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Materializing Music in the Lutheran Home

I.

Introduction

On 1 June 1562, the 48-year-old Poppo XII of Henneberg-Schleusingen (1513–1574) married Sophie of Braunschweig-Lüneburg (1541–1631) at the castle in Schleusingen, in the Lutheran heartland of Thuringia. Nearly thirty years his junior, Sophie was Poppo's second wife, following the death of his first wife, Elisabeth of Brandenburg, in 1558. Although no information describing the wedding survives, it is clear this was a thoroughly Lutheran union. Formerly a Canon in Cologne and Würzburg, Poppo renounced his position as archdeacon in Bamberg in 1542 and enthusiastically embraced the Augsburg Confession and converted to Lutheranism.¹ Sophie experienced no such conversion, having been born into a Lutheran family as the daughter of Ernst I, Duke of Braunschweig-Lüneburg, whose passion for Lutheranism earned him the sobriquet 'Ernst the Confessor'. Although little is known about the wedding, one remnant of the marriage celebrations is known to us: a tablecloth, presented to the couple as a wedding gift by Poppo's older brother, Georg Ernst of Henneberg, and his wife Elisabeth.² (Illustration 1)

Embroidered in the centre of the tablecloth, which measured 160cm x 180cm, are the bride and groom. Poppo stands tall and straight, his feet spread at shoulder width while his left hand clutches Sophie's wrist. Whereas Poppo's midsection may hint at the rotund, Sophie is short, standing only as high as Poppo's shoulders, with an impossibly thin waist and a

¹ Eckart Henning, *Die gefürstete Grafschaft Henneberg-Schleusingen im Zeitalter der Reformation* (Cologne, 1981), 39–47; Hilde Liederwald, 'Die Ehe des Grafen Poppo von Henneberg mit Elisabeth', *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte deutschen Altertums* 36 (1931), 37–88; also David Voit, *Das Herzogthum Sachsen-Meiningen* (Gotha, 1844), 77.

² Photograph is taken from the unpaginated front matter of Georg Rhau, *Neue deutsche geistliche Gesänge*, ed. Johannes Wolf (Wittenberg, 1544; facsimile edition, Leipzig, 1908).

small dog at her feet. Reflecting the way in which weddings in Reformation Germany helped to define and reinforce the bonds of both family and community, Sophie and Poppo are encircled by figures depicted as taking part in the wedding celebration. Embroidered musicians – alternating male and female – create the inner ring of figures and play a variety of musical instruments, including lutes, violins, harps, a flute, shawm, cornetto and trombone. Such an eclectic consort is likely symbolic rather than documenting the wedding ensemble, as it both resembles a type of aristocratic angel consort and follows the admonition of Psalm 150 that God be praised with the sound of the trumpet, the lute and harp, strings and pipe and with clanging cymbals, indeed ‘everything that has breath’.³ Amidst the psalmist’s litany of musical instruments also appears the command to ‘praise Him with tambourine and dance’, a command taken up by the outer ring of wedding guests. The guests, as if moving to the sound of the wedding music, are arranged into pairs of one male and one female with two exceptions: two male musicians play the trumpet and kettle drum, whilst another male couple holds hands. Aside from the bride and groom, only the givers of this wedding gift are identifiable; Georg Ernst and Elisabeth, wearing laurel wreaths, are situated directly beneath the marital couple in the outer ring.⁴

The anonymous but highly skilled embroiderer or embroiderers – perhaps members of Elisabeth of Henneberg’s *Frauenzimmer*, perhaps accomplished craftsmen in Nuremberg or another centre of linen production, or perhaps Elisabeth herself – also accurately and legibly notated two pieces of music on the tablecloth. The inner ring notates the four-part vocal setting of Luther’s famous paraphrase of Psalm 46, ‘Ein feste Burg’, by the Magdeburg cantor Martin Agricola (1486–1556). Agricola’s setting is the first known polyphonic setting of ‘Ein feste Burg’, and first appeared in Georg Rhau’s 1544 *Neue deudsche geistliche*

³ On angel consorts, see instruments Barbara Drake Boehm, *Choirs of Angels: Painting in Italian Choir Books, 1300–1500* (New Haven, 2009).

⁴ Jacob Heinrich von Hefner-Alteneck (ed.), *Trachten, Kunstwerke und Geräthschaften vom frühen Mittelalter bis Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts nach gleichzeitigen Originalen*, vol. 9 (Frankfurt am Main, 1879-90), pl. 594.

Gesenge, a well-known and influential anthology of vocal music for use primarily in Lutheran schools and churches.⁵ However, Agricola's setting was altered by the embroiderers of the tablecloth who placed the hymn's melody in the alto voice rather than the tenor. As the vocal range of the alto and tenor is nearly identical, this alteration is best understood as symbolic, perhaps of Sophie being the primary recipient of this gift, given that the house mother (*Hausmutter*) often sang the alto part in multi-voice Lutheran domestic singing.⁶

The outer ring notates a piece instrumental consort music loosely based on Luther's hymn, 'Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein', a paraphrase of Psalm 12 found in the early Lutheran hymnbook, the Erfurt *Enchiridion* (1524). This instrumental setting, which at present has no known concordance, syncopates the melody of Luther's hymn and divides the hymn into two sections: a duple-time section in which the discantus part invokes the beginning of Luther's tune before then deviating from the melody, after which the metre changes to triple time and the duple-time material is reworked. This bipartite form makes this consort setting suitable for accompanying a pavan and a galliad, courtly dances popular across Renaissance Europe. In this way, the two fashionable musical settings embroidered onto the tablecloth reveal a cultivated social identity on the part of both the presenters and recipients of the gift. The settings also affirm a shared Lutheran identity that placed value on selecting and re-crafting two hymns whose texts and tunes were written or codified by Martin Luther, and exemplify the way in which music could function across sensory, material, and intellectual dimensions to give voice to religious identity and a sense of Lutheran community.

As mentioned above, we know neither where the tablecloth was produced nor who created it. The composer of the instrumental setting is also unknown, and was perhaps an employee in Georg Ernst's court chapel, the cantor of the Schleusingen Latin school, or the

⁵ VD16 N 569. *Neue Deutsche Geistliche Gesenge CXXIII. Mit Vier vnd Fünff Stimmen* (Wittenberg, 1544). A revised critical edition is *Neue deutsche geistliche Gesänge*, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel, 1969).

⁶ For accounts of this phenomenon, see Linda Maria Koldau, *Frauen—Musik—Kultur: ein Handbuch zum deutschen Sprachgebiet der Frühen Neuzeit* (Köln, 2005), 350; and Stephen Rose, *The Musician in Literature in the Age of Bach* (Cambridge, 2011), 158.

noble givers of the tablecloth, George or Elisabeth, as a display of musical skill and religious devotion. Difficulty in answering these questions is compounded by the fact that the table cloth itself has not survived. Once held in the *Kunstgewerbemuseum* in Berlin, it was destroyed during the Second World War, and knowledge of it today comes from an early twentieth-century photograph and a nineteenth-century illustration.⁷

Despite the distinctiveness of this object, the fact of its existence should not be entirely surprising. Since the Middle Ages, brides received linens and other domestic items as part of the *trousseau*, to be used in their new households.⁸ The tablecloth – while doubtless intended for display on special occasions rather than everyday use – is another example of a rich visual culture in the Lutheran home created through the lavish decoration of domestic interiors and everyday objects.⁹ Moreover, it is unsurprising that the Lutherans involved in this gift exchange should value music. Not only did spinning and needlework often include singing, but scholars have long described the openness of Luther and his followers to domestic music-making, especially in the Lutheran *Hauskirche* and around the family table.¹⁰ Indeed, after 1550 there was a groundswell of printed music books containing so-called table songs (*Tischgesänge*), and the image of music-making at table became fundamental to how Luther was remembered and memorialised after his death.¹¹

⁷ Jacob Heinrich von Hefner-Alteneck (ed.), *Trachten, Kunstwerke und Geräthschaften*, pl. 594. The illustration contains several small alterations compared to the photograph of the table cloth. The illustrator added large floral flourishes to each corner of the table cloth, whereas the photograph reveals the bouquets were embroidered only in the corners of the inner ring of musicians, with the outer corners of the table cloth remaining unadorned.

⁸ On linens in marriage trousseaus in early modern France, see Julie Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy: Gender and the Politics of Household Authority in Early Modern France* (University Park, Penn., 1998), 97–9.

⁹ Andrew Morrall, 'Protestant Pots: Morality and Social Ritual in the Early Modern Home', *Journal of Design History* 15 (2002): 263–73.

¹⁰ Hans Medick, 'Village Spinning Bees: Sexual Culture and Free Time among Rural Youth in Early Modern Germany', in *Interest and Emotion: Essays on the Study of the Family and Kinship*, ed. Hans Medick and David W. Sabeau (Cambridge, 1984), 317–39.

¹¹ The Dutch painting 'Cucina opiniorum' (Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, c.1600–25) shows the pope, Calvin and Luther sitting together in a kitchen. Luther is shown playing a lute as a metaphor for social harmony and a reference to Luther's well-known affection for music. The painting is based on an earlier engraving by Dirk Volkertszoon Coornhert (1522–90).

Moreover, music clearly functioned not simply as an ephemeral aural experience, but emerged in relation to its spatial contexts and was embedded in material objects ranging from songbooks and instruments to everyday household items like ceramics, furniture, and linens.¹² As the work of Flora Dennis has demonstrated, to search for evidence of how music was incorporated into early modern homes is to turn not to the sounds themselves, which have long since died away, but to evidence from material culture. Her investigation of the Italian Renaissance home draws attention to the striking variety of musical objects that both decorated and produced sound in domestic spaces across the social spectrum. Knives bearing musical notation facilitated religious devotion and reinforced rituals of dining, while hand bells and notated fans were mobile objects that were once part of a bustling and noisy household.¹³ Keyboard instruments produced sound when played in the home, but they also functioned as decorative objects. Elaborate depictions of mythological figures on harpsichord lids and the walls of music rooms intensified the sensory experience of listening to the sound of the instrument, while also conveying messages about the unique properties of music as well as the social status of an instrument's owner, even when the instrument sat in the room silently.¹⁴

Despite its significance to Lutheran agendas of social discipline, music in the sixteenth-century Lutheran home has attracted only scattered attention from scholars. Although not placed explicitly within the framework of materiality, the historiography of Lutheran domestic music has relied heavily material culture. Scholars such as Patrice Veit, Christopher Boyd Brown, and Stephen Rose have closely studied the semantic contents as

¹² On the link between sound and physical space, particularly the music room, see Deborah Howard and Laura Moretti (eds), *The Music Room in Early Modern France and Italy. Sound, Space and Object* (Oxford, 2012).

¹³ Flora Dennis, 'Scattered Knives and Dismembered Song: Cutlery, Music and the Rituals of Dining', *Renaissance Studies*, 24 (2010), 156–84; Dennis, 'Resurrecting Forgotten Sound: Fans and Handbells in Early Modern Italy', in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, ed. Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham, 2010), 191–210.

¹⁴ Flora Dennis, 'Musical Sound and Material Culture', in *The Routledge Handbook of Material Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Tara Hamling, Catherine Richardson, and David Gaimster (London, 2017), 370–81.

well as the physical characteristics (namely binding, layout, and format) of music books produced for domestic use, and have demonstrated the foundational role of hymnbooks and other musical-devotional literature to fostering domestic piety among the Lutheran laity.¹⁵

However, a range of other domestic musical artefacts – hitherto overlooked or considered tangential by scholars of Lutheran music – point to a material presence of music in the home far richer than previously acknowledged. This essay brings to light how lay Lutherans embedded music into the material infrastructures of everyday life, and deployed musical objects – ceramics, images, and linens, in addition to books, manuscripts, and instruments – in the process of shaping domestic musical spaces and producing Lutheran soundscapes in the home. At the same time, the performance of domestic sacred music (including singing, playing, and composing hymns) contributed to the production of material objects during the first century of Lutheranism. Considering the materiality of music adds new evidence to the growing body of literature elaborating the rich visual and material culture of the Lutheran home. It also gives a sharper sense of how the Reformation infiltrated domestic and familial spheres of Lutheran private life, and highlights how lay Lutherans understood music as a multi-sensory phenomenon that located confessional and communal identities in images, spaces, and material contexts, not just sound.

II.

Music and Materiality

¹⁵ Christopher Boyd Brown, *Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation* (Cambridge, MA., 2005), 105–29; Stephen Rose, ‘Haus Kirchen Cantorei: Lutheran Domestic Devotional Music in the Age of Confessionalisation’, in *Musik in neuzeitlichen Konfessionskulturen (16.-19. Jahrhundert): Räume – Medien – Funktionen*, ed. Gabriele Haug-Moritz, Michael Fischer and Norbert Haag (Ostfildern, 2013), 103–22. For the seventeenth century, see Patrice Veit, ‘Private Frömmigkeit, Lektüre und Gesang im protestantischen Deutschland der frühen Neuzeit: Das Modell der Leichenpredigten’, in *Frühe Neuzeit – Frühe Moderne: Forschungen zu Vielschichtigkeit von Übergangsprozessen*, ed. Rudolf Vierhaus (Göttingen, 1992), 271–95. Veit, “...daheime seine Zeit mit singen, mit beten und lesen zugebracht”: Über den Umgang mit Kirchenliedern im aussergottesdienstlichen Kontext’, in *Die Quellen Johann Sebastian Bachs – Bachs Musik im Gottesdienst*, ed. Renate Steiger (Heidelberg, 1998), 329–35.

Throughout German lands, music was fundamental to establishing and developing the liturgical and ritual character of early modern confessional churches. However, music was equally powerful for shaping confessional cultures outside the institutional walls of church buildings. The work of Robert Scribner attuned not just our eyes to the visual impact of the Reformation but our ears to the sounds of noisy taverns, dusty streets, and household tables where Lutheran ideas were read aloud, discussed, and debated.¹⁶ Building on Scribner's work, Rebecca Oettinger has provided clear answers to the question of what was sung around the dinner table, in the tavern, and on the streets, and by whom. Contrafacta and other 'political music put the words of theologians into the mouths of farmers, seamstresses, carpenters or milkmaids', and 'overturned the Catholic paradigm of educated clergymen providing all religious information, and opened the ecclesiastical debate to the masses'.¹⁷ Songs and hymns circulated materially as broadsheets, pamphlets, books, and manuscripts, but they also spread ideas and information aurally in open air. One early Lutheran recalled around 1520 how he was moved to embrace Lutheran teaching upon hearing an evangelical song sung by a farmgirl (*grasmait*), as the wind carried the sound of her singing across a field.¹⁸ For this Lutheran believer, as with Scribner and Oettinger, musical sound could cut across an individual's ability to read or purchase printed material, allowing information to flow and creative expression to take place among individuals who could access printed religious material only with great difficulty.

Beyond the charged public arena of the street, market, and tavern, music created a Lutheran domestic soundscape that was at once different, but closely linked, to that of the church. House fathers were to be pastors of their flocks by leading the family in regular scripture reading, prayer, singing and delivering sermons. Lutheran mothers were to attend

¹⁶ Robert Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London, 1987), 59.

¹⁷ Rebecca Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation* (Aldershot, 2001), 50.

¹⁸ Johannes Hasse, *Scriptores Rerum Lustaticarum*, vol. 4 (Görlitz, 1870), 14. I would like to thank Martin Christ for drawing my attention to this account.

public worship and ceremonies, but also, as Christopher Boyd Brown observed, ‘not forget that each is her own preacher, and should speak with her own broken heart, tortured experience and downcast soul, and comfort them out of God’s word’ as found in scripture, hymns, and other devotional reading.¹⁹ This type of domestic ‘self-preaching’ led some Lutheran women and men to exercise their musical ingenuity and religious devotion in composing, re-setting, or compiling vernacular hymns. In 1534, Katharina Schütz Zell – an admirer of Martin Luther – edited and contributed to Michael Weiss’s hymnbook of the Bohemian Brethren for publication in Strasbourg.²⁰ Magdalena Heymair, schoolmistress in Straubing and Cham, composed new hymn texts to existing tunes for use in educational as well as domestic settings, and which initially supported private meetings in Catholic Straubing in which Lutheran women asked questions of one another, discussed Reformation ideas, read scripture, and sang together.²¹ Noble men, women, and children across Lutheran Germany composed original hymn texts and tunes as part of their private religious education, thereby refining practical skills in writing music and poetry, and deepening religious understanding through close engagement with hymn texts.²²

Domestic self-preaching took more everyday forms as well. Katharina Schütz Zell instructed her readers ‘to teach your children and relatives to know that they do not serve human beings but God, when they faithfully keep house, obey, wash dishes, wipe up and tend children’ and that while doing this work ‘they can turn to God with the voice of song’.²³ Here

¹⁹ Boyd Brown, *Singing the Gospel*, 128.

²⁰ Elsie Anne McKee, *Reforming Popular Piety in Sixteenth-century Strasbourg: Katharina Schütz Zell and Her Hymnbook* (Princeton, 1994).

²¹ Boyd Brown, *Singing the Gospel*, 162–66.

²² In Dresden, Saxon court education included music lessons and periods of musical recreation which included the performance and composition of sacred song. Saxon court organist Augustus Nörmiger assembled two manuscript books of keyboard tablature for members of this Lutheran court: in addition to a *Tabulaturbuch* for Christian II of Saxony (1592), he also compiled a *Tabulaturbuch* of Lutheran hymns and psalms (as well as secular dances) for Princess Sophia of Saxony (1598). See Julius Richter, ed., *Das erziehungswesen am hofe der Wettiner Albertinischer (haupt-)linie* (Berlin, 1913), 158–9. On the musical compositions and arrangements by Sophie-Elisabeth of Braunschweig-Lüneburg, see Karl Wilhelm Geck, *Sophie Elisabeth Herzogin zu Braunschweig und Lüneburg (1613–1676) als Musikerin* (Saarbrücken, 1992).

²³ Translated in McKee, *Reforming Popular Piety*, 67.

Zell is echoing Luther's belief that 'the works of monks and priests...do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic labourer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks'.²⁴ Zell then concludes that true belief and faithfulness is shown not in special places by special people, but in everyday tasks and ordinary places: 'the seven holy hours, Mass, vespers, and matins, will be sung thus: the artisan at his work, the maidservant at her dishwashing, the farmer and vinedresser on the farm, and the mother with the wailing child in the cradle'.²⁵ Through encountering and engaging with song in the home and workplace, Zell – following Luther – encouraged readers to see their everyday lives differently. Performing daily activities and engaging with everyday objects like farm tools or dishes were holy occupations, and presented daily opportunities to praise God in song.

Such sixteenth-century directives to fill mundane life with the sound of singing accord with recent scholarship on urban and domestic soundscapes in early modern Europe. Alexander Fisher, Flora Dennis, and Emilie K.M. Murphy have illustrated how domestic devotion filled early modern homes with a wide range of sounds, including singing, instrumentalizing, and bell ringing.²⁶ Homes were filled with other sounds too. Maiolica dishes enabled the performance of polyphonic singing through the musical notation they sometimes bore, but they also produced sound when the dishes were noisily stacked on one another, or when knives clanked against a dish's surface during the meal.²⁷ As Fisher and Murphy advocate, books and manuscripts should not be viewed as mute relics or abstract symbols but, in the words of Bruce Smith, as cues for the production of actual sound.²⁸ Similarly, by viewing domestic objects in light of their 'sound potential', Dennis challenges

²⁴ Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church (1520): The Annotated Luther Study Edition*, ed. Erik H. Herrmann (Minneapolis, 2016), 81.

²⁵ Translation adapted from McKee, *Reforming Popular Piety*, 67.

²⁶ Alexander J. Fisher, *Music, Piety, and Propaganda: The Soundscapes of Counter-Reformation Bavaria* (New York, 2014), 172–8; Emilie K.M. Murphy, 'Adoramus te Christe: Music and Post-Reformation English Catholic Domestic Piety', *Studies in Church History* 50 (2014), 240–53.

²⁷ Flora Dennis elaborates this point in, 'Musical Sound and Material Culture', 371–80.

²⁸ Bruce Smith, 'Listening to the Wild Blue Yonder: The Challenges of Acoustic Ecology', in *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity*, ed. Veit Erlmann (London, 2004), 32–3.

the tendency among historians of early modern culture, art, and music to treat the material culture of the past as largely silent.

Luther considered the sound of music fundamental to spiritual well-being, as sound served to bridge the inner and outer worlds of the believer. In his letter to Ludwig Senfl, Luther expounded on the salutary capabilities of musical sound (as opposed to the other liberal arts) to dispel gloom and the Devil, writing that

the devil, the creator of saddening cares and disquieting worries, takes flight at the sound of music almost as he takes flight at the word of theology. This is the reason why the prophets did not make use of any art except music; when setting forth their theology they did it not as geometry, not as arithmetic, not as astronomy, but as music...proclaimed truth through Psalms and songs.²⁹

To Luther, sound was a carrier of the universal and everlasting Word, but Luther also saw God's design in that each person possessed their own sonic fingerprint based on their level of musical ability and sound of their voice.

[I]f you compare human beings themselves you will see how manifold and varied the glorious Creator is in distributing the gifts of music, how much they differ from each other in song and speech, so that one marvellously excels another, for they say that no two persons can be found alike in all respects of song and speech.³⁰

While the individuality of the voice was evidence of God's workmanship, its sound alone was insufficient for praising God as he deserves. The emotions and the voice should work in

²⁹ As translated in Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music*, 65.

³⁰ Translation taken from Loewe, 'Musica Est Optimum: Martin Luther's Theory of Music', *Music and Letters* 94 (2013), 602.

tandem, ‘lest the people sing only with their lips, like sounding pipes or harps’.³¹ In contrast to Zwingli, for whom music fell under the rubric of silent prayer and did not require the voice to express genuine belief,³² Luther viewed inner belief and outward sound as reciprocal: outward sound prompted the melting of unbelief, which then led the believer to produce audible song.

Music’s ability to soften the heart and stir the emotions was not confined to the voice. One could benefit from the sound of instruments as well. ‘All pious, Christian musicians’, Luther wrote in 1541, ‘should let their singing and playing to the praise of the Father of all grace sound forth with joy from their organs, symphonias, virginals, regals and whatever other beloved instruments there are (recently invented and given by God)’.³³ To Luther, the sound of instruments and voices could intensify or alter an individual’s emotional state, but Luther also implies that the believer should take delight in the physical objects related to music-making. As Robin Leaver keenly observes, Luther held that ‘the development of new and wonderful musical instruments is due to human skill, but the raw materials used to make them’ – which might include wood, paper, metal, or animal product – ‘are the prior gift from God’ and can act as mirrors in which to glimpse the character and goodness of God.³⁴

Luther’s attitude towards music thus included valuing the physicality of music as it existed alongside the ephemeral and intangible nature of sound produced by instruments and bodies. In this way, for Luther one could appreciate not just the sound of the lute through the sense of hearing, but also the instrument’s physical design and appearance: the feel of the pig gut strings under the fingers, and the sight and feel of the wood’s grain. Printed music books and pamphlets not only scripted the production of sound, but were themselves objects of

³¹ Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music*, 9.

³² Charles Garside, ‘The Origins of Calvin’s Theology of Music’, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, 69 (1979), 11.

³³ Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music*, 91.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

beauty and cause for thanksgiving as showcases of man's ingenuity and God's grace.³⁵ Singing melted the hardened and anxious heart, but Luther instructed his followers they should also marvel at the highly physical process by which 'the air, struck with so slight a motion of the tongue and an even slighter motion of the throat, pours forth that infinite variety and articulation of voice and words at the will of the governing soul'.³⁶

Luther goes so far to say that God embedded music into the fabric of the entire physical world, since

you will find that music was impressed on or created with every single creature, one and all. For nothing is without sound, or sounding number, so that the very air, which in itself is invisible and impalpable, and imperceptible to all the senses, and least musical of all things, but utterly mute and of no account, yet in motion sounds and can be heard and even touched.³⁷

With music, Luther saw bodily senses and emotions, audible sound, and the physical world as seamlessly connected, triangulating in such a way that simultaneously displayed God's design and providence, and moved his people to praise him in fitting and creative ways.

Recent scholarship has stressed the importance of music in shaping distinct confessional identities, and has illustrated how singing built bonds across social categories and underpinned religious instruction in the domestic sphere.³⁸ Yet, as the next two sections illustrate, the emphasis scholars have laid on music as sound – at the expense of music's ability to appeal to the other senses – creates a distinction lay Lutherans would not have

³⁵ On the printing press as a gift of God, see Robert Kolb, 'The Book Trade as Christian Calling: Johann Friedrich Coelestin's Admonition to Printers and Bookdealers', in *Books Have Their Own Destiny: Essays in Honor of Robert V. Schnucker*, ed. Robin Bruce Barnes, Robert Kolb, and Paula L. Presley (Kirksville, Mo., 1998), 61–2.

³⁶ Loewe, 'Musica Est Optimum', 600.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 598.

³⁸ Boyd Brown, *Singing the Gospel*, 105–29; Rose, 'Haus Kirchen Cantorei', 103–22.

recognised. In domestic spaces, Lutherans indeed heard music, but they also decorated their homes with musical objects that appealed to the sense of sight and touch. Performing music from books strewn over the household table was powerful for building social connections, but Lutherans also made their ‘social relationships concrete’ through non-sounding activities like signing each other’s music books or giving their books away as gifts.³⁹ In what follows, I offer some preliminary examples of how lay Lutherans in German lands and Scandinavia embedded music in the routines and materials of their domestic environments during the first century of Lutheranism. Using two functions of Sophie and Poppo’s wedding tablecloth as a framework, the first section investigates the visual presence of music in Lutheran domestic spaces by considering musical objects and decorations, while the second concentrates on how materiality allowed music to participate in early modern cultures of the gift.

III.

Music and Lutheran Domestic Interiors

Lutherans made music in nearly every corner of their homes. Dining rooms and parlours echoed with vocal and instrumental music performed either from memory or from hymnbooks, part books, and volumes of table music, as families collectively sang religious songs at table before and after meals and made music during times of recreation.⁴⁰ Although leaving little archival trace, Lutherans doubtless matched Zell’s description of Strasbourg Protestants mentioned above and sang hymns in the kitchen while washing up and in the artisan’s household shop during the workday. Singing also filled private bedchambers, as Lutheran parents sang hymns not only to their children, but also to express their devotional

³⁹ This phrase is taken from Martha Howell, ‘Fixing Movables: Gifts by Testament in Late Medieval Douai’, *Past and Present* 150 (1996), 44.

⁴⁰ Two examples are Joachim Magdeburg, *Christliche vnd Tröstliche Tischgesenge* (Erfurt, 1572); Bartholomäus Gesius, *Christliche Hauß und Tisch Musica* (Wittenberg, 1605).

fervour and fashion their religious identities. The sound of singing also carried from one room to another. In Pomerania, servants of the noblewoman Ursula von Eickstedt (1563–1602) described how the sound of Ursula’s fervent prayers and singing echoed beyond the walls of her bedchamber into the rest of the house.⁴¹

Music was heard throughout the home, but in many homes (especially those of more affluent families) lay Lutherans made music visible as well. Lutherans stored their music books on shelves over dining room tables for easy access, and near the bedside for private devotions in the morning and evening.⁴² In late sixteenth-century Braunschweig, the goldsmith Anton Weidenteich kept his library of forty books (including at least five music books) in a cupboard located in the living room. He also stored a fragile ‘old new-sheet and songs’ safely away in a chest (*Kestlein*).⁴³ Stringed instruments were played in living rooms, bedrooms, and dedicated music rooms, but they also needed storing when not in use. Lutes and viols could be placed in the corner of a room or in a cupboard, but evidence suggests they were frequently hung on walls. An illustration of the domestic music room of Nuremberg organist Paul Lautensack (III) (fl.1579) shows three stringed instruments hanging on the wall underneath a shelf of music books, while a woodcut of Sebastian Ochsenkhun (1521–74), court lutenist to the Lutheran Elector Ottheinrich of the Palatinate, shows a lute on the wall of the Electoral residence in the Heidelberg castle, hanging above two music books.⁴⁴

Musical instruments and books were therefore not isolated domestic objects. They came in contact with, and were displayed alongside, other domestic furnishings which, as

⁴¹ Jonas Gigas, *Eine Christliche Klag und Leichpredigt/bey den gar traurigen Sepulturen und Leichbestattungen der [...] Ursulae/geborne von Blanckenburgk* (s.l., 1602), sig. G4v. This account is discussed in Rose, ‘Haus Kirchen Cantorei’, 110–11.

⁴² A woodcut on the title page of *Colloquia oder tischreden Doctor Mart. Luthers...* (Frankfurt am Main, 1571) shows a shelf of books above Luther’s table, which suggests Luther may have stored some of his books – including possibly his music books – near the table.

⁴³ Michael Hackenberg, ‘Books in Artisan Homes of Sixteenth-Century Germany’, *The Journal of Library History* 21 (1986), 86–7.

⁴⁴ Illustration of Lautensack is found at Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen, Sign. B 534; reproduced in Walter Salmen, *Musikleben im 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1976), 191. Sebastian Ochsenkhun, *Tabulaturbuch auff due Lauten von Moteten frantzösischen-welschen und teütschen geystlichen und weltlichen Liedern...* (Heidelberg, 1558), sig. Z3v.

Andrew Morrall and others have recently demonstrated, were often elaborately decorated with ornamented religious imagery and spiritual messages. In this way, lutes hung on dining room walls next to other household items, such as tile stoves, which were covered with ceramic tiles bearing large numbers of confessionalized images of biblical and contemporary figures, including Luther himself.⁴⁵ Music books were used at dining room tables that were covered with pots, pitchers, cups, and plates decorated with anti-Catholic messages and moralistic verses against drunkenness.⁴⁶ Cupboards and chests in which lay Lutherans stored music books – like the Braunschweig goldsmith mentioned above – were often decorated with passages from scripture and scenes from the Bible. A sixteenth-century chest of Low German origin, for instance, was decorated with Lucas Cranach the Elder's *Law and Gospel*, a painting whose two halves visually presented the Lutheran understanding of Old Testament law and the New Testament grace offered through Christ.⁴⁷ Not only were *Law and Gospel* chests popular domestic items, judging by the roughly thirty surviving chests that survived into the twentieth century, but they often held part of a bride's *trousseau*.⁴⁸ It is therefore possible that the embroidered tablecloth discussed above was stored in a decorated chest that itself also provided a visual religious lesson within the home, and made explicit the Lutheran identity of its owner.

Reflecting the fact that religious instruction in the Lutheran home was as much visual and tactile as heard through the reading and singing of the Word, music provided religious instruction as a visual subject in domestic artworks. Lucas Cranach the Elder's *David and Bathsheba* (1526), part of the interior furnishings of Duke Moritz of Saxony (1521–53) at the

⁴⁵ Claudia Hoffmann, 'Lutherzeitliche Ofenkacheln aus dem Bestand des Kulturhistorischen Museums der Hansestadt Stralsund', *Tagungen des Landesmuseums für Vorgeschichte Halle 1* (2008), 201–8.

⁴⁶ Andrew Morrall, 'Protestant Pots', 270–2.

⁴⁷ Richard Förster, 'Die Bildnisse von Johann Hess und Cranachs Gesetz und Gnade', *Jahrbuch des Schlessischen Museums für Kunstgewerbe und Altertümer 5* (1909), 133. A surviving example is held at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, museum number W.5-1909.

⁴⁸ Ernst Grohne, *Die bremischen Truhen mit reformatorischen Darstellungen und der Ursprung ihrer Motive* (Bremen, 1936), 8.

Schloss Hartenfels in Torgau, depicts a golden lyre in the hands of King David as he overlooks Bathsheba as she is washed by her handmaidens.⁴⁹ (Illustration 2) Cranach added the lyre to this scene (the original text of 2 Samuel makes no mention of a lyre) in order to establish for the viewer that David, not Bathsheba, is the seducer – a crucial detail for understanding the story’s moral. The lyre thus served as a visual cue that served to prevent misunderstandings that may have arisen from viewing the image without knowledge of Biblical story. To Lutheran viewers of the panel, however, the lyre also visually reinforced the moral instruction found in the prefaces of leading hymnbooks and devotional literature warning of the seductive potential of music. Here King David is not soothing an angry Saul by the sound of his harp, but succumbing to temptation and playing the scandalous ‘love ballads and carnal songs’ Luther described in the preface to *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn* (1524) that were so entrenched among German youth.⁵⁰

While this painted wooden panel graced the walls of a single princely residence, the woodcut form Cranach’s *David and Bathsheba* – nearly identical to the panel painting, and in which Cranach also added a lyre – entered the homes of countless Lutherans across the social spectrum, accompanying the Tenth Commandment (‘Thou shall not covet they neighbour’s wife’) in Luther’s *Smaller Catechism* (1529).⁵¹ Through making use of well-known associations of instrumental music and sexual sin, visual culture enabled music to provide spiritual and moral instruction in the Lutheran home even when it was not sounding. Religious and moral instruction concerning music was thus a multi-media and multi-sensory campaign involving vernacular hymn repertoires, printed paratexts, catechetical literature, and visual representations of music’s role in fuelling sinful behaviour.

⁴⁹ Gunnar Heydenreich, *Lucas Cranach the Elder: Painting Materials, Techniques and Workshop Practice* (Amsterdam, 2007), 223.

⁵⁰ Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music*, 18 and 109.

⁵¹ Bodo Brinkmann, ed., *Cranach* (London, 2007), 300.

This multi-media campaign extended to other domestic furnishings as well, as Lutherans across the social spectrum – from craftsmen and artisans to clergy and nobility – adorned their tile stoves with images of music. Tile stoves were frequently installed in living rooms and dining rooms in order to heat rooms where meals and recreation took place. Because stoves were essential domestic objects, central to the physical survival as well as social life of the household, decorative tiles helped to mirror the values and ambitions of a household and, according to David Gaimster, were an effective ‘medium for the introduction of new attitudes and beliefs on to the domestic scene’.⁵²

While ceramic tiles could feature decorations ranging from simple floral designs to scenes from mythology or the Bible, *Musica* – the foremost of the seven liberal arts and the embodiment of harmony and proportion – was a common subject for tiles in Lutheran homes. In the home of Wittenberg printer Johann Krafft (1510–1578), *Musica* appeared on the household stove, alongside tiles celebrating the six other liberal arts.⁵³ (Illustration 3) Depicted against a plain background with her name emblazoned above her head, *Musica* is wearing a dress and a chain necklace and playing a lute, with her head turned to the right in the direction of an open music book.⁵⁴

A similar tile of *Musica* is found on the tile stove in Luther’s living room (the so-called *Lutherstube*) in Wittenberg, the room where Luther sang and played his lute with

⁵² David Gaimster, ‘The Baltic Ceramic Market 1200–1600: Measuring Hanseatic Cultural Transfer and Resistance’, in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, vol. 4, *Forging European Identities* (Cambridge, 2007), 30–58, at 49. See also Hoffmann, ‘Lutherzeitliche Ofenkacheln’, 201–8; Ulrich Lappe, ‘Ein Fund mit spätmittelalterlichen Ofenkacheln aus der alten Universität in Erfurt’, *Alt-Thüringen* 36 (2003), 206–233; and Mirko Gutjahr, ‘Wie protestantisch ist Luthers Müll? Die Konfessionalisierung und ihre Auswirkungen auf die materielle Alltagskultur des 16. Jahrhunderts’, *Mitteilungen der Deutsche Gesellschaft für Archäologie des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit: Religiosität in Mittelalter und Neuzeit* 23 (2011), 43–50.

⁵³ Recently excavated by archaeologists working with the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt.

⁵⁴ See Harald Rosmanitz, ‘Luther und die Sieben Freien Künste: Die Wittenberger Ofenkeramik und ihre Bezüge zu Südwestdeutschland’, in *Mitteldeutschland im Zeitalter der Reformation. Interdisziplinäre Tagung vom 22. bis 24. Juni 2012 in Halle*, ed. Harald Meller (Halle an der Saale, 2014), 193–203, here 200, Illustration 8. An identical *Musica* was used in the Imperial Kitchen, Prague Castle (NPÚ, Inv. No 12491), according to Vladimír Brych, Dana Stehlíková, Jaromír Zegklitz, *Pražské kachle doby gotické a renesanční* (Prague, 1990), 110, plate 255.

friends after meals and conducted his famous Table Talks. (Illustration 4) Installed in 1602 when the *Lutherhaus* operated as a boarding school, the stove displays *Musica* alongside the four evangelists, various figures from the Old and New Testaments, and the six other liberal arts. Given the popularity of tiles celebrating the liberal arts from at least the mid fifteenth century, combined with the desire of University officials to alter the *Lutherstube* as little as possible after his death as the room became a memorial site, it is worth speculating that a tile of *Musica* may also have adorned the stove in use during Luther's lifetime, and that Luther's frequent music-making at table was done so under the watching eyes of *Musica*.⁵⁵

To Krafft, Luther, and their households, viewing *Musica* over meals or during times of domestic recreation affirmed the value they placed on humanistic learning. For Catholics, Calvinists, and Lutherans alike, *Musica* represented proportion in the movement of celestial bodies – the sun, moon and stars – and reinforced the notion that music was fundamental to social harmony and balancing the bodily humours. However, although such humanistic views of *Musica* were both cross-confessional and in circulation in the centuries prior to the Reformation, the meanings and emotions invested in these images and material objects were not universal. As recent research has demonstrated, different people may view the same object differently, and meanings attached to a single object can change over time.⁵⁶ Indeed, over the course of the sixteenth century Lutherans transformed *Musica* into a confessional marker that embodied and epitomised specifically Lutheran understandings of music. *Musica* became increasingly associated with practical musicianship (*Musica Practica*) which permeated music education in Lutheran schools and universities.⁵⁷ In addition, Lutherans confessionalized the image of *Musica* through the creation of *Lady Music* (*Frau Musica*), Luther's metaphorical figure who exemplified the Reformer's belief that music was one of God's most gracious gifts to mankind.

⁵⁵ Stefan Laube, *Das Lutherhaus Wittenberg: eine Museumsgeschichte* (Leipzig, 2003), 93–99.

⁵⁶ Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson, 'Introduction', in *Everyday Objects*, 14.

⁵⁷ John Butt, *Music Education and the Art of Performance in the German Baroque* (Cambridge, 1994), xiii.

Woodcuts of, and laudatory poems to, *Frau Musica* circulated widely in print throughout the sixteenth century. The woodcut of *Lady Music* by Lucas Cranach the Younger, printed alongside a laudatory poem by Luther, first appeared in Rhau's *Newe Deudsche Geistliche Gesenge* of 1544, the same volume from which the tablecloth's vocal setting of 'Ein feste Burg' was taken. (Illustration 5) Influenced by Cranach and Luther's renderings were a later poem by Johann Walter (long-time cantor in Torgau and friend of Luther) and woodcut by Jakob Lucius the Elder, printed in Walter's *Lob und Preis der himmlischen Kunst Musica* (1564).⁵⁸

The visual similarities between the tiles and woodcuts leave little doubt that, in the minds of Lutheran artists, engravers, and craftsmen – and likely many lay Lutherans as well – the humanistic conception of *Musica* and the Lutheran *Lady Music* became closely intertwined. Like Cranach's woodcut, the tiles in the home of Krafft and in the *Lutherstube* portray *Musica* playing a lute and wearing a flowing dress and jewelry, with her eyes gazing distinctly to her right. Moreover, the *Lutherstube* tile combines elements of both Cranach's and Lucius' woodcuts, suggesting both that Cranach and Lucius may have been familiar with *Musica* tiles when creating their images of Lady Music, and that later tile makers used woodcuts of Lady Music as templates in the creation of tiles. Like Cranach's 1544 woodcut, the *Lutherstube* tile shows *Musica* reclining, but her reclining is not done outdoors, as Cranach depicted her, but indoors, following Lucius' representation. Furthermore, not only does the *Lutherstube* tile surround *Musica* with an array of instruments (like the woodcuts of both Cranach and Lucius), but Lucius' woodcut of *Lady Music* further intertwines the two metaphorical figures by including the heading of *Musica*, rather than *Lady Music*.

Compared to *Musica* alone, viewing the tiles as Luther's *Lady Music* projected uniquely Lutheran confessional and emotional messages for residents and visitors of a home.

⁵⁸ VD16 W 1010, unpaginated front matter.

Lady Music embodied Luther's belief that singing softens 'all grief and sorrow' and dissolves all 'grudge, hate, rage, or row'. *Lady Music* instructed Lutherans that, through music, 'the devil's works are confounded' and 'evil murders are avoided'. Luther lauded the faithfulness of *Lady Music*'s praise to God, and viewed it an example Lutherans should follow: 'Day and night she always sings, untiring praise to God she brings. I too will sing my laud and praise, eternal thanks will I thus raise'.⁵⁹ Rather than lamenting the ephemerality of musical sound, as Leonardo di Vinci and others had done, *Lady Music* tiles functioned as a fixed reminder that a household's singing and instrumentalizing, while ephemeral, was part of the eternal and unending song of praise being offered to God by *Lady Music*.⁶⁰

Thus, visual images of music – on tiles, in the pages and display of books, on panel paintings, and on Sophie and Poppo's wedding tablecloth – kept music constantly before the eyes of the household and spoke of music's salutary spiritual and emotional potential. They also served as visual reminders of the importance of music to domestic life. The same Protestant women described by Zell – who sang hymns and psalms around the house while doing the washing up and rocking children to sleep – may have been reminded to do so upon glancing at the image of *Lady Music* adorning their household stoves. Similarly, Luther's warnings against scandalous and carnal songs were encountered in moralistic images around the home, meaning that it was visual images embedded into the physical fabric of the home – not just paratexts in printed music books – that reminded many lay Lutherans day by day of the power of music to alter the emotions and dispel the Devil. And like decorative images from mythology found on Italian keyboards, the visual presence of both *Lady Music* – looking over domestic activities at table – served to intensify and deepen the sensory, emotional, and religious experience of music-making in the home.

⁵⁹ Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music*, 74–5.

⁶⁰ Discussed in Dennis, 'Musical Sound and Material Culture', 371–80.

IV.

Music as Gift

While stove tiles illustrate how some domestic objects in the Lutheran home were stationary, other musical objects were mobile and moved from one person to another. It is the movement of objects—what Arjun Appadurai calls ‘things-in-motion’—that I wish to highlight in this section, given their ability to illuminate the social world in which they circulated.⁶¹ In particular, I will focus on how musical objects circulated within enter early modern cultures of the gift.

Historians have recently viewed gifts as an exciting and fruitful topic of enquiry. Seeking to extend and move beyond the foundational work of Marcel Mauss, Felicity Heal has shown not only the vast array of items presented as gifts across the social spectrum of early modern England, ranging from precious metals to books and food, but also how the gestures and circumstances of giving can be as important as the gifts themselves.⁶² Natalie Zemon Davis has demonstrated the great extent to which paradigms of the gift governed theological and political thought, arguing that the theological debate at the heart of the Reformation was essentially one about gift-giving. Whereas Catholic belief incorporated elements of obligation and reciprocity in which charity and good works towards God and others aided in salvation, Lutherans and Calvinists held that faith in Christ was a gift freely given which required no repayment.⁶³

Extending Davis’s argument, understandings of the gift could also be said to govern Protestant thought and practice about music. Following Mauss, a central tenet of gift theory maintains that the spirit of the giver, including the giver’s social status, remains permanently present in the gift. Applied to music, this theoretical formulation hold true with Luther’s

⁶¹ Arjun Appadurai, ed. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge, 1986).

⁶² Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift Exchange in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2014).

⁶³ Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 2000).

belief that music is a gift from God, and that in the gift of music the believer encounters the *esprit* of God in his ‘absolute and perfect wisdom’, as described by Luther in the *Symphoniae Iucundae* (1538).⁶⁴ Just as gifts necessitate action through reciprocity, encountering the perfect and gracious nature of God through music required the reciprocal act of offering the gift of ‘laud and praise’ to God.⁶⁵

Grounded in these beliefs, Lutheran musicians actively participated in established cultures of gift giving. Musicians in search of employment presented manuscripts or dedicated printed collections to potential patrons in the hope of reciprocation in the form of a permanent position.⁶⁶ Viewing individual musical talents as undeserved gifts from God, composers gave their music away at no cost for the spiritual benefit of fellow believers. As Stephen Rose has argued, Michael Praetorius echoed Luther by claiming he did not want to profit from his publications, instead seeing printed books as the physical means of communicating ‘to everyone all that I know, have learned and can do through God’s grace and blessing’.⁶⁷

While scholarship has concentrated on gifts made by professional musicians, little attention has been paid to musical gifts that were more private, informal, and which took place between amateur musicians. However, inscriptions in surviving music books suggest a vibrant culture among lay Lutherans of commemorating social relationships in musical objects. At the Schulpforta, an Electoral Latin school just outside the Saxon city of Naumburg, pupils exchanged a copy of George Buchanan’s Latin psalter – a common text for instruction in rhetoric, Latin and music – to commemorate the friendship they forged during

⁶⁴ Loewe, ‘Musica Est Optimum’, 602.

⁶⁵ Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music*, 79.

⁶⁶ For an example of compositions presented to potential patrons, see the career of Lutheran musician Johann Knöfel in Christian Leitmeir, ‘Lutheran Propers for Wrocław/Breslau: the Cantus Choralis (1575) of Johannes Knöfel’, in *The Musical Culture of Silesia Before 1742: New Contexts - New Perspectives*, ed. Paweł Gancarczyk, Lenka Hlávková-Mráčková and Remigiusz Pośpiech (New York, 2013), 89–113.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Stephen Rose, ‘The Mechanisms of the Music Trade in Central Germany, 1600–40’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 130 (2005), 31.

their studies which likely included making music together in student residences. An inscription by Joachim von Machwitz reveals that he ‘gave this [psalter] as a gift to his illustrious friend Martin Kilian, out of grateful remembrance, at the moment when he was departing from the Gymnasium [Schulpforta], the year of Christ 1605’.⁶⁸ Unlike the manuscript or printed gifts given by professional musicians which were explicitly designed to solicit reciprocal generosity, the boys, likely early teenagers, exchanged this ordinary, vellum-covered school book, and invested it with emotional value associated with a key moment in their life.

That Lutherans, especially students, commonly archived and commemorated social contacts in their music books is linked to the widespread practice among Protestants of using psalters and hymnbooks as friendship albums (*alba amicorum* or *Stammbücher*). Olaus Lixander, a Swedish student studying in Wittenberg and Rostock in 1599 and 1600, collected signatures and messages from roughly thirty professors and students in his copy of George Buchanan’s Latin psalter.⁶⁹ Another Swedish Lutheran studying in Wittenberg in 1602 kept a musical commonplace book, half of which contained keyboard intabulations of music he encountered during his studies, while fellow students inscribed the other half with messages about proverbs, poems, and quotations about music.⁷⁰ Reflecting the communal character of the musical settings, the many signatures and messages from professors and fellow students made these books not just facilitators of sound but a silent catalogue of their social contacts which he could peruse and show to family and friends after returning to Sweden.

It could be that a desire to seal relationships through signatures was more important for foreign students, who had obviously come from further away than many German students. But as material objects, music books functioned not merely to facilitate musical performance

⁶⁸ British Library, London, Hirsch III.968.

⁶⁹ University Library, Uppsala, Cod. Y. 84.

⁷⁰ University Library, Uppsala, Vok. mus. hs. 132. See Nicole Schwindt, ‘Ein studentisches Vademecum um 1600: Die wenig bekannte Wittenberger Claviertabulatur S-Uu, Vok. mus. hs. 132’, in *Im Dienst der Quellen zur Musik: Festschrift Getraut Haberkamp zum 65. Geburtstag* (Tutzing, 2002), 229–47.

or to script the production of musical sound, as Bruce Smith and others treat them.⁷¹ Instead, these material artefacts counteracted the ephemerality of musical sound and the temporary nature of student relationships – the books, with their numerous signatures and messages, serving as enduring tokens of the student relationships formed over what was likely hours of music-making. Moreover, the signatures in these music books, particularly by professors, have resonances with the ‘grapho-relic’ culture described by Ulinka Rublack, and helped to undergird Lutheran word-based identity and memory culture.⁷²

As mentioned above, professional musicians frequently sent their compositions as gifts to potential employers – be they noble patrons or town councils – in the hope of permanent employment. But manuscripts were also presented as gifts by non-professionals, as an expression not just of skill but of religious devotion and confessional identity. The Lutheran noblewoman, Anna zu Solms-Lich (1522–1594), presented her arrangement of the popular Lutheran funeral hymn ‘Herr Christ, wahr’ Mensch und Gott’, to the Palatine Administrator, the staunchly Calvinist Johann Casimir (1543–1592), at the death of Anna of Denmark (1532–1585), the Electress of Saxony and mother of Johann Casimir’s Lutheran wife, Elizabeth of Saxony (1552–1590).⁷³ The hymn was originally penned by Wittenberg theologian Paul Eber, but Anna altered the rhyme scheme and replaced the original tune ‘Vater unser im Himmelreich’ with the fashionable Italianate secular tune ‘Venus du und dein Kindt’ by Jacob Regnart (c.1545–1599), Kapellmeister to Habsburgian courts in Prague and Innsbruck.⁷⁴ At the end of the manuscript is Anna’s autograph with a message to Casimir

⁷¹ See footnote 28

⁷² Ulinka Rublack, ‘Grapho-Relics: Lutheranism and the Materialization of the Word’, *Past and Present*, Supplement 5 (2010), 144–66.

⁷³ University Library, Heidelberg, Cod.Pal.Germ.734.

⁷⁴ Regnart’s ‘Venus du und dein Kindt’ first appeared in print in German-speaking areas in *Kurtzweilige teutsche Liedlein nach Art der Neapolitanen oder welschen Villanellen* (Nuremberg, 1574). RISM A/1 R 742.

which reads: ‘Lord, by your will, Anna countess of Hohenloe, born countess of Solms, etc., I dedicate this to your Grace, from your servant, with faithful heart so God knows’.⁷⁵

This re-working of a well-known Lutheran funeral hymn not only conveys the message that its author was concerned with grieving in a devout way, but also suggests that she gave some thought to accommodate the desires and tastes of the gift’s recipient, a staunch Calvinist. Hymnbooks from around Calvinist Germany reveal (including Herborn and Heidelberg, for instance) reveal that Eber’s funeral hymn had a wide cross-confessional appeal as early the 1570s, and found regular use among German Calvinists. Re-crafting this hymn, like the altered hymn settings featured on the tablecloth, helped Anna to create a genuinely unique gift that showcased her own creativity and musical ability.

Taken together, the notated tablecloth, the inscribed psalters, and Anna zu Solm’s Lich’s manuscript demonstrate the importance of musical objects for creating and maintaining social networks outside the church doors. These networks included members of one’s own confessional church, but as Anna’s manuscript illustrates, musical gifts bound individuals together across confessional lines. All three objects were exchanged at key moments in the life cycle of the givers or recipients – a wedding, a funeral, and a graduation ceremony, moments which the institutional Lutheran church marked through special musical provisions. It is unknown whether the music on the tablecloth or Anna’s manuscript was ever performed. To emphasise this question, however, runs the risk of reducing these artefacts merely to their semiotic function, and missing not just the emotional and functional value Lutherans invested in these musical objects, but also the belief among Lutherans that the semantic contents of music books were alterable as a platform for their own creative and devotional activities as explored in the private sphere of the home.

⁷⁵ University Library, Heidelberg, Cod.Pal.Germ.734, 84^v. ‘Her[r] in deynem willen, Anna greffin von hohenloe geborne greffin von Solmes &c widme ewer furstliche genaden vnderthenige deinen mitt trewem hertenzen das erken gott’.

V.

Conclusion

Using a range of hitherto unknown and overlooked objects, this essay has argued that the presence of music in the Lutheran home was far more pervasive and multi-sensory than previously acknowledged, as lay Lutherans cultivated a domestic musical life that spoke across the senses of hearing, seeing, and touch. Although this essay has concentrated on the Lutheran household, it should also be clear that music, just as it spoke across the senses, also spoke across different musical media and the institutional cleavages of home, church, and school. Images of *Lady Music* adorning the home, not to mention the musical setting of ‘Ein feste Burg’ notated on the tablecloth, were drawn from the *Newe deudsche geistliche Gesenge* (1544), a publication of polyphonic music composed both for performance in church and for musical instruction in schools. Moreover, although this essay has examined musical objects beyond their semiotic functions, they should nevertheless be viewed as closely connected to, not independent from, performance. As the two students in Naumburg illustrate, the regular singing in the classroom and student rooms brought individuals into relationship, which preceded commemorating the social bond in a material thing. Yet the tablecloth demonstrates that the opposite was also true. The gift of a musical object served to mark the changing relationship between the marriage couple and their families, and preceded a union that was to result in a household filled with devotional singing.