



as an inaudible and invisible principle (as found in the harmony of the spheres) ‘descends’ from the heavens to the earthly realms of audible praxis.

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EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY SACRED VOCAL MUSIC IN PENNSYLVANIA CULTURE

SCHWENKFELDER LIBRARY AND HERITAGE CENTER, PENNSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA, 20 JUNE 2009

Music in eighteenth-century America, especially of the Pennsylvania German settlements, is often overlooked by scholars. This recent symposium sought to remedy this deficit. The speakers presented on a wide variety of topics to approximately fifty people.

In his keynote address Don Yoder (University of Pennsylvania) discussed ‘Pennsylvania German Hymnody as a Research Field’. Now emeritus professor of religious studies and folklore/folklife, he was a logical choice for the keynote address because of his early fieldwork (the recordings of which are now in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.) and his landmark and still authoritative study *Pennsylvania Spirituals* (Lancaster: Pennsylvania Folklife Society, 1961). Yoder established that there were three types of hymnody used by the Pennsylvania Germans: Biblical psalm settings, hymns and spiritual songs (*geistliche Lieder*). The use of these genres reflected larger trends in American religious thought. Revivalists in the Second Great Awakening in America (early nineteenth century), for example, used spiritual songs or choruses, entirely displacing traditional Reformation-era chorales from many Pennsylvania German churches. The German Reformed Calvinists of Pennsylvania favoured psalm settings, which were always in the front of German Calvinist hymnals, but the importance of the Psalms waned when interest shifted to spiritual songs as a result of revivalism. Extremely helpful were Yoder’s preliminary bibliographical remarks on research tools and major hymnbook collections (including the Daniel Grimminger Collection, the Roughwood Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Mennonite Collection at Goshen, IN, and so forth). This presentation set out the foundations of Pennsylvania German music as a musicological research field and identified the areas in which further research is particularly needed.

In ‘Schwenkfelder Use of the Hymnal of the Bohemian Brethren’, Allen Viehmeyer (Schwenkfelder Museum) took a historical and musicological approach to Moravian hymnody used in Schwenkfelder hymnals from the sixteenth century to the present time. The followers of Caspar Schwenkfelder, a sixteenth-century Anabaptist, used the hymnbooks of the Bohemian Brethren early in their history as a sect and later started to print their own in a limited number of editions. Although approximately one third of the hymns in the 1762 Schwenkfelder hymnal were Moravian in origin, by the middle of the nineteenth century this Moravian core shrank to twelve per cent. Viehmeyer provided a valuable comparison of the 222 hymn tunes in the Wilhelm Schultz tune book (an early nineteenth-century manuscript) with printed editions to reveal variants between imprints and manuscripts. As director of research at the Schwenkfelder Museum, Viehmeyer was able to analyse in detail the handwritten revisions in manuscripts and printed hymnals held in the collection.

My (Daniel Jay Grimminger, Mount Union College) contribution to the symposium was entitled ‘Die Ersten Früchte: The Discovery of Musical Tastes in Southeastern Pennsylvania at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century’. Tune books and chorale books evince a continuum of cultural change (from retention to



adaptation, acculturation and amalgamation) that began in the eighteenth century and continued until the German language and German traditions of Protestant theology were replaced with their English equivalents as late as the 1860s and 1870s. Singing schools served as places where cultural change could be resisted. I started with a Philadelphia tune book printed for a Lutheran singing school in 1778, setting four main criteria for my analysis of tune books: 1) musical notation, 2) the appearance of new English tunes or full retention of chorales from Europe, 3) the content and purpose of tune book introductions (the Prefaces) and 4) voicing (that is, the number of voices and the print layout of these voices). As these key elements of the printed tune books changed to reflect the changing ethnic landscape, Pennsylvania Germans embraced stylistic aspects of European music and the taste of the time, a fact that often gets ignored in musicology and folk music studies. This presentation was the only one to deal with *Kirchenleute* (Lutheran and Reformed) music, while the others handled *Sektenleute* (Anabaptist) topics.

Just before lunch Joel Alderfer (Mennonite Heritage Center) and his Mennonite colleagues sang a selection of unaccompanied Mennonite chorales, though most of them were actually Lutheran chorales that Mennonites had appropriated for their own use after the Reformation (including *Gott sei gelobet, O Gott Vater wir loben dich, Liebster Jesu wir sind hier, Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten*). For each chorale, the ensemble sang at least one verse in Pennsylvania Dutch (*Deutsch*), the dialect spoken by Pennsylvanians of German heritage, and some verses in high German (*Hochdeutsch*) and English.

Brethren hymnody also played a role in the symposium. Hedwig Durnbaugh (Juniata College) spoke on 'The Eighteenth-Century Hymn Tradition of the Descendants of the Schwarzenau Brethren'. She gave a fine explanation of Pietism and hymnody. Brethren hymnody ultimately imitated Pietist hymns of Germany in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As was the case in the Freylinghausen *Gesangbuch* (Halle, 1704), *Das kleine Davidische Psalterspiel* (Christoph Saur, 1744), the first Brethren hymnal in America, put forth hymns and sacred music as a means of spiritual edification. The music for these hymns was higher in pitch, had dance-like time signatures and rhythms and featured odd or large intervallic leaps. Vocal ornamentation was applied from German baroque performance practice.

Conrad Beissel's (1691–1768) Cloister at Ephrata, Pennsylvania had three to five hundred professed members at its height in the 1740s and early 1750s. In 'Ephrata Hymnals as Devotional Guides', Jeff Bach (The Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies) detailed this unique group of mystical Pietists, who lived an austere monastic life shaped by work and prayer. It was here that one of the early presses of the Pennsylvania Colony printed hundreds of texts, including hymnals for this community. Hymn books served as rhetorical guides for leading people to an experience with God. As this union was very intimate, the texts of these books (starting in 1730) were highly erotic in their language. Sexual images were tied to theological ones (for example, virginity was paired with the sacrament of baptism). It is interesting to note that the first Ephrata publication, *Göttliche Liebes und Lobes Gethöne* (1730), was the first hymnal printed in America.

Candace Perry (Schwenkfelder Museum) closed the symposium with 'Singing Schools and School Masters', in which she took a material-culture approach to Schwenkfelder manuscript tune books. While there is no mention of music education in Schwenkfelder *Schul-Bücher*, manuscript tune books akin to the tune books used in Mennonite singing schools do survive, most of them in the Schwenkfelder Museum Collection. Perry speculated on a 'mysterious Hereford township schoolmaster' who might have been a student of the Lutheran Johann Conrad Eyer (a schoolmaster to Mennonites and artist of some important *Fraktur* manuscripts), and possibly the student Andreas Kolb. A document from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century in the Schwenkfelder collection was possibly the most salient piece of Perry's presentation. This document pertained to the formation of an early choral ensemble: it detailed a humble performance practice, confirmed that singing was done in four-part harmony and listed the participants by name. The ensemble's main objective was to provide music for the small worshipping community of Schwenkfelders.

Hymnody and church music in eighteenth-century Pennsylvania is a sorely neglected area of research. The Schwenkfelder symposium began to fill this lacuna in scholarship and knowledge. A volume containing



these essays is planned and, should it come to fruition, will make the findings of these scholars readily available to all.

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NICOLÒ PAGANINI: DIABOLUS IN MUSICA

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‘Paganini-O-Rama’: *Strings Magazine* ran this headline in its July 2009 issue (number 171, page 17) after a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra’s violin section performed all of the Twenty-Four Caprices in a marathon performance in May. The neologism serves just as well to describe this conference. Organized by the Società dei Concerti (La Spezia) and the Centro Studi Opera Omnia Luigi Boccherini (Lucca) in association with Musical Words, <<http://www.musicalwords.it/>>(Cremona), the event drew together scholars and music lovers from across Europe, Russia and the United States to share in a wide variety of perspectives on the diabolical violin virtuoso.

Sessions proceeded more or less in chronological order – leading from precursors of Paganini towards his own time and then to his posthumous legacy – and gave a broad historical overview. They were organized around the following themes: biography, Paganini and violin schools of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, his works, the bravura tradition, the reception of his music and, finally, Paganini and the piano. The presentations, given in English or Italian, reflected a variety of historical and analytical approaches, and each deepened our understanding of some aspect of the violinist.

Many of the papers shed light on Paganini’s historical context as a composer, as a performer and as an Italian musician. One focus was the reception of concerts Paganini gave – in Milan (Matteo Mainardi, Civico Liceo Musicale Malipiero, Varese), in Paris (Rosalba Agresta, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris) and in Poland (Renata Suchowiejko, Uniwersytet Jagiellonski, Krakow). Another was evidence of the strong links of Paganini with violinist Sivori (Flavio Menardi Noguera, Biblioteca Mediateca Finalese), with Ole Bull (Harald Herresthal, Norges Musikkhøgskole, Oslo), with cellist Gaetano Ciandelli and violinist Onorio di Vito (Enrica Donisi, Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata) and with the Polish ‘Paganinis’ Lipinski, Wieniawski, Kontski and Lotto (Renata Suchowiejko). Paganini’s precursors were also discussed: Francesco Zannetti as an important figure in the Italian violin tradition (Gregorio Carraro, Università degli Studi di Padova), Alessandro Rolla’s ‘Solfeggi’, or counterpoint exercises, and their contribution to nineteenth-century violin didactics (Paolo Sullo, Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata), Viotti’s emphasis on vocality over technical virtuosity (Diane Tisdall, King’s College London) and the genealogy of the Neapolitan ‘partenopea’ violin school, including Fiorelli (Antonio Carocchia, Conservatorio S. Giacomantonio di Cosenza). Joseph Gold (Piedmont, California) displayed Paganini’s favourite steel bow and a model replica of Paganini’s right hand – to the delight of all present.

Some speakers gave detailed musical analyses, pointing out thematic affinities between the concertos of Viotti and Paganini (Tatiana Berford, Novgorod State University Yaroslav the Wise), Paganini’s more extensive use of the chromatic scale as compared to Viotti’s (Philippe Borer, Société Suisse de Pédagogie Musicale), thematic coherence and episodic construction in the first movement of the First Concerto (Rohan H. Stewart-MacDonald, University of Cambridge), the originality of Paganini’s *Caprices* balanced against his borrowings from Locatelli and Nardini (Margherita Canale Degrassi, Conservatorio di Trieste,