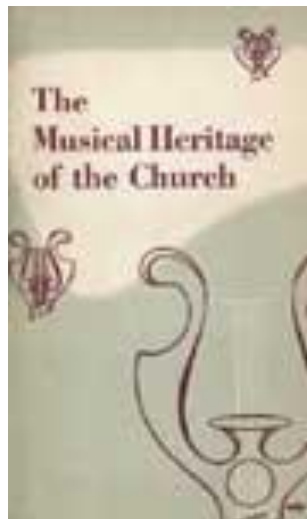


The Musical Heritage of the Church

Volume VI

Edited by Theodore Hoelty-Nickel
Valparaiso, Indiana



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Foreword

Once again Concordia Publishing House is pleased to make available another volume in *The Musical Heritage of the Church* series, containing essays delivered at the Valparaiso University Church Music Seminars. The present volume is the sixth in the series. Since 1944 these seminars, under the able leadership of Dr. Theodore Hoelty-Nickel, have been held regularly to discuss church music, Christian worship—especially in its Lutheran understanding—and related problems. The papers presented at the meetings have had wide influence in church music circles both within the Lutheran church and also in other denominations. Previous volumes in the series have been eagerly sought after both by church music scholars and also by practical church musicians in this country and abroad. This is evidenced by the fact that all previous volumes, with the exception of number five, are out of print.

The present volume contains essays on a variety of topics. Several strike at the very heart of church music and its relation to Christian worship. Others are of a technical, practical, or historical nature. All will be of value to the conscientious church musician.

O. A. Dorn

Editor's Preface

The essays contained in this volume were presented at the Valparaiso University Church Music Seminar at its annual meetings from 1958 to 1962. They are published as volume six in the series *The Musical Heritage of the Church*.

We are publishing this material as it was presented at our conferences. The opinions expressed are those of the essayists and do not necessarily reflect our point of view.

The editor wishes to extend his appreciation to the Aid Association for Lutherans of Appleton, Wis., for the continuous interest in our program of studies in the field of church music and for making possible a wider distribution of this volume.

The editor also wishes to extend his appreciation to Prof. Elmer E. Foelber and the editorial department of Concordia Publishing House for many helpful suggestions.

Theodore Hoelty-Nickel
Valparaiso University
May 15, 1962

Faith and Music

O. P. Kretzmann

“When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” (Job 38:7)

Several months ago at the time of the dedication of our first chancel window I spoke about the intimate relationship between the Gospel and the fine arts. I attempted to show that the Holy Spirit still broods over the bent world with warm breast and bright wings, and that all Christian art is ultimately the work of God the Holy Spirit, a reflection of His creative and sanctifying power in the hearts of men.

Today I should like to recognize the presence of the members of our Church Music Seminar by pointing out briefly that one art—the art of music—is the eternal and inevitable companion of the marching of God through history. From eternity to eternity, from Genesis to Revelation, from creation to the Judgment, music is the background for all the mighty acts of God.

It all began at the creation: “When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” It flowed through the psalmist’s songs in the night, the echo of song and psaltery and cymbal in the hymnbook of a waiting church. Then there was the song of the heavenly host over Bethlehem. The announcement of the harps of the redeemed around the throne became a part of the Christian hope. Always and always, except possibly at Calvary, as we follow God through history, we are never far away from the sound of music. This is man’s counterpoint to the sound of an acting God. It is sometimes broken and alone, sometimes low and sometimes high, sometimes far and sometimes near, but always a deep, profound, and essential part of our Christian life.

There is, therefore, every reason for us to give attention to this companion of our faith. There is, in the sublimest sense of the term, a spiritual music, an interior music, both human and divine. *It is a sacramental act by which a gift of God becomes an offering to God*, who has so honored us by the incarnation of His Son and the redemption of the world. It carries the most personal and the most indescribable reflection of the divine presence in our souls.

There are some strange and mysterious things about this process. The Gospel—the vision of God in Jesus Christ—was given to us in words, in language, in the ordinary symbols by which we touch and hear the world around us, by which we communicate with our fellowmen. God comes to us in words. He speaks in human accents. He talks so that a child can understand.

In an essay on the Bible as literature Henry Van Dyke has written: “The Bible speaks in hundreds of languages to the heart of man. Above the cradle and beside the grave its great words come to us uncalled. They fill our prayers with power larger than we know and the beauty of them lingers on our ear long after the sermons which they adorned have been forgotten. They return to us swiftly and quietly like doves flying from far away. They surprise us with new meanings, like springs of water breaking forth from the mountains beside a long-trodden path. They grow richer as pearls do when they are worn near the heart.” Now we may say: “All this is true and all this is wonderful. God has really been kind to us in using our language, our limitations of human speech, to tell us His pity, His love, and His heart.” What else can be added to so great a revelation?

Mysteriously now, there *is* something else! After all, many of the things said about the Bible can also be said about other great books. They, too, have lifted, inspired, and comforted. There is, however, one thing about the Bible that no other book has or ever will have, where it stands completely alone. The

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Bible is Jesus Christ! In, above, beyond, and beneath the words is Jesus Christ. It can, therefore, be understood only on our knees. As we feed upon it, we become aware of great hands, powerful and real, drawing us toward the bleeding and glorious face of Jesus Christ. The final sense of the Bible always lies beyond! Beyond the words, the ideas, the events, which are but signs in which the eyes of faith detect the person of the Only Son, the Holy One, the Redeemer of the world.

And here is the place where sacred music enters the picture. Often the words of Scripture are trying to say the unutterable, the unspeakable, the humanly incredible. Only by clothing them or their ideas in the garment of music can the unutterable become an audible undertone. Music tries to reflect the divine atmosphere with which the words are invested. It opens the heavenly meaning of the words. It weaves a sequence of sounds surrounding the words or ideas which are the direct result of the Holy Spirit's working once more, after all these years, to bring God into human life.

Is all this clear to us? Let us take just one example in which the meaning of the words is made clearer, more powerful, more glorious by the lifting hands of music. Look for a moment at the *Mass in B Minor* by Johann Sebastian Bach! There is the "Kyrie," the outcry of a soul that clutches at the divine mercy from the black edge of despair. Where is there greater exaltation of worship than in the "Gloria" with its crackling trumpets? Never was the tenderness of divine pity more eloquently set forth than in the "Qui Tollis," or the mystery of divine condescension than in the "Et Incarnatus," or the grief of divine Passion than in the "Crucifixus," or the victory of divine love in the "Et Resurrexit." In all of these the words are drawn from the limitation of time and intellect to the long light of eternity. There are a few passages like that in Handel's *Messiah*, and there is always something like that in the Gregorian chant and in the greatest hymns of the church. Here God can be most fully expressed, and all we can do is to let Him utter Himself by the hands and genius of His children, singing and playing and chanting, joining the morning stars and the son of God in their songs for creation. With this there is something of eternity in the plainest church, the humblest chapel, and the lowliest heart. On Sunday morning we join with the angels in what they are doing all the time.

This is the great task of all sacred music at its highest and best. It forms a holy bridge of sound between the known and the unknown. Someone has said that all history is point and counterpoint, two melodies running side by side, God's and man's. Alone one of them is always incomplete. Even the melody of God—He preferred to die rather than to be without us! Taken together, there is meaning and beauty in the rise and fall of these melodies. Their temporal dissonance is resolved into final harmony. This is the task of the music of the church—to anticipate that final harmony even here on earth—so that singing of God and man, heaven and earth, time and eternity is the prelude to the day when God and man are finally united by sight, and heaven and earth have passed away and time has been lost in eternity and our music has become perfect.

One more observation. Though sacred music is a part of the created universe—all the morning stars sang together—it is also the greatest and highest reflection of the essential unity of the body of Christ. Men have blasphemously used the very words of Scripture to divide the church—but no one has ever used the music of the church to divide it. What men sing is far more Christian than what they say. Sacred music always unites, because at the moment of worship the church is always one. The singing church is a single living organism in a world of disunity and death. In its music it really becomes the communion of saints, the *una sancta*, the body of Christ, the blessed city of God on earth and in heaven, the beloved community whose choir we are, both here and hereafter. And we never sing to Him alone. There are always the saints who have gone before, the saints who sing by our side, and the saints who will sing

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over our graves. They are always one, always in unison, always saying and singing that nothing can ever empty the world of the communion of saints.

A final observation! All the music of the church will be bad and harsh and thin unless we ever and always remember our Lord's words: "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." Here is a good and great theology of music. A theology which includes the great works of Christian musicians of all times, and the music in a little white church on the plains of Kansas or Nebraska. At this very moment this Sunday morning about a hundred people are there. There is a little electronic organ on one side and a children's choir. Now what happens? Something like this: "Behold your children, dear God. We are only little people and glad that You know it. We have come to Your house. See what we have brought for You—a little money, a little music—and our tired minds and lonely hearts. Other things we have too. We have built an altar and carved a cross and bought an organ. These things are not much, we know, beside the glories of the outstretched universe. Our music is faint and weak beside the singing of the morning stars and the music of the spheres. We cannot sing as well as the sons of God in the shining ranks of heaven. But, dear God, what we offer is the best Your children can give or do. Accept us in Your pity! Wipe the tears from our eyes, and comfort the lonely fear in our hearts! Help us to sing just a little better!"

And suddenly, very suddenly, God is high and lifted up. There is a glory in the little church, a far but true echo of the morning stars singing together. There is the sound of forgotten trumpets and the music of heaven, the last home of little children who worship Him—sing and play and pray to Him—in spirit and in truth.

Valparaiso University

Fundamental Considerations for a Theology of Music

Oskar Soehngen

I don't know, my American friends, whether it is true for your country too that the question of the essential nature of music is becoming more and more important in these years. It is a question asked not only by those who think about music but also by musicians and composers themselves. In Germany, at any rate, the intellectual situation of creative and practical musical life is largely influenced by it. And at the same time one is beginning to say again and again that this question cannot be answered in aesthetic categories and philosophic concepts, but that the last and profound reason for music can be given only in theology. But is theology really able to say something binding about music? Is this after all a legitimate task of theology? There is one thing all of us will agree upon, and that is that it will not suffice with some Biblical reminiscences and devotional reflections as we know them, for instance, from Mattheson's well-known *Ehrenpforte* of 1740. There, for example, it is said: "Music is a noble art and a great embellishment for a noble spirit. All other arts and sciences will die with us. A lawyer can't use his skill in heaven, for there will be no trials like in Speyer. Nobody in heaven will ask a doctor for a prescription or a purgative. But the things theologians and musicians learned on earth they will also practice in heaven, that is, to praise God." No, there must already be a real bridge between theology and music, if theological reasoning of music is to be possible. Let us now discuss this with one another. But not every theology is ready to build this bridge, as we shall see. To mention the result beforehand, I think one can prove that a theological reasoning of music can be possible only on the foundation of Martin Luther's theology. But now to the point.

Music and theology can be brought into a real relationship only if one ascribes a theological relevance to the peculiar phenomenon that results when ordered air vibrations are mediated by our organs of hearing and are registered in our consciousness as a process of musical experience and understanding. In any case, a theology of music is possible only when we can make real theological statements about music.

The requirement we thus make can be clarified for the non-theologian by a few examples. The offices which are established in the church, whether perhaps there should be a preacher besides the pastor, whether a bishop should be called to be the head of the church, and which polity the church chooses, these are all questions which cannot be decided theologically in a strict sense of the word, i.e., with the Word of God. These are matters that should be decided on the basis of historic facts with the help of natural reason. Theologically, from the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, there is only a twofold requirement: first, that the public ministry is established in some concrete form and that it performs its service, so that by the clear proclamation of the Gospel and by the administration of the sacraments according to the Scriptures the congregation of Jesus Christ is nurtured and renewed in the power of the Holy Spirit; and second, that the polity which the church gives itself in no way contradicts its confession but is adequate to the task received by its Lord. In the same way the questions of the *liturgical order*, the so-called ceremonies, are reckoned by the Reformers as *adiaphora* or *neutralia*, i.e., things which can be decided in some way or another without touching the foundations of faith.

Certainly it is not accidental that in the discussion about the reintroduction of congregational singing, which arose a few decades after the death of Zwingli, the word "adiaphora" was the point at which the minds separated. While the supporters of the prohibition in the spirit of Zwingli concluded from Article 23 of the Second Helvetic Confession that church hymns belong to the things which are not necessary,

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the opponents of the adiaphora character of Christian singing maintained that it serves the glory of God and the edification of the neighbor and like prayer is commanded by God.

Still more revealing and characteristic for the Lutheran Church's speedy decline from the deep music-theological insights of Martin Luther is the fact that also the dogmatists of Lutheran orthodoxy declare music to be an adiaphoron. It is significant that Johann Gerhard (1582–1637), its classic representative, quite incidentally mentions music in his article about "ceremonies," i.e., The Order of Service, in the fifth volume of his *loci*. The result is summarized by Friedrich Kalb in his essay "The Doctrine of the Cultus of the Lutheran Church During the Period of Orthodoxy" (Berlin, 1959), as follows: "Music belongs like all arts within the Lutheran service in the sphere of adiaphora. The question as to whether and which music should be used during the service is for orthodoxy on the same level as the question as to the right and character, for example, of the Communion vessels, the vestments, the paraments, etc." And to the systematician of orthodoxy, Ludwig Dunte, in his *Decisiones mille et sex casuum conscientiae* (1628, page 909), Christian music takes a place at the side of medicine for the body, the companionship of honest people, and a small quantity of wine and fun as an outward means to remove sadness and melancholy! Here indeed is a lack of all presuppositions for a theological estimate of music.

When we look into the traditional forms for the coordination of music and theology, in the first place, there is the theology of music originated by Pythagoras and his school. Basic to it is the perception that the same numerical laws determine the structure of music that also characterize the order of the universe and the movement of the stars: everywhere there are the basic musical principles of unity, number, and order. Music developed in all three spheres of the concept of the world of that time: as inaudible music of the spheres (*musica mundana*), as a well-ordered interplay of man's body and soul (*musica humana*), and as a peculiar ontological realm of sounding (*musica instrumentalis*) binding heaven and earth. The understanding of music therefore at the same time mediated cosmological and anthropological-theological insights, just as inversely special rules for musical production resulted from theological understanding. This musical theology not only determined the medieval art of composition, but can also be found in the Protestant music theoreticians of the 17th and 18th centuries. It also formed the spiritual foundation for the productions of Johann Sebastian Bach, and in our days above all it was resurrected by Paul Hindemith in his *Theory of Composition*. Usually when Catholic theology today tries to get to the bottom of music, these attempts are made along the lines of a theological over-elevation of Pythagorean insights.

It is not necessary to know much about the theology of the three Reformers to presume from the beginning that it would be difficult to build a bridge from their theological attitude to the *musica speculativa* of the Pythagorean musical theory. Martin Luther was most closely bound to this tradition; with his extensive ties to medieval conceptions it would be easy to prove a series of numerical elements in his musical-theoretical thinking. But these are more or less unimportant. The new thinking about the musical views of Luther does not have to do with the scientific-speculative aspect of music, but is based on the specific elemental experience of music as a sounding form, and this elemental experience of music is likewise elementally theological and possesses a characteristic theological depth, which witnesses to the deep-rooted unity of music and theology, thus creating the basis for a completely new theology of music. It is not just a coincidence that a thorough reorganization of the teaching of music took place at that time. Luther's own university in Wittenberg apparently had no chair of musicology, while there were lectures about the other liberal arts. An effort to establish a professorship in music in 1541 failed because of the frugality of the elector. Otto Clemen (Letters of Luther, WA 9, p. 339) and van Crevel presume that Sixt Dietrich, who besides Johann Walther was nearest to the musical view of the

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Reformer and who on the occasion of a visit to Wittenberg had held a public lecture on music, was slated for this professorship; it is possible that Dietrich had again been a guest lecturer (*hospes*) in 1544 in Wittenberg for a number of months. The prefaces to the works by Sixt Dietrich show that the world of Pythagorean music theology was lost for him entirely; on the other hand, according to the judgment of his biographer Hermann Zenck, they differ “sharply from the humanistic and renaissance-flavored prefaces of the time.”

Zwingli and Calvin were not so much bound to medieval thought as Luther and did not need to bear the antithesis of the times in their own breast. Unlike Luther, they consequently were not confronted with the tremendous task of breaking out of the “Babylonian prison” of the Catholic Church, but were supported in their Reformation work by other movements. The role that humanism played in the formation of Zwingli’s thinking and in the preparation of the Reformation in German Switzerland is known by everyone. Also his musical concept was determined from this line—that is not surprising, since his teachers were mostly leading men of the humanistic movement. Just as the humanistic feeling for life sought to release all thinking processes from their servitude to theology and pressed toward an establishment of an earthly order and arrangement that proceeds out of itself, it also tried to put the arts on their own feet by proclaiming the aesthetic-artistic as an end in itself. The arts he regarded fundamentally and in their source as secular. It had disastrous results for church music in the Reformed German Switzerland that Zwingli’s humanistic musician friends devoted themselves to secular music and that Zwingli associated himself with them.

If music is altogether a worldly affair—in Zwingli’s writing there is no word that it is a divine gift, a gift of God—nevertheless Zwingli regarded it highly; in this respect he is different from Calvin. Zwingli’s interpretation of the classic passage from the Bible, 1 Sam. 16: 23, is related to his positive evaluation of music: “And it came to pass when the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp and played it with his hand; so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.” According to Calvin’s opinion this was a special intervention of God; nothing would be stranger than to attribute the healing of Saul’s despondency to the natural power of music. Therefore this event has no general significance. God could just as well have made use of another means than music to carry out His intentions. Luther, on the other hand, without any reflection is quite certain that David not only played the harp but also sang. The sung Word of God made the miracle possible which is mentioned in the 16th chapter of the First Book of Samuel. Certainly it is not just a coincidence that God used the power of music, for this sung Word for Luther is a part of the abundance of the effective possibilities of the Word, and, to be sure, of the Word in its elemental and pure form as *verbum vocale* and *viva vox*; indeed, music keeps reminding one that the elemental form of the Word of God is a forthgoing Word. With Zwingli it is altogether different: to him the reported events are completely natural, which can be seen from his letter to the Episcopal vicar general Fabri. David was simply a good harpist, and it belongs to the ability of music that it can free a melancholy person “for a short time” from his illness. That which is reported in 1 Sam. 16 has, according to Zwingli, a thousand similar parallel cases.

Our discussion has gone far beyond the starting point. For it has become evident that Zwingli not only broke with the cosmologically founded medieval music theology, but rejects a theological relevance to music, and therefore has no assumptions or a starting point for a theology of music. For even though sacred compositions were sung, as in Zwingli’s house-music sessions, music as such remains a worldly thing. The acute secularization of musical thought during humanism made it natural that Zwingli did not reflect further on it, but as a matter of course proceeded within the spheres of a secularized musical conception. Charles Garside, Jr., therefore, in his essay “The Literary Evidence for Zwingli’s

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Musicianship" (*Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 48th year, Gütersloh, 1957, pp. 56–74) for good reasons comes to the conclusion: "Music for Zwingli thus exists without the additional theological dimension. . . . And to music Zwingli will not accord the sanction of the Paraclete; it is, on the contrary, wholly secular." And he sums up: "Music was a recreation of and for this world, for the comfort of souls possibly, but certainly not a divine gift and emphatically not second to theology" (pp. 69 and 73). This attitude of Zwingli, as we saw above, is confirmed by his pupils when they declare music as an adiaphoron which has no place in the service of worship, and is anchored by Zwingli's successor, Heinrich Bullinger, in Article 23 of the Second Helvetic Confession.

Calvin's spiritual remoteness from the medieval music theology of the *musica speculativa* is so great and so manifest that it simply disappears from the scene. This can be explained in his case not only from the completely different structure of his theological thinking but also from his spiritual origins in humanism.

Although Calvin was not personally engaged in music, one dare not overlook the fact that he determined the model for the singing of psalms, and that the musical prototype for him, in the opinion of Arnold Geering, was in the melodies used by the humanists in the composition of Latin odes to teach students the antique meters and verses by having them sing them.

Calvin's important musical co-workers were also followers of humanism. Certainly it is not only by chance that the meager reports that we have about Louis Bourgeois, Guillaume Franc, Pierre Dagues, and Claude Goudimel, but also about the later arrangers of the Geneva Psalter, primarily Claudin Le Jeune, at least show that they all are friends of and are spiritually at home in musical humanism. "Sur le terrain de la musique, comme sur plusieurs autres, Humanisme et Réforme se côtoient et parfois se rencontrent" (Paul Marie Masson: "In the field of music as in a number of others, humanism and the Reformation go arm in arm and sometimes meet together").

Although it is clear that a deep chasm lies between Calvin and the *musica speculativa* of the Middle Ages, the question is still open whether his views on music, contrary to those of Zwingli, could be the basis for an evangelical theology of music. We will turn to this question now. First of all, it is absolutely necessary that we concern ourselves with a third form for the coordination of music and theology that has been handed down to us by history—the first form was the Pythagorean theory; Luther's music theology is the second form of such a coordination. The third form is characterized by the fact that it asks about the significance of music for the *vita religiosa* (religious life). Is music useful or a hindrance to reaching the goal of salvation? If the first is the case, how far and in what manner is it able to accompany and accelerate the way of the *ordo salutis* (the way of salvation)? Where it is the principal task of theology to develop the soul's way of salvation to God, and where the service of worship in accepting neo-Platonic thoughts is understood as devotion and exaltation to God, it is easy to believe this kind of pragmatic question. Augustine, who was a modern man insofar as he combined the Pythagorean-Platonic thinking about music with a remarkable openness and sensitivity for musical sound, answered with a distinct "yes." He did this in the sixth volume of his work *De Musica*, which he wrote after his baptism: The music through which God created the world can simultaneously be means of the *anagoge*, of spiritual growth, and of the return of the soul to God. With this the presuppositions for the development of a specific form of music, church music, are affirmed. Zwingli chose the very opposite view: Music necessarily leads the believer out of the quietness of prayer and devotion. Therefore he rejected music in every form during the service of worship, whether organ playing, choir music, liturgical music, or congregational singing. The elementary massed singing of the congregation has an outward thrust, but the service of worship aims toward contemplation and devotion. And

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concerning the other more artistically developed forms of music for worship, Zwingli knew only too well the alluring power that can be involved in it, because of his artistically sensitive nature. Where God's Word should be obeyed, we cannot at the same time want to listen to the sounds of music. It is significant that Zwingli only approaches the problem of a coordination of music and theology under such a pragmatic view, although he hastens to answer it with a distinct "no"; the service of worship should not be combined with music, and music should not be combined with the service of worship. Because the service should be nothing else than service, and art should be nothing else than art, the theologian Zwingli relegated the musician Zwingli into a sphere of privacy.

But not always is music rejected as such and as a whole by the theological understanding of the *unum necessarium* and of the service of worship. Then tables of commandments and prohibitions are erected with clearly defined conditions to which music must comply to be allowed for the worship service. Calvin's attitude toward music is determined by this casuistry. He begins his efforts with the observation that the congregation is largely lukewarm and not participating. Music should be used to help the situation. In order to increase the ardor of the congregation and to give their prayers urgent power, Calvin organized in Geneva an exemplary singing of the psalms. Contrary to Zwingli, Calvin is convinced that music can unleash dissolving lascivious powers. Therefore one dare not allow it to develop freely in the worship service, but must ask of it *poids et majesté* (power and majesty): In accordance with the *cantus ecclesiasticus* of the Roman Church, Calvin develops the idea of a special worship service music, of the *chants ecclésiastiques*, which should differ fundamentally in its style from all other music "with which one gladdens people at table and at home." At the same time he is certain that during the worship service the Word alone and exclusively dare reign; therefore only such music is permitted during the gathering of the believers which is ready and able in a selfless way to enter into the service of the Word of God. He draws the following practical conclusions from this: (a) Instrumental music has no place in Christian worship because it belongs to the *umbræ legis*, the "shadow of the Law" in the Old Testament; the truth in Christ has nothing to do with the shadow (Commentary to Ps. 33:2 and Ps. 81); (b) The singing of psalms, at least during the worship service, may be done only in unison, because polyphony can endanger the single meaning of the Word of the Bible. In this limitation, however, vocal music may play an important part in the service: not only that the music by strength of its *vertu secrète et quasi incroyable* may kindle the heart to prayer and praise of God, but the Word of God penetrates even deeper into the heart when music is added to the Word.

According to the above delineation there can be no doubt that Calvin attributes a devotional-psychological significance to music and beyond that (when we think of his many positive remarks about secular music and the pleasure which it can give) also a general anthropological meaning. But it still remains an open question whether a real theology of music can here find a basis. Certainly Calvin can praise music as a gift of God and can state its one purpose, that it sound to the glory of God. However, it is a gift of God only in an indirect sense; in the foreground of Calvin's view of music is the idea that it is an invention of men and that musical instruments were invented by the descendants of Cain. Moreover, along with the theological conclusion that music is a gift of God, the other conclusion is not excluded that, as an art invented and practiced by men, it has a worldly character; for the "world," too, has been created by the hands of God and is held in His hands. In fact, is not the worldly character of music indirectly presupposed if the songs which are used during the service need to be hallowed by *mélodies convenables au subject* (melodies which are suitable to the subject) and by *poids et majesté* (power and majesty)?

In this question, however, whether music is essentially “worldly,” opinions differ. The observation is revealing that the *vertu secrette* of music does not hold true by Calvin, as it does by Luther, in the struggle against Satan and the shades of sadness, in the invasion of Satan’s empire, but rather in the overcoming of the lukewarmness and indifference of human nature, i.e., in its influence on the psycho-physical organism of man. In the same way, according to Calvin’s opinion, it is not possible for music by itself to lift the heart to God, but the understanding must be put to use: “*Le coeur requiert l’intelligence.*” One should sing not only with the heart and mouth but also with understanding. The distinguishing feature of man’s music is that man, unlike the birds, knows what he is singing. Here is the “heart,” which for Luther is the living center of faith, removed from its single central position. The heart, however, is the exhaustible source of all singing and music making.

There is still another decisive argument, from which it becomes clear that, from Calvin’s view on music, no real theology of music is possible. If Martin Luther gives music the closest place next to theology, in fact, if Johann Walther, the closest musical collaborator of Luther, can describe the rootlike unity of music and theology with the picture that music is “wrapped and locked in theology,” then this is possible only because music in Luther’s opinion is understood “like word,” i.e., only from its center in Jesus Christ: “In Christ lie hidden all God’s treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3). Because music from the beginning is coordinated with the Word of God, it can be coordinated also with theology. From this fundamental conception, Luther develops his characteristic theology of music, of course not in a closed system but in great remarks and aphorisms, which have their secret center in this fundamental conception. Now, of course, Calvin also mentions that music must be *convenant à la parole* (appropriate to the word). It is revealing of his position that he makes this demand especially for the music of the worship service, and that therefore only a stylistic demand is made. In Calvin one cannot speak of a direct inner relation of music to the Word, of a “Word relation” in music, also not in simple instrumental music. To the contrary, the pictures used by Calvin for music all proceed from the presupposition of a fundamental difference between the basic word and the “dress,” the “cover,” the “vessel,” the “funnel” of the music; an agreement can be made only in the “suitability” of the garment or of the receiving vessel. For Calvin’s conception of music a direct, dangerous line leads from the ability of music to cheer men and enkindle the spirit to the promotion of disorderly conduct through music, and this line is interrupted at only one point: i.e., where music is called upon, “in the face of God and His angels,” to aim at the attitude of *poids et majesté* (power and majesty) and thereby to have a part in the honor of the *chant ecclésiastique*.

When we now try to summarize with necessary care the results of our discussion thus far, we can say the following: For *Zwingli* all music is worldly; but it is just in this worldliness that it has its special dignity and task beyond the sphere of worship.

Calvin can attribute a function helpful to worship in music, which in itself is secular, if with the use of *chants ecclésiastiques* stylistic protections are included as a safeguard against the natural, lascivious powers of music. It is from this point that Claude Goudimel in the preface to his *Premier livre de Psaumes en forme de motets* (1551) can argue against every kind of secular composing, although he himself in subsequent years never ceased to publish secular chansons.

For *Luther* all music is “spiritual” (sacred), i.e., theologically relevant. For him there is no secular music in the strict sense of the word, but at the most a degenerate music: “Music is a gift, a benefaction, of God, not a gift of man” (*TR*, No. 7,034). Singing “has nothing to do with the world” (*TR*, No. 1,300). A motet of Senfl and a sermon of Luther are *both* gifts of the Holy Ghost.

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It could mean an important confirmation of our exposition if it were possible to show how the different music conceptions of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin each correspond to a characteristic concrete form of music making and of the music itself. For *Luther* music is a statement of the deeper realities, and the playing of music a banishing of hidden powers; these deeper realities speak to him as movingly in the ancient church hymns as they do in the modern motets of Josquin, and a right kind of music making signifies a mobilization of the powers of music as well as of the Word of God in the struggle against the shades of sadness. For *Zwingli* and his cultivation of music, instrumental music is clearly in the foreground. Chamber music especially fascinated him, and he prepared the way for an early blossoming of this art form in German Reformed Switzerland. His understanding of music as pure art hangs together with his aesthetic-formal ideal of art. Music is for him a kind of game; the denial of a theological relevance to music corresponded then, as it does today, to the play theory of music (which does justice only to certain phases of music). It is along the same line when Zwingli now and again tries to bridge over to the popular music of the minstrel. Just as the minstrel in the Middle Ages was the representative of secular music and thus the opponent of the practically exclusively sacred art music, so at the same time, Zwingli confirms his confession to the worldliness of music by removing the barriers to a worldly music making of the people. As to *Calvin*, he apparently reckons with a music which has an eye for the inflammability of the Roman temperament and aims in this direction. The Psalms of the Geneva Reformation, when seen from the standpoint of their musical type, are closely related to the Marseillaise of the French Revolution, the gripping melody of which fascinated the people, and it is the same line which leads to the electrifying rhythm of Bizet's "Carmen" and Ravel's "Bolero."

Thus there remain two forms for a theology of music: that which is not practicable for an Evangelical faith, the *musica speculativa* founded on the regular structures of music; and the theology of music developed by Martin Luther, which is borne by the faith that music is deeply related to the Word of God. That music comes from the *auricularia*, i.e., from the sphere of the miraculous audible things—like the Gospel, that it is a unique gift of God's creation which comes to us in the same way the Word of God does, namely, mediated by the voice, that is a point at which Luther is lost in wonder again and again. Gospel and music, theology and music, point to one another: the Gospel is the high school of singing, just as music itself leads very closely to the Gospel and, in the fact, knows even more of the mystery of the Gospel than many a learned theologian. It cannot be our task to develop these outlines of a Lutheran theology of music; we must be content to have pointed out the place from which one can speak theologically about music, and for that reason to see the real, deep nature of music in its true light.

Berlin, Germany

Theology and Church Music as Bearers and Interpreters of the Verbum Dei

Walter E. Buszin

In the very first issue of *Musik und Kirche*, published in January–February 1930, Christhard Mahrenholz stated in his foreword that no age or generation can afford simply to take for granted that a relationship exists between the church and her music. Mahrenholz emphasized at the time that the very nature of the problems involved demands that each generation study this question anew. In the January–February issue of *Musik und Kirche*, published by the Johannes Stauda-Verlag in 1955, Mahrenholz repeated and reemphasized verbatim what he had said 25 years before.^[1] As a theologian, liturgiologist, and musicologist he was aware that the proper relationship is easily obliterated and destroyed unless steps are taken periodically and at the proper time to safeguard and reestablish it.

I

If theology and church music are to be in perfect agreement with each other and the one complement the other, the text-based music of the church must share the objectives and obligations of Christian theology. Notes and tones are added to texts not to weaken but to strengthen these texts as bearers and interpreters of their message. Music often employs signs and symbols to convey the deeper meaning of what the text says. When no text is employed by the musician, the problem becomes more difficult, since the text is needed to clarify and state *in expressis verbis* what the composer has in mind. The text thus comes to the aid of the music, just as at other times the music reinforces the text. When a clash or rift develops between verbal theology and tonal music, we must realize that their conjoint character has been either impaired or destroyed. The textual and spiritual content of theology and of church music must be homogeneous and fitting, not only that each may serve its purpose well but also that their fusion may actually help increase their strength and insure their effectiveness. By combining texts with music the composer seeks to present and interpret the *Verbum Dei* clearly and unmistakably. The better he is equipped theologically and musically, the better should he, as an instrument of the Holy Ghost, be able to serve the church in performing the task of bringing people to Christ and establishing them in the Christian faith. When this is not the case, the composer will easily confuse people and create a chaotic condition. He will then not serve the Gospel well and may do more harm than good. He may gratify people musically, aesthetically, or emotionally, but that is not the great responsibility of church music.

It is imperative, therefore, that theology and church music be integrated as much as possible. Church music and theology must give evidence of an understanding of their chief and common functions and must provide proof of their compatibility. Both must aim, we repeat, to serve the Christ and the *Verbum Dei*. Neither dares to become an expression of human vainglory. Both must help create the same atmosphere in the church service of worship. Should music be without a theological text and not even hint at a text, it is neutral. When such music is used in services of worship, it must not militate against the theonomous character of the occasion by suggesting what is foreign, ungodly, or frivolous. Not only absolute music but even the accompaniment of a sacred text can thus either support the theonomous character of a worship service, or it can profane and degrade it. The efforts of theology will in that case be thwarted by music.

It is possible, even likely, that much theological literature and religious music of the past two centuries is unsatisfactory and inferior because theologians and church musicians have become unaware of the importance of their high calling and have departed from the fundamentals of Christian faith, order, and

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decency by resorting to what borders on blasphemy and mockery. It is possible, indeed even likely, that the bill of divorcement issued by some to theology and church music has not only resulted in a catastrophic separation of these God-given gifts but also brought dishonor on the bride of Christ and her Christocentric and doxological services of worship. Victorianism and romanticism of the 19th and 20th centuries have driven many members of the Christian church into the crypts and cubicles which blind their view and make them so shortsighted that they are unable to behold the vast panorama afforded Christian people by a wholesome type of ecumenicity and a healthy type of Lutheranism, with Christ, the Son of God and Mary's Son, in the very center of each. Romanticism, with its stress on the feelings, emotions, and moods of people, and its emphasis on the rights of the individual, has not only subjected many to the prejudices and selfish demands of uncharitable and unreasonable people, but it has also distorted the vision and outlook of many to such an extent that their views on religion and worship have become egocentric. They have become intolerant also in areas in which the *Verbum Dei* permits no intolerance. Accordingly the bearers and interpreters of the Word are disfigured and are robbed of the stamp and semblance given them by the infallible *Verbum Dei* and the church of Jesus Christ.

In the late 17th and the early 18th century, theology became in large part an expression of *pia desideria*, of pious desires, while church music became an expression of emotional effusion and effeminacy. Services of worship became nothing more than *collegia pietatis*; and virile *cantus firmus* type of church music, until then a symbol of the church, was dropped, and sweet music with pleasant texts took its place. Sugar-coated harmonies replaced virile unisons, and counterpoint polyphony, when used, became as thick and muddy as the theology of those years. Both theology and church music surrendered their theonomy and their ecclesiastical attachments to the spirit of sentiment and ego, and each insisted on self-centered rights and autonomy. Again the concomitant relationship of theology and church music was rent in twain, and their dependence upon the derivation from the *Verbum Dei*, if not eradicated entirely, became cloudy and indistinct.

The vexatious problems and difficulties which romanticism and other movements and agencies foisted on the church already began to appear long before the romantic era of the 19th century. They had made their influence felt more than 300 years ago, before Johann Sebastian Bach appeared on the scene. In fact, they already began to appear in the days of the Counter-Reformation and during the time of the Thirty Years' War. Composers began to employ less worthy texts for the healthy texts of the Bible, the liturgies, and the hymns of the church. Though influenced, at times even to a rather considerable extent, by such developments, J. S. Bach fought against these tendencies and continued to base his choral works on Biblical, liturgical, and hymnic texts. Since other composers of great talent fell in line with these new tendencies, Bach was branded as an old fogey, even by his most talented sons. Nevertheless he remained a dutiful voice and servant of the *Verbum Dei* and helped to perpetuate the close relationship between theology and church music, whereas his contemporaries tended to widen the gulf and to create unwholesome cleavage. The one was imbued with the mind of the church, the others with the mind of ego, rationalism, and the theater.

Two centuries earlier Martin Luther had refused to go along with the Reformed demand that all texts used in the service of worship must be taken over from the Bible either literally or in adapted form. Luther had likely taken for granted that the church and her composers would not do foolish things and that profound respect for the *Verbum Dei*, for sound theology, and noble church music would prevent composers from indulging in sentimentalism of an amorous type when singing to the Christ. Nevertheless what Luther likely had not expected to happen did happen. The refusal of later generations to use the theologically sound texts of the Bible, hymns, and liturgies naturally and logically led also to a

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relaxing of truthfulness and relevance in texts and music used in the church service. While the pastor would perhaps preach a sound sermon on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, the organist would use the *vox humana*, tremolo, and chimes to play Robert Schumann's *Nachtstück in F Major*, the choir would present Mozart's *Ave Verum*, and the congregation would sing "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," the latter a hymn marked by questionable theology and sung to an abominable hymn tune. This sort of thing still happens in hundreds of churches, some of which are Lutheran. We thus see what the results are when church music is divorced from theology and when music is presented in churches to please men and not, to put it as Luther did, to "keep the Word of God in circulation among men."

II

There was a time when theology and church music were regarded as conjoined bearers and interpreters of the *Verbum Dei*. It is well known that Martin Luther stressed music as a gift of God "close to theology."^[2] Practically all of Luther's remarks regarding music provided evidence of a distinctively theological approach to the problems involved. Not only as an ardent lover of music but perhaps even more as an experienced and cautious professor of theology, Martin Luther remarked in one of his table talks: "We should not ordain young men to the ministry unless in the schools they have attended previously they have studied and performed music adequately and well."^[3] Luther likely made this statement because he was aware of what will happen when the study of music does not accompany the study of theology. He knew that an unbalanced and prejudiced view of Christian worship will develop which will easily create a clergy-centered approach, aversion to church music, and a depreciatory attitude toward Christian hymnody and instrumental (chiefly organ) music. These tendencies and developments, he knew, would not redound to the greater glory of God and the edification of His people.

For Luther, no serious problem was involved in establishing and perpetuating an interrelationship among the *Verbum Dei*, Biblical theology, Christian hymnody, and church music. Alfred Dedo Müller insists that Luther's remarks regarding music are not tinged with a romantic type of musical zealotism.^[4] The great Reformer's ardent love for, and profound understanding of, music as a gift of God, Müller contends, cannot be divorced from his theology. In other words, because music is used in the service of God to convey and expound God's holy Word, therefore Luther was compelled to assert that music be placed next to theology, there to share the functions of Christian theology. For this reason too, concludes Müller, church music has no autonomous rights of its own but must serve as an instrument of the Holy Ghost to propagate and establish the Word. That's why we ought to speak of the theonomy of church music, not of its autonomy. In view of the fact that it is a tool of the Holy Ghost, we may well speak also of the paracletic character of church music.

When the theonomous and paracletic character of *musica sacra* is maintained, this art, as great and independent as it may be otherwise, is kept from becoming a law to itself; its chief functions and objectives remain identified with those of theology, which, too, when used properly and effectively, is a servant and instrument of the Holy Ghost for the upbuilding of the church of Jesus Christ. Both theology and church music are but means to an end. When used as an end and not as a means, theology, the queen of sciences, soon becomes only another science, and music, queen of the arts, soon becomes only another art.

Martin Luther's deep-rooted understanding and appreciation of church music was as theological as it was musical. His theology was as Christ-centered, soteriological, and eschatological as it was kerygmatic.

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Christian theology and church music should be proclaimed and heard, but at the same time both should be media of a message greater than themselves. Both should convey the message of redemption through Christ. When preached and taught, theology should convey and interpret the *Verbum Dei*; it should involve a searching of the Holy Scriptures because in them may be found the hope of eternal life and because they testify of the Christ (John 5:39). Music, like theology, should be heard in our services of worship as a medium which helps to bring us the *Verbum Dei* and its blessed Gospel. Though in the service of worship instrumental music by itself cannot serve this purpose directly, its character and spirit should certainly conform to the atmosphere and spirit of the worship service and thus help to sustain its spiritual tenor.

When music is not thus used in the service of worship, it may hardly be said to be theonomous; instead it will be autonomous or anthropocentric. It is then out of place and destroys the unity of Christian worship. As music is heard by some, it may seem to them to be autonomous, notably when it is absolute instrumental music. Through the blessed assistance given by the Holy Spirit, however, the devout and attentive Christian, who listens not merely with the ears of his body but likewise with those of his Christian faith, also hears the inmost expression of true church music and thus becomes more fully aware of the theonomous character of *musica sacra*. He hears it as a gift given us by God also for the upbuilding of His church.

In the religious life of Christian people the mnemonic assistance furnished by music plays an important part in rendering valuable service to the *Verbum Dei*. Music offers better mnemonic aid than do rhymes and meters. Children will retain texts they have sung much better than texts they have learned and memorized by rote. The same applies to adults. The Lutheran Church of the 16th century was aware of this. Among the very first collections of music published by Georg Rhau, the famous Wittenberg publisher of Luther's day, were volumes of music written for children and young people. Children not only recited the Six Chief Parts of Martin Luther's Small Catechism, they were taught also to sing them as an aid to retain these texts better. Though, in later years, texts once sung were often shelved, they could be recalled far more readily than texts which had been merely recited. Many people today know hymn texts from memory because they have sung them so often. The same applies to Bible texts and texts of the liturgies. People on their deathbed recall and appreciate most genuinely those texts which they have memorized and sung in earlier years. Pastoral considerations therefore should compel us to recognize the value of memorizing and singing texts in early childhood which will be better understood and also be of deeper spiritual value in the years of adulthood. The mnemonic help furnished us by music thus comes to the aid of theology and religious instruction; it reminds us that sacred music, like Christian theology, can render valuable service to the Word and, with the help of the Holy Comforter, enable the Word to achieve its purpose and reach its goal.

The intrinsic spiritual character of both theology and music is perceived and grasped not by natural man but only by the regenerate and devout Christian. Though he did not refer precisely to the problem presently under discussion, we think of the truth expressed by St. Paul in 1 Cor. 2:14: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." We think also of Christ's words, recorded in Mark 8:18: "Having eyes, see ye not? And having ears, hear ye not? And do ye not remember?" Indeed, the Christian approach to the problems of church music is unique and distinctive; it is at variance with the approach of egotistic man and also with that of the stage and concert world.

If Christian theology is regarded by Christian theologians as a *theologia crucis*, then church musicians ought to join the ranks of Christian theologians and regard church music not only as *ars musica* but more specifically as *musica crucis*. In view of the fact that Lutheran theologians rightly refer to the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ crucified and risen again as the cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion, the musicians as well as the theologians and laity of the church may well refer to text-accompanying or text-suggesting music which presents and interprets this doctrine as the cardinal music of the church. We think of the many passions written by Lutheran masters, beginning with the *Passion According to St. Matthew* by Johann Walther, the *Urkomponist* of the Lutheran Church, and extending through the passions written by Resinarius, Antonio Scandello, Lechner, Vulpius, Gesius, Mancinus, Demantius, and others, to the more famous passions of Heinrich Schütz, Johann Sebastian Bach, and in our own day, Kurt Thomas, Ernst Pepping, Hugo Distler, and others. We think of the *Auferstehungshistorien* by Antonio Scandello and Heinrich Schütz, of the Easter cantatas by J. S. Bach, and of the glorious compositions by master composers of the church who knew that the resurrection of our Lord testified to the fact that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had accepted the work of atonement which His only-begotten Son had completed on the cross of Calvary. We think, too, of the countless hymns which present and interpret the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord and of all the wonderful music which relates itself to texts which refer to His birth, His ascension into heaven, and to other events of His redemptive life. The life and work of Jesus Christ is the great theme not only for the theologians, the preachers and teachers, but also for the musicians of the church.

Music played an important part in the church of Old Testament times, particularly in the days of David the king. However, even David was no more than a type, and the music of his day, beautiful as it may have been, was but a shadow of things to come. The music of the church of the King of kings of the New Testament dispensation is superior to it; it is more highly developed, it is full-grown, ripe and rich. Of this, too, Martin Luther was aware, as may be seen from the foreword he wrote for Valentin Babst's *Gesangbuch* of 1545, in which he said in part: "The worship of the New Testament church is on a higher plane than that of the Old. — If any would not sing and talk of what Christ has wrought for us, he shows thereby that he does not really believe and that he belongs not into the New Testament, which is an era of joy, but into the Old, which produces not the spirit of joy, but of unhappiness and discontent."^[5] Alfred Dedo Müller discusses also this point and states that Christian music of our New Testament era belongs to, and yearns for, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.^[6] True Christian church music encourages us to surrender ourselves to the Christ and to proclaim His saving Gospel to others also through the medium of song. While speaking of the meaning and intent of writing Christian hymns, Martin Luther said: "This should be done that the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which through God's grace is now being proclaimed, might be set going and spread among men."^[7]

Let us not overlook that the words just quoted were spoken by a theologian to whom God had given prodigious insights. He repeatedly stressed the need for preaching sermons, but he also urged strongly that the arts, particularly music, be employed in the service of Christ and His blessed Gospel.^[8] The work of communicating the Gospel should emanate, therefore, not only from the pulpit, the cathedral, and the classroom, but also from the organ and the choir loft. All unite to serve and disseminate the Word. The task of the organist, choirmaster, and cantor has in many respects the same purpose as that of the preacher, the missionary, the teacher of religion, and the professor of theology. Even for this reason great care should be exercised by congregations in selecting and appointing their choirmasters and organists. It is more important that the church musician have the mind of the church, possess the necessary liturgical knowledge, and give unquestioned evidence of a salutary approach to the problems of Christian (Lutheran) worship than that he be an organist and/or choirmaster of superior ability.

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Among Lutherans the custom of installing organists and choirmasters in a corporate service of worship is by no means of recent origin. The fact that the practice has not been perpetuated is attributable, at least in part, to two facts: (1) *The Lutheran Agenda* includes no such rite for church musicians, though it does include orders for the installation of teachers and a church council and orders for the induction of women teachers, Sunday school officers, and teachers; (2) The work of the church musician has been entrusted by many parishes to teachers in their parochial schools. In the latter case the rite of installation took into account not only their work as teachers but also their work as musicians of the church. It should not be difficult to understand the seriousness of the situation when one considers that church musicians assist pastors in the conduct of the corporate worship services of the church and that their functions demand more than a technically adequate performance of duties. In Old Testament times not only the members of the priesthood but also the musicians of God's chosen race were recruited from the house of Aaron. This helps us better to understand our problem and it explains why Martin Luther attached music directly to theology. In the early centuries of the Lutheran Church's existence the musicians of the church were required to testify to their faith in the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God; they were likewise required to subscribe to the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, notably to the Formula of Concord, and were pledged to a conscientious performance of their duties as servants of God and of His church. Bearing in mind that the essential nature of the work of church musicians has not changed and that in their official capacity as church musicians they, too, teach, proclaim, and interpret the *Verbum Dei*, the church of today ought duly to install them as called servants of the church. Like the theologians of the church, they proclaim Christ, and theological texts are the most basic part of their church music. If this were clear, many congregations would likely be more careful in choosing a church musician and entrusting to him the music of their worship service.

We can, of course, think of theology and church music, the conjoined bearers and interpreters of the *Verbum Dei*, as being *vivae voces Evangelii*—living voices of the Gospel. It would be tragic indeed if they were nothing more than mute beings and silent bodies. Both theology and church music, though heard and by no means aphonic, can be lifeless and dead. Indeed, they are lifeless and dead when their soul has fled and their heart has ceased to beat. They may be dressed in beautiful garments, their faces may be tinted so effectively that they appear to be alive, and their coffin may be costly and ornamental, but if inanimate, they are still nothing more than corpses; what is more, when lifeless, they soon give evidence of decay, a sorry replacement for the healthy blood of life and the sweet perfumes of clean and well-preserved bodies. Such is the case when theology and church music are dead. The beating heart of Christian theology and church music is, of course, Jesus Christ, whose Holy Spirit, as the Oil of gladness, preserves both theology and church music and enables them to be heard as *vivae voces Evangelii*. A purely aesthetic approach will never succeed in enabling truly Christian music and art to reach their final goal. Our love for church music involves an aesthetic appreciation, but it must go beyond this point. It must rest primarily on what church music offers and conveys on the basis of the *Verbum Dei*.

While our theology and church music are identical in many respects, there exist also some differences. We shall restrict ourselves at this time to only one. Whereas Christian theology can and should be so presented by the spoken voice that its centripetal character comes to the fore, Christian church music can well be so presented that its panoramic character is boldly emphasized. Like a mighty unisonous chorus and as a living, resounding voice of the Gospel, theology relates all fundamental Christian doctrine to the one great cardinal doctrine of justification through faith in Christ the Redeemer. Our theology is thus like a wheel, all spokes of which meet in its hub. This great gift, we believe, our theologians who teach in the classroom and preach from our pulpits can apply and transmit, often more

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successfully than can our musicians. It is, however, achieved also in music, although certainly not without the indispensable aid of theological texts. Though there is some similarity, the advantage enjoyed by the musician is unique. The musician can present several ideas simultaneously without sacrificing or obliterating one for the other. Within the same measure bars he can speak and sing of Christ's birth, death, resurrection, and second advent, as J. S. Bach does in the closing chorus of his *Christmas Oratorio*. In this chorus Bach, in music written for the Advent and Christmas seasons, has a glorious Easter text sung to the melody of "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," while trumpeters play fanfares which call attention to the coming of the King of kings on Judgment Day. While both the teacher of theology and the preacher must present their points one at a time, the musician can present several at one time in panoramic fashion, as can also a painter and sculptor. Music thus becomes a mosaic in sound. Verbal theology should therefore not be unduly exalted at the expense of music and the other arts. When properly employed, all are theology, all seek to present and interpret the Word. All have been given us by God that they might serve the Word and keep clear its true meaning. We have great cause to rejoice that they share one another's abilities and virtues. But at the same time we have cause to rejoice that each also has certain functions of its own. These gifts remind us of 1 Cor. 12, where we are told that there are diversities of gifts but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

Lutheran theologians of Germany have issued a terse statement which has become an axiom and which says, *Theologie ist Doxologie*, "Theology is doxology." While Lutheran theology and church music are of necessity soteriological and kerygmatic in essence, both are also Trinitarian and doxological. The elements of praise, glorification, and thanksgiving play a conspicuous part both in our theology and in our music. The frequent and mighty Amen choruses written by Dietrich Buxtehude, J. S. Bach, and other master composers of the church help to substantiate what has just been said. Those who ridicule these Amen choruses show thereby that they are unaware of theological implications which need to be considered. The word "Amen" was to the early Christians not merely a word of confirmation and acceptance but rather a doxology in condensed form.^[9] Because this word "Amen," like the doxology itself, is so loaded with content and meaning and is tantamount almost to an oath, early Christians did not use it so indiscriminately as people do in our day. When the writers of the chorales used it, they incorporated the word directly into the body of the hymn and did not append it at the end, sung and accompanied by a subdominant and a tonic chord. It was added to doxologies, however, to serve as a virile reaffirmation and summation of what had just been sung or spoken. The doxology itself was tantamount to a creed, with the element of glorification added. The doxology and its Amen are therefore more than statements of joyous exaltation; they are strong statements of faith and conviction. Small wonder that the doxology plays an important part in the glorious liturgies of the church; small wonder that doxologies play an important part in the Lutheran church service of worship and in its music; small wonder that theologians say, *Theologie ist Doxologie*, "Theology is doxology."

Bearing these circumstances in mind, we begin to realize more than ever before why we stand as we sing our doxologies. We begin to appreciate more fully, too, the elaborate Amen choruses written by the masters. If we accept the dictionary definition and maintain that a doxology is a song of praise to the Triune God and a confession of our faith in Him, we will find in the doxologies of Christendom another reason for insisting that theology and church music serve the same purpose as bearers and interpreters of the *Verbum Dei*. And if the two share each other's qualities and responsibilities, we shall become more aware of why Christian people should sing their theology and theologize their church music. Luther thought also of such developments among the children of God and said on Oct. 4, 1530, in a letter addressed to Ludwig Senfl, the most noted German composer of his day: "For this very reason the

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prophets cultivated no art so much as music in that they attached their theology not to geometry or to arithmetic or to astronomy, but to music, speaking the truth through psalms and hymns.”^[10] We are not surprised to note, therefore, that Luther placed theology and music beside each other and did not keep them far apart. Bearing this intimate relationship in mind, we think of words spoken by Johann Walther, Martin Luther’s counselor in musical matters, who said in his famous *Lob und Preis der löblichen Kunst Musica*: “Music, because of its character, and because of its own rich inheritance, belongs to sacred theology; indeed, it is so entwined and so sealed up with theology that anyone who desires, studies, and learns theology must also take up music with it, though he may not see, feel, or understand it.”^[11]

The doxological character of Biblical theology and of church music compels us to reflect at this time on another important matter. Doxologies are directed Godward; they are objective and Trinitarian in content and expression. These two important factors close the doors of doxological theology and church music to sentimentality, sensuousness, vainglory, and to striving for effects. People do not sentimentalize about the Holy Trinity. The very fact that much religious literature and church music give expression to the improprieties and weaknesses of the flesh referred to in the first part of our discussion indicates that their basic theology is not so fundamentally doxological and centered in the Triune God as some would have us believe. The problem before us is not a simple one, especially when we deal with the attempts at interpretation made by some in their theology and church music. To discuss these problems adequately is not the purpose of our essay. It is within our province, however, to call attention to the fact that their doxological character and influence have helped to make theology and church music wholesomely objective and God-centered in spirit, character, and expression. This applies particularly to much of the church music and theological literature written during the 16th century, that great century of the Lutheran Reformation whose superb theocentric and doxological music is unfortunately so little known in the anthropocentric age in which we live today. Personal and sentimental elements made their way into theology, church music, and Christian hymnody notably during the eras of Pietism and Rationalism, both of which were eras of decline for the church. In these years, too, as in our own, there was much overemphasis on sameness and drab simplicity, and the arts were rejected and driven out of the church into the secular world. The hymns of those eras lack the virility, straightforwardness, and confessional character of those written by former generations. Many of these are what the Germans call *Jesuslieder*. Both the texts and the tunes of these *Jesuslieder* often become so intimate, sensuous, and sentimental that they are not well suited for corporate worship services of a doxological and God-centered character. Though there are exceptions, the objective (nonindividualistic) hymn remains to the present day the ideal hymn for the Christian congregation, because it is indeed a stronger and healthier bearer for the *Verbum Dei*. Especially when doxological in content and character, the objective hymn, too, can console, strengthen, and inspire, as it establishes people in the Christian faith, testifies to theological truth, and exhorts to confession and prayer.

III

The church has a rich heritage in her theology and her music. On the Festival of the Reformation many restrict this heritage to her theological writings, the open Bible, religious liberty, and developments in the field of education. The rich cultural, liturgical, and musical heritage we have received through the Reformation is seldom, if ever, mentioned. When we thus ignore it, we fail to recognize the intimate relationship between theology and this heritage. We refer occasionally to the Lutheran Church as the Singing Church, but all too often render this distinction nothing more than lip service. Our failure to recognize church music as a blessing concomitant with theology often also reflects a lack of respect for one of God’s most precious gifts to the church of Jesus Christ. Martin Luther expressed himself forcefully

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when he discussed situations of this kind. As late as 1538 he stated in a preface he wrote for a collection of partsongs based on the suffering and death of Jesus Christ: "Accustom yourself to see in this creation (i.e., in music) your Creator and to praise Him through it. . . . Use the gift of music to praise God, and Him alone, since He has given us this gift. Diligently beware of corrupt hearts, which misuse this beautiful natural gift and art, as do those lascivious and lewd poets who use it for their insane amours. . . . These adulterers convert a gift of God into a spoil and with it honor the enemy of God, who is also the adversary of nature and foe of this lovely art."^[12]

Without doing violence in any way to the principle of *sola Scriptura*, the Lutheran Church regards her confessional writings as bearers and interpreters of the *Verbum Dei*. Lutheran church music has much in common with the confessional symbols of the Lutheran Church, particularly as they are expressed in the worship heritage of her precious liturgies. These liturgies are thoroughly theological in character. They are confessions of the Christian faith of Lutheran people, and it is interesting indeed to note that the foremost Lutheran composers of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries based a large proportion of their music on the theologically rich texts of the Lutheran liturgies. Lutheran church music of the 16th and 17th centuries adopted the ecumenical character of these liturgies, and here, too, we are made aware of the intimate relationship which existed between the theology of the church and her worship music. In this connection we think also of the eminently good pre-Reformation chorales which Luther salvaged for the church and adopted for use in Lutheran worship. The Roman Catholic Church disapproved of their use in the Mass, precisely for the reason that they were in the language of the people. Some of these chorales had to be purged of false doctrine; Luther himself did much of this in order that the close relationship which existed between the theological and confessional liturgies and the hymnodic music of the church be not broken. It is a source of great comfort to hear and sing the Lutheran liturgy and familiar chorales in churches in many parts of the world. Linguistic differences are in that case not serious handicaps; one may still participate in the service of worship in the language one knows or follow quietly in spirit.

What has been said of Christian hymns applies also to Lutheran choral music. When Georg Rhau, the music printer of Wittenberg, wanted to include in one of his collections of church music certain choral music which was beautiful but whose theology was off color, Johannes Bugenhagen disapproved^[13] and said in effect: "The music may be beautiful, but the doctrinal errors of its texts are not in agreement with orthodox theology and hence destroy the relationship which must exist between church music and the theology of the church." This explains, for instance, why Thomas Aquinas' *Lauda Sion, Salvatorem*^[14] appears in Lutheran hymnals only in abbreviated form and why James Russell Lowell's "Once to Every Man and Nation," popular as it is otherwise,^[15] is absent from *The Lutheran Hymnal*, as is also the medieval *Stabat Mater dolorosa*, ascribed to Jacopone da Todi (d. 1306).^[16] It also helps us to understand the well-intentioned objections to the second stanza of the apostrophic hymn "Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones"^[17] and to the reference to "false sons within her pale" in Samuel J. Stone's "The Church's One Foundation,"^[18] even though both references are defensible. Christians want their hymns doctrinally pure. One finds Calvinism, millennialism, and other aberrations in not a few revival hymns, which some unfortunately call Gospel hymns. Also some Lutheran chorales of the era of Pietism are highly sentimental; however, their tunes are less primitive and on a higher plane than the tunes of American revivalistic hymnody. Both depart from the standards of healthy Lutheran orthodoxy, whose principle we find aptly expressed in Christian Scheidt's chorale text *Aus Gnaden soll ich selig werden*,^[19] "By Grace I'm Saved, Grace Free and Boundless,"^[20] which closes with the words:

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Ich glaub', was Jesu Wort verspricht,
 Ich fühl' es oder fühl' es nicht.

In these words Scheidt emphasizes that Christians are content to believe the promises expressed by Jesus in the *Verbum Dei*, whether they feel them emotionally or not. The expression of Christian faith is more than an emotional reaction; it is a glorification of God. This also implies that those who are relatively unemotional may yet possess a strong and virile faith and heartily glorify God. While emotions can play an important part in the life of the average Christian, to gratify them is neither the source nor the goal of the Christian faith. Sentimentalism, which is a low form of emotionalism, is so often self- and man-centered that orthodox Lutheranism in particular, but not exclusively, views it with disfavor and insists that Christian worship be theocentric, not anthropocentric. The chief concern of church music should therefore not be to please the emotions of men but to glorify God and convey to men the *Verbum Dei*. This explains why superb worship music does not seek to please men but to serve God; hence its modesty and lack of ostentation.

History records that heretics have repeatedly appropriated music and tunes written by Christian composers for worship purposes in order to disseminate their heterodoxy. The Gnostics of postapostolic times caused serious vexation among Christian people when they stole tunes of the church and altered their texts. The Arians resorted to the same practice, as did also anti-Trinitarians of later eras. Christ said that the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light (Luke 16:8). Christian people, on the other hand, are often unaware of their own wealth and hence ignore the warning given by Christ in His Sermon on the Mount, in which He said: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6). The rich musical heritage of the church will not be liquidated easily by the foes of Christ and His Word if the church will treasure her musical heritage and make faithful use of her possessions in the realm of music while bringing Christ to people through the Gospel and through music which bespeaks the truth and spirit of the Gospel. The music of the church, again together with Biblical theology, continues to serve as a truthful bearer and interpreter of the *Verbum Dei*. Both are living voices of the Gospel, both are doxological, and both are kerygmatic.

It is not accidental that the era of Orthodoxy of the Lutheran Church was also the culmination of the golden era of Lutheran church music. In that era theology and church music were regarded as cobearers of the *Verbum Dei*. In that era the pipe organ, too, came into its own, and the pipe organs built in Lutheran churches between A. D. 1600 and 1750 serve today as models for expert organ builders in Christian lands. Indeed, our generation can learn from its forefathers of the 17th and 18th centuries. We can learn from them to hold fast the *Verbum Dei* with its priceless pearls and costly jewels, our precious theology and our glorious worship music.

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Hymnody: A Reflection on the Beginning, Middle, and End of Man's Destiny

Martin J. Naumann

And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. (Is.6:3)

As a rule one does not begin a discussion with a footnote—although there are people who find footnotes the most interesting part of a book. I should like to begin this discussion with two footnotes, though, because they illustrate what we shall be trying to understand. The first of these footnotes is a comment by Guenther Baum of Berlin in an article on the “Problems of Modern Music,” that the public makes no effort to understand the rational musical elements that are the bases of modern composition. The second is a comment on what is meant by a concept of art.

Baum maintains that most people make no effort to understand the rational elements basic to modern composition because they think that it is a kind of sacrilege to try to understand music. Failing to understand it, they refuse it. He then goes on to say that the public in general does not know what is happening in the world of today, that there is very little general awareness of the new things the experts are doing to man in art, in philosophy, and in many other areas—things that had not been done for the past 4,000 years. They are excavating and rediscovering or uncovering the very foundations of society in order to reconstruct (in the sense of redesigning) the very foundations themselves. The public does not and cannot realize that analysis of the changes that are taking place in the world leads men to new forms and effects, not for the sake of mere newness or novelty but for fundamental reasons. And so the public is estranged and antagonized by modern music.*

**Universitas*, July 1960, pp. 773 ff.

Baum is right. The public—this important and, at the same time, impersonal judge of art—wants to “enjoy” music, as it enjoys food, drink, a movie, TV, yes, even a sermon. (One of the trials of the clergy is having to face the weekly barrage of unintended insult from parishioners who “sure enjoyed your sermon, Reverner.”) People welcome novelty. Unfortunately they seldom ask for the reasons for new forms or effects. This discussion will not attempt to explain the foundations of modern music, which are, of course, often too complicated or technical for laymen to understand, but the point needs to be made that we must know something about these foundations before we can hope to appreciate the structures that have been built on them. Sacred song, church music, hymnology, hymnody, worshipful music, whatever you choose to call it, the fact that must be borne in mind is that it can be properly enjoyed only as we know upon what foundations it is built.

Foundations have a way of being where the house is, though often they are not visible at all. Visible or not, they are certainly important. In the case of hymnody or sacred music, the foundations are so all-important that the “house” itself is worthless without them. The title of this discussion—which at first glance may sound pretentious—was deliberately chosen. We must know what man's destiny is before we can evaluate any of his functions. We must have a faith before we can confess it. We must have a theme before we can sing it. We must hear the Word before our hearts and lives can answer that Word. Knowing the foundations will not, in itself, solve all our problems, but if we, as Christians, know the foundation of the apostles and prophets and Jesus Christ as the chief Cornerstone, we know that on this foundation we can build something solid, something valid, something lasting. Standing on this foundation, we know that our mission in life is not only to sing, to play, to concertize, but also to preach, teach, and confess.

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No one is entitled to moan and groan about the attitude of the public toward proper music and hymnody or to lament the lack of appreciation of the music of the church unless he has made a dedicated and persistent effort to uncover and show people the real foundation of the art of worship. The task of teaching people an appreciation of proper church music is made more difficult than it need be by our failure to show man his own real foundation and the destiny which God has willed for him.

And now a few comments on the second footnote. What is art? It is useless to talk about “good” art and “bad” art, for art is art when it is art. The essence of true art is not determined by a set of rules that may be applied to a man’s work; it is contained in the work itself. Rules, norms, standards, and so forth are established by men of a certain time or culture. They are not permanent and they do not define the essence of art. Man-made rules are subjective and therefore fluctuate, shift, even evaporate as cultural climates change. The norms that we consider permanent and valid are not a matter of rules but are a property of the thing itself. Something is true if it fulfills that for which it was designed by the Creator.

We need to be especially mindful of this fact when we speak of the destiny of man. In every work of art the revelation of truth is this, that something of the “soul” or essence of a person or thing is presented in such a way that it becomes audible or visible to the hearer or beholder and enables him to retranslate it for himself. Art is communication, and communication is much of interpretation. A real artist is one who can present an intended truth or fact in a visible or audible way. An artistically mature person is one who can, by hearing or seeing the work of an artist, grasp the intended meaning. Communication by art forms may break down, therefore, either because the artist does not show or say a thing properly or because the receiver of the message does not know what is being shown or said. Thus understood, art demands that nothing, not even the rules and the norms, detract from the basic principle of interpretation. Neither the skill of the virtuoso nor the perfection of his perspective nor the tempo of his presentation dare detract from the essence of the work. Michelangelo was well acquainted with the human skeleton, but the skeleton is concealed in his statues. True art is its own authority, has its own power of presentation, creates its own conviction.

Now apply these principles to the problem of man’s destiny and it will be obvious that only as man fulfills his destiny as a creature of God can he be what he should be and do what he should do. Only as a creature of God can he praise as he ought and sing as he should. If man is to be true to himself—that is, to the destiny that God has laid upon him—he must, first of all, know what he is.

All of this is by way of introduction to our discussion of hymnody as the beginning, middle, and end of man’s destiny. In the Lutheran Church we still have, by the grace of God, a good understanding of the foundations. We are still a doctrinal church, and our people still possess a considerable amount of doctrinal conviction and Scriptural knowledge. These are good foundations on which we can build our public worship. And so, if we all aim at the same goal from the same basis, it should not be too difficult for us to agree on what good Christian music is and how Lutherans ought to sing and play unto the Lord. It is not necessary that our people take courses in music theory to understand the value of the heritage of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, nor do we need a crew of theological and musicological experts to devise such courses. What is important is that each one of us must know for himself what the foundation is, what the destiny of man is, and must realize how intimately, how realistically, how existentially the destiny of man is intertwined with a proper hymnody, understood not in a technical sense but in the sense of the *logos* of praise to God.

What, then, is man's destiny? It must be said, first of all, that man's destiny is not a mere fate, but rather that for which God has created him and toward which God leads or drives him. This destiny is asserted over and over again in the Scriptures. Let us take a text from the very center of Scripture, the song of the angels recorded in Is. 6:3: "And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory."

This is the song of the seraphim as Isaiah heard it in a vision, and it has something basic to say about God's creation. Isaiah represents every man, but especially man as the creature that is given the Word of God to preach and confess. The song contains concepts of such majesty and profundity that they simply cannot be comprehended by man; nevertheless the song is directed at man and it includes man as a creature in God's creation.

We do understand, to some degree, what is meant by "the whole earth." Actually, "the fullness of the earth is God's glory" would be a more literal translation of the second part of this comprehensive sentence. Taken thus, this song is, then, a statement of God's absolute "otherness" and of man's responsibility. God's program for "the whole earth" has not changed since He created the heavens and the earth, nor has there been any change in the role which God assigned to man in this creation. And what is this role? In the very first chapter of Genesis, v. 26, we are told that God said: "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion" over all things that are upon the earth. In the following verse we read that "God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him." And in v. 28 man's destiny is clearly set forth: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." Note here that the word "replenish" is, in the original Hebrew, the same word that the angels use when they sing that all the earth is to be *full* of God's glory.

This blessing of God is to be understood, therefore, not merely as a command to make the earth the scene of man's activity and to fill it with man's progeny. No, it is to be taken as a plan of God to fill the world with His praise by filling it with creatures who retain His image. This blessing still holds good for fallen man. Man did, indeed, lose sight of his destiny by seeking to assert his own glory and by attempting to compete with God. But then God brought into play His plan of salvation: Man was yet to fill the earth with His glory, as our risen Lord emphasizes and reestablishes in His commission to His disciples (Mark 16:15): "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

This Great Commission is not new. It is the fulfillment and interpretation of the original command: "Fill the earth!" It is also the fulfillment and exegesis of the song of the seraphim: "All the earth shall be full of God's glory!" The sentences may not look alike, but the theme and the aim are identical. Ultimately, when "all is said and done" as the saying and doing are summarized in our Lord's "It is finished," the new heaven and the new earth shall indeed be full of nothing but the glory of God, and the Trisagion, the Thrice Holy, shall be sounding in and through all of God's creatures.

Without going into any greater detail, we may assert, therefore, that man as a creature made after the likeness of God was created to praise God. And man as the new creature in Christ—man as a believer, as *the creature*, as the only one who can praise God in the highest sense—will reach the goal of the eternal praise of the Holy One. The beginning and the end, the goal and the fulfillment, of man's destiny is the glory of God, the singing of the song of the seraphim, the participation with the holy angels in the eternal hymnody and liturgy.

Let me digress here into a footnote which ought to appear, if at all, in very small print. There was once a fictitious student on our campus by the name of Hinkey Dormatts. Hinkey's name used to turn up on

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class rosters, and the students got a great charge out of hearing his name called on roll calls. At the time I was instructing a class in Biblical interpretation, and a part of the required work was a term paper which consisted of an exposition of some text from the Book of Isaiah. When the term papers were handed in, sure enough there was one from Hinkey Dormatts. I still have it. He had chosen the song of the seraphim. His exposition almost caught the sense of the song, for it consisted of ten typewritten pages containing nothing but “Holy, holy, holy, holy, holy.” I had to give him an incomplete because he had only *almost* caught the sense of the song. He had made the mistake of placing a period at the end of the last page of *holys*. If he had written “etc.” at that point, I would have given him a grade, for the song does indeed go on forever.

But to return to our theme. Hymnody reflects not only the beginning and end of man’s destiny, but also the middle. By the middle I mean not the midpoint geometrically or chronologically but rather the interval between assignment and fulfillment. The German word *Mittel*, in the sense of a means, catches the etymological sense of the word “middle.” Between the soup and the mouth is the spoon. The spoon is a middle in the sense that it is the instrument, the means, by which something is brought from the beginning to the goal. Our life is between the beginning and the end, and it is in this “middle” that we find our real responsibility. This middle of our life is, however, determined by God’s creation and by the fulfillment of His glory in eternity. It is at this point that we find ourselves. It is between the intention of God and the goal of God (after all, they are the same thing) that we find the answer to the sense and essence of our hymns, our songs, our church music.

I know of no other human art or activity that comes closer than does music to the responsibility laid upon man by God. Yet this must be learned. Evidently many good Christians think of worship as something reserved or excluded from the general life of man. By the same token, hymns and the praises of God seem to occupy a reserved and little-recognized corner of the worship life. Even that term, “worship life,” seems to imply a life apart, an occasional digression from life as usual. Yet it should be clear that the glory and praise of God should be synonymous with life itself to a believer. Look again at the sixth chapter of Isaiah. Why does Isaiah respond to this vision of the glory of God and the song of the seraphim with a confession that he is a man of unclean lips and living among a people of unclean lips? Why does he single out lips for mention, rather than hands or heart or some other part of the body? Precisely because it had been demonstrated to him by the holy angels that life is nothing if it is not praise of God. Suddenly the full force of his responsibility for the praise of God fell upon him. Suddenly he realized that any life lacking this aim and purpose was not only not worth living but, worse still, worthy of damnation. “I am undone” is man’s true and logical conclusion in the presence of God’s holiness.

In the concept of true art, no part of the work of the artist dare make itself glorious at the expense of true art. Therefore man, as God’s creature, has the duty to put his everything into the assignment and destiny of praising God. That is man’s responsibility, we say, forgetful of the depths of meaning that that word possesses. The “re” signifies a return, or echo, and the “sponsible” comes from the Latin root *spondere*, which conveys the idea of a pledge. “Responsibility” could, therefore be literally defined as the duty to answer by a pledge. The first and basic meaning of the statement that “man was made responsible” is that man was created to be able to answer to God and obliged to do so. That was the glory of man in his innocence, as God made him. The “image of God” was man’s God-given capacity to talk with God, to respond to Him, to answer Him. The enormity of man’s fall is nowhere more evident than in the fact that, in his first encounter with God after the Fall, he gave God a false and lying answer. Now that we have, by God’s forgiveness in Christ, been renewed in the image of God, we can and should

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respond to Him in praise. Isaiah recognized that he could not of his own reason or power sing the Sanctus. But when he had been forgiven by the fire from God's altar, he cried: "Here am I, send me!" Basically this means: "I will now gladly sing the praises of God in all the earth!" Is it not obvious from this that the text before us has something fundamental to say about the singing and praising church? Man was created with the ability to speak the praise of God. Man lost it by the Fall. Man regains it through his conversion, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, and through God's forgiveness, which is by faith in Jesus Christ. Man as a child of God is, therefore, gladly *responsible*—i.e., able to answer God.

When there is any question of the place and character of worship and of music in the life of man, we and our people must look for the answer to the fundamental concept of man's destiny as a glorifier of God as it is revealed in His Word. And we must apply the concept of true art also to our worship. No true Christian lives unto himself. As soon as his work begins to extol himself, his gifts, his name, even his art—at that point he becomes guilty of forgetting the aim of his existence. When hymns and song become exponents of man's feelings, his glory, his ambition, his fame, they cease to be true worship forms, just as art ceases to be art when it does not communicate. Only as we realize for what purpose we have been placed into our niche of history—our "station," as Luther called it—will we be free from the necessity that drives people to seek their own, and free to evaluate our life and work under the aspect of eternity. Then, and only then, will we be truly fit to choose what is good and acceptable to offer to God in praise of His holy name.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; all the earth is to be full of His glory. We who have seen His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; we who have been made God's children through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ—we join Isaiah and the whole company of believers of all times and all places in the *Soli Deo gloria* that echoes and reechoes through all eternity.

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The Dynamic Power of Christian Hymnody

Walter E. Buszin

Christian hymnody is indeed one of the most simple and unpretentious components of the rich cultural heritage of the Christian church. Viewed from a high literary point of view, its texts are often not admirable verse and, measured by standards of resplendent music, its tunes are frequently unpretentious. Not one of the famous hymns of the church was written by a front-rank poet, and the foremost composers of hymn tunes are not among the great composers of music. While creating hymn texts and tunes, poets as well as composers must shy away from exhilarating flights of imagination and fantasy, and both are obligated to neglect techniques which furnish evidence of expert craftsmanship. Alfred Tennyson is known to have remarked shortly before his death: "A good hymn is the most difficult thing in the world to write. In a good hymn you have to be commonplace and poetical. The moment you cease to be commonplace and put in any expression at all out of the common, it ceases to be a hymn." [1]

Despite what has been said, the church accords a place of honor to Christian hymnody. Churchmen and church historians have maintained repeatedly that Christian hymns, more than religious literature and ecclesiastical documents, mirror faithfully the life and character of the church and her people and reflect either their integrity or their infirmity. Though written by individuals, the most significant hymns of Christendom reflect the corporate mind of the church rather than personal opinions of their authors. They indicate to what extent the Holy Spirit has succeeded in persuading their authors and composers to express what He wanted them to say. Martin Luther's *Ein' feste Burg* illustrates vividly what has been said: Both text and tune have the earmarks of a Martin Luther, but both have to an even greater extent the birthmarks of the Holy Spirit and His holy, catholic church. Though of Lutheran origin, this great hymn, like most truly great hymns of the church, is not specifically denominational; it may well be sung by Roman Catholics, but its second stanza should not be sung by those who deny the deity of Jesus Christ, who, in Luther's words, is the Lord Sabaoth, the Valiant One, the Man of God's own choosing.

In Christian hymnody the Holy Spirit accommodates Himself to the needs and standards of people. He permits men to be eclectic, mediocre, or even vulgar that they may accomplish His purpose, lead men to Christ, and through Christ to eternal salvation. Christian hymnody must function under the jurisdiction and surveillance of the Holy Ghost and His Holy Scriptures; like Christian art and music, Christian hymnody must serve the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and it is from this Gospel that it derives its most noteworthy power and beauty.

Christian hymnody rallies to the support of Christian truth. When we study its history, we soon discover that Christian hymnody concerns itself largely with the work of the Holy Trinity and enables us to sing exultant doxologies to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Christian hymnody is cognizant of the fact that Jesus Christ is coequal with the Father and the Holy Ghost; Christian hymnody asserts boldly that Christ is of one substance with the Father and incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and that this same Jesus Christ will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead and that His kingdom shall have no end.

On the other hand, history discloses also that the archenemies of the church have repeatedly clothed themselves in sheep's clothing in order to disseminate falsehood through the use of unbiblical and deceptive hymnody. The foes of Jesus Christ are fully aware of the power and potentialities of corporate hymnody in particular. They realize far better than we how easily man is swayed by what is corporate

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and how man has an innate desire to go and to sing with the crowd. These foes know that there is power in popularity and that popular song can be an effective implement for weaning people away from the eternal truths of God's infallible and redeeming Word.

I

Hymnody in the Early Church

The Rev. W. H. Frere began his famous Introduction to the Historical Edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*[2] with the two following short but significant sentences: "The Christian Church may be said to have started on its way singing. The earliest witnesses from within and from without alike bear witness to this."

The early church took its cue not only from the singing of psalms by the church of Old Testament times, but also from the life of Jesus Christ. Matt. 26:30 we read: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." Jesus fought many a battle during His life; all His battles, including His 40-day stay in the wilderness, were preparatory for the decisive battle which now confronted Him. He entered into this battle with a hymn, likely with the singing of the invigorating Hallel-psalms of the Old Testament Psalter. In this battle He fought with Satan, of whom He had once said: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies." [3] Christ Himself, therefore, used a hymn in order to ready Himself for His final battle against Satan, the father of lies, perversion, and falsehood.

In two well-known passages, Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19, St. Paul exhorts that we let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly as we teach and admonish one another in all wisdom and as we sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in our hearts to God. This Word of Christ whereof St. Paul speaks is the Word of truth, and we are to be imbued with this truth as we sing our hymns to God. To gainsay and triumph over falsehood and error, God's truth should not only be spoken and preached; it should also be sung to achieve this purpose. This is usually ignored by those who frown upon the use of doctrinal and didactic hymnody; their attitude may evince, therefore, not only indifference to sound doctrine, but also a rather narrow regard for the functions and objectives of the hymnody of the church. They thus join the ranks of those who restrict the use of Christian hymnody and who perhaps accept Augustine's definition of a hymn: *hymnus cantus est cum laude Dei*—"a hymn is a song in which we have the praise of God." Many hymnologists of our day reject this definition because it is too narrow; we reject it because it does not take the words of St. Paul (Col. 3:16) into consideration.

The greatest truth of the Christian religion concerns itself with Him who referred to Satan as "a liar and the father of lies" and who alone could say of Himself: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me." [4] The church and her people make Him who was and is in truth the only-begotten Son of God both the theme and the recipient of their glorious hymnody. This was done already in the days of the first century of the Christian era. Valid proof may be found in the famous letter which Pliny, the governor of Bithynia, sent to Emperor Trajan; in this letter Pliny reported that the Christians sang *carmen Christo quasi deo dicere invicem secum*, that is, they sang an antiphonal song unto Christ as unto God. Some scholars believe that this song was a morning hymn which later became the *Gloria in Excelsis* and its majestic *Laudamus Te*, the great Christ-centered canticle of our liturgy.

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Already in those days Christian people were compelled to realize that the Christian church is of necessity a church militant. Hymns were employed not merely to make Christian worship more enjoyable, but also to offset the onslaughts of vicious heretics who sought to dethrone the Christ. Many Christians belonged to the lower strata of society, and illiteracy was not uncommon among them. It was known that texts containing Scriptural truth could be memorized and impressed upon the minds of the people more quickly when sung; through singing hymns people learned to love both the texts of these hymns and the great truths which they expressed. Heretical sects soon became aware of the power of hymnody and began to use hymns to deny the Christ and to liquidate the church. The Gnostics Marcion and Valentinus prepared hymn texts which were to be sung to melodies which were popular among Christian people. In the second half of the second century, Bardesanes and his son Harmonius prepared a psalter of 150 hymns which was Gnostic in character and thus added to the confusion which had already prevailed among many Christian people. Often Christian texts were retained, but with alterations made here and there to convert Christian theology into Gnostic theology and to beguile simple and credulous people. In the following century Ephraem of Syria reversed the process in order to win people over to Christianity. All these efforts related themselves to the person and work of Jesus Christ: while the Christian church stressed the deity and redemptive work of Jesus Christ in her hymns, Gnosticism used hymns to reject the Christ and to seduce men into misbelief and doctrinal fallacy. Through its hymnody Gnosticism sought to destroy the doctrine of the Trinity, while Christianity employed hymns to confess and uphold this important doctrine.

The Arians continued where the Gnostics left off. To put across his anti-Trinitarian views, Arius used popular tunes with his heretical texts. The Gnostic psalter of Bardesanes and Harmonius encouraged others to write new psalms which were called *psalmi idiotici*; in view of the fact that very many *psalmi idiotici* were heretical, the Council of Laodicea, which met between A. D. 343 and 381, forbade their use. St. Ambrose of Milan and the so-called Ambrosian School prepared hymns which stressed the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. While in earlier years much hymn singing in services of worship was done by choirs, St. Ambrose stressed congregational singing that the people themselves might confess their Trinitarian and Christ-centered faith through the medium of song. It is well known that A. D. 398, when St. Chrysostom became Bishop of Constantinople, the Arians were required to worship outside the city walls. However, they assembled in public places on Saturday evenings, on Sundays and festival days, and there sang Arian hymns. They attracted large crowds of people and seduced many. To counteract this, St. Chrysostom organized nocturnal processions for the singing of hymns; crucifers headed these processions, and lighted torches were used to impress the people. Riot and bloodshed often resulted, and the final upshot was that all corporate hymn singing by Arians was forbidden by law.

We are therefore not at all surprised to note that already in those early years of the Christian era the church formulated not only her Christocentric *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* and its thoroughly evangelical *Laudamus Te*, but also the Trinitarian *Trisagion* and *Tersanctus*. Trinitarian doxologies began to appear, and the *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto* was likely a creation of these early years of the New Dispensation given to the church by God through Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who had been begotten of His Father before all worlds, who Himself was God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God. The Christ-centered *Kyrie eleison* enjoyed widespread popularity among Christian people, and this entire development related itself intimately and eucharistically to the blessed Sacrament of the Altar, which enabled them not only to profess their Christian faith in the everlasting Son of the Father, but also to partake of the body and blood of Him who, to redeem mankind, had become incarnate. Early Christian hymnody was part and parcel of all these developments within the church. It expressed the

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confessional character of the church and was far more than an ornament in the worship life of the body of Christ.

II

Hymnody in the Era of the Reformation

Though our consideration of developments during the first four centuries of the Christian era has been cursory, what has been said indicates that in these important years, in which the New Testament church established herself, the Christian hymn played a most important part in the life and growth of the church. Christian hymnody was enlisted in the service of the Gospel, it helped to vanquish the foes of Christendom, and through its battles for a type of hymnody which stressed both Trinitarian content and Christological purity it rallied to the support of Christian theologians by providing for the church a solid and lasting foundation, which has endured to the present and which will continue to endure until heaven and earth pass away. This compels us both to smile and to frown when proud spirits belittle the hymns of the church and speak of them as being trivial and unessential intrusions. We again think of the author of Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16, when he wrote to the Corinthians: "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God." [5]

Martin Luther was aware of the God-given potentialities of Christian hymnody. While the same may be said of Huldreich Zwingli, John Calvin, John Knox, and other reformers of the 16th century, Luther cautiously avoided the unfortunate mistakes made by these men, whose integrity and sincerity we in no wise question. Unlike these men, Luther related Christian hymnody to the liturgical worship practices of the church; just as he refused to reject liturgical worship and brand it as something intrinsically papistic, so did he likewise refuse to discard noteworthy medieval hymns; he did not brand the *Leisen* and their *Kyrie Eleisons* as *sinnlose und papistische Fremdkörper*. [6] Unlike other reformers of his day, the Nightingale of Wittenberg did not put Christian hymnody into a straitjacket which would stifle originality and prevent free composition; he refused to suppress and dispel all possibilities of relating the hymnody of the church to changes of time and circumstance. In his *Geschichte des deutschen evangelischen Kirchenliedes*, Wilhelm Nelle said: "In Luther ist der Kirchengesang seiner Zeit gleichsam verkörpert" ("In Luther church hymnody of his day is, so to speak, personified"). [7]

Luther was indeed a heroic soldier of the cross. He was courageous and unafraid because he was convinced of the efficacy of the holy Bible and its blessed Gospel. He put his trust not in men but in God, and sang his faith wholeheartedly. This same faith enabled him to tell the church of his day boldly that her theology and her teachings were saturated with error *and that her hymns* accorded greater honor to the Virgin Mary than to her Son. However, Luther did not only find fault and criticize; he at the same time took steps to remedy matters. In a letter which he sent to Ludwig Senfl on Oct. 4, 1530, he said: ". . . the prophets cultivated no art so much as music in that they attached their theology not to geometry, not to arithmetic, nor to astronomy, but to music, speaking the truth through psalms and hymns." [8]

In 1524 Luther wrote to Georg Spalatin: "Following the example of the prophets and fathers of the church, we intend to collect German psalms for the people so that through the medium of song the Word of God may remain among the people." [9]

In his publication *Die Christologie in Luthers Liedern*, Klaus Burba begins his foreword with the words: “Es gibt kaum eine Darstellung der Christologie Luthers, in der nicht vereinzelt auch ein Liedvers zitiert wird” (“There exists hardly a discussion of Christology written by Luther in which a hymn stanza is not quoted sporadically”).[10]

The Christological character of Luther’s hymns is so widely known that it seems almost superfluous to call attention to this trait. However, today we need to stress that Luther found it practically impossible to divorce a healthy and live Christology from evangelical hymnody and song. We quote Luther once more to illustrate. In the famous foreword he wrote only a year before his death for Valentin Babst’s *Gesangbuch*, Luther said: “If any would not sing and talk of what Christ has wrought for us, he shows thereby that he does not really believe and that he belongs not into the New Testament, which is an era of joy, but into the Old, which produces not the spirit of joy but of unhappiness and discontent.”[11]

The entire Lutheran Reformation of the 16th century related itself to the Christology of Christian worship. There lies the heart of this great movement, and that is why Christians must take the Reformation seriously. The Reformation was the climax of the Renaissance; its hymns are frequently referred to as the new song of the New Testament era. To Luther, it was self-evident that both the services of worship and the hymns of the church must be Christocentric, soteriological, kerygmatic, and eschatological. The more worship and hymnody ignore their task of proclaiming salvation through Christ, the more do they depart from the saving truth; such negligence easily reduces the praise of God to mere platitudes. Much medieval hymnody, notably that of the late Middle Ages, was fallacious and even noxious because it focused attention not on Christ crucified and risen again, but on the blessed Virgin Mary, whose glorious *Magnificat* expresses that she was aware of her low estate and unworthiness; according to Mary’s own words, she rejoiced not in her merit, but in God, her Savior. We all know that Martin Luther himself edited otherwise precious hymns of medieval times, erased from them what was untrue, and in them focused attention on Christ, the one and only Savior of all mankind. Instead of rejecting their tunes, as did the Reformed theologians, Luther retained them; in addition, he and his followers added fitting tunes from the realm of secular song, and it is said that Luther asked nonchalantly: “Why should the devil have all good tunes?” Despite much trial and vexation, his writings reveal on almost every page that he retained a sense of balance, good humor, and cheerful sobriety; this cannot be said of other reformers of his day.

It is well known that Luther’s first original hymn was like *Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g’mein*[12] and that this hymn was also the first hymn of the famous *Achtliederbuch* of 1524, the first hymnal of the Lutheran Church.[13] *Nun freut euch* is a hymn version of the life and work of Christ. For reasons already given this hymn is so significant that we find it difficult to understand why the editors of a Lutheran hymnal published recently omitted both text and tune of this historically famous Christ-centered and joyous hymn. Klaus Burba says: “*Ohne Frage ist das Lied Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g’mein seit seinem ersten Erscheinen im Achtliederbuch (Januar 1524) zu dem beherrschenden Lied des reformatorischen Gottesdienstes geworden*” (“Ever since the time of its first appearance in the *Achtliederbuch* of January 1524 the hymn “Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice” unquestionably became the dominant hymn of the services of worship of the Reformation Era”).[14]

Shortly after making this statement, Burba repeats his claim and says that *Nun freut euch* “ist zweifellos das Hauptlied der Reformation und eigentliches Christus-Lied” (“Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice” is undoubtedly the chief hymn of the [Lutheran] Reformation; it is in truth its Christ-hymn”).[15]

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In the midst of his discussion regarding this pivotal hymn of the Lutheran Reformation, Burba asks: What may have prompted Luther, in his letter of 1523 to Spalatin, to refer not to *Nun freut euch* but to *Aus tiefer Not schrei' ich zu dir*[16] as a typical example of the type of hymnody Luther had in mind for Christian congregations and their people? *Nun freut euch* was already known to the people; why now refer to a new and unknown hymn, to a hymn which is penitential besides? Burba's reply is both deductive and logical. He points to the fact that in 1523 Luther was compelled to see the dangers of religious enthusiasm and iconoclasm more clearly than ever before. He distrusted Thomas M nzer and did not approve of the doctrinal content of the hymns written by this zealot, whose liturgical activities he regarded with utter disdain; while the weaknesses of M nzer's liturgical productions consist largely in this, that he forced German texts into music in a most unfortunate manner, the weaknesses of his hymns were of a doctrinal character. In 1526 Luther published his *Deutsche Messe* to offset the zealotic influence of M nzer in liturgical matters; but the danger which was imminent in M nzer's liturgical endeavors was not as grave as that which Luther found in the hymns of Thomas M nzer. Just as Roman Catholicism diverted attention away from Christ to His mother, so did M nzer employ in his hymns a Christology which diverted attention away from Christ's work of atonement and away from the *pro vobis*, away from the "for you" of His blessed Gospel to the exemplary character of Christ's life. While this exemplary character is important, it follows after and does not precede in importance the redemptive character of Christ's work, just as, according to Christian theology, sanctification does not precede but follows justification.

Rather than refer Spalatin to his *Nun freut euch*, a hymn which abounds in evangelical joy, Luther referred him to his new creation, *Aus tiefer Not*, a hymn based on a penitential psalm.[17] Luther thus indicated that one must first empty oneself completely and, like Christ, make "himself of no reputation";[18] one must become aware of one's own incompetence and embrace Christ in faith before one can truly rejoice in the Christ. For this reason *Aus tiefer Not* must precede *Nun freut euch*. This is God's own sequence. A Christian is not a person who, to gratify his own emotions, ignores God's mode of procedure through the Holy Ghost and intoxicates himself in religious ecstasy; he is not a person who gives way to religious frenzy and to anticultural iconoclasm, as did the Anabaptists under the leadership of Thomas M nzer. To quote from the psalm on which Luther based his *Aus tiefer Not*, the Christian is one who "waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning"; he knows that "with the Lord there is steadfast love and . . . plenteous redemption."

When we examine the text of Martin Luther's *Aus tiefer Not*, we see clearly how Christological his thinking was; no hymn writer, including Isaac Watts, knew better how to newtestamentize the Psalms, to relate them directly to Christ's work of redemption and imbue them with a profound evangelical spirit. The zealotic iconoclasts of the 16th century were unable to curb fully the evils which the church had inherited from medieval times because they resorted to force and applied the sword. This was no way in which to battle for truth against error, because radicalism and the sword appeal to the flesh and not to the spirit. Luther's penitential *Aus tiefer Not* breathes an altogether different spirit; it makes no mention of fire and brimstone, but stresses rather love, grace, hope, trust, and mercy.

Some relate Luther's hymns chiefly to his battles with Rome. However, a sane and healthy ecumenical spirit permeates his hymns. As already stated, his *Ein' feste Burg* may be sung also by Roman Catholics. In his *Ein neues Lied wir heben an*,[19] from which has been derived the hymn *Flung to the Heedless Winds*,[20] Luther is utterly frank and calls a spade a spade, but he does not rant and rave. This hymn was written in 1523, while Luther was beset by foes from all sides. However, while in *Ein neues Lied* he is more acerb than otherwise in his hymns, we ought not to overlook that *Ein neues Lied*, which is likely

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Luther's first hymn and hence is older than *Nun freut euch*, is actually a ballad and not a hymn; in a ballad more acrimonious language has its place. Taking into consideration that *Ein neues Lied* was written because two young Augustinian monks had been burned to death at the stake in Brussels because of their Lutheran faith, we are amazed that Luther did not actually become vitriolic in his condemnation of what had happened. Even in his *Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*, which he wrote as a *Kinderlied* as late as 1542,[21] Luther showed no excessive acerbity; his words "und steur' des Papsts und Türken Mord" are factual and not sharp or bitter; they are certainly not as acrid as are sundry statements made in the imprecatory psalms of the Bible. Luther also explains the petition he makes in this hymn. Immediately after he begged that God "steur' des Papsts und Türken Mord," he explains: "die Jesum Christum, deinen Sohn, wollen stürzen von seinem Thron." His reason is, therefore, a Christological one, surely a most valid reason; when once we find in the Psalms the strong Messianic character which they actually have, we begin to realize that Luther followed in the footsteps of the authors of the Messianic psalms, but that he expressed himself far less forcefully than did the authors of these psalms. Men who try to destroy God's plans and aims to redeem the world through the work of His Son, Jesus Christ, commit the most heinous type of sin which can be committed; this was realized by both the psalmists and Martin Luther.

That 16th-century Lutheranism, in its battles for a healthy Christology, did not lose her healthy ecumenical sense of balance may, perhaps, best be seen in stanzas 2–4 which Martin Luther added to that wonderful German hymn of the late Middle Ages: *Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist*. [22] Though he wrote this in the year 1524 and hence at a time when he was harassed not only by Rome but also by two radicals, Thomas Münzer and Andreas Bodenstein von Carlstadt, Luther retained his ecumenical balance and in his stanzas prayed not only "that we Jesus Christ may know aright" but also "that with hearts united we love each other, of one mind, in peace with ev'ry brother." His reason was both Christological and ecumenical, and we are happy to note that his stanzas were even irenic. In the very midst of his battles and while writing his mighty hymns for use in battles against the foes of Christ and His church, Luther retained his composure; he did not resort to vain shadowboxing, and when he struck, he made his blows count by striking there where it mattered, there where the person and work of Jesus Christ were being obscured and jeopardized.

However, when we hear that Martin Luther wrote and prepared the majority of his hymns in the years 1523 and 1524 and that in those very years he experienced serious difficulties with the *Schwarmgeister*, that is, with the religious fanatics and zealots of his day, we are compelled to bear these circumstances in mind while we examine the content of his hymns. Thomas Münzer wrote his hymns to refine the people by pointing to Christ as their example; on the other hand, when Luther in his hymns referred to Christ, he stressed above all that Christ was made man not merely to serve as an example, but rather to save those who cried out with the psalmist: "Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice." [23] In order to justify and incite to fanaticism and anticlericalism, Münzer misinterpreted the precious doctrine of the royal priesthood and made of it a doctrine for angry mobs and gangs. However, even in the famous *Invocavit* sermons which he directed against the destructive iconoclasts after his departure from the Wartburg, Luther remained calm and refused to become impassioned against these hateful bigots. He followed the example set by God, who had said through Isaiah: "Come now, let us reason together." [24] And when Luther discussed the doctrine of the royal priesthood, he refused to incite to schism and a vicious mob spirit; he pointed instead to the nobility of the Christian estate into which we enter through Holy Baptism.

This spirit of moderation coursed its way into Lutheran hymnody of the Reformation era and gave to the church the finest chorale texts and melodies we have. Hence we find in this hymnody a resolute and well-tempered submission to the Word, and not to the spirit of emotional distemper and hostility. Note the simplicity of the final stanza of *Ein' feste Burg*; let us hear both its original German version and its English translation:

Das Wort sie sollen lassen stan,
und kein danck dazu haben,
Er ist bey uns wol auff dem plan,
mit seinem Geist und gaben,
Nemen sie den leib
gut, her, kind und weib,
Las faren dahin,
sie habens kein gewin,
Das Reich mus uns doch bleiben.[25]

The Word they still shall let remain
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
Let these all be gone,
They yet have nothing won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.[26]

What could be more sober and simple? One is reminded of Luther's wonderful interpretation of the Second Psalm,[27] a Messianic psalm, and we call special attention to Luther's interpretation of the first four verses, where the psalmist says: "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision."

While Luther did not say that the Romanists and the zealots are pagans, yet did these troublemakers, through their errors and their madness, join forces with paganism and the Antichrist and render service to the destructive forces of hell. This is what caused Luther deep concern regarding their activities. However, no one knew better than he that, in battling against such forces, one must remain sober and vigilant and not intoxicate himself either with noxious fanaticism, blind enthusiasm, or with both. Luther himself could become very enthusiastic, especially about music, but in his hymns he remained temperate even when, as in *Ein' feste Burg*, he became defiant and daring. In *Ein' feste Burg* he could easily have ranted not only against the pope and his hierarchy, but also against Carlstadt and Münzer whose activities were well known to him at the time he wrote his famous battle hymn of the Christian church; however, as matters stand, even papists and enthusiasts can today sing and enjoy this great and powerful hymn. Bach's magnificent Cantata No. 80, based on this hymn and named after it, was the first cantata of J. S. Bach to be performed in Rome!

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Some have ridiculed Paul Speratus' chorale text *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*—"Salvation unto Us Has Come,"[28] and have referred to it as "rhymed dogmatics." While we admit that this hymn, when examined in its original entirety, is repetitious and perhaps not too well organized, yet is this hymn one of the truly great hymns of the Lutheran Reformation. It reflects both the temper and the spirit of the Reformation and deserves being placed aside of Martin Luther's *Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g'mein*. In fact, Speratus wrote it shortly after he had seen Luther's *Nun freut euch*. The repetitious character of *Es ist das Heil* indicates how persistently the Lutheran reformers adhered to the core of the Christian religion, how conscientiously they tried to impress on the common people, most of whom were not well educated, that man is saved not by the deeds of the Law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer from sin, death, and damnation. Its ninth stanza in *TLH* says:

Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
 And rests in Him unceasing;
 And by its fruits true faith is known,
 With love and hope increasing.
 Yet faith alone doth justify, Works serve thy neighbor and supply
 The proof that faith is living.[29]

These words are then fittingly followed by a doxology and its stress that all glory belongs not to man but to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This hymn has been called "the true confessional hymn of the Reformation" and the "poetical counterpart of Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans." [30] Miles Coverdale translated it for his *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songes*. In 1868 the prominent 19th-century theologian August Vilmar of the University at Marburg, a former skeptic and rationalist who later in life embraced a firm faith in Christ, remarked regarding *Est ist das Heil*: "...es doziert in dem Liede kein Schulmeister, sondern es singt eine Seele, die erfüllt ist vom Frieden des Evangeliums, von der groszen, eben wiedergefundenen Grundwahrheit des Christentums." ("... we hear in this hymn not the dry teaching of a pedant, but rather the song of a soul filled with the peace of the Gospel and with the great, recaptured truth of Christianity").[31]

In the 17th century the Pietists of Germany discarded this hymn for reasons which we can well understand; like the zealots and enthusiasts of the 16th and 17th centuries, they stressed the Christian life rather than the Christian faith, the example of Christ rather than the atoning work of Christ. They thus watered down the Christology of the Lutheran Reformation, and we are not surprised that many among them discarded *Es ist das Heil* entirely. Its theology accorded all glory to God alone and was therefore too theocentric for them. The age of Rationalism discarded this hymn even more drastically; this, too, we can well understand, for to the Rationalists the content of *Es ist das Heil*, like that of the holy Gospel to whose support it rallies, was both foolishness and a stumbling block. While we regret that such treatment was accorded this hymn in those years, we regret even more that this hymn too, like *Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g'mein*, was not included in a widely used Lutheran hymnal published in America recently.

III

Hymnody in the Era of the Counterreformation

Largely because of the theological instability of Philipp Melancthon, Lutheranism became fearful during the era of the Counterreformation. It was attacked and beleaguered by Roman Catholicism on the one side and by crypto-Calvinism on the other. Though many among the Lutherans fought heroically and

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though God enabled them to produce the Formula of Concord, there was much trepidation and lack of the sturdy faith of a Martin Luther among Lutheran people and their theologians in the second half of the 16th century. Lutherans learned to resort to prayer more than ever before, and the result was that this became a great era of prayer hymns for the church. These prayer hymns were strongly eschatological; it was felt that the end of all things was at hand. The era produced the chorale version of the *Dies Irae*, namely, Bartholomaeus Ringwaldt's *Es ist gewisslich an der Zeit*—"The Day is Surely Drawing Near";[32] it produced also *Ach bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ*—"Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide"[33] by Nikolaus Selnecker, an otherwise fearless theological hero of this generation, who did not hesitate to part company with Philipp Melancthon, his former personal benefactor. Selnecker's *Ach bleib bei uns* offers us a true picture of the spirit which prevailed among Lutherans who lived during the time between the death of Martin Luther and the Thirty Years' War. Their greatest concern was the church's retention of the Word of God in its truth and purity, because they knew that the Day of Judgment would be preceded by a falling away from the truth of the Word and by the revealing of the Antichrist, the son of perdition.[34] All this we find reflected in Selnecker's hymn, where he pleads

1. That pure we keep, till life is spent,
Thy holy Word and sacrament.

3. Lord Jesus, help, Thy church uphold,
For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold,
Oh, prosper well Thy Word of grace
And spread its truth in ev'ry place.

6. The haughty spirits, Lord, restrain
Who o'er Thy church with might would reign
And always set forth something new,
Devised to change Thy doctrine true.

Along more heroic lines, lines which breathe the spirit of the Reformation and its vigorous and joyful hymnody, we think of Philipp Nicolai's famous hymn *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*,[35] a veritable monument of ecclesiastical hymnody. Though eschatological, this hymn says of the church:

Zion hears the watchmen singing,
And all her heart with joy is springing,
She wakes, she rises from her gloom.

.....

Therefore will we Eternally
Sing hymns of praise and joy to Thee.

The Eras of Pietism and Rationalism

Like the epochs in which they were produced, the hymns of the eras of Pietism and Rationalism which followed the era of the Counterreformation illustrate that the church as well as her hymnody had lost much of the strength and virility which both had possessed in rich measure in the critical years of the Reformation. The theology of both of these eras became increasingly devoid of its theocentric character and their liturgical worship, their church music and their hymnody declined accordingly.

It is well known that the pietistic movement of the 17th century became strongly anticlerical and frowned upon the institutional character of the church. Following the example of Philipp Jakob Spener, who was not as radical as August Hermann Francke and other of his followers, they encouraged the development of *collegia pietatis* and *ofecclesiolae in ecclesiis* to foster the cause of devotions which were conducted in private homes (*Privat- und Hausandachten*). While other developments, including the sudden emergence of the pipe organ in Lutheran churches and the composition of organ music based on chorales used as *cantus firmi*, encouraged the use and writing of isorhythmic chorale melodies, the Pietists themselves insisted on isorhythm in order to simplify music for smaller worship groups which usually had no pipe organ at their disposal. For this same reason they also isorhythmicized chorale melodies written in previous eras and thus indicated that their attitude toward music and the arts had much in common with that of the Calvinists. Like the zealots of Luther's day, they prepared subjective hymn texts which stressed personal sanctification. To a greater extent, however, these Pietists stressed human feelings and emotions; the result was that their hymnody, especially when addressed to Christ, became saccharine and sentimental, and the personal pronoun of the first person singular played a most important part in pietistic hymnody. Note the highly subjective and amorous character of the following stanza of a hymn written in the year 1661:

Nichts ist Lieblichers als du,
liebste Liebe,
Nichts ist Freudlichers als du,
milde Liebe,
Auch nichts Süszers ist als du,
süsze Liebe,
Jesu, süsze Liebe.[36]

Naught is lovelier than Thou,
Fairest Lover!
Naught is friendlier than Thou,
Gentle Lover! And naught sweeter is than Thou,
Sweetest Lover,
Jesus, sweetest Lover![37]

Special attention is called to the fact that the translation, prepared by an American, expresses even more affectation than the original German text. One no longer finds this hymn in the better Lutheran hymnals published today. In America this happened partly because many resent its affinity to highly amorous love lyrics which enjoy popularity outside the church and which are sung with a great deal of ardor and pathos over the radio and television as well as in locales which furnish worldly and even carnal amusement and hence counteract what the church seeks to achieve.

We need hardly say much regarding the hymns of the era of Rationalism. While sentimental hymnody is enslaved by human feelings, rationalistic hymnody is victimized by human reason. Rationalistic hymnody is usually deistic and unitarian and not Trinitarian; when it refers to Christ, it points to Him as an example but not as the Savior from sin, death, and damnation. Rationalistic hymnody thus actually dethrones the Christ. Much of it is an expression of natural religion and not of the revealed religion of the Bible. From a purely poetic point of view much of it is of high literary quality; but some is also crude and absurd, as may be seen from the following example:

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Ach, wie würd' es elend lassen,
 wenn man sie* mit Händen fassen
 und nach aufwärts ziehen müsste:
 das bedenke, lieber Christe.[38]
 * die Augenlider

Indeed, how miserable it would be
 If we were obliged to take hold of them* with hands
 And pull them upwards;
 Give thought to this, dear Christian.[39]
 * the eyelids

An examination of any hymnal published to propagate religious rationalism will reveal that hymns of this type are frequently trite; from a Christian point of view they are sterile and lack the dynamic power of truly Christian hymnody. Since the Word is to be disseminated not only through sermons but also through song, permit me to change one word in quoting 1 Cor. 1:18 before arriving at the conclusion of this discussion: "For the singing of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

Conclusion

Our discussion of the part played by the hymn in the life of the church has shown that Christian hymnody has sought to support the Word of truth as revealed in the holy Bible, it has helped to acquaint the people better with her Christology, and it has expressed the faith and prayers of those who fought against the insidious attacks of the foes of the church. Though the liturgies of the church underwent notable changes during the 16th century in particular, they succeeded nevertheless in retaining their objectivity and dignity. Christian hymnody, on the other hand, gave fuller vent to the reactions of the laity of the church. While the liturgies included participation on the part of the people, they nevertheless included less congregational participation than they do today. This enabled the liturgies to remain more formal, while the hymns became less formal and also less restricted. Whereas the liturgies evince a spirit of refinement, the hymns, coming from the people, usually evince less refinement; they are less restricted, both rugged and homely, often childlike and naive. But there lay the strength of these hymns. They were neither elegant nor artificial; they rang true and expressed the voice of simple and honest people during the battles of the church for Biblical truth. That they were written by people from many walks of life helps to prove that the Lutheran Reformation was a mighty religious movement in which not only the professional theologians and clergy but also the people participated and even played a leading role. While it was difficult for the people to be liturgically creative, Christian hymnody stimulated greater creativity among the people and provided future generations with *cantus firmi* which to this day serve as the foundation of a large part of the vast musical heritage of the church.

We thus see that the battles of the church for Scriptural truth are in many respects more constructive than destructive. This is true especially when they employ Christian hymnody, Christian truth, and Christian unity in the faith, but also when they help to unify Christians as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and as a unique and distinguished people.

Many battles have been fought by Christian churches of America. All claimed they were fighting in the interest of Biblical truth. However, have these battles not been fought largely among the theologians of the churches? Have we heard the voices of the people resound in these battles? If so, have the people

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participated as intelligent Christian people who were imbued with the spirit of Christ, or have they participated in a manner which reflected little Christian insight and even less Christian spirit? We shall not attempt to answer these questions at this time, but we shall say that the very means which God has put at our disposal to rally to the support of His Word and to unify His people in spirit and in truth have not been applied as they should be and deserve to be in order to integrate God's children. Battles and controversies of the church are only half fought and half won as long as they do not reach the people and as long as the entire field of Christian culture is brushed aside as though it were nothing more than a luxury or an ornament, or even a mode of entertainment, which is not needed by the church for what she should seek to accomplish. Experience has shown repeatedly that hymn contests do not produce great hymns; however, the history of the church shows clearly that the contests (battles) of the church in the interest of the glorification of God and the propagation of Scriptural truth do produce noteworthy hymns when the people participate in the performance of this task and when Christian hymn writers of many walks of life are given the opportunity to participate not only in the battles of the church, but also in her life-giving work of serving Christ and His blessed Gospel.

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The Quempas Goes 'Round

Edward W. Klammer

“The Quempas goes 'round” is the expression which has been used in Silesia for several hundred years to describe the delightful, worshipful, and truly beautiful custom of Quempas singing which dates back to the Middle Ages. At midnight on Christmas Eve, when the congregation had assembled for worship, four groups of boys proceeded to the four corners of the church to announce to the congregation from north, south, east, and west that “Heaven’s all-glorious King is born.” As soon as they had reached their places, group one began to sing the first phrase of the Quempas carol, “He whom joyous shepherds praised,” followed by the second group singing the second phrase, and so on. After the fourth phrase the mixed choir sang the first stanza of the *Nunc angelorum*, “The glorious angels came today.” Then the congregation joined both choirs in the singing of the refrain “God’s own Son is born a child.” In this manner all four stanzas of the Quempas were sung. This constituted the principal item of carol singing on Christmas Eve; in fact, the service was not considered complete without the singing of the Quempas.

The Name *Quempas*

The Quempas Carol receives its name from the first two syllables of the Latin original:

QUEM PASTores laudavere,
quibus angeli dixere; absit vobis jam timere,
natus est Rex gloriae.

The complete carol consists of three Latin texts. The second text is:

Nunc angelorum gloria
hominibus resplenduit in mundo,
quam celebris victoria
recolitur in corde laetabundo;
novi partus gaudia
virgo mater produxit,
et sol verus in tenebris illuxit.

The third text is the refrain:

Magnum nomen Domini Emanuel,
quod annuntiatum est per Gabriel.

from the carol *Resonet in laudibus*.

Quempas sometimes refers to the first carol only and sometimes to the complete Quempas Carol.

The History of the Quempas

No one really knows how old the Quempas is. At the time of the Reformation it appears in various hymnals and service orders (*Gottesdienstordnung*) as “*ein uralter Brauch*”—a very old custom. Some handwritten copies of the Latin text (no music) go back farther into the Middle Ages. They all stem from Bohemia. In the Hohenfurth Cloister in southern Bohemia a manuscript was discovered about the year 1450, which contained quite a few sacred folk songs. Some were in German and some were in Latin. The

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two Latin carols which form the Quempas appear next to each other at the very beginning of this manuscript. (The Ms. is now in the museum of the city of Prague.) The melodies of both carols in the Hohenfurth Ms. are printed out. The last line of the *Nunc angelorum* is set for two voices—in organum. This, no doubt, points to the division of the Quempas among various choirs. The few extant examples indicate that the Quempas was generally known in this form in Bohemia, both before and after the Reformation. The Quempas appeared in handwritten manuscripts rather than in printed books because folk carols were forbidden in the church (Catholic) in this region of Bohemia and Moravia. Precentors sang them from handwritten copies, particularly in the home.

Martin Luther makes no mention of the Quempas, although the Latin *Nunc angelorum* appears as a hymn among other hymns from 1543 on in various hymnals closely related to Luther. For example, it is No. LV in the Babst *Gesangbuch* of 1545. (Luther's *Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her* is a *Wechselgesang*.)

Only after Luther's death do we find the complete Quempas printed in hymnals; however, the first hymnals which contained it were edited and published by men who stood between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism theologically.

The first of these was Georg Witzel of Vacha on the Werra. He was a Roman Catholic priest who became Lutheran and served for a time as a Lutheran pastor at Niemeck in Flaming. Later he returned to Catholicism in order to try a reformation from within. In 1550 Witzel published a book which contained the hymns for Christmas Eve from the ancient church. These he had translated into German and also had added explanations for the laity. One section was called "Jubelgesang der heiligen Weihnachten, wie sie von unsern christlichen Vorfahren fröhlich gesungen" (Songs of rejoicing for the Holy Night as they were joyfully sung by our Christian ancestors). Here appeared the first known German translations of the Quempas. The Quempas was partly in rhyme, beginning *Dendie Hirten lobeten sehre*. The *Nunc angelorum* was a prose translation beginning, "Nun ist die himmlische Herrlichkeit den Menschen auf Erden erschienen." This version could not be sung to the traditional melodies.

In 1555 Pastor Valentin Triller published *Ein schlesisch Singebüchlein aus göttlicher Schrift*. Here both melodies appear with Triller's own German translations. The Quempas begins with melody only: "Preis sei Gott im höchsten Throne und auch seinem lieben Sohne." The *Nunc angelorum* is set for three voices and begins, "Es ist der Engel Herrlichkeit den Menschen itz erschienen hie auf Erden." Above the individual stanzas of the *Nunc angelorum* appear the beginning words (in Latin) of the appropriate stanzas of the Quempas, indicating that they are to be sung in alternation between the unison singing of the Quempas and the part singing of the *Nunc angelorum*. Triller's German version was spread in the church of the Counterreformation through the efforts of the ecclesiastical administrator, Dr. Johann Leisentrit. In his *Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen*, Bautzen, 1567, he printed Triller's German version with music with the heading, "Ein schön Lied für die Knaben zu singen auf vier Chor" ("A beautiful song for the boys to sing in four choirs"). This is the first time that we hear of the specific method of performance of the Quempas. (This translation of the Quempas together with the Latin appeared in Catholic hymnals until almost the 18th century.)

In 1605 in the *Mainzer Cantual* (R. C.) a new German translation appears—

"Geborn ist uns ein König der Ehre,
den die Hirten lobten sehre."

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The *Nunc angelorum* was added in Latin with the following instructions: “The two songs are to be sung in three ways. First, each one by itself. Second, four boys in four corners of the church sing the four lines of the Quempas—each boy sings one line. In this manner they sing the other stanzas. The choir may sing a German stanza in between the Latin stanzas. Third, the four boys sing the Quempas as above. Then two tenors follow with the singing of the first half of the first stanza of the *Nunc angelorum*, followed by two other tenors singing the second half with the entire choir joining in ‘Cuius festi hodie recolitur memoria.’ The remaining stanzas were sung in the same way. ‘Und also haben vor Zeiten die lieben Alten in der heiligen Christnacht pflegen zu singen, dasz sie des englischen Lobgesangs und der Hirtenfreud’ sich hiebei erinnerten und nach ihrem Exempel Gott den Allmächtigen für die heilsame Geburt Christi inniglich lobten.’”

The hymnal of the Bohemian-Moravian Brethren of 1566 contained only the melodies of the Quempas and the *Nunc angelorum*, but used other Christmas carol texts with them.

In the meantime, however, Cantor Nikolaus Herman (“Lobt Gott, ihr Christen allzugleich”), born c. 1480 in Altdorf near Nürnberg and died in 1561, printed a broadside (*ein fliegendes Blatt*) in St. Joachimsthal, Bohemia (where he was serving as teacher and cantor), containing “Heut’ sein die lieben Engelein” (the *Nunc*), which has since been the “official” German version. In 1560 he included it in his book *Sonntagevangelia*. Herman’s version has certain problems. He refers to *Engelein*, which are not mentioned in Scripture. They exist only in paintings and sculpture. *Nunc angelorum gloria* was not translated accurately by Herman either. A Catholic translation of 1608 reads “Heut’ ist der Engel Glorienschein den Menschen all in dieser Welt erschienen.” This is closer to the Latin word *gloria*, which connects with “natus est Rex gloriae” of the Quempas, and belongs to the living presentation (announcement) experienced by the shepherds in the fields—“and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.” In Herman’s translation we miss the tremendous manifestation of the glory of God and the angel chorus. This is not helped by the use of “Engelein.” (Here the English translation by H. Bouman is much better.)

At the end of the 16th century we find definite and specific indications of the Quempas and the customs connected with it. Matthäus Lütke (Ludecus), the Lutheran canon at the Cathedral of Havelberg, had a missal printed in Wittenberg in 1589 which contained the order of services for the Lutheran *Dom*. Here we see in print for the first time the German text of the Quempas, which the congregation had been singing for a long time.

According to Lütke’s description the *Christmette* began at 4 A. M. Choir and organ intoned “Hört zu und seid getrost nu” (possibly in the setting by Leonhart Schroeter from his *Neue Weihnachtsliedlein*, 1507.) This was followed by an artistic rendering of “Vom Himmel hoch” alternatim by choir and congregation. Then the deacon intoned the “Gloria in excelsis Deo.” Choir and organ responded with “Resonet in laudibus,” in which the “Eia” was always sung by two boys. Then the choir sang “In dulci jubilo,” and an organ motet followed by the Quempas in Latin and German (four boys in four corners, etc.). The choir responded with the *Nunc angelorum*. Then the deacon intoned, “Ein Kind ist uns geboren. Hallelujah!” and the choir answered, “Ein Sohn ist uns gegeben. Hallelujah!” followed by the Collect for Christmas Eve in German. Then follows Epistle, Isaiah 9, and organ and choir responding with “Omnis mundus jocundetur” (“Alle Welt springe und lobsinge”). Gospel—John 1 (Luke 2 was the Gospel for the chief service). After the Creed the choir sang a responsorial version of John 1, followed by the sermon. This way of singing the Quempas became the standard order for Germany (Lutheran).

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Soon after, various part settings appeared. The most famous of these is the one by Michael Praetorius (1571–1621). Praetorius not only made various settings for mixed voices, equal voices, etc., he also arranged similar antiphonal songs for all the festivals of the church year for boys' voices, choir, and instruments. They appear in his *Puercinium*. (Easter—"Ubi Rex est gloriarum?"—"Wo ist doch der König der Ehren?") Praetorius also made it a point to spread the Quempas in his homeland, Thuringia.

In the introduction to his setting of the Quempas, Praetorius quotes from the *Mainzer Cantual* of 1605: "This is very old. It originated in the ancient church. (With this carol the people) reminded themselves of the angels' hymn of praise and the joy of the shepherds. Following their example, they praised the almighty God intimately for the gracious birth of Christ."

Praetorius also suggested three methods of singing the Quempas and the *Nunc angelorum*. The first method (the one he preferred) follows:

Four choirs of boys (or four boy soloists) are to take their stations in the four corners of the church during the service on Christmas Eve. The first choir sings the first line: *Quem pastores laudavere*; the second choir sings: *Quibus angeli dixerere*; the third: *Absit vobis jam timere*; and the fourth: *Natus est Rex gloriae*. Then the first stanza is repeated in the same way by the four groups in the vernacular. To this the mixed choir, instruments, and organ respond with the first stanza of the *Nunc angelorum*, immediately repeated in the vernacular. Stanzas two, three, and four of both carols are sung in the same manner. After each of the stanzas sung by the mixed choir the congregation may sing a stanza of *In dulci jubilo*.

In the 17th century, when the court chapels were developing artistic singing, attempts were made to "improve" the poetic quality of the Quempas. Some of the emphasis was on equalizing the number of syllables in each line and improving the rhyme. The best of these was Paul Gerhardt's (1607–1676) hymn *Kommt und lasst uns Christum ehren* ("Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising," *TLH*, 90). This has eight stanzas corresponding to the four original Latin stanzas of the Quempas and the four German stanzas. Gerhardt's version was taken up rapidly by almost all hymnals. Johann Georg Ebeling published it in 1667 as "Weihnachtsgesang nach der Melodie Quem pastores."

The original Quempas continued to appear in the various *Gesangbuecher* of the 17th century. It was included, for example, in Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen's *Geistreiches Gesangbuch* of 1704, however, with the Latin text. (This was the most important of the early Pietistic hymnals.) The general approach of the Pietists was that since Latin was not understood by the people, it was therefore harmful. In spite of this the Freylinghausen hymnal does contain both Latin and German for *Puer natus in Bethlehem* and several other Latin hymns. The melodies for the Quempas were printed out in the Freylinghausen *Gesangbuch*—the Quempas with melody only and the *Nunc angelorum* with melody and a figured bass. By including the Quempas the Freylinghausen *Gesangbuch* showed itself to be conservative.

The Quempas, however, did not fare well under the Pietists. What follows must be understood in the light of the celebration of Holy Night at this time. It must be remembered that Christmas was considered the beginning of the New Year. The celebration of Christmas at this time was quite degenerate, akin to an annual fair. However, instead of correcting the abuses, the Pietists abolished the entire service and naturally the Quempas customs also. The first was the pietistic reformer Graf Christian Ernst von Wernigerode, who forbade the celebration of the *Christmette* in 1732. The antipietistic consistory of

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Hannover followed with a decree abolishing the *Christmette* on Dec. 17, 1734. (See note in Graebner's *The Borderland* regarding a Christmas service at Paul Gerhardt's church in Berlin.)

Brandenburg followed next. In 1739 Frederick William I of Prussia issued an order to the church superintendents to have all church doors locked on the afternoon of Christmas Eve. He also forbade any kind of church services on Holy Night, and abolished the singing of the Quempas.

Later similar prohibitions were issued in Sachsen-Gotha, Sachsen-Weimar, and at the beginning of the 19th century in the kingdom of Saxony. However, in smaller communities in remote places the Quempas singing continued unabated.

In Brandenburg they had gone too far. Shortly after Frederick the Great came to power, he abolished the decrees of Frederick William I regarding Christmas Eve services and Quempas singing. Here and there in Thuringia the Quempas was even officially adopted, as is shown by the fact that it was included in the *Reusische Agende* of the year 1766 with both Latin and German texts and the suggestion of Matthäus Lüdtkke of introducing it with a dramatic presentation of "Vom Himmel hoch."

Although Pietism did not wipe out the custom of Quempas singing, it did bring with it the use of the Quempas melody for countless other hymns, whereas before it had been used only for the Quempas.

Zinzendorf and the Bohemian Brethren

Zinzendorf himself wrote ten hymns for the Quempas melody, and other poets of the Brüdergemeinde wrote four others. Only one of Zinzendorf's ten songs had a connection with Christmas—a "Kinderlied auf seine Tochter Benigna an ihrem zweiten Geburtstage, 28. Dez. 1727."

Jesu Christ, man hat gelesen,
dasz Du auch ein Kind gewesen. . . .
Heut ist's Fest unschuld'ger Kindlein,
gestern sah man Dich in Windlein;
Jesu, binde in dies Bündlein
der Benigna Seele ein!

The best-known poem of Zinzendorf ("Jubilus Bernhardi") is the one from 1730:

Jesu! Deiner zu gedenken
Kann dem Herzen Freude schenken,
Aber mit was Himmelstränken
Labt uns Deine Gegenwart!

Among the four songs by followers of Zinzendorf which used the melody of the Quempas was one other Christmas song, Johann Baptist Albertini's "O du wunderholder Knabe." Of the 14 Moravian Brethren songs to the Quempas melody plus Paul Gerhardt's "Kommt und lasst uns Christum ehren" as No. 14 and Gerhard Stip's morning hymn "Früh am Morgen Jesus gehet" from the year 1851, there were still ten in the hymnal of the Bohemian Brethren in 1939 (in Germany) which use the Quempas melody. Many musicians wrote other melodies for Gerhardt's "Kommt und lasst uns Christum ehren" and individual songs of the Herrnhuter, but none of the melodies replaced the Quempas melody.

What is the significance of this, that the Herrnhuter took over the melody of the Quempas for so many hymns? Wilhelm Thomas believes this happened because the Quempas originally came from the same territory as the Brethren. But they did not possess the good sense to reserve the melody for the once-a-year Quempas singing.

The Age of Rationalism

The Age of Rationalism, which continued the radical approach to the old Lutheran hymnody which Pietism had begun, also had its misgivings about the Quempas.

Ehrenfried Liebich (a serious person interested in a real Biblical church and also the editor and chief promotor of the Hirschberger Bibel) stated, "In Schlesien wird fast durchbegangen, an den meisten Orten wird das sogenannte *Quem pastores* von den Schulknaben in 4 Chören dabei gesungen. Warum? Das weiss ich nicht; zur Erbauung gibt der Text wenig Gelegenheit, und die Melodie hat wohl auch nichts Reizendes." He and others did not conclude therefore that the Quempas should be discontinued. Instead, they promoted it with zeal, as well as they understood it, wrote new texts for it, and adapted it to the taste of the times. These new texts were lovingly rehearsed and sung, and they were careful that printed copies were available for posterity.

To get an idea of the performance of the Quempas at this time and the joy and effort they brought to it, we have only to consult *Sammlung christlicher Lieder für evangelische Gemeinden zur öffentlichen und stillen Erbauung*, which Supt. Scherer dedicated to his congregation in Jauer in 1813 and had printed in Breslau. This collection begins with a section "Feier der Geburt Jesu," containing two Christmas hymns by contemporaries, one by Keimann (probably "Oh, Rejoice, Ye Christians, Loudly"), Luther's *Gelobet sei'st du, Jesu Christ*, one by Klopstock, etc. Then followed two *Festliche Wechselgesänge*, which are new versions of the Quempas. The first one the congregation begins "mit hoher Freude": "Jauchzet, ihr Himmel, frohlocket, ihr englischen Chöre!" This is followed by a "feierlicher Chor" of angels singing "Jauchzet dem Herrn! Er sprach: Es werde." Then follows a choir of shepherds "mit Erstaunen und Demut" to the tune of *Quem pastores*:

Hört doch, hört, ach welche Lieder!
Engel Gottes schweben nieder!
Seht doch, seht des Himmels Klarheit!
Hirten, zittert, Gott ist nah!

There are six such stanzas interspersed with an encouraging, reassuring choir of angels singing, "Fürchtet nichts, ihr guten Leute." After the shepherds have praised the joyous news "mit süszer Wonne" (with sweet delight), the congregation closes with "Jauchzet, ihr Himmel! Frohlocket, ihr Enden der Erden." Wilhelm Thomas comments: "Schwung kann man dieser dramatischen Dichtung nicht absprechen. Es ist ein ausgesprochenes Wechselgespräch zwischen den heiligen Personen der biblischen Geschichte entstanden, eingerahmt von dem Lobgesang der Gemeinde."

The second *Wechselgesang* in Scherer's collection is the one by Ehrenfried Liebich, which first appeared in his *Geistliche Lieder und Oden*, 1768. (Liebich was under the influence of Gellert.) Liebich's version was divided between four choirs of boys also.

The Liebich version is the one that was brought to America by our forefathers. It is contained in *Liederperlen* and also in English translation in Hanser's *The Christmas Song Book*. The *Liederperlen* indicates that it is to be sung by different choirs.

The Quemphas in Modern Times

In 1902 George Ratcliffe Woodward and Charles Wood included both the Quemphas and the *Nunc angelorum* in *The Cowley Carol Book*. The Quemphas with three stanzas in Latin only is contained in *The Oxford Book of Carols*.

In 1930 Konrad Ameln and Wilhelm Thomas edited (for the *Bärenreiter-Verlag*) *Das Quemphas-Heft. Auslese deutscher Weihnachtslieder*. During the Third Reich, when Christmas had become the "Hohe Nacht der klaren Sterne," this *Quemphas-Heft* was the most popular song collection in Germany. The sale of this booklet has reached the fantastic number of over 1,536,000 copies since 1930. The *Quemphas-Heft* was printed with beautiful outline drawings for coloring by Willi Harwerth, a pupil of Rudolf Koch. This harked back to the custom of preparing individual Quemphas-Hefte or booklets.

During the Advent season the Quemphas boys and the other children of the church busied themselves with the preparation of their own handwritten collections of traditional Christmas hymns and carols. Each carol was neatly copied on the center of the page and surrounded with garlands of flowers. The remainder of the page was decorated with drawings or paintings of the Holy Family, the shepherds, the Wise Men, angels, stars, and Christmas and Epiphany symbols. The collections were called *Quemphas-Hefte* after the chief carol—the Quemphas. Such Quemphas carol books are again being made by boys and girls during the Advent season, and many old *Quemphas-Hefte* are preserved in the libraries and museums of Europe.

There is also a new Quemphas in Germany, based on the same pattern as the original Quemphas. The words are by Kurt Müller-Osten, and the setting is by Gerhard Schwarz.

Siona-Quemphas

In 1877 the magazine *Siona* printed a form of the Quemphas which has since been called the *Siona-Quemphas*. It consists of Gerhardt's "Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising" and "Now Sing We, Now Rejoice." Friedrich Spitta placed it into the hymnal for Alsace-Lorraine, and in 1913 it appeared in a "Liturgical Devotion for Christmas." It also appeared in the hymnal of Schleswig-Holstein in 1908. In 1930 it was also included in *Das Quemphas-Heft*.

Conclusion

Someone may very well ask, "Why be so concerned about a single carol, especially since there are so many fine and beautiful carols?"

The following answers may be given:

1. Both text and music are of the highest quality. The text contains both proclamation and praise. It grows out of Scripture.
2. It admirably fulfills the twin aim of all worship and church music—to the glory of God and the edification of man.

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3. It involves the adult congregation, the children, and the choir in a very special way in the praise of God for the Incarnation.
4. Because of its special form and the customs connected with it, it incites the people to worship.
5. It is old and quite universal in usage (ecumenical). In some churches in Europe it has an unbroken tradition from the 15th century to today.
6. It has popular appeal and yet fits easily and comfortably in a Lutheran liturgical service.
7. It serves as a symbol of the type of Christmas carol singing which should prevail in our churches.

St. Louis, Mo.

The Function of the Tactus in the Performance of Renaissance Music

Newman W. Powell

Thomas Morley, in the preface to his *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* of 1597, says the following:

But as concerning the book itself, if I had before I began it imagined half the pains and labour which it cost me, I would sooner have been persuaded to anything than to have taken in hand such a tedious piece of work, like unto a great sea, which the further I entered into the more I saw before me unpassed, so that at length, despairing ever to make an end (seeing that grow so big in mine hands which I thought to have shut up in two or three sheets of paper) I laid it aside in full determination to have proceeded no further, but to have left it off as shamefully as it was foolishly begun. But then, being admonished by some of my friends that it were a pity to lose the fruits of the employment of so many good hours, and how justly I should be condemned of ignorant presumption in taking that in hand which I could not perform if I did not go forward, I resolved to endure whatsoever pain, labour, loss of time and expense and what not, rather than to leave that unbrought to an end in the which I was so far engulfed.

Taking, therefore, those precepts which being a child I learned, and laying them together in order, I began to compare them with some other of the same kind set down by some late writers. But then was I in a worse case than before, for I found such diversity betwixt them that I knew not which part said truest or whom I might best believe. Then was I forced to run to the works of many, both strangers and Englishmen (whose labours, together with their names, had been buried with me in perpetual oblivion if it had not been for this occasion) for a solution and clearing of my doubt. But to my great grief then did I see the most part of mine own precepts false and easy to be confuted by the works of Taverner, Fayrfax, Cooper, and infinite more, whose names it would be too tedious to set down in this place; but what labour it was to tumble, toss, and search so many books, and with what toil and weariness I was enforced to compare the parts for trying out the value of some notes (spending whole days, yea and many times weeks for the demonstration of one example which one would have thought might in a moment have been set down), I leave to thy discretion to consider, and none can fully understand but he who hath had or shall have occasion to do the like.^[1]

If Morley found the situation of tactus, rhythm, and mensuration confused in his day, so much the greater is the confusion in our day, both because of the remoteness of the times and the additional contradictions of modern authorities with their problems of transcription. For there is probably no other aspect of Renaissance music in which there is more disagreement among modern scholars than in the matter of tactus and mensuration and their effect on meter, rhythm, and proper methods of transcription. Some scholars seem to ignore the theory of tactus completely in their transcriptions, while others have become slaves to a method of transcription which is tied to a single unvarying concept of the tactus. Some regard the tactus as the equivalent of one modern beat, some as two. Some scholars insist on what they regard as an objective, even mechanical, method of transferring mensural systems into specific meters, whereas others insist that mensuration has nothing to do with meter, but only with relative note values. Some employ bar lines regularly according to a strict interpretation of the meter according to the mensuration sign; others employ bar lines irregularly according to their own interpretation of the rhythmic structure of the music. Some use solid bar lines, some use dotted, some use both solid and dotted bar lines. Some put the bar lines through the staff, others between the staves, and some do a mixture. Some regard the use of ties as a gross misinterpretation of the original rhythmic

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concept, whereas others regard them as one of the blessings of modern notation. Some scholars have transcribed Renaissance music without reduction in note values. Most modern scholars agree that a reduction of note values is desirable for modern use, but they disagree as to the scale of reduction.

It is obviously impossible even to attempt a resolution of these many conflicting opinions within the confines of an introductory paper such as this. The purpose of this paper is, rather, to give a highly condensed preview of a more complete and thorough study in which the writer is presently engaged, with special attention to the practical function of the *tactus* in the conducting of Renaissance music. Almost four years have passed since this paper was presented in its original form at the Valparaiso University Church Music Seminar. Since that time the progress of these studies^[2] has made it desirable to revise some portions considerably, but this presentation should still be regarded as a preliminary report, not as a final study. A full explanation of the methods of transcription employed and the full documentation of many complicated and controversial issues will have to await the completed study.

The *tactus* is a method of conducting by simple down-and-up movements of the hand or finger (or even the foot, in the case of a player who needs a method of keeping time while his hands are otherwise occupied). The concept is often referred to in English writings by the word *stroke*, in German by the word *Schlag* (or sometimes *Taktschlag*), in Italian by *bybattuta*. The Latin word *tactus* is often found shortened in other languages to simply *tact*. The term *tactus* always refers to the complete down-and-up movement (▼ ▲). Thus the *tactus* is a compound unit which may be separated into two components or half-tactus units.

The *tactus* is, of course, inextricably bound up with the notation and with the mensural theory of the 15th and 16th centuries. One aspect of mensural theory must be reviewed here as a necessary preliminary to understanding the interrelationships among *tactus*, rhythm, and meter—namely, the mensuration schemes that form the basis of the rhythmic systems of the 14th to the 16th century.

A mensuration scheme is a hierarchical arrangement of note values involving five different levels of notes: the *maxima*, the *longa*, the *breve*, the *semibreve*, and the *minima*. These five levels of note values are organized into four levels of rhythm (“rhythm” here referring to the relationship between two adjacent levels of note values). The levels of rhythm are expressed in the four terms (1) *maximodus*, which refers to the relation between *maxima* and *longa*; (2) *modus*, which refers to the relation between *longa* and *breve*; (3) *tempus*, which refers to the relation between *breve* and *semibreve*; and (4) *prolatio* (or *prolation*), which refers to the relation between *semibreve* and *minima*. Each level of rhythm may be either perfect (that is, by threes), or imperfect (that is, by twos).

Altogether there are 16 possible combinations of perfection and imperfection at the four levels of rhythm, producing 16 possible mensuration schemes. These 16 mensuration schemes are listed by many theorists of the 15th and 16th centuries. Tinctoris even refers to them as “species of composition” and deals with each one separately and with an accompanying musical example.^[3]

Renaissance theorists have elaborate and often conflicting terminology for these 16 mensuration schemes. For the sake of brevity it is convenient today to refer to them by means of a system of two Roman and two Arabic numerals.^[4] For example, II-III-3-2 means imperfect *maximodus*, perfect *modus*, perfect *tempus*, and imperfect *prolation*. Reference to any two or three of these levels can be made by the use of the appropriate numerals, the arrangement of Roman or Arabic numerals indicating the levels intended (for example, II-III, or III-3, or 2-3). A single level will be identified by its proper term without recourse to the system of abbreviations.

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Unfortunately, despite the importance attached to these “species of composition” by the older theorists, modern scholars have made no effort to reproduce these mensuration schemes in modern transcriptions, and worse, they have almost invariably obliterated in their transcriptions many of the bits of evidence in the original notation that would enable the reader to reconstruct the mensuration scheme for himself. I shall here propose a system of transcription that will enable the modern reader to identify the original mensuration schemes by means of the “modern” time signatures.

Table I shows a list of time signatures that express unequivocally (1) the rhythmic hierarchy analogous to the hierarchy found in the original mensuration scheme, and (2) the ratio of reduction in note values used in the transcription.^[5] A measure in the transcriptions corresponds to a maxima in the original notation. The time signatures on the staff show the constitution of the measure corresponding to the constitution of the maxima of the original notation. Since these measures are often rather long for ready comprehension, they are usually subdivided by dotted bar lines into smaller groupings. The time signatures for these dotted subdivisions are given above the staff in smaller figures.

TABLE I
 MODERN TIME SIGNATURES DERIVED FROM MENSURATION SCHEMES

A. Mensuration Scheme	Modern Transcription		
	B. Ratio 4:1	C. Ratio 2:1	D. Ratio 1:1
II-II-2-2	$\frac{4}{2}$	$\frac{8}{2}$	$\frac{16}{2}$
II-III-2-2	$\frac{6}{2}$	$\frac{6}{1}$	$\frac{6 \times 4}{2}$
III-II-2-2	$\frac{3}{1}$	$\frac{3 \times 4}{2}$	$\frac{3 \times 8}{2}$
III-III-2-2	$\frac{9}{2}$	$\frac{9}{1}$	$\frac{9 \times 4}{2}$
II-II-3-2	$\frac{12}{4}$	$\frac{12}{2}$	$\frac{12}{1}$
II-III-3-2	$\frac{18}{4}$	$\frac{18}{2}$	$\frac{18}{1}$
III-II-3-2	$\frac{3 \times 6}{4}$	$\frac{3 \times 6}{2}$	$\frac{3 \times 6}{1}$
III-III-3-2	$\frac{27}{4}$	$\frac{27}{2}$	$\frac{27}{1}$
II-II-2-3	$\frac{24}{8}$	$\frac{24}{4}$	$\frac{24}{2}$
II-III-2-3	$\frac{6 \times 6}{8}$	$\frac{6 \times 6}{4}$	$\frac{6 \times 6}{2}$
III-II-2-3	$\frac{3 \times 12}{8}$	$\frac{3 \times 12}{4}$	$\frac{3 \times 12}{2}$
III-III-2-3	$\frac{9 \times 6}{8}$	$\frac{9 \times 6}{4}$	$\frac{9 \times 6}{2}$
II-II-3-3	$\frac{36}{8}$	$\frac{36}{4}$	$\frac{36}{2}$
II-III-3-3	$\frac{54}{8}$	$\frac{54}{4}$	$\frac{54}{2}$
III-II-3-3	$\frac{3 \times 18}{8}$	$\frac{3 \times 18}{4}$	$\frac{3 \times 18}{2}$
III-III-3-3	$\frac{81}{8}$	$\frac{81}{4}$	$\frac{81}{2}$

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regularly do these mensuration schemes work out in the actual musical works of the period? As might be supposed, a high degree of variation is found between complete regularity in some pieces and much irregularity in others. However, despite the irregularities that arise in the practical application of the mensuration schemes (and the corresponding modern measures), there is ample evidence to support the contention that these mensuration schemes are fundamental to the rhythmic system of the 14th to the 16th century and should be the point of departure for a rhythmic analysis and transcription of the music.

What is the nature of the irregularities that do occur? These can be briefly outlined here as follows:

1. Syncopation—the displacement of any note value from its normal position in the rhythmic structure. A syncopation may affect any part of a mensuration scheme or the entire mensuration scheme (syncopation of the maxima). The former may cause a displacement of dotted bar lines in the transcription; the latter will cause a displacement of an entire measure in the transcription. (Such a concept of syncopation as a displacement entails the idea that the displaced note or rhythmic figure retains its identity or “integrity.” Since modern ties tend to destroy this identity, they are avoided in the transcriptions as much as possible.)

2. Redistribution of rhythmic values and/or figures. The most common of these is the hemiola, which may be described as a redistribution of 2 x 3 into 3 x 2. Like syncopation, the hemiola may take place at any rhythmic level, and if it affects the maxima, it will create a different-sized measure in the transcription. The hemiola may be effected in the original notation by means of coloration (white or red notes instead of black, black notes instead of white). Coloration is indicated in the transcription by a bracket above colored notes (┌─┐ or ┌─┐). Other types of redistribution may be effected by means of syncopation. These again may be internal (such as a redistribution of a 12/2 measure into 3 x 4, or of a (3 x 4/2) measure into a 4 x 3 grouping, or the oft-remarked redistribution of 8 into 3+3+2, etc.),^[6] or they may affect the measure structure. Thus a period of five maximae that would ordinarily be transcribed as 5 measures of 4/2 (5 x 4/2) may actually show a rhythmic structure of 4 x 5/2. Syncopation often combines with coloration to produce regular or irregular redistributions in the rhythm.

3. Fractional mensuration schemes. There are times when a mensuration scheme is incomplete. It may consist of only a single longa or perhaps only a single breve, or it may be truncated at any time before it has run its full course. The most obvious indication of such fractional schemes in the original notation is the appearance of a new mensuration sign that forces the curtailment of the previous mensuration scheme and begins a new one.

There are likewise problems that arise in regard to an interpretation of the original notation and its significance. Sometimes there are discrepancies between the mensuration sign of the original notation and the actual mensuration scheme operating in the music. Discrepancies may also exist between mensuration and meter, so that, for example, a triple meter may be found expressed in a duple mensuration. (Cf., for example, Fig. 3, below.)

How is the tactus related to these mensuration schemes? In the development of mensural notation from the early 14th century to the end of the 16th century, three basic systems can be discerned in the application of the tactus. In the ensuing discussion these three systems are designated as Systems I, II, and III, or the “preclassical system,” the “classical system,” and the “postclassical system.” The three systems may be roughly distinguished from one another by the kind of note value that receives the

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tactus in *integer valor* (the normal or “whole” time value of the notes): the imperfect breve in System I, the imperfect semibreve in System II, and the minima in System III. The “preclassical” system is so designated because it is not clearly described by the theorists, but must be reconstructed by deduction and by means of retrospective references by later writers. It is found primarily from 1300 to approximately 1450, with remnants carrying over to 1600 and later. The “classical system” is so named because it is clearly defined, precise, and predictable in its application, and it is the system in vogue at the time theorists begin describing the tactus. Examples may be found from the early 15th century to the early 16th century, with the basic principles retaining some validity throughout the 16th century and to a lesser extent even in the 17th century and later. The “postclassical system” is so named because it represents a breakdown and disintegration of the classical principles. It is not so much a unified system as it is a convenient grouping of different practices which can be brought into logical relation with one another. The unifying principle is simply that in *integer valor* the minima receives the tactus. Its earliest manifestation is the use (in conjunction with the classical system) of perfect prolation as augmentation, forming in effect a new *integer valor* which was itself subject to diminution and augmentation.

Some scholars insist that the value of the tactus should be made a whole note in the modern transcription; most modern transcribers make the half note the tactus; a few modern scholars prefer the quarter note. I believe that all three of these modern note values can be justified under differing circumstances. It would seem logical to transcribe music in the preclassical system of the tactus in a 4:1 ratio and music in the classical system in a 2:1 ratio, producing in both cases a half-note tactus in the modern notation. The problem encountered in following this procedure is that ambiguities exist between the two systems that cannot always be resolved with certainty. Furthermore, both the preclassical and the classical system were used in both black and white mensural notation, though it can be said that the preclassical system was more “at home” in black notation and that the classical system was more “at home” in white notation. Inasmuch as both of these systems of tactus could be notated in either black or white notation, it would seem desirable to have the difference in notation reflected in the modern transcription. Considering, then, the ambiguities between the two systems of the tactus and considering the desirability of reflecting the difference between black and white notation in the modern transcription, I here propose the following system of ratios for the transcription of mensural notation:

1. Transcribe black notation in a 4:1 ratio (♠=♩ or ♩·) for *integer valor*. In the transcription, then, the preclassical system of tactus will give the half note the tactus (dotted half note if the prolation is perfect); the classical system will give the quarter note the tactus.
2. Transcribe white notation in a 2:1 ratio for *integer valor* in Systems I and II (♠=♩ or ♩·). In the transcription, the preclassical system of tactus will give the whole note the tactus (dotted whole note if the prolation is perfect); the classical system will give the half note the tactus.
3. Transcribe white notation without reduction in note values (1:1 ratio) when it can be ascertained that System III is in effect, most notably in perfect prolation as augmentation in conjunction with the classical system. The half note will receive the tactus.

Admittedly some problems will be encountered in carrying out this scheme of ratios for transcription, but such a scheme has the advantage of giving a logical unity to the transcription procedure for the entire body of music in mensural notation from the 14th to the 16th century. Table II summarizes this proposal, showing the ratios of transcription for *integer valor*, duple diminution, and duple

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augmentation in these various situations and showing the resultant note values that will receive the tactus.

One of the most significant features of the tactus method of conducting is that it makes no difference to the manner of conducting whether the rhythm is duple or triple on any level. All meters are conducted alike. This feature is illustrated in Table III, which shows the classical system of tactus applied to the four possible combinations of tempus and prolation, *A* in mensural notation and *B* in modern notation (2:1 ratio of reduction). (It is unnecessary to illustrate this application of the tactus with the various combinations of modus and maximodus, since these involve only varying extensions of the partial schemes shown in Table III.) It will be noted that in the classical system the constant unit in all mensuration schemes is the minima, which in *integer valor* always receives the half tactus. In transcription from white notation, then, the quarter note gets the half tactus in all the time signatures found in Column C of Table I.

As strange as this “rhythmic neutrality” may seem to the modern conductor, it is nevertheless a basic and integral part of the system of tactus and is the only method which permits the many counterrhythms and simultaneously conflicting mensuration schemes that characterize the music of the 15th century. A little experience with the system also shows that the conducting of triple meters, such as in perfect prolation, with a binary tactus is not actually as disadvantageous as it may at first appear. For example, the oft-encountered hemiola fits easily into the binary tactus as follows:

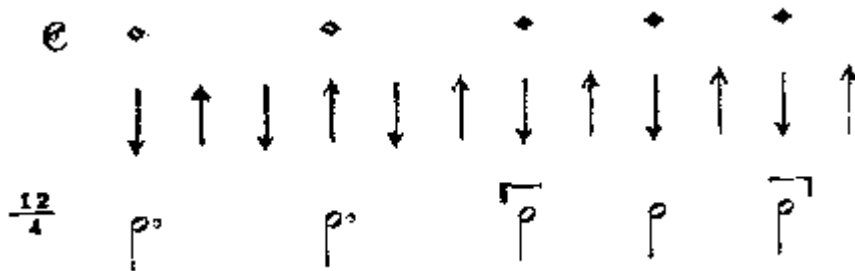


TABLE II
RATIOS FOR TRANSCRIBING MENSURAL NOTATION

	Duple Diminution	Integer Valor	Duple Augmentation	Value of Tactus in Transcription
I. Black notation Tactus System I or II	8:1 	4:1 	2:1 	t = in System I t = in System II
II. White notation A. Tactus System I or II	4:1 	2:1 	1:1 	t = in System I t = in System II
B. Tactus System III	2:1 	1:1 	1:2 	t =

N. B. Dotted notes in parentheses are applicable when prolation is perfect.

TABLE III
THE CLASSICAL
SYSTEM OF TACTUS

A. Mensural Notation		B. Modern Transcription (2:1 ratio)	
	$\frac{8}{2} \frac{6}{2} \frac{3 \Delta \epsilon}{2} \frac{6}{2}$		
	$\frac{12}{2} \frac{13}{2} \frac{11 \Delta \epsilon}{2} \frac{17}{2}$		
	$\frac{24}{4} \frac{6 \Delta \epsilon}{4} \frac{11 \Delta \epsilon}{4} \frac{5 \Delta \epsilon}{4}$		
	$\frac{36}{4} \frac{7 \Delta \epsilon}{4} \frac{3 \Delta \epsilon}{4} \frac{5 \Delta \epsilon}{4}$		

The Kyrie I of the *Missa*

Prolationum of Ockeghem^[7] may serve as an illustration of the simultaneous use of four different mensuration schemes in the classical system of tactus. It may be found in Fig. 1 in the method of transcription here proposed, that transfers the original mensuration schemes into modern time signatures in accordance with the relationships given in Table I.

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Figure 1.

OCCBHEM. MISSA PROLATIONUM. Kyrie I.

fol. 98v

fol. 99r

Ky-ri-e e-le-i-son, Ky-ri-e e-le-i-son, Ky-ri-e e-le-i-son.

l. 1

l. 2

l. 3

In diminution all the note values are halved. Fig. 2, an excerpt from the *Choralis Constantinus* by Heinrich Isaac,^[8] illustrates the combining of *integer valor* with duple and quadruple diminution. Fig. 3 illustrates the simultaneous use of duple and triple diminution in a famous mensuration canon by Josquin.^[9] Note that here the tactus is subdivided by twos in the lowest voice and by threes in the highest voice.

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Figure 2.

HEINRICH ISAAC. CHORALIS CONSTANTINUS Ideo que (concluding section)

Fi lius Dei filius Dei.

fi- lius Dei Dei.

fi lius De i.

filius dei

Fi- li- us De- i,

- tur. Fi- li- us De-

- tur. Fi- li- us De-

- tur. Fi- li- us Fi- li- us

Fi- li- us De- i.

i, De- i.

i.

i.

De- i.

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Figure 3.

JOSQUIN. MISSA "L'HOMME ARME." Agnus Dei II.

The image displays a musical score for the Agnus Dei II from Josquin's Mass "L'Homme Armé". It features multiple staves with vocal lines and lyrics. The lyrics are: "Agnus Dei qui tol- lis pecca ta mun di mi misere re no stri. Agnus De- i, qui tollis peccata mundi, mi- se-re-re nobis, no- A- gnus De- i, qui tol- lis peccata mundi, mi- bis, mi-se-re- re. ni-se-re- re no- bis, mi-sc- tol- lis pec- ca- ta mun- di mi- se- re-re no- bis, no- bis, mi- se- re- re, re- re no- bis, mi- se- re- re no- bis. se- re- re no- bis. mi- se- re- re no- bis." The score includes various time signatures such as 3/4, 9/4, 2/4, and 3/8, and includes musical notation like clefs, notes, rests, and bar lines.

Some indication of the degree of variability in the application of the tactus in the different systems may be had by a consideration of the ways in which perfect prolation can be related to the tactus. Four such different relationships are indicated in Table IV. In the 14th century there is little doubt that in perfect

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prolation the semibreve was worth a half tactus (Table IV, A). In some sources of the 15th and 16th centuries, perfect prolation is shown with the semibreve equal to the full tactus (Table IV, B). In the classical system, as we have seen, the minima is worth a half tactus (Table IV, C) And finally, in the closing years of the 15th and throughout the 16th century it became common practice to treat perfect prolation as a form of augmentation, in which the minima is equal to a tactus (Table IV, D). This *tactus alla minima* interpretation becomes a new *integer valor* for perfect prolation, which was then again subject to diminution and augmentation.

TABLE IV
PERFECT PROLATION AND THE TACTUS

			Modern Transcription
A. Fourteenth century		$\frac{36}{8} \quad \frac{54}{8} \quad \frac{3 \times 18}{8} \quad \frac{81}{8}$	
B. Some 15th- and 16th-century sources		$\frac{36}{4} \quad \frac{54}{4} \quad \frac{3 \times 18}{4} \quad \frac{81}{4}$	
C. The classical system		$\frac{36}{4} \quad \frac{54}{4} \quad \frac{3 \times 18}{4} \quad \frac{81}{4}$	
D. Perfect prolation as augmentation		$\frac{36}{2} \quad \frac{54}{2} \quad \frac{3 \times 18}{2} \quad \frac{81}{2}$	

In the

16th century the problem of the tactus becomes further complicated by the presence of three kinds of tactus described by the theorists. But before the relationship between these three kinds of tactus and the rhythm of the music can be adequately analyzed, it is necessary to define some terms.

The concepts of "beat," "pulse," and "rhythmic unit" are not always clearly defined in modern discussions of rhythm. For the purpose of the ensuing analysis the following definitions are established:

A "rhythmic unit" is a note value or its equivalent in any level in the rhythmic hierarchy. It is, therefore, a flexible term, which can be applied to long or short durations or metric structures.

A "beat" is a rhythmic unit which is capable of a consistent twofold division in the rhythmic hierarchy.

A "pulse" is the first division of the beat. It is therefore capable of consistent division into a still lower level of note values.

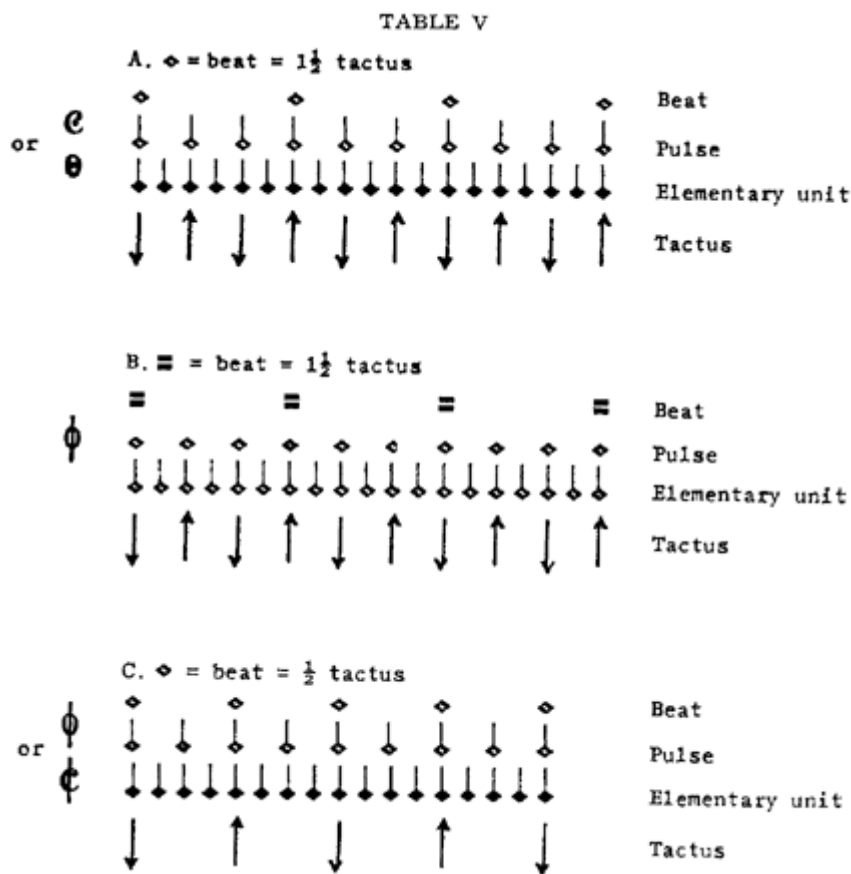
The division of the pulse is referred to as an "elementary unit." It is not capable of further consistent division in the musical styles under consideration in this paper, but isolated elementary units may be

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subdivided into two smaller note values. Since then, these smaller note values occur only in pairs, they are not regarded as an essential part of the rhythmic hierarchy. They are in the nature of tiny melodic flourishes and make no appreciable contribution to the metric structure.

When these concepts are related to the mensuration schemes as employed in the musical sources from the 14th to the 16th centuries, it will be found that any of the note values may represent the beat in the rhythmic organization: the maxima and longa may represent the beat, but only in diminution; the breve represents the beat in 14th-century music and in much of the music of the 15th century; the semibreve represents the beat in much 15th- and 16th-century music; and the minima represents the beat in perfect prolation and other forms of augmentation of the 15th and 16th centuries and in the so-called "black notation" of madrigals in the latter half of the 16th century.

It should be emphasized that the above definitions relate to the rhythmic organization of the music and are independent of the method of conducting. Such a distinction is a necessary preliminary to an adequate understanding of the relation of the tactus to the rhythmic structure of the music. In the simplest and most obvious relation between tactus and beat, the tactus equals the beat. However, this is by no means always true, and other relationships are possible. For example, in the classical system of the tactus, the tactus equals the beat only when the prolation is imperfect. In perfect prolation, since the pulses (represented by the minimae) are grouped by threes, the beat equals 1½ tactus, as illustrated in Table V, A. A similar relation occurs in *tempus perfectum diminutio*. (See Table V, B)



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In Table V, A and B, the relation between beat and tactus is the same in spite of the fact that in A the notation is in *integer valor* and in B it is in diminution. Here the diminution in note values is compensated for by the use of correspondingly larger note values. In the latter part of the 15th century, however, it became common practice to use diminution as a device to obtain a faster movement, so that there were now as many notes within a half tactus as had previously appeared in the entire tactus (see Table V, C). It will be noted that now the half tactus is the beat. To the practical musician this situation soon suggested the possibility of doubling the speed of the tactus to make it easier to accommodate the greater number of notes. This possibility led to the employment of two kinds of tactus—the greater and the lesser, a situation first clearly documented by Ornithoparcus in 1519:

Tact is three-fold, the greater, the lesser, and the proportionate. The greater is a Measure made by a slow, and as it were reciprocal motion. The writers call this *Tact* the whole, or total *Tact*. And, because it is the true *tact* of all Songs, it comprehends in his motion a *Semibreffe* not diminished: or a *Breefe* diminished in a duple.

The lesser *Tact*, is the halfe of the greater, which they call a *Semitact*. Because it measures by it[s] motion a *Semibreffe*, diminished in a duple: this is allowed of onely by the vnlearned.^[10]

(Ornithoparcus' third kind of tact will be discussed later.)

Table VI shows the two kinds of tactus applied to diminutions of the four partial mensuration schemes previously shown in Table III in *integer valor*. The decision as to whether the greater or the lesser tactus should be employed is a decision that lies in the hands of the performer. The choice exists, however, only in those cases where the half tactus of the greater tact is a full beat. It is obvious that the lesser tactus is easier for beginners (see Ornithoparcus' reference, above, to the "unlearned"). It is also clear that there is more danger of too slow and stodgy a tempo when the lesser tactus is used.

The greater and the lesser tactus, then, theoretically stand in a ratio of 2:1. However, if the greater tactus is maintained in accordance with the strict classical rules, despite the shift in the level of the beat to the semibreve through the introduction of smaller note values in diminution, there is almost inevitably going to be a slowing down of the tactus to accommodate the greater number of notes.

Thus C will mean a faster tempo (that is, beat) than C, but a slower tactus. In any given piece where the choice between the greater tactus (with half-tactus beats) and the lesser tactus (with full-tactus beats) presents itself, the relation between the two kinds of tactus will indeed be 2:1. If, on the other hand, the lesser tactus under C or O is compared with the greater tactus under C or O (assuming the full tactus to be just one beat) the speed of the lesser tactus will be found to be faster, but it probably will not be twice as fast. Thus C and C came to represent a faster tempo and a faster tactus, but not necessarily in a 2:1 proportion. This procedure is documented by Glareanus when he says:

But whenever musicians wish to accelerate the *tactus*, which they consider should be done when they believe the hearing is fatigued, namely, in order to remove weariness, they draw a line downwards through the circle or semicircle, as C , C , and they then call this contrary quality *diminutio*, not because either the value or number of notes is lessened, but because the *tactus* becomes faster.^[11]

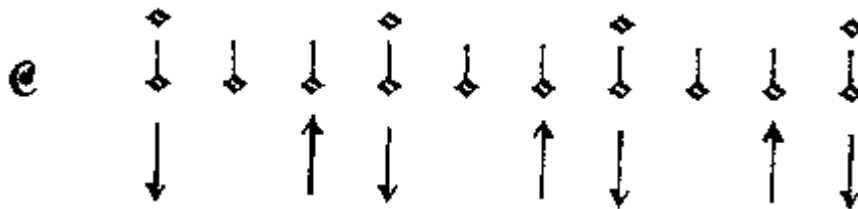
According to these directions, the proportional relation between C and C seems to have lost its significance, and the crossed semicircle simply stands for a faster tempo.

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By the second half of the 16th century the lesser tactus under C seems to have been a widely accepted norm. But meanwhile a similar development was also taking place in undiminished signatures. Before the middle of the century examples may be found where even in *integer valor* (C or O) the half tactus becomes the beat. This opens the way for the same choice between the greater and lesser tactus under C and O as under C and O . About the middle of the century the lesser tactus under C, producing a *tactus alla minima*, becomes a normal procedure in the so-called “black notation” for madrigals. This *tactus alla minima* under C now stands in a logical relation to the above-mentioned *tactus alla semibreve* under C , the former used mostly in secular music, the latter in both sacred and secular music.

Obviously, when first introduced, the lesser tactus restores the simple equation of one tactus equals one beat. But late in the 16th century again the pressure of an increased number of small notes (introduced especially through ornamentation) once more forced the half tactus into representing a full beat, and from this development stems the present-day concept that C stands for a measure of two half-note beats, one down and one up.

There is still another type of tactus which is mentioned by Ornithoparcus in 1519 and described more completely by Agricola in 1532.[12] This is the *tactus proportionatus*, or what Praetorius later called the *tactus inaequalis*.^[13] According to this method of beating the tactus, any arrangement of three pulses forming a triple beat, which under the system previously described resulted in one beat to each $1\frac{1}{2}$ tactus, could be beat in one tactus in which the down strokes and the up strokes were uneven, as follows:



It should be noted, however, that this method was not appropriate for arrangements of three beats, for then the second beat would be left completely unarticulated in the tactus. Agricola makes this restriction of the *tactus proportionatus* clear when he says that each of the minima in a *tactus proportionatus* is equal to a minima in the lesser tactus under C ,^[14] a situation where, at this time, the minima could be only a pulse and not a beat.

A statement of Glareanus suggests that this *tactus proportionatus* is what was used in the so-called tripla sections of works of his day under the signs O3, C3, or O₃. He objects to the common or popular use of the word “tripla” for such sections, which term should be reserved for a true tripla proportion between voices. But he does speak of the tactus in these sections as an “admirable and majestic *tactus*.”^[15] This suggests that the tactus was slower than the common lesser tactus employed under C , though perhaps not as slow as the 1:1½ ratio that Agricola’s explanation would imply. Thus here again we are confronted with at least the possibility that a nonproportional change in tempo is involved in these

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“tripla” sections, so that a *tactus inaequalis* or *proportionatus* is employed in which the full tactus is somewhat slower than the lesser tactus that preceded.

From this study of the development of the tactus concept during the 16th century it may readily be seen that the supposed “absolute” tempo of the tactus is largely a myth. The tempo of the tactus was variable, after all; in fact, the developments traced here could not have taken place if the speed of the tactus had been invariable. Just as in any period, the actual musical situation confronting the performer will have to be the main consideration in determining tempo.

Various attempts were made by 16th-century theorists to define the speed of the tactus, the most reliable indications being those that relate the tactus to the human pulse, about 72 per minute. Unfortunately it is not always clear whether the writers are speaking of the greater or the lesser tactus, or whether they are referring to the entire tactus or to the individual down and up movements. A little experimentation and experience suggests that 72 is actually a good average speed for the beat in those situations where either the lesser tact or the greater tact could be applied. This speed may sometimes be reduced to about 60 per minute, which means that the greater tact would be as slow as 30 full tactus per minute. In situations where the full tactus is a beat, it seems reasonable to suppose that it may go as fast as 80 or 90 per minute. So that, even though the tactus may not be a means to fix a precise tempo, it may serve to determine fairly adequately certain limits to a suitable tempo and may serve to prevent gross misconceptions.

With all of the complication of the three kinds of tactus, and situations where one or the other should be given preference, it is easy to understand why in 1547 Glareanus gives up—almost in despair, it seems—trying to explain the tactus and sends the reader back to the authority of the late 15th century, Franchinus Gafurius. Glareanus then says: “Perhaps it would be better to warn the reader in passing that the tactus or measuring is understood principally through the solution which has to be made by an examination of *modus*, *tempus*, and *prolatio*.”^[16]

This is still good advice. The conductor of today, when he approaches music of the 15th and 16th centuries, should make himself familiar with the basic principles of its rhythmic structure and with the various possibilities in the application of the tactus, and then determine the method of conducting that best solves the rhythmic problems at hand. Likewise, the editors of this music should establish a method of transcription faithful to the original notation and to the basic rhythmic concepts underlying the musical styles of the period.

Cited References and Notes

1. Modern ed., ed. Alec Harman (New York, 1952), pp. 5, 6.
2. These studies have been made possible in part by grants from The Newberry Library (Fellowship, Summer 1960) and Valparaiso University (Research grants, 1960 and 1962, sabbatical leave, 1962).
3. Cf. E. de Coussemaker, *Scriptorum de musica medii aevi* (Paris, 1869), IV, 50–53.
4. This system represents a slight modification of that presented by Willi Apel in *The Notation of Polyphonic Music, 900–1600*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 97–100.

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5. The rhythmic hierarchy implicit in these time signatures may be determined by factoring the numerator into twos and threes and then continuing to divide the note value represented by the denominator by twos until one has the four levels of rhythm. If a number is encountered in the numerator which contains both two and three as factors, factor out the twos first, then the threes (going from the higher rhythmic levels to the lower), thus:

$$6 = 2 \times 3 \text{ (not } 3 \times 2\text{!)}$$

$$12 = 2 \times 2 \times 3$$

$$18 = 2 \times 3 \times 3$$

$$24 = 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3$$

$$36 = 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3$$

$$54 = 2 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3$$

The number in the denominator merely refers to a note value and carries no connotation of beat or tactus; thus 3/1 does not necessarily mean that the whole note gets the beat or the tactus, but merely that there are three whole notes in the measure.

6. Cf. Curt Sachs, *Rhythm and Tempo* (New York, 1953), p. 65 et passim, and Willi Apel, "Drei plus Drei plus Zwei = Vier plus Vier," *Acta Musicologica*, XXXII (1960), 29–33.
7. Cf. the facsimile of the chief source for this work (Roma, Vat. Chigi, Cod. C. VIII. 234) in Johannes Ockeghem, *Collected Works*, ed. Dragan Plamenac, Vol. II (New York, 1947), Plate II.
8. Cf. facsimile in Apel, *Notation*, p.169.
9. Cf. facsimile, *ibid.*, p.181.
10. This translation from Andreas Ornithoparcus, *Micrologus; or, Introduction: Containing the Art of Singing*, trans. John Dowland (London, 1609), p. 46.
11. This translation from "The *Dodecachordon* of Heinrich Glarean," trans. and ed. Clement Albin Miller (University of Michigan Ph.D. dissertation, University Microfilms, No. 2424), pp. 390–91.
12. Cf. Martin Agricola, *Musica figuralis deudsch* (Wittenberg, 1532).
13. Cf. Michael Praetorius, *Terpsichore (1612)*, Bd. XV, *Gesamtausgabe der musikalischen Werke von Michael Praetorius* (Wolfenbüttel, 1929), pp. xi and xii.
14. Cf. Agricola, chap. vi.
15. Cf. translation, pp. 391 and 392.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 388.

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The Church Composer and the Contemporary Musical Scene

Richard Hillert

In his comments about the blessing that contemporary music had received in Pius XII's encyclical, the *Mediator Dei*, Virgil Thomson wrote in 1948: "No major musical power is today vowed to musical reaction save the Soviet government and possibly the American films."^[1] Since neither American film nor Soviet music has made a consistently notable contribution to the music of our time, Mr. Thomson's observation is still quite possibly true.

The unfortunate fact is, however, that neither has the church made consistently notable contributions to the music of our time, in spite of official Catholic sanction (with certain reservations), and in spite of the fact that Protestants and even Lutherans today find it fashionable to agree that contemporary techniques should be admitted to church composition. The contemporary musical world has demonstrated that it can get along without either the Soviet government or the American films; we are not seriously concerned about them. But as church musicians we regret that the church should get along without contemporary music; and we regret, too, that contemporary music should get along without the church. In part, this concern has a historical basis: the realization that the great religious music of the past was always in the front ranks of contemporary art.

This is the one constant pattern that is discernible in the historical periods that saw the production of the great masterworks of religious music: the continuous exchange of material and device between sacred and secular usage. Under the circumstance of one common, all-inclusive style, sacred and secular music were able to borrow liberally from one another. The *ars nova* of the early 14th century was primarily a secular movement, but by the middle of the century the motet-ballad style had made its appearance in the church. Luther's recommendations, including the famous one about the church's proper attitude toward using the devil's better tunes, instigated an upsurge of activity within the Lutheran Church. When, through the decisions of the Council of Trent, the Catholic Church attempted to "purify" church music, some of her better composers turned to the marketplace and were provoked into the invention of secular opera. And, in turn, the real originality of 17th-century operatic style caused its adoption for religious usage within 25 years and introduced some of the chief stylistic features of the Baroque era. More recently the modernization of plainchant in the Catholic Church made possible the writing of much of the music of the French Impressionists, although it has failed to influence the production of a first-class piece of church music. In our own century the musicological restoration of the music of Machaut and Dufay has influenced the stylistic practices of such modernists as Webern and Stravinsky.

While the secular music of our century has continued to draw and enlarge upon the materials and devices of both sacred and secular music of all periods, most of the sacred music of our time has persisted in literal simulation of merely some sectarian aspects of the whole art. By the failure of our contemporary religious music to employ the real idioms of contemporary music and by its reluctance to participate in the adventures of 20th-century music, sacred music has come to exist outside the mainstream of contemporary music, tolerated by the musical world as a necessary but insignificant adjunct of the art.

An erroneous conception of what constitutes sacred and secular style has been one of the symptoms afflicting, and limiting, the creative efforts of our religious composers, with the result that much of our contemporary religious music making is, like that of the 19th century, often timorous and unimaginative.

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It is marked by a sobriety and inexpressiveness that belies our observation of the sacred injunction to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. At its very best it is respectable, but its respectability is induced often by scholarly rather than artistic considerations. The best composers of our time have certainly tended to reserve their more joyful noises for secular occasions.

Although we may acknowledge the fact that there is no basis for such categorization between the sacred and the secular in any of the arts, in practice we have preferred the more comfortable, less problematical, condition of surrounding ourselves with the sacred musical treasures of the past. In doing this we have sought to avoid the crucial problems of contemporary church music.

It is not our main purpose here to formulate an indictment against our situation with regard to contemporary music in the church. The problem is simple to present, and it is as easy to oversimplify it as it is difficult to offer a solution. For the real and final solution to our musical problems is not a purely musical one. With exceptional insight Paul Henry Lang has written: “. . . *the problem of church music is the problem of the church itself*. We may give correct and highly artistic performances of the great church art of the past, and thereby accomplish a serious cultural deed, but religion is neither retrospective nor archaic, it must be living to inspire a living art.”^[2]

Professor Lang is writing here about the state of church music in the 19th century, but the principles he affirms are completely relevant to the church and its art in any period of time. The problems we face in American Lutheranism today, even in the area of church music, will not be solved if such vital and living spirituality does not exist. And this spirituality, which alone can engender a live spiritual art, is never a conscious attainment for the individual artist by his own reason or strength.

It is beyond our powers, then, to legislate or to pass resolutions about how to write contemporary religious music or to determine along what lines it should develop. We cannot quickly devise by formula something which can be built up only slowly and with much patience; and we cannot impose self-consciously upon music something that can come only from within. The contemporary religious composer's problems will not be solved by a sudden U-turn decision to write his sacred music in the style of modern secular music, for personal style will also come from within. Music written in a contemporary language can be communicative only if its composer speaks that language with naturalness and conviction and without artificiality.

The problems of the church composer today involve also a great deal more than a simple concern for the practicalities of writing and performance. They are intricately involved with the general and specific problems of contemporary art and culture. We cannot evade these interrelationships anymore than the contemporary church can evade or minimize the difficulties under which it labors in our society. The so-called “mass public” is something new on the cultural scene, uniquely of the 20th century, having been created artificially not only by mass means of communication, but less directly by other forces—political, economic, and social, as well. Since this mass public is basically traditionless and rejects the real values of “high art,” a kind of cultural mediation is imposed by which the forms of high art are imitated and exploited in a zeal to make them more palatable.^[3] The process of satisfying the cultural needs of this mass public has become in our country a major business enterprise. This popularizing of culture has come to include certain phases of contemporary art, so that Picasso and early Stravinsky, to mention two obvious examples, have become eminently salable. But there is little evidence that such mass exposure has improved the real quality of our culture. And since the values of art have come more and

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more to be measured by their salability, the entire process has made the position of the serious creator more difficult.

Our musical predicament, therefore, whether in or out of the church, is part of the problem of modern culture in general. The purely musical problems of the church composer are basically the ones faced by other composers. The composer of today, writing in the “advanced” idioms, soon discovers that his music has very little to do with the “taste of the majority,” on which most of our contemporary organized musical life is based. Thus the problem of communication, of bridging the gap, between the composer and his hearers is a particularly vexing one during a period such as ours that has seen the revision of the whole syntax of music. The American composer Roger Sessions recently described our present situation when he suggested that “. . . music is undergoing one of its major upheavals, at least comparable to that brought about by the discovery of polyphony in the ninth century, or by the whole set of changes which took place roughly around the sixteenth. Future historians may conceivably find that the present transformation is more profound than either of the other two.”^[4]

These changes, Mr. Sessions seems to imply, define the nature of the profound challenges that meet the composer of today, making necessary therefore “a searching reappraisal not only of traditional ideas, but even of those underlying assumptions which have always been taken for granted as irreducible; for such a situation brings with it inevitably a completely new set of requirements.”^[5]

While some of us may feel that Mr. Sessions’ analysis is rather a sweeping exaggeration, it is evident that no real composer of today can fail to reflect, in some measure, these changes that characterize 20th-century music. The harmonic and contrapuntal anachronisms found in some of our contemporary church music betray a shallow innocence of what has happened to music in our times. The implication here is not that the composer will follow blindly the whims of every current fad, nor that he must be brought into conformity with contemporary styles at the expense of his individuality. On the contrary, if he is a writer of high individuality, this problem will not exist, and his language is more likely to be formed in the idioms of the more advanced techniques of his day. An assumed individuality that is oblivious of the 20th century constitutes a brand of radicalism that amounts simply to an easy escape from the critical problems of contemporary music, and too often such radicalism is grounded in ignorance of these problems. If we are going to reject the techniques of contemporary music, we must have a better reason for doing so than for the reason of our inexperience with their various facets or ignorance of how these techniques can be used. There is nothing wrong with rejecting the composition methods of the 12-tone technique or of serialism or neoclassicism; but this rejection should be made on the basis of a working knowledge of them that can come only with genuine and serious efforts in the actual manipulation of the musical materials.

Thanks to the labors of the musicologists, the composer has available today a greater variety of idioms and formal procedures than at any other time. Most of the procedures of contemporary music can be categorized roughly under the following three classifications:^[6]

1. *Neoclassicism*, which had its beginning in the 1920’s with the “Back to Bach” movement. Stravinsky and Hindemith were then its chief practitioners, but the aesthetic, which is basically a conscious, personal transformation of an established style of the past, has had its influence on much of the music written within the last 30 years. The approach has come to embrace any era of music history: neo-Renaissance, neobaroque, neoromantic, neoimpressionism, and more frequently even neoexpressionism.

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2. *Dodecaphonism*, which includes any music written with the conscious aim of avoiding the sounds of tertial harmony, or tonality as it is conventionally understood. This is most commonly achieved by the utilization of some form of serialism such as Schoenberg's 12-tone system. Most of the younger composers of today employ some form of serialism with varying degrees of rigorousness.

3. *The use of folk materials*, sometimes exotic, either as quotation (as with Charles Ives) or as raw material (as in Bartok and Copland). This divergence of modern style is very apparent, and sometimes confusing, to us today. But with closer inspection these styles become more similar than dissimilar, and we may eventually come to see greater similarities than the glaring differences that often appear on the surface.

There are other, more general, tendencies that characterize the music of our time. There is the widespread urge to control and predetermine every aspect of a piece of music (this is one of the main purposes of employing the serial techniques); the exaggerated belief in the efficacy of musical analysis (as though the music were written with analysis as its objective); and the denial of the validity of what is called "expression" in music (which accounts for the sterility of much neoclassical music). These are attitudes for good or ill that govern the workings of many of our contemporary composers.^[7] Hindemith's attempt to "prove" musical values on the basis of the overtone series, and the numerous so-called "systems" of composition, are all symptomatic of an age that often equates scientific quantity with aesthetic quality. These are factors, however, that relate to principles and criteria rather than to results. We must not be misled in our criticism of these principles no matter how defective they may seem. Quite unsound principles have often proved most fruitful as working bases for a composer.

This is, then, the contemporary musical scene in which the composer of today, including the church composer, finds himself, and to which he must naturally tend to orientate himself. While the contemporary Lutheran composer has many problems in common with all contemporary composers, and with all contemporary church composers, he also has particular problems that relate to his own situation. These problems, as we have tried to show, are not really separable from the mainstream of contemporary music.

In spite of some of the disparaging allusions that have been made here about our tendency toward overveneration of our glorious past and our unfortunate discrimination against the present, it is possible that the Lutheran church composer is in a comparatively favorable position to produce significant church music today. But to do so he will need to cultivate a proper perspective toward contemporary music on the one hand, and toward the Lutheran traditions on the other. This is possible precisely because we have a tradition by which we can identify ourselves. We are not traditionless as is the new mass public in our society today. We are not traditionless as are many of our artists in the secular field who have lost a sense of spiritual, hence also artistic and intellectual, security. We have, moreover, reestablished contact with this tradition under the leadership of informed musical scholarship.

While we must have composers who are properly oriented toward today's scene in its many aspects, we must also acknowledge the necessity for a whole musical superstructure within the church, which is a prerequisite to the production of significant original church composition. We must have the musicologists who point to our heritage, and who lead us to a more definitive understanding of it; we must have the music editors who will provide the materials that make it possible to perform and hear the music of our heritage; we must have the publishers who are willing to risk publication of music that

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is not easily disseminated to a large purchasing public; we must have in our worshipers a sense of liturgical decorum that will admit for church usage the highest art as an expression of man's devotion to God. And we must have the conductors, instrumentalists, singers, and teachers who are willing to expend time and effort in learning and understanding unfamiliar idioms of the past and, especially, of the present.

Having established such a superstructure (as I believe we have), and having reestablished contact with a valid artistic heritage, we must then also assume the proper perspective about that tradition. To state it briefly, we must cease to regard it academically. An awareness of tradition does not simply imply an antiquarian preoccupation with our musical past, or an imitation of past models in some pleasing form of archaeological reconstruction. Our Lutheran tradition, as the traditional in any art form, has more to offer than a mere means which can be imitated in some form. The real sense of tradition consists, not in preserving a form or a set of forms, but in keeping alive an interest in the solution of contemporary problems in contemporary terms and materials. The great men who created the Lutheran tradition—men like Luther, Walther, Schütz, Scheidt, Buxtehude, and Bach, were men who solved their musical problems in terms that were relevant to their own contemporary situation.

Our tradition, any tradition, is timeless, but the surface aspect by which this tradition is transmitted must be a constantly changing one. The surface aspect, that is, the form, the style, the instrumentation, the materials, and their treatment, the sounds that the music makes, will be rooted in and reflect the time in which the work is produced. As James Johnson Sweeney has written of all the arts in the contemporary scene: “. . . from period to period, from day to day, all art that is not plagiarism must be different in surface aspect from all art that preceded it. And to keep familiar with its living changes we must keep in touch with them. If we do not, we will always be surprised at what has taken place in our absence.”^[8]

The next step forward in music that is destined for church usage, even in the Lutheran Church, is full employment of contemporary techniques. And it will be the truly contemporary composer who will be at the same time the real traditionalist. Our Lutheran tradition is wide enough and vital enough for living composers who can write living religious music for live worshipers.

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2. Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1941), p. 1008. Italics R. H.
3. William Phillips, “The American Establishment,” *Partisan Review*. XXVI, No. 1 (Winter 1959), 107–116.
4. Roger Sessions, “Song and Pattern in Music Today,” *The Score*, No. 17 (September 1956), 73–84.
5. Ibid.
6. There are, of course, other possibilities for classifying the techniques and procedures of contemporary composition. For the sake of brevity and conciseness the present categorization is an oversimplification.

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7. Sessions, op. cit.
8. James Johnson Sweeney, "The Literary Artist and the Other Arts," *Spiritual Problems in Contemporary Literature* (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1957), ed. by Stanley Romaine Hopper, p. 8.

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Organ Compositions Based on Kyrie Fons Bonitatis

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Introduction

I am indebted to Dr. M. Alfred Bichsel, head of the Department of Church Music at the Eastman School of Music, for the idea of tracing the *Kyrie fons bonitatis* through eight centuries of organ composition. Interestingly enough, this chant appears as a *cantus firmus* at least once in each period, except in the 19th century. It has been, for me, a fascinating study, as well as a new idea for the teaching of the history of music. Western music begins with Gregorian Chant; it is evident that the influence of this chant is still a potent force in contemporary music. L.P.

Kyrie fons bonitatis

The first chant of the Ordinary of the Mass, the *Kyrie Eleison*, has been an official part of the Roman liturgy at least since 529, when the third canon of the Synod of Vaison in Provence directed that, "Since both in the Apostolic See and in all the provinces of the East and of Italy a sweet and most salutary custom has been introduced that *Kyrie Eleison* should often be said with great devotion and compunction, we too ordain that in all our churches this pious custom be introduced at matins and masses and vespers."

Its recorded place in ecclesiastical history begins somewhat earlier, about the end of the fourth century, when the Gallic pilgrim lady, Aetheria, relates how, about 390 in Jerusalem, at the end of Vespers, one of the deacons read petitions which were interspersed by the answering shouts of a crowd of boys singing "Kyrie Eleison." Describing what was in all probability a litany, she said, "Their cry is without end."

The exact date for the inclusion of the *Kyrie* in the Roman rite is uncertain. It may have become set in the liturgy at the time of the reforms carried on by Pope Gelasius (492–496). At any rate, by the time of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604) it was definitely a part of the service. In a letter to Bishop John of Syracuse, Gregory defends himself against accusations of introducing new, Greed-emulating practices to

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Rome. He stresses the differences between Greek and Roman practices: how the Greeks all answer *Kyrie Eleison* together, both clergy and people, whereas in Rome the clergy sing and the people respond; how the Greeks simply use *Kyrie Eleison*, while the Roman practice includes *Christe Eleison* as well.

The first Roman *Ordo* (said to date from the eighth century, contained in a ninth-century manuscript owned by the Abbey of St. Gall) directs, "The choir, having finished the antiphon, begins the *Kyrie*." Thus we see already the change from the directive of the time of Gregory, which had read, "To be sung by the priest and response made by the people." With the assumption by the Schola Cantorum of the responsorial functions once possessed by the congregation, the *Kyrie* as an art form was given freedom for expansion. In the reflowering of Gregorian composition that resulted, many of the *Kyrie* melodies were created. From this period, in all probability, dates the melody known as "Fons bonitatis."

This is also the period of the trope, the full literature of which developed from the ninth century onward. Blume, in *Tropes of the Missal* (Leipzig, 1905), states, "The melody of 'Fons bonitatis' is already in the manuscripts of the tenth century. The text appears first in the 11th century. The 10th-century manuscripts hold many tropes—texts—as well as the melody of 'Fons bonitatis,' but not its particular text, so it is clearly a trope composed to a preexisting tune."

It was inevitable that the tropes themselves should also be troped. Having expanded the chants textually, the inventive minds of the time turned quite naturally to the embellishment of the music. Adding another line of music above or below the chant itself marked the beginning of polyphony, the birth of organum. Willi Apel states that organum originated from the playing of organs. Certainly the similarity of the terms would seem to indicate a close connection between the two in the minds of the writers of the period. Two-part playing on the organ seems to have been known to the Greeks and Romans and to have been preserved by the Byzantines, who probably retransmitted the art to the Western world. Leo Schrade has found a reference to *organa* being played on the organ in the 14th century.

The first example of a composition based on *Kyrie fons bonitatis* is from this early polyphonic period; it comes from the 12th-century Spanish *Codex de las Huelgas*. It is a free organum composed above the original chant melody.

Example 1



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For the 13th century, the *ars antiqua*, the distinction between the liturgical motet and its secular counterpart may not always have been a hard and fast one. Eminent churchmen, confronted with the gaily descanting musicians, were often disgruntled, as this quotation from John of Salisbury will show:

Could you but hear one of these enervating performances executed with all the devices of the art, you might think it a chorus of Sirens, not of men; and you would be astounded by the singers' facility, with which indeed neither that of the parrot or nightingale, nor of whatever else there may be that is more remarkable in this kind, can compare. For this facility is displayed in long passages running up and down, in dividing or in repeating notes, in repeating phrases, and in clashing together of voices, while in all this the high or even the highest notes of the scale are so mingled with the lower and lowest, that the ears are almost deprived of their power to distinguish.

In 1322 Pope John XXII issued a decree which specifically deplored singers who "truncate the melodies with hockets, deprave them with discants, and even trope the upper parts with secular songs!"

Small wonder that it caused a pope's irritation, these texts:

Well above all things must I praise only love, for my heart has made me accord it such a lofty place, for which I must always give it thanks with all true lovers. Nothing can vex me, not even lies, for love makes me feel this for this lovely one. Sweet God! I love her so that I cannot forget her great beauty, which causes me to think on her day and night and often to sigh. And her great nobility, her wit and goodness, which we must remember, for one could find none other more virtuous than this one who has thus captivated me. Alas, O God, alas! I am no longer able to contain myself that I must now speak to her, but I fear lest my love should fail, and for this I pray in singing that she would keep me as a lover, and in this I also rejoice in God, for I have served Him loyally in faith. (Triplum of *Codex Montpellier*, Number 262.)

Translated from the medieval French by M. A. Bichsel.

The specific function of the organ in the church before the 14th century remains largely a matter of conjecture. It was probably used to give pitches and regulate the intonation of the singers. Most writers agree that the organ must have reinforced the long tenor notes of the *organa* and *polyphonic motets*. Thus in our performance of a 13th-century motet from the *Codex Montpellier*, the organ assumed its historic function and sounded the *Kyrie*, while the two secular-texted lines were sung above this supporting melody. The transcription of this charming music was made by Yvonne Rokseth and is published in her *Polyphonies du XIII. siècle* (Paris, 1939).

Example 2

Bien me doi sor tou-tes riens d'a - pour lo-er,
 Je n'ai que que nus

(8) KIRIE FONS

During the 14th century the technical advances necessary to enable the organ to become a solo instrument were made. For instance, the organ of Rouen Cathedral acquired a rudimentary “Rückpositiv” in 1386. Open-flue drone pipes for sounding long tenor lines became quite common in the larger instruments; in some cases they seem to have become too prominent, as in Rouen Cathedral, where, in 1382, the organ builder was asked to remove these pipes, because the tenor was overweighing all the other stops. The roller-board, allowing disposition of pipes elsewhere than directly above the keys controlling them, was already known in the 14th century. As early as 1312 we read of pedal keys to control bells of the carillon in Antwerp, a device soon transferred to the control of the larger organ pipes. The first specific mention of the organ pedal in France occurs in the *Annals of the Cathedral of Troyes*, where a pedal of eight notes was added to the organ in 1432. And, among other novelties, the much-abused “shaking-stoppe,” or tremulant, came into being.

While the organ was being prepared to play a larger role in the church service, new styles for performance of the Mass came into vogue. Felix Raugel has suggested that the alternation of organ and *schola cantorum* in various parts of the Mass may have begun as early as the 11th century, while Yvonne Rokseth even surmises that the organ, taking the place of congregational responses, may have been employed for this purpose as early as the 10th century, when this responsorial role of the congregation seems largely to have disappeared.

At any rate, in 1414 a report of a Mass, alternating between organ and *schola*, at St. Jacques de la Boucherie in Paris, is the first official note we have of this practice. Henry of Saxony, employed as organist of Notre Dame, Paris, in 1415, has left a record of his duties there. He played during the Kyrie, Gloria, Sequences, Sanctus, and Agnus of the solemn Masses.

In 1662 Martin Sonnet compiled his *Caeremoniale Parisiense* as a guide to church practices in the city, and as an attempt to secure uniformity in the playing of the Mass. To quote from this delightful book of directives: “The organist must be modest and diligent, and must guard particularly against being loud, lascivious, or profane at the organ. He should give careful attention to the bells in order not to delay or hurry the service. No unauthorized persons should be admitted to the organ, and it should be kept closed when not in use—and clean and free from dust.”

Surely M. Sonnet must have been the original “chairman of the music committee!”

The *Caeremoniale* further directs the uses for the organ in the Mass: it is to play the plainchant, to guide the celebrant, soloists, and chorus, to give pitch to the singers, “lest cacophony and dissonance of the

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voices should arise from the lack of such things.” Specific versets of the Mass are designated as ones in which the organist should play the *cantus firmus*: the first and last *Kyries*, *Et in terra pax*, *Suscipe deprecationem nostram*, *In gloria Amen*, first *Sanctus*, and first *Agnus*. “In those versets where the *cantus firmus* is present, it must not be altered, mutilated, or falsified, but must be presented exactly as it occurs in the Parisian chant books.”

This work of 1662 seems to describe time-honored Parisian practice, for the next of the “Kyrie compositions” dates from 1531—131 years earlier than Sonnet’s book—and yet it satisfies the requirements for the organ Mass set forth therein.

The first organ music in France, that is, music specifically designated for the organ, was published in seven small tabulature books by Pierre Attaignant of Paris in 1531. These are the only French organ pieces from the 16th century to survive—and indeed only one copy of these works is extant, and that no longer in France, but in the Staatsmuseum Bibliothek in Munich. The works contained in the Attaignant organ books are by anonymous composers, and Yvonne Rokseth, who transcribed the tabulature and prepared the practical edition (Paris, 1930), believes that they are not all the works of one man.

In the performance of the *Kyrie*, *Christe*, and *Kyrie* from “Messe fons” of the Attaignant organ books, the organ alternated with the Schola Cantorum, as was done on feast days and festivals in 16th-century Paris. The organ, contrary to ecclesiastical decree, played the opening verset, a practice which, however, seems to have been quite common.

Example 3



In the *Christe*, the chant melody forsakes its more usual tenor range, and is found in the soprano. Perhaps this is an ideal spot to utilize the tremulant!

Example 4



With the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century, the “Fons bonitatis” melody, along with many other Gregorian tunes, was taken over into the Lutheran liturgy, unchanged, as the *Kyrie Summum* of Luther’s *Deutsche Messe*. German words, simply a translation of the 11th-century trope, replaced the Latin, and “Fons bonitatis” became *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit*.

Dr. Friedrich Blume, writing on the establishment of a Protestant organ style, has said, “The practice of alternation and the chorale prelude were the main outlets for the development of a specifically Protestant school of organ composition.” Further, concerning this *alternations-praxis*: “In the Evangelical church, as in the Catholic church until well into the 17th century, the organ could itself take over the major role in the Mass service. It was much practiced, for instance, in the *Kyrie*, to have ‘Kyrie eleison’ sung by the priest and the choir, the ‘Christe’ played on the organ, and the second ‘Kyrie’ performed by the choir.” The French essayist Montaigne, writing of a Lutheran service in Kempten, Germany, where he visited in 1580, expressed surprise at hearing the organ alternating with the choirs in the performance of the *Kyrie*.

Choral settings of the “Kyrie fons bonitatis” by Praetorius, Schütz, and others still exist. Short versets for the organ have not survived from many composers; perhaps most were not written down but merely improvised. However, from the pen of Johann Sebastian Bach’s contemporary, Tobias Volckmar (1678–1756), came 33 measures—three “fughettinas,” as it were, on *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit*. Volckmar, organist, cantor, and musical director in Reichenstein, Laubau, and Hirschberg, was a pupil of Johann Krieger.

In his three short versets, Volckmar has composed simple fugal expositions of the three subjects which he has derived from the chant-choral melody.

Example 5

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In 1731 J. S. Bach's *Six Partitas for Klavier* were engraved on copper plates and published as the *Klavierübung, Opus I.* The second part, consisting of the *Italian Concerto* and the *French Overture in B Minor*, appeared in 1735, and in 1739 followed the third part, with the title:

Third part of the keyboard practice, consisting in Various Preludes on the Catechism and Other Hymns for the Organ for Music Lovers and especially for Connoisseurs of Such Work composed by Johann Sebastian Bach, Royal Polish and Electoral Saxon Court Composer, Capellmeister and Director Choir Musici In Leipzig.

Published by the Author.

In this collection flanked by the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat, we find 11 large-scale chorale preludes based on the Lutheran chorales corresponding to the liturgical parts of the service; hence the name by which the work is often known, "The German Organ Mass." The ten shorter chorale preludes have been said to symbolize Luther's Shorter Catechism, just as the larger works may symbolize the Greater Catechism. Much symbolism may certainly be read into this chorale collection; perhaps even the use of the key signature of E-flat, with its three flats, is symbolic of the Trinity.

The first compositions following the B-flat Prelude are those based on *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit*. In these three chorale preludes Bach sets the *Kyrie, Christe*, and *Kyrie* of the Lutheran Mass. In the first *Kyrie* the *cantus firmus* is in the soprano; in the *Christe* it is found in the tenor; for the final *Kyrie* the *cantus* appears in augmentation in the pedal, while a five-voice fugue is built above it. The extreme chromaticism at the conclusion of the composition nobly expresses the word "eleison" and recalls with its intensity such other Bach works as the *Crucifixus* of the *B Minor Mass*, the three-sectioned chorale prelude *O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig*, or the 11th counterpoint of the *Kunst der Fuge*.

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The three shorter fuguetas based on *Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit* follow next in the collection. These gems are to be played *manualiter*.

During the classic period the organ fell into a period of decadence already hinted at in the full flowering of the organ building of Silbermann, when the ensemble of the instrument began to take second place in importance to the solo voices and the imitative possibilities of the instrument. The composers of the time turned their attentions to the improved and developing orchestras and to the novel and exciting “loud-soft” or “fortepiano.” The chorale fell into disuse as the more catchy pietistic *Lieder* became ever more popular, and Gregorian chant, too, suffered many indignities; in many churches it fell completely into disuse.

Here and there, it was true, an artistic flame was kindled, shone brightly, then flickered: Mozart’s organ works are true gems, although so few compositions were written, and these are mostly for mechanical clock-organ; in France Boely continued the contrapuntal art for another generation; Lemmons began the organ school which led to Franck and Guilmant, and in Germany, Felix Mendelssohn learned to know the works of Bach from his teacher, Zelter, and the revival of interest in the *Thomaskantor’s* works brought a minor renaissance of interest in the organ and its possibilities—a renaissance which led to the excellent compositions of Mendelssohn, the monumental single work of Reubke, the immense tone pictures of Liszt, and the charms of the little-known organ works of Schumann.

But the *Kyrie fons bonitatis* was stilled; there was no place for Gregorian chant in the rhapsodic outpourings of Franck or in the romantic meanderings of his successor, Pierné. But the next occupant of the organ bench at the Church of Ste. Clothilde in Paris was Charles Tournemire, who spearheaded a return to the chant as a source of inspiration for his improvisation and composition. In the preface to his monumental opus *L’Orgue Mystique*, a set of 51 volumes based on the Gregorian propers for each Sunday of the liturgical year, Tournemire said, “. . .The author found at Solesmes Abbey many appreciated encouragements and retained marvelous impressions concerning chant. Plain-chant . . . really is an inexhaustible source of mysterious and splendid lines; plain-chant (is) the triumph of modal art. . . .”

Since these volumes are based on the propers, we do not expect to find the *fons bonitatis* melody in *L’Orgue Mystique*. There may be a hint of it in Volume XXVI for Trinity Sunday, or this may be only my wishful thinking. At any rate, the return to the chant as a source of inspiration for variation has continued with the composers of the present. Tournemire’s successor at Ste. Clothilde, the blind organist Jean Langlais, incorporated *fons bonitatis* in the *Tiento* of his *Suite Médiévale* (Paris, Éditions Salabert, 1947). The *tiento*, as a form, dates from the 16th century, from Spain, where it was a forerunner, together with the *ricercar*, of the fugue.

Finally, to bring *fons bonitatis* to a setting as contemporary as the morning paper, we have Neely Bruce’ *Fantasia for Organ*. This brilliant young composer, born in 1944, agreed to accept a commission to write a closing work for the *Fons bonitatis Recital*. At no point in the composition is there a direct statement of the Gregorian melody, but the influence of its melodic shape and its free rhythm may be found, and hints of the melody itself are heard throughout the composition.

The *Prelude* presents a quiet figuration for a single 4-foot flute; this serves as accompaniment to the free melody, to be played on a cornet combination.

Example 6

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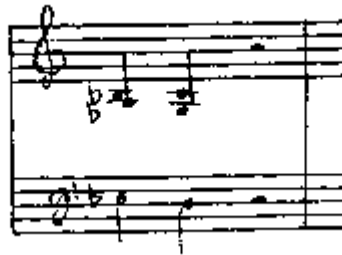
The *Theme and Variations*, reminiscent of the style of Sweelinck, become increasingly more virtuose and dissonant, but culminate, in the fifth variation, in a most introspective *Lento*.

Example 7



Example 8

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The *Finale* (Maestoso, quasi Passacaglia), is built over a recurring 12-tone bass, above which a theme, clearly derived from the *font bonitatis*, is varied. After a variation above a pedal augmentation and a short chordal interlude, the work concludes with a whirlwind "vivace," and *fons bonitatis* is brought safely to rest in the second half of the 20th century.

Example 9

Maestoso

The *Fantasia for Organ* by Neely Bruce received its first performance at the Eastman School of Music, March 9, 1961. It had been composed during February of the same year.

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Lutheran Church Music for Hungry Americans

Hans Rosenwald

In music an enormous amount of compositions and a great deal of musical materials have been arranged for and now are available to “music-hungry Americans.” Much of it emanates from Europe, and in the fields of Lutheran church music, from Germany. Lutheran church music has become an extremely exportable item as far as the German publishers and record manufacturers are concerned. This interest in Lutheran church music is only part of a general interest Americans have shown in music, and in the last three decades particularly in the music of the baroque and preclassical eras.

Many barriers exist between Lutheran church music since the Reformation and the time of Johann Sebastian Bach and that of our present 20th century. Our world has become totally different — not only all our artistic, our intellectual habits and expressions have changed, but also many of our spiritual and religious habits and expressions.

Conspicuous and natural ties have always existed between the tradition and heritage of the Lutheran Church abroad and the music making within the worship service and in the homes of Lutherans over here. The best known is the chorale and the music of Bach. The way in which Bach and his music were remembered and his work was cultivated in the United States is, with all its ups and downs, symbolic. From the Clarence Eddys and Wilhelm Middelschultes to E. Power Biggs and his Sunday morning recitals; to the appearances of distinguished organists from abroad, such as Dupré and Bonnet, we have an essential phase of Bach and church music in the American milieu. Of these older monuments erected to Bach in this country, that provided by the Bethlehem Festival is perhaps the most noteworthy. Still another facet of this appreciation of church music and Bach is reflected in the repertory of our large American Symphony orchestras and in the choral groups such as Hugh Ross’s Schola Cantorum, the Robert Shaw Chorale, and the Saint Olaf Choir. Only a decade or so ago new adventures were entered upon with the radio performances by Alfred Wallenstein of Bach and other Lutheran church music. And then there still is the Bach Aria Group under the direction of William Scheide.

It is not mere coincidence that the 20th-century restoration of Lutheran church music commenced with the revival of Bach. However, this is only a repetition of events because the same revival of Bach had brought about that same restoration of much, if not of all, Protestant music in Europe in the 19th century. During the romantic period the old staunch centers of Protestant church music, Saxony, Prussia, and Württemberg, became more and more troubled over the function of music in the divine service. They became aware of the great contrast between Pietism, which wanted to be “spiritual” and possibly was more sensitive than the older orthodoxy, and orthodoxy itself. Attempts at giving musical distinction to holy worship failed. When it became practically hopeless, Bach began to be recognized as the last great cultivator of religious music in our sense. The state of contemporary religious music had fallen into a much-discussed state of decay. Lack of unity instead of the traditional order of worship was common, and it took some time until ecclesiastical and music life were renewed and revived. Once they were revived, the greatness of Bach established itself firmly. In America, too, Bach was regarded as the one composer who gave impetus to a new awareness in Protestant church music. And with this came a rediscovery of other musicians from the time of the Reformation to Bach and the unearthing of a vast repertory of Lutheran church music.

I submit that the wakening interest in music since the Reformation and up to Bach’s death on the part of Americans is to a large extent traceable to the arrival here of *émigrés* from Nazidom in the middle of the

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thirties. The *émigrés* were either “practical” musicians or scholars, but primarily they were “humanistically” educated and had acquired their background of learning from European universities. Whereas at that time in the early thirties very little consideration was given to music in the liberal-arts educational program of American colleges and universities, now in most colleges and universities of America music is granted a status that equals that of literature for its intellectual as well as for its expressive values.

To bring about a change such as this within a short quarter of a century, there had to be a great deal of controversy and there still is. These controversies have not jeopardized general progress, but have focused attention on the issues of music and on what it means in our daily life. Now in 1961 we offer a pretty well-balanced musical education in this country, which in many ways excels that of other civilized countries. Practical music serves more and more as a means of approach to the literature and to aesthetic values as such, and it is continually scrutinized in formal courses.

In this growing interrelationship of practical and academic music, the entire realm of Lutheran church music played a role of which Lutherans are not always conscious. The evidence is in the surge of interest in the so-called monumental works, in the *Monumenta and Documenta Musicologica*. The reissues of the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Oesterreich* and the *Denkmäler, Deutscher Tonkunst* has been most gratifying. On the other hand, there have been the *Bärenreiter* and other editions of Rhau, Sweelinck, Scheidt, Schein, Buxtehude, Schütz, and many others. What is more significant is that the younger generation actually uses this material.

Another important fact — very important, sociologically speaking — is the interest of musical amateurs in works originally conceived for the church. We think of the wonderful influence of Mr. Henry S. Drinker of Philadelphia who, singing Bach for Bach’s sake with a group of friends, eventually published Bach’s vocal works in his own excellent translations and, in doing so, established the Association of American Choruses, permitting members to rent any number of copies needed at a nominal figure.

Another phase we should consider is that of recordings and their American collectors. Much of this music is performed with exaggerated dynamics, with all sorts of improper effects, with misshapen phraseologies, with thickened textures, and sometimes they even turn out to be nothing short of involuntary travesties. On the other hand, we are not without the ever-present pedants who insist that because style should be a reality in music, we should no longer concern ourselves with any old music as long as it is not played on old instruments. Again we must remember that it is the spiritual value which matters in the end. I said at one time in the *Little Bach Book* published by the Valparaiso University Press, “The playing of Bach’s piano works cannot be made dependent upon the number of harpsichords or clavichords available, and to insist, as some scholars do, on the exclusive use of reconstructed instruments seems questionable counsel even in Europe and more so in this country.” I think that in the 11 years that have gone by I have not changed my opinion a bit. We must do the best we can do under the circumstances surrounding *our* life.

Singing and music making cannot be replaced with anything. The direct experience which it communicates is not communicable through broadcasting or through recording. Because of that, the youth movement often has opposed canned music altogether. We should not bemoan the fact and see in the canned music our competition and an enemy. Interpretation is all-important. The record gives us the possibility to record *authentic* interpretation. This is a benefit attendant not only to old music but

with respect to contemporary music, which frequently can be recorded under the very guidance of the composer.

Perhaps even more gratifying is that Lutheran church music of today, seen as a movement, has not confined itself to the revival and rediscovery of the old, but has groomed, at least in Germany, its own remarkable composers. These composers have been inspired by their work for the church and have given us excellent and in part truly outstanding music. I am thinking of Hugo Distler, Ernst Pepping, Siegfried Reda, and others, who serve best as witnesses to the fact that a powerful Lutheran church music of today is certainly on its way. Their great work is a testimony to the fact that the tide of faith is running strong again and that unbelief is beginning to ebb. Surely we do not need music to *believe*, but we have come to recognize that the music of the past and of today has been able to tell us about God and our Savior in a language which brings us nearer to faith and contributes to our better understanding of the eternal spiritual values of the world, of love, of trust, and of hope. That they do so is no coincidence with respect to the old masters. Music and faith to most of them were inseparable.

Let us remember — and I am saying this not to close on a timely note, but out of deep conviction — that no matter how beautifully we render Lutheran music of the past, we shall kill its spirit in today's world if we fail to keep alive that which is equally important: the way of life fostered by our American ancestors. We must uphold our arts as a basis of democracy. We need to preserve our democracy, the heritage that has been handed on to us from our forefathers and that we in turn are obliged to pass on to our children.

New York City, N. Y.

*Performance Practice of Bach's Music**

Wilhelm Ehmann

*This is a brief summary of a demonstration lecture. Dr. Ehmann was assisted by the singers and instrumentalists of the Westfalian *Kantorei*. See recordings, Cantate 641203 and 641206, Darmstadt, Tonkunst-Verlag.

A. The Chorale, Note Against Note, a Harmonic Setting1. *Vocal*

In our discussion the motets will receive primary attention. Here the problems of performance practice are still the greatest. We are all acquainted with the motet *Jesu, meine Freude*. The a cappella rendition is familiar and dear to us. This art of a cappella performance stems from the early 19th century, out of the period of the Bach renaissance, and not from Bach's own time. The bearer of music culture in the 19th century was the mixed chorus. Through this mixed chorus of the 19th century the forgotten works of Bach again became known to us. Up to the present time we are accustomed to hearing his motets in this manner. This is not wrong, but it should not be the only manner of their performance. Further musicological research, new sound possibilities, and added choral organizations point to new ways.

2. *Vocal and General Bass (basso continuo—thorough bass)*

A noted musicologist has called the period from Schütz to Bach the general-bass or the thorough-bass period. The thorough bass belongs to the nature of that age; it is the support of this music and gives it its symbolic meaning. The 16-foot bass belongs to it. Without it there are numerous false harmonies when the tenor goes below the bass. In the motet *Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden* Bach himself provided a thorough bass.

3. *Vocal and Thorough Bass and Strings*

In most of Bach's cantatas, in which similar movements occur as in the motets, the vocal parts are supported by strings. Johann Gottfried Walther, a cousin and contemporary of Bach, says in his lexicon that the definition of "a cappella" includes both singers and instruments. The pregnant phrases of the voices demand an instrumental precision.

4. *Vocal and Thorough Bass and Strings and Cantus Firmus of Wind Instruments*

The *cantus firmus* is a musical symbol. It is the bearer of the Word of God. Thus it is more often reinforced by a wind instrument in the cantatas of Bach. The brass instruments, since the Old Testament, likewise stood for a musical symbol, namely, the voice of God. The melodic symbol is supported by the instrumental symbol. The addition of a wind instrument is also desirable for stylistic reasons. It is important to hear the *cantus firmus* in a special way. Such a type of movement was designated by musicology as a contrasting movement (*Spaltsatz*).

These four possibilities with numerous variations serve fundamentally for all compositions of this type in the 17th and 18th centuries and also for other types of that time.

B. Soloists in Bach's Music

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Out of the before-mentioned development of the 19th century we are accustomed to have the choir consist of lay people interested in music but without special musical training, sing the choral movements from cantatas and oratorios. In between the professional soloists make their appearance, singing the arias. The voluntary choir and the professional soloists are apart from each other. This was not the case from the Middle Ages to Bach's time. The soloists were leading members of the *Kantorei*. Schütz divides his choir into *Favoriten* and *Cappellisten*, Bach into *Concertisten* and *Ripienisten*. The *Favoriten* and *Concertisten* are the soloists. We would like to point out several responsibilities of the soloists in the works of Bach without going into the arias, which are also known to us.

1. *The soloists are leaders of their sections.*

Pretorius calls them the *essentia totius cantilena*.

2. *The solo ensemble can sing the sections marked "piano" or the middle sections from oratorio and cantata movements, which are sparsely orchestrated or not orchestrated at all.*

For an example, I refer you to the first and last movements of the *St. John Passion* of Bach. Arthur Mendel, an American musicologist, also mentions this type of performance. In this way the vocal section of Bach's works becomes a vocal *concerto grosso*, as we have had in the instrumental field for a long time. As an illustration you will hear the second section from the motet *Jesu, meine Freude*. Here the solo ensemble will take over the portions marked "piano."

3. *Fugal Exposition.*

The exposition of many Bach fugues are performed by the singers with thorough bass, but without orchestra. After the exposition the orchestra joins in with the *tutti* section. In any cantata, especially in the earlier ones, Bach designated these vocal parts of the exposition as "*solo*." Not until the orchestra enters does he also write *tutti* for the choir. In this way the fugue contains a distinct baroque buildup. The example is the last movement of *Singet dem Herrn*.

4. *Entire movements are performed by soloists.*

Many movements of Bach's works are better suited for a solo ensemble than for a mass chorus. In his memorandum to the Leipzig Council in 1730 Bach requires three singers for each part, in order to have at least two in the event that one of them is sick, a *Concertist* and a *Ripienist*. The more expressive movements are especially well suited for a solo ensemble. Example: "Gute Nacht, o Wesen" from the motet *Jesu, meine Freude*. In a rendition by soloists it becomes a chorale concerto on a *cantus firmus* in the sense of the baroque.

5. *In a double chorus the solo ensemble can take over one of the choruses.*

In the previously mentioned memorandum to the Council of the city of Leipzig, Bach speaks of *Concertisten* in connection with double choruses. Example: "Wie sich ein Vater erbarmet" from the motet *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*. The second choir is a choral *cantus firmus* setting and should be performed in an objective *tutti* manner. The first choir was designated by Bach as "Aria." The parts are expressive and freely interpreted. It is an ensemble aria with continuo.

C. The Performance of a Double Chorus

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The double chorus dates back to the end of the 16th century (Italy). It is a concerto for two choirs with typical baroque characteristics. In the motets of Bach it plays a still greater role.

1. *Vocal performance is possible.*

Example: "Lobet den Herrn in seinen Taten," the third movement from the motet *Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*.

2. *Here also an employment of the thorough bass is desirable.*

The reasons are the same. Bach himself had portable organs which he took along for musicals into the homes of the citizens and for serenades in the street. One could assign *abasso continuo* instrument to each choir and perhaps have a *positiv* play against a *cembalo*; or one *continuo* instrument for both choirs. The 16-foot bass is again important. We can play the same example with thorough bass.

3. *The one choir will be colored with strings, the other with wind instruments.*

This procedure was a common one also in the age of Gabrieli and Heinrich Schütz. In the motet *Der Geist hilft unsrer Schwachheit auf* (*The Spirit Also Helpeth Us*) Bach, in his own handwriting, himself assigned strings to the one choir and wind instruments to the other.

Bach orchestrated a double-choir motet of Palestrina in the same manner. That in several motets we do not find instrumental parts may be because most of the motets were written for funeral services in the *Thomaskirche*. Here instruments were forbidden at church funeral services. When Bach performed the same work upon another occasion, he naturally used instruments. Instruments could also be used *ad libitum* in the motets according to European tradition. The instruments of one choir should be of a specific kind. The instruments with the second choir must be of a contrasting nature. Here also the principle of contrast is important.

Herford, Westphalia
Germany

*A Philosophy of Lutheran Church Music**

Theo. Hoelty-Nickel

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The use of the term “philosophy” in an investigation of the reason for the existence of an act or custom among people is valid only if we understand the term in quite nonphilosophical language: “How do they get that way?” in the sense of the boy taking apart a clock to see what makes it tick. To go into the discussion of a philosophy of Lutheran church music thoroughly—and it has to our knowledge not been done—would mean to investigate the whole realm of theology and music with special reference to Lutheran theology. The problems connected with such an investigation would be many and perhaps would at some point lead to a conjoining of music and theology in the question: Why sing in church?

We can readily see that the theme does not put the emphasis on philosophy, for then theology would take a back seat. It is not a question therefore of philosophy or theology, nor a question of aesthetics or ethics (and we do still in Christian circles differentiate between the two), but it is rather a question that asks in a very realistic way: When and why can we call music used in worship “Lutheran music” or music suited for the worship of a Lutheran, or more significantly, of a Christian congregation? The answer will not be a prescription of certain types or modes but rather a challenge to responsible and knowing men within the area of the church to recognize the proper blend of philosophy and ethics necessary to produce or use such music as is the proper aesthetic expression of the Christian faith.

Certainly the matter has been discussed in Europe and in our own country, in Europe evidently more than here, and such discussion has been among men who were particularly interested both as theologians and as musicians. The Luther research of the past few years has also touched upon the Reformer’s direct and indirect contribution to the music of the church. No one has questioned Luther’s intense love of music, and no one has expressed any doubts as to his training and proficiency in music. His training was no doubt equal to, if not better than, that received by candidates for the Master’s degree in music at most of our colleges and universities today. Luther scholars are, however, still endeavoring to interpret the implications of Luther’s musical philosophy. Was he a product of the Middle Ages, which saw the climax of the *cantus firmus* technique of the Netherland School? The manner in which he solved the problem of placing his texts under a melody, and the manner in which he approached a musical expression, seem to indicate this. The great cantor Johann Walther, Luther’s friend and collaborator, admiring Luther’s ability to combine text and melody in a most artistic manner, said: “As among other things it can be seen from the German Sanctus (‘Isaiah, Prophet, Seer of Old’) how masterfully and well he arranged the notes to the text, that I at the time felt obliged to ask his reverence from what or from where he had this piece or this instruction, Whereupon the good man laughed at my simplicity and said, ‘The poet Vergil taught me these things.’”^[1]

Luther’s mind was never static, nor did he have a closed mind against new ideas or interpretations in music. He knew quite a number of prominent musicians of his day, among them Senfl, of whom it has been said that he was a “king of music,” who could demonstrate musical effects. There were also Heinrich Finck, Pierre de la Rue, and Josquin des Pres, and of course Walther. Of Josquin Luther said: “Josquin is a master of the notes; his music flows evenly and is not forced, not according to rules, like that of Finck.” Luther here praises the genius of Josquin, and this does not seem to fit into the pattern of the philosophy of music based on medieval concepts. The artistic *ingenium* (genius) is a discovery of humanism and lies far afield from the thought processes of the Middle Ages. The humanist Henricus Glareanus, one of the first theoreticians of *themusica reservata*,^[2] published his *Dodekachordon* in 1547,

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a year after Luther's death. It actually belongs, according to its contents, to the year 1510 and is thus contemporary with both Luther and Josquin. Almost exclusively did he take Josquin's compositions as a material basis for his theories, neglecting altogether the contemporary Italian music. According to Glarean, a work of art requires two prerequisites: *ars* and *ingenium*. *Ars* he interprets as the laws and rules of music that can be taught and learned. *Ingenium* to him means the original and creative impulse of the musician, which is purely a gift. Where *ars* and *ingenium* meet in the process of composing, there will necessarily ensue a perfect work of art. *Ars* alone is not sufficient, and *ingenium* alone is despicable, since it places itself above all musical order, and by denying the validity of the *ars* draws music into impossible subjective situations. (Music must always be a manifestation of objective situations to be found in the *ars musica*.) Therefore the *ingenium* must accept the *ars* as the criterion of its creative process, and it must respect the objective limits dictated by the rules and regulations of the *ars*.

What Glarean means when he speaks of art and genius, Luther also means when he names Josquin a master of the notes. The other "songmasters" like Finck and la Rue are musicians with great *ars*—skill, but without the corresponding *ingenium*. In one of his sermons Luther once expressed the wish that during the singing of the Credo in the liturgy all should kneel at the words "et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est." It is clear that Luther here expresses the desire that the music should in a special manner interpret the text and bring it home to the congregation.

Luther was not interested in contemporary musical developments. Had he chosen music as a career, he no doubt would have ranked with the great musicians of his time. He had a much more important work to do. And yet, because of his remarkable gift of music, supported by excellent training in both theory and applied music, and especially because of his great love of music, which remained with him all his life, he used this special—you might say this additional—gift of God for the purpose of implementing his work, preaching the Gospel through his hymns, and finding an honored place for music in the liturgy of the church. "Die Noten machen den Text lebendig," he said, and "Sic Deus praedicavit Evangelium etiam per musicam," and again, "Demnach habe ich auch . . . etliche geistliche Lieder zusammengebracht, das heilige Evangelion zu treiben und in Schwang zu bringen" (1524); "dass es andere auch hoeren und herzukommen" (1545).

Thus Luther's musical philosophy must be interpreted on the basis of his theology, and if we wish to arrive at a definition of a Lutheran philosophy of church music, we must seek first of all its theological basis. The problem therefore is the problem of musicians who are theologically concerned, and of men who are theologically trained and musically interested. That is why it is not idle talk to demand a philosophy of Lutheran church music. It is rather a necessity in an area in which either the untheological or unmusical man is liable to set up a musical program for the church—for one reason or another—but without a good foundation in one or the other of the aspects which must be considered together

We do not propose to undertake an analysis of Luther's development in this respect. He showed a more theological evaluation of music later in life and a more philosophical view in younger years. Our contribution may be of value to all who seek to find answers for the music of worship if our answer lays foundations from which, provided they be firm enough and high enough, a man can see into distant fields, high over the clouds of man's secular industriousness, and yet not get dizzy or lose the feeling of the solidity of the foundation he stands on.

To get back to a previous question: Why do we use music in worship? Is it an inherent characteristic of music or theology that leads them together? Is the spoken Word of God insufficient? Is the praise of God

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spoken in words of man deficient without song? Must we add music? Should we avoid music in worship? Or does music possibly constitute a worship complete in itself, needing no words? All these questions might seem superfluous and unreal since our music is traditionally a part of the congregation's worship. But we know that there have been and will be people who say that music can only interfere with the Word of God. Music, they affirm, plays on the emotions of man, expresses passions and moods of men, and can have no power to add to God's Spirit, who speaks through the Word. We know that both Calvin and Zwingli, as Soehngen puts it, "are not only far removed from a medieval understanding of the cosmological-theological relevance of music, but positively reject that position. Music is for them, it is true, still a gift of God, but it remains a worldly thing" Calvin would classify music on the same plane as other inventions, as, for example, gunpowder, as accomplishments of Cain. We may have a different attitude to music, but why?

Again we might say that other people, deeply religious people, would consider music without the Word of God a perfectly good way of worship. If we think this attitude extreme, let us remember that our choral preludes are only by implication connected with the Word of God. To what degree can music without the Word be worship, whether it is worship-connected or not? In considering these two extreme possibilities of relation between the Word and music we will naturally admit that worship without music, that is, with only the spoken Word, is possible; whereas the opposite is hardly possible: there can be no worship in the proper sense without the Word.

The area between the two possibilities is the battleground where men shoot with opinions and experiments. The fact that music is almost invariably a part of our worship services ought not be based merely on apostolic word and sanction but must have theological, yea, also philosophical reasons. May we now bring of both theology and philosophy enough to enable us to evaluate the place of music in the worship in order that we may form judgment as to the kind of music that should be used in the Lutheran worship services?

What is music? Not only sound, not only movement, not only rhythm, not only pitch, not just a change of all these in various combinations and varieties. We have samples of music, so called, that would qualify for all and sundry aspects. What the common man misses in these and the expert decries in such noise is "order." What the philosophers since Plato have said about music is that it is order, in fact, part of a divine or created order. Plato's interest is ethical and pedagogical. The order of the cosmos is reflected in the music. The Pythagorean concept of number is found in Plato's concept of music as order. This aspect of music certainly is generally appreciated even today. There is an interesting line which can be drawn from Plato or Pythagoras to modern physicists who find a cosmic formula in numbers. Even the atheist Russell said that if there were a God, he would be a mathematician. Soehngen asserts that a modern scientist, Heisenberg, has found a mathematical "Weltformel." We would say that we can see in the physical laws and in the mathematical or logical rules that govern our creation an order, created by God together with all other ruling laws. Not only "together with" but "integrated into" all the cosmos is the order of numbers and music. Bach knew it and expressed it both in his almost supernatural application of the order of music and in his application of a hidden number code in his works.

But music has another aspect, that of movement, sometimes called liberty. Music has a freedom that makes it what it is. The art of painting, until recently, has been tied to orders and rules that bind it to objects. Modern art has tried to liberate itself from certain laws and thereby from the object. The abstract type of art has its place, for no artist can be bound rigidly to the representation of an object.

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However, in our opinion the artist who moves too far from his object becomes an outlaw. (He may do what he pleases in his own bailiwick, but must not expect to exhibit his personal type of excrement to the public for appreciation.)

Music more than any other art is free from imitation of nature or of objects in nature. Music is expression, not representations. We are not in the habit of calling the rumbling of the drums which simulates thunder, music. The sound effects of the radio are not music, because they are representations and not free expressions. (This has implications for the relation of word and tone, to be noted later.) In this freedom, music is more able to “be” nature or be “like” nature than any other art. Thus music becomes creative in a greater sense than any other art. This we believe is true because in its essence music combines the best aspects of order “and” freedom. It is beyond me at present to say whether music is therefore necessarily best suited to express the essence of Lutheran theology of Law and Gospel. Yet music does present to man the possibility, in this fallen creation, of acting as if there were no damning law but only good rules, happily to be accepted by man as part of the order given by a gracious Creator for man’s enjoyment.

“Play” (*Spiel*) has occupied the thoughts of modern philosophers. Schlink, for example, quoting from Huizinga’s *Homo ludens*, says that play is not life but an abandonment of life. Play has rules that bind, to be sure, but only to serve the possibility of playing, just as laws serve liberty. The rules make it ethically possible to play. Music shares this character of “playing.” We know how the expression “playing” is connected with the concept of music, at least in the English language. To play is to accept certain rules for the sake of play. These rules are accepted and followed in playing in all forms of sport for the sake of playing, that is, for the very sake of enjoying freely a sport which would be impossible without rules. Playing brings a world of ordered freedom into a disordered world. Playing creates an artificial paradise.

So music, too, must bow to rules. Wherever all rules are abandoned for the sake of liberty for the individual, art ends in dissolution. Plato thought so seriously of this that he wanted certain modes elevated to laws and called for the prohibition of others. It is worth noting that the church to a great extent followed Plato in this regard; or perhaps better, here Plato was found to be in agreement with the Scriptural principle followed by the church. We have many examples of the praise of God by music as well as by the works of creation in the Psalms and other parts of the Old Testament. Luther in one of his Table Talks said, “Grammatica, musica conservatores rerum.” He found in “order” the law that held all things together and considered grammar and music examples, if not the evidence, of such order.

As Christians, and particularly as Lutheran Christians, we have more to add to these ideas, for we see with eyes enlightened by the Spirit of God. We see order in God’s creation, but we see better still the order God has imposed on man for man’s benefit. God made man in His image; that meant, God gave man a responsibility which is literally the ability to be answerable to God. God would expect man to understand His will and appreciate His wisdom. Heavenly harmony was the beginning of man’s existence. But we know that man “fell,” in the fullest and most tragic sense of the word, for the lie of Satan that doubted the order of God. Ever since, law and order have irked man. Now the law becomes man’s persecutor and prosecutor. No more can we equate cosmic order and the law of God. The law of God does not fit man into the harmony of creation, but rather puts man in his place as opposing God’s will and order. A Christian recognizes this in his own life and looks for the final redemption from all evil as the day when he will be in the glory of new existence with God, in perfect order and in harmony with the new heaven and the new earth.

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But what of the element of liberty in music? Here, too, the Christian may have more than any other man; all men have felt the treadmill of the cycle of night and day, life and death, work and play, summer and winter; but the reason they have known life as the labor of Sisyphus is that it has been labor and sorrow and disappointment without the real freedom from the fear of death to which all men during their lifetime are subjected. All men yearn to be free. All want freedom from guilt. And men seek this freedom in many ways. The Christian has found it in the Gospel, in the forgiveness of sins, in the redemption through Christ and His payment for all guilt. Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is life and salvation. We are made free if the Son makes us free.

Just here is the point at which music recommends itself to the believer as the medium for worship in connection with the Word. Christian liberty, or, if you will, freedom, accepts the order of this world, the laws and the law of God as blessings, as a possibility of a joyous existence. If we draw the picture of Paradise, then let it be that kind of place, world, and life, incomprehensible to us now, in which order and law are the liberty which makes us free to play and sing unto the Lord. Here, we may say, God sets up for us rules for playing, and we enjoy this playing according to the rules, for without rules there is no playing. In Paradise our existence is in the full agreement and harmony with the will of God. Then we, like Christ in His day, have that food, that meat that keeps us happy. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me."

The life of the Christian in this world is a life between freedom and order. Both must be a part of his life. Without order no freedom, without freedom no order. Translate that into Luther's theology, and we will find that it coincides very clearly with his statement and confession of the Christian as saint and sinner at the same time: "simul iustus et peccator." Man, even the believer, is totally a sinner. The forgiveness makes him totally a saint in the eyes of God. Neither one nor the other permits of a mixture, so that a Christian is not a cross between the two, partaking of both characteristics.

Rather, a believer has full forgiveness before God in Christ. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Yet at the same time there is no grain of false modesty in the believer's confession that he is a poor, miserable sinner. This mystery of our existence must be believed. It cannot be solved or doubted, nor can it be explained. It is of the worship of such men, of such a congregation, that we speak, and here we may say, both analogically and paradoxically, the essence of music meets the essence of the man in Christ. Law and Gospel, saint and sinner. Freedom and order can begin to be a part of worship. No more does music violate religion if it is used and appreciated under that philosophy, if we may call it a philosophy. So the Christian cannot say no to music in Christian worship. Even when music has been misused too often in the world and its practices, music still is to be used in worship.

We may ask, "Can we sing and play under the cross?" Is there an art that can survive the crushing wrath of God as evidenced at the cross of Christ? Is there a song that was sung on Good Friday 1,900 and more years ago? Did Christ leave us music or poetry? These questions are not facetious. They must be faced and are always faced when we ask about the music for the liturgy or for worship. How may we sing "Beautiful Savior" in view of Him who had no form or beauty? But Christ did sing, even on the night in which He was betrayed.

The church has always sung in the presence of the cross. Paul asks us to do our "teaching and admonishing" in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). It seems needless effort to list the passages of Scripture where song and music are mentioned as means of thanksgiving, confession, or praise. Not all of worship is proclamation. Martin

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Luther would call attention to the fact, indeed, that all confession is proclamation and praise of God, and that no believer confesses, that is, speaks of his faith, without praise of God and proclamation of His name. To differentiate between passages where *keryssein* (proclaim) is used and those indicating other aspects of worship or the use of God's name is unnecessary for our purposes. Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19 are not special instances in which teaching and admonishing are separated from preaching or confessing. A Christian is a preacher precisely when he uses the name of God. After all, the sermon of the preacher is the sermon of the congregation, and the hymns of the congregation are the expression and often the sum of the sermon's message, especially if the hymns are chosen and used properly.

There are still two considerations regarding the church's worship and its music. On the one hand, the death of Christ caused the church to regulate its life in an imitation of Christ. It was said, He suffered; we, too, must suffer much tribulation to enter the kingdom of God. He had no place where to lay His head; men, too, ought to consider poverty a virtue. He was not married; how could a serious servant of Christ be married? He did not dance or make music; how can a serious Christian dance and make music? On such ascetic considerations some Christians have based their attitude toward music in the church. For them, music has to be heavy and sad.

But the church also has in its history another and a better attitude toward music. Since Christ died that we should live, why should not the tremendous change also invade all aspects of the Christian life? He wept that we might laugh. He was sad that we might have His happiness. That does not mean that we know no more suffering, cross, or trial; it means that we are free from the curse of the Law and fear of death and hell. Why should we not sing, even in the face of death—even at funerals and at the graveside? The character of Christian music is to be determined by the Law and the Gospel and by the sinner-and-saint concept of the individual Christian. Free from the Law, we serve God in glad obedience of faith. Free to use all and everything, we choose and decide in love toward God and man. The regenerated creature of God is born to a new and different existence; he is born into a better wisdom than that of the world. We need not expect any applause from the world that must hate us as it hated Christ; but the world should also learn to envy us our peace and hope, our firmness of purpose, and our ability to choose that which is good and adequate.

In the sense of the redemption from sin and for eternal perfection, our music should be of the kind which bespeaks and gives a foretaste of that transformation which is to take place in eternity and which has already taken place in our hearts by the miracle of faith. It cannot be a true beginning of that new world, but it can express our hopes of it. It cannot be the beginning, for our music in its laws and its freedom is yet a part of the creation which is subject to vanity because of the fall of man. No picture of heaven will tell us what it is like, only how much beyond our expectations; and no chord, ever so quickly lost, can actually bring down the heavenly Jerusalem or sound the song of the angels.

Our music is a gift of God, and it can be an echo to God's Word, an answer of our believing hearts, and a confession of our consecrated lips. In this sense we should find in music for worship the challenge to bring the best and purest of all as an offering of thanksgiving. May we say, quite incidentally, that in God's Word we are not told that heaven will have sculptors, painters, engineers, scientists, physicists, or even theologians; but it is very evident that there will be music—and therefore surely musicians—in heaven!

These are some aspects familiar to all Lutherans who are conscious of the message that Luther brought forth again in Christendom. The great truths of our faith ought to be presented in a confession of song

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and music, not only in worship but also in our daily life. Seeing the world clearly for what it is and knowing of the salvation for this world, every believing musician and artist should regard himself the salt of the earth, also musically speaking. A major part of our philosophy should therefore be that we break out of the artificial limit set for us in what is called music for worship and create a Lutheran music for life, for living in the world and with the world. If we accept the fact of redemption of all and liberty won for all, and if we see clearly what is meant when we are told all things are ours, we will recognize that the music we compose and sing and play belongs to us, but belongs also to God.

Certainly music for worship has a different character from everyday music, but only in degree or spiritual strength. A Sunday religion is no religion, for the relation to God is not switched off and on like a spiritual air conditioning. God is not so available or disposable as the Philistines thought when they took the Ark of God into their temples. We can dot our landscape with beautiful churches and in these churches provide decorations, organs, and music, but these must not be a witness against a people but for their faith and life. We can have beautiful music in our worship, but it must in its difference from secular music not be a witness against life but a testimony of that which is believed and lived, of that which we sing from Monday to Saturday. Let the Lord's day be the high ground of Christian experience as we hear of Him, and then our Sunday music will actually be a singing and playing unto the Lord. The splitting asunder of the religious and secular spheres of lives is the bane also of the Lutheran Church. To ask for proper music for worship would be to demand that we ask first for a proper worship in our lives. So much of the music we reject is unfit for use because it does not truly testify to the glory of God and His church. If we fail to reject music not suitable for Christian nurseries, kindergartens or schools, or any other sphere of life, we cannot expect our Christian congregations to appreciate a solemn, dignified testimony or a joyous expression of their faith according to the "best" liturgical and musical traditions and standards.

Lutheran music, then, does not move out of the reality of life into a realm unreal and mystical. Our people need not be taken into a dimly lit, incense-laden place that is as alien to the living room of their homes as the chant is to the music they hear every hour of the day. It may be that the very contrast reminds them that there is something, but certainly it ought not to be different. Nor is the solution of the problem the one attempted by some unthinking go-getters—bringing the noise and glare of the mardi-gras world into church. The basic principle of order and freedom must be interpreted in the light of the Gospel as freedom for men in this world, though not *of* this world. The cleavage between the world and the believer is clearly shown by Christ who told His followers that men will hate them, as and when they show their affinity to Christ. No true worship can please the world, and no secular music of the type the world loves ought to be beloved of the church. But within this world we as confessors cannot deny the order of creation or the beauty of it. Our music cannot be a denial of the very gift God has given man. Our glorification of God and His Christ need not and must not be confined to music for Lutheran worship. And our music for worship must not begin at a point which has no tangent with the music we would want in our families and in our homes and at our play. Too long has religion been a foreign body in the lives of our people. If the spirit of true Lutheranism will not permeate lives, it cannot be a blessing. We should realize that the Spirit of Christ must permeate our whole life, including our music.

Martin Luther has taught us to recognize in music a gift of God—the *viva vox Evangelii*. It is a gift, in its very essence designated to be used by all that worship in spirit and in truth. Whereas there is no creation of God that cannot be used in praise of God, this creation of God, given particularly to man, is one that by its very nature demands that it be used to proclaim and praise the name of the Redeemer.

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No other art can come so close to illustrating or representing heaven on earth—and I do not mean this mystically. No other gift has hidden in its depths so much of order and liberty combined and is so well suited to the Law and the Gospel concept of Scriptural theology. It is our commission to use it according to its nature and not against it, and it is ours to use in our worship to proclaim the glory of the Lord and Savior. No Christian will deny that it can also be misused, even in worship; yet no musician having accepted Christ as his Savior, and being conscious of the Christian faith implanted in his heart, can refuse to seek to make music in every way a handmaid of religion, a living voice of the Gospel, and thereby also a means of preaching the Word of reconciliation.^[3]

Cited Reference and Notes

1. M. Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. I. (Wittenberg, 1915).
 2. Aesthetics of music as against ethics of music. The word now becomes important in its influence on form, rhythm, melody, and harmony. During the Middle Ages not the “word” but the *numerus* was the constructive principle of music. Cf. Christoph Wetzel, *Studie zur Musikanschauung Luthers in Musik u. Kirche*, Vol. 25, pp. 241 f.
 3. Among the sources and references which the reader might profitably consult are these: M. J. Nauman, “The Character of Christian Worship,” in the *Musical Heritage of the Lutheran Church*, Vol. V, St. Louis, 1959; Walter Blankenburg, “Luther und die Musik,” in *Mitteilungen der Luthergesellschaft*, Heft I, Berlin, 1957; Edmund Schlink, *Zum theologischen Problem der Musik*, Tübingen, 1950; Oscar Söhngen, “Theologische Grundlagen der Kirchenmusik,” in *Leiturgia: Handbuch des evangelischen Gottesdienstes*, Vol. IV, 1961, Kassel; Karl Anton, *Luther und die Musik*, Zwickau, 1928; Walter E. Buszin, “Luther on Music,” in *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1, 1946; Erik Routley, *Church Music and Theology*, Muhlenberg Press, 1959.
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