

Hieronimus Weller's Job Commentary: a new source for Luther's *Encomion musices**

By Derek Stauff

Luther's most well-known remarks on music, now known as the *Encomion musices*, have come down to us thanks to a handful of 16th- and 17th-century printed sources. These sources transmit three basic versions, one in Latin and two in German, each with small but significant differences. Since the 18th century, scholars have worked to explain the relationship between these versions, but their efforts have created much confusion.¹ Thanks to a new source, however, one of these versions now appears less authentic, representing not a lost draft by Luther himself, as some have believed, but rather the work of a translator from nearly thirty years later. In the end, the relationship between and transmission of the different versions can now be explained with greater clarity.

Two of the three versions are clearly connected. The first and earliest published source is a Latin version printed as a preface to Georg Rhau's motet collection, *Symphoniae iuncundae* (Wittenberg, 1538). Scholars both recent and from the past several generations have taken many significant steps toward understanding Rhau's print, the context in which he worked,

* This study has benefitted from the comments and encouragement of Robin A. Leaver and Daniel R. Melamed.

1 Robin A. Leaver's recent book goes a long way toward clearing up these problems. See R.A. LEAVER, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (LQB), 2007, 10–12; Leaver also offers transcriptions and translations of two versions of Luther's *Encomion* in his appendix 3. The most recent examination of Luther's *Encomion* places it in the context of the late-medieval quadrivium: J.A. LOEWE, 'Musica est optimum': Martin Luther's Theory of Music (*Music & Letters* 94:4, 2013, 573–605).

and the influence of his collections.² Yet the authenticity of Luther's Latin preface has not attracted controversy ever since Georg Kawerau edited it for the Weimar Luther Edition.³ The second source, clearly taken from Rhau's Latin, is Johann Walter's German translation from nearly thirty years later, which appeared as a preface to his *Lob und preis der Himlischen Kunst Musica* (Wittenberg, 1564). This version, too, has aroused little debate.⁴ By contrast, the third, a German version much shorter than the others, has sparked more discussion. Until now its earliest source was thought to be the preface to Wolfgang Figulus's 1575 motet collection *Cantionem sacram*. Prior to the 1970s, scholars did not consider this version significant. Kawerau, for example, knew Figulus's version and correctly recognized its differences from Rhau and Walter, but included only a single short sample in the edition's critical notes.⁵ The musicologist Walter Blankenburg, however, revisited the issue in a 1972 article and touted Figulus's version as Luther's original draft.⁶ Since then his ideas have gone unchallenged.

A new source, though, refutes Blankenburg's claims. In his 1565 commentary on Job, the Lutheran theologian Hieronymus Weller introduces

- 2 The most extensive source of information on Rhau's collection itself is found in HANS ALBRECHT's modern edition Georg Rhau. Musikdrucke aus den Jahren 1538 bis 1545 in praktischer Neuauflage, Band III: Symphoniae Iucundae, 1959; for more on Rhau's work in general see MARTIN GECK's article on Rhau in MGG²; and M. SCHLÜTER, Musikgeschichte Wittenbergs im 16. Jahrhundert. Quellenkundliche und sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchungen (Abhandlungen zur Musikgeschichte 18), 2010; Johannes Schilling has also recently documented the provenance of many surviving copies, showing the extent to which the print found its way into the libraries of pastors, church choirs, and schools: J. SCHILLING, Die erhaltenen Exemplare von Georg Rhau's *Symphoniae iucundae* (1538) und Martin Luthers Vorrede (in: Buchwesen in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit. FS H. Claus, hg. v. U. WEISS, 2008, 251–265).
- 3 G. KAWERAU, Praefatio zu den Symphoniae iucundae (in: WA 50; 366); both Schilling and Leaver also reprint the Latin text with their own German and English translations respectively.
- 4 Kawerau thought Rhau's Latin the most authentic but acknowledged the significance of Walter's translation by including all of it in a footnote paralleling the Latin: »So ist uns kein Zweifel, daß der lateinische Text das Original bietet, um aber das Urteil über diese Streitfrage zu erleichtern, teilen wir auch Walters deutschen Text mit«. WA 50; 366.
- 5 Ibid., 367.
- 6 W. BLANKENBURG, Überlieferung und Textgeschichte von Martin Luthers *Encomion musices* [Lu] 39, 1972, 80–104].

what appears to be an extensive remark on music by Luther.⁷ (See Table 1 for a complete list of all sources; the appendix below reprints the excerpt from Weller's commentary.) Weller turns out to present a previously unknown source for the *Encomion musices* in a version almost identical to Figulus's. Details in both sources, further, suggest that Figulus borrowed Weller's quotation wholesale and that neither likely drew on a lost draft, as Blankenburg thought. Instead, it most likely originated as Weller's own abbreviated translation from Rhau's Latin.

Ultimately, as a source for Luther's own words, Weller's quotation has little value. But as a barometer for later Lutheran views on music, it still has significance. In the age of confessionalization, Lutherans adapted Luther to defend their own music. Unlike Rhau's Latin version, Weller's translation explicitly defends music in formal worship – one reason later composers like Wolfgang Figulus, Michael Praetorius, and Tobias Michael reprinted it along with their music.

I A Lost Urfassung?

Blankenburg's main conclusion – that Figulus's preface stems from Luther's lost German draft – arose from several divergences he noticed between the three versions known to him. Figulus presents a text clearly related in structure and content to Rhau and Walter, but its differences are striking: it is not only shorter and simpler but also contains a few passages without parallel in the others. Figulus, moreover, uses entirely different German wording from Walter with two exceptions: both have almost identical beginnings and endings. This parallel only occurs in the two German versions. Finally, both Walter and Figulus seem to offer the contradictory claim to print Luther's remarks in German for the first time.

Blankenburg argued that this evidence pointed back to an older source on which Figulus, Walter, and Rhau each drew to varying degrees. For Blan-

7 HIERONYMUS WELLER, *Der ander Theyl des Buchs Hiob / darinnen begriffen ist die Außlegung vom dreyzehnden Capitel an / biß ins zwey vnnd zweintzigste* (Nürnberg, Ulrich Newber und Johann vom Bergs Erben, 1565), Vviv^v-Xxii^v; digital copy available online courtesy of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb11117012_00002.html

kenburg, the two German versions do not share identical beginnings and endings because one borrowed from the other. Instead, he claimed, both arrived at identical wording independent of each other by drawing on an even older, now-lost source. Blankenburg could imagine no reason for Figulus to borrow such trivial passages directly from Walter, even though Walter's translation had appeared years before.⁸ The few unique passages in Figulus's text further suggested to Blankenburg that it drew on an unknown source independent of Rhau or Walter. Blankenburg was convinced based on writing style that this unknown source was no second-hand translation but rather from Luther's own pen.⁹ Because Figulus's version was much shorter than Rhau's, Blankenburg believed it to be what he called Luther's *Urfassung* or original draft.

Figure 1 presents a model for the work's transmission based on Blankenburg's argument. The dotted line indicates a source consulted but only partly adopted. Thus Walter, according to Blankenburg, knew the *Urfassung* but rejected most of it in favor of Rhau's preface.¹⁰

Even without new information about Figulus's likely source, Blankenburg's argument and the model presented in Figure 1 rest on shaky ground. First, it depends on the assertion that Figulus's version is so stylistically close to Luther's German that it must have stemmed from the reformer's pen. As

8 BLANKENBURG, Überlieferung (see n. 6), 88: »Was ist aus der Übereinstimmung der Grußformeln bei Walter und Figulus zu entnehmen? Schwerlich, daß der Meißner Kantor [Figulus] Walters Druck von 1564 als Vorlage benutzt hat! Daß er diesen gekannt hat, ist freilich zu vermuten. Liegt doch Torgau, der langjährige Wohnsitz Walters mit Ausnahme seiner Dresdner Hofkapellmeisterzeit von 1548 bis 1554, nicht sonderlich weit von Meissen entfernt, und wissen wir doch zudem, welche große Beachtung die Werke des protesantischen Urkantors [i.e. Walter] zu ihrer Zeit in den reformatorischen Kernlanden und weit darüber hinaus gefunden haben [...]. Sollte hingegen Walter diese Urfassung des ›Encomion‹, wie wir sie nennen möchten, nicht gekannt haben? Doch, er hat sie sicherlich seinerseits gekannt; denn wenn man nicht annehmen kann, daß Figulus lediglich die Grußformeln und ein paar wenige andere Wendungen von Walter übernommen hat (welchen Grund sollte er dafür gehabt haben?), dann bleibt nur die Erklärung, daß diese aus der Urfassung des ›Encomion‹ stammen.«

9 Ibid., 87: »Der Text, den Figulus bietet, ist überhaupt keine Übersetzung, sondern ein originaler Text, den er jedenfalls für einen des Reformators gehalten hat.«

10 Following this model, Luther himself used his own draft to create the Latin preface for Rhau.

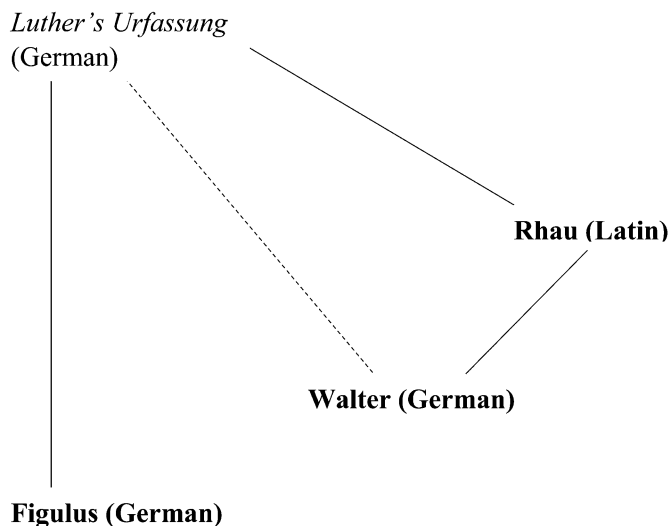


Figure 1: Model for the transmission of Luther's *Encomion* based on Blankenburg

evidence, Blankenburg merely offered thanks to Dr. Peter Krause, who just seconded the opinion that Figulus's text was no translation.¹¹ Even if he had demonstrated clear similarities, this method has only limited use in proving authenticity, especially because so many of Luther's pupils and friends adopted his expressions and phrases.¹² Thus, even if Blankenburg's evidence pointed to a lost version of the reformer's remarks, the mere fact that it appears in a style close to Luther's German offers little proof of its authenticity.

Blankenburg's argument, secondly, assumes that Luther's original draft would have been in the vernacular.¹³ Scholars of Luther, however, no longer

¹¹ This was probably the same Krause who served as research associate at the Leipzig Musikbibliothek; *ibid.*, n28.

¹² KAWERAU (see n. 3), 365.

¹³ Some confusion about the *Encomion* came from scholars who argued for the priority of German versions over the Latin, assuming that Luther originally wrote his first thoughts in German (see LEAVER [see n. 1], 11f). Hans Albrecht, Bärenreiter's editor for Rhau's *Symphoniae jucundae*, even claims that the *Encomion*'s printed sources go back to a

automatically assign priority to Luther's German.¹⁴ He was clearly bilingual and did not need to write out German drafts before translating them into Latin. In some cases, he did the opposite. For example, he penned his famous letter to Pope Leo X in Latin and then released a German translation.¹⁵ Hence, we cannot assume that Figulus's version represents Luther's earliest or most authoritative thoughts on the matter simply because of its language.

Finally, there is a simpler explanation to Blankenburg's belief that Johann Walter consulted an *Urfassung* while still using Rhau as his main source. Blankenburg worked under the assumption that both Walter and Figulus copied exactly what they saw in their sources with scholarly diligence. Following this logic, because the two German prefaces conclude with the place and date (»Geben zu Wittenberg / Im 1538 Jahre« and »Wittenberg 1538« respectively), while Rhau's preface proper does not, they must point to an earlier source independent of the Rhau. This reasoning is not difficult to refute. Walter did not need to turn to a lost *Urfassung* for some of the information missing from Rhau's preface. He could just as easily have found the place and date given in the *Symphoniae iucundae*'s colophon. To suggest, as Blankenburg does, that Walter consulted an *Urfassung* for these details while still taking the bulk of Rhau as his main source offers a complex solution when a simpler one is readily available.

II Weller's Commentary as Figulus's Source

Blankenburg acknowledged the weaknesses of his argument but held to it, in part, because he could not explain why Figulus borrowed only a few phrases from the beginning and end of Walter's translation.¹⁶ Had he known

Greek draft; (ALBRECHT, *Symphoniae Iucundae*, XII). Perhaps he confused the *Encomion* with Luther's unrelated draft for a proposed treatise on music, which contains a Greek title (LEAVER [see n. 1], 86; WA 30,2; 696).

¹⁴ Cf. B. STOLT, Studien zu Luthers Freiheitstraktat mit besonderer Rücksicht auf das Verhältnis der lateinischen und der deutschen Fassung zu einander und die Stilmittel der Rhetorik (Stockholmer Germanistische Forschungen 6), 1969, 7.

¹⁵ WA 7; I–II, 39–49.

¹⁶ BLANKENBURG, Überlieferung (see n. 6), 88f: »Natürlich könnte Walter bei seiner Übersetzung von sich aus das Erscheinungsjahr des Rhauschen Drucks der »Symphoniae

about Weller's commentary, which appeared in print a decade before Figulus's preface, he might have discovered a plausible reason: Weller's commentary is missing the very spots that, in Figulus's text, mirror Walter. The way the two older sources – Weller and Walter – line up in Figulus's preface suggests that he borrowed directly from these two sources only rather than from an *Urfassung*.

As a source for Luther's remarks, Weller's quote had one major drawback: unlike Rhau or Walter, it was incomplete, lacking Luther's salutation and breaking off with an »etc.« shortly before the end. In its context as a quotation in the midst of Weller's commentary, this makes sense, but assuming Figulus needed to use it on its own, the quotation is unsuitable. Faced with this problem, he appears to have drawn on Walter's translation to give Weller's version the guise of a complete letter. This explains why Figulus borrowed from Walter only at the preface's beginning and end.

Comparison of the three texts (see Tables 2 and 3) reveals Figulus's methods. As Table 2 reveals, apart from wording on the title page, which Figulus probably translated from Walter's German back into Latin,¹⁷ he presents Luther's greeting using Walter's exact wording. Yet after the salutation, Figulus's text diverges from Walter's and begins to directly parallel Weller's until the end. Table 3 shows similar features for the conclusion. Unlike the opening, however, Figulus had to exercise some creativity to

iucundae· hinzugefügt haben; wahrscheinlicher aber ist doch, daß er Anfang und Schluß von der Urfassung des ›Encomion‹ übernommen hat, während sein eigentlicher Text eine etwas weiter ausgeführte Übersetzung, die aber zweifellos noch als eine solche anzusprechen ist, darstellt.« Blankenburg also seems to caution that the evidence above does not definitely point to an *Urfassung*: »Nun soll freilich nicht der Eindruck erweckt werden, daß die Existenz einer Urfassung des ›Encomion‹ durch die bisherigen Ausführungen bereits mit Sicherheit nachgewiesen sei. Es lassen sich auch Argumente ins Feld führen, die für Walter als Autor der Grußformeln sprechen können, womit freilich deren Verwendung bei Figulus rätselhaft bliebe. Bei dem Gruß zu Beginn fällt der Begriff ›freie Kunst Musica‹ auf, der für Walter, nicht jedoch für Luther charakteristisch ist« (ibid., 89).

- 17 This created confusion for Blankenburg because Figulus's title page claimed that the German preface by Luther had not appeared in print before. Given Figulus's sources, his claim to offer something not previously published is false. But considering his method of borrowing from Walter, the most likely explanation is that he simply took Walter's title page as a model just as he did the headings and conclusion.

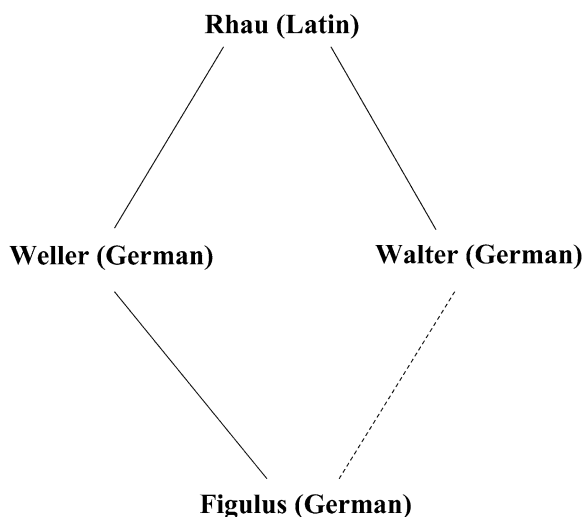


Figure 2: New Model for the Transmission of Luther's *Encomion*

dovetail one source with the other. Weller's quote breaks off with an »etc.,« but unfortunately Walter offered no easy spot at which to pick up. Instead, Figulus prints the relative clause, »welcher ein Feind Gottes [ist],« part of which he seems to have added himself. Other than this minor alteration, Figulus used the same procedure at both ends of Weller's quotation: where Weller's text was incomplete, he turned to Walter to fill in the gaps.

Following this reasoning, Figure 2 shows a new model for the *Encomion's* transmission. If this explanation is correct, Figulus can no longer be regarded as the primary source for Luther's *Urfassung*, since he derived his entire preface from existing printed texts. By itself, this does not negate the whole notion of a lost draft. Weller, rather than Figulus, could have printed the true *Urfassung*.

The most striking evidence for this still seems to be the number of occasions where one or more of the German versions convey ideas not clearly paralleled in the Latin, but the evidence is not conclusive. In one case, for example, Walter and Weller offer significant elaboration. Rhau's paragraph beginning with »Honorat eam ipse Spiritus sanctus« merely mentions Elisha

and Saul, while both Walter and Weller elaborate the stories in 2 Kings 3 and 1 Samuel 16 respectively. The Latin merely says: »ut in Eliseo videre est,« and »ut in Saule rege Israel monstratur.«¹⁸ Walter, however, gives a more detailed account:

As we see in the Prophet Elisha, who, when he wanted to prophesy is said to have commanded that they bring him an instrumentalist, and when the instrumentalist played on the strings, the hand of the Lord came upon him, etc.¹⁹

Likewise, he expands the account of Saul and David. Weller, who reverses the two stories, is strikingly close in word and meaning to Walter: »The same when the Prophet Elisha wanted to prophesy, he commanded that they ought to bring him an instrumentalist, who played on the harp.«²⁰

These divergences from the Latin might suggest an unknown model on which both drew, but other explanations also make sense. Their similar wording might mean that Weller borrowed and paraphrased passages directly from Walter, whose preface appeared the year before his commentary. Even more likely, either author could have simply amplified each story himself for the benefit of the lay reader. Both accounts frequently appear in writings about music from this era and come from well-known passages of

18 Rhau, WA 50; 371,9–13: »Honorat eam ipse Spiritus sanctus, ceu sui proprii officii organum, dum in scripturis suis sanctis testatur, dona sua per eam Prophetis illabi, id est omnium virtutum affectus, vt in Eliseo videre est, Rursus per eandem expelli Satanam, id est omnium vitiorum impulsorem, vt in Saule rege Israel monstratur.« (emphasis added)

19 Walther, WA 50; 371n,25–35: »Ja der heilige Geist / lobet vnd ehret selbs diese edle Kunst / als seines eigenen ampts Werckzeug / in dem / das er in der heiligen Schrift bezeuget / das seine Gaben / das ist / die bewegung vnd anreizung / zu allerley tugend / vnd guten wercken / durch die Musica / den Propheten gegeben werden / Wie wir denn im Propheten Elisa sehen / welcher / so er weissagen sol / befiehlt er / das man jm ein Spielman bringen sol / Vnd da der Spielman auff der Seiten spielet / kam die Hand des HERRN auff jn etc. Widerumb zeuget die Schrift / das durch die Musica / der Sathan / welcher die Leute zu aller vntugend vnd laster treibet / vertrieben werde / Wie denn im Könige Saul angezeigt wird / vber welchen / wenn der Geist Gottes kam / so nam Dauid die Harffen / vnd spielet mit seiner Hand / so erquicket sich Saul / vnd ward besser mit jm / vnd der böse Geist weich von jm.« (emphasis added)

20 Weller: »Der heylige Geyst ehret sie selbst / vnnd hebt sie hoch / da er zeuget / wie der böse Geyst von Saul gewichen sey / wenn Dauid auff der Harpfen schlug. Item da der Prophet Elisa weyßsagen solte / befalhe er / man solte ihm ein Spielman herbringen / der auff der Harpfen schlug.«

scripture.²¹ Because these stories are quite common, and both Weller and Walter use different wording, in all likelihood neither author needed to consult a lost version to create such parallels.

One major section in Weller's version, however, has a direct parallel neither in Rhau nor in Walter, potentially pointing to an unknown source. This is the section on the nightingale:

Ah, how delightful a music is it with which the Almighty Lord in heaven has blessed his song-master, the dear nightingale, together with her young students and so many thousand times thousand birds in the air, that each species has its own manner and melody, its delightful sweet voice and fantastic coloratura, which no man on earth can fathom nor attain.²²

Both Rhau and Walter mention birds and quote Psalm 104 (»By them the birds of heaven have their habitation; they sing among the branches«), but neither mentions the nightingale or the uniqueness of every bird's song. As Blankenburg claimed, this passage might point back to a lost source. If Weller had been a diligent copyist, transcribing only the text presented to him, this reasoning might make sense. Judging by the way he handles other quotations in his commentary and considering the expectations of his readers, Weller's methods were very different. In the end, the context in which Weller introduced his quotation of Luther casts further doubt on his reliability as a direct source for a lost version. Rather, he probably created this version himself by translating loosely from the Latin.

21 Either author, in addition, could have found a passage in Luther's *Von den letzten Worten Davids* (1543) in which both stories appear in the same breath. WA 54; 33,39–34,7: »Doch hilfft die Musica, oder noten, als ein wunderliche Creatur und gabe Gottes seer wol dazu, sonderlich wo der hauffe mit singet, und fein ernstlich zu gehet. Denn so lesen wir vom Propheten Eliseo 4. Re. 3., das er durch das Psalterspiel (da man freilich Psalmen auff gespielet hat, nach der ordenung Davids) den Geist der weissagung in sich erwecket, Wie auch David mit seinem Psalter spiel offft den bösen geist Saul veriaget, oder doch hindert oder schwechet, lesen wir j. Re. 16. Denn dem bösen geist ist nicht wol dabey, wo man Gottes wort im rechten glauben singet oder predigt.«

22 Weller: »Ach wie ein herrliche Musica ists / damit der allmechtige Herr im Himel / seinen Sangmeyster / die liebe Nachtigal / sampt ihren jungen Schülern / vnnd so viel tausent mal tausent vögel in der lufft begnadet hat / da ein jedes geschlecht seine eygene art vnnd Melodey / seine herrliche süsse stimm / vnd wunderliche Coleratur hat / die kein mensch auff erden begreyffen noch erlangen kan.«

III Weller's Quote in the Context of his Commentary

In presenting Luther's text, presumably from Rhau's Latin, Weller probably took many liberties, but this makes sense given what we know about his methods of translation, quotation, and citation in the rest of his commentary as well as 16th-century habits of translation in general. Indeed, he even may have molded Luther's remarks to help support his larger exegetic aims.

To those expecting a faithful transmission of Luther, this can be troubling, but for the 16th century, it is not exceptional. What we know about 16th-century methods of translation is best summed up by Peter Burke: »Despite frequent references to the ›laws‹ of translation, the early modern culture of translation was one of relative freedom.«²³ Burke contrasts the literal medieval practice with a post-medieval emphasis on translating the sense of the original. Luther's own *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen* ridiculed those who would have him adopt a literal translation of the Bible rather than adapt it to idiomatic German. Of course, the kind of document being translated shaped the translator's methods. In Luther's own estimation, his translation of the Bible demanded careful attention to the literal meaning, even when he ended up diverging from it.²⁴ When translating less significant texts, Luther and his contemporaries might take more liberties. As Burke summarizes,

What were described at the time as ›translations‹ often differed from the originals in major respects, whether they shortened the texts or amplified them. Changes of this kind were often made without warning the reader.²⁵

All this suggests that Blankenburg's assumptions about faithful scribal transmission might be anachronistic.

23 P. BURKE, *Cultures of Translation in Early Modern Europe* (in: *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by DERS./ R. PO-CHIA HSIA, 2007, 7–38), 26.

24 WA 30,2; 640,19–22: »Doch hab ich widerumb nicht allzu frey die buchstaben lassen faren, Sondern mit grossen sorgen sampt meinen gehülffen drauff gesehen, das, wo etwa an einem ort gelegenn ist, hab ichs nach den buchstaben behalten, und bin nicht so frey davon gangen [...]«.

25 BURKE (see n. 23), 31.

We cannot even assume that Weller drew only from Rhau's version of the *Encomion*. The portions of Weller's version without parallels in either Rhau or Walter may have been drawn from another source, Luther's famous *Frau Musica* poem, which first appeared in print in 1538.²⁶ In addition to recounting the stories of David and Elisha, Luther here introduces the example of the nightingale. Although Weller's words do not match Luther's *Frau Musica* poem exactly, he may have conflated some of the ideas in it with portions of the *Encomion*.

Beyond general habits of translation and the possibility that Weller conflated multiple sources, his intended readership may have pushed him to modify Rhau's version. His primary purpose is exegesis, as the title page to his second volume makes clear. Yet while his three volumes offer verse by verse explanations of Job, his audience was not fellow theologians or pastors but lay readers. In contrast to learned commentaries, Weller's style is in plain German, he introduces Greek and Latin sparingly, and his citations of the Bible, church fathers, and Luther are informal and often presented in indirect speech. To accommodate his lay readers, he nearly always translates his sources into the vernacular. With this in mind, we cannot assume that Weller's model for the *Encomion* was originally in German. If it were Latin, Weller certainly would have translated it.

Given his lay audience, Weller may also have glossed over topics of interest mainly to the learned. This might explain why his version omits much detail on speculative and philosophical ideas of interest primarily to Rhau's university-educated reader. Concerning music's cosmic significance, Rhau gives the following:

First then, looking at music itself, you will find that from the beginning of the world [music] has been instilled and implanted in all creatures, individually and collectively. For nothing is without sound or sounding number. Even the air, which of itself is invisible and imperceptible to all our senses, and is the least musical of all things, but is clearly mute and cannot think, nevertheless becomes sonorous, audible, and comprehensible when set in motion. Wondrous mysteries are here suggested by the Spirit, but this is not the place to dwell on them.²⁷

26 Preface to JOHANN WALTER, *Lob und Preis der löblichen Kunst Musica* (Wittenberg: Rhau, 1538), reprinted with translation in LEAVER (see n. 1), 74f.

27 Rhau, WA 50; 368,10–369,6: »Primum, si rem ipsam spectes, inuenies Musicam esse ab initio mundi inditam seu concreatam creaturis vniuersis, singulis et omnibus. Nihil enim

Weller, on the other hand, merely gives the following:

There is nothing on earth that is without its sound and its harmony [number], yes even the air, which is invisible and imperceptible, makes a sound when a stick is struck through it. This noble art has its image in all creatures.²⁸

The Latin did not refer to a stick striking through the air but rather to the broader category of air set in motion. Here Weller gives a concrete and simple example where Rhau introduces the kind of abstract Aristotelian classification common in speculative music theory.

Other places in Weller's quotation also present much shorter and simplified content. The remarks on heathen philosophers who unsuccessfully tried to investigate music's properties, for example, quickly pass over the details of their debates. Weller simply notes:

Heathen philosophers have labored to explain how the human tongue can wonderfully express the thoughts of the heart, both in speaking and singing, but without success. Truly they have come no further than establishing the ›ABCs‹ of music, namely, that of all known creatures, only humans can use it to express the joy of their hearts in laughter and their afflictions in weeping.²⁹

est sine sono, seu numero sonoro, ita vt et aer ipse per sese inuisibilis et inpalpabilis, omnibusque sensibus inperceptibilis, minimeque omnium musicus, sed plane mutus et nihil reputatus, tamen motus sit sonorus et audibilis, tunc etiam palpabilis, mirabilia in hoc significante spiritu mysteria, de quibus hic non est locus dicendi.« This and later Latin translations are based on LEAVER (see n. 1), 314–319, and U.S. LEUPOLD, Luther's Works, Vol. 53: Liturgy and Hymns, 321–324; this and the section below allude to issues discussed in Aristotle's *De Anima*, 419b 4 – 421a 6; see A. BARKER (ed.), Greek Musical Writings, 2: Harmonic and acoustic theory, 1989, 77–80.

28 Weller: »Ist doch nichts auff erden / das nicht seinen klang hat vnd seine zal / Ja auch die lufft / so doch vnsichtbar vnnd vnbegreyfflich ist / wenn man darein schlegt mit einem stabe / so klingt sie. Das also diese edle kunst an allen Creaturen ihr bildnuß hat.«

29 Ibid.: »Die Heydnischen Philosophi haben sich hefftig bemühet zu erforschen / wie doch des menschen zunge also wunderbarlichen die gedanken des hertzens beyde mit reden vnd singen dargeben müge. Aber sie habens nicht können ergründen / Ja es ist noch keiner so weyt kommen der da hette können außgründen das Abc von der Musica / Nemlich / das vnter allen sichtbaren Creaturen / der mensche allein die freude seines hertzen also darthun kan / wann er lacht / vnnd dargegen wenn er betrübt ist / das er weynet.«

Rhau's version, however, lists some of the questions the philosophers examined:

Philosophers have labored to explain the marvelous instrument of the human voice: how can the air projected by a light movement of the tongue and an even lighter movement of the throat produce such an infinite variety and articulation of the voice and of words? And how can the voice, at the direction of the will, sound forth so powerfully and vehemently that it can not only be heard by everyone over a wide area, but also be understood? Philosophers for all their labor cannot find the explanation; and baffled, they end in perplexity; for none of them has yet been able to define or demonstrate the original components of the human voice, its syllabification and (as it were) its alphabet, e.g., in the case of laughter – to say nothing of weeping. They marvel, but they do not understand.³⁰

Thus, compared with Rhau's Latin preface, the version offered by Weller appears to avoid many of the allusions to the speculative traditions about the nature and production of sound.

Furthermore, other quotations in Weller's commentary also appear highly selective and adapted to his immediate needs. His quotation of the Bible demonstrates this. Weller clearly knew Luther's translation: like many commentators, Weller presents the relevant portion of biblical text prior to his own exegesis, and for this he relied on Luther's translation of Job. Within his prose, too, he also occasionally quotes Luther's Bible literally. Yet in some places, Weller gives what appear to be his own translations or adaptations of Luther. At its simplest, he would rework a verse to make its grammar fit its new context. When he references Psalm 17, Weller gives a portion of the fourteenth verse as »Du füllest ihnen ihren bauch mit deinem schatz.«³¹ In Luther's translation, this is a relative clause in the middle of the verse:

30 Rhau, WA 50; 370,1–10: »Sudarunt Philosophi, vt intelligerent hoc mirabile artificium vocis humanae, quo modo tam leui motu linguae leuiori-que adhuc motu gutturis pulsus aer funderet illam infinitam varietatem et articulationem vocis et verborum, pro arbitrio animae gubernantis, tam potenter et vehementer, vt per tanta interualla loc-orum circulariter ab omnibus distincte non solum audiri, sed et intelligi possit. Sed sudant tantum, nunquam inueniunt, et cum admiratione desiuunt in stuporem, Quin nulli adhuc reperti sunt, qui definire et statuere potuerint, quid sit ille sibilus et alphabetum quoddam vocis humanae, seu materia prima, nempe Risus (de fletu nihil dicam). Mirantur, sed non complectuntur.«

31 Weller, chapter 21, Vvi^r.

Von den Leuten deiner hand / HERR / Von den Leuten dieser welt / welche jr Teil haben
in jrem Leben / welchen du den Bauch füllest mit deinem Schatz / Die da kinder die fülle
haben / vnd lassen jr vbriges jren Jungen.

In this case, Weller has simply reordered the words to fit his commentary. Another example, Weller's quotation of Ps 73:15, diverges even more from Luther. He gives the verse as »Ich het auch bald gesagt / wie sie sagen / Aber damit het ich alle deine kinder verdammet,«³² whereas Luther writes: »Ich hatte auch schier so gesaget / wie sie / Aber sihe / da mit hette ich verdampt alle deine Kinder / die je gewesen sind.« In both cases, Weller adapted his sources to fit the flow of his commentary.

The way Weller quotes Luther's own writings also suggests that he chose the reformer's words selectively. In his remarks on Job 15, he quotes Luther's 1525 sermon for the tenth Sunday after Trinity, using it to reinforce his point about the coming destruction of Germany brought on by the unrepentant. The italics have been added here to show the quotation from Luther:

Dergleichen straffe drowet Gott vns Teutschen / von wegen der sicherheit vnd verachtung des heiligen Euangelij / vnd das jr vil mit sünden wider Gott / in sachen das heilige Euangelium betreffende / vil gutest schaffen wöllen / Vnd das alle sünd und schande beginnet ehre vnnd tugend zu werden. Darumb spricht der liebe vater D. Martinus / *Es ist kein schertz / wir dörrffen auch nicht dencken / wo wir nicht anders thun denn die Juden / das es vns anders gehen werde. Je heller das wort ist / je grösser die straffe sein wird / Ich förchte es werde das gantz Teutschland kosten.* Besihe die außlegung vber den 10. Sontag nach Trinitatis. Darumb ists zeit bittens / vnnd das wir an den verstöreten Stedten / Landen und leuten lernen / was zu vnserm friede dienet.³³

This quote combines two separate statements from Luther's sermon: »Es ist keyn schertz, wyr durffen auch nicht yn syn nemen, das es uns anders gehn werd, Die Juden wolten es auch nicht glewben, bys sie es erfueren und ynnen wurden.«³⁴ Several paragraphs later, Luther writes: »ye heller das wort ist, ye grosser die straff wirt seyn. Ich foercht, es werd das gantz teutschland kosten.«³⁵ While retaining most of Luther's own words, Weller appears to have picked only a few phrases from different parts of the ser-

32 Ibid., chapter 21, Bbbiv.

33 Weller, chapter 15, Si^v–Sii^r.

34 WA 17,1; 386c,25–27.

35 Ibid., 389c,17–18.

mon. He may have adopted a similar method with Luther's *Encomion*. This would explain the many omissions compared with Rhau's text.

IV Translating Luther in the Age of Confessionalization

Weller may also have shaped Luther's quote to fit his exegetical ends for Job 21:12. His goal was to defend music, especially church music, against those who would banish it. Job 21:12, »Sie jauchzen mit Pauken und Harfen und sind fröhlich mit Flöten,« appears in the middle of a chapter in which Job bemoans the fact that the wicked prosper in security – and even celebrate their comfort with music – while the good suffer: in Job 21, music is something the wicked enjoy in their prosperity.

Aware of this tension, Weller vigorously defends music, introducing Luther to counter those who would curtail music in churches. The commentator first distinguishes between the two contrasting purposes to which the wicked and regenerate put music. This leads directly into the long quotation from Luther after which Weller briefly summarizes with an explicit apology for music: »From this you can see that the Holy Scripture does not concede that one ought not sing or listen to an instrument, but speaks here of the misuse of God's gifts by the godless.«³⁶ The main reason for quoting Luther is thus to defend the rightful place of music among the Godly.

Weller's own commentary itself does not specifically defend music-making in worship, but the way he translates Luther makes his apology for church music unambiguous. Rhau's Latin says nothing about music in formal worship:

Thus it was not without reason that the fathers and prophets wanted nothing else to be associated as closely with the Word of God as music. Therefore, we have so many hymns and psalms where message and music join to move the listener's soul, while in other living beings and instruments music remains a language without words.³⁷

36 Weller: »Hierauß sihest du / das die heylige Schrifft hie nicht verbeut / das man nicht singen soll / oder einem Instrument zuhören / Sondern hie wird geredt vom mißbrauch der gaben Gottes / bey den Gottlosen.«

37 Rhau, WA 50; 371,14–372,2: »Unde non frustra, Patres et Prophetæ, verbo Dei nihil voluerunt esse coniunctius quam Musicam. Inde enim tot Cantica et Psalmi, in quibus simul agunt et sermo et vox in animos auditorius, dum in ceteris animantibus et corporibus sola musica sine sermone gesticulatur.«

Rhau's text emphasizes a particular kind of composition where music is joined with scripture but does not indicate where the patriarchs and prophets wanted this music performed. Weller's translation, however, says this explicitly:

Thus it was not without reason that the dear patriarchs and prophets *wanted music to always remain in the church*, for which so many songs and psalms have been introduced. And this cherished gift is given to man alone that with it he might remember that he has been created in order to laud and praise God.³⁸

With the phrase »always remain in the church,« Weller's version also implies that certain detractors wish to remove music from worship. Since the Latin is ambiguous, this may be a spot where Weller shaped Luther's words to reinforce his own defense of liturgical music. It certainly does not contradict Luther or his contemporaries outright, but this translation clearly suits Weller's exegesis.³⁹

Broadly speaking, this translation of Luther's *Encomion* also may have resonated better with Lutherans of Weller's generation rather than Rhau's. Writing in the age when confessional conflicts increasingly divided Lutheran from Reformed and where elaborate church music became a symbol of Lutheran Orthodoxy, Weller's translation may subtly reflect the anxieties of his age more than Luther's. If Weller used Rhau as his source, a source where the defense of church music remains only implicit, he may have had more than one reason to both simplify and clarify a point of special interest to his Lutheran lay reader.

38 Weller: »Daher auch nicht ohne vrsach die lieben Vätter vnnd Propheten gewolt haben / *das bey der Kirchen die Musica allwegen bleiben solt* / Daher sind kommen so viel geseng vnnd Psalmen. Vnnd ist diese thewre gaben allein dem menschen gegeben / das er sich dabey erinnere / er sey darzu geschaffen / das er Gott loben vnnd preysen soll.« (Emphasis is mine)

39 See Melancthon's preface to Rhau's *Selectae harmoniae*: »Verum, vt hanc disputationem de causis omittamus, illud minime dubium est, Musicen in sacris ritibus semper adhibitatem esse, vt vel tranquilliores redderet animos, & ad cogitationem rerum diuinarum aptiores, vel alios excitaret motus ijs sententijs quae proponebantur, congruentes;« in: *Selectae harmoniae de Passione Domini* (1538), ed. by W. REICH/G. RHAU: Musikdrucke aus den Jahren 1538–1545 in praktischer Neuausgabe, 1990, XVIII; for more on Melancthon's preface see C. SPEHR, Musik – Herzschlag der Seele. Melancthons Vorrede zu den »Selectae harmoniae« von 1538 (Luther 83, 2012, 2–7).

V Reception

Weller's clear defense of church music may help to explain why later authors borrowed his version in part or whole. Figulus, for example, clearly knew both German versions but chose Weller. On the practical side, Weller's offered a much shorter text, and Figulus may have needed a condensed version to fit his print better.⁴⁰ Beyond the practical, the subtle differences in content and style may also explain his choice. Weller offered both a drastic simplification of ideas and, as shown above, an unequivocal apology for church music, giving Figulus a defense of the Latin and German motets in his collection.

Michael Praetorius may have had similar motives when he combined portions of both German versions as a preface to his *Musae Sioniae* (1605).⁴¹ He must have known either Weller's commentary or Figulus's partbooks, because even though Praetorius's preface is mostly a reprint of Walter's translation, a few passages come from Weller. Besides the section on the nightingale, these include the phrase about music in church (»das bey der Kirchen die Musica allwegen bleiben solt«) as well as a portion of Weller's description of polyphony (»freundtlich einander begegnen / vnnd sich gleich hertzen / vnnd lieblichen vmbfangen«). In all cases, the borrowings from Weller's version strengthen Walter's defense of music, which in turn helped Praetorius promote his own works.

As a source for Luther's remarks on music, Weller's commentary must have enjoyed some familiarity into the 17th century. The Leipzig Thomas-

40 As it stands, all the prefatory material in Figulus's *Cantioneum sacrarum* fits neatly into two gatherings. Weller's version, turned into a preface, takes up the last four pages of a single eight-page gathering. The first gathering in the tenor primus includes the following: A1, title page with blank verso; A2, Latin poetry; and finally the preface by Luther, A3–A4. The second gathering includes the Latin dedication, B1^r–B3^r, two Latin poems, B3^v–B4^r, and the index, B4^v. Had he used Walter's version, Figulus likely would have needed several more pages, requiring the prefatory material as a whole to spill over into a third gathering.

41 Blankenburg made an important observation when he noticed these sections in Praetorius's preface, but he again believed that Praetorius, too, consulted the *Urfassung* to get this information: »Sowohl Walter als auch Praetorius haben diese Urfassung, offenbar aber unabhängig voneinander, gekannt;« W. BLANKENBURG, Johann Walter. Leben und Werk, 1991, 267; see also BLANKENBURG, Überlieferung (see n. 6), 85f.

cantor Tobias Michael printed the entire section of commentary on Job 21:12, including Luther's remarks, in the preface to his *Musicalischer Seelenlust ander Theil* (Leipzig, 1637). Its role here, too, is to defend sacred music. Michael may have found Weller suitable for a collection of concerted music, because the commentator concludes his remarks by defending both voices and instruments. Michael also faced the problem of selling an expensive collection of music in the latest Italian style during the economic and social upheaval of the Thirty Years' War. He may have included Weller's commentary to defend himself against charges that a luxury like concerted music would not have been appropriate for such hard times.

Regardless of his reasons, the fact that Michael reprinted Weller suggests that the commentary and this version of Luther's remarks remained for a time in the era's cultural memory.⁴² By the end of the next century, however, this memory had faded. When he started the modern debates about Luther's *Encomion musices*, Forkel did not mention Weller's commentary.⁴³ Even though musicologists of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries knew Michael's *Musicalischer Seelenlust*, no one seems to have scrutinized the sources of his prefatory material.

Oddly enough, however, the rediscovery of Weller might not take us any closer to Luther's *Encomion* than we were nearly a century ago. Georg Kawerau's old Weimar Luther Edition turns out to present the most authoritative version of Luther's remarks. Rhau's preface, Kawerau's main source, is still the earliest known version and the one closest to Luther himself, whereas the German versions date from over twenty years later and connect only indirectly to the reformer. If the quotation presented in Weller's commentary no longer clearly points back to a lost draft, it nevertheless remains valuable as a testament to the ways Lutherans in the age of confessionalization adopted and adapted Luther's views to defend their own music.

42 Knowledge of this version continued into the later 17th century. In 1671, MICHAEL RAAB, a pastor in Wassertrüdingen, cited chapter 21 of Weller's commentary in his *Neocosmos, Oder Neue Welt* (Nürnberg, Endtner, 1671), 306.322.324.

43 Forkel printed Praetorius' text; J.N. FORKEL, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Musik*, Bd. 2, 1801, 76–79.

Table 1: Sources for Luther's Encomion musices up to 1650.

Source	Title
Rhau 1538	SYMPHONIAE IV= CVNDAE ATQVE ADEO BREVES <i>QVATVOR VOCEVM, AB OPTIMIS QVIBVSQVE MVSICIS COMPO=</i> sitae, ac iuxta ordinem Tonorum dispositae, quas vulgo Mutetas appellare solemus, Numero quinquaginta duo. TENOR <i>Vox ego sum simplex; tenuiq; canenda labore Hinc mea conueniens carmina nomen habent. Vtq; ego, sic facili resonant modulamine cantus, Quos breuis hic omni parte libellus habet. Hi tibi quisquis amas Musarum sacra placebunt, Seu quia dulce canit, seu quia sacra canunt. Cum Praefatione D. Martini Lutheri. Vitebergae apud Gregorium Rhau. Anno XXXVIII. </i>
Walter 1564	Lob vnd preis/ Der Himlischen Kunst <i>MV=</i> <i>SICA</i> : Mit einer herrlichen / schonen Vorre= de / des seligen / tewren / hochbegabten Mannes / Doctoris Martini Lutheri / vormalß deutsch im Druck nihe ausgangen: Durch Johan Walther. [printer's emblem] 1564. [colophon:] Gedruckt zu Witte= berg / Durch Lorentz Schwenck. 1564.
Weller 1565	Der ander Theyl des Buchs Hiob / darinnen begriffen ist die Ausslegung vom dreyzehnden Capitel an / biss ins zwey unnd zweintzigste. Erkleret vnd Außge= leget durch D. Hieronymum Weller. Nürnberg. Anno M. D. LXV. [colophon:] Gedruckt zu Nürnberg / durch Ulrich Newber / vnd Johann vom Bergs Erben.
Figulus 1575	WOLFGANGI FIGVLI NVM= BVRGANI CANTIONVM SACRARVM, Octo, Sex, Quinque Quatuor vocom, Primi tom: Decas prima. <i>Cum praefatione Germanica Reuerendi Patris D. Mar= tini Lutheri antè non impressa. TENOR PRIMVS. Psallite cum Figulo pueri iuuenesq; sensq; Dulcisono grates dum canit ore Deo. Suanibus aptauit numeris pia carmina, grata Sunt sacra sola Deo, suauia sola sacra. Hiobus Madeburgus. Cum Grat: & Priuileg: Caes: Maiest. [colophon:] Gedruckt zu Frankfurt an der Oder / durch Johan Eichorn M.D. LXXV.</i>
Praetorius 1605	MUSÆ SIONIÆ Oder Geistliche Concert Gesänge über der fürnembste Herrn Lutheri vnd anderer Teutsche Psalmen / Mit VIII. Stimmen gesetzt / vnd Zugleich auff der Orgel vnd Chor / mit lebendiger stim[m] vnd allerhand Instrumenten in der Kir- chen zu gebrauchen. In Druck verfertigt / Durch <i>MICHAELÆM PRAETORIVM</i> , Fürstlichen Braunschweigischen Capellmeister vnd Cammer Organisten. Erster Theil. CANTUS I. Chori. Regensburg. 1605. ¹
Michael 1637	Musicalischer Seelen=Lust Ander Theil / Darinnen / gleichermassen außerlesene vnd aus H. Görtlicher Schrifft gezogene Glaubens=Seuff= tzerlein / hertzliche Andacht vnd Frewde / [et]c. In mancherley Art / mit 1.2.3.4.5.6. und mehr Stimmen / abgewechselten Instrumenten / Symphonien vnd Capellen gesetzete / doch nur in fünf Voces vnd ihrem Bass. <i>contin.</i> eingetheilete Concert zu befinden. <i>Componieret Von Tobia Michaelæ Dresden. Chori Musici Directore</i> zu Leipzig. Quarta Vox ² 16 [printer's emblem] 37. In Verlegung Johann Franckens Sel. Erben vnd Samuel Scheiben.

- 1 Title taken from printed title page for the Erster Theil rather than the engraved title page for the entire series.
- 2 The relevant text also appears in the prima vox, tertia vox, and basso continuo part books.

Table 2: Comparison of the beginnings of Walter, Figulus, and Weller.
(boxes and bold show parallels)

Walter 1564	Figulus 1575	Weller 1564
Vorrede des Heiligen tewren Man Gottes / Doctoris Martini Lutheri / von der himlischen Kunst Musica / vormals nie Deusch im Druck ausgangen	[from title page:] <i>Cum praefatione Germanica Reuerendi Patris D. Martini Lutheri ante non impressa.</i>	
Allen Liebhabern der freien Kunst Musica / wünsch Ich Doctor Martinus Luther Gnad vnd Fried / von Gott dem Vater vnd vnserm HERrn Ihesu Christ.	Allen liebhabern der freien Kunst Musica/ wünsch ich Doctor Martinus Luther / Genad vnd Fried von Gott dem Vater vnd vnserm HERRN Christo / etc.	[Vnd hie muß ich einfüren / wie er / der liebe Vater / diese edle gabe Gottes also herrlich gepreyset hat:]
Ich wolt von hertzen gerne diese schöne vnd köstliche Gabe Gottes / die freie Kunst der Musica / hoch loben vnd preisen / So befinde ich / das dieselbige also viel vnd grosse nutze hat / vnd also ein herrliche vnd edle Kunst ist / ...	Ich wolt warlich das alle Christen den theuren / werden / hohen schatz / die lieben Musicam meine ich / so Gott vns Menschen gegeben / ja lieb vnd werdt hielten / denn es ist ein solch herlich Kleinot / ...	Ich wolt / sagt er / das alle Christen den thewren / werden / hohen schatz / [margin: die liebe Musica meine ich] so Gott vns menschen gegeben / ja lieb vndd werd hielten / Denn es ist ein solch herrlich kleynot / ...

Table 3: Comparison of the endings of Walter, Figulus, and Weller

Walter 1565	Figulus 1575	Weller 1564
... so werden diese vngeratene Kinder vnn Wechselbelge / durch den Satan dazu getrieben / das sie solche Gabe / Gott dem HERRN nemen vnd rauben / vnd damit den Teuffel	... Die sie aber misbrauchen / zu sauffen / schwelgen / leichtfertigkeit vnd vnzucht / die bezeugen damit das sie noch ins Teuffels reich sein /	... Die sie aber mißbrauchen zu sauffen / schwelgen / leichtfertigkeyt vnd vnzucht / die bezeugen damit / das sie noch ins Teuffels Reich sind / etc.
/ welcher ein Feind Gottes / der Natur / vnd dieser lieblichen Kunst ist / ehren / vnd damit dienen / Hiemit wil ich euch alle / Gott dem HERRN befohlen haben. Geben zu Wittenberg / Im 1538. Jahre.	welcher ist ein feind Gottes / der natur vnd alles des / so Gott gemacht vnd gut heist: Hiermit wil ich euch allen Gott dem HERN beuolen haben. Wittenberg 1538.	

Sie jauchzten mit paucken vnnd harpffen / vnd
sind frölich mit pfeffen.

They reioice with drums and harps, and are
merry with pipes.

Wo man fröhlich ist / vnnd im sause lebet / da
redet man nicht allein / vnd ist guter ding /
sondern man pflegt auch die Musica darbey zu
haben / das es alles erklinget. Vnd des gebrauchten
auch die Gottlosen am meisten. Die Christen
pflegen auch / wenn sie wöllen / frölich sein / an
der edlen Musica jhre freude zu haben / Aber gar
vil anderer meynung als die Gottlosen / Denn
denselbigen müssen alle Creaturen darzu dienen /
das sie jhrer schendtlich mißbrauchen. Also auch
diese edle kunst brauchen sie nur zur
leichtfertigkeit vnd vppigkeit. Die Christen aber
hören darumb geren ein guten gesang vnnd
liebliche Melodey / oder eine schöne tageweyse /
das sie der trawrigen gedanken ein wenig loß
werden / vnnd sich nicht dem Teuffel vnnd der
Welt zu gefallen zu tode plagen. Also hatte der
liebe Vatter Doctor Martinus Luther / seine
freude an der lieben Musica / vnnd lude oft seine
gute freunde zu sich / das er der gedanken ein
wenig möchte loß werden / damit jn der Teuffel
krencket vnd plagete.

Where one is merry and lives it up, one does
not merely speak and be in cheerful spirits
but one also is in the habit of having music
so that it resounds all around. And this the
godless also employ the most. Christians
also, when they wish to be merry, are
accustomed to have their joy through noble
music, but with entirely different significance
than the godless. For the thing that they
shamefully abuse must serve all creatures.
Thus they use the noble art only for frivolity
and opulence. Christians, however, like to
hear a good song and lovely melody or a
beautiful tune so that they might be rid of
mournful thoughts a little and not worry
themselves to death, pleasing the devil and
the world. Thus the beloved father Dr.
Martin Luther is said to have had his joy in
lovely music and often beckoned his good
friends to him that he might forget a little his
thoughts with which the devil wounded and
afflicted him.

Vnd hie muß ich einfüren / wie er / der liebe
Vater / diese edle gabe Gottes also herrlich
gepreyset hat: Jch wolt / sagt er / das alle Christen
den thewren / werden / hohen schatz [marg.: Die
liebe Musica meine ich.] so Gott vns menschen
gegeben / ja lieb vnnd werth hielten / Denn es ist
ein solch herrlich kleynot / das ich nicht weyß /
wo ichs nemen soll / daruon / wie sichs gebürt /
zu reden. Ist doch nichts auff erden / das nicht
seinen klang hat / vnd seine zal / Ja auch die lufft
/ so doch vnsichtbar vnnd vnbegreyfflich ist /
wenn man darein schlegt mit einem stabe / so
klingt sie. Das also diese edle kunst an allen
Creaturen jhr bildnuß hat. Ach wie eine herrliche
Musica ist / damit der allmechtige Herr im Himel

And here I must insert how he, the
beloved father, praised so gloriously this
noble gift of God: I wish, he said, that all
Christians would hold dear and worthy the
true, valued, high treasure [marg.: beloved
music, I mean] that God gave us men, for it
is such an excellent treasure that I do not
know from where I should borrow to speak
of it duly. There is nothing on earth that
does not have its sound and its number, yea
even the air, which is invisible and impercep-
tible, makes sound when one strikes through
it with a stick. This noble art has its likeness
in all creatures. Ah, how delightful a music is
it with which the Almighty Lord in heaven

/ seinen Sangmeyster / die liebe Nachtigal /
 sampt jhren jungen Schulern / vnnd so viel
 tausent mal tausent vögel in der lufft begnadet hat
 / da ein jedes geschlecht seine eygene art vnnd
 Melodey / seine herrliche süsse stimm / vnd
 wunderliche Coloratur hat / die kein mensch auff
 erden begreyffen noch erlangen kan. Der liebe
 Dauid hat solches mit grösserm verwundern im
 Geyst angesehen / da er spricht im 104. Psalm:
 An demselben sitzen die Vögel des Himmels /
 vnnd singen vnter jhren zweygen. Vnnd vber das
 alles / hat er die menschen mit dieser kunst noch
 höher begnadet / das nichts dargegen zu rechnen
 ist / wenn eines menschen stimm erklinget.

Die Heydnischen Philosophi haben sich
 hefftig bemühet zu erforschen / wie doch des
 menschen zunge also wunderbarlichen die
 gedanken des hertzens beyde mit reden vnd
 singen dargeben müge. Aber sie habens nicht
 können ergründen / Ja es ist noch keiner so weyt
 kommen der da hette können außgründen das A b
 c von der Musica / Nemlich / das vnter allen
 sichtbaren Creaturen / der mensch allein die
 freude seines hertzens also darthun kan / wann er
 lacht / vnnd dargegen wenn er betrübt ist / das er
 weynet. Jnn summa / die edle Musica ist nach
 Gottes wort der höchste Schatz auff erden. Sie
 regiert alle gedanken / sinn / hertz / vnnd mut.
 Wilstu einen betrübten frölich machen / einen
 frechen wilden menschen zeumen / das er
 gelinder werde / einem zaghaftigen ein mut
 machen / einen hoffertigen demüthigen / vnnd
 dergleychen / Was kan besser darzu dienen /
 denn diese hohe / thewre / werde vnnd edle
 kunst. Der heylige Geyst ehret sie selbst / vnnd
 hebt sie hoch / da er zeuget / wie der böse Geyst
 von Saul gewichen sey / wenn Dauid auff der
 Harpffen schlug. Jtem da der Prophet Elisa
 weyßsagen solte / befalhe er / man solte jhm ein
 Spielman herbringen / der auff der Harpffen
 schlüge. Daher auch nicht ohne vrsach die lieben
 Väter vnnd Propheten gewolt haben / das bey
 der Kirchen die Musica allwegen bleiben solt /

has blessed his song-master, the dear
 nightingale together with her young students
 and so many thousand times thousand birds
 in the air, that each species has its own
 manner and melody, its delightful sweet
 voice and fantastic coloratura, which no man
 on earth can fathom nor attain. Dear David
 considered such things with great
 astonishment in spirit, for he speaks in
 Psalm 104 v. 12: »By them the birds of
 heaven sit and sing under their branches.«
 And above all this he [God] graced mankind
 with this art yet more, so that nothing can be
 compared to when a human voice resounds.

The heathen philosophers have intensely
 labored to determine how the human tongue
 can so wonderfully express the thoughts of
 the heart both with speaking and singing.
 But they have not been able to comprehend
 it. Yea no one has yet come so far that he
 has been able to establish the Abc's of
 music, namely, that of all visible creatures,
 man alone can show the joy of his heart
 when he laughs and, by contrast, when he is
 troubled that he weeps. In short, noble
 music is next to God's Word, the highest
 treasure on earth. It governs all thoughts,
 mind, heart, and spirit. If you wish to make a
 distressed man joyful, an insolent mad man
 tame, a timid man courageous, an arrogant
 man meek, and so forth, what can work
 better than this lofty, beloved, worthy, and
 noble art. The Holy Ghost himself honors it
 and raises it high when he witnesses how the
 evil spirit left Saul when David played on the
 harp. Similarly, when the prophet Elisha
 wanted to prophesy, he commanded that
 they bring him an instrumentalist, who
 played on the harp. Thus it was not without
 reason that the dear patriarchs and prophets
 wanted music to always remain in the
 church, for which so many songs and psalms
 have been introduced. And this cherished

Daher sind kommen so viel gesenge vnnd Psalmen. Vnnd ist diese thewre gaben allein dem menschen gegeben / das er sich dabey erinnere / er sey darzu geschaffen / das er Gott loben vnnd preysen soll. Auch sihet man inn dieser kunst / die grosse / vnaussprechliche / vnbegreyffliche vnnd vnerforschliche weyßheyt Gottes / das die eine stimme jhrer art nach seyne gerade vnnd einfeltig hergeheth / vnnd die andern so wunderbarlichen auff allen orten / darneben vnnd vmbher spielen / freuntlich einander begegnen / vnnd sich gleich hertzen / vnnd lieblichen vmbfangen / Das wer ihm ein wenig nachdencket / vnnd es nicht für ein vnaussprechlich wunderwerck des Herren helt / der ist nicht werd das er ein mensch heyst / vnnd solte nichts anders hören / denn wie der Esel schreyet / vnd die Saw grunztet.

Darumb laßt vns in diesem thewren geschöpff / den Schöpffer erkennen / vnd jhr nicht mißbrauchen / noch dem Teuffel damit dienen / sondern Gott den Herren damit loben vnnd preysen. Die sie aber mißbrauchen zu sauffen / schwelgen / leichtfertigkeit vnd vnzucht / die bezeugen damit / das sie noch ins Teufels Reich sind / e[t]c.

Hierauß sihest du / das die heylige Schrifft hie nicht verbeut / das man nicht singen soll / oder einem Instrument zuhören / Sondern hie wird geredt vom mißbrauch der gaben Gottes / bey den Gottlosen.

gift is given to man alone that with it he might remember that he has been created in order to laud and praise God. Thus one sees in this art the great, inexpressible, incomprehensible, and unsearchable wisdom of God, that a single voice proceeds according to its fine and simple manner, and the others so marvelous play in all places, beside it and around it, amicably responding to, now caressing, and sweetly enfolding each other, such that whomever thinks a little about it and considers it not an unspeakable wonder of the Lord, he is not worthy to be called a man and should not hear anything other than the braying of the ass and grunting of the pig.

Thus let us know the creator through this dear creature and not misuse it and so serve the devil, but rather laud and praise God the Lord. But those who misuse it for drinking, debauchery, frivolity and lewdness show with this that they still remain within the devil's kingdom, etc.

From this you can see that the Holy Scripture does not concede that one ought not sing or listen to an instrument, but speaks here of the misuse of God's gifts by the godless.