Biblical Sources for Sonnets 24 and 33 and for *Henry VIII*: Implications for de Vere's Authorship

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Shakespeare is often considered a secular writer, whose biblical allusions add little to our understanding of his plays and poetry. George Santayana did his part to shape this misunderstanding. In his aptly if misleadingly named essay, "The Absence of Religion in Shakespeare,"[1] he, like many others, seemed to project his own prejudices onto his image of Shakespeare, concluding that Shakespeare had a "strange insensibility to religion";[2] and that Shakespeare "confined his representation of life to its secular aspects."[3]

However, if we free ourselves from our own secular bias, a close reading provides abundant evidence that Edward de Vere, in his "Shakespeare" canon, engaged repeatedly with biblical themes.[4] He was so familiar with the language of the Bible that its phrases seemed to flow from his pen spontaneously, whether or not he was always mindful of these parallels. Sternhold and Hopkins' translation of *The Whole Book of Psalms* (*WBP*) is a significant example of biblical influence on Shakespeare.

Recent evidence suggests the *WBP* was more influential on de Vere's plays than were the Coverdale, Bishops, or Genevan translations of the psalms.[5] Many newly discovered allusions to the Psalms in de Vere were specifically to *WBP*. *WBP* is an especially rich source for the Sonnets, helping elucidate many previously enigmatic passages. *WBP* also influenced several sections in *The Rape of Lucrece*.

De Vere's repeated echoes of *WBP* alerted his contemporary audiences to intertextual reverberations, as the echoed psalms amplified, commented on, or contradicted the manifest meaning of de Vere's text. Scholars' previous unfamiliarity

with *WBP* has led them to overlook the abundant allusions to it in de Vere's works. I suggest that we re-examine our interpretation of many of the poems and plays, in view of his many allusions to *WBP*.

Most (though not all) of the echoes of *WBP* found thus far in de Vere's works are of psalms marked in Edward de Vere's 1569 edition (now at the Folger Shakespeare Library).[6] Beth Quitslund, after studying some fifty early editions of *WBP*, reported that the Folger's copy is unique in its extensive marginalia.[7] Fourteen psalms (6, 12, 25, 30, 51, 61, 65, 66, 67, 77, 103, 137, 139, and 146) are each marked with a large and distinctively different manicule, or pointing hand. Of those fourteen psalms, 6 and 51 are "penitential psalms"; 137 was also a popular psalm. The other eleven marked psalms were presumably of personal interest to the annotator. Psalm 130, another penitential psalm, is marked with a **C**-shaped drawing. The close correspondence between these annotations and de Vere's echoes of *WBP* supports the traditionally taboo thesis that "Shakespeare" was one of the pseudonyms of Edward de Vere.

To those who still claim "It makes no difference who Shakespeare was," one might point out that our knowledge of intertextuality in Shakespeare's works was severely stunted by the misguided effort to see the canon as the result of inborn genius with little formal education. During the decades since Geoffrey Bullough's preliminary study of Shakespeare's literary sources,[8] our awareness of the vast breadth of these sources continues to expand (see Stuart Gillespie[9]). But we have hardly scratched the surface of de Vere's astonishing reading, and his sophisticated dialogue with past authors. All one has to do is go through one of de Vere's works, enter phrases in EEBO, and find from what earlier text he may have borrowed that phrase. For example, it was in researching an anonymous poem I have attributed to de Vere that I found literary allusions that suggest he knew the work of the great French author Christine de Pizan.[10]

Noble, Shaheen, and others have deepened our awareness of Shakespeare's biblical sources. However, some scholars stubbornly view Shakespeare primarily as a secular writer, whose biblical allusions were only incidental. I have recently presented evidence[11] that *WBP* has previously been overlooked as perhaps the most significant Psalm translation in its literary influence on Shakespeare's works. It was de Vere's fourteen manicules and other annotations in his copy of *WBP* that led me to these discoveries.

Beth Quitslund[12] has resurrected interest in *WBP*, whose early popularity was all but forgotten as its clunky wording led to later neglect, if not ridicule. It was often bound with Bibles and with the *Book of Common Prayer* in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a result, it went through hundreds of editions. Its translations, in regular meter, were set to music and provided hymnals as early as 1560. So de Vere and his readers would have known these psalms so well that their echoes in his work would have been recognizable and effective in creating implicit dialogues between his works and the psalms.

Psalm 139 Is a Source for Shakespeare's Sonnet 24

Although many of the history plays contain significant echoes of *WBP*, the Fair Youth sequence (Sonnets 1-126) seems to contain the densest psalm allusions in the canon. For example, previous work proposed that Sonnet 21 ("So is it not with me as with that Muse") is structured as a dialogue with Psalm 8.[13] Scholars have assumed "that Muse" in this sonnet referred to a contemporary rival poet. But the close parallels with Psalm 8 suggest instead that de Vere is emulating King David, the psalmist, and that he is comparing the Fair Youth with God. Sonnet 66 ("Tired with all these, for restful death I cry") responds to Psalm 12. Awareness of this intertextuality sharpens the pathos of the sonnet, since it repeats the description of worldly corruption of the first half of the psalm, while glaringly omitting the consolation of its second half.

Thus, one key for unlocking the riddles of some of de Vere's more enigmatic sonnets is to identify and examine the psalms with which he is engaged in an implicit dialogue. To the several previous instances of this pattern, this section adds the allusions to Psalm 139 ("O Lord thou hast me tride & known, my sitting doost thou know") in Sonnet 24 ("Mine eye that play'd the painter and hath steeld").[14] Stephen Booth[15] highlights the obscurity of Sonnet 24 when he comments that "The sonnet is carefully designed to boggle its reader's mind."[16] Robert Alter calls Psalm 139 "one of the most remarkably introspective psalms… [that is a] meditation on God's searching knowledge of man's innermost thoughts [and] on the limitations of human knowledge."[17] This introspective theme is well suited as a literary source for the reflections in Sonnet 24. Further, Booth says the sonnet is basically about "two people looking into one another's eyes";[18] a central trope of the psalm is in its 7th verse—"From *sight of thy all-seeing* spirite, Lord, whither shall I go?" The sonnet instantiates Alter's characterization of Psalm 139 by using the psalm's account of divine knowledge to highlight the misleading nature of the Fair Youth's outward appearance, so that "eyes… know not the heart." The introspectiveness of the psalm inspires de Vere's disturbing meditation on the Fair Youth's innermost failings.[19]

Psalm 139 uses the symmetrical "envelope" structure which is frequent in the psalms. The argument begins "David to clense his *hart* from al hipocrisy…." The first verse then begins "O Lord, thou hast *me tride* and *known*." Its penultimate verse closes the envelope with "*Try me*, O God, and *know* my *hart*." De Vere repeats this envelope structure and some of its wording in speaking of "the table of my *heart*" in line 2, while admitting that his eyes "*know* not the *heart*" in the final line. "Draw" in line 14, as noted by Booth, ostensibly means "delineate," but also hints at "attract," thus linking the word with "And in thy way, O God my guide, for ever *lead* thou me" in the final line of the psalm.[20]

Line 9 of the sonnet is "Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done." Naturally, "good turns" explicitly means "acts of good will." But the ninth line of an Italian sonnet is called the "volta," or "turn." In addition to playing with this aspect of the sonnet form, "turn" may hint at an additional meaning of the word that was

current in the 16th century—(*OED*, 21) "a trick, wile, or strategem." This darker meaning is retrospectively activated by the time we reach the despairing conclusion of the sonnet.

Psalm 139:6 says "Too wonderful above my reach, Lord, is thy *cunning skill* :/ It is so hye that I the same, cannot attayne vntil."[21] This is the unique instance of *cunning* in *WBP*.[22] De Vere uses the word often in his plays, but only three times in the Sonnets. The second instance is in "What need'st thou wound with *cunning*?" of Sonnet 139. *Cunning* is only one of several links between Sonnets 24 and 139. Both rhyme *heart* with *art* (Sonnet 24 does it twice); both use *eye* repeatedly; both focus repeatedly on looking. It may not be coincidental that Sonnet 139 thus echoes Psalm 139. Similarly, Sonnet 103 prominently echoes Psalm 103. Sonnet 148 speaks of "*cunning* love" in its couplet; further, it echoes looking, *eyes* (five times), and *sight* from Psalm 139.

The poet, in line 13 of Sonnet 24 ("Yet eyes this *cunning* want to grace their art"), admits the same lack of cunning as does the psalmist in 139:6. The word "cunning" is especially prominent here, as the only polysyllable in the couplet. Line 13 plays on a double meaning of *cunning*, as both noun, but also, more subtly, as an adjective modifying "eyes." "Want" thus means "lack" (as a verb) in the first reading, but "wish" (also a verb) in the second reading. The second reading strongly suggests that it is *cunning* as "craftiness," in contrast with any lack of ability, that leads the poet to blind himself to the Youth's unfaithful heart.[23] Line 13 thus enacts a paradox—through its more muted second meaning, it contradicts the very lack of cunning that is claimed in the first, more explicit meaning of the line. Further, "cunning" as hidden "craftiness" then evokes the "hypocrisy" that is said to be cleansed from King David's heart in the argument of Psalm 139. Syntactical pivots such as "cunning" as noun/adjective are frequent in the Sonnets, and are a central feature of the art of de Vere's rich multiplicity of meaning, animating his words with the shimmering tensions of life itself, while recreating in the reader the rapidly shifting perspectives of the poet's emotional state that the Sonnets embody.

The poet in Sonnet 24 has painted the Fair Youth's beauty "in table of [his] heart." 139:13 similarly uses a trope of enclosure of one person inside another to describe the psalmist's relationship with God: "For thou possessed hast my raynes, and thou hast couered mee:/ When I within my mothers womb, enclosed was by thee." Some rhymes also link the sonnet and the psalm. "Lies/eyes" in the sonnet echo the rhyme "wise/arise" in the psalm; "me" and "thee" rhyme in both the sonnet and the psalm.

Booth glosses "perspective" as alluding to renaissance anamorphic paintings, which appear severely distorted unless viewed from an extremely oblique angle (close to the plane of the canvas), at which point the distortion disappears. The psalmist describes God as all-seeing—"From sight of thy al seing spirite, Lord, whither shal I go?/ Or whither shal I flee away, thy presence to scape from?" (139:7). The psalm continues with further images of God's omniscience through his capacity to see.[24] In sharp contrast with God's ability to see clearly everything and everywhere, de Vere plays with limitations and distortions of his vision of the Youth, including those that

are self-imposed out of a wish to protect the Youth and the poet from the ugly truth of the Youth's inner self. There is a hint that the Youth must look at the depiction of his "true Image" from just the right angle in order to see something pleasing rather than an unattractively "smeared" reflection "in the table of" the poet's heart. The echoes of Psalm 139 help de Vere whisper his despair to the Youth, especially because they remind the Youth that the psalms are a moral measure against which the Youth's inward character falls short.

Shakespeare's Sonnet 33 and the Biblical Story of the Transfiguration'[25]

Sonnet 33 ("Full many a glorious morning have I seen") alludes to the biblical story of the Transfiguration of Jesus. Pondering these allusions deepens the pathos and irony of the sonnet. It glorifies the Youth on the surface, while its biblical echoes sharpen the poet's abject disillusionment in him.

The Transfiguration takes place in the synoptic Gospels when Jesus is on a mountain with three disciples. As described in Matthew 17:2, "And [Jesus] was transfigured[26] before them: and his *face did shine* as the *sunne*,[27] and his clothes were as white as the light."[28] Two verses later: "While [Peter] yet spake, beholde, a bright *cloude* shadowed them: and beholde, there came a voyce out of the *cloude*, saying, This is my beloved Sonne, in whome I am wel pleased: heare him" (17:4). This passage is widely viewed by Christians as describing a moment when Christ's divinity is made visible. As the Genevan gloss puts it, "Christ shewed them his glorie, that they might not thinke that he suffred [his subsequent crucifixion] through infirmitie, but that he offered up him self willingly to dye."

"*Did shine*" is a phrase used only twice in the Geneva Bible.[29] Each time, it is in the context of the Transfiguration (as described in Matthew and in Mark, respectively). That phrase occurs in de Vere's Sonnet 33, in a context that makes a deliberate echo of Christ's Transfiguration seem likely. Lines 9-10, "Even so my *Sunne* one early morne *did shine*/ With all triumphant splendour on my brow" echoes three words from Matthew 17:2, most clearly linking the sonnet with the Transfiguration. De Vere thus implies that he, like Jesus, was transfigured by the god-like Youth. "*Mountaine* tops" of line 2 echoes "up into an hie *mountaine*" in Matthew 17:1. "Basest *clouds*" of line 5 and "region *cloude*" of line 12 bring to mind the contrasting "bright *cloude*" that casts a shadow, and God's voice coming out of a "*cloude,*" both in Matthew 17:5. These biblical allusions then invite us to reread the sonnet with its biblical analogue in mind. Doing so expands and amplifies the sonnet's previous interpretations.

Helen Vendler believes "this is the first sonnet to remark a true flaw in the friend" through "an implicit accusation."[30] De Vere's biblical echoes often help create and elucidate such implicit levels of meaning. Vendler also finds "self-reproach," which echoes Stephen Booth's conclusion that the sestet "contributes to a general tendency of the sonnet to fuse the speaker and the beloved by describing guilty action and reaction in terms that also fit innocent action and reaction or by describing the victim in words that also describe the offender" (188).[31] Booth's

gloss of line 14, "Suns of the world may staine, when heavens sun staineth," falls just short of noticing the biblical echoes in Sonnet 33. Booth writes that there is "an inevitable suggestion of 'heaven's son,' which in turn floods the poem with vague and unharnessed suggestions of the incarnation and crucifixion." What is inchoate for Booth comes into focus when we view the sonnet through the lens of the Transfiguration story.

In the Sonnets, de Vere's biblical allusions often evoke not only his apotheosis of the Youth, but also his repeated, contrasting disillusionments as the Youth's behavior fails to live up to the poet's idealization. Sonnets 33 and 34 interact significantly with each other, inviting the reader to read these two sonnets not only against each other, but against their respective biblical precedents. Booth notes "an implication of 'in a Christ-like manner'" in glossing "bears the... cross" in Sonnet 34 (189). He reads "ransom" in the final line of Sonnet 34 as an allusion to Christ (he cites 1 Timothy 2:6). There may be several additional allusions to the Gospels in Sonnet 34. For example, "*ransom*" may echo Matthew 20:28—"the Sonne of man came... to give his life for the *ransome* of many"; line 10's "Though thou *repent*" may evoke the words of Jesus in Luke 17:3, "if thy brother trespasse against thee, rebuke him: and if hee *repent*, forgive him"; line 12's "To him that *bears* the strong offence's *cross*" may allude to the only use of "*Beare* his *crosse*" in the Geneva Bible, in Matthew 27:32.

The Transfiguration allusions in Sonnet 33 prepare the reader for the Crucifixion trope and the implication of a Judas-like betrayal by the Youth[32] in Sonnet 34, and ironically highlight the Youth's metamorphosis from a divine to a degraded status—from God to Judas, as it were.

Psalm Echoes in de Vere's *Henry VIII*

Shakespeare's authorship of the entirety of *Henry VIII* continues to be disputed. However, Naseeb Shaheen argues that biblical allusions in this play are consistent with those in Shakespeare's other plays; he believes this fact supports Shakespeare's sole authorship of the play (with John Fletcher possibly having done some editing). Allusions in *Henry VIII* to *WBP* support Shaheen's argument. These allusions were overlooked by Shaheen (probably because he was unaware of de Vere's repeated echoes of *WBP* in many of his plays, as well as in his Sonnets and in *The Rape of Lucrece*).

Queen Katherine's speech to the King in 2.4.13-57 echoes several psalms, especially Psalm 30. Katherine is one of several characters in the play who suffer a fall in their fortunes. The argument of Psalm 30 aptly notes that David wrote it after "he *fell* so extreme sick," and that this psalm shows "that the *fall* from prosperity is sudden." Verse 7 is "For thou, O Lord, of *thy good grace*,[33] hadst sent me strength and aid/ But when thou *turn*ed *away* thy face, my mind was sore dismayed." Katherine echoes the gist of these words of David to God when she asks King Henry how she has offended him—"What cause/ Hath my behavior given to your displeasure,/ That thus you should proceed to put me off,/ And take *your good grace* from me?" (19-

22). She later asks that, if Henry can prove she has offended him, "in God's name/ *Turn* me *away*" (41-42). Other words in this speech that echo Psalm 30 include "give," "pity," "your/thy will," "desire," "your countenance/thy face," "anger," "mind," "mine enemy/my foes," and "prove." In contrast with the strong echo of Psalm 88 in Katherine's later speech in 4.2, here the echoes of Psalm 30 are so isolated and subtle that they may not have registered consciously with the audience. At the very least, though, such biblical allusions provide a window into de Vere's creativity, and into the conscious and unconscious associative processes that contributed to that creativity.

In addition to Katherine's echoes from Psalm 30 here, there are also words and phrases from the Morning Prayer (that was printed with *WBP*). That prayer includes the words, "We th*erefore* most wretched sinners… we *humbly beseech* thee for Jesus Christ's sake, to show thy mercies upon us, and receive us again to thy favor." The kneeling Katherine mixes quotations and paraphrases of this prayer when she says "wh*erefore* I *humbly/ Beseech* you, sir, to spare me… i' the name of God" (2.4.53-54). Her echo of the Morning Prayer implicitly invokes a religious dimension in her appeal to the divinely anointed King for mercy and forgiveness, so she can be "received again to his favor." Another echoed phrase is Katherine's "To the *sharp*'st kind of *just*ice" (2.4.44), from the prayer's "we *just*ly deserve thy wrath and *sharp* punishment."

Critics have noted the emphasis on truth in the play, from its likely alternate title (*All is True*) to the frequency of the words "true" and "truth" in the play. Katherine says to Wolsey, "Pray speak in English. Here are some will thank you,/ If you *speak truth*, for their poor mistress' sake; Believe me, she has had much wrong. Lord Cardinal,/ The willing'st sin I ever yet committed/ May be absolv'd in English" (3.1.46-49). Although the phrase "speak truth" was common in early modern England, I would suggest that Katherine is alluding here to a verse from the chief Penitential Psalm, Psalm 51:17—"The heavy heart, the mind oppressed, O Lord thou never does reject./ And to *speak truth* it is the best, and of all sacrifice the effect." Katherine may thus echo a crucial biblical reference to truth, from a psalm that is centrally about being absolved from sin.

Cardinal Wolsey makes several allusions to *WBP* Psalm 34 in 3.2.377-85. His fall from favor has been sudden indeed, similar to what is described in the argument of Psalm 30. After Cromwell asks "How does your Grace?" Wolsey claims "Never so truly *happy*, my good Cromwell;/ I know myself now, and I feel within me a *peace above all earthly* dignities,/ A still *and quiet* conscience. The King has cured me,/ I *humbl*y thank his Grace." (377-80). Psalm 34:2 refers to "*humbl*e men and mortified," capturing Wolsey's current state. 34:9 reads "Fear ye the Lord, his holy ones, *above all earthly* thing;/ For they that fear the living Lord, are sure to lack nothing." Wolsey's allusion to verse 9 implies he now fulfills both its injunction and its promise of heavenly consolation. The other highlighted words come from verses 8 and 14. Words from Psalm 34 in Wolsey's subsequent lines in this scene include "his bones," "poor," and "thy right hand." 34:14 reads "But he doth frown and bend his brows, upon the wicked train:/ *And cut away the memory*, that should of them remain." Wolsey paraphrases this sentiment when he tells Cromwell, "*And when I am*

forgotten, as I shall be,/ And sleep in dull cold marble where no mention/ Of me more must be heard" (432-34). Robert Alter comments that Psalm 34 offers "a moving vision of hope for the desperate. Part of the spiritual greatness of Psalms… is that it profoundly recognizes the bleakness, the dark terrors, the long nights of despair… and, against all this, evokes the notion of a caring presence that can reach out to the broken-hearted" (120). Alter's gloss helps explain why the fallen Wolsey would be thinking of Psalm 34.

At the end of 3.2 Wolsey is expressing contrition for his grave spiritual lapses—"O Cromwell, Cromwell,/ Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal/ I serv'd my king, He would not in mine age/ Have left me *naked* to mine *enemies*" (3.2.454-57). There is a fitting allusion here to the idolatry of the Israelites, when they worshipped the Golden Calf while Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. After Aaron explains to Moses that the Israelites demanded he give them idols to worship, the Genevan Exodus 32:25 states, "Moses therefore saw that the people were *naked* (for Aaron had made them *naked* unto their shame among their *enemies*)."[34] This biblical allusion thus compares Wolsey's corruption by earthly wealth and power with the famous Old Testament story of idolatry. The Geneva Bible glosses "naked" here as meaning "destitute of God's favour." Since this chapter also describes Moses' success is persuading God not to punish the Israelites with annihilation, Wolsey's allusion to it may also implicitly convey his hope that he too will be forgiven by God.

Although Shaheen found no psalm allusions in Katherine's lines[35] in 4.2, there are in fact several pregnant echoes of *WBP* Psalm 88 in her moving speech in 4.2.160-73. Of Psalm 88, Robert Alter notes, "What distinguishes this particular supplication is its special concentration on the terrifying darkness of the reality of death that has almost engulfed the supplicant" (308). Katherine's final speech as she nears death draws on its allusions to this psalm to amplify its emotional impact on the audience, highlighting her innocence and religious devotion.

De Vere's psalm allusions sometimes begin subtly, then become more apparent later in a speech.[36] Such is the case in Katherine's speech. It is only her final words of resignation, "*I can no more*," that most clearly echo those four words (in the same order) in Psalm 88:9—"*I* am shut up in prison fast, and *can* come forth *no more*." Once the contemporary audience heard that allusion to Psalm 88, they may have retrospectively detected several earlier echoes of it in her speech. Her first words to Lord Capuchius were "If *my sight fail* not,/ You should be… My royal nephew… Capuchius" (IV.2.108-10). Psalm 88:10 reads "*My sight* doth *fail* through grief and woe."[37]

Gordon McMullan[38] argues that the final christening scene "extends the connections that had at various times been drawn… between Henry VIII and King David as restorers of true religion (*most notably in relation to David as psalmist*)" (emphasis added). McMullan further notes the parallel between Henry's relationship with Anne Boleyn and King David's notorious relationship with Bathsheba. David's contrition over Bathsheba was traditionally thought to be the occasion for the

composition of Psalm 51. In contrast with *Macbeth* and several other works that echo Psalm 51 repeatedly, I have found only one muted echo of it in *Henry VIII*—Katherine's previously noted "*speak truth*" (3.1.47). These two words are an apt and highly condensed summary of one precondition for the state of contrition required for divine forgiveness.

If McMullan is correct about the christening scene drawing connections between Henry and King David, we might expect to find some psalm allusions in that scene. In fact, it is packed with them, almost constituting a newly created psalm, in praise of Princess Elizabeth. Since Cranmer wrote and compiled the 1559 Book of Common Prayer, it was in character for him to speak with such quasi-biblical eloquence.

De Vere writes here with especially dense literary allusions. It is a *tour de force* on the part of Cranmer and his creator. It elicits from Henry the movingly high praise that "This oracle of comfort has so pleas'd me/ That when I am in heaven I shall desire/ To see what this child does, and praise my Maker"[39] (66-68). Edmond Malone and E.K. Chambers thought a previous version of *Henry VIII* may have been first performed as early as 1593. If that play was performed at court, Cranmer's "oracle of comfort" would no doubt have been deeply moving to the Queen, as it encouraged her to imagine her father looking down on her approvingly from heaven.

Cranmer's opening words in 5.4 allude to the opening verses of 2 Corinthians. Cranmer says "And *to* your royal *Grace* and the good Queen,/ My noble partners and myself thus pray/ *All comfort*, joy, in this most gracious lady." St. Paul's epistle begins, "Paul… *to* the Church of God… *Grace* be with you… Blessed by God… the Father of mercies, and the God of *all comfort*. Which *comfort*eth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to *comfort* them which are in any affliction by the *comfort* wherewith we ourselves are *comfort*ed of God" (1-4).

Some allusions in this scene are to Psalm 118, which Alter calls a thanksgiving psalm. Thanksgiving is a suitable theme for the christening of the future Queen Elizabeth. Words echoing Psalm 118 include "prosperous/prosper," "joy," "gracious/grace," "hand," "utter," "truth," "goodness/good," "songs," "name," "see" and "bless."

Cranmer's speech (47-55) also includes several allusions to Psalm 128, as Cranmer is prophesying that Elizabeth will one day "create another heir" (41) who will "make new nations" (52). Alter says of this psalm, "The rewards of the good life are spelled out here in an idyll of domesticity. The language is simple and direct; the only two metaphors, the vine and the young olive trees, link the family… with the world of productive horticulture" (451). Echoed words from this psalm in Cranmer's speech include "peace," "truth," and "vine." An especially interesting echo is Cranmer"s "Our *children's children/ Shall see* this, and bless heaven" (54-55). He is here alluding to Psalm 128:6, "Thou *shal*t thy *children's children see*, to thy great joy's increase." Cranmer cannot literally make this biblical promise to King Henry, but he offers the comfort of echoing the words of the psalm's promise.[40]

There is also an echo of the Geneva Psalm 72. It is a fascinating source for some sections of Cranmer's "oracle of comfort" here. Psalm 72 was believed to have

been written by King David for his son Solomon; this would naturally parallel Henry's relationship with Elizabeth, another future monarch.[41] The Geneva editors note in the argument of this psalm that "Solomon… was the figure of Christ." The Geneva Psalm 72:3 states, "The *mountains* and the hills shall bring peace to the people by justice." A Genevan gloss for "mountains" explains, "When justice reigneth, even the places most *barren* shall be enriched by thy blessings" (emphasis added). I wonder if this gloss contributed to de Vere's wording "He shall flourish,/ And like a *mountain* cedar…" By the time the play was written, Queen Elizabeth's barrenness was beyond doubt.

The biblical allusions in this scene blend the *WBP* Psalms with allusions to the Geneva Bible. Once these allusions are identified and unpacked, they are unusually rich in unfolding new dimensions to Cranmer's words. A good example is his "This royal infant…/ Though still in her cradle, yet now promises/ Upon this land *a thousand thousand* blessings" (17-19). The allusion here may be to the Geneva 1 Chronicles 22:14.[42] That chapter, like Psalm 72, involves David and Solomon. It describes King David's efforts to help the future King Solomon to build the Temple in Jerusalem. The chapter's Argument (summary) makes the typological claim that "Under the figure of Solomon Christ is promised." God will not permit David himself to build the Temple, because of all the blood that David has shed. In verse 14 David says to Solomon, "For behold, according to my poverty have I prepared for the house of the Lord a hundred thousand talents of gold, and *a thousand thousand* talents of silver…." De Vere's allusion to this story encourages the audience to perceive a parallel between this biblical royal father and child, and the ones on stage (thus casting Elizabeth in a Christlike role, following the Geneva gloss on Solomon). Perhaps the Temple would suggest to some members of the audience the Church of England, for which Henry lay the foundations, and which Elizabeth helped complete with the Religious Settlement of 1559.

Easier to dismiss when viewed in isolation, de Vere's echoes of *WBP* are more convincing when studied cumulatively. Our awareness of their many echoes of the Sternhold and Hopkins Psalms (and of other biblical passages) will enrich our reading of Sonnet 24, Sonnet 33, and *Henry VIII*, and will provide a window into de Vere's creative process. Further, the many crucial allusions in the canon to passages marked in de Vere's copy provide further evidence for the still controversial Oxfordian authorship hypothesis.

Sonnet 24

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd,
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictur'd lies,
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

Sonnet 33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine;
The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

Psalm 139

Dauid *to clense his hart from al hipocrisy*, sheweth that *there is nothyng so hyd, which god seeth not*: which he confirmeth by the creation of man. After declaryng his zeale and feare of god, he protesteth to be enemy to al them that comtemne god.

[1] O Lord thou hast me tride & *known*, my sitting doost, thou *know*
[2] and rising eke, my thoughts a far, thou vnderstandst also.
[3] My pathes yea and my lieng down, thou compassest alwayes.

and by familiar custome art, acquainted with my wayes.
[4] No word is in my tonge O Lord, but known it is to thee:
[5] thou me behind holdst & before, thou layest thy hand on mee
[6] To wonderful aboue my reach, Lord is thy *cunning skil:*
It is so hye that I the same, cannot attayne vntil.
[7] From sight of thy al seing spirite, Lord whither shal I go?
Or whither shal I flee away, thy presence to scape from?
[8] To heauen if I mount aloft, lo thou art present there:
In hel if I lye down below, euen there yu doost appeare.
[9] Yea let me take the mornings wings, and let me go and hide,
Euen there where are the farthest parts, wher flowing sea doth slide:
[10] Yea euen thither also shal, thy reachyng hand me guyde:
and thy right hand shal hold me fast, and make me to abyde.
[11] Yea, if I say the darknes, shal, yet shroud me from thy sight:
Lo euen also the darkest nyght, about me shal be lyght.
[12] Yea darknes hydeth not from thee, but night doth shyne as day:
To thee the darknes and the lyght, are both alyke alway.
[13] For thou possessed hast my raynes, and thou hast couered mee:
When I within my mothers womb, enclosed was by thee.
[14] Thee wil I prayse, made fearfully, & wondrously I am:
they workes are maruelous, right wel my soule doth know the same.
[15] My bones they are not hid from thee, although in secret place,
I haue bene made, and in the earth beneath I shapen was.
[16] When I was formeles then *thine eye saw me:* for in thy booke
were written al (nought was before) that after fashion tooke.
[17] The thoughts therfore of thee O God, how deare are they to mee?
and of them al how passing great, the endles numbers be?
[18] If I should compt them, loe their summe, more then the sand *I see*:
and whensoeuer I awake, yet am I stil wyth thee.
[19] The wicked and the bloudy men, oh that thou wouldest slay:
Euen those O God to whom depart, depart from me I say.
[20] Euen those of thee O Lord my God, that speake ful wickedly:
Those that are lifted vp in vayne, beyng enemies to thee.
[21] Hate I not them that hate thee Lord, and that in earnest wyse?
Contend not I against them al, against thee that aryse:
[22] I hate them with vnfayned hate, euen as my vtter foes:
[23] *Try me* O God and *know* my *hart,* my thoughts proue & disclose.
[24] Consider Lord if wickednes, in me there any be:
and in thy way O God my guide, for euer lead thou me.

Endnotes

[1] In George Santayana, *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (New York: Scribner's, 1900).

[2] Santayana, 153.

[3] Santayana, 160.

[4] See Richmond Noble, *Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge* (New York: Macmillan, 1935); Naseeb Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Associated University Presses, 1999).

[5] See Waugaman, "The Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter is a major source for the works of Shakespeare," *Notes & Queries* 56:595-604 (2009a); "Echoes of the 'Lamed' Section of Psalm 119 in Shakespeare's Sonnets." *Shakespeare Matters* 8:1-8 (2009b); "Psalm Allusions in Shakespeare's *1 Henry VI, Richard II,* and *Edward III*," *Notes & Queries* 57:359-64 (2010a); "The Discovery of a Major New Literary Source for Shakespeare's Works in the de Vere Geneva Bible," *Brief Chronicles: The Interdisciplinary Journal of the Shakespeare Fellowship II*:109-20 (2010b); "Shakespeare's Sonnet 6 and the First Marked Passage in de Vere's Bible," *Shakespeare Matters* 9:15-18 (2010c); "*Titus Andronicus,* the Psalms, and Edward de Vere's Bible," *The Oxfordian* 13:34-49 (2011a); "The Sternhold and Hopkins *Whole Book of Psalms* Offers Crucial Evidence of de Vere's Authorship of the Works of Shakespeare." *Brief Chronicles* 3:213-34 (2011b); "Psalms Help Confirm de Vere Was Shakespeare." *The Shakespeare Oxford Newsletter* 48:19-24 (2012). "The Source for *Remembrance of Things Past* in Shakespeare's Sonnet 30," *Shakespeare Matters* 12:1 (Winter 2013), 1, 15-16. Most of the above articles are available online at http://www.oxfreudian.com.

[6] Excellent digitized images of this copy are available online, through the Folger Shakespeare Library's web site.

[7] Personal communication, 26 March 2010.

[8] *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).

[9] *Shakespeare's Books: A Dictionary of Shakespeare's Sources* (New York: Continuum, 2001).

[10] De Vere used the phrase "Dame Reason," which was used repeatedly by Christine

in *The City of Ladies*; see Waugaman, "A Shakespearen 'Snail Poem,' Newly Attributed to Edward de Vere," *Shakespeare Matters* 7:1, 6, 11, (2008).

[11] Waugaman, 2009a and 2010a.

[12] *The Reformation in Rhyme* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

[13] Waugaman, 2009a.

[14] Psalm 139 is also echoed in *The Rape of Lucrece* and in *Edward III*; see Waugaman, 2009a and 2010a.

[15] *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

[16] Booth, 172.

[17] Robert Alter, *The Book of Psalms* (New York: Norton, 2007), 479.

[18] Booth, 172.

[19] Helen Vendler (*The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* [London: Belknap Press, 1997]) believes a rival poet first appears in Sonnet 21. Vendler opens the possibility that Sonnet 24 may hint indirectly about a rival (who has perhaps obtained a portrait of the Fair Youth). The psalmist may serve as a surrogate for de Vere's contemporary rivals. We can assume *WBP* drew de Vere's intense interest for many reasons. Perhaps he displaced some of his rivalry with living poets onto a long dead one, implicitly elevating himself above any contemporary rivals as he competed with the divinely inspired psalmist.

[20] Their rhymes also link Sonnet 24 with Psalm 139. *Me* and *thee* are rhymed in both; "wise" and "arise" are rhymed in the psalm, while "lies" and "eyes" are rhymed in the sonnet.

[21] *Skill* is echoed in line 5, "For through the painter must you see his *skill*."

[22] The Coverdale, Geneva, and Bishop's Bibles do not use "cunning" in their translations of Psalm 139.

[23] Shakespeare may have been one of the first writers to use "cunning" in what the OED calls its "prevailing modern sense"-- (5.a.) "in a bad sense: skilful in compassing one's ends by covert means... crafty, artful, guileful, sly." (The OED credits Spenser in 1590 with the earliest use of this meaning.) It is thus possible that the double meaning of line 13 helps transform *cunning* from its earlier prevailing meanings of "skill" and "skilllful" to its current derogatory meaning.

[24] "Yea darknes hydeth not from thee" (139:12); "My bones are not hid from thee, although in secret place" (139:15). God even sees the baby in his "mother's womb" (139:13)—"When I was formeles then thine eye saw me" (139:16). Similarly, the psalm's argument says "there is nothing so hid, which god seeth not."

[25] I am grateful to Helen Vendler for her support of my thesis about Sonnet 33 (personal communication, 20 November, 2010: "I'm sure you're right; nothing echoed more in [Shakespeare's] ear than the Bible").

[26] "Metemorphothei" in the original Greek.

[27] Cf. "his celestial *face*" from line 6 of the sonnet.

[28] I follow Stephen Booth in using the Geneva Bible translation in this note. This is

the translation that is most frequently echoed in Shakespeare's works.

[29] The Tyndale and Bishops' translations also have "did shyne" in Matthew 17:2. It is the unique occurrence of "did shyne" in those two translations.

[30] *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (London, 1997), 178.

[31] *Shakespeare's Sonnets* (New Haven, 1977), 188.

[32] E.g., "this disgrace" in Sonnet 34, line 8. This implicit allusion to Judas invites us to reread "kissing" in Sonnet 33, line 3, in connection with Judas's kiss of betrayal. Six of the nine uses of "kisse" and "kissed" in the Geneva New Testament refer to Judas. As we reread "kissing with golden face" with this darker meaning, we are retracing the poet's path from joy to despair.

[33] This is the earliest use of the phrase cited in Early English Books Online.

[34] Shaheen does not cite this verse with respect to any play; nor does he cite Exodus 32 in connection with *Henry VIII*.

[35] None of the allusions I describe in this paper are listed in Shaheen, except as otherwise noted.

[36] Richard D. Altick noted such a pattern in the leitmotifs of *Richard II*—"a particularly important passage is prepared for by the interweaving into the poetry, long in advance, of inconspicuous but repeated hints of the imagery which is to dominate that passage," in "Symphonic imagery in *Richard II*," in Jeanne T. Newlin, *Richard II: Critical Essays* (London: Garland Publishing, 1984), 274.

[37] 69:3 also includes the phrase "my sight doth fail."

[38] Gordon McMullan (ed.). *King Henry VIII* . 3d Series (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2001), 57-147.

[39] Note the self-congratulatory double meaning here on the part of the playwright, since "maker" also means "poet."

[40] William Tyndale's Bible contains the first use of "children's children" listed in EEBO; *WBP* is the second. Cranmer's words in 47-55 also echo the content of the Nunc Dimittis that was recited daily during Evening Prayer. This was the prayer spoken by Simeon, who tells God that he is ready to die, now that he has seen the infant Jesus. Cranmer refers to Elizabeth as "this chosen infant." "Peace" and "servants" here (47-48) may allude to the Nunc Dimittis's "Lord, now lettest thou thy *servant* depart in *peace*."

[41] Rivkah Zim, *English Metrical Psalms* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), observes that, in 1583, William Patten identified Queen Elizabeth with Solomon in his translation of Psalm 72 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of her accession.

[42] Verse 4 of this chapter speaks of "*cedar* trees without number," possibly contributing to the "mountain *cedar*" in 5.4.53.