fit Norton's translation/versification. This psalter set the four-part harmonization as a complete unit, in what Jessie Ann Owens refers to as "quasi-score" or "pseudo-score" format, where "the individual voices each occupy a single staff and are superimposed one above the other, not necessarily in the order high to low, and without bar lines or vertical alignment."¹³⁵ This method of scoring was used for examples that were often only one line long and served to "bring the voices into physical proximity" while keeping the individual parts separate.¹³⁶

In the 1592 psalter, East placed two parts on each page, directly across from one another, with the higher *cantus* and *tenor* voices on the left page and the lower *altus* and *bassus* on the right. Regardless of where the music occurred on the pages, the positioning of the parts across from each other was consistent, indicating that perhaps the book was intended for use by two singers at a time, one high voice and one low, sitting next to each other. A *manicula*, or hand, was placed at the beginning of the part where the "church tune" was located (fig. 14).¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Jessie Ann Owens, *Composers at Work: the Craft of Musical Composition 1450-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 35. Jeremy L. Smith, however, merely refers to East's organization as "choirbook format," as seen on p. 74 of *Thomas East and Music Publishing in Renaissance England*.

¹³⁶ Owens, *Composers at Work*, p. 36.

¹³⁷ Usually the tenor part: an examination of this psalter showed no settings where the tune was found in a part other than the tenor.

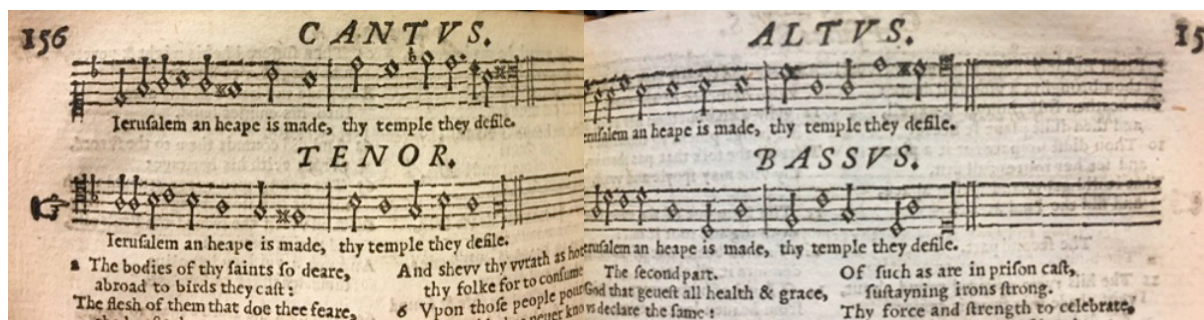


Fig. 14. Excerpts of Psalm 79 in Thomas East's *Whole Booke of Psalmes*, 1592. Images courtesy of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The harmonization of the original Psalm 51 tune was written by a now little-known composer named Edward Blancks (Blanks, Blanke, Blankes, Blancq; see fig. 15); the other arrangement, of one of East's additions to the psalter tunes, was composed by John Dowland (fig. 15a). Both harmonizations are for four voices: *cantus*, *altus*, *tenor*, and *bassus*.

Thomas Morley's 1597 *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*, offered in the "third part" insight into the harmonic structure of, among other things, the psalm settings. *A plaine and easie introduction* is structured as a dialogue between a master and a student wishing to understand music. As the dialogue unfolds, more complicated concepts are explained and illustrated. The student, who in this section is attempting to compose music in four parts based on a tenor, is berated by the master for committing one of the "grossest faults," which is to "go out of your key."¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Thomas Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke set downe in forme of a dialogue: deuided into three partes, the first teacheth to sing with all things necessary for the knowledge of pricktsong. The second threateth of descant to sing two parts in one vpon a plainsong or ground, with other things necessary for a descanter. The third and last part entreateth of composition of three, foure, fiue or more parts with many profitable rules to that effect. With new songs of 2. 3. 4. and .5 [sic] parts. By Thomas Morley, Batcheler of musick, & of the gent. of hir Maiesties Royall Chapell., Imprinted at London: By Peter Short, dwelling on*

Morley explained that a composition may move through different keys, but must end in the same key as it began. The student asks if there is a general rule to follow for this, and the master says that while this is generally left up to the composer, the “church men for keeping their keyes have deuised certaine notes commonlie called the eight tunes, so that according to the tune which is to be obserued, at that time if it beginne in such a key, it may end in such and such others, as you shall immediately know.”¹³⁹ Blanck’s Psalm 51 setting, as well as Hooper’s setting of Psalm 79, begins and ends in the same “tune,” or key, as per Morley’s rule.

Looking at Morley’s examples of the eight tunes, or modes, we see that Blancks’ harmonization is in the first tune, in the key of D (b). It can be seen that in this key there were often raised thirds and sevenths--there was “an overall theory which from c. 1500 favoured [sic] sharpened leading-notes and cadential major thirds.”¹⁴⁰ Blancks ended his setting with an open fifth- DDAD (reading bottom to top) rather than a major chord, but there is a raised seventh leading to it.

Morley’s volume included a “table containing the vsuall cordes of the composition of foure or more partes.”¹⁴¹ This table aptly represents the compositional style of the

Breedstreet hill at the signe of the Starre, 1597. Accessed at Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/search?ACTION=GOTO&SOURCE=var_spell.cfg&FILE=../session/1466456347_15173&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&ECCO=&SIZE=10, 20 June 2016, pp. 146-7; and Thomas Morley, R. Alec Harman, ed., *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1952), p. 249.

¹³⁹ Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction*, p. 147. Harman stated that “eight tunes” is a corruption of “eight tones,” which is a reference to the eight church modes. See Harman, *A Plain and Easy Introduction*, p. 249.

¹⁴⁰ Roger Bray, “Music and Musicians,” in Bray, *The Sixteenth Century*, p. 43.

¹⁴¹ Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction*, pp. 129-30. Harman commented that this table was translated from Zarlino’s *Isititutioni armoniche*, pp. 296-7. See Harman, *A Plain and Easy Introduction*, p. 226.

arrangements found in East's 1592 psalter, and, using the first chord of Blancks as an example, we can observe, referring to the portion of the table labeled "Of the Sixth," that he has constructed it in this manner:

If the treble (F) be a sixt with the tenor (A) and the base (D) be a fift vnder the tenor, the *Altus* may be a vnison or eight with the partes (D).¹⁴²

Morley also gave examples of what he referred to as "formal closes" for four, five and six parts, and Blanck's choice of an open fifth at the end of his setting is indeed one of the options Morley illustrated.¹⁴³

Dowland's harmonization of Psalm 51 did not adhere to Morley's rule about keeping in one key, as the tune starts on F but ends on G. As G is the final, we can say that it is in the key of G (b), and, as in the description of the theory described above, the final cadence has a raised seventh in the tenor leading to a G major chord with the raised third in the *altus*. However, in the second phrase of this setting, the chords move from D minor to Bb major (first inversion) to C minor (first inversion), resulting in a diminished fifth between the tenor and *cantus* in the C minor chord, a situation not found in Morley's table. This type of dissonance and its resulting tension is not found in the Blancks, a discrepancy that may reflect the difference between older and newer compositional styles, perhaps, or merely the difference in the older and newer tunes.

In these settings of Psalm 51, bar lines are used (rather than rests) to indicate phrase divisions. The note values here follow the form of the other two psalters: primarily semibreves and minims with the occasional dotted minim followed by a crotchet (used to create harmonic tension) and a long at the end of the piece.

¹⁴² Ibid, p. 130.

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 132.

What can be seen from the harmonic structure of the psalm settings in East's psalter is that the composers involved obviously knew the strictures placed upon them by the Church. There is no evidence of contrapuntal technique or any sort of rhythmic complexity; nothing that could distract worshippers, singing or listening to the psalms, from prayerful contemplation of the same.



Fig. 15. The first four phrases of Edward Blanck's setting of Psalm 51, Thomas East's psalter, 1592.

Fig 15a. John Dowland's setting of Psalm 51, Thomas East's psalter, 1592.

The four-part setting of Psalm 79 in the 1592 psalter incorporates a new tune by East that is unrelated to the one found in the 1562 and 1594 psalters. This tune is in the key of G (b), and is perhaps the simplest of all the tunes discussed in this study. The only leaps are those of a minor third, both ascending and descending- all other motion is stepwise. The note range of the tune lies mostly in the interval of a fourth, from G^3 - C^4 , but it dips down to $F\#^3$ twice, once as a leading tone at the first cadence (end of the first phrase) and once as the third of a D major chord at the end of the third phrase.

The tune and its harmonization are short, only four phrases long, encompassing the first verse of the psalm. As in the examples for Psalm 51, there are no rests indicated; instead, bar lines separate the phrases. At the end of the second phrase the final note is a dotted semibreve; at the end of the fourth phrase the final note is a long. With the exception

of the *cantus* part, the only note values used are the long, semibreve and minim: the *cantus* includes dotted minims and crotchets.

The harmonization was written by Edmund Hooper, another of the ten “masters” East employed to compose the settings. Hooper’s arrangement, like the previous two discussed above, ends with a raised seventh tone leading to a G major chord, this time with the raised third in the *cantus*. There is no fifth in this final chord, but this does not stray from Morley’s examples of proper “closes” for a four-voice composition.¹⁴⁴

Hooper made use of the lowered sixth tone, as did Dowland: again, it is probably indeterminable whether this is due to the newer tune or a more modern compositional style. In this setting, each time a C chord occurs, whether in root position or in first inversion, the chord is minor, with the Eb occurring in each of the three harmonizing voices. Hooper also used the raised third (B natural) outside of the final cadence, at a non-cadential point in the fifth chord of the first phrase.

In contrast to Blancks’ and Dowland’s settings of Psalm 51, Hooper’s setting of Psalm 79 has few repeated notes: the *cantus* has repeated Ds in notes 2-4 in the second phrase; at the beginning of the third phrase there are repeated notes in the tenor and *bassus* parts, and a repeated D for notes 5-8 of the *altus* part in the same phrase (fig. 16):

¹⁴⁴ Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction*, p. 132; Harman, *A Plain and Easy Introduction*, p. 229.



Fig. 16. Edmund Hooper's setting of Psalm 79 in Thomas East's psalter, 1592.

Again, simplicity is key here, and Hooper followed common Protestant practice in his setting, just as Blancks and Dowland did. All of these examples display clarity in setting that would not distract from the meaning of the texts nor interfere with prayerful consideration of God and his scriptures. Additionally, *the settings in East's psalter did not require highly trained singers to perform them, nor instrumental accompaniment* (although it is uncertain whether or not instruments were incorporated in "performances" of the psalms in either the orthodox Church of England or in the homes of those English Protestants who could afford them)¹⁴⁵, which is the fourth musical reform goal.

¹⁴⁵ Given the propensity for improvisation on tunes, such as faburdening, in English vocal practice, it seems unlikely that there was no experimentation with the psalm melodies, especially in private homes. Also, there is no evidence one way or the other that people in their homes or in social settings were not making use of instruments to supplement or replace vocal parts.

While Luther took a more conservative stance regarding the use of instruments, other reformers such as Calvin and Bullinger were adamant in their condemnation of instruments. Again, this appears to be a political statement, as instruments such as the organ were deemed “papist,” especially by the more extreme Protestant sects. Bullinger refused to give any credence to the use of instruments, saying derisively, “I say nothing at this present of their music which they call figurative, and of their musical instruments, all which are contained in a manner in their organs, as they term them.”¹⁴⁶ Alongside his dismissive attitude toward polyphony, Erasmus decried instruments in the church, saying, “Horns, trumpets, pipes vie and sound along constantly with the voices. Amorous and lascivious melodies are heard such as elsewhere accompany only the dances of courtesans and clowns.”¹⁴⁷ Calvin invoked apostolic authority in his commentary on Psalm 77:12 when he stated:

To sing the praises of God upon the harp and the psaltery unquestionably formed a part of the training of the [ancient Jewish] law, and the service of God under the dispensation of shadows and figures; but they are not now to be used in public thanksgiving. We are not, indeed, forbidden to use, in private, musical instruments, but they are banished out of the churches by the plain command of the Holy Spirit when Paul, in I Corinthians 14:13, lays it down as an invariable rule, that we must praise God, and pray to him only in a known tongue.¹⁴⁸

All of the above musical reforms exemplified one main goal: that music in the church should glorify God alone, not man. Simplicity, lack of music distraction in the form of counterpoint or use of instruments and a desire for return to ancient practice were the means by which the reformers intended to turn worshippers away from Roman traditions that were deemed heretical at worst and spiritually dangerous at best.

¹⁴⁶ Bullinger, *Decades* (vol. 5), p. 197.

¹⁴⁷ Bisgrove, *Sacred Music in the Calvinist Tradition*, p. 68.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 56.

In evaluating the political aspects of these books, we must take into consideration the evolution of the metrical psalters, as they experienced fluctuation through four English reigns: the Henrician (where the short-lived *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes* was born and then quickly banned); the Edwardian (Thomas Sternhold's original *Certayne Psalmes*); the Marian (with multiple editions including the Anglo-Genevan and early versions of the Sternhold and Hopkins); and the Elizabethan (where the addition of East's printing monopoly resulted in a homophonic version concurrent to the monophonic ones produced by Day's enterprise). In addition, the rapidity with which John Day needed to produce his 1562 *Whole Booke of Psalmes* surely had great effect upon that psalter and the music it contained.

It is the method behind the creation and evolution of these books that determines their political validity, as seen in the examples presented in this chapter. Indoctrination into the new state religion was accomplished partially through the simple music and metricized texts of the psalters, helped along no doubt by the dictum that all citizens must attend Church of England services. While the state had control over what was presented in these services, the psalters remind us that it also had partial control over expressions of faith practiced in the home, using an instrument that featured simplicity, musical and textual repetition, recognizable tunes, and vernacular texts, as well as mass production that afforded most parishioners the opportunity to own one.

The number of editions produced in the mid- to- late sixteenth century and the insistence that every parish and household not only own psalters, but use them regularly show that the Protestant reformers' methods were extremely effective. While the

effectiveness of this indoctrination seemed undeniable, it was not complete, as will be shown in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four

English Catholicism and Its Music, Pt. I: Hope for Restoration through Reeducation

[...] I hear say that England hath been a Catholic Christian country a thousand years before this Queen's reign and her father's. If that were the old high way to heaven then why should I forsake it?

-Thomas Dowlton, recusant Catholic¹⁴⁹

The immense ongoing changes in religious practice and theology during the late 1540s-1590s were reflected in the music of the Anglican church as well as in a move toward congregational and private devotion in the form of the metrical psalter. For English Catholics the situation was more problematic, and therefore it is necessary to explore the politics of their music and its possible function in a Catholic community that was no longer allowed to worship openly. Why did composers continue to write Latin music in a regime that had all but forbidden it, and what influenced their text choices? I posit that the actions of some Catholic composers may have been a direct response to the recusant Catholic movement of Elizabeth's reign and the similarly timed activities of Jesuit priests sent to England to restore the faith and reeducate English Catholics.¹⁵⁰ The Jesuits' activities, seen

¹⁴⁹ From the examination of the recusant Thomas Dowlton, as quoted in Philip Caraman, trans.. *William Weston: The Autobiography of an Elizabethan* (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, 1955), p. 243.

¹⁵⁰ Due to the conservative gentry's reaction to Elizabeth's political mishaps with the Holy Roman Empire and Spain in 1568 as well as the 1570 papal bull excommunicating her, many English Catholics stopped attending Protestant services, a practice known as *recusancy* (from the Latin *recusare*, to refuse). See MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, p. 323.

in the light of Catholic turmoil, provide both an impetus and a frame for understanding motet texts and their function within the English Catholic community. Within this framework we can read the motets of composers such as William Byrd and Thomas Tallis in a different light from previous scholarship, one that allows us to reflect upon the changes in Catholic thought during this period, and this new reading will empower us to interpret the music through performance in a fresh way. To fully understand the situation in which composers such as William Byrd found themselves, however, we must first explore the changes in Catholic identity that occurred during and after the Reformation period and the educational and propagandistic musical elements that in part contributed to this new identity.

Changes to the “Old Faith”

English Catholicism became quite different after Henry VIII’s break with Rome in 1533. As we have seen earlier, Henry’s desire was to eliminate papal supremacy in England but to keep elements of Roman Catholicism such as the Mass intact.¹⁵¹

After Henry’s death, English Catholics were forced either into exile or underground for the whole of Edward VI’s reign. Then, during the five years of Mary I’s reign, the original “old faith” was replaced by a new version of Catholicism that focused on many of the same

¹⁵¹ No doubt his revised views on faith and worship were colored somewhat by more orthodox Protestant reformers and their theology, but Henry essentially reverted to his original beliefs, with some modifications, in the last third of his life. See Lucy Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), chaps. 2,3.

elements emphasized in Protestant reform, thereby amending Mary's intent of restoring England to pre-Cranmerian Catholicism.¹⁵²

It seems possible that many mid-century English Catholics did not feel an allegiance to the Pope, as Henry VIII was the self-declared Supreme Head of the Church for the last decade and a half of his life, followed by the radical Protestantism of Edward and the Lord Protector. Peter Marshall, in a 2006 essay entitled "Is the Pope a Catholic?" addresses the unique situation presented to English Catholics during the Reformation- that of whether they could still be considered "Catholic" if their monarch had severed ties with the Pope. There may have been some sense of isolation and abandonment (especially during the Protestant regimes), at least until the influx of Jesuit missionaries in the 1580s.¹⁵³ However, a dialogue written by Erasmus for Sir Thomas Boleyn in 1533 defined how one might determine the "true Church." The first and most important sign, according to Erasmus, was to look for "the authorite of the olde Synodes," which the Henrician reformers interpreted as a diminishing of the importance of the contemporary Church.¹⁵⁴ This likely strengthened the reformist propaganda aimed toward the English laity, which encouraged them to view Henry as the ultimate church leader without need for reliance on Rome.

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 115. Catholic reformers pushed for the ideas of Scriptural foundation for piety, reformed ministry to all, and the need for an "inner piety which depended on faith", concepts drawn from humanistic and Protestant reformist ideals.

¹⁵³ Peter Marshall, ed., *The Impact of the English Reformation 1500-1640* (London: Arnold [Hodder Headline Group], 1997). In fact, the term "Roman Catholic" was not used until the Reformation- there was no need for such a descriptor prior to this time. However, we see in Marshall's essay that to be "Catholike" could mean simply "not to be a heretic" (p. 172). See Marshall, *Religious Identities*, chapter 9, for a discourse on the identity of English Catholics.

¹⁵⁴ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 88.

The new Catholic reformers instead focused on some of the same agenda so valued by their Protestant counterparts: education of the clergy, education of the laity, restoration of the Mass to ancient practice, and elimination of those elements which distracted worshippers from keeping their attention on the Bible and its teachings, such as superstitious ceremonies and rites or even veneration of the saints beyond those found in the Bible.¹⁵⁵ Although contemporary and modern scholarship discusses many of these concerns, there is little emphasis placed on what the role of music in the church should be (unlike the Protestants' insistence on congregational singing), other than the idea that music should become more understandable. We shall see, however, that it is quite possible that music played a larger role in Catholic reformation and renewal than previously thought, especially for those in the recusant communities who were determined to continue practicing the Catholic faith.

Overall, the Catholic reform ideals showed similarity to their Protestant counterparts, while keeping Catholic fundamentals in place. "In the 1550s, the emphasis was still on Christ, rather than the Pope, as the head of the Church, and the single most binding element was usually held to be the sacrament."¹⁵⁶

Mid-century reformers' desire to effect change in the clergy and the hierarchy of their Church was no different from that of Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola over half a

¹⁵⁵ See Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, chap. 4, "Catholic Renewal," which quotes contemporary theologians and churchmen such as Thomas Paynell, Roger Edgeworth and John Angel; and Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, chap. 16, "Mary," which draws upon such contemporary accounts as "Robert Parkyn's Narrative" and the *Wriothesley Chronicle*.

¹⁵⁶ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 124.

century earlier, in a sermon on renovating the Church (1495):

Now, let us begin with the reasons that I have cited to you [...] which demonstrate and prove the renovation of the Church. Some of the reasons are probable and can be contradicted; some are demonstrable and cannot be contradicted, for they are based on Holy Scripture.

The first is *propter pollutionem praelatorum* (because of the pollution of the prelates). When you see a good head, you know that the body is well; when the head is wicked, woe to that body. However, when God permits that there be at the head of government ambition, lust and other vices, believe that God's flagellation is near . . . Therefore, when you see that God permits the heads of the Church to be weighed down by evils and simonies, say that the flagellation of the people is near.¹⁵⁷

This sermon, along with several others, shows Savonarola's recognition of Church abuses and the need for reform over 20 years before the beginnings of the European Protestant movement.¹⁵⁸ The Catholic reformers who followed after Savonarola may have had differing theological aims from the Protestants, but they were as highly educated and well-versed in humanist thought as their Protestant counterparts.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Quoted in John C. Olin, *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1969, 1992), p. 5.

¹⁵⁸ Protestant reformers were drawn to this as well as to his derision for the actions of then-Pope Alexander VI, seeing parallels between the actions of that pope and the current Pope Julius II. The great humanist Desiderius Erasmus, in his satirical dialogue *Julius Exclusus* (1517), painted a picture of an imaginary exchange between St Peter at the gates of heaven and Julius, who, awaiting entrance into Heaven, demands that Peter acknowledge him as the Vicar of Christ. Peter responds: "I see the man who wants to be regarded as next to Christ and, in fact equal to Him, submerged in the filthiest of all things by far: money, power, armies, wars, alliances—not to say anything at this point about his vices. But then, although you are as remote as possible from Christ, nevertheless you misuse the name of Christ for your own arrogant purposes; and under the pretext of Him who despised the world, you act the part of a tyrant of the world; and although a true enemy of Christ, you take the honor due Him. You bless others, yourself accursed; to others you open heaven, from which you yourself are locked out and kept far away; you consecrate, and are execrated; you excommunicate, when you have no communion with the saints." Quoted in Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, 2nd ed. (Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 52.

¹⁵⁹ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 117. In fact, a young Mary I translated Erasmus' Latin paraphrases of the Gospel of St John into English, which the Church of England intended for placement into every parish church alongside the vernacular Bible

No reformers would have denied the need to halt clerical and papal abuses, but mid-16th -century English Catholics reading Savonarola's works might have been more attracted by his portrayal of a Christ-centered church and country, an ideal that appealed to many worshippers regardless of class or education.¹⁶⁰ Worshippers who were not heads of state or church were probably not as interested in reform at the highest levels of the Church as they were in the freedom to worship as they once had, with corresponding rites and music. Catholic music, drawn from scriptures beyond that of the Psalms, might have represented the comforting aspects of the "old faith" and known ritual as well as a political statement on resistance to change at multiple levels.

The influence of the Jesuits

Elizabethan English Catholics faced a double dilemma: there was a strong need for religious education (read: reeducation) but a shortage of priests to deliver the needed instruction. In an attempt to resolve this, as Lucy Wooding describes, books of homilies were intended to fill the void left by a shortage of priests. In her chapter "Catholic Renewal," she gives several examples of such books. Each example she cites is of a book that includes more than just sermons, as illustrated by the title of Richard Bonner's "attempt at a doctrinal formulation for the Marian church," *A profitable and necessarye doctryne, with certayne homelyes adioyned . . .*¹⁶¹. Thomas Watson, bishop of Lincoln, published a collection of homilies and other writings entitled *Holsome and Catholyke*

¹⁶⁰ This is assuming that English Catholics were reading Savonarola at all, given that the inclusion of his prison meditations in devotional documents had seemingly fallen out of favor a decade earlier and that his sermons and other writings were available to English readers only in Latin. The resonance of Savonarola in England will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

¹⁶¹ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 132.

doctryne concerninge the seven Sacramentes of Chrystes Church, expedient to be knownen of all men, set forth in maner of shorte Sermons to bee made to the people. Unlike the later emphasis on reaching the gentry, these mid-century books were intended to educate and edify all people, either through reading or hearing the sermons and doctrines within.¹⁶²

Books of homilies were valuable tools, but the recusant population was made up primarily of laypeople who probably did not have the necessary training to utilize these instruments. However, there was a sect of priests whose mission was both education and the reestablishment of Catholicism in England: the Jesuits.

The religious order known as the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was founded in 1540 by Inigo López Loyola (1491-1556), a Spanish priest later known as St Ignatius Loyola. The Society of Jesus was not founded in direct response to Protestantism; in fact Loyola saw great need for reform in the Roman Church, beginning with the reform of individual souls and stressing loyalty to the Church and to the Pope.¹⁶³ That said, Loyola was not shy about making statements that seemed directed toward the Protestant movement, as found in the last section of his *Spiritual Exercises*, where he gives his “Rules for Thinking with the Church”:

353. 1. We must put aside all judgment of our own, and keep the mind ever ready and prompt to obey in all things the true Spouse of Christ our Lord, our holy Mother, the hierarchical Church.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Ibid, chapter 4, esp. pp. 132-143.

¹⁶³ Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, p. 335.

¹⁶⁴ Louis J. Puhl, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1951), p. 157.

365. 13. If we wish to proceed securely in all things, we must hold fast to the following principle: *What seems to me white, I will believe black if the hierarchical Church so defines* [emphasis added]. For I must be convinced that in Christ our Lord, the bridegroom, and in His spouse the Church, only one Spirit holds sway, which governs and rules for the salvation of souls. For it is by the same Spirit and Lord who gave the Ten Commandments that our holy Mother Church is ruled and governed.¹⁶⁵

In similar fashion, the “Rules” address veneration of the saints, use of images, the sacraments, feast days, and the Mass in addition to other points of contention with Protestant belief.

In England at the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign, many if not most of the priests who now served the Church of England had been ordained prior to 1559 as Catholic priests. It was not unusual for these priests, especially outside of London, to maintain elements of the traditional Mass in their services, with no resistance from parishioners.¹⁶⁶ The state did its best to regulate the services of these priests, but it was difficult, in rural areas especially, to monitor their activities. The Church of England was also suffering from a lack of priests to serve all of its parishes, so retribution for non-conforming priests was fairly lax.¹⁶⁷

While the government was willing to briefly look the other way, this situation did not last. Persecution of Catholics, particularly of priests, grew stronger and more frequent during the 1570s and 1580s, especially after Pope Pius IV, the Roman Inquisition and a committee from the Council of Trent “declared in 1564 that Catholics might not attend the services of the Church of England, and faculties were issued to four priests to reconcile to Rome those who had fallen into schism.”¹⁶⁸ In addition, Pope Pius V excommunicated

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 160.

¹⁶⁶ Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 248.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, pp. 248-50.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 259.

Elizabeth in 1570 via the bull *Regnans in Excelsis*,¹⁶⁹ and these two declarations gave a sense of security to English Catholics for a brief period. Elizabeth, however, was unwilling to let Catholicism gain much of a foothold, and as the old priests who served both churches died and others feared for their lives and either conformed or left the priesthood, a shortage of priests made it quite difficult for Catholics to practice their religion.

Young English Catholic men, particularly those of the gentry class, found an opportunity to serve the Church by entering seminary at the English College of Rome and the English College at Douai, among others. These priests knew firsthand of the lack of clergy in their homeland, and many of them were willing to undertake the dangerous mission of returning to England to serve their fellow Catholics. Some joined the Jesuits, who saw as their response to the Reformation to “extirpate heresy and win Protestants back to Rome by means of political influence and effective education.”¹⁷⁰

The Jesuit priests were highly educated, unlike many of their Anglican contemporaries, and Jesuit leaders knew exactly where these missionary priests needed to concentrate their efforts: on English upper class Catholics, who had the means (especially those with large estates well outside of London) to host underground meetings and Masses. This was happening not only in England but also across Europe, as Jesuits became confessors to nobles who had the power to try and crush Protestantism.¹⁷¹ In England, the

¹⁶⁹ Caraman, *Henry Garnet (1555-1606)*, p. 9.

¹⁷⁰ Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, p. 338. There is much literature on the forming of the Jesuit order and the Jesuit response to the Reformation, including Caraman, *Henry Garnet (1555-1606) and the Gunpowder Plot*; Caraman’s translations of the autobiographies of Frs. John Gerard and William Weston; Haigh, *English Reformations*, esp. chaps. 14 and 15; Olin, *The Catholic Reformation*; Puhl, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*; and James Broderick, S.J., *Saint Ignatius Loyola: The Pilgrim Years [1491-1538]* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998).

¹⁷¹ Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, p. 338.

idea was that Jesuits would exert influence upon the gentry to enter into recusancy, thereby stemming the flow of conforming happening in the early 1570s.¹⁷²

The Jesuit General, Claude Aquaviva (1543-1615), had set forth very specific rules for the priests active in England, and their role was not to be as political as in other countries. Aquaviva's set of instructions for Fr Henry Garnet, dated 24 March 1586, specified that the English priests were not to speak against Queen Elizabeth or allow others to speak against her in their presence; they were not to "mix themselves in the affairs of state"; they were not to give political news in their letters to Rome; they were to do nothing that might endanger Catholics, "whose spiritual good was their only concern"; and they were to deal solely with people in the upper classes.¹⁷³

Christopher Haigh stresses that this emphasis on the upper class rather than those in the classes below was "so there could be a Catholic ruling order when the faith was restored,"¹⁷⁴ but it also makes sense that these highly educated priests would be more successful (at least initially) in spiritually educating Catholics who were themselves secularly educated, rather than spending precious time working with illiterates who likely did not understand either the importance of the Mass or the need for a return to Rome, of which most knew nothing.¹⁷⁵

This spiritual education needed to include music. Loyola himself spoke of the importance of music in his *Rules for Thinking with the Church*: "We ought to praise the

¹⁷² Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 262.

¹⁷³ Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, pp. 20-21.

¹⁷⁴ Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 264.

¹⁷⁵ It is worth mentioning here that reform was indeed going on in the lower classes of Catholics, as is mentioned in Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 271; but as the focus of this project is on the music performed primarily (or exclusively) by the upper middle and upper classes, it merits no more than a mention.

frequent hearing of the Mass, the singing of hymns, psalmody, and long prayers whether in the church or outside ... (355. 3.).”¹⁷⁶ Some of the owners of the English country houses were skilled musicians, as were some Jesuits, and so it was not difficult to keep Loyola’s rule. In 1586, at the height of Catholic persecution, Fr. William Weston (c. 1550-1615) told of the atmosphere at Hurleyford, an estate located to the northwest of London:

There was a chapel in the house. Their host, Mr Bold, himself a ‘skilled musician,’ had constructed the organ and had trained his household as choristers and instrumental musicians. Sometimes [Fr. Henry] Garnet sang the daily Mass, probably one of Byrd’s three Masses and composed for this occasion.¹⁷⁷

This sounds strikingly similar to the situation in the 1550s-60s at the estate known as Nonsuch,¹⁷⁸ although whereas its owner Lord Arundel had many professional musicians in his employ and considered music to be an important part of his daughters’ education, at Hurleyford “Mr Bold” gave his household members a seemingly extensive music education so that they might create their own music performances, likely both sacred and secular, within the confines of the estate.

All of the secretly practicing priests were able to bring sacraments and homilies to the recusants; they could act as tutors to the children of estate owners;¹⁷⁹ and they could serve as a support system for Catholics who were unable to practice their religion openly. However, as much of their mission involved bringing people back into the “old faith,” the use of long-standing elements such as veneration of saints, saying of the Mass, periodic taking of Communion, and traditional music were important to keep the old ways fresh in the minds of parishioners.

¹⁷⁶ Puhl, *The Spiritual Exercises*, p. 157.

¹⁷⁷ Caraman, *Henry Garnet*, p. 34. Caraman admits in a footnote that the Byrd Masses cannot be dated, and so this comment is probably one of conjecture rather than fact.

¹⁷⁸ For more on the estate Nonsuch and the Arundel/Lumley family, see Chapter Five.

¹⁷⁹ Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 264.

Music manuscript collections

If, as we have seen, the religious practices of English Catholics could only occur in secret, it is reasonable to assume that music was included in these covert gatherings. As stated above, music was a vital part of Jesuit mission work, and many estates probably had the means to use music as part of the Mass and other devotional aspects of recusant life. However, it would not have been safe for copies of Latin music to be printed, as the printers and publishers would thereby have exposed their Catholic sympathies.¹⁸⁰ The solution to this may lie in the circulation of manuscript collections, several if not many of which contain settings of biblical texts with strong political associations.

Multiple collections of Tudor-era manuscripts have been discovered. Most of them belonged to the libraries of contemporary landed gentry and other nobility, although the collection now known as the Tenbury manuscripts was gathered in the nineteenth century by Sir Frederick Ouseley and donated to St Michael's College in Tenbury Wells.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ With the exception of the two volumes of Byrd's *Sacrae Cantiones* (1589 and 1591), Latin music was not printed, and it is uncertain what the circulation was for these volumes.

¹⁸¹ Edmund H. Fellowes, *The Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Library of St. Michael's College Tenbury* (Paris: Louise B. M. Dyer, 1934), p. 1. The best-known Elizabethan collections today besides the Lumley library are the Gyffard partbooks (GB-Lbl Add. MSS 17802-5), known to have belonged to a Dr Roger Gifford and including various Marian (and other) motets, Lady (and other) masses, antiphons, and Magnificats; the Dow partbooks (Oxford, Christ Church, GB-Ob Mus. 984-988), compiled by the possible recusant Catholic Robert Dow and including music mostly likely intended only for private devotion, such as several controversial settings by Byrd in both English and Latin; and the Paston manuscripts, collected by the Byrd and Thomas Morley patron Edward Paston (bap. 1550, d. 1630), which includes the sole sources of certain Byrd motets as well as other Latin music. However, multiple other manuscripts exist in libraries in Britain as well as other countries. Readers wishing more information may want to consult the foreword to the modern edition of the Gyffard partbooks by John Caldwell (London: Published for the British Academy by Stainer and Bell, 2007 and 2009) and the introduction to the facsimile edition (by the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music) of the Dow partbooks by John Milsom (Oxford: DIAMM Publications, 2011).

Copying of manuscripts continued well after the advent of printing in England, and we have information on some of the copyists such as Robert Dow (1553-1588) and John Baldwin (d. 1615). Baldwin was responsible for the collections of Latin music now known as Oxford, Christ Church, MSS 979-983; his “commonplace book,” or BL, RM 24.d.2; the Forrest-Heyther collection of masses (Bodl. Oxf., MSS mus.sch.e.376-381); and two pieces in the Dow partbooks (Oxford, Christ Church Mus. 984-988).¹⁸² In the foreword to the modern edition of the Gyffard partbooks, John Caldwell writes that:

Two reasons at least suggest themselves for the continued copying and composition of such music [meaning Latin masses and motets]: antiquarianism and nostalgia on the one hand, and the possibility that it might still be performed in clandestine circumstances by disaffected Catholics on the other.¹⁸³

This lends credence to the idea that the masses and motets in these manuscript copies were in part used as educational tools, much as the metrical psalters functioned for Protestants. In the same way that the psalters accompanied the vernacular Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, it would stand to reason that Latin motets and masses could serve as a supplementary adjunct to homilies, not only as a means of strengthening scriptural knowledge but also by pointing out scriptural passages that defined and complemented the current status of English Catholics, comparing it to the captivities of the ancient Israelites.

Several scholars have convincingly attributed the copying of Latin music in predominantly Protestant England to the Renaissance fascination with antiquarian

¹⁸² David Mateer, “Baldwin, John (d. 1615).” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: OUP, 2004. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/70096> (accessed August 7, 2015); also Roger Bray, “John Baldwin,” *Music and Letters* (1975) 56 (1): 55-59. doi: 10.1093/ml/56.1.55.

¹⁸³ David Mateer, *The Gyffard Partbooks I*, in the *Early English Church Music* series, vol. 48 (London: published for the British Academy by Stainer and Bell, 2009), foreword.

pursuits.¹⁸⁴ Indeed, John Baldwin, John Sadler (the copyist of MS Tenbury 1486, among others) and Robert Dow were all supposed Protestants, with Sadler being an Anglican priest, and therefore their interest in and motivation for copying such music may well have been driven by the desire to preserve English musical history. However, it seems odd (given their Protestant attributions) that we find such a recurrence of highly controversial and Catholic-leaning political texts in these copyists' collections. Price asserts that any collection with a large number of Byrd's compositions "would have implied its Roman Catholic association."¹⁸⁵

One must wonder, then, if the preservation of "antique" music was instead a smokescreen for covert Catholic sympathies. Modern scholar David Mateer mentions Robert Dow's possible recusant sympathies in his biography of the copyist.¹⁸⁶ Additionally, as can be seen in an examination of the manuscript collections listed above, the composers represented were as often contemporaries of the copyists (for example, Tallis, White and Byrd) as composers from previous generations (such as Taverner, Tye or Parsley).

Given the Renaissance penchant for returning to perceived ancient practices, it is entirely likely that copyists such as Baldwin and Sadler did have the intent to preserve music of another era; however, the possibility that Latin motets and liturgical music found

¹⁸⁴ Hugh Benham, *Latin Church Music in England, c. 1460-1575* (London: Barrie and Jenkins Ltd, 1977), pp. 26-7; N. P. Milner and David Mateer. "Sadler, John (*b.* 1512/13, *d.* in or after 1591)." N. P. Milner In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: OUP, 2004. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24458> (accessed January 28, 2016).

¹⁸⁵ David C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance*, in *Cambridge Studies in Music* series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 162. It was quite common to find both secular and religious music in print and manuscript collections, due to the influence of Italian musicians in England since Henrician times. See Price, pp. 156, 195.

¹⁸⁶ David Mateer, "Dow, Robert (1553–1588)." David Mateer In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: OUP, 2004. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/70097> (accessed December 22, 2015).

in these collections likely had a more covert practical use should not be ignored. Jeremy Smith asserts that William Byrd was involved in “the distribution of music for illegal Catholic Masses . . .”¹⁸⁷ Much of the Latin music found in manuscript collections and in Byrd’s print collections does not have a liturgical function, however, which points yet again to other uses such as reeducation or (as with the metrical psalters for the Protestants) a means by which underground Catholics could communally perform music of their faith.

Certain texts common to many of these manuscript motets appear to have been used in the above manner. One of the most common is *Ne irascaris*, from Isaiah 64:9-12:

9 How long wilt thou crush us, Lord, with thy anger, wilt thou keep our sins ever in mind? We are thy people, all of us. 10 A desert, the city thy chosen servant knew, a desert, the Sion we love; Jerusalem lies forlorn. 11 Given over to the flames, the house that was our sanctuary and our pride, the house in which our fathers praised thee; all that we loved lies in ruins; 12 Lord, wilt thou have patience still? Wilt thou keep silent still, and overwhelm us with calamity?

Other common texts relate to the Holy Eucharist (*O sacrum convivium*) or come from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, such as *Heth. Peccatum peccavit*, set by Robert White:

Heinously Jerusalem sinned: what wonder if she became an outlaw? How they fell to despising her when they saw her shame, that once flattered her! Deeply she sighed, and turned away her head.

Also found in the collections are the Savonarolan meditation, *Infelix ego*; the penitential Psalm 50 (51), *Miserere mei, Deus*; and Psalm 78 (79), *Deus venerunt gentes*:

1 O God, the heathen have broken into thy inheritance; they have profaned the temple, thy sanctuary, and left Jerusalem in ruins. 2 They have thrown the corpses of thy servants to feed all the birds of heaven; wild beasts prey on the carrion of the just; 3 blood has flowed like water on every side of Jerusalem, and there was none to bury the dead. 4 What a triumph was this for the nations that dwell around us; how have our neighbours mocked and derided us! 5 Lord, must we always taste thy vengeance, must thy jealous anger still burn unquenched?¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Smith, *Thomas East*, p. 96.

¹⁸⁸ There are other texts in these collections that are in English rather than Latin. In the Dow partbooks are two songs by William Byrd that blatantly address political issues, *How*

These texts suggest a feeling of desperation within Elizabethan Catholicism that was likely well warranted, given the many instances of torture and execution described in contemporary literature.¹⁸⁹ Under such circumstances, texts like these and their accompanying musical settings would have been considered by the Protestant government as dangerous and controversial and it is no coincidence that they circulated in manuscript form rather than print.

It is not just the texts that hint at an educational propaganda usage for these manuscripts. The sheer volume of extant manuscripts would indicate that there were many of these collections in existence, probably many more than we know. Those that have survived were primarily owned by highly educated people of the upper and upper middle classes, as we see with the Gyffard, Dow, Paston, and Lumley collections. All of these men were known Catholic sympathizers; in fact, Edward Paston “maintained a mass-centre at Appleton,” near Sandringham;¹⁹⁰ this fact insinuates that he was harboring priests, a crime punishable by execution.

long shall mine enemies and *Why do I use my paper, ink and pen? How long shall mine enemies* appears to have been an early work by Byrd, possibly prior to the 1575 *Cantiones Sacrae*, and therefore may not have originally had a political intent, but it is interesting to see it included in a collection with obvious Catholic sympathies. *Why do I use my paper, ink and pen* is famously known as Byrd’s reaction to the execution of the English Jesuit priest and missionary Edmund Campion (and is a setting of a poem by Campion). It appeared twice in print, including in the 1588 *Psalmes, Sonets and Songes*. See Jeremy Smith, ed. *Psalmes, Sonets and Songs (1588)*, *The Byrd Edition* series, vol. 12 (London: Stainer and Bell, 2004), p. vii.

¹⁸⁹ An excellent collection of contemporary accounts of the English Catholic situation is to be found in Philip Caraman’s *The Other Face: Catholic Life under Elizabeth I* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960).

¹⁹⁰ Philip Brett, “Paston, Edward (*bap.* 1550, *d.* 1630).” Philip Brett In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/70482> (accessed December 22, 2015).

The volume of manuscripts also indicates great demand. Much manuscript copying of the time is beautifully and carefully done, as exemplified by the Dow partbooks. The facsimile of the Dow partbooks reflects a document that is quite neat and well ordered, as Robert Dow was famous for the quality of his handwriting (fig. 17).¹⁹¹

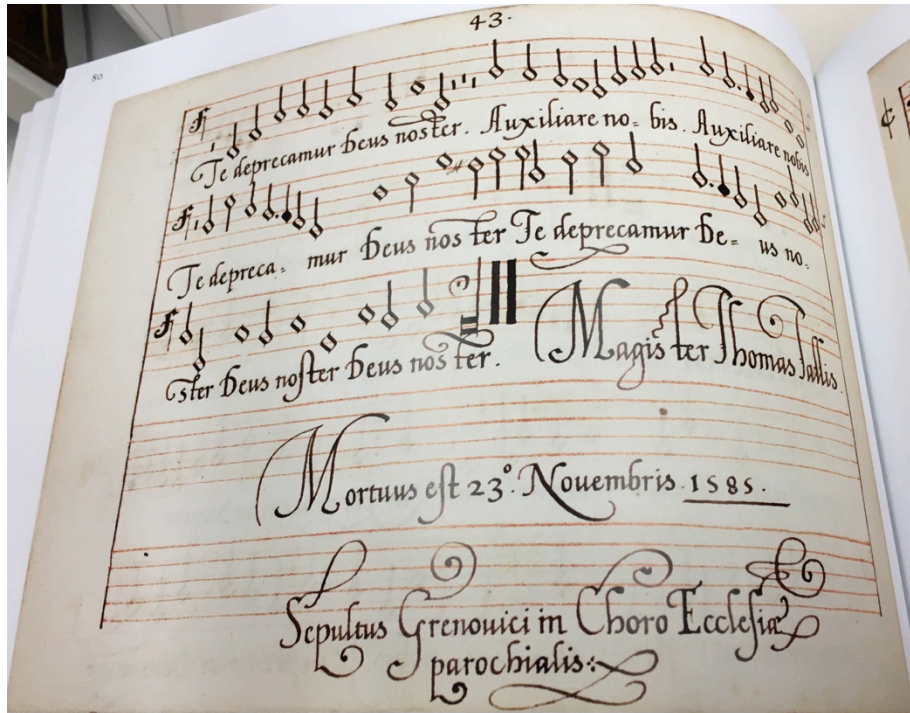


Fig. 17. Thomas Tallis' *Te deprecamur*, as found in the Dow partbooks (facsimile).

The above example displays carefully and elaborately worked text. At the end of the motet, the remaining white space has been neatly filled with a tribute to Thomas Tallis, including his death date. All of the words in the motet text are written out in full, and carefully spaced under the corresponding notes. The musical elements of the piece have

¹⁹¹ John Milsom, in the introduction to *The Dow Partbooks*, pp. 11, 13. The image in Fig. 17 is also from this edition, p. 80.

also been carefully and clearly drawn- the entire page, and indeed the entire volume, reflects a labor of immense time and care.

In contrast (perhaps showing the demand for many copies of this music), an examination of two manuscripts in the Weston Library of the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS Tenbury 1486, known as the “Braikenridge MS”; and MS. Mus.Sch.E.423), reveals copying done in a hurry: there are multiple crossings-out in both text and notation; and illuminations and illustrations were often unfinished, as if the demand for the document precluded completion and neatness (figs. 18, 19).

MS.Mus.Sch.E.423 includes several examples of what might be called “sloppy” copying, and one of the most blatant of these is in fig. 18 below. Here we see the crossing out of an entire line of music, and it does not appear to be the same or nearly the same music as on the staff below it. While small scribal corrections are not uncommon, this is remarkable for the amount of material that has been crossed out. Also worth mentioning is that the composer listed to the left of the newly begun motet on the third system is “William Parsons (Persons),” but the composer Parsons’ first name was actually Robert. The text was copied using a great deal of shorthand, and the notes and musical symbols, while legible, were not drawn with the same amount of care and effort as the Dow or even MS Tenbury 1486.

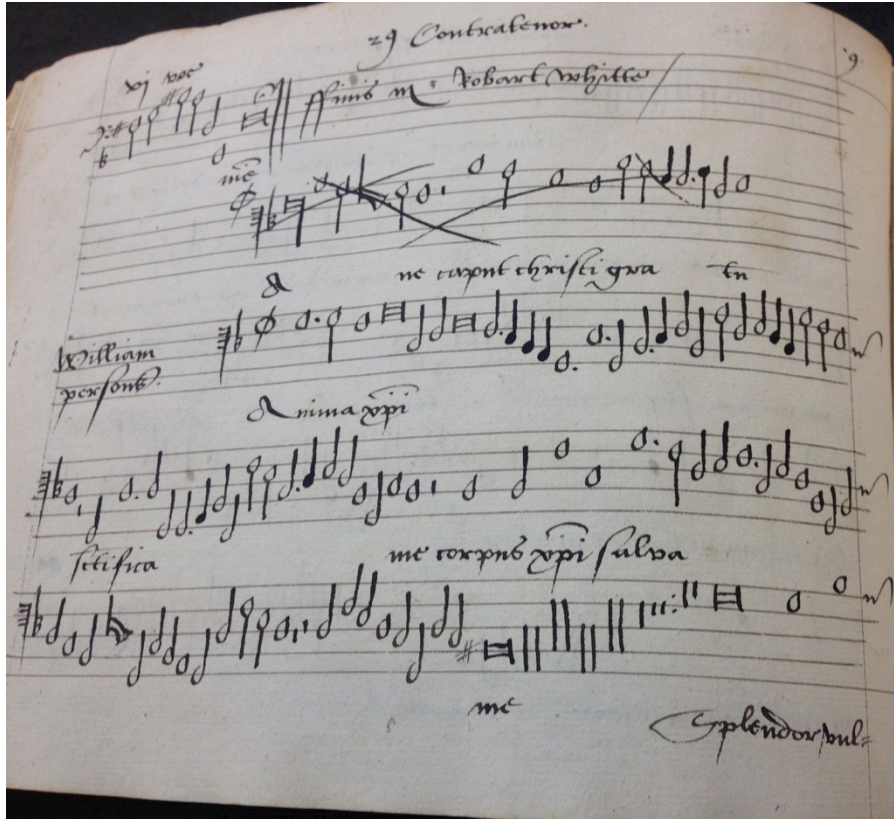


Fig. 18. Scribal error in MS.Sch.E.423, last fol. of motet 9 (v). Image courtesy of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

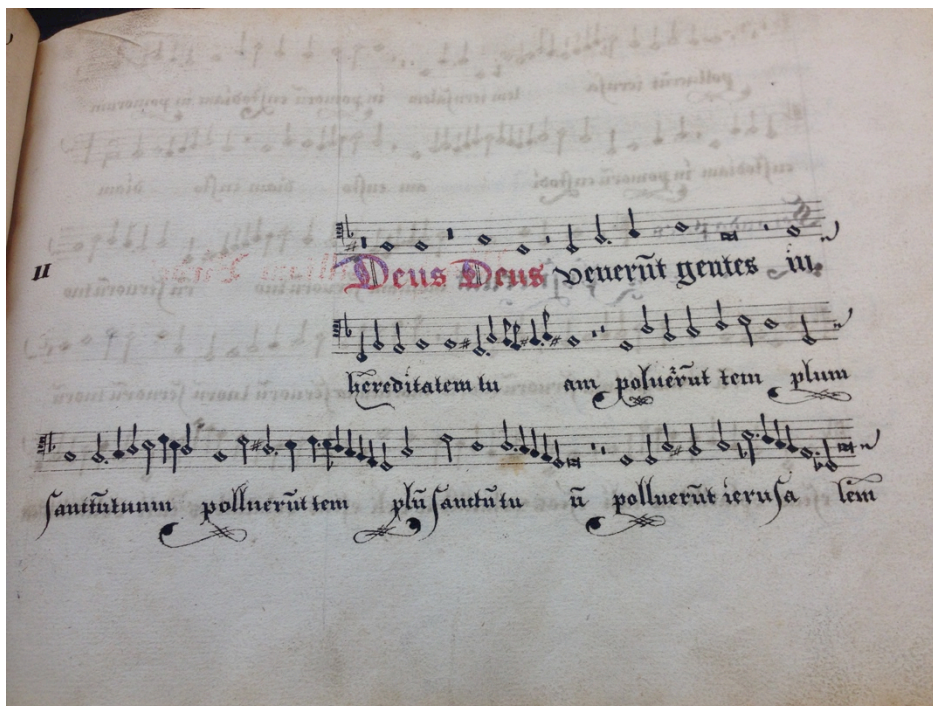


Fig. 19. Unfinished illumination in MS Tenbury 1486, "Deus Deus venerunt gentes" (motet 11), fol. 19 (r). Image courtesy of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

In MS Tenbury 1486 (fig. 19) the opening page of *Deus, venerunt gentes* (motet 11) has a great deal of white space that obviously (based on other motets in the collection) was intended to be filled with some sort of illumination and/or illustration, certainly surrounding the first letter of *Deus* and also likely in the open space above the first system. Throughout the motet, the initial words of each *pars* are rubricated, evidently by the scribe/copyist himself, but the illustrator did not complete his work and many of the motets display opening pages similar to this. It should be noted here that the text has been copied beautifully, albeit with many of the common Latin scribal abbreviations that are absent from the Dow partbooks. The notes, rests and other musical symbols are also fairly neat, although occasionally rather densely packed. It is the unfinished illustrative items, however, that are remarkable in this example.

Perhaps these manuscripts are anomalous- examples of poorly executed work- or perhaps they are examples of a common occurrence in circulating music manuscripts intended for use by Catholics: copyists working quickly, without the luxury of time to correct mistakes and send the piece to an illustrator, in order to get the music out to those who needed it. Further scholarly investigation into the scribal habits in manuscripts such as these might be warranted to elaborate upon and test the hypothesis that such documents were actually for recusant use and not merely for acquisition.

The Renaissance respect for and fascination with ancient philosophers and the musical styles of preceding centuries certainly may account for the acquisition of music manuscript collections, as alluded to in Caldwell's comment above (and more strongly stated by Roger Bray in his essay on John Baldwin)¹⁹². It can be argued, however, that this

¹⁹² Bray, "John Baldwin," pp. 55-6.

cannot be the primary reason behind the circulation of such a quantity of Latin music, especially that of current composers. The music in these manuscript collections is of high quality and would require trained singers or players to perform it; something that would not have been impossible, given the level of music education in the homes of gentry and nobility. It is highly likely that such musicians would have been available, including quality professionals. A notable feature of the manuscript collections examined for this project is the absence of marginal markings (other than the animal grotesques): while it is sometimes assumed that a lack of post-scribal markings indicates that manuscripts were for collection purposes rather than practical use, in actuality the wide availability of inexpensive printed music in the last decades of the century meant that copied manuscripts were “associated more with the process of composition, with performance, or with repertoires of limited market, rather than with study or presentation...”¹⁹³

Manuscript collections as commonplace books

Beyond the included texts and their political insinuations, how else can we view these motet collections as propagandistic educational devices? Beyond supposition there is no real proof, but it might be worthwhile to consider parallels between these collections and the common educational tool known as the commonplace book.

Commonplace books arose from the practice of glossing, or making comment or explanation upon a segment of text, often in the margin or above or under the glossed fragment, for later reference. A commonplace book, in its simplest form, is a mnemonic

¹⁹³ Stanley Boorman, et al. "Sources, MS." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.* Oxford University Press, accessed January 3, 2017, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/50158pg1>.

device similar to a medieval memory palace;¹⁹⁴ in a commonplace book, however, the material one wishes to remember and return to later is written out in a notebook. This notebook uses “heads” rather than rooms as its method of organization. Commonplace books (a term not used until the 17th century) were originally intended to help students learn Latin from its basic grammar to the writings of the most revered ancient authors. The students were expected to write rules and later quotations in the book with the intention of eventually learning to write competently in Latin themselves. Eventually the term “commonplace-book” came to mean any sort of book that included authoritative quotations, notes, and annotations by its author, or, indeed, any sort of collection of material on a particular topic that would serve as a creative instigator at a later date.¹⁹⁵

Regarding Wooding’s chapter on Catholic renewal and the importance of books of homilies in that renewal, it would not have been unusual to see these books turned into commonplace books, not would it be surprising to find a great number of marginalia

¹⁹⁴ A “memory palace” is but one of the ancient and medieval memory storage metaphors described by Mary Carruthers in her 1990 *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 2008). Others include wax tablets, storehouses, hives, and bags or pouches. The idea behind memory storage is to visualize pieces of information as residing in rooms or segments in a common location or item; for later retrieval, the recollection of that place or item will trigger the desired memory. As Carruthers states, “What is involved in remembering is the association and recollection of previously impressed material when the original is no longer present to us.” See Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 27.

¹⁹⁵ See Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Adam Smyth, 2010, “Commonplace Book Culture: A List of Sixteen Traits”, In *Women and Writing, C.1340-c.1650: The Domestication of Print Culture*, edited by Anne Lawrence-Mathers and Phillipa Hardman, NED - New edition, 90–110, Boydell & Brewer. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt9qdk7z.11>; and Fred Schurink, 2010. “Manuscript Commonplace Books, Literature, and Reading in Early Modern England”, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73 (3). University of California Press: 453–69, doi:10.1525/hlq.2010.73.3.453, for more detailed descriptions of commonplace books and their history.

therein; while a true commonplace book would have begun with blank pages, at least according to Erasmus' *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum*¹⁹⁶, collections such as sets of printed homilies could have been heavily annotated and marked up by their owners, with segments of the material within possibly used to create new tracts or homilies. Also, the authors [of these books] included a variety of material, not just homilies, intended to propagate Catholic doctrine and loyalty.¹⁹⁷ Given that any sort of volume might serve as a commonplace book, it seems reasonable to imagine that music manuscripts might have functioned in the same manner. After all, the manuscript now known as BL., RM 24.d.2 is colloquially referred to as "John Baldwin's commonplace book," not only because of its unusually long compilation time (c.1581-1606),¹⁹⁸ as Baldwin periodically returned to it adding new material, but also because he occasionally "modernized" the music in it by rescoring it for different voices or instruments or by adding "biographical and chronological details" after a piece.¹⁹⁹

Collections of manuscript music such as Baldwin's Commonplace Book resemble traditional commonplace books in other ways too. The collections vary in their hands, with some such as Baldwin's and Dow's showing great precision and beautifully rendered script; others, often seeming hastily done, appear to have been copied by more amateurish scribes. There are also blank pages or segments of pages (perhaps left blank for future corrections or annotations). Most interestingly, there is occasionally marginal commentary

¹⁹⁶ Moss, *Printed Commonplace Books*, pp. 106-7.

¹⁹⁷ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 132.

¹⁹⁸ Mateer, "Baldwin, John (d. 1615)."

¹⁹⁹ Bray, "John Baldwin," pp. 59, 57.

in the form of verses (as found in the Dow partbooks), or in artwork, such as the animal grotesques that randomly dot the pages of MS Tenbury 1486 (fig. 20):



Fig. 20. Animal grotesques in MS Tenbury 1486, fol. 40 (r), “Anima C[h]risti” (motet 21); and initial page (v.) of “Ne irascaris” (motet 4). Images courtesy of the Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford.

While the marginalia and/or ordering of the manuscript collections does not necessarily seem logical now, at the time the images and verses could have been some sort of *aide memoire* or commentary that would have made perfect sense to their users. Carruthers explains how images such as these functioned as “memorial hooks and cues” and were common to all methods of memory training from the earliest evidential examples.²⁰⁰ A more literary example of a “memorial hook” is the verse found in MS Tenbury 1486, after motet #20:

Reason doth wonder howe faith tell can
 that marie is a virgin and god a man,
 leaue the reason and beleue the wonder
 for faith is aboue and reason is under.

16th-century Catholic readers would have had no problem recognizing the justification for Mary’s virginity after the birth of Jesus, and of his humanity: two topics that were highly controversial in Reformation England.

²⁰⁰ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, p. 274.

The varied extramusical material found in some English manuscript collections of the late sixteenth century seems to indicate that these volumes served as commonplace books in the most educational sense, with the use of verses and other doggerel as well as illustrations (some of which may have depicted martyrdom or persecution)²⁰¹ perhaps intended as *aides-memoire* for scriptural or dogmatic retention. This intensifies the argument that antiquarianism was not the only, nor yet the primary, reason for the copying of Latin motets by composers from all periods of the sixteenth century. Through examination of both modern sources and contemporary manuscripts it can be seen that books of homilies and music manuscript collections may have served as adjuncts to the missionary work of the Jesuits in Elizabethan England as part of a large-scale plan to return the country to Catholicism.

Viewing these manuscripts as educational propaganda reveals that they functioned similarly to the metrical psalters of the Anglican church, but with one important distinction: the state-approved metrical psalters were printed many times over in multiple editions making them available to anyone with the money to purchase them; while Latin motets could not be printed without putting printer and publisher in danger of retribution from the Protestant government. Two exceptions were the print copies of Byrd's 1589 and 1591 *Cantiones Sacrae*, printed by Thomas East, who, "unlike nearly all of his London colleagues in the Stationers' Company," was evidently unafraid to publish material attractive to Catholics.²⁰² Thomas Morley, who likely obtained Byrd's publishing monopoly in 1593, may also have displayed some Catholic sympathies and even composed his own

²⁰¹ Tessa Murray, *Thomas Morley: Elizabethan Music Publisher*, in *Music in Britain 1600-2000* series (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 13-4.

²⁰² Smith, *Thomas East and Music Publishing*, p. 97.

Latin motets as well as setting some of the Jesuit Robert Southwell's poetry. However, Morley was not publishing overtly Catholic material, nor can his own Catholicism be definitively proven.²⁰³ More common among printers and publishers with supposed Catholic sympathies are what Jeremy Smith terms "hidden editions," which are undated and bear no printer's colophon or other identifying marks.²⁰⁴

Perhaps, then, we can infer that the manuscript collections, while more unwieldy and time-consuming in their creation than printed books, were better able to serve an educational function by their distinct lack of a "paper trail" linking them to any specific composer or publisher, thereby removing some of the danger of their existence.

Additionally, if manuscript collections did indeed function in a manner similar to that of the metrical psalters, the need for music to fill them is obvious. A great respect for the music and liturgy of previous generations would not have precluded the desire for more contemporary music, and composers like Mundy and [especially] Byrd with exposure to Continental motet style seem to have enthusiastically responded to that desire.

The inclusion in circulating manuscripts of music of contemporary composers (as well as those of previous generations) indicates that an antiquarian intent on the part of copyists cannot be the sole reason for compiling these collections, and the presence of texts considered controversial attests to what may be a more political function for the music in

²⁰³ Murray, *Thomas Morley*, pp. 16-9.

²⁰⁴ Smith, *Thomas East*, p. 43. Smith identifies both mis- and un-dating of editions, with the former being the "hidden editions" that purposely use dates of previous editions in an attempt to hide the new controversial material and the latter "reissues," or newly set title pages with unaltered content pages that give the impression of a new edition. Smith convincingly attempts to assign correct dates to these editions by studying the paper stock, watermarks and typography of these editions and comparing them to dated versions, as discussed on pp. 43-54.

the collections. This presents the possibility that the copyists themselves, even those who seemed quite loyal to the Church of England, showed Catholic sympathies.

It may be possible to meaningfully compare Latin music manuscript collections with the Protestant metrical psalters as two forms of educational propaganda: one with the intent of proselytizing for a new faith, the other with the intent of reinforcing, even reintroducing an old (albeit reformed) one. With this in mind, we can see that there was a need for music to fill circulating manuscripts, both old and new, in order to fulfill the Roman Church's dicta on the use and purpose of music in the Mass. As with the metrical psalters, these collections enabled private music making in [recusant] homes by skilled amateur and professional musicians. By making such a comparison between two seemingly different documents, it is possible to see a common thread in what often appears to be an implicit conflict in English sacred music.

While the Jesuit missionary movement and current political events can be considered as having strong textual influences on Elizabethan composers with Catholic sympathies, they were not the only ones. It may be that patronage by wealthy recusants was also influential in the choice of texts by composers such as William Byrd and William Mundy, as is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

English Catholicism and its Music, Pt. II: Patronage and Compositional Sources in the Catholic Underground

Do not wonder, most illustrious Sir, what the reason may be for my venturing to inscribe and dedicate these songs to your name.

--William Byrd, to John, Lord Lumley, in his dedicatory of the 1591 volume of *Cantiones Sacrae*²⁰⁵

An examination of the attempts of Catholic reestablishment and re-education by the Jesuits shows that certain documents, such as books of homilies and music manuscript collections, circulated throughout recusant communities and may have contributed to the continuing existence of Catholicism in Elizabeth I's Protestant England. The recusant community served by the Jesuits consisted largely of upper class nobility with the means to conduct worship practices in secret, and some of these nobles extended their patronage to composers like William Byrd who continued to write music in Latin. Assessing compositional intent through the influence of patronage and defining possible functions for provocative text settings may allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the motivation for setting seemingly controversial political texts, thereby opening the possibility of new interpretation of the music through the rehearsal process and performance.

16th-century musical patronage

The dedications in Byrd's 1589 and 1591 volumes of the *Cantiones Sacrae* are examples of the role Catholic patronage played in Byrd's compositional process and in the

²⁰⁵ Quoted in Alan Brown, ed., *Cantiones Sacrae I (1589)*. From *The Byrd Edition*, ed. Philip Brett, vol. 2 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1988), p. xxi.

dissemination of his music. The dedicatee of the 1589 volume was Edward Somerset, Count Worcester, whose family was deeply divided over religion. While Somerset pledged his allegiance to the Church of England, his wife remained Catholic, his children grew up crypto-Catholics, and he himself had provided shelter to Jesuit priests: all factors that throw his Protestant sympathies into question.²⁰⁶ Byrd valued this patronage for its influence and for the high level of Somerset's musical ability, as the composer was frustrated by the lack of accuracy in some earlier print versions of his music:

Therefore, most noble Count, I have deemed that the first part of this work should, in duty, be inscribed to you, as being the most auspicious Patron of good letters and of worth, seeing that in all the distinguished multitude of nobles at the present time I assuredly know no one either more skilled in music or (not to speak of your other virtues) more benevolent than you and you alone.²⁰⁷

Byrd dedicated the 1591 volume to John, Lord Lumley, who shall be discussed in more detail shortly. As he did Somerset, Byrd considered Lumley a friend as well as patron; but the dedication to Lumley was somewhat more personal, reflecting Byrd's appreciation for Lumley's personal and scholarly generosity:

For you, above other men (if not all others, at least most) are held not only renowned for your participation in virtues and letters, but also pre-eminent for your most ardent love towards all the daughters of the Muses and of Science, and for your extraordinary beneficence [...] Therefore whatever, this long time past, Harmony has suggested either to my mind or to my pen, I have thought that it might fittingly be introduced to your favour; and I hope that you will be content with it.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Pauline Croft, "Somerset, Edward, fourth earl of Worcester (c.1550–1628)," Pauline Croft In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by David Cannadine, May 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26005> (accessed September 13, 2016).

²⁰⁷ Quoted in Brown, *Cantiones Sacrae I (1589)*, p. xxi.

²⁰⁸ Quoted in Alan Brown, ed., *Cantiones Sacrae II (1591)*. From *The Byrd Edition*, ed. Philip Brett, vol. 3 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1981), p. xvii.

Admittedly, many dedications of the time now seem rather ingratiating, but Byrd appeared genuine in his statements about these patron friends who apparently agreed with him on matters of faith and the validity of publishing Latin music.

David C. Price offers this explanation for the relationship between composers and their Catholic patrons in his book on musicians and patrons of the English Renaissance:

Secrecy was the only condition under which Catholic musical worship could continue and therefore many of the surviving private manuscripts of the period are connected with Roman Catholic patrons. [...] Perhaps it would be inadvisable to relate the political and religious fortunes of the time so closely to the waywardness of contemporary music publishing. Yet it does remain possible that many published composers were at some time involved in Roman Catholic activities, that this often drew them to the patronage of Roman Catholic families or their sympathisers, and that this connection influenced their choice of music collaborators, of music titles, even of musical text.²⁰⁹

Price outlines a tightly woven web of recusancy, patronage and the cultural elite wherein recusant families such as the Petres, Howards, Arundels /Lumleys, and the Pastons were interconnected through friendship, religious conviction, marriage, and the composers whom they supported.²¹⁰ It is important to note that some of these bonds formed before the Reformation, when it was not unusual for large estates to maintain a chapel choir and players. Some of the finest of these musicians (Tallis, Sheppard, and Parsons, for example) were able to continue their relationship with the elite gentry, thereby also continuing Catholic practice, beyond the Protestant reform movement while working for the Court as Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal.²¹¹

English musical patronage reflected Continental practice, as seen in Iain Fenlon's detailed description of patronage by the Gonzaga family in sixteenth-century Mantua. He

²⁰⁹ Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, p. 155.

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, especially the sections on private music and worship, pp. 60-65 and private music and religious faith: the Roman Catholics, pp. 156-167.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 61.

pronounces elite patronage as pursuant with “remarkable cultural achievements in relation to the interests and activities of the ruling élite.”²¹² Fenlon also remarks:

One area in which music and the arts played an increasingly important role during the period was as an important aspect of despotic mythology, whose primary function was to provide traditional explanations of the nobility, antiquity, and political legitimacy of the dynasty...²¹³

There was, then, a symbiotic relationship between Continental artists and patrons, one likely similar to that of English patrons and musicians, although while Mantuan patronage also showed evidence of some interfamilial connections, the Italian reform influence in patronage was focused upon paganist elements of mid-century court life rather than opposing Christian religious views.²¹⁴

Patrons such as Somerset and Lumley offered support in various ways, and it is quite possible that one of these was to allow composer-protégés access to their libraries. The phenomenon of private book collecting was relatively new in the first decades of the sixteenth century. Prior to the advent of the printing press, most libraries were located either in monasteries or universities; it was rare for an ordinary individual to have the physical or monetary means to acquire books beyond personal devotional instruments or the occasional copy of a Bible or patristic writings. The Renaissance brought about an increased interest among the nobility and higher ranking clerics in the creation of private libraries that showcased their knowledge of and interest in the sciences, history, theology, philosophy, the classics, and music.²¹⁵ Along with the useful patronage of artists described

²¹² Iain Fenlon, *Music and Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Mantua*, in *Cambridge Studies in Music* series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 1.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²¹⁵ A library such as this would have had books in multiple languages, including Latin, Greek, French and English (and possibly Italian and Hebrew) and numerous copies of

above, having a substantial private library was a way of establishing the legitimacy of a family's dynasty.

The Arundel/Lumley library at Nonsuch

Two motets found in extant manuscript collections are William Byrd's *Deus, venerunt gentes* and *Infelix ego*, both representing vivid examples of what appears to be politically driven text setting. In an attempt to comprehend the impetus behind these works it is necessary to first take a closer look at the library of John, Lord Lumley and his family. The possibility exists that Byrd, with strong political connections to the Lumley family and to Thomas Tallis (who was himself closely connected to the Arundel/Lumleys), might have examined various documents in the family library under recommendation from his patron and mentor and/or through a desire for greater understanding of the inclusion of certain motet texts in Continental collections.

John, first Baron Lumley, was a conspirator in the 1571 Ridolfi plot to replace the Protestant Queen Elizabeth with her Catholic cousin, Mary, Queen of Scots. Upon exposure of his role, Lumley was arrested and spent nearly three years in prison.²¹⁶ He was the son-in-law of Henry Fitzalan, 12th earl of Arundel (1512-1580), who spent most of his adult life in service to royalty, beginning with Henry VIII. Arundel was a sometime crypto-Catholic

works by the ancients such as the Western church fathers, Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. More recent works would have included humanist and historical writings, mostly in Latin. See Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright, *The English Library before 1700* (London: The Athlone Press, University of London, 1958), chaps. V and VI for descriptions of items commonly found in medieval and early modern libraries; chap. VIII is a discussion of the dispersal of monastic libraries after the Dissolution.

²¹⁶ Kathryn Barron, "Lumley, John, first Baron Lumley (c.1533–1609)." Kathryn Barron In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, May 2015. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17179> (accessed November 20, 2015).

who often allowed politics to determine the depth of his religious leanings, but he was a trusted nobleman in Henry VIII's court. As a reward for his assistance in her claim to the throne, Mary gave Arundel part if not most of Thomas Cranmer's extensive library after his execution in 1556. There is a strong possibility that Arundel also received part of Henry's library either via Cranmer's collection or through gifts by Henry himself. He was deeded the rights to Nonsuch Palace, the estate founded by Henry VIII, in 1556 also.

John Lumley was a far more outspoken Catholic than his father-in-law, and his outspokenness landed him in the Tower and elsewhere for nearly three years (1571-73) due to his part in the Ridolfi plot. He was named high steward of the University of Oxford in 1559 when Arundel became chancellor, and maintained a relationship with the university until his death, donating a number of books to the Bodleian library in 1599.²¹⁷ He was a dedicated collector of paintings and marble sculptures as well as books, and was generous to his friends, often giving them duplicates of books in his library in addition to allowing them access to his own handlist.²¹⁸

The library at Nonsuch, in keeping with the finest estate libraries, held a great variety of material (mostly in Latin) from the scholarly areas considered most important at the time, including Theology, History, Arts and Philosophy, Medicine, Cosmology and Geography, Law (Canon and Civil), and Music.²¹⁹ R. M. Wilson, in an essay entitled "The

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid; see also Sears Jayne and Francis R. Johnson, eds., *The Lumley Library: The Catalogue of 1609* (London: Published by the Trustees of the British Museum, 1956), pp. 7, 12-13; and Charles W. Warren, 1968, "Music at Nonesuch". *The Musical Quarterly* 54 (1). Oxford University Press: 47-57.

<http://www.jstor.org.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/stable/741082> (accessed November 30, 2015.), p. 56.

²¹⁹ Jayne and Johnson, eds., *The Lumley Library*, p. 10. Roberto Weiss, in his essay on "The Private Collector and the Revival of Greek Learning," stated that the aim of some private

Contents of the Medieval Library,” commented that “the sixteenth-century catalogues [...] show again a fair number of English works present, but the average fourteenth- or fifteenth-century library will rarely show anything in English, and what there is will almost certainly be devotional or didactic.”²²⁰ The 1609 catalogue of the Arundel/Lumley library contained relatively few items in English, including music: the only pieces in English were “A sett of 4 bookes in English, manuscript. Litanie. The firste, Arise o Lorde, 4 volumes [partbooks]” (the so-called Lumley Partbooks) and “A sett of 3 Bookes manuscript, the first in English, Alack my little finger, 9 volumes” [scribal error?], which has been lost.²²¹

Conspicuously absent from the catalogue are any sort of devotional books in English- primers, metrical psalters or the Book of Common Prayer. Given that this was partially Cranmer’s library, the omission seems suspect; however, it is entirely possible that Mary (or Arundel) might have destroyed any reformist literature belonging to Cranmer. It is also possible that devotional books were not kept in the library but rather in the owners’ personal quarters; or that the absence of these books gives us a window into the strong Catholic views of both Arundel and Lumley and their evident refusal to conform to Protestant practice; this may have had a direct influence on their staff as well.

The bulk of the print and manuscript music entries in the catalogue represents Continental composers and includes both secular and sacred works by Josquin, Willaert,

collectors was to “defend the Protestant religion” or to “assemble the necessary weapons for fighting successfully against heresy and paganism.” It would not be unreasonable to assume that Catholic collectors could have had the same goals in assembling their libraries. See Wormald and Wright, *The English Library before 1700*, p. 114, and Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, pp. 160-2.

²²⁰ R.M. Wilson, “The Contents of the Medieval Library,” in Wormald and Wright, *The English Library before 1700*, pp. 105-6.

²²¹ Jayne and Johnson, eds., *The Lumley Library*, p. 286. It must be noted that another catalogue of the library from 1596 has been lost, and it is therefore impossible to tell if the 1609 version includes the same or as many entries as the 1596.

Ruffo, Arcadelt, de Rore, among others.²²² This may be attributed to the fact that Arundel was well traveled and culturally aware, thereby encouraging his daughters Jane and Mary to attain a high level of education in many areas including music.²²³ Whether his interest in music collecting was due to time spent at Nonsuch when Henry VIII owned it or simply his own interest in the subject, Arundel devoted a great deal of time and money to building up an impressive collection of not only the above-mentioned music scores, but a large array of musical instruments; he also employed skilled musicians to provide his household with the finest entertainment.

At a time when household music was at a low ebb in England, the brilliance of the Henrician courts being a thing of the past and the golden age of the madrigal not yet begun, it was one of the few places where an Englishman could hear the latest continental music performed with something of the resources of continental courts. Indeed, in that rather gray period after the Reformation in England when the art of polyphony was officially held to be reactionary, if not absolutely illegal, Nonesuch remained a flourishing outpost of continental musical fashion manned by disciples of Roland de Lassus.²²⁴

Upon Arundel's death his son-in-law Lumley inherited a great debt; Nonsuch was sold after his death (due to lack of heirs) and most of the massive library, now three times larger than Arundel's, was absorbed into the Royal Library in the early 17th century at the directive of Henry, Prince of Wales.

Byrd addressed Lumley's friendship and generosity in his dedicatory:

[You are]... pre-eminent for your most ardent love towards all the daughters of the Muses and of Science, and for your extraordinary beneficence. As for myself, insignificant though I am, you hold me bound to you by a greater debt; you are wont to be so friendly and so very kind to me that the sweetness of your countenance and your words has perhaps brought me no small help in the pursuit of Music.²²⁵

²²² Ibid, pp. 284-86.

²²³ Warren, "Music at Nonesuch," pp. 48-9.

²²⁴ Ibid, p. 48.

²²⁵ Quoted in Brown, *Cantiones Sacrae II (1591)*, p. xvii.

It is apparent that Byrd valued all aspects of his relationship with John Lumley, but above all the musical collegiality. Byrd, however, was not the only composer to enjoy Lumley's patronage, and the close association with this family may indicate the religious leanings of another well-known musician, Thomas Tallis.

Tallis, Byrd and the link to Nonsuch

Thomas Tallis was the first English composer to have a recorded relationship with the Arundel/Lumley family.²²⁶ Tallis was likely a practicing Catholic throughout his life, albeit not an outspoken one. As a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal for more than forty years, he enjoyed the benefits that came with that position, possibly including worshipping outside the Chapel in the manner of his choice. Tallis biographer Paul Doe states:

A clerk who was also a composer thought of himself primarily as a craftsman in the service of the church, producing whatever was required of him [...] Such an attitude explains why it was quite possible for a man like Tallis, if he avoided controversy, to continue to serve quietly under any religious or political conditions . . ."²²⁷

As a composer who worked in all four 16th-century Tudor reigns, Tallis was constantly part of the pendulum swing of English sacred music, but the music of any given monarch's reign did not necessarily reflect the beliefs of its composers. Given in part that there are no extant books of Tallis' music for the Chapel Royal, it is difficult if not impossible to ascertain

²²⁶ Other composers with association to the Arundel household were Orlando di Lasso and Derick Gerarde, a Netherlandish composer of whom little is otherwise known. His works are found only in the Lumley library catalog. See Warren, "Music at Nonesuch," pp. 48, 50, 54; and John Milsom, "The Nonsuch Music Library," in Banks, Searle and Turner, *Sundry Sorts of Music Books: Essays on the British Library Collections presented to O. W. Neighbour on his 70th birthday* (London: The British Library, 1993), pp. 146-182.

²²⁷ Paul Doe, *Tallis*, In the *Oxford Studies of Composers* series (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 7-8.

his true religious allegiance.²²⁸ This has not prevented modern scholars from speculating upon his beliefs: Doe insists that Tallis' choice of motet texts was not intended to express any reflection of the English Catholic identity and that the texts were not set "with any such consciously emotive purpose,"²²⁹ but current lay clerk John Heighway (St George's, Windsor Castle) speculates that Tallis' setting of texts such as *In ieiunio et fletu* (with its depiction of priests between the porch and altar weeping for God to spare his chosen people) or the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* are suspect in their overtly Catholic references.²³⁰ It is difficult to pass off as coincidence the setting of certain texts that were circulating at a time when ill feeling toward Catholics was escalating.²³¹

Tallis' text choices, such as *O sacrum convivium* (a blatant Eucharistic text); the afore-mentioned *In ieiunio et fletu*; *Miserere nostri, Domine* (a canon whose only words are "have mercy on us, Lord"); and *Derelinquat impius* (from the Old Testament book of Isaiah 55:7, which in translation reads, "Leave rebel his ill-doing, sinner his guilty thoughts, and come back to the Lord, sure of his mercy, our God, so rich in pardon."), all of which are included in the collaborative 1575 collection *Cantiones, quae ab argvmento sacrae vocantur*, seemingly point to a musical commentary on the current religio-political situation as well as possibly providing inspiration for younger colleague Byrd in his 1589 and 1591 motet volumes. However, we must be careful in assuming anything about Tallis' religious position, as there are no contemporary documents that reveal his actual beliefs.

²²⁸ Paul Doe and David Allinson. "Tallis, Thomas." *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.* Oxford University Press, accessed December 4, 2015, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/27423>.

²²⁹ Doe, *Tallis*, p. 40.

²³⁰ Private conversation, June 2015.

²³¹ Dating Tallis' music is difficult, as there are no dates given on either print or manuscript copies, but Wulstan estimates that the Tallis motets referenced above were written in the Marian or (more likely) early Elizabethan periods. See Wulstan, *Tudor Music*, p. 305.

Paul Doe and David Allinson assert that Tallis may very well have been more of an active Catholic than previously thought, due to an item in wife Joan Tallis' will:

The potential significance of the first bequest in Joan Tallis's will ('to m^r Anthony Roper esquier one guilte bowle with the cover therunto belonginge in respect of his good favors shewed to my late husband and mee') has been persuasively argued by Bennett. He has shown that the beneficiary was almost certainly the grandson of the Catholic martyr Thomas More and member of one of Kent's most influential – and most notoriously recusant – families, Anthony Roper (c. 1535–1597). As Bennett has commented, 'The phrase "good favours" suggests that Roper and Tallis were linked in some sort of patron/client relationship' (p. 42), the possibilities including links at Canterbury and at the court. Bennett concluded that Tallis and the Ropers might have had a similar relationship to that which Byrd enjoyed with his patrons the Petres.²³²

This bequest is a circumstantial yet intriguing hint of Tallis' religious stance. If he and his wife were indeed crypto-Catholics, their opportunity for Catholic worship would have been limited to the homes of sympathetic patrons including the Arundels/Lumleys. The location of Nonsuch and its distance from London contributed to the freedom of its religious practice, and while there Tallis and other musicians could have freely practiced their beliefs while avoiding royal attention.²³³

As mentioned above, William Byrd also enjoyed the patronage of the Arundel/Lumley family. He was born, probably into the middle class (as his father Thomas appeared to have mercantile connections in London), toward the end of King Henry VIII's

²³² Doe and Allinson, "Tallis, Thomas."

²³³ Harley mentions that "Tallis' own position was probably of little political consequence [at the ascendance of Elizabeth], and appears to have been secure." His loyalty and obedience to three prior monarchs evidently rendered him above suspicion, which proves only that he was flexible enough to embrace, at least publicly, whichever religion happened to be currently the "proper" one. See John Harley, *Thomas Tallis* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2015), p. 145.

reign.²³⁴ There seems to be some disagreement among modern scholars as to when his Catholic radicalism took hold,²³⁵ as there is not a great deal of information on the first two decades of his life. He was possibly a chorister either in the Chapel Royal or at St Paul's with his brothers John and Simon and therefore was involved in church music from an early age.²³⁶ He may have continued on as an alto after his voice broke, or, more likely, turned to the position of organist (at Lincoln Cathedral in the early 1560s), and therefore would have experienced all of the reformatory changes in the late Henrician, Edwardian and Marian reigns. The question remains as to what pushed him to the devout Catholicism he displayed later in life during his tenure as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in Protestant Elizabeth's court.

Regardless of when Byrd became Catholic, at some point he was acquainted with patrons who shared his beliefs as well as taking an interest in his music. Scholars have debated whether Byrd actually was influenced in any way by the musical contents of Lumley's library. It seems (given Byrd's own words above) very possible that he had relatively free access to the library and, depending upon when he entered into a personal relationship with Lumley, to the musicians and composers who worked at Nonsuch.²³⁷

²³⁴ Craig Monson, "Byrd, William (1539x43–1623)." Craig Monson In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4267> (accessed November 20, 2015).

²³⁵ I use "radical" in the sense of "non-conforming."

²³⁶ There are multiple books and articles on Byrd's life and music, with probably the most comprehensive being Edmund Fellowes' *William Byrd* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936). Others include Kerry McCarthy's *Byrd* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Joseph Kerman's *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd* and the prefatory material found in the volumes of *The Byrd Edition*, Philip Brett, ed., to name but a few.

²³⁷ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, p. 47. The relationship between Lumley and Byrd is mentioned in other biographies of both men, including Fellowes, *William Byrd*, p. 74,

Tallis and Byrd were both Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal beginning in 1572, and although Lumley would have been in prison during this time it is not impossible that Tallis could have brought his younger colleague to Nonsuch, exposing Byrd to its music, musicians and Catholic political intrigue.²³⁸ There is no record of when Byrd's religious views became more radical (in fact, there is no record of him identifying as Catholic in his early life), however, he was released from his duties at Lincoln Cathedral in 1569 due to "certain matters of objection to the same by the said lords of the chapter," raising the question of whether his beliefs had come into conflict with those of the cathedral's.²³⁹

As Owen Rees comments in an article on the sources of Byrd's motets, a composer of Byrd's talents who was also an avowed and unapologetic Catholic must have been highly appealing to Arundel and his family.²⁴⁰ That appeal was likely mutual: Byrd would have been exposed to Continental music, including the fashionable non-liturgical work now identified as the "psalm-motet" that was in high favor in Europe, at Nonsuch on a level unparalleled in the rest of England.²⁴¹

Given the intellectual atmosphere at Nonsuch, it is necessary to look beyond the musical items in Lumley's library for Byrd's possible compositional inspiration. It may be

Monson, "Byrd, William (1539x43-1623)," and Barron, "Lumley, John, first Baron Lumley (c.1533-1609)."

²³⁸ Tallis, as mentioned above, enjoyed the patronage of Lord Arundel, and according to anecdote the premiere of his grand 40-part motet *Spem in alium* took place at Nonsuch, possibly on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's 40th birthday. See Doe and Allinson, "Tallis, Thomas;" and John Milsom, "Tallis, Thomas (c.1505-1585)." John Milsom In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26954> (accessed December 4, 2015)

²³⁹ Monson, "Byrd, William (1539x43-1623)."

²⁴⁰ Owen Rees, "The English background to Byrd's motets: textual and stylistic models for *Infelix ego*," in *Byrd Studies*, Alan Brown and Richard Turbet, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 24-5.

²⁴¹ For more on the psalm-motet, see Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, p. 29.

naïve to assume that an educated composer like Byrd or Tallis would have been interested solely in the musical volumes and scores found in their patron's library; perhaps they would have also drawn upon books from the Philosophy and Theology sections for inspiration in their sacred compositions. The choice of controversial texts set as motets in mid-late 16th century manuscript collections indicates a strong biblical, philosophical and theological knowledge on the part of the composers and their patrons, and may therefore account for the inclusion of a Savonarolan text such as *Infelix ego* into Byrd's music, both in print and manuscript. Byrd may also have perceived Lumley as somewhat of a kindred spirit, with access to others of the same beliefs- indeed, by 1581 Byrd and his family had moved out of London to Harlington, an area where there were several known recusant households.²⁴²

Byrd and the Jesuits

Besides patronal influence, Byrd's motets may reflect inspiration from the efforts of Jesuit missionaries working to reestablish Catholicism in England. Fr William Weston gave the following description of a meeting of gentlemen at a country estate with the purpose of welcoming two Jesuit priests, Fr Robert Southwell and Fr Henry Garnet. Philip Caraman assumes that this meeting was:

[...] the beginning of a lifelong friendship between Byrd and Garnet, himself a keen musician, with a fine singing voice; probably also it gave the poet Southwell an opportunity of making himself familiar with the new forms of English verse then current only in manuscripts [this in reference to the poems found in Byrd's *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs of Piety*].²⁴³

²⁴² Fellowes, *William Byrd*, p. 40.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 33.

Fr Weston's recollection of the meeting was an interesting reflection on Byrd's professional and personal status at the time:

Mr Byrd, the very famous musician and organist, was among the company. Earlier he had been attached to the Queen's chapel, where he gained a great reputation: he had sacrificed everything for the faith—his position, the court, and all those aspirations common to men who seek preferment in royal circles as means of improving their fortunes.²⁴⁴

If Fr Weston was accurate in his recollection of this event, there are several conclusions to be drawn: firstly, William Byrd was evidently an active member of the Catholic recusant community outside of London; secondly, he was sympathetic to the missionary efforts of the Jesuit and seminary priests; thirdly, his Catholic faith was important enough to him (and he was confident in his connections at Court) to be unafraid of government retribution.

Much has been made of Byrd's Catholicism and recusancy; scholars such as Edmund Fellowes, Joseph Kerman and Philip Brett have weighed in on the subject, each attaching varying degrees of importance to it. But Byrd's adherence to Catholicism during a time of great religious upheaval is reflective of a much larger English Catholic reformist viewpoint that focused largely on educational propaganda to both regain and retain its parishioners. In extant manuscript collections, we see that it is primarily Byrd's Latin works (along with Tallis') that make up much of the material found in such sixteenth-century manuscripts as MS Tenbury 1486 (Other composers such as William Mundy and Robert White are represented as well, but their contributions are fewer, probably because they simply did not have the output of the more prolific Tallis and Byrd.),²⁴⁵ but multiple composers' works

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ My examination of MS Tenbury 1486 at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, also included MS Tenbury 1474, which is a photocopy of the altus partbook of the same manuscript.

are represented in these manuscripts and their music was in part being utilized to embrace and continue the work of the traditional [Roman] Catholic Church.

As we have seen in the above example of the household at Nonsuch, there is evidentiary support for the idea that many of the largest estates had self-supporting choirs and other ensembles of trained musicians; some of these musicians came from other countries. Price explains how many landowners (beginning in the Henrician period) encouraged musical literacy for their children, often hiring former Court or monastic musicians to teach them; the largest households employed their own resident musicians. This practice appears to have continued throughout the 16th century.²⁴⁶

Price is willing to state that “there is considerable surviving evidence to show the involvement of various Elizabethan and Jacobean musicians in secret activities associated with Roman Catholicism” and that “an important section of ‘the quality,’ even that of the Court” was actively practicing Catholic rituals in secret meetings, generally with limited retribution.²⁴⁷ Contemporary reports support the fact that there were many more active Catholics than the Elizabethan government was able to control. The Jesuit Fr Henry Garnet reported:

This last week there was the cruellest search at London in the night that ever was, and some days before and after the Court was guarded and the gates of London, and rumours spread abroad that the Jesuits and the King of Scots were about to kill the Queen. One Justice said that for his part he had searched four hundred homes . . . Notwithstanding all our troubles we sing Mass.²⁴⁸

A revealing government document disclosed this information: “There are in many parts divers notorious recusants not yet reformed, whose presumption (they being of the latter

²⁴⁶ Price, *Patrons and Musicians*, pp. 11-19.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 156-7.

²⁴⁸ Quoted in Caraman, ed., *The Other Face*, pp. 211-12.

sort) draweth the inferior sort into no small boldness.”²⁴⁹The Garnet quote and government document represent but a small portion of contemporary commentary on the recusant population in England. Granted, the numbers may have been somewhat inflated as benefited the political agendas of both factions, but we can derive from these quotes that there was an active Catholic community thriving in the face of persecution. As was the case in Europe, music was a vital part of traditional English Catholic worship and it is plausible that this continued with the recusants of the late 16th century, giving credence to the idea that William Byrd and his contemporaries were writing Latin music with at least the partial intention of providing it for recusant worship.

Modern scholarship is divided on the impetus behind Byrd’s Latin music, with Edmund Fellowes in the 1930s firmly stating that, due to the lack of persecution directly suffered, Byrd was only writing Latin music for its “beauty and sincerity” (although, in his chapter on the Gradualia he reluctantly admits that this set of music was for “those who adhered to the old Catholic traditions of the Church”);²⁵⁰ 50 years later Brett, Monson and Kerman willingly acknowledged Byrd’s recusancy and its possible impact on the Catholic cause.²⁵¹ All of these scholars in their analyses of Byrd’s motets tend to focus either on recognition of persecution or his purely artistic motivation. This project examines the

²⁴⁹ From *The State Civil and Moral of the County of Lancaster*, as quoted in Caraman, ed., *The Other Face*, p. 283.

²⁵⁰ Fellowes, *William Byrd*, pp. 48, 84.

²⁵¹ Multiple examples include Kerman, *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd*; Philip Brett’s *William Byrd and His Contemporaries: Essays and a Monograph* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), which was edited by Kerman and published after Brett’s death, and Monson, “Byrd, William.”

music in a more practical light, considering how it might have functioned in the secret assemblies for which it was possibly written.²⁵²

Common manuscript collection texts and their functions

To begin, it is valuable to see which motets were common to circulating manuscripts in Elizabethan England. Byrd's *Infelix ego* (a setting of the Savonarolan meditation on Psalm 50 [51]) and *Deus, venerunt gentes* (a setting of Psalm 78 [79]) are examples of politically driven motets found in these collections, with *Infelix ego* more commonly seen than *Deus, venerunt gentes*. Table 2 (p. 135) is a representation of motet texts, which, in light of their applicability to the Catholic cause, seem controversial in meaning and practice. Absent from this group are any texts in common usage, such as liturgical texts, Advent/Christmas/Easter texts, Jesus antiphon texts, and commonly set Psalms (with the exception of Psalm 50, *Miserere mei, Deus*, due to its association with *Infelix ego*). All of these texts may have served in an educational capacity for Catholics unused to liturgical practice; they are not, however, of use here. Also absent from this list are the Marian texts, which are controversial in their own right due to Protestant apathy towards Mary's biblical role; they also deserve more attention than can be allotted in this project.

²⁵² Modern scholars such as Joseph Kerman, Owen Rees and Philip Brett have written extensively on Byrd's motets, with detailed musical analyses; the focus of this study, while it recognizes and salutes their work, is to delve deeper into the triangular relationship of text, music and application and to offer a fresh look at this music beyond scholarship that is 20 years old or more.

Derived from their subject matter, the controversial aspects of the texts listed below fall into the following categories:

- Penitential texts, such as *Miserere mei, Deus* and the related *Infelix ego*, which may have been especially useful for those who had willingly or unwillingly conformed to Protestantism but now wished to return to Catholicism.
- Eucharistic texts, such as *O sacrum convivium*, which support the contested issue of the Blessed Sacrament and transubstantiation.
- Tribulation texts, such as *Ne irascaris*, which describe the destruction of Jerusalem and/or its occupation by the Babylonians or Egyptians (often used by English Catholics as a metaphor for their own situation).
- Persecution texts, such as *Deus, venerunt gentes*, which may describe either personal or communal persecution and may reflect upon the torture and execution of English Catholics during Elizabeth's reign.

These texts, as found in manuscript collections, represent a variety of composers, with heavy emphasis on the settings of Tallis and Byrd. One particularly interesting text is *Exurge christe*, which is not of biblical origin, but rather a prayer "for the confounding of schismatics and the revival of 'apostolic truth'".²⁵³ It is included here due to its unusually pertinent topic and as an illustration of the possible Catholic sympathies of composer William Mundy, whose English verse anthem setting of the Savonarolan *Infelix ego* is discussed in Chapter Six.

²⁵³ Mateer, ed. *The Gyffard Partbooks I*, p. 150.

COPYISTS AND COLLECTIONS*	DOW (Oxford, Christ Church, Mus. 984-988)	GYFFARD (GB-Lbl Add. MSS 17802-5)	BALDWIN (Oxford, Christ Church, Mus. 979-983)***	BALDWIN (Lbl R.M. 24.d.2: "Baldwin's Commonplace Book")***	SADLER (Tenbury MS 1486)	SADLER (Mus.Sch. E.423)
TEXTS:						
Penitential <i>Infelix ego</i> <i>Miserere mei deus</i>	X		X	X	X X	X
Eucharistic <i>O sacrum convivium</i> <i>O salutaris hostia</i>	X X	X	X		X	X
Tribulation Lamentations texts <i>Ne irascaris</i> <i>In ieiunio</i> <i>Tribulaciones</i>	X X X		X ² X X X	X X ²	X X	X ² X
Persecution <i>Why do I use my paper, ink and pen?</i> <i>Deus, deus venerunt gentes</i>	X X		X		X	X
Other <i>Exurge, Christe Adolescentulus sum ego**</i>		X	X	X		

Table 2. Manuscript collection texts with possible application for the recusant community

*The collections here were examined for this project but many others are extant: for example, multiple manuscripts were collected by Edward Paston (another Catholic patron of Byrd), four of which include *Infelix ego*.

**A setting of vs. 141 in Psalm 118 [119] by Mundy and others, which translates as "Still despised and disinherited, I do not forget thy charge."

***Includes a 1591 setting by the composer Giles of the Savonarolan prison exposition (unfinished) of Ps. 30 [31], *In te, Domine, speravi* ("In you, Lord, there is hope")

Some texts may have supported the increasingly popular glorification of martyrdom.

Cardinal William Allen (1532-1594) said:

Bloud so yelded [sic] maketh the forciblest meane to procure mercie that can be. Euery time that you confesse Christes name, euery wrinche of any ioynt for it, euery opprobrious scoffe and scorne giuen by the popular, when you be caried in the sacred vestiments through the streates . . . euery vilany and sacrilege done to your Priestod, euery of your sores, sorowes and sighes, euery of your wantes and necessities, make a stronger intercession for our Countrie and afflicted church, then any prayers lightly in the world.²⁵⁴

Allen's words held great authority, and if his sentiments were circulated throughout the English community, their influence might have prompted Catholic writers and composers to use [especially] persecution texts as a means of generating enthusiasm for martyrdom.

Deus, venerunt gentes offers an example of this idea, as it reflects the Elizabethan Catholic perception of communal persecution while providing commentary on the martyrdom of the Jesuit Fr Edmund Campion and his companions in 1581.²⁵⁵ Psalm 78 [79] contains 13 verses, only the first four of which were set in the Byrd motet. Robert Alter summarizes the psalm thusly:

This entire psalm, a cry of anguish over the destruction of Jerusalem and the defilement of the temple, vividly testifies to the use of the psalm form as a poetic vehicle not only for set liturgical occasions but also for a strong response to historical events.²⁵⁶

For the recusants, the destruction of Jerusalem depicted in the psalm would have been familiar as both a biblical (Old Testament) reference and as a mirror of their own circumstance- a "strong response to historical events" both old and new. By setting only the first four verses, Byrd emphasized the graphic reality of the situation surrounding his

²⁵⁴ Quoted in Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism*, p. 267.

²⁵⁵ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, pp. 43-4. Both David Wulstan and Joseph Kerman argued that the influence of Byrd's Jesuit friends was a strong factor in his choice of the motet as a political vehicle. See Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, pp. 45-6; and Wulstan, *Tudor Music*, p. 309.

²⁵⁶ Alter, *The Book of Psalms*, p. 281.

fellow recusants (and in particular the persecution of Jesuit priests) while dodging any possibility of the community's responsibility for its situation, as is addressed in verses 5 and 8:

5 How long, O LORD, will You rage forever, Your fury burn like fire?

8 Do not call to mind against us our forebears' crimes. Quickly, may Your mercies overtake us, For we have sunk very low.²⁵⁷

Byrd's textual choice changes the tone of the psalm, at least in this setting, from penitential to persecutory and might have created solidarity for the recusants through a once commonly known text used in the Ferial Office of the Dead, reinforcing Catholic ritual.

The first four verses of the psalm describe the horrors of the Israelites subjected to torture and death at the hands of their Babylonian captors:

1. Deus, Deus venerunt gentes in hereditatem tuam;
(O God, the heathen [Gentiles] are come into thy inheritance;)

polluerunt templum sanctum tuum.
(they have polluted thy holy temple [thy sanctuary].)

Posuerunt Hierusalem in pomorum custodiam.
they have left Jerusalem in ruins [made Jerusalem a heap of stones].)

2. Posuerunt morticina servorum tuorum. Escas volatilibus cœli,
(They have made the carcasses of thy servants into food for the fowls of the air,)

carnes sanctorum tuorum, bestiis terræ.
(the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the land.)

3. Effuderunt sanguinem ipsorum tanquam aquam in circuitu Hierusalem,
(Blood has flowed like water round about Jerusalem,)

et non erat, qui sepeliret.
(and there was none to bury them.)

²⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 282.

4. *Facti sumus opprobrium vicinis nostris;*
(We are become a reproach to our neighbors;)

subsannatio et illusio his qui in circuitu nostro sunt.
(a scorn and a mock to them that are round about us.)

The *prima pars* sets the scene for the impending horrors; it is in the *secunda pars* where there may be an association with the execution of Fr. Edmund Campion and his companions. Byrd begins this section with a quietly mournful statement (in the *tenor* and *medius* voices) on the text “*Posuerunt morticina servorum tuorum escas volatilibus cœli*” (they have made the carcasses of thy servants meat for the birds of heaven) but breaks the next text segment, “*carnes sanctorum tuorum bestiis terrae*” (the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the land) in half, with cropped statements of each half in increasing rapidity and with shorter note durations (fig. 21):

100

-ræ, car - nes san - cto - rum tu - o - rum, be -
 san - cto - rum tu - o - rum, be - sti - is ter - - ræ,
 car - nes san - cto - rum tu - o - - -
 - ræ, car - nes san - cto - rum tu - o -
 - cto - rum tu - o - rum be - sti - is

- sti - is ter - - - - ræ, be - sti - is ter - ræ, be - sti - is
 car - nes san - cto - rum tu - o - -
 - rum be - sti - is ter - - - - ræ, ter - - -
 - rum, be - sti - is ter - - - -
 ter - - - ræ, car - nes san - cto -

110

ter - ræ, be - sti - is ter - ræ, ter - ræ, be -
 - rum, be - sti - is ter - ræ, be - sti - is ter - -
 - ræ, be - sti - is ter - - - - ræ, be - sti - is ter - - - -
 - ræ, ter - ræ, be - sti - is ter - - - - ræ, [ter -
 - rum tu - o - rum, be - sti - is ter -

Fig. 21. "Carnes sanctorum tuorum bestiis terræ" from *Deus, venerunt gentes*.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁸ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpl.org/wiki/images/c/c3/BYRD-DEU.pdf>.

Kerman's observation that "the quartered bodies of Campion and his companions were nailed to a gate on Tyburn Hill, from which members were stolen by the faithful to be preserved as holy relics"²⁵⁹ gives credence to the implication that Byrd's focus on this portion of the *Deus, venerunt gentes* text might have been a reference to the martyrdom of the Jesuit priests.

Infelix ego, primarily a penitential text, may also have been selected by Byrd to reflect admiration of martyrs due to its persecutory overtones.²⁶⁰ The opening segment of Savonarola's meditation shows the anguish of its author after confessing to "heretical acts," over which he admits feeling of guilt:

I am unhappy and stripped of all help, for I have sinned against heaven and earth!
Where shall I go? Where shall I turn? To whom shall I flee? Who will take pity on me? I dare not raise my eyes to heaven, for I have sinned seriously against it.²⁶¹

While such a penitential text may not have been as communally resonant as *Deus, venerunt gentes*, part of its appeal could lie in Savonarola's martyrdom. It is debatable whether late 16th-century English Catholics would have known much about Savonarola's life, but Byrd might have read works about and/or by Savonarola in a library such as John Lumley's. Additionally, he may have seen the print copy of Josquin's *Miserere mei, Deus* (supposedly in honor of Savonarola) that resided in the Lumley library as well as several Continental motets of Savonarolan influence that may have also been part of Lumley's music collection.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, pp. 43-44.

²⁶⁰ *Infelix ego* and its English settings are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six.

²⁶¹ John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., ed., *Prison Meditations*, p. 31.

²⁶² The manuscript collection now known as the Newberry-Oscott partbooks may have been an item in the Lumley library, according to scholar H. Colin Slim. These partbooks and their Savonarolan influence are discussed in Chapter Six.

It may have been Josquin's work, with its Savonarola-inspired reiteration of the phrase "Miserere mei, Deus," that influenced Byrd to set only the opening segment of *Infelix ego*- he (Byrd) utilized text-repetition throughout the piece, more so than other English composers of the time. Byrd's scoring for six voices and the grouping of voices for dramatic effect somewhat echoed the Lasso and Willaert settings, but as this was a fairly common technique, it is difficult to say whether Byrd found inspiration in Continental settings of the text.

Both the 1589 and 1591 volumes of Byrd's motet collections known as the *Sacrae Cantiones* contain texts of personal and communal persecution. As Joseph Kerman explained,

The first group, of which we have already seen examples in the 1575 *Cantiones*, is the more homogeneous and the more conventional. It comprises expressions of personal penitence, faith and supplication. With varying shades and degrees of emphasis, texts of this group balance professions of the guilt and distress of the speaker, acknowledgements of the consolations to be derived from God's Grace, and direct appeals to the same. [...] Many of them sound as though they are to be spoken at the point of death [...]. Four other texts, united only in their common resumption of references to the Babylonian captivity or some other great communal affliction, are Byrd's most startlingly individual.²⁶³

As a penitential text, *Infelix ego* contains all of the elements found in Kerman's evaluation, with one striking difference: this motet ends on a hopeful note, with the persecuted one asking for mercy and recognizing that "God alone then is my refuge (*Solus igitur Deus refugium meum*)." This indicates a dual function of the meditation and its accompanying psalm: recognition of persecution as well as use of the psalm text to request mercy and deliverance.

Catholic composers' controversial texts, particularly those referencing persecution, may have served the English Catholic community in several ways, including reeducation or

²⁶³ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, pp. 39; 41-2.

reintroduction of basic Catholic tenets; identification with other persecuted communities, especially those in the Old Testament; and recognition and admiration of martyrs and martyrdom, as promoted by church leaders such as Cardinal Allen.

In contrast, the metrical psalter versions of these texts seem somewhat neutralized, although that may be due to the rhyming and singsong meter or our modern perception of certain words used. Persecution of Protestants took place earlier in the century, during the Henrician and Marian eras, and while the execution methods used may have been as gruesome as those for Elizabethan Catholics, during the Marian reign many staunch Protestants fled to Europe rather than face her wrath. As discussed in Chapter Three, it was during Mary's reign and after that the metrical psalters came into their own and therefore it is quite possible that English Protestants were not as focused on elements of personal or communal persecution as their Catholic counterparts; additionally, there was not the admiration for martyrdom found in the Catholic community.

To illustrate, we can compare two versions of Psalm 78 [79] in parallel, on the left the translation from the Latin found in Byrd's *Deus, venerunt gentes* and, on the right, John Hopkins' metrical version of the 1562 psalter:

Deus, venerunt gentes

1. O God, the heathen [Gentiles] are come into thy inheritance;
they have polluted thy holy temple [thy sanctuary].
they have left Jerusalem in ruins [made Jerusalem a heap of stones].
2. They have made the carcasses of thy servants into food
for the fowls of the air,
the flesh of thy saints for the beasts of the land.
3. Blood has flowed like water round about Jerusalem,
and there was none to bury them.
4. We are become a reproach to our neighbors;
a scorn and a mock to them that are round about us.

1562 metrical version

1 O Lorde the Gentils doo inuade,
Thyne herytage to spoyle,
Jerusalem an heape is made,
thy temple the [they] defoyle [defile].
2 The bodies of thy sainctes most dere,
abrode to birdes they cast:
The fleshe of them that doo thee feare,
the beastes deuoure and wast [waste].
3 Their bloud throughout Ierusalem,
as water spilt they haue;
So that there is not one of them,
to lay their dead in graue.
4 Thus are wee made a laughing stock,
almost the world throughout, the enemies
at vs iest and mock,
which dwell our coasts about.

It would be presumptuous to assume that the creators and editors of the metrical psalters did not take this text seriously; in fact, it must have been quite difficult to put a text such as this in meter while keeping some semblance of its gravity. The metrical version does not have quite the same impact as the Latin, however, due perhaps to the idea that all 150 psalms were equally important or (more likely) to the emphasis on ease of learning.

The motets and metrical psalter settings can also be compared in light of practical performance considerations, such as the variety and availability of musicians at any given meeting. Both functioned as components of private worship/performance, and both were constructed in a way that allowed for flexibility of performance.²⁶⁴ This can be seen in the *prima pars* of *Infelix ego*, where in the line, “Ad cœlum levare oculos non audeo (to heaven I

²⁶⁴ For more on performance practice in private settings, see Wulstan, *Tudor Music*, chap. 4: “Private Musick”, especially pp. 90-1.

dare not raise my eyes),” the words “non audeo” are repeated multiple times, occasionally without text underlay (the modern edition indicates these instances by the use of italics). It is tantalizing to consider that these repetitive segments may have offered opportunities to insert instruments in place of the voices, although modern scholarship recognizes this as common practice in music of the time, likely as a form of scribal/printer shorthand. (fig. 22):

Quis me - i mi - se - re - - bi - tur?
 -re - bi - tur, quis me - i mi - se - re - - bi -
 -se - re - bi - tur, quis me - i mi - se - re - - bi - tur?
 -tur, mi - se - re - bi - tur, quis... me - i mi - se - re - bi -
 Quis me - i mi - se - re - bi -
 -re - bi - tur, quis... me - i mi - se - re - - - bi -

non au - de - o, ad coe - lum le - va - re
 au - de - o, ad coe - lum le - va - re, ad coe -
 le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o, non au - de - o,
 non au - de - o, non au - de - o, le - va - re o - cu - los, ad
 o - cu - los non au - de - o, ad coe - lum le - va - re o - cu -
 coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o, non au - de - o,

Ad coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o,
 -tur? non
 Ad coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o,
 -tur? Ad coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los
 -tur? Ad coe - lum le - va - re...
 -tur? Ad

o - cu - los non au - de - o,
 -lum le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o, non
 ad coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o, non
 coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los, non au - de - o, non au - de - o, non
 -los non au - de - o, non au - de - o,
 ad coe - lum le - va - re o - cu - los non au - de - o,

Fig. 22. Text repetition in *Infelix ego*.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁵ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpd.org/wiki/images/7/76/BYRD-INF.pdf>.

Kerman explained the motivic idea of this section by saying:

Byrd devised a rapid and original double point in which the 'non audeo' motive forms itself (after one neat augmentation) into a series of sighing antiphonal echoes. This makes for a very affecting setting of these words, though it is not altogether easy to say why.²⁶⁶

If we are willing to accept that motets such as *Infelix ego* may have had practical application and usage beyond the purely artistic, it is easier to assign meaning to Byrd's technique here- in its beautiful and masterful execution, it offers opportunity for varied performance while simultaneously reiterating and reinforcing the penitential aspect of the text.

A similar motivic device occurs in *Deus, venerunt gentes, quarta pars*: as in "non audeo", the text fragment "et illusio" (from the phrase "subsannatio et illusio his [a scorn and a mock to them]"), is set with seemingly excessive text repetition that could lend itself to substitution of instruments (fig. 23):

²⁶⁶ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, p. 179.

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sub - san - na - ti - o et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o

-stris, et il - lu - si - o

-stris, sub - san - na - ti - o et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o

-stris,

-stris,

his,

his, sub - san - na - ti - o et il - lu - si - o his, et il - lu - si - o

his,

sub - san - na - ti - o et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o

sub - san - na - ti - o et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o, et il - lu - si - o

Fig. 23. Text repetition in *Deus, venerunt gentes*.²⁶⁷

Again, performers of the motet had possible instrumentation options; here, however, the rapid fire reiteration of “et illusio” serves both as an allusion to persecution and a rhythmic representation of a mocking, jeering crowd. Kerman described the “highly personal use” of such texts as not uncommon on the Continent but unknown in England before Byrd.²⁶⁸ Indeed, we have seen in the Chapter Three how the Protestants treated this text in the metrical psalter, assigning it to a decidedly dance-like tune from another psalm (although

²⁶⁷ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpdl.org/wiki/images/c/c3/BYRD-DEU.pdf>.

²⁶⁸ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, p. 45.

later to the tune for the Lamentations) that is incongruous with the graphic nature of the text and its story. Byrd, on the other hand, embraced the horrific words in his setting.

However, the psalters also offered a wide variety of “performance” options, in the limited range and simplicity of the tunes/settings as well as their accessibility to all levels of musical ability; this was in direct opposition to the motets, which required more accomplished musicians to sing or play them. There is little if any text repetition in the psalters, however, which is not unusual when considering that users of the metrical psalters were trying to learn and remember entire psalms, not just selected portions. Ironically, the instruments of personal devotion so prized by the Church of England seem less personal and more generic in their style than the Latin motets, but as the psalters came into prominence during times of Protestant majority, one would not expect to see emphasis placed on persecution or other issues pertinent to an oppressed community.

Comparing the motets and metricized psalms in their musical structure and design in order to perceive them as implements of (re)indoctrination or (re)education, allows us a different glimpse into their possible Catholic or Protestant function. To do so, let us look again at *Deus, venerunt gentes* and *Infelix ego*.

Unlike *Infelix ego*, which might very well hail from an earlier period in Byrd’s compositional life and therefore reflect the practice of predecessors like Tallis, *Deus, venerunt gentes* is thickly textured throughout, with few of the two- or three-voice sectional entrances common to *Infelix ego*. Also differing from *Infelix ego* is the setting for five voices, rather than six.²⁶⁹ Each section of *Deus* corresponds to one verse of the psalm, and while

²⁶⁹ The 1589 *Sacrae Cantiones* contained only 5-voice motets, whereas the 1591 edition contained motets for both five and six voices. See Brown, ed., *Cantiones Sacrae II (1591)*, p. v.

the *secunda* and *tertia pars* both open with reduced forces, the other voices quickly enter and intensify the musical depiction of the grisly text. Both of these are in stark opposition to the metrical psalm tunes and settings, as most metrical psalter editions featured monophonic tunes only. This begs an interesting performance practice question, however: in Chapter Three we learned that the monophonic tunes of the metrical psalters lent themselves well to both private devotion and congregational singing, but that they could also have been faburdened or otherwise improvised upon, presumably by both voices and instruments. The Latin motets, however, while presenting options for flexibility in voicing, do not seem to offer the same options for improvisation. Neither *Infelix ego* nor *Deus, venerunt gentes* are constructed on *cantus fermi*, although perhaps the tenor could be extracted from various sections and improvised upon. This would leave the performers (and listeners) with quite a different piece than the one Byrd envisioned. It also would destroy the vivid imagery created by Byrd's treatment of the texts.

As an example, we can turn again to *Deus, venerunt gentes*. Some of the most illustrative moments in the motet occur in the *tertia* and *quarta pars*, where the words "in circuitu" are set to circular melismatic patterns that begin in one or two voices and quickly escalate into rapidly occurring repetitive entrances that deftly call to mind blood flowing like water (*tertia pars*) or the chaos of invasion (those that are "round about us" in the *quarta pars*):

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a Latin text. The first system begins at measure 240, marked with a box containing the number '240'. It features five staves: a vocal line (Soprano) with lyrics '-lu-si-o... his', a vocal line (Alto) with 'qui in cir-cu - i - tu no - - - - stro', a vocal line (Tenor) with '-o... his qui', a vocal line (Bass) with 'et il-lu - si - o... his qui in cir - cu - i - tu no - stro sunt', and a lute line with 'his qui in cir-cu - - i - tu no - - - - stro'. The second system continues the text with lyrics: 'qui in cir-cu - i - tu, qui in cir-cu - i - tu no - - -', 'sunt, no - stro sunt, _____', 'in cir-cu - - i - tu no - - stro sunt, no - - stro sunt,', 'qui in cir-cu - - i - tu no - - stro _____', and 'sunt, no - stro sunt, qui in cir - cu - i - -'.

Fig. 24. "in circuitu," *Deus, venerunt gentes, quarta pars.*²⁷⁰

In *Infelix ego*, Byrd emphasized text in a different manner, using homophonic statements and textural variations, as in the *tertia pars* at the initial statement of "Miserere mei (have mercy on me)." In this example, even though the first "Miserere mei" is nearly fully homophonic, there is still a slight bit of ornamentation in the tenor part on "mei." This is directly followed by another statement of "Miserere mei" which begins in the sextus part and is immediately echoed by the remainder of the choir. Here we have the full phrase, including the word "Deus," which has the contratenor and tenor singing a melisma in stepwise motion, a sixth apart, to emphasize the name of God.

²⁷⁰ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpd.org/wiki/images/c/c3/BYRD-DEU.pdf>.

In contrast to the Catholic motets, there is no text painting to be found in Thomas East's metrical settings of Psalms 51 and 79. This is not unexpected, as these settings were based on popular music and their educational and indoctrinating value lay in learning and memorizing scriptures rather than relating these texts to personal experience. Songs meant for congregational use needed to be simple and easily sung, not necessarily emotive. It is important to note that the simplicity of the metrical psalters was not a commentary on or reaction to the lack of general musical ability but instead represented replacing the old (and suspect) irrelevant polyphony with newer, more attractive music for worship that quickly and effectively brought parishioners into the new state religion.

Extant 16th-century English manuscripts of Latin motets give us little if any information about the function of this music and whether it was indeed a vital part of underground worship. However, the existence of the Catholic patronage of composers like Byrd and Tallis, the possible opportunities for composers' use of patrons' libraries and the influence of Jesuit missionaries may link these manuscript collections to Catholic ritual practiced in the homes of landed gentry willing to harbor priests.

The texts found in these collections reflect elements of penitence, persecution, tribulation, martyrdom, and Eucharistic concepts such as transubstantiation that were the cornerstone of Catholic faith and beliefs. Such texts might have served to aid in the Jesuit effort to reestablish Catholicism as the primary religion in England, with music as a vehicle in which to present them in a traditional and accepted manner.

William Byrd's motets relied upon vivid musical images to describe and illustrate scriptural stories of oppression and persecution, bringing to life historical events that

seemed to echo the current English Catholic environment. These same psalm texts, in Protestant metrical form, seem somewhat flat in comparison to Byrd's deft treatment, but the simplicity and repetition of meter and music in the metrical psalters had its own function as educational propaganda designed to facilitate learning and memorization of the psalms in private devotion while also fostering congregational singing in the services of the Church of England.

One text common to many of the manuscript collections was *Infelix ego*, the exposition on Psalm 50 [51] by Fr Girolamo Savonarola that was set by Byrd. This text (featured in English primers in the first half of the century), and its settings- both Catholic and Protestant- form the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Six

Fr Girolamo Savonarola and Elizabethan Sacred Music

God come I all sade & sorowfull for y[o]u only art my hope, and thou art only the toure (tower) of my defence. Byt what shall I saye vnto ye, sythe (since) I dare nat lifte vp myne eyes, I wyl poure out the wordes of sorowe, I wyl hertely beseche the for mercy and wyl saye. . **Have mercy vpon me (oh God) accordyng to thy great mercy.**²⁷¹

-Fr Girolamo Savonarola, 1498

Few figures in the late medieval Church were as controversial as the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola. In the short period of time from August 1489, when he gave his sermon on the Apocalypse (based on visions he had received earlier that summer) to an enormous crowd in Florence,²⁷² until his death by execution on May 23, 1498 he functioned as a moral compass and as political and spiritual advisor to the city of Florence; a prophet; a city reformer who also advocated for church reform; and finally an excommunicated pariah whose extreme viewpoints on every issue, religious or civic, alienated the very people who had recently venerated him as nearly a god.

Many of his sermons and other writings such as *Predica della Rinnovazione* (Renovation sermon), 1495; *Compendium Revelationum*, 1496; *The Triumph of the Cross* (various titles in Latin and Italian), undated; and sermons on the book of Job and various Psalms were published during his lifetime, and were hugely popular. None of them, however, would have the extended afterlife of the so-called prison meditations on Psalms 50 [51] (*Miserere mei, Deus*) and 30 [31] (*In te, Domine, speravi*).

²⁷¹ Girolamo Savonarola, *An exposycyon after the maner of a cōtemplacyon vpon the li. Psalme/called Miserere mei De⁹/Whiche Hierom of Ferrarye made at the latter ende of hys dayes*, Thomas Cranmer's *Missal 1538* (Imprinted by me Nicolas le Roux, M. D. xxxviii.), A. r, v.

²⁷² Villari, *Life and Times*, vol. 1, p. 91.

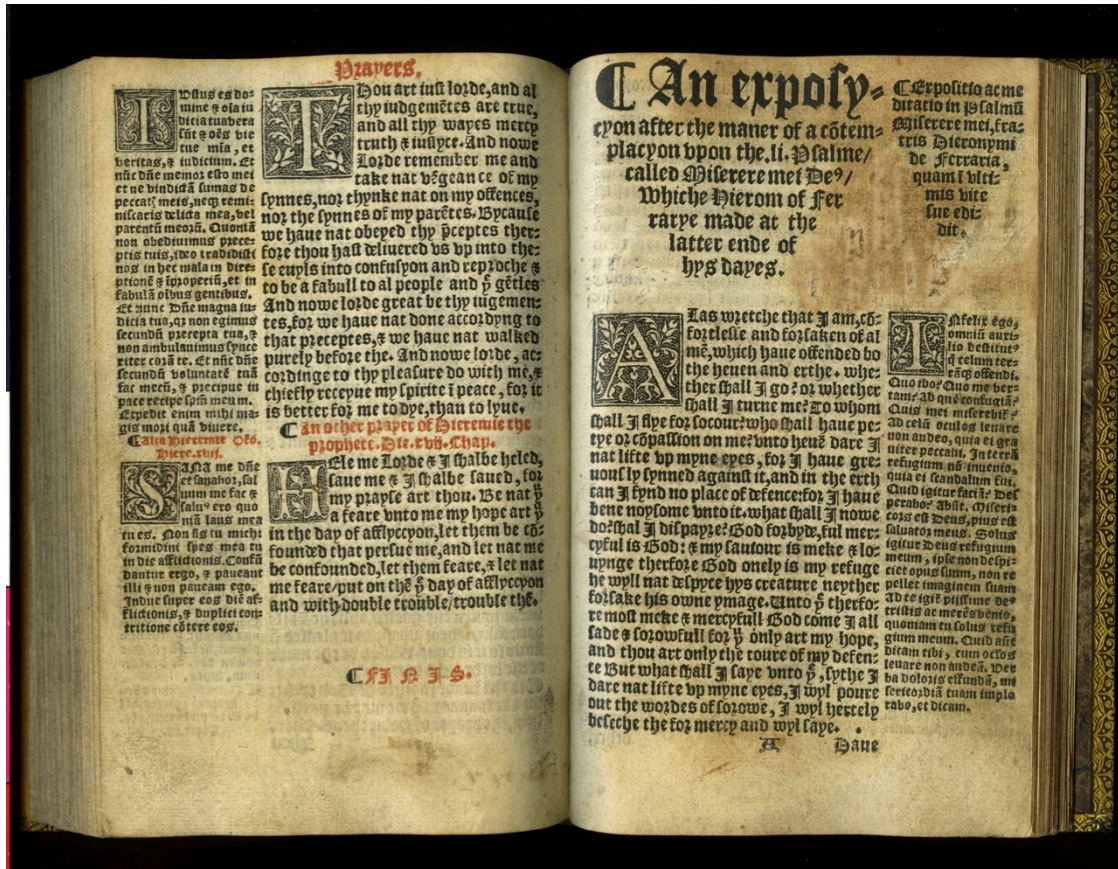


Fig. 25. Savonarola's exposition on Psalm 50 [51] in the primer printed by Nicolas le Roux, 1538. Image courtesy of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Savonarola's appeal during and beyond his lifespan was eloquently summarized by the nineteenth-century intellectual historian Eugenio Garin, who wrote:

Heretic or saint, precursor or survivor, but always divorced from his age, Savonarola, in sum, seems to have remained irreconcilable with a culture that yet was fascinated with him and with a world which fought him but afterward listened to him devotedly as the sincere expression of its own deep needs.²⁷³

Savonarola was but one of "a chorus of papal critics" that included prominent Catholics from Italy, Spain and Germany.²⁷⁴ Perhaps it was this rising chorus from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries that accounted for the appeal of Savonarola's writings in the face of the Inquisition. Although he appeared to share many of the later

²⁷³ Quoted in Donald Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence: Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 15.

²⁷⁴ Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, p. 323.

beliefs of Martin Luther, Savonarola should not be considered a “Protestant” in the usual sense of the word, but rather a theologian fully immersed in the “quarrels that animated the rivalry between his order [the Dominicans] and the Franciscans.”²⁷⁵

By the second decade of the sixteenth century Savonarola’s writings were circulating freely throughout England. In the 1520s, Bishop John Fisher, who would later be beheaded by Henry VIII for his loyalty to Rome, stated that Savonarola had not been a Lutheran, but rather “was condemned for denying an excommunication, not for his beliefs, [...] and had accepted the Pope as head of the Church.”²⁷⁶ Not all Catholics of the time were so generous in their evaluation of the friar. The founder of the Jesuit order, St Ignatius Loyola, refused to allow any of Savonarola’s books in Jesuit libraries; “this was only to be expected from Jesuits, dedicated to defending the papal monarchy.”²⁷⁷ So while the idea of Savonarola the proto-reformist appealed to English Protestant reformers, the attraction for later 16th-century English Catholics is more difficult to discern.

In response to what Savonarola perceived as corruption not only in the Medici governance of Florence but also in the Roman Church, he spoke in a 1495 Advent sermon on the book of Haggai on the need for Florentines to “elect” a new King of the city—Jesus Christ. In doing so the city would show its humility and servitude to God.²⁷⁸ If English Catholics (whose national religion had been determined by the reigning monarch) had access to Savonarola’s sermons, they might have identified with the idea of returning their country to the “true” faith as well as reacting to the similarities between the political

²⁷⁵ Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence*, pp. 13-4.

²⁷⁶ Seward, *The Burning of the Vanities*, p. 274.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.70-71; See also Villari, *Life and Times*, vol. 1, pp. 330-1, and Weinstein, *Savonarola*, pp. 176-7.

upheaval in Florence (indeed, in all of the Italian states) and their own Tudor state of flux in matters civic and religious. Therefore, English Catholic elites with the means to read and understand Savonarola's writings may have had the ability to look beyond any conception of "ante-Lutheran" or Protestant elements to his message of rejecting corruption at all levels, thereby applying components of his message to their own troubles.

It is the afterlife of Savonarola's writings, particularly his exposition on Psalm 50[51], which is the focus of this chapter. By scrutinizing both English Catholic and Protestant settings of this text, we can uncover a fresh interpretation of both text and music: one that places already politically driven words into a new position as part of the English Reformation conflict.

Although not a musician himself, Savonarola had strong opinions about music. As a highly educated man, he was likely familiar with classical writings that stated not only that "God was the 'Founder and Donor' of all music" but also that "the creation of the universe had been in essence a musical enterprise."²⁷⁹ This concept may have influenced his work with Florentine street youth, as he chose to reform them by recognizing their fondness for popular (although often vulgar) songs and turning those songs into implements for praising God. In fact, Savonarola found more value in the popular carnival songs than in the elaborate polyphony of the cathedral choir of the Duomo, considered one of the finest in the world. The composer Heinrich Isaac wrote complex polyphonic masses and motets for this choir upon his arrival in Florence in the mid-1480s; Savonarola perceived these as

²⁷⁹ Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 40.

detracting from the Scripture they were meant to glorify, and stirring parishioners to dangerous emotional heights.²⁸⁰

Patrick Macey comments upon Savonarola's sermons against the dangers of polyphony:

He especially accused the clergy and nuns of employing it [polyphony] for ends that had nothing to do with the enhancement of spiritual life, and enumerated several kinds of abuse. First, he criticized priests who relied on polyphonic music and elaborate ceremonies to lure almsgivers into their churches; secondly, he turned his reforming zeal on convents of nuns, who strayed from the true spiritual life by filling their services with too much music, especially organ-playing; and finally, he excoriated tyrants who, for their own pleasure and to increase their prestige, hired highly trained—and highly paid—singers for polyphonic choirs. In his sermons the friar attacked each of these abuses in turn.²⁸¹

Savonarola chose to use popular music as one method of reforming the masses. This practice, which went directly in the face of common Church practice, would seem to align him strongly with the Protestant reformers who followed. It is indeed interesting to note, as Macey has done, that Catholic composers of the sixteenth century would instead be drawn to Savonarola's prison meditations as material for traditional Latin motets when Savonarola rallied so strongly against them.²⁸² Whatever his views of Savonarola, Byrd obviously saw value in the words of the friar's prison meditations, and therefore choosing to set them, perhaps to aid in the effort to reestablish Catholicism in England, regardless of public perceptions of the author.

Savonarolan scholarship to date has focused primarily on the link with Continental composers, particularly those living and working in Italy. H. Colin Slim, in his work on the so-called Newberry-Oscott partbooks (see below), established a Florentine origin for the manuscript in part due to the music of the composers found in the volumes-- Verdelot,

²⁸⁰ Macey, *Bonfire Songs*, pp. 34, 91.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

²⁸² Macey, *Bonfire Songs*, p. 3.

Willaert and Sermisy, as well as other lesser-known composers-- all of whom worked in Florence or the surrounding area in the early 1500s.²⁸³ Patrick Macey, in his book *Savonarolan Laude, Motets, and Anthems*, devotes all but the last chapter to Continental settings of Savonarolan texts and omits entirely the Byrd setting of *Infelix ego* in his chapter, "Motets on Savonarola's Meditations on Psalms 50 and 30."²⁸⁴ Establishing a connective thread between Savonarolan thought and English composers of the sixteenth century is therefore somewhat problematic.

The Newberry-Oscott partbooks and the Lumley library

To identify a source of Savonarolan influence on William Byrd (and to a lesser degree William Mundy), it may be valuable to consider a set of manuscripts now known as the Newberry-Oscott partbooks and their relationship to Byrd patron John Lumley, first Baron Lumley (1533-1609), collector and Catholic conspirator.²⁸⁵

The Newberry-Oscott partbooks are a collection of 30 motets and 30 madrigals, for four, five or six voices. Four of the five books (Cantus, Tenor, Bassus, and "Quintus et VI") are housed at the Newberry Library in Chicago. The Altus partbook, once thought lost, resides at Oscott College in Sutton Coldfield, England. The composer who wrote the largest number of both motets and madrigals is Philippe Verdelot; he and the six other identified

²⁸³Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets, vol. I*, chaps. 2 and 3.

²⁸⁴ Macey, *Savonarolan Laude, Motets, and Anthems*. Macey's previous book on Savonarolan music, *Bonfire Songs: Savonarola's Musical Legacy*, discusses the Byrd motet in chap. 12, "Savonarola's Psalm Meditations in England."

²⁸⁵Barron, "Lumley, John, first Baron Lumley (c.1533–1609)."



Fig. 26. Two of the Newberry-Oscott partbooks: the bassus partbook and the tenor soggetto ostinato of the motet for Henry VIII, *Nil maius superi vident*. Image courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago (VAULT Case MS minus VM 1578.M91).

composers (including Adrian Willaert and Claudin de Sermisy) of the collection all worked at some point in their careers in Florence, and some of the motets appear to have strong Savonarolan connections in their text sources and political ideas.

H. Colin Slim, the modern scholar who did the most significant scholarly work on the Newberry-Oscott partbooks, theorized that five of the sacred motets in the Newberry-Oscott manuscripts can be tied to Savonarolan thought: *Quare fremuerunt gentes* by Sermisy and *Recordare, Domine; Congregati sunt inimici nostri; Deus, in nomine tuo; and In te, Domine, speravi*, all by Verdelot.²⁸⁶ Of these, the text of *In te, Domine, speravi* (Psalm 30 [31]) would have been recognizable as the inspiration for the Savonarolan prison meditation of the same name that was often printed together with the meditation on Psalm 50 (51). While the meditation on Psalm 30 (31) reflects the suffering of a convicted man torn between sadness, fear and hope, *Infelix ego* describes the hopelessness of one who has

²⁸⁶ Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets*, vol. I, p. 70.

been falsely accused of heresy—perhaps a more appealing choice for Byrd, who might have recognized similar feelings of hopelessness and fear among his fellow Catholics.

Slim linked some of the texts in the Newberry-Oscott manuscript to Savonarola by postulating that Verdelot and the other composers specifically chose biblical texts for the motets that held great meaning for Savonarola, such as *In te, Domine, speravi*. In addition, Slim pointed to instructions printed in Sermisy's setting of *In te, Domine speravi*: "Canon. Exaltata est magnificentia tua super celos," which echo Savonarola's 1496 sermon on Christ as the King of Florence: "*Quoniam elevata est magnificentia tua super coelos*; my people, your magnificence, that is, your Christ, which is your magnificence, has been elevated above the heavens."²⁸⁷

Another, perhaps more tenuous, link to Savonarola is that of the image of pomegranates, which appear in the illuminations of the partbooks. Evidently pomegranates appear in none of the illustrator Boccardi's other illuminations, which caused Slim to assume that their presence here is "symbolic, not decorative."²⁸⁸ He mentioned two of Savonarola's sermons in which pomegranates play a role, saying:

The pomegranate signifies those who are responsible for the care of souls, who maintain under their mantle many others; and **they should hold themselves prepared for martyrdom** [emphasis added] and for bloodshed in defence of their flock and through charity should hold them together, like the pomegranate holds its seeds within itself.²⁸⁹

Although Slim later admitted that it was more likely that the pomegranate images were in fact an homage to Henry VIII's queen, Catherine of Aragon, as the pomegranate was her

²⁸⁷ Ibid, pp. 70-71.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 73.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

emblem,²⁹⁰ any Elizabethan Catholics reading these sermons might have marked the mention of preparation for martyrdom, as the Cardinal William Allen urged them to do (see Chapter Five). And there was more in Savonarola's writings to inspire the Catholics of the next century:

Ironically enough, Savonarola was himself martyred by the Florentines for his love of Christ and for his love of them. Considering Clement VII's difficulties with the Lutherans and Henry VIII, Florentines of the last republic might have been struck by the fresh relevance and the irony of Savonarola's admonition that the reigning pope (in his time, Alexander VI) should keep the church united.²⁹¹

Catholics born toward the end of or after Henry VIII's reign may not have felt this as strongly as the Florentines or even as earlier English Catholics, given the distance of English Catholicism from Rome; at the same time the desire to unite and revitalize Catholic worshippers was strong, and writings such as Savonarola's could have provided impetus for Catholic regeneration.

It is believed that the leather-bound and ornately illuminated manuscripts were intended as a gift for a king, most likely Henry VIII of England.²⁹² At the time of presentation to Henry VIII (c. 1528), the motets in the Newberry-Oscott partbooks would not have been remarkable for their Catholicity, and it is virtually impossible to ascertain whether he would have recognized Savonarolan political elements in the texts. It is known that Henry was contacted by Florentine officials desperate for his military aid (due to the

²⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 108. Florentine Savonarolans may have also known that Savonarola admired Henry VIII's father, as transcripts from his third trial document the inquisitors asking Savonarola if he had any "dealings with princes," and which ones he trusted. Savonarola responded that he did not trust most rulers, with the exception of the Emperor Maximilian, the King of Spain, and "King Henry VII of England 'because I heard he was a good man'." See Seward, *The Burning of the Vanities*, pp. 255-6.

²⁹¹ Slim *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets, vol. I*, p. 73.

²⁹² Ibid, pp. 8, 80. The most convincing evidence for this is in the final motet, *Nil maius superi vident*, a secular motet which "salutes a great and benign English King, Henry, who, though powerful, is peace-loving and just to the rich and poor alike."

unstable political situation in Italy) after the sack of Rome in 1527. The city of Florence made this plea based on assumptions of Henry's great wealth and of his willingness to align with them against their common enemy, France. Neither assumption proved to be true, and Henry did not enter into the Florentine political fray.²⁹³ While the partbooks did not achieve their intended goal, no doubt Henry was flattered by a gift of such musical sophistication, especially as the last motet, *Nil maius superi vident* (with its tenor *soggetto ostinato* "Henricus dei gratia anglie rex") was meant to appeal to his ego and thus reinforce the plea for aid.²⁹⁴

While paying attention to such a seemingly minor aspect of the Newberry-Oscott motets may seem superfluous, we should remember that this story affirms a relationship between England and Italy that goes beyond a plea for military aid. Henry VIII was enamored of Italian musicians, and as mentioned earlier, employed several in his household. The musical relationship between the two countries did not end with Henry's death, and the English continued to appreciate Italian musicians and their compositional style. Assuming foreknowledge of both Italian music and Savonarola's works, it is not difficult to picture later sixteenth-century educated elites, including anyone who might have used the Lumley library, as recognizing and appreciating the [import of the] Savonarolan elements of the partbook motets.

Slim traced a possible provenance path of the partbooks from Henry's library to that of Thomas Cranmer (Henry was known for making gifts of his books to his friends and favorites) and thence to Lord Lumley via Lumley's father-in-law, Henry Fitzalan, Lord

²⁹³ Ibid, pp. 106-7.

²⁹⁴ Ibid, pp. 109-112; 223.

Arundel.²⁹⁵ If, as Slim theorized, the manuscripts now known as the Newberry-Oscott partbooks were part of the Arundel/Lumley library, along with Savonarola's sermons and prison meditations, a composer such as Byrd with a strong Catholic identity might not only have read Savonarola's words and made a comparison between the political situation of late 15th-century Florentines and that of current English Catholics, but also examined the music of composers working in Florence who had great admiration for the martyred friar, thereby gaining inspiration for his own motets.

An examination of the 1609 Lumley catalogue (the only catalogue of the library extant) in the areas of theology ("Theologi") and history ("Historici") shows plenty of material to educate and edify anyone who might need to learn more about Catholicism past and present, especially after the 1560s when anti-Catholic sentiment and persecution began to grow. The library held multiple copies of the Savonarolan prison meditations (nos. 334a, 716, 758, 765) along with his tracts on the Triumph of the Cross and the Simplicity of a Christian Life (no. 457). There is a Catholic catechism (no. 356) from 1553; numerous writings by the Church Fathers; tracts by the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine (no. 781); a Catholic liturgy and hymnal (no. 436); and several tracts against the Lutherans, Calvinists and Anabaptists (nos. 73, 353, 380, 395, 791, 1223), including two copies of Henry VIII's *Assertio contra Lutherum* (nos. 443 and 792), one of which was the presentation copy made to Cranmer by the king. In addition, there were other tracts and pamphlets on Catholic dogma, the lives of saints and the refutation of Protestantism; there were also several books of homilies.

²⁹⁵ Refer to Chapter Five for a more detailed discussion of the Lumley/Arundel household and library collection.

The library held an extensive collection of music, both in manuscript and print,²⁹⁶ including (as one would expect of one of Byrd's patrons) copies of all of Byrd's print output as well as multiple volumes of Italian motets, madrigals, masses, and other Continental collections.²⁹⁷ One of the sets of partbooks was a 1515 copy of Josquin des Prez's masses. Josquin worked in the early 1500s for Duke Ercole I d'Este of Ferrara, who was an unabashed admirer of Savonarola and commissioned Josquin to write his *Miserere mei, Deus* in honor of the executed friar.²⁹⁸

If the Newberry-Oscott partbooks were part of the Lumley library, anyone with knowledge of Savonarola's writings and recent continental political history might recognize that some of the motet texts in this collection had political impetus derived from Savonarolan influence, especially if it was known that the composers contributing to the collection were all working in Florence in the 1520s, a time when the city-state was appealing to Henry VIII for political and military aid.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ Lumley himself was not a musician (his interests lay primarily in science and history), and may not have had as much interest in music as his father-in-law; however, his wife Jane was an accomplished musician and would have recognized the value of the musical documents in the library. The collection of the Earl of Arundel included several unidentified music scores similar to the Newberry-Oscott manuscripts. See Jayne and Johnson, eds, *The Lumley Library*, for more information on the provenance of the collection which became the Lumley library.

²⁹⁷ Lumley's collection of Byrd's works included the 1575 Byrd and Tallis *Cantiones Sacrae*, the two volumes of *Sacrarum Cantionum* (1589 and 1591), and the 1605 edition of Byrd's *Gradualia*. Knowledge of the music of non-British composers may be attributed, among other things, to the influx of foreign musicians to England: Flemish and Low Country musicians arrived as religious refugees during the reign of Elizabeth, along with Italians (such as Alfonso Ferrabosco) who were not refugees but were, rather, looking for employment in a country where the monarchs and nobility were determined to have only the best musicians in their households. See Peter Marshall, *Religious Identities in Henry VIII's England* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006), p. 145.

²⁹⁸ See Macey, *Bonfire Songs*, Part II, chapter 8 for a detailed discussion of this work.

²⁹⁹ Slim, *A Gift of Madrigals and Motets*, vol. I, pp. 70-3.

William Byrd's *Infelix ego*

Joseph Kerman in *The Masses and Motets of William Byrd* and Owen Rees in his essay "The English Background to Byrd's Motets" have each provided us with thorough musical analyses of *Infelix ego*. Therefore, our focus here is on Byrd's treatment of Savonarola's text.

Savonarola wrote his exposition on Psalm 50 [51] approximately three weeks before his execution, after extensive periods of torture that left his arms nearly useless. Donnelly believes that this meditation is on a par with such revered writings as the *Imitation of Christ* and Augustine's *Confessions*.³⁰⁰ Modern scholars agree that Savonarola took this opportunity to offer a final sermon of sorts (papal directive indicated that he was no longer allowed to preach) as it not only addresses his own transgressions but advocates for renovation of the Church.³⁰¹ More interesting for Elizabethan Catholics, however, especially those influenced by Jesuit teaching, might have been the reference to the desire for martyrdom:

[...] Then will the oblations of the priests and clerics be acceptable to you because they have left behind earthly things and girded themselves for a more perfect life . . . Then will they lay the calves upon your altar, **offering their bodies to the cross, that is, to tortures and death, for your name** [emphasis added]. Then will the Church flourish; then will it expand its borders; then will your praise resound to the ends of the earth [...]"³⁰²

A composer like Byrd with the desire to contribute and add to those teachings might have been doubly attracted to the prison meditations after reading such a passage. While Kerman's comprehensive analysis of Byrd's motet attributed the motivation, style and form to Continental influences, and Rees' to earlier English ones (plus Josquin), it is tempting to

³⁰⁰ Donnelly, *Prison Meditations*, p. 17.

³⁰¹ Weinstein, *Savonarola*, p. 287; Seward, *The Burning of the Vanities*, p. 261; Villari, *Life and Times, vol. II*, p. 383. Donnelly also says that in this meditation Savonarola was "trying to steel himself for martyrdom." See *Prison Meditations*, p. 18.

³⁰²Weinstein, *Savonarola*, p. 287; also Donnelly, *Prison Meditations*, pp. 95-6.

wonder if, at least in text selection, Byrd was moved to set *Infelix ego* due to the degree of its Catholicity.³⁰³

European Catholics of the aristocracy and gentry had a long tradition of interest in both penitential and persecutory texts. Eamon Duffy devotes a chapter of his book *Marking the Hours* to the Book of Hours eventually owned by Richard III of England and his prayer annotations therein. Duffy mentions Jonathan Hughes' theory that the "complaint language" of many of the Psalms "portrays the speaker as beleaguered by enemies" and that "people using such psalms and prayers must certainly have applied them not to spiritual forces, but to their day-to-day enemies and rivals."³⁰⁴ He also discusses John Bossy's 1991 argument categorizing the prayers of the books of Hours as "social prayers, but often negatively so, many of them revealing a preoccupation with the pray-er's safety, and in particular, with their deliverance from their earthly enemies."³⁰⁵

If these theories are true, the phenomenon of aristocratic persecutory belief was strongly in place well before the sixteenth century and could have set the tone for Catholic prayer and use of the Psalms as devices for deliverance from tribulation. In this case, it would seem likely that texts such as *Infelix ego*, *Deus venerunt gentes*, the *Lamentations* texts, *Ne irascaris*, or the possible political texts *In ieiunio et fletu* and *Derelinquat impius*

³⁰³ Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, p. 179; Rees, in Brown and Turbet, "The English Background to Byrd's Motets," pp. 39-49. Owen Rees suggests that Byrd accessed the text for *Infelix ego* through "one of the several editions of the Primer" that his family might have owned when he was a boy, and that Byrd may have been recalling the text from memory, as his text does not exactly match that of settings by Lassus, Willaert, Vicentino, or Rore, thus giving the impression that Byrd had not had access to these Continental settings. However, this theory does not explain his desire to set the text in the first place, or the interest he displayed in persecution texts such as *Deus, venerunt gentes*. See Rees, pp. 36-7. One must also wonder if there was a patronal element at work here regarding selection of this text-Lumley, perhaps?

³⁰⁴ Duffy, *Marking the Hours*, p. 101.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 98.

(set years earlier by Tallis) might have served in the same manner, rendering them highly appealing to recusant worshippers; another motivator, perhaps, for setting these texts.

As we saw in the previous chapter, Byrd's setting of *Infelix ego* incorporates only the introduction to Savonarola's meditation: the last words of his motet are the first verse of Psalm 50 [51], "*Miserere mei, Deus, secundam magnam misericordiam tuam* (Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to your great mercy)." The motet is for six voices (superius, medius, contratenor, sextus, tenor, bassus) and is in three sections, which I have labeled as follows:

1. *Prima pars*: The confession

Vulgate Latin

Infelix ego, omnium auxilio destitutus, qui coelum terramque offendi. Quo ibo? Quo me vertam? Ad quem confugiam? Quis mei miserebitur? Ad coelum levare oculos non audio, quia ei graviter peccavi. In terra refugium non invenio, quia ei scandulum fui.

1538 English

Alas wretche that I am, comfortlesse and forsaken of al men, which haue offended bothe heuen and erthe, whether shall I go? or whether shall I turne me? To whom shall I flye for socour? Who shall have petye or compassion on me? unto heuen dare I not lifte up myne eyes, for I haue greuously synned against it, and in the erth can I fynd no place of defence:for I haue bene noysome unto it.

The *prima pars* reflects upon the sinner's recognition of wrongdoing. For Savonarola, this was not the confession of the accusations leveled against him, but rather his realization that in confessing to the charges of heresy and treason he had actually sinned against God by not defending his actions (preaching and prophesying after excommunication) to his accusers.³⁰⁶ This section shows the depths of Savonarola's despair, for he feared that there

³⁰⁶ Weinstein, *Savonarola*, pp. 285-7.

was no one on earth or in heaven that could help him, as he had "grievously sinned against" heaven and had "been noysome" (displayed scandalous behavior) to those on earth.

2. *Secunda pars*: The hope of redemption

Latin Vulgate
*Quid igitur faciam? Desperabo? Absit.
Misericors est Deus, pius est salvator
meus. Solus igitur Deus refugium meum:
ipse non despiciet opus suum, non repellet
imaginem suam.*

1538 English
what shall I nowe do? Shal I dispayre?
God forbyde, ful mercyful is God: and my
Saviour is meke and lovyng therefore
God onely is my refuge he wyll nat
despyce hys creature neyther forsake his
owne ymage.

In the second part, the sinner is cautiously hoping for redemption and [eventually] mercy. Savonarola began this section by asking: "What then shall I do? Shall I despair?" but immediately answered himself: "Far be it." He recognized God's inherent mercifulness and grace and assumed that, since God would not turn his back on his creation, there would be refuge in God.

3. *Tertia pars*: The plea for mercy

Latin Vulgate
*Ad te igitur, piissime Deus, tristis ac
moerens venio, quoniam tu solus spes
mea, tu solus refugium meum. Quid autem
dicam tibi? Cum oculo levare non audio,
verba doloris effundam, misericordiam
tuam implorabo, et dicam: Miserere me,
Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam
tuam.*

1538 English
Unto ye therefore most meke &
mercyfull God come I all sade &
sorowfull for you only art my hope, and
thou art only the toure of my defence
But what shall I saye unto ye, sythe
[since] I dare nat lifte up myne eyes, I
wyl poure out the wordes of sorowe, I
wyl hertely beseche the for mercy and
wyl saye

**Have mercy upon me (oh God)
accordyng to thy great mercy.**

After the hope of redemption comes the plea for mercy (*tertia pars*), written in the same manner as one might write a dedication to a wealthy and high-ranking patron. The language is self-deprecating yet at the same time deferential to the higher being. At the end of this section, the sinner beseeches God by using the opening line of the Psalm: “Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to your great mercy.”

The three sections of the opening of the meditation are those most directly related to Psalm 50 [51]; as he developed and expanded upon his initial words, Savonarola drew upon other Scriptures, including some from the New Testament, to bolster his sermon-like exposition.

We saw in Chapter Three that both this and Savonarola’s other prison meditation (on Ps. 30[31], *In te, Domine, speravi*) were often included in early English Reformation primers and that the Protestant reformers saw Savonarola as a proto-reformist whose message foreshadowed their own revolution. Given the association of these texts with Protestant documents, it is useful to consider possible elements of Catholicity in Byrd’s setting.

As mentioned above, penitential and persecutory texts were common to medieval books of Hours and seemed especially pertinent to those who equated their current situation to historical events. Beyond this, Byrd’s treatment of the text displays the following characteristics:

- Rather than the English translation, Byrd used the original Latin, which was the “official” language of the Church.
- Unlike later English settings of the text, the impact of despair and sinfulness found in the Latin does not seem watered down by a metrical treatment.
- The penitent in this text feels it necessary to beg for mercy and grace, rather than accepting it as God’s gift to him. There is the implication that grace must be earned rather than received as a benefit of being a believer.

Musically, as Rees has noted, there is the presence of the old “antiphonal style” favored by composers working in the eras of the Catholic Tudors. In this style,

[...] particularly common [in such pieces] are passages in which a single text phrase is first presented by a duo or (more usually) trio of high voices and then by a group of low voices; this pattern was developed- for example by Sheppard in *Confitebor tibi Domine* and Parsons in *Domine quis habitabit*- by overlapping high and low trios to create textures which approach fully-scored imitation, so that the vestigial distinction between semichoir and ‘full’ sections disappeared.³⁰⁷

Additionally, in *Infelix ego* we see prolific use of polyphony, although this is not the polyphony of previous eras but rather, with its limited melismas and one-note-per-syllable setting, a product of Tridentine reformation. Byrd does make use of homophony, but it is not the dominant harmonic structure seen in Protestant music; rather, it is used for emphasis and effect. We can perhaps define the Catholicity of this motet in its textual aspects and by its reliance on both older techniques found in England’s Roman musical roots and more modern reformed elements, but it is Byrd’s handling of the text and music that sets it apart from its predecessors and Continental counterparts.

³⁰⁷ Rees, in Brown and Turbet, *Byrd Studies*, “The English background to Byrd’s motets,” p. 39.

As in the antiphonal style Rees mentions, *Infelix ego* opens with a trio of the highest voices (on the text *Infelix ego omnium auxilio destitutus, qui cœlum terramque offendi*), but the low trio does not echo this text, instead moving on to the next fragment (*Quo ibo?*), as seen in fig. 27:

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the opening of 'Infelix ego'. Each system consists of five staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Bassoon. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. In the first system, the high voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) sing the text 'Infelix ego omnium auxilio destitutus, qui cœlum terramque offendi', while the low voices (Bass, Bassoon) sing 'Quo me ver... Quo i... bo?'. In the second system, the high voices continue with 'di, of-fen-di, qui cœlum terramque offendi', while the low voices sing 'Ad quem con-fu-gi-am? Quis me-i mi-se-ri-um con-fu-gi-am, con-fu-gi-am?'. The score includes bar lines, clefs, and musical notation such as notes, rests, and accidentals.

Fig. 27. Opening trios in *Infelix ego*.³⁰⁸

Additionally, Byrd does not always adhere to the high voice/low voice trio formula, as illustrated in fig. 28, where we see a trio composed of the medius, sextus and bassus voices

³⁰⁸ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpd.org/wiki/images/7/76/BYRD-INF.pdf>.

moving fluidly into a trio of contratenor, sextus and tenor voices and then dovetailing into a duo of the superius and medius voices:

Fig. 28. Voice groupings in *Infelix ego*.³⁰⁹

Therefore, while giving an obvious nod to the techniques of earlier composers, Byrd makes it his own by mixing and remixing the combinations of voices in such a way that the interest of both performers and listeners never flags. This fluctuating combination adds to the unsettled nature of the text and its juxtaposition of penitence and supplication

Infelix ego ends with a nearly full homophonic blast at the Psalm 50[51] opening:

Miserere mei (fig. 29). As Rees states, it is no coincidence that Byrd is echoing Savonarola here- in most, if not all contemporary print copies of the exposition, “there is either a

³⁰⁹ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpl.org/wiki/images/7/76/BYRD-INF.pdf>.

change in the size of type or a new decorative initial (or both) at the opening words of the psalm, “Miserere mei, Deus”.³¹⁰



Fig. 29. Byrd’s initial statement of “Miserere mei” in *Infelix ego*.³¹¹

Besides the fact that this echoes the type and decoration changes in print copies of the meditation, this would also be the part of Byrd’s text most familiar to Catholics and worth reinforcing as the focal point of the piece. Byrd’s Continental contemporary Lassus used similar techniques on the same phrase at the end of his setting of *Infelix ego*, but his version is straightforward and spare, with little ornamentation and very restrained polyphony on the rest of the phrase “secundum magnam miseridordiam tuam.” As the two composers were working at the same time, it is difficult to know if Byrd was aware of Lassus’ setting,

³¹⁰ Rees, in Brown and Turbet, *Byrd Studies*, “The English Background to Byrd’s Motets,” p. 47.

³¹¹ Image accessed at <http://www1.cpd.org/wiki/images/7/76/BYRD-INF.pdf>.

and it may simply be coincidental that they both envisioned the text and font change of that particular line of the meditation in nearly the same way.

When we read modern scholarship on this motet, we see varying degrees of importance assigned to Byrd's compositional Catholicity. Rees seems to prefer focusing his essay mostly on the relationship between Byrd's works and those of his predecessors, while Kerman wrote how such a "highly personal use" of a Latin motet (meaning Byrd's treatment), while common in Continental music, was unusual in English music prior to Byrd:

The position in England is dogged by revealing ironies. Only when the [English] motet lost its liturgical bearings did it adopt the Renaissance attitude towards the text established by composers like Josquin at the late *quattrocento* Italian courts. Only when the Catholicism of the motet was called in question did it assert that Catholicism in a newly militant, newly personal, half-surreptitious fashion.³¹²

This seems to imply that the motet needed to be removed from the Church in order for its consumers to find personal meaning in it, but it may have been its use in recusant ritual as an implement of intended reestablishment of Catholicism in England that allowed the personal aspects of the faith to be derived due to the perceived association of some motets' subject matter with contemporary events.

By mostly ignoring the political Catholicity of motets like *Infelix ego*, Rees (and Fellowes, in his work) reduces the personal aspects of textual choice and interpretation that color Byrd's music; conversely, Kerman dove so far into the "Catholic propaganda" argument that discussion of contemporary compositional practice and the influence of older composers whose work Byrd surely knew and respected fell by the wayside.

³¹² Kerman, *Masses and Motets*, p. 45.

Neither of these scholarly opinions is recent- Kerman's book appeared in 1981, and Rees' essay in 1992. A more recent take on Byrd belonged to Philip Brett, who wrote as late as 2002 about the *Gradualia*, although his words are also applicable to the motets:

[it was] art that was clearly meant to attain liturgical decorum as well as to promote the cause of the Jesuits and their Catholic Reformation [...] decorum was largely kept while more subtle ways were found to inject political messages into the printed volumes, through such means as musical nuance or arrangement of contents.³¹³

Perhaps it is these words that best convey Byrd's commitment to both the Catholic cause and musical integrity. We have no record of Byrd stating that *Infelix ego* was intended as a vehicle for political dissemination, but we can see through the relationship between text and music his reflection of the current situation of Elizabethan Catholics.

Ah, helples(se) wretch

Byrd appears to have been the only English Catholic composer to set Savonarola's meditation on Psalm 50 [51]; however, there are three extant Protestant settings. Thomas Ravenscroft's verse anthem is from the seventeenth century and therefore out of the realm of this study. The two remaining settings are late 16th century: William Hunnis' monophonic song; and the verse anthem based on his text by William Mundy, which is an excellent example of a Protestant choral version of Savonarola's work.

The text of *Ah, helpless wretch* was transcribed and versified by William Hunnis (d. 1597), a "musician and conspirator" who was a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal and master of the chapel children (although he is better known as a poet and translator than as a

³¹³Brett, *William Byrd and His Contemporaries*, p. 126.

musician).³¹⁴ He was implicated in a plot to execute Mary I and her husband Philip of Spain in order to place Elizabeth on the throne; although he imprisoned in the Tower for a time he avoided execution and was reestablished in the Chapel Royal in Elizabeth's reign.³¹⁵ He enjoyed the patronage of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, an influential Protestant peer.³¹⁶

Hunnis' verse is found in *Seuen Sobs of a Sorrowfull Soule* (1583), a metrical psalter of sorts that focuses only on the seven penitential psalms: 6, 31 [32], 37 [38], 50 [51], 101 [102], 129 [130], and 142 [143].³¹⁷ *Seuen sobs* includes other material besides the psalm versifications, including prayers and two dialogues between Christ and a sinner. A separate tract bound with *Seuen sobs* is entitled *The poore widowes mite* (1583), the first part of which is the Savonarolan meditation.³¹⁸ Hunnis separated his version of the meditation into (aptly) seven smaller meditations, each of which is divided into "fourteeners"

³¹⁴ Andrew Ashbee, "Hunnis, William (d. 1597)," Andrew Ashbee In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008. <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/view/article/14187> (accessed February 26, 2016).

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ Macey, *Bonfire Songs*, pp. 279-80.

³¹⁷ Hunnis had written another metrical psalter in 1550, entitled *Certayne Psalmes chosen out of the Psalter of David*, which Andrew Ashbee categorizes as an "unsuccessful addition to the tradition of English versifying from the scriptures." See Ashebee, "Hunnis, William (d. 1597)".

³¹⁸ William Hunnis, *Seuen sobs of a sorrowfull soule for sinne [electronic resource] : comprehending those seuen Psalmes of the princelie prophet David, commonlie called Pœnitential /framed into a forme of familiar praiers, and reduced into meeter by William Hunnis ... ; wherevnto are also annexed his Handfull of honisuckles, The poore widowes mite, a dialog betweene Christ and a sinner, diuers godlie and pithie ditties, with a Christian confession of and to the Trinitie* (Imprinted at London : By Henrie Denham, dwelling in Pater noster Rowe, at the signe of the Starre, 1583. Accessed on Early English Books Online, http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:26872, March 1, 2016), pp. 31-40 of *The poore widowes mite*.

(couplets of 8 + 6 syllables) and includes an ending response composed of Latin phrases related to the psalm, such as “*Peccavi, peccavi, miserere mei.*”³¹⁹



Fig. 30. The macaronic ending of William Hunnis' *Ah helpless wretch*, 1583.³²⁰

The seven meditations of Hunnis' *Ah, helpless wretch* manage to convey even more despair than earlier translations of Savonarola's original, as can be seen in the couplets of the first meditation:

1. Ah helpless wretch! what shall I doo?
 or which way shall I ronne?
 The earth bewrais [bewrays], & heuen records
 the sins that I have donne.³²¹
2. The gates of hell wide open stand,
 for to receive me in,
 And fearefull feends all readie be,
 to torment me for sin.
3. Alas, where shall I succour find?
 the earth dooth me denie,
 And to the sacred heavens above,
 I dare not lift mine eie.

³¹⁹ Macaronic interjections such as this are not unusual, especially when they are common phrases, as in the carol *On this day, earth shall ring* with its refrain, “*Ideo, in excelsis deo.*”

³²⁰ Image accessed at Early English Books Online, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=23816035&FILE=../s.

³²¹ “Bewray,” from the Middle English *bewraien*, means to reveal, expose or betray.

4. If heaven and earth shall witness be,
 against my soule for sin,
 Untimelie birth (alas) for me
 much better then had bin.

5. And now despaire approacheth fast,
 with bloodie murdering knife,
 And willeth me to end my greefes,
 by shortening of my life.

6. Shall I despaire? Thou God forbid,
 for mercie more is thine,
 Than if the sins of all the world
 were linked [linkèd] now with mine.

7. Despise not then, most loving Lord,
 the image of thy face,
 Which thou hast wrought and dearlie bought
 with goodnesse of thy grace.

8. And since thy bloudie price is paid,
 and bitter paines all past;
 Receive my plaints, accept my spirit,
 and mercie grant at last.

- R.** So shall my soule rejoyce, rejoyce,
 and still for mercie crie,
 *Peccavi, peccavi, miserere mei.*³²²

Macey has suggested that it was Hunnis' time in the Tower that precipitated his interest in and feeling of kinship with Savonarola;³²³ he was also likely familiar with the meditation from the primers of his youth. Hunnis not only versified and metricized the prose text but also composed an accompanying tune that serves both verse and response. Macey comments that, while the tune is monophonic, an accompaniment could easily have been improvised by a lutenist.³²⁴

³²² Hunnis, *Seuen sobs*, as quoted in Macey, *Savonarolan Laude*, p. lxx.

³²³ Macey, *Bonfire Songs*, p. 281.

³²⁴ Macey, *Savonarolan Laude*, p. xix.

In looking at these verses, it might be worthwhile to consider whether there are aspects of this version that skew more “Protestant” than either the Savonarolan Latin utilized by Byrd or the parallel early English translation. The layout of *Seuen Sobs* is a hybrid of primer and psalter, with its metricized psalms and psalm tunes and additional prayers and dialogues. Referencing earlier Protestant primers, the bound combination of *Seuen sobs* and *The poore widowes mite* includes the Savonarolan meditation. Additionally, Hunnis prefaces *The poore widowes mite* with an acrostic of his full name that is set, as is his version of the Savonarolan meditation, in “fourteener” couplets. In it he stresses the Protestant concept of faith alone, rather than good works, leading to salvation (fig. 31).³²⁵

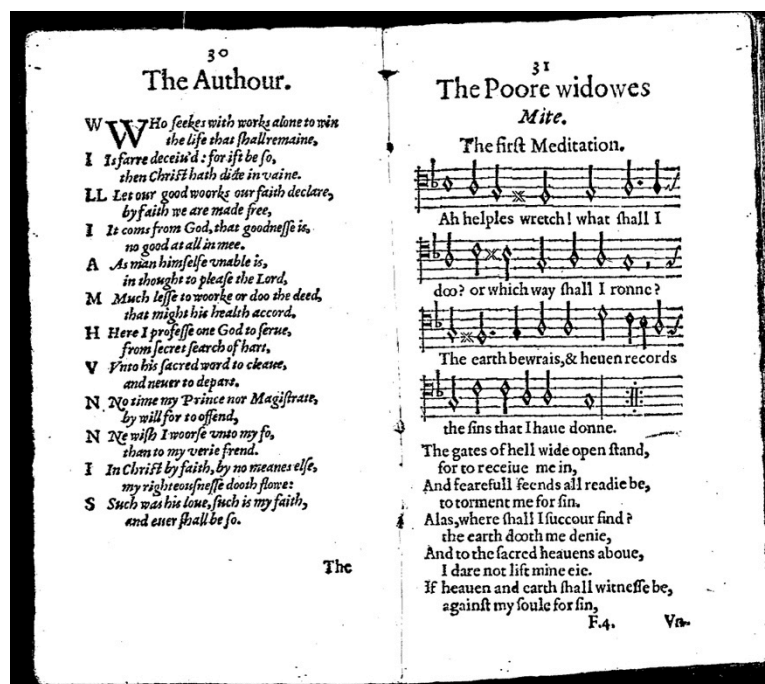


Fig. 31. William Hunnis' acrostic and opening page of *Ah helpeles wretch*, 1583.³²⁶

³²⁵ Hunnis, *The poore widowes mite*, p. 30.

³²⁶ Image accessed at Early English Books Online,

http://eebo.chadwyck.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=23816035&FILE=../s.

Because Hunnis versified Savonarola's entire meditation, the tripartite form of Byrd's and Mundy's versions is missing. Instead, by separating the exposition into seven parts, Hunnis reiterates the use of the number seven in his title *Seuen sobs* and the seven penitential psalms. Each "meditation" has eight verses, making a total of 56 verses plus seven responses.

This seems like a cumbersome amount of text for the eight measures of music that accompany it. While Hunnis prints a tune for both the verse and the response, they are actually the same tune with minor rhythmic variations to accommodate the text. One could argue that this is practice similar to that found in the metrical psalters, or that Hunnis was primarily a poet and translator and not a composer, but neither of these arguments belies the fact that listening to the entire piece sung as a whole, even with improvisation and instrumental accompaniment, would [today] be tiring for an audience.

The melody itself is so simplistic that it could easily be committed to memory after one reading or hearing. Its range encompasses only the interval of a minor sixth, meaning that it is singable on multiple starting pitches, and the largest leap is that of a perfect fourth (occurring twice in the second half of the tune). The mode is G Dorian. There are two accidentals, F# and B natural, which are indicated in the score: this is another clue that the piece was probably intended solely for amateur musicians. Because of its simplicity, it lends itself well to improvisation, both vocally and instrumentally, but there are no indications for that in the score.

Perhaps *Ah helples wretch* was not intended (as Macey suggests) for performance, but rather as an educational tool in the manner of the metrical psalters, with the tune as a mnemonic device to aid in memorization of the text. This seems a more plausible use for

the piece, especially in light of the binding of the two volumes into one. Obviously, given the content of *Seuen sobes/Poore Widowes Mite*, Hunnis was not trying to compete with the hugely successful Sternhold and Hopkins metrical psalters.

It can be argued, then, that Hunnis' tracts are intended as private devotional materials in the vein of the metrical psalters, with a more accessible form of the Savonarolan meditation on Psalm 50 [51] included that could thereby be committed to memory. The emphasis on penitence and confession in this meditation is very much reformist rather than orthodox in tone, as is seen by Hunnis' stress on God's grace and our personal salvation as a gift rather than something that must be earned.

In fact, in both Hunnis' and Mundy's versions of the text we see an assumption of God's mercy for the sinner, rather than the need to beg for it; going even farther into this assumption is the mention of Jesus Christ and his sacrifice for people's salvation, which is indeed found in the Savonarolan meditation, although not in the early pages.³²⁷ Mundy almost immediately mentioned Christ in the first verse of his setting, while Hunnis alluded to Christ in verse eight of his first meditation: "And since thy bloudie price is paid, and bitter paines all past ..." ³²⁸

Hunnis' version of *Ah, helples wretch* could be perceived as the most "Savonarolan" of the three exposition settings discussed in this chapter in that it is a treatment of the entire meditation. Hunnis does not echo each of Savonarola's points, and one cannot assign each of Hunnis' meditations to a specific point in the Savonarolan text, but he covered much more ground than Byrd or Mundy, likely due to his main vocation as a poet and translator.

³²⁷ Savonarola, *An exposycyon*, b. v r. Here we see the first mention of Christ in the meditation: "But rather that I may perceyue the remissyon of my synnes purchassyd by Chrystes blode/..."

³²⁸ Hunnis, op. cit.

In many ways his metricized version is more accessible than the original (even in translation). It eliminates the incessant repetition of ideas which tend to bog down the reading of the original; it uses metricization as a means by which one could memorize the text; and each meditation section returns to the original penitential plea: "I have sinned, I have sinned, have mercy on me. (*peccavi, peccavi, miserere mei*)."

The length of Hunnis' song is counterbalanced by the simple tune he wrote for it. There are no indications for "performance" in *The poore widowes mite*, of course, but each of the eight meditations could function as a stand-alone song if necessary.

There is little information on the life of composer William Mundy (c. 1529-1591?) (Moondaye, Monday, Mondaie, Mondy, Munday), but he appears to have been head boy of the choristers of Westminster Abbey c.1543 and became a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal sometime around 1559, having sworn allegiance to the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity of Elizabeth.³²⁹ He was the father of composer John Mundy (c.1555-1630). William composed in both Latin and English, and though his allegiance publicly was to the state and its Protestant regime, there is some question of just how deep his devotion to the Protestant cause was. Several of his Latin motets are found in manuscript collections that also include works of other composers with possible Catholic sympathies (see chapter 5), including the controversial *Exurge, Christe* that was a prayer "for the confounding of schismatics and the revival of 'apostolic truth'".³³⁰

³²⁹ Alistair Dixon, "Mundy, William (c.1529–1591?)," Alistair Dixon In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19542> (accessed March 1, 2016).

³³⁰Mateer, ed. *The Gyffard Partbooks I*, p. 150.

Regardless of his personal beliefs, Mundy was responsible for a very Protestant setting of the Savonarolan meditation on Psalm 50 [51]. *Ah, helplesse wretch* is a verse anthem (sometimes considered to be the English Protestant counterpart to the motet), and therefore was composed in English rather than Latin.

Mundy's treatment of Hunnis' text compressed the eight couplets of the first meditation into five verses of five lines (six lines in the final verse), with each line comprised of eight syllables. The text itself is slightly less graphic than Hunnis':

Ah helples wretch what shall I doe,
or which way shall I goe or runne?
The earth bewrayes, the heaven record
the wickednes that I have done.
Have mercy, Lord, for Christ thy Sonne.

Alas where shall I succour find,
both heaven and earth doth me deny,
so that unto the heavens above
I dare not once lift up mine eye,
for I have sinned so grievously.

If heaven and earth shall witnesse be
against my sickly soule for sin,
untimely birth alas for me
a great deale better had it been
than heaven to loose and hell to win.

Shall I despaire, thou God forbid,
I know that mercy more is thine,
than if the sins of all the world
were knit and linked unto mine,
wherefore my soul doe not repine.

Despise not then, most loving Lord,
the forme and image of thy face,
which thou hast wrought and dearely bought
with mercy, great goodnesse, and grace.
Accept therefore my humble plaints,
and grant me rest among thy saints. Amen.³³¹

³³¹ Quoted in Macey, *Savonarolan Laude*, p. lxxiii.

It appears that Mundy's setting may have exceeded Hunnis' in its Protestantism, as it eliminated the use of any Latin text as well as any reference to an outright plea for mercy, both of which Hunnis retained. What Mundy did ask for in his final verse was that God "grant me rest among thy saints,"³³² again a very Protestant implication that we are all saints without rank in heaven.

Like Byrd, Mundy set only the opening segment of Savonarola's meditation. Mundy's musical treatment of the text, however, reflected contemporary Anglican practice. The choir is scored in five parts (medius, countertenor 1, countertenor 2, tenor, and bassus, a voicing which shows that the piece was most likely meant to be sung by men rather than men and trebles). The soloist is drawn from the CT 1 section, and apparently the intent is for the soloist to sing the choral parts as well. The indication for the soloist in a collection of full and verse anthems used at Durham Cathedral in the 17th-century (Lbl Add. MS. 30478) is "A countertenor alone." (fig. 32)³³³

³³² Mundy, op. cit.

³³³ *Tenor cantoris. A Booke of Selected Chvrch-mvsick consisting of Fvll Anthems and Anthems with Verses used in the Cathedrall Chvrch of Dvrham. Anno Domini 1664.*

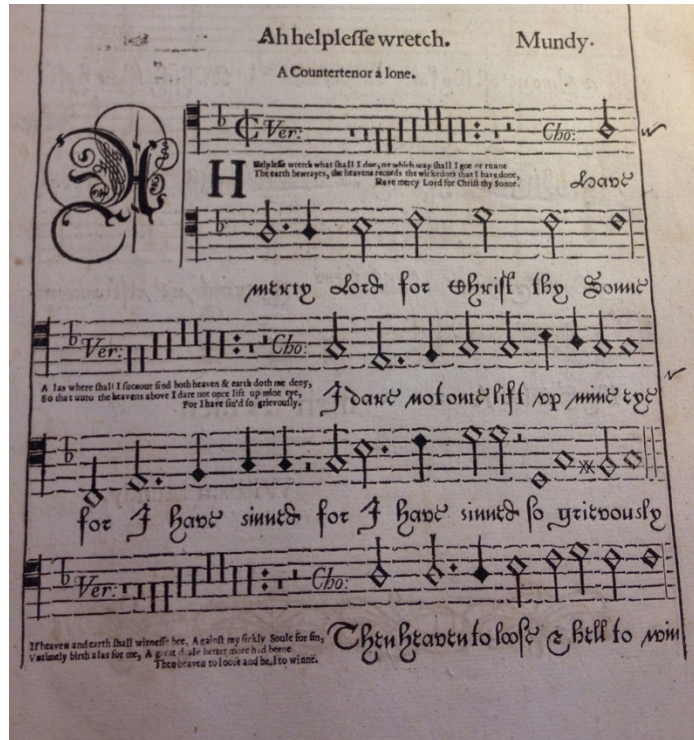


Fig. 32. William Mundy's *Ah helplesse wretch* in a 17th-century collection. Image by permission of the British Library.

Unlike the Hunnis, there is a written-out accompaniment, which according to Macey was possibly originally written for lutes to enable private performance. A later organ accompaniment allowed the piece to be used as service music.³³⁴ However, the organ accompaniment is very simple and thinly textured, maintaining the intimate feeling that lutes would have provided if the piece were used (as Macey says) as “pious chamber music.”³³⁵

As in Byrd's *Infelix ego*, the piece is divided into three sections, although Mundy's are unlabeled, unlike Byrd's. Section 1 is the first two verses as shown above; section 2 is verses three and four. As one would expect in this new verse anthem form, the choral parts are primarily homophonic, with the verses sung by the soloist and the choir echoing the

³³⁴Quoted in Macey, *Savonarolan Laude* p. xix.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

final line of each verse in the first two sections. The third section, verse five, is a call and response between soloist and choir, diminishing the length of both the solo and choral segments, and treating the final, coda-like “Amen” in a more traditional polyphonic manner (fig. 33).

Fig. 33. The “Amen” coda of William Mundy’s *Ah helpless wretch*.³³⁶

Mundy does not use Hunnis’ tune as a basis for his work, and the pitch range of Mundy’s solo line (F⁴-F⁵) is slightly larger than Hunnis’ monophonic line (F^{#4}-D⁵). The first two sections of Mundy’s work are in duple meter (as is Hunnis’ tune), but the final section is in triple meter with the “amen” polyphony returning to duple.

Possibly in a nod to Hunnis, Mundy’s composition begins in G Dorian, with imitative entrances of the opening solo motive in the organ. The note values in the vocal parts are similar to those in Merbecke’s *Booke of Common Praier Noted*: semibreves, minims, dotted minims, and crotchets; there are quavers in the organ part as well. The largest melodic leap in the solo line is that of a descending fifth, and each choral part also has limited motion.

³³⁶ Peter LeHuray, ed. *The Treasury of English Church Music, vol. Two: 1545-1650* (London: Blandford Press Limited, 1965), p. 32.

By the end of the first section, the soloist and the choir have moved from Dorian mode to what appears to be “F major” in a V-I cadence.³³⁷ As is typical of some late Renaissance music, hints of what would become tonality appear throughout the piece, although as Le Huray pointed out, it is quite impossible to determine any tonality for the choral parts due to the variety of conflicting accidentals present in existing manuscript copies.³³⁸

The first instance of a false relation occurs in this section (ms. 13), a C# in the solo line against a C natural in the organ part. This will happen several more times, not unusually for music of this period, once in the organ part (ms. 27, F#-F) and twice in the choral parts (ms. 53, B flat in the tenor against a B natural in the medius; ms. 64, F# in the medius against an F natural in the tenor).

If one considers the vocal solo and organ accompaniment as a unit, section two opens in an F “tonality”, returning to G Dorian before the next choral entrance. The solo melody differs from the one in the first section, but the rhythmic values remain the same. The chorus, rather than merely repeating the last line of the solo, has an expanded version of the last line with repeated text and minor imitative polyphony. As previously, the section ends on a “major” chord, this time in G.

In the final section, there is a meter change to triple, beginning with one measure of the organ before the soloist enters on the text “Despise not then, most loving Lord.” As stated above, this section is a call and response between the soloist and the choir, with the choir repeating each line of text. This device, along with the meter change, gives the section a

³³⁷ All musical analysis of the piece was done using the two modern critical editions currently available: Macey, *Savonarolan Laude*, pp. 202-208; and Peter Le Huray, ed., *The Treasury of English Church Music, vol. Two: 1545-1650* (London: Blandford Press, 1965), pp. 28-32.

³³⁸ Le Huray, ed., *The Treasury of English Church Music*, p. 256.

feeling of more motion than the previous two, until the last three syllables of the text (“[a]mong thy saints”) followed by the twofold “Amen,” that return to duple meter (fig. 34).

60

VERSE

with mer - cy, great good-ness and grace,

mer - cy, great good-ness and grace, with mer - cy, great good-ness and grace, Ac -

with mer - cy, great good-ness and grace,

and grant me rest a - mong thy

-cept there-fore my hum-ble plaints, and grant me rest a - mong thy

and grant me rest a - mong thy

65

saints, A - men, A - men.

saints, A - men.

saints, A - men, A - men.

saints, A - men, A - men.

Fig. 34. The final verse, response and coda of *Ah helpless wretch*.³³⁹

³³⁹ Ibid, p. 32.

The solo line in this section is firmly in G Dorian; however, the accompaniment and the choral parts appear to be in quasi-G minor, given the lowered sixth and raised seventh degrees of the scale. The coda continues the feeling of G minor, and the piece ends on a G chord with a raised third (G “major”).

If Mundy’s verse anthem appears “Protestant” in its musical composition, it is probably more a reflection of current compositional trends and the influence of the Chapel Royal musicians than a deep political statement. Le Huray spoke of the impact of the madrigal (newly popular in England beginning in the 1580s), as well as the genesis of the homophonic and monodic *seconda prattica*, on compositional practice; in addition, it was becoming more common to use solo voices, instruments and full choir *in alternatim* in works such as *Ah, helpless wretch*.³⁴⁰

Mundy appeared more interested in the interplay between soloist, choir and instrument(s) than in that of text and music, although the simplicity of the accompaniment and the choral parts do allow the focus to remain on the text. Possibly he saw Hunnis’ metricization as an obvious choice for the new form of the verse anthem and knew that the text, based on the proto-reformist Savonarola’s words, would fit in well with the Protestant ideals of the Anglican Church.³⁴¹

³⁴⁰ Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England*, p. 146; also Le Huray, ed., *The Treasury of English Church Music*, p. xiv.

³⁴¹ Modern scholars have at times been dismissive of Mundy’s English service music. Peter Le Huray, in discussing the anthems for men’s voices, stated: “Many of the imitative entries are forced, and there are some crude dissonances and ugly holes in the harmony.” Alastair Dixon said merely of the verse anthems *Ah, helpless wretch* and *The secret sins* that they were examples of a genre that Orlando Gibbons would make famous in the next century. However, it is important to remember that Mundy’s verse anthems represent the earliest form of a genre that would come to dominate English church music and, although perhaps not as interesting to us as his Latin works, should not be overlooked. See Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation*, p. 211; and Dixon, “Mundy, William.”

We have considered three settings of [essentially] the same text by three English composers: William Byrd, the devout Catholic, whose beliefs were reflected in his treatment of the text; William Hunnis, the dedicated Protestant whose transcription seems the most true in expression to the original English translation; and William Mundy, whose religious alliance was questionable but whose setting skewed the most “Protestant.” This leaves us with some interesting questions.

Attempting to determine the personal aspects of a life lived over 400 years ago is difficult at best. There is well-documented evidence of Byrd’s Catholicism and recusancy, and Hunnis was outspoken in his Protestant beliefs. Details of Mundy’s life, on the other hand, are quite vague. Like Tallis, he worked during several Tudor reigns, Protestant and Catholic, and obviously composed music for both churches. Although dating his *Exurge, Christe* is difficult (it may have have been written toward the end of the Marian era), he did apparently write it in response to the “schismatics” whom he perceived to be tearing the true English Church apart.

Thomas Morley held Mundy in high regard, listing him with Byrd, Sheppard, Taverner, and others he deemed as equals to the Continentals of the time.³⁴² Morley is another example of a composer who apparently held to Catholic beliefs while working for the Church of England, as organist at St Paul’s; yet another composer with admitted Catholic beliefs was John Dowland, who wrote several of the settings for Thomas East’s 1592 metrical psalter.³⁴³ As Peter LeHuray mentioned in the introduction to the critical edition of Mundy’s *Ah helpless wretch*, composers may have been “hampered in their work by the

³⁴²Harman, *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music*, p. 255.

³⁴³ Murray, *Thomas Morley*, pp. 15,19.

puritanism of the early Elizabethan church;"³⁴⁴ a composer like Mundy who was a member of the Chapel Royal likely did not want to jeopardize his position with suspect religious views. Conversely, Byrd had moved out of London well before the time of the *Sacrae Cantiones* publication in 1591 and no longer had this concern.

We have no idea of Mundy's impetus for setting *Ah, Helplesse Wretch*; it may be, as he used Hunnis' text for his own version, that he simply had the desire to put the song in choral form. Given the Queen's great musical knowledge and appreciation, the setting may have been a royal request. Undoubtedly the choral setting with organ accompaniment was intended as service music, and there would have been little choice but to keep it in accordance with the church's dicta regarding music. Indeed, we have no concrete ideas of motivation in text setting for any of the three composers, although Byrd's and Hunnis' settings certainly align with other psalm motets or metrical songs of their respective religious tendencies, as seen above.

Other factors worth considering are the Tudor fascination with and admiration of all things Italian (beginning at least at the start of the century), the easy availability of the Savonarolan text and its association with the most popular of the penitential psalms, which appealed to both Protestants and Catholics for very different reasons. Shading this, however, is the fact that opposing sides in any situation are apt to interpret texts in a manner that most benefits them; this may be the final factor to consider when pondering why a text such as Savonarola's exposition was chosen as a subject for musical setting.

And yet, given the accessibility of Savonarola's meditation, it is curious that, to our knowledge, only three 16th-century English settings exist. It would seem a likely text source

³⁴⁴Le Huray, ed., *The Treasury of English Church Music*, p. xiii.

for exiled Protestants in Mary's time, although their heavy focus on the metrical psalter may have precluded other interests. The Puritan insistence on congregational singing and scriptural texts may also have been a factor.

Use of scriptural texts may also have been a consideration for Catholic composers. While Savonarola's words evidently resonated with Byrd as a mirror of the Catholic community's situation, there are multiple settings of *Miserere mei, Deus* in the manuscript collections and perhaps these appeared more valid for use in crypto-Catholic activities. Again, this is all supposition, as we have no documentation for or against uses of Savonarola's exposition outside of its placement in the primers.

Although Savonarola was quite politically driven in his era, it is doubtful that he would have given thought to whether his words (especially at such a stressful time) would be meaningful to future generations. And yet they were significant, in England and elsewhere, for both recusants and reformers.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

See how they go about seeking indulgences and pardons! Come here, go there, kiss St. Peter, St. Paul, this Saint and that! Come, come ring bells, dress altars, deck the churches, come all of ye, for three days before Easter, and then no more. God mocketh your doings, heedeth not your ceremonies, [...] for, Easter passed, ye will be worse than before. All is vanity, all hypocrisy in our times; true religion is dead.

-Fr Girolamo Savonarola, in a sermon on the second Sunday in Lent, 1496³⁴⁵

Savonarola, the proto-reformist yet devout Catholic of late 15th-century Florence, might have been speaking to the opposing factions of the following century's English Reformation when he uttered the words, "true religion is dead." Likely both Catholics and Protestants would have nodded their heads sagely in agreement with the last statement above- at least as it applied to the "other" side.

Church reform in 16th-century England, as on the Continent, was not static but rather a fluid, uncomfortable phenomenon that lasted far beyond the 1500s. The state-supported Anglicans were not of one mind (splitting into conservative and more radical Puritan factions); the Catholics might well be referred to as "radical" in their own right, resorting to an underground movement that was fueled by Jesuit missionaries with an agenda that occasionally clashed with traditional English Catholic thought. At times Protestant and Catholic ideologies merged regarding reforms in music, congregational participation, and promotion of individual reading and study of the Bible.

³⁴⁵ Villari, *Life and Times*, vol. 2, pp. 58-9.

In its structure, this project reflected the schismatic nature of the English church, placing initial emphasis on the devotional documents of the Protestant Church of England and the music found within the metrical psalters. While the historiography of the psalters is important in itself, what is more important to this study is teasing the political aspects out of the psalters. Sometimes this is an easy task, as in “Let Go the Whore of Babilon,” found in Myles Coverdale’s *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*. Other times it is more oblique, as metricization, monophony and simplicity all but neutralized psalm texts such as Psalms 51 and 79. Was this neutralization deliberate? The obvious answer is yes, as the texts and music of the metrical psalters were meant to aid worshippers in their personal devotions and therefore simplicity was considered a must for laity in all levels of literacy and education.

Pleasant neutrality can be an aspect of propaganda and politicization, however, and further investigation into the writings of English reformers might offer elucidation as to whether the metrical psalters (in partnership with sermons, tracts and other writings) went beyond the intent for individual devotion into a more blatant politicism. Jeremy Smith and Timothy Duguid have looked at the chronology of the psalters and the printers and publishers who produced them; perhaps a narrative could be drawn from the personal papers of these printers that would shed light on political directives from church officials regarding their production.

It seems unlikely that the music of the metrical psalters can find a place in performance outside of private or communal worship; however, it is necessary to remember that some of these tunes greatly influenced later hymn tunes. Indeed, the metrical psalters may serve as a cautionary tale about the intertwining of church and state

and the political difficulties inherent in such enmeshing. They also articulate the influence of popular music on sacred music, and illustrate how popular tunes converted to *contrefacta* can [in turn] become popular in their own right, as the psalters were for nearly 200 years.

In seeming opposition to this was exposition on the other half of the story- that of Catholic manuscript collections and the possibility of politically driven usage for them. Again, the historiography is essential, but it gives only part of the story. The coincidence of a thriving recusant community and apparent prolific copying of Latin motets appears to prove that the manuscript collections had a purpose beyond that of wealthy collectors wishing to preserve previous generations' work; that purpose may well have been reeducation and proselytizing of Catholics who had lost many of their traditions, including the musical. Bearing that in mind, the opportunity is rife for more research in this area, as in examining the works of individual composers beyond Byrd and Mundy for hints (or more) of political derivation. While this may be more difficult to ascertain for composers such as Tallis or White given the lack of personal information available, it would be worthwhile to comb the manuscripts, texts, and music for what can be gleaned in this regard.

Scholarship on the motets within these collections is often thirty or more years old, and while the work of scholars such as Joseph Kerman, Philip Brett or Alan Brown is comprehensive, this music deserves a fresh look in regard to its politics. Our current ideas of performance and interpretation of the music of both Protestant and Catholic composers should be colored and shaped by the social and political events that surrounded its creation. This is important not just for its historical significance, but also for its significance

in current socio-political climates. Perhaps an understanding of the politics of sacred choral music in Byrd's time fosters a greater understanding of political choral music in more recent centuries, as found in the work of composers such as Dallapiccola, Distler or even Poulenc. Programming *Infelix ego* as part of a concert of politically driven works allows the motet to find new life not just as a piece of Renaissance church music, but as a symbol of a larger political movement that stretched across borders and time periods and remains relevant today. Considering Byrd's Catholicism and the potential dangers it posed can give new insight when presenting his motets to performers. This applies not just to Byrd's music but to that of other possibly political composers of the time- English or Continental- who were doing more than just writing music for their employer (Church or Crown) by making a statement about the often dire situations in which they found themselves. Through thoughtful regard of not just the time period, text, musical style or genre of a piece but also its situational aspects and by reassigning it to its liturgical context, we can influence thought on how this music affected (and continues to affect) social viewpoints and the multifaceted layers that lie within it.

As in many politically divisive situations, both sides of the religious struggle during the English Reformation used common texts to validate their ideologies. We found this in the writings of Fr Girolamo Savonarola, especially in his prison meditation on Ps. 50 [51]. Protestants such as William Hunnis responded to the reformist thought displayed in Savonarola's work and viewed him as proto-reformist and ante-Protestant. William Mundy's verse anthem raises some unanswered questions about his compositional motivation, as there is evidence of his Catholic sympathies.

William Byrd's *Infelix ego* represents a much more overt Catholicism in its setting. It is difficult to know why Savonarola resonated so strongly with Byrd, as in England the prison expositions were found mostly in Protestant primers and similar documents. Perhaps it was the Continental influence of composers such as Josquin, di Lasso and Willaert who worked in the area of Florence where Savonarola was still revered as a Catholic leader that led Byrd to set the opening of the exposition on Ps. 50 [51], and encouraged copyists to include it in manuscript collections of the Elizabethan era. Perhaps in setting in such a Catholic, polyphonic style what may have been perceived as a more Protestant [reformist] text, Byrd was in essence "thumbing his nose" at the Protestant establishment and attempting to bring Savonarola back to his true Catholicity.

We can only speculate on the religious allegiance of most Elizabethan composers, with the obvious exception of William Byrd. We have no idea how many, if any, of the composers of the psalter tunes or church anthems were writing this music only because it was required of them, although we do know that several composers such as Tallis, Mundy and Byrd were writing both for the state church and the Roman one. This was partially due to regime changes, but as we have seen the Catholic music of Tallis, Parsons, Mundy and White, along with Byrd, was present in multiple manuscript collections during the Elizabethan period. We can also only speculate on the religious views of most of the copyists, as the tumultuous time period in which they lived made it extremely difficult to admit to any Catholic sympathies. Again, however, future research may be able to uncover previously unnoticed commonalities in the manuscripts that offer clues to the true religio-political viewpoints of their creators.

In this project, the concept that metrical psalters and manuscript collections of Latin motets may be interpreted as propagandistic educational tools that pushed the ideals of various religious reforms was identified and expounded upon. Within these documents, one of the most useful means for disseminating the political agendas of either religious sect was apparently the book of Psalms. While both factions recognized the importance of learning the Psalms as a function of individual piety, Catholics responded to the penitential and persecutory elements of individual psalms such as Ps. 50 [51] and 78 [79], relating the stories of these and other Old Testament texts about the captivities of the Israelites to their own situation. We see vivid musical representation of these stories in motets such as William Byrd's *Infelix ego* and *Deus, venerunt gentes*.

On the other hand, the metricized psalms of the Anglican Church seem strangely neutral, with the rhyming singsong verses nearly negating the desperate situations in which Old Testament populations found themselves. This neutralization is political in itself, as it forces the focus of the psalter away from the text into memorization and retention. Use of aids such as rhyming to assist in the memorization of texts, however, was a common educational concept beginning in the medieval era, and the addition of tunes that correlated to popular song ensured the affordable metrical psalters' popularity.

During periods of great political instability, divisiveness is rampant, and the correlations between our own time and that of the Reformation are many. We see examples every day of violence, anger, mistrust, and fear pointed toward those whom we perceive to be the Other, and as in the time of the Reformation often the Other exists in our own community. To whom or what do we turn in this time of confusion and conflict? From whence do we draw hope? Do we allow ourselves to wallow in our selfishness and anger,

or do we, as Savonarola, allow hope to manifest itself as a result of our reaction to ourselves?

I dare not raise my eyes to heaven, for I have sinned seriously against it. I find no refuge on earth, because I have been a scandal to it. What then shall I do? Shall I despair? [...] But what shall I say to you, when I dare not lift up my eyes? I shall pour forth words of suffering; I will beg your mercy and say: **“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your great mercy.”**³⁴⁶

Great emphasis has been placed on the torture and suffering of Savonarola, Jesuits like Edmund Campion, and countless others. Savonarola’s meditation on Psalm 50 [51] is filled with self-loathing and penitence, and it is not unusual that those who read his words would recognize and attach importance to the penitential aspect of them, given that the psalm in question is considered the most penitential of all. It is also not surprising that Byrd chose only to set the opening portion of the exposition, or that in the 20th century Dallapiccola, in his *Canti di prigione*, intertwined Savonarola’s words with the incipit of the *Dies irae* sequence.

However, Savonarola does not write solely from a place of pessimism. Rather, both of his prison expositions end on a hopeful note, as he wrote them to assuage his guilt, to process what was happening to him and to offer a final sermon:

Then will bishops and preachers lay calves upon your altar because, after having been perfected in every virtue and filled with the Holy Spirit, they will not hesitate to lay down their lives for their sheep. [...] then will joy and happiness take over the whole earth; then “will the saints exult in glory and rejoice on their couches” [Ps. 149:5] as they await us in the land of the living.³⁴⁷ (from the meditation on Psalm 50 [51])

My heart was so comforted by these words that I began to sing for joy, saying: “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life, of whom shall I be afraid” [Ps. 27:1]?³⁴⁸ (from the meditation on Psalm 30 [31])

³⁴⁶ Donnelly, *Prison Meditations*, p. 31.

³⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 95.

³⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 141.

Here, perhaps, is the takeaway from many, if not all of the “towering figures” in this study: regardless of what happened to or because of them, there is often an underlying thread of hope in their words and actions. Is it possible to look for the hope in music such as *Infelix ego* rather than dwelling on the misery so apparent at first glance, and can we infuse our performances of this music with that hope? This raises interesting and exciting possibilities for both programming and interpretation, and challenges us to alter our perception of the music, motivation, and even the schism fostered by the English Reformation.

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APPENDIX A: Chronology of Events³⁴⁹

1498	Fr Girolamo Savonarola and two of his Dominican brothers executed by hanging and burning in Florence on May 23 rd .
1509	Henry VIII ascended the throne of England on April 21 st .
1534	“An act concerning the King’s Highness to be Supreme Head of the Church of England and to have authority to reform and redress all errors, heresies and abuses in the same”.
1535	Myles Coverdale’s <i>Goostly psalmes and spirituall songes</i> , published on the model of the Lutheran “geistliche Gesenge”: the collection was subsequently banned by Henry VIII.
1536-40	The dissolution of the monasteries.
1536	Injunctions issued requiring that copies of the Bible, both in Latin and English, be placed in every parish church “for every man that will so look and read thereon”.
1540 or 1543?	Byrd born.
1544	Cranmer’s English Litany published and authorized for general use.
1547	Death of Henry VIII; February 20 th , Coronation of Edward VI.
1547-48	Restrictions imposed (by ecclesiastical <i>fiat</i>) upon the use of florid Latin music.
1548	March: sections of the Mass translated into English and published by authority as the <i>Order of the Communion</i> . May: services at St Paul’s and at some of the London parish churches first said and sung in English.
1549	“An act for the uniformity of service and the administration of the sacraments throughout the realm”, following the use of the English <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> (first published early in 1549). Thomas Sternhold’s <i>Certayne Psalmes, chosen out of the Psalter of David and drawn into English metre</i> , published.
1550	Merbecke’s <i>booke of Common praier noted</i> , published.

³⁴⁹ Partially drawn from Peter LeHuray, ed., *The Treasury of English Church Music*, pp. xv-xvii.

- 1553 Coronation of Mary Tudor, September.
 “An Act for the repeal of certain statutes made in the time of the reign of King Edward VI,” restoring “all such divine service and administration of sacraments as were most commonly used in the realm of England in the last year of the reign of our late sovereign lord King Henry the Eighth...”
- 1558 Elizabeth I proclaimed Queen, November 17th.
- 1559 “An Act for the uniformity of common prayer and divine service in the Church, and the administration of the sacraments”, restoring the *Book of Common Prayer* “so authorized by Parliament in the said fifth and sixth year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth...”
- 1560 Congregational singing becomes very popular in London and in the provinces, based on the metrical psalter of Sternhold and Hopkins.
- 1562 Proposal for the abolition of organs and for the ending of “curious singing” discussed in the Lower House of Convocation (assembly of alleged Puritan bishops), but rejected by a narrow majority.
- 1570 Papal bull *Regnans in Excelsis* issued, excommunicating Elizabeth I and determining that Catholics were no longer required to attend Anglican services.
- 1570s-1580s Jesuit missionaries enter England with the intent of restoring England to Catholicism.
- 1575 The *Cantiones quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur*, published by Byrd and Tallis, Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal.
- c.1575 Non-conformist agitation causes the government increasing concern.
- 1588 The publication of Byrd’s *Psalmes, Sonets, & songs of sadnes and pietie* marks the beginning of a very active period of music printing, lasting some thirty years.
- 1603 James VI of Scotland crowned King of England, on July 25th.
- 1605 Discovery of the Gunpowder Plot.
 Byrd’s first book of *Gradualia* published.
- 1607 Byrd’s second book of *Gradualia* published.

APPENDIX B: Glossary of Terms and Usage

Conformity: According to the 1559 Act of Uniformity, all English subjects were required to reject churches other than the Church of England and attend regularly all Anglican services.

Crypto-Catholic: a person who practices Catholicism in secret.

Gentleman of the Chapel Royal: A musician in the ecclesiastical organization that serves the reigning sovereign.

Lay clerk: A “singing man” in a cathedral or collegiate church.³⁵⁰

Recusancy: the refusal by some 16th-century English Catholics to conform to the Church of England and attend its services, with the possibility of governmental retribution.

Rubrication: the practice of putting some or all of a text in red ink, whether for emphasis or decoration.

Underground: For purposes of this project, “underground” is synonymous with “secret,” referring to a condition rather than a place.

Spelling: due to the lack of standardized English spelling in the 16th century, some names are given in multiple forms (e.g., Merbecke, Merbeck, Marbecke, Marbeck). Primary source quotes are in their original form (with occasional glossing where necessary), with the following exceptions: the long *s* (**f**) and double *v* (**vv**) have been replaced with *s* and *w*, respectively. The letters *u* and *v* are used interchangeably, as are *i* and *j*.

Psalm numbering: Protestant and Catholic churches in the 16th century used differing systems of numbering the Psalms: the Protestants used the Hebrew, or Masoretic system while the Catholics preferred the Septuagint or Vulgate numbering. When referring to specific Psalms in this project, the Vulgate number is listed first, followed by the Masoretic number in brackets: [].

Exposition vs. Meditation: When discussing Savonarola’s prison writings upon Psalms 50 [51] and 30 [31], the words “exposition” and “meditation” are used interchangeably, as they were in 16th century documents- “exposition” being the more common term of the time.

Biblical translations: all modern English translations of scriptural passages are from the Knox Bible (www.newadvent.org) unless otherwise noted.

³⁵⁰ Source: Oxford English Dictionary.