The Three Doctrines of the 1933 Methodist Hymn Book.

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In 1933 the Methodist Church in England produced a new Hymn-Book. A version of it was also prepared for use in Australasia and New Zealand which appeared in 1935. Identification with Australia and New Zealand was almost entirely through provision of a supplement of words (Hymn Nos. 985 to 1035). These publications were products of the unification of Methodism that commenced in 1902 (Australia), 1907 (Britain) and concluded in 1932.

The 1933 Hymnal was to all intents and purposes the last publication of its kind compiled and used extensively by the Church for which it was intended. It represented two centuries of stylistic development in a distinctive medium that had its own rules and purposes, a kind of Gebrauchsmusik.

Since John Wesley’s first hymnal of 1737 (compiled in North America) Methodist Hymnody had shown a continuous growth and evolution for almost two centuries. Words and music were selected, adapted, created and tested together. Various original pairings survived and still appeared together in the 1933 book. Sometimes preferred alternate tunes had been found that better suited the symbol and content of the texts, or were superior expressions of the developing ethos of Methodism. A broadly-based but identifiable stylistic trend was established and cultivated over these two centuries. It came to reflect the social preoccupations, doctrines and theology of the Methodist Church.

These hymns also made demands on the performing
skills, and revealed something of the musical tastes of Methodist choirs and congregations. Few other denominations could lay claim to assemblies capable of singing such relatively complicated music (and still call it hymns). Congregations were treated as an extension of the choir and expected to attain remarkably high performance standards.

LUTHERAN CONNECTIONS

For 200 years Methodist hymn writers and compilers remained true to the broader principles of 18th Century techniques, theories and philosophies of music. This was the century of Methodism’s origins. It was also the century that saw a high point in Lutheran sacred music which had taken 200 years to evolve.

We might recall some of Luther’s own pronouncements on music. With one important exception his strong defence of music, and the reasons he gave for it, could well have represented the musical creed of Wesley’s church two centuries later.

“A clergyman who does not sing is no proper clergyman” . . .
“But if you want to have singing in the church, then it should only be in unison for there is but ONE God, ONE belief, ONE song” . . .
“I love music, and those people who condemn it do not impress me, because -
1) it is a gift of God, not of man
2) it makes the soul glad,
3) it drives away the devil,
4) it arouses innocent joy. In all of this, anger, lust and pride vanish. I put music in first place after theology. It originates with the example of David and all the prophets since they have communicated everything in poetry and song.
5) Because music is a token of Peace . . .”

One major difference was that Wesleyans came to strongly encourage congregational part-singing whereas Lutherans saw unison as symbolically appropriate. Nor did Methodists ever achieve that integration of organ and liturgy for which Lutherans became so famous. Methodist music grew out of a mixed English Church and Puritan tradition where the organ was given a distinctly second priority to the human voice.

Methodists inherited no single musical tradition: it would be more accurate to say that they created one out of all the others. Music became a constant concern of their conferences. Contrapuntal congregational singing was already well entrenched with them during the 18th Century. The Conference of 1796 was clear concerning performance standards and issued a sharp edict to their congregations about each group of voices maintaining its proper place in the texture:

“Let the women constantly sing their parts alone. Let no man sing with them unless he understands the notes and sings the bass as it is pricked down in the book.”

Methodism naturally inherited some Anglican traditions of choral part-singing - aided, abetted, and modified by the Welsh and Cornish in particular. While they might have differed with Luther’s preference for congregational singing in unison, they aligned themselves strongly with his other doctrines and practices. This could be seen in their placing about equal
importance on Bible and Chorale or Hymn Book.

“The MHB I soon discovered was to the Methodists what the Book of Common Prayer was to the Anglicans and the Missal to the Romans. It was far better known than the Bible. It was varied, containing almost 1000 hymns from every period of the Church’s life in a spirit of ecumenical abandon. Above all, it had a great many rattling good tunes. And a Preface written in 1779 by the great John Wesley himself for the ancestor of the 1933 MHB”.

The Bible may have been the Word of God (said) but the Methodist Hymn book was the Word of God (sung).

FIRST DOCTRINE: PAUL

In its Preface the 1933 Hymnal commences with the following paragraph. Its first line was frequently quoted in sermons in the years that followed:

METHODISM was born in song. Charles Wesley wrote the first hymns of the Evangelical Revival during the great Whitsuntide of 1738 when his brother and he were “filled with the Spirit”, and from that time onwards the Methodists have never ceased to sing. Their characteristic poet is still Charles Wesley. While for half a century hymns poured continually from his pen on almost every subject within the compass of Christianity, and while no part of the New Testament escaped him, most of all he sang the “gospel according to St. Paul.” He is the poet of the Evangelical faith. In consequence Methodism has always been able to sing its creed.

The fact that the “gospel according to St. Paul” was “sung” is particularly apt. Henry Purcell (1658/1659-1695), among others, occasionally set text from Paul’s letters. His “Bell” Anthem (‘And the Peace of God which passeth all understanding...’) may be cited here. Yet the words of St. Paul, particularly in direct quotation, have generally been ignored by composers and librettists throughout the history of Christian music. The Gospels (in many Passion Settings), Old Testament Subjects (in the Oratorios of Handel for example), and the Book of Revelations have been the preferred sources of literary inspiration to the musicians of the church.

Paul's Epistles were, however, strongly favoured by the Evangelical Revival. This has sometimes been a problem doctrinally. It has always been a problem musically. One solution to this dilemma of Paul and Music is to downgrade music as a priority of the church. In the late-20th Century, music, from once being a major recreational occupation of a hardworking churchgoing class, has now been replaced by other pursuits. Such trends have left church congregations lacking musical skills and literacy. Few churches show much interest in maintaining and developing their traditions. One problem is the lack of available human resources to properly sustain group musical activities such as choirs. This abandonment of established musical traditions by churches coming out of the Evangelical-Pauline tradition produces a slightly ironic situation: it was Paul himself who encouraged Christians to “sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts...”.

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Since music of Evangelical revivalists had to be created and applied to express their doctrines, then it needed to happen in relation to Paul. In connection with Pietism this was clearly one of the great Christian-Cultural achievements of Johann Sebastian Bach and his librettists, particularly in the Cantatas. In connection with Evangelical Revival Hymnody it was the major cultural achievement of Methodism.

This is the first of our three doctrines, the biblical orientation towards Paul. Next came the need to reflect his ethos in the language of Evangelical Revival music.

SECOND DOCTRINE: MUSICAL AFFEKT

Equally interesting is the connection between the techniques of musical composition in the Eighteenth Century, and the evolved style of Methodist Hymnody over the following two centuries. During the era of the Wesleys the musical tools of rhythm, tonality, harmony and counterpoint were regarded as the components of a powerful musical language. There were broader concepts of music known as Affektenlehre and Figurenlehre that these components served. Affektenlehre and Figurenlehre were translated into 18th Century English language as “Doctrine of Affections” and “Doctrine of Figures” respectively.

The New Harvard Dictionary of Music explains the Doctrine of Affections as:

The belief held in the 17th and early 18th Centuries, that the principal aim of music is to arouse the passions or affections (love, hate, joy, anger, fear, etc., conceived as rationalised, discrete and relatively static states). By the later 17th Century, the view also included the notion that a composition (or at least a single movement or major section of a larger work) should have a unity of affection.7

Hymns, especially those that we might term the modern variety, seem to work best, and serve their doctrinal, social and liturgical objectives especially well, when their musical Affections tie in with their poetic sentiments. There is great potential for a symbiotic affiliation behind every act of combining a hymn text with music. The most typical and successful Methodist hymns seem to fall particularly well into this kind of relationship.

Hymns express the passions of love, hate, joy, anger, fear, and a good deal more. They generally exhibit “unity of affection”. This is the second of our three doctrines, the Musical Doctrine of Affections.

THIRD DOCTRINE: SYMBOL AND MUSICAL FIGUR

We may identify Figurenlehre as the third doctrine of Methodist Hymnody. Again the New Harvard Dictionary of Music states it succinctly for us:

Any of various attempts made in the 17th and 18th Centuries to codify music according to classes of musical figures thought to be analogous to the figures of rhetoric.9

Later in this dictionary rhetoric is explained from the point of view of literature, poetry and music:
... in prose and poetry, the codification of verbal strategies that enhance the reception of a text; in music, the conscious, consistent use of patterns and formal arrangements to engender in an audience a sense of aesthetic satisfaction or psychological plausibility that clarifies or heightens the intended effect of a composition or performance.\textsuperscript{10}

Also, in the words of Paul Henry Lang:

\ldots the whole of the Baroque \textit{Affe\kern-.15em ktenlehre} was predicated on [hermeneutics], and all composers of the age attempted to portray words, even ideas, by using musical figures that have a pictorial quality expressible in the very graphic image of the score. But both the term hermeneutics and the notion were borrowed from scriptural exegesis; \ldots \textsuperscript{11}

To associate \textit{Affe\kern-.15em ktenlehre} with Scripture in this way opens a new field in hymnology. It explains the curious, but always undeniably strong links between Western Music and Christian Scripture. It would indeed be strange if Wesleyan Hymns did not exploit such properties as \textit{Figurenlehre} and \textit{Affe\kern-.15em ktenlehre}: they were originally 18th Century creations, mixing scriptural words, images and ideas.

Methodist Hymnody can be seen to have remained under these strong influences for the following two centuries. It will be argued that its success was largely the result of these three \textit{Doctrines} working together and enhancing each other.

HANDEL - MUSICAL \textit{MESSIAH} TO METHODISM

The 18th Century was both the Age of Wesley and the Era of Handel. George Friderick Handel’s music is often held up as a prime example of the use of \textit{Figurenlehre} and \textit{Affe\kern-.15em ktenlehre}\textsuperscript{12}. The influence of his oratorios, particularly \textit{Messiah}, was a major force in the religious culture of his day and in the centuries that followed. It is an exemplary collection of musical \textit{doctrines} that support the theological-literary ideas they are carrying. \textit{Messiah} became part of the staple diet of Methodist choirs and had an enormous cultural influence in these circles. Many Methodist hymns of the more complicated variety have strong affinities with Handelian Oratorio Choruses.

Connections between Methodism and Handel exist. They go well beyond the mere chance of a shared century. One significant association is a claim by Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon who reported that Reverend Martin Madan had become “close” to Handel shortly before the composer’s death. Such a report may well have been coloured by the proselytising ambitions of a zealot; the Countess was a keen Methodist and may have wanted to achieve Handel’s conversion.

But firmer alliances existed. Handel was actually invited to write hymns for the Methodists. He produced three in or about the year 1750. We may also note here that a total of nine of the tunes of the 1933 book are attributed to Handel (compared to only six of Bach, and none of Purcell). Most of these tunes are derived and adapted from Handel Oratorios. Only one of the three specially-commissioned Handelian hymns found its way through to the 1933 book: \textit{Rejoice, the Lord is King!} (\textsc{gopsal}, MHB 247).
In this hymn Handel’s musical setting works well with Charles Wesley’s words. The test of this lies partially in the very durability of their coupling in an environment where only the fittest of such combinations survived. A rising melodic line coupled with the harmonic progression from tonic to subdominant sets a strong and appropriate Affekt for the first word “Rejoice”. The rhythm that follows on the words “is King” is sufficiently martial or regal to be seen as an appropriate Affekt for this concept as well. However it is in the chorus where Figur may best be observed: “Lift up your heart lift up your voice” is set to two rising fourths in a “double-lifting”. Note also the rising bass-line with its assertive rhythm. Handel here foreshadows the importance that rhythm was to have in the evolving Methodist style. These qualities single GOSPAL out from the constant successions of equal quarter-or half-notes of many other 18th Century hymns.

Unity of Affekt is also achieved. One major factor in this is the chorus: it regularly returns with its clear Affekt and Figur “Doctrines”. Methodism certainly developed the use of choruses as a great unifying force in its hymns. “Chorus and People” were as synonymous in Methodist Hymnody as they were in Greek Drama or Bach Passions. These connections sit comfortably in an era that produced one of Western Civilisation's neoclassical revivals.

There are some typical Handelian problems in the word setting for Rejoice, the Lord is King!. English was not Handel's native tongue - notwithstanding that it was his firmly adopted nationality. Here the problems are not altogether his fault for once - Charles Wesley must accept some responsibility for the displaced accents of certain lines: “Jesus the Saviour reigns”, “Mortals give thanks, and sing,”. They remind us of the Hallelujah Chorus from Messiah where a consistent Hallelujah throughout is suddenly reversed for the final Hallelujah! (Fortunately English can accommodate this kind of corruption: other languages do not always fare so well).

We see how the three Doctrines of Text, “Musical Affekt” and “Musical Figur” work together
in *Rejoice, the Lord is King!*, an early and influential Methodist hymn. They contribute to the numinous when enthusiastic Methodists sing it. Clearly such factors are critical to the survival of any given coupling of words and music wherever this is put to cultural and doctrinal test.

**A DEVELOPED LANGUAGE FOR METHODIST HYMNODY**

Over the following two centuries many more examples of text/music symbiosis were to be created, adopted or borrowed from other denominations by the Methodists. The development of a distinctive style in their Hymnody, a preoccupation with making words and tunes work together, and a refining process by which their “Singing Bibles” increasingly reflected their theology, musical tastes and singing skills, had already begun with Handel’s GOPSAL and Charles Wesley’s words.

One famous confluence of successful elements occurs in connection with Handel, a French poet and an English translator. Edmund Louis Budry (1854-1932) wrote *À toi la gloire, O Ressuscité*. Richard Birch Hoyle (1875-1939) translated it as *Thine be the Glory* (*Maccabæus*, MHB 213). These words were set to a melody written by Handel for his Oratorio “Judas Maccabæus”. Their coupling has become immortal in the annals of Hymnody. The *Figur* and *Affekt* which result are most effective. The rhythms of the opening words involve three different note-values, a majestic triumph *Figur*, reminding us of martial drumbeats. “Risen” not only rises, but is embellished in the process with a melismatic touch. Then the identical *Figur* follows, placed one tone higher, and climaxing on the same rhythm and arpeggio fragment as “Glory” (“victory”). This constantly reiterated and strongly characteristic motive develops a most powerful *Affekt*.
Like an all-pervading ostinato this rhythm becomes a unifying force, with “assertive” splitting of its strong first beat, “excited” expression of victorious joy, and subliminal war drum-signal associations. These all interpret and strengthen the meaning of the text. In every performance of the three verses of Thine be the Glory, its characteristic rhythm occurs no less than 18 times (i.e. 6 times in every verse). There is symbolism here, also through association with the original secular words “See the conquering hero comes”. Conquering and victory are the musical Affekt and Figur concepts appropriate to both. The symbiosis of these elements has ensured the place of this hymn in the repertoire of congregations, not least the Methodists. The amazing thing is that it is rarely sung more than once a year, yet completely retains its familiarity in congregational memory. Our three doctrines are clearly working well in this instance.

Another example of a hymn exhibiting both Affektenlehre and Figurenlehre is the opening motive in “Stand up, stand up for Jesus!” (MORNING LIGHT, MHB 821). Here not only the rising fourth of the first two notes, but the “assertion” of the dotted rhythm combine to support and interpret the text.

The second verse, second line, also has “Figur” in the form of a Trumpet-motive that supports the text at this point: “The Trumpet-call obey”. Although this hymn may not be to everybody’s musical or theological taste, it has had ample distribution and use. It served a specific purpose and had a highly-favoured place with the Methodists. Embedded trumpet-motives were also well appreciated by the Salvation Army where it survives in regular use to this day. The point here is that its theological and musical qualities have an evangelistic purpose among the social classes for which it was intended. It works well because musical language and poetic meaning are mutually supportive, its Musical Doctrines of Figur and Affekt tie in with its other doctrinal objectives and therefore communicate them. We will do well to regard such combinations of words and music in connection with mission activity rather than compare them to contemporary high art forms of symphonic or operatic music. Or, for that matter, to the church music of a privileged upper class. That would be to miss the point: this hymn is a symbol and generates the numinous when the conditions of its performance are right.
The point of singing hymns of this kind was missed in 1805. An East Anglian clergyman condemned home hymn-singing, presumably Wesleyan, in the following terms:

The labourer of this class returns from his day’s work nearly exhausted with it; but instead of taking the rest so much wanted, in the chimney corner, he immediately takes his wife and children from the wheel and other useful employments in the house; which is not unfrequently kept up at the expense of fire and candle to an unseasonable hour. I have often heard this singing in some of our poorest cottages at so late an hour as nine, and sometimes later of a winter’s evening.  

Another instance of 18th Century Figurenlehre at work may be found in the chorus to *Low in the grave He lay* (**CHRIST AROSE**, MHB 211). Again we are dealing with trumpet motives, this time also with a clear rising **Figur**, representing resurrection. The connection between Trumpets and the Day of Resurrection is totally biblical and has here been woven into the musical fabric. While the associations might only work subliminally, that is precisely the point of hymnody's communication. (Direct parallels with modern advertising research and practice are the Procrustean bedfellows here). The rising fourth in the alto part subtly supports the **Figur** as do the “military” rhythms, conveyors of assertiveness and symbolisers of a church “Militant and Triumphant”. This was an important part of Methodism’s ethos; indeed a whole section in their 1933 Hymnal was devoted to Militancy. Although *Low in the grave He lay* is a mid-nineteenth century hymn, words and music by Robert Lowry (1826-1899), it still obeys 18th century musical precepts. Its musical and theological doctrines are mutually supportive.

**HYMNS AS ICONS**

Just how well our three “doctrines” work together will

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1 Low in the grave He lay,  
   Jesus, my Saviour;  
   Waiting the coming day,  
   Jesus, my Lord.  

2 Vainly they watch His bed,  
   Jesus, my Saviour;  
   Vainly they soil the dead,  
   Jesus, my Lord.  

3 Death cannot keep his prey,  
   Jesus, my Saviour;  
   He tore the bars away,  
   Jesus, my Lord.
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Robert Lowry, 1826-99.
determine the enduring success of a hymn. A hymn need only be an identifiable “symbol” to succeed, irrespective of its musical qualities. Akin to musical nationalism this identification process can assure very strong acceptance by a particular assembly irrespective of musical merit. This sometimes extends to theological and doctrinal merit as well as musical. National Anthems are good examples of this. Many hymns from other denominations found their way into the 1933 Hymnal and were sung “with feeling” merely as an expression of unity within a broader group of churches. This practice recalls *Figurenlehre*’s “psychological plausibility that clarifies or heightens the intended effect of a composition or performance”.

We find many great hymns of the Lutheran Reformation in the 1933 Methodist Hymnal. No better example of this kind of symbolism exists than what was sometimes described in Methodist circles as the “Battle Hymn of the Reformation”: *A safe stronghold our God is still* (*EIN’ FESTE BURG*, MHB 494).

Apart from Lutheran Chorales there are also Genevan/Scottish Metrical Psalms in this collection. The identification of Methodism with other Reformed Churches is totally logical. The bonds between them were forged and kept alive partly through a shared hymnody. Their kinship as Protestants was greatly strengthened in the process. A similar statement might be essayed about the Puritan movement, but a Methodist congregation, once it decided it was going to be “musical”, tended to orient itself more towards Lutheranism. Puritans were too deeply suspicious of music for Methodists to forge many direct alliances with them. Anyway Methodists sang Paul as well as Psalms, something a decent Puritan would never have dreamed of doing. A sprinkling of “Old ...” (23rd, 44th, 100th, 104th, 112th, 113th, 120th 124th) Psalm tunes may be found in the 1933 Hymnal that attest to these connections. The “Old 112th” is identified in the index as the Lutheran Chorale “Vater Unser”.

The provision of a section of over 80 settings dedicated to “Ancient Hymns, Canticles and Psalms”, pointed and provided with Anglican Chants in the 1933 Hymnal, prompts us to recall similar symbolic and practical links with Anglicanism - the very point of departure for Wesley’s reforms. It was a credit to the Wesleyans that the English Church tradition of pointing and chanting was preserved by them in this way (as is still the case with the 1983 Hymnal). Anglican Chant did not always fare so well in its own environment during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Other Hymns that have symbolic importance of this kind have national, regional or even sociological associations. The Welsh Hymns (*Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah*, *CWM RHONDDA*, MHB615i, *Through the love of God our Saviour*, *AR HYD Y NOS*, MHB 525), or Irish associations (*I bind unto myself today*, *ST. PATRICK*, MHB 392) are notable examples. No doubt the social conscience of Methodism and its efforts on behalf of minority or other special community groups were partly responsible for the folk-song or national-related hymns of this kind that found their way into the 1933 hymnal.

Children were important in the communities to which this Church was dedicated. The human conscience of Methodism ensured that children had their rightful place in the century or so around Dickensian England. There was scriptural endorsement for this: “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs”. It was also acknowledged through the preaching of special children’s “addresses”. A separate Methodist Sunday School Hymn Book was produced - a virtual catechism for the young that conjures up memories of Lutheranism again with its “simple” explanations of doctrines for
children alongside the more complex ones for adults. Johann Sebastian Bach produced a major collection of organ pieces, *Dritter Teil der Klavierübung*, in which hymns of the Lutheran catechism were set in two versions, one “simple” the other “complex”. In its index the 1933 Hymnal places asterisks against the hymns that are suitable for children: nearly 20% of them!

**PERFECTIBILITY OF HYMNS**

In the performance of hymns by a congregation for whom words and music are mutually supportive we may identify links between “Affektenlehre”, “Figurenlehre” and the numinous. The marriage of a specific combination of words with their ideal music can communicate strongly between individuals in a singing assembly. This depends on the way in which our three Doctrines interact with each other. A notion of perfectibility, appropriate to philosophical movements around the Eighteenth Century, is introduced with this process.

We should also observe how performance takes on a special meaning here: in such contexts the dynamic of a group (choir or congregation) allows the individual to surpass what might otherwise be attainable. “Enthusiasm”, an attribute linked to Methodists, also serves well to heighten these situations. Here is true Art at work: a good leader aims at achieving these cathartic experiences. Methodism relied heavily on this kind of leadership, especially from its hymn writers, compilers, youth leaders and choirmasters.

The encouragement of Congregational singing was one of Wesley's prime objectives. It is now, in an age of the individual, possibly the last surviving art-form in which a whole community participates. In any quest for the ideal combination of words and music we are therefore dealing with a long history of strong encouragement to community involvement. The 32 Additional Tunes appended to the 1933 Hymnal stand as testimony to this. A section devoted to “Additional Tunes” is a rare phenomenon indeed in the history of hymnals, and virtually unique to the 1933 book. Its inclusion is proof of the fact that experimentation was encouraged, indeed expected, since no words were printed with these tunes. The “Perfectibility” of ideal tunes matched with ideal words was always an important priority wherever choirs, clergy and interested laymen spoke of music in Methodist circles.

One important by-product of this was that compilers were always adding new tunes - thus keeping their musical interpretations of the Bible “up-to-date”. Luther is often quoted as having said something to the effect that he “did not see why the devil should have all the good tunes”. In all fairness, his successors did not achieve much by way of adding new tunes, sacred or secular, after the consolidation of the 17th and 18th centuries. In this sense Methodism assumed the mantle and projected Lutheran congregational-musical ideals into the 19th and 20th Centuries. The 1933 Hymnal took in new material such as the evangelical styles of the Moody & Sankey or the Alexander hymns. Some Methodist Hymns have strong affinities with Sousa Marches and other quite secular forms. North American cultural achievement of this kind thus received recognition on what was essentially European soil. Luther's principles of turning secular music into sacred were honoured in the process.

**REFINER'S FIRE**

As an example of the variety of choices that allowed continual refining processes of word and text couplings we shall examine Hymn No. 1 “O for a thousand tongues to sing”. This hymn
had particularly strong connections with Methodism. For one thing its words were by Charles Wesley. Its musical and literary symbols generated many numinous experiences. They seemed to combine in near-explosive proportions wherever enthusiastic congregations were gathered in celebration of their Methodist identity. It was no accident that it was chosen as “Number One” in 1933. By then these words had become associated with three musical settings: two 18th Century and one 19th Century.

The first tune, Richmond, was fairly standard in its musical qualities and used freely with other Common Metre words. Indeed it is the set or suggested tune to a total of five hymns in this book (1, 305, 485, 703, 959). It worked well enough, but by 1933 had no exclusive claim of association with “O for a thousand tongues to sing”.

The second tune, Lydia, shows a slightly more adventurous approach and a closer identification with these words. It is the set tune for only three hymns (1, 85, 92).

The third tune is found in the Additional Tunes section (Lyngham, A.T. 8), has no other so closely identified associations, and became most strongly linked with “O for a thousand tongues”.

All three tunes were used at some stage or other. After 1933 which was the most frequently sung? This possibly varied between communities. However, in the experience of the writer, and a number of former Methodists consulted on the matter, Lyngham was eventually the preferred setting both in frequency of use and because of its strength of association with the words. Its Handelian/fugal style is unmistakable. That this hymn had been put through the hoops of “perfectibility” seems axiomatic under the circumstances.

A rising arpeggio in the first line of Richmond (music by T. Hawes, 1734-1820) gives a sensible climax to the word “Thousand”, the focal point of the poetic line and hyperbole of the text. This also works well for the 2nd verse: “Master”, and 5th verse: “Power”. The sequences that bear “The glories of my God and King” also provide a fine effect neatly elaborating the first word “Glories”, then emphasising “King”. In the 2nd verse the words emphasised in this way are: “spread”/“abroad”, 3rd verse: “music”/“ears”, 4th verse: “mournful”/“rejoice”, and 5th verse: “blood”/“clean”.

These associations are little more than coincidental with Richmond: merely what we would expect of any reasonably good combination of words and music in Common Metre.

The second tune, Lydia, (music by T. Phillips, 1735-1807) took hold of some of these aspects and developed them so that the musical doctrines drove the words a little further and increased the hymn's potential for “numinous performance”. Lydia exhibits a greater rhythmic variety, more melismatic passages, and a repeat of the final line of the words structured into its very fabric. This repetition of lines became a strong feature of Methodist Hymnody. It may be compared to other religious practices, such as litanies, but seems to have primarily assumed the function of what might be termed a kind of Mantra in this genre. Lydia was therefore less suited to other Common Metre words and consequently had a stronger identification with “O for a Thousand tongues”. It produced a more “perfect” result than Richmond.

The final setting of this hymn was to the tune Lyngham (Additional Tunes No. 8, Music by
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**Additional Tunes**

LYNGHAM's bass part contains a short melisma at the end of the fifth repetition of the last line. This draws these cumulative, "leading and following" effects to their conclusion through the use of imitation. The word-emphasis of the melisma is again a doctrinally emotive or momentous one and furthermore works perfectly for each verse ("Grace", "name", "peace", "believe", "me", and "man"). Yet even this is really only a precursor to the next melisma that gathers all the parts together. Then a subtle change takes place and the emphasis is given to the second word of the final line rather than the last. This turns out to support favoured cornerstones of Methodist doctrine: "triumphs", "honours", "life", "humble", "blood", "every". 

T. Jarman, 1776-1861). Here the symbols of 18th Century music are called into play with full force. The unmistakable heritage of George Friderick Handel lies in this music, an important element in its success.

With **LYNGHAM** the hyperbole of the word “Thousand” is fully elaborated in its five-note melisma. We note also how the dual repetition of “My great redeemer’s Praise” (or in vs.2: “assist me to proclaim”, vs.3: “that bids our sorrows cease”, vs.4: “New life the dead receive”, vs.5: “He sets the Prisoner free”) is particularly supportive of the Methodist/Pauline ethos. Similarly the word “honours” receives a flourish the second time which intensifies the key word “assist” (vs. 4: “life”, vs.6: “Lamb”).

But it is the sixfold repetition of the last line that clearly focuses this coupling of music with text and sets the doctrinal climax in stone. (Vs.1: “The Triumphs of His Grace”, vs.2: “The honours of Thy name”, vs.3 “Tis life, and health, and peace”, vs.4: “The humble poor believe”, vs.5: “His blood availed for me”, vs.6: “For every soul of man”). Eighteenth century “Figurenlehre” is still fully functional in this nineteenth century setting.

We also find here the musical technique of imitation - one voice-part leading off, another imitating it a moment later. In Eighteenth Century *Figurenlehre* this technique was often used to symbolise “Law and Obedience” or similar concepts. It also conjures up notions of “leaders and followers”, producing a kind of “gathering” effect on a singing assembly. In his settings of the Ten Commandment Chorales J. S. Bach consistently used this musical technique. Nor was Handel any stranger to it. The Messiah chorus “He trusted in God” serves as an example of this musical *Figur* at work, underlining the concepts of “leaders and followers” and “law and obedience” implicit in the idea of trust.
The feeling generated by a good performance of LYNGHAM is totally vital and joyous. This is achieved through the symbiosis of its text with the Affekt and Figur of its music. Broadly considered the choice of a major key also contributes to this, as does the employment of a wide range of note values, from longer half-notes down to eighth-notes as shortest values. The quicker notes and dotted rhythms function as producers of dynamic movement and engines of rhythmic vitality in the setting, supporting the Affekt of joy. A climactic note, top “e”, in the second, seventh and third-last bar of the melody should be noted. It works its way from brief and offbeat (second bar), through longer and still offbeat (seventh bar), to strong first-beat status (third last bar). As such it is part of the general melismatic climax supporting “triumphs”, “honours”, “life”, “humble”, “blood”, and “every”. It functions as doctrinal interpretation through both Affekt and Figur.

Since “O for a thousand tongues” is Common Metre then may we not use LYNGHAM for other Common Metre words? Or other Common Metre tunes for “O for a thousand tongues”? Problems encountered in attempting this provide us with the proof that, even where metre is the same, the three Doctrines may not always work together. Let us apply a test.

Additional Tune Number 6, DIADEM, is normally used with MHB No. 91, “All Hail the power of Jesu's name”. This is another instance of a later tune full of specific and appropriate Affekt and Figur supplanting an earlier tune - our perfectibility syndrome again. DIADEM should scan “O for a thousand tongues” since they are both Common Metre settings. However it emphasises different words, and uses an altogether different scheme for its “Mantra” repeats. It also commences with an upbeat where LYNGHAM commences with a strong beat. This might work poetically/doctrinally for vs, 4, 5 and 6 of “O for a thousand tongues” (or conversely suggest that RICHMOND, LYNGHAM and indeed also LYDIA have a slight problem here).

However it creates a curious emphasis for other verses including our all-important first verse. The notion of Unity of Affection usually has its strongest bonds with the first verse or even first line. It might be said that doctrinally all verses can take the accented first syllable even if poetically 2, 4 & 5 need the accented second. Clearly the beginnings of most verses of “O for a thousand tongues” will work better with the RICHMOND, LYDIA and LYNGHAM than they will with DIADEM.
It is when we arrive at the repeated chords in the lower parts at the end of DIADEM that it totally collapses if used with “O for a thousand tongues”. All is well in the “Crown him” repetitions of “All Hail the power of Jesu’s name”. In “O for a thousand tongues” however, it works with “triumphs” and “honours” in the first two verses, but thereafter fails increasingly on “life, and”, “humble”, “blood a-”, and “every” Although it scans on “every” it brings emphasis to the wrong end of the phrase. It makes a total mockery of “life and” and “blood a-”!

With “humble” we have an interesting problem. Again DIADEM scans, this time being reasonably relevant to the doctrinal emphasis and poetic accent of the line. But here we must remember 18th century Affektenlehre and the expression of music that is using assertive rhythms: there is conflict between the concept of humble and the “assertive” Affekt of:

Thus LYNGHAM works with “O for a thousand tongues” whereas DIADEM works for “All Hail the Power”. They are not exchangeable. Such considerations were central to the perfectibility of Methodist Hymnody. They illustrate the finesse with which it developed the symbiosis between its scriptural and musical doctrines.

18th CENTURY DOCTRINES AND 19th CENTURY LANGUAGE

Another fine example of our three Doctrines working together is found in Fierce raged the tempest o’er the deep (ST. AELRED, MHB 167):

The word-colouration on “fierce-raged” and “deep” is well represented in the two bass runs of the opening three bars. Its minor tonality also reflecting the darker, brooding, aspects of the text. The first two lines of each verse work logically with a minor tonality. Similarly the third lines of the text function neatly with the changing Affekt and Figur as the notes lengthen and the music modulates. Rhythms gradually slow, harmonies relax and transform into long major chords for the final lines. This expresses well the “Calm and still” or “Peace be still” conclusions to three of its four verses.

Here we have nineteenth century musical language, both harmony and rhythm, overlaid with 18th Century musical Doctrine. It is in this hymn's
unusual scheme of commencing in the minor, but concluding in the relative major, that we experience the full power of Affekt. The poet plunges us into turbulence then lifts us out of it four times over in this hymn. The musician provides us with a modulation scheme and rhythmic “slowing” to support the expression of the poet.

The term “expression” rather than “impression” used here hints more at 18th rather than 19th century musical practice. We need to remember that 18th century music “speaks to us”, whereas 19th Century Music “paints pictures”. “Fierce raged the tempest” paints textual pictures, but the musical rhetoric is equally important here in “speaking” to the sensitised believer/performer.

The attempt to “paint” every word, line or verse with a dynamic marking, special turn of harmony or idiosyncratic melody can be a problem in hymns. For one thing it can act as a destroyer of “Unity of Affection”. Some 19th century hymnals included such performance directives. The 1933 Hymn Book is almost totally devoid of them. In this way it may again be seen as conforming to 18th rather than 19th century musical precepts.

We have here several important considerations. First the “Unity of Affection” principle of the Doctrine of Affections meant that a hymn was, through all its verses, either forthright and assertive, or quiet and contemplative, or somewhere between. Second that Methodist singing was mostly a happy, even lusty affair (contemporary reports - even complaints - during the 18th century to personal experience in the 20th endorse this). Where Anglicans sang quietly, and Catholics not at all, Methodists rarely followed. Softer dynamics generally identify in music with the mystical. Methodism’s joyous extroversion could never allow it to be more than marginally concerned with mysticism.

RHYTHM AND TONALITY AS INDICATORS OF FIGUR AND AFFEKT

In examining the broader aspects of Affektenlehre, Figurenlehre and Methodist doctrine expressed through its hymnody we will naturally have a particular interest in Rhythm and Tonality. Mysticism in music seems well-served by slower, quieter, introverted performance practices, and is traditionally associated more with Modal and Minor tonalities than Major keys. Nor is it well- served by strong assertive rhythms; quieter, flowing sequences of even note-values serve it well. Contrasting with the relative introversion of mysticism, we have extroverted joy and even militancy, concepts that are better reflected in strong rhythms, lively tempi, fuller dynamics (Affekten) and musical symbols such as trumpets and drums (Figuren). Wesleyans expressed their faith as a joyous, even militant affair. We should expect to find their music expressing this in a way that is open to identification and analysis.

Plainsong is often held to be the epitome of the mystical and contemplative in religious music. It was polarised a long way from Methodist Hymnody. Only three examples were included in the 1933 book: VENI CREATOR, (MHB 779), ADORO TE, (MHB 691), and VEXILLA REGIS, (MHB 184). Significantly not one of these could be a serious aspirant for Plainsong's most introspective style.

Of the various “Affekten” employed by 18th Century composers, therefore, the two most important for our purposes are tonality (major, minor or modal) and rhythm/tempo. Tonality broadly meant a loose linking of major keys with “joy”, “happiness”, “love”, etc. and minor keys with “hate”, “sadness”, “fear” etc..
Rhythms could also express these concepts by their patterns. They could give feelings of “assertion”, “timelessness”, associations with the dance or even sleep (e.g. the berceuse). However, the 18th century was ever complex in its application of these musical doctrines. The Hallelujah at the end of each verse of the minor-harmonised Easter Chorale “Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands” (Christ lag in Todesbanden, MHB 210) has been described as the “saddest Hallelujah in Christendom”. Yet this is to put a nineteenth century slant on minor being always “sad”. The tune is as much modal as it is minor, and the word setting is given rhythmic vitality and a Tierce de Picardy harmony to conclude. (19th Century processes, to some extent polarising major/happy with minor/sad, nevertheless grew out of 18th Century Affektenlehre).

We shall therefore make a more detailed investigation of tonality and rhythm as integral elements of the language of Methodist Hymnody.

RHYTHM

Earlier this century, not long after the publication of the 1933 Hymnal, Percy Scholes wrote:

> There is now a tendency to restore to the older tunes some of the rhythmic variety they once possessed; it is argued that few of them ought to appear as that unbroken series of notes of one length to which from the middle of the nineteenth century they were reduced.

The beginning of this statement rings true, but is the end really correct?

Certain facts need to be ascertained about the rhythmic qualities of a given hymn or collection of hymns. They vary from having one note to a syllable, all of equal value (disregarding the pauses found, for example, at line-ends of Lutheran Chorales), to being quite complex and varied in their rhythmic structures.

To throw light on this subject and take steps towards a factual analysis of the situation we should establish Rhythmic Indicators for hymns and hymnals. We may do this by analysing each hymn as having anything from one rhythmic unit (all notes except the line-ends being equal) through two rhythmic units (a mixture of quarter-notes with half-notes, again ignoring pauses or long notes at the ends of lines) and up to four rhythmic units (hymns that have half, quarter, eighth and sixteenth notes present). Thus, where one rhythmic unit only is involved, a hymn will have a Rhythmic Factor of one. The presence of two differing rhythmic values in this way gives a hymn a Rhythmic Factor of two. Taking the Rhythmic Factors of all hymns in a hymnal and producing a weighted average with them will give us the Rhythmic Index for that particular hymnal.

Percy Scholes' “unbroken series of notes of one length” will give a Rhythmic Factor of one for each hymn of this kind. A whole book of them will give a Rhythmic Index of one. The style of hymn seen in most Scottish Metrical Psalm settings (e.g. the “old” version of Old 100th, MHB No. 2, with its mixed long and short notes) will have a Rhythmic Factor of “two”. A hymnal consisting of 50 hymns of “unbroken series of notes of one length” and 50 in the style of Old 100th will have a Rhythmic Index of 1.5, i.e. \{(50\times1)+(50\times2)\}/\{50+50\}. Rhythmic Indices may also be established for individual sections of a Hymnal.
The following table shows the Rhythmic Indices for Metrical Psalms, the first part of “Hymns Ancient and Modern” (including the later supplements), and the Methodist Hymn Book of 1933. We include the category “Scholes” as a reference point only, relating it to his comment quoted above: “that unbroken series of notes of one length to which from the middle of the nineteenth century they were reduced”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RHYTHMIC INDICES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholes</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison between the Methodist Hymnal of 1933 and Hymns Ancient and Modern (1916/1922) is instructive. The general Rhythmic Index for each book is markedly different: Hymns Ancient and Modern (complete) has a Rhythmic Index of 2.02, significantly lower than the 2.25 of its Methodist companion. This difference becomes even greater when we realise that the first part of Ancient and Modern (up to No. 473) actually only achieves a Rhythmic Index of 1.91. What follows No. 473 is designated as supplements which may be seen to have been compiled under the influence of Methodist Hymnody anyway. (This fact is reflected in their sectional Rhythmic Index of 2.22, much closer to MHB's 2.25). The first section of Hymns Ancient and Modern contains no hymn with a Rhythmic Factor above “3”, a total of only 17% of them being even “3-factor” hymns. In the supplements we find 32% of “3-factor” hymns and nine “4-factor” hymns (i.e. more consistent with Methodist Hymnody).

Metrical Psalms are almost invariably combinations of two note-values. The proximity of Hymns Ancient and Modern's Rhythmic Index to that of Metrical Psalms is interesting. Clearly the first part of Hymns Ancient and Modern comes closest to Scholes' “unbroken series of notes of one length...”. We may reconcile Scholes to some extent with the probability that the preferred hymnody of Anglicans in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries was mostly of this kind. “O God our help in ages past”, and Tallis' Canon serve as typical examples here.

Obviously the connection between lively tempo and rhythmic complexity in Wesleyan Hymns is rather critical. Lively tempi and strong rhythms were part of the Baroque expressions of “joy” and “assertiveness”, qualities that well express the ethos of Methodism. It is notable that certain sections of MHB show a tendency to much higher rhythmic indices. For example “Resurrection and Ascension” (204-231) sees a rise to 2.65, well above the book's already high average of 2.25. Similarly “The Church Militant and Triumphant” section (816-833) attains an Index of 2.72. Clearly rhythm has meaning in such contexts, and this aligns directly with 18th Century Affektenlehre. Reference to the following table will illustrate these points.
It may be surprising that the Passion section, “His Sufferings and Death” (MHB 172-203), has a higher than average Rhythmic Index of 2.3 (average for the hymnal is 2.25). We might think of Passion as warranting a more introspective treatment through calmer rhythms. Later, in our tonality investigations, we will note how this Passion section exhibits a tendency towards minor keys. Here we are on more comfortable ground, yet the seeming anomaly to this is that the incidence of “Tierce de Picardy” (a major-key ending to a minor-key hymn) actually rises markedly in these Passion hymns. Of course we encounter a mixture of emotions at the crucifixion, since this gave us both the pain of Death as well as the promise of Salvation (a truly Good Friday). The phenomenon of higher Rhythmic Index, increased minor tonality and dramatically rising incidence of Tierce de Picardy in this section therefore mirrors these conflicts. The language of 18th Century Figur and Affekt has a unique capacity to reflect this complicated mixture of doctrinal concepts. Music is indeed the handmaiden of religion in this context.

Turning to the equivalent sections of Hymns Ancient and Modern (Lent and Passion, 84-95, 100-125, 490-496 and 644-649) we observe a totally different picture to that found in the Methodist Hymnal. Lent and Passion in Hymns Ancient and Modern presents us with rather consistent sectional Indices compared to the overall index: 1.87 for Part One Passion Hymns, and 1.90 for all Passion Hymns. The Index for the whole book is 1.91 (Part One), and 2.02 (All). There is no real equivalent in Hymns Ancient and Modern to the Methodist “Militant” hymn, but in its Easter and Ascension sections we find again only a slight variation to the average Indices of the publication. In Part I the Easter and Ascension section has an index of 2.0, or, if we take the whole collection including supplements, 2.17. These are all relatively insignificant sectional variations when compared to those of the 1933 Methodist book.

Tempo is another consideration, although elusive unless recorded with some kind of device such as a metronome. Nevertheless, we may get valuable clues from recorded comments. For example Wesley spoke out against “dragging” hymns. While this gives us no absolute information on tempo it does show that, from the outset, Methodist Hymnody was intended to be sung in a more lively fashion than that of other churches. This preoccupation with tempo also relates to rhythm. Wesley is reminding us that the Affekt of rhythmic activity will be lost if tempo is too slow. (The Wesleyan Hymn Tune Book of 1859 had metronome markings). 27

Thus we see that Hymns Ancient and Modern has an essentially “Romantic” or 19th Century musical ethos. That is to say, there is little or no clearly-distinguishable or consistent 18th century Affekt or Figur Doctrine operating in its hymns, viewed from the aspect of its Rhythmic
Indices and Factors. By contrast *Figur* and *Affekt* are clearly identifiable in the rhythmic qualities of the Methodist Hymn Book.

**TONALITY**

As observed above in connection with “*Fierce raged the tempest*”, major/minor tonality was an important element in the linking of hymn settings with their texts. The following table shows aspects of tonality extracted from five different hymnals. To the hymnals already mentioned above we may add the Australian Hymn Book and the New English Hymnal for additional reference purposes. We may compare the proportions of major to minor tonality hymns contained in these Hymnals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hymn Book</th>
<th>% major</th>
<th>% minor/modal</th>
<th>% Tierce de Picardy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodist 1933</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A &amp; M</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New English</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metrical Psalms</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is notable that the highest proportion of major-key hymns is in the 1933 Methodist collection. In terms of *Affektenlehre* and *Figurenlehre* this is consistent with its high Rhythmic Index. When we consider the number of minor hymns that conclude with a major chord (Tierce de Picardy) we find an extraordinarily high proportion represented. (Here “Amens”, where present, have been taken into consideration and also hymns that modulate into major keys).

Earlier we noted how the Rhythmic Index for the “Passion” section of the 1933 Hymnal actually rose. We now find a consistency in terms of *Affektenlehre* with the concluding state of the tonality. Here we see sharp differences: the tonality index falls from 91% major (overall Rhythmic Index for the Hymnal) to only 58% major (Passion section). This represents a rise in minor tonality from 9% to 42%. Yet when we look at the Tierce de Picardy rate, we find it climbs here to an extraordinary 8 out of 13. That is 62% of minor-key Passion hymns have major chords as their concluding tonality.

These are dramatic figures.

What do they tell us?

At this point we are dealing with *Affekt* in one of its clearest 18th Century forms: Passion is one of the most appropriate sections in which to use minor keys, yet the result of the Passion, Salvation, must be dealt with as an overwhelmingly joyful concept, a symbol, which could logically be transmuted to the status of *Figur*. Should we have any doubt that Methodists
were using tonality and rhythm as Figur here then we might refer to some other related hymns.

“Man of Sorrows! what a name”, (GETHSEMANE, MHB 176), commences with a rhythmic factor of “1” for its first three lines, but for the last line, “Hallelujah! what a Saviour!”, it suddenly accelerates to a Rhythmic Factor of “4”.

“Plunged in a gulf of dark despair”, (OLDBURY, MHB 179), is one of a number of hymns in the 1933 collection that employ whole sections or verses in differing tonalities. Here the first three verses are sung in the minor, but for the last two, where the text turns from the harrowing of hell to praise and angels, a major key signature is substituted. We have the classical poetry of Isaac Watts (1674-1748) in a surprisingly Romantic mood. J.F.Bridge's musical setting uses Romantic harmonies. Yet the achieving of Figur by changing the tonality is a musical practice dating back to Watts' own era.

There are other hymns in this collection that change tonality with mood (19th Century) or symbol (18th) of the words. “We saw Thee not when Thou didst come” (CREDO, MHB 148), and “We have not known Thee as we ought”, (also to CREDO, MHB 741), adopt the tonic major and increase Rhythmic Factor from “2” to “3” where the final two lines of text become more positive in tone. “I heard the voice of Jesus say” (VOX DILECTI, MHB 154ii), uses similar techniques. “I bind unto myself today” (ST. PATRICK, MHB 392), increases its Rhythmic Factor and adopts the major tonality for “Christ be with me” (DEIDRE), before returning to the minor. It concludes in the major, not just a Tierce de Picardy, but a preemptive major tonality no less than seven bars before the end (“Salvation is of Christ the
Lord. Amen.”). We may recall a similar use of Affekt in Bach's organ setting of “Durch Adams Fall ist ganz verderbt”, from Orgelbüchlein, where a preemptive major tonality at the end is clearly representing Salvation. “Hills of the North rejoice” (LITTLE CORNARD, MHB 815), is similar to “Fierce raged the tempest” in that it concludes in the relative major (“He judgement brings and victory”).

No better example of the use of these techniques can be suggested than “Surrounded by a host of foes” (DEFIANCE, MHB 483). Here the very word “Salvation” is the trigger associated with the change from minor to major tonality.

We explain this extraordinarily high preponderance of major-key endings here as reflecting the Methodist doctrine of Salvation. The strikingly high major-key content of the whole Hymnal may similarly be seen as a realisation of the broader Methodist ethos.

Thus we find tonality and rhythm, often together with each other, still functioning in this 20th century collection of hymns according to 18th century Affektenlehre and Figurenlehre precepts.

CONCLUSION

If Methodism was born in Song, then to all intents and purposes the Swansong of Methodism was its 1933 Hymnal. The demise of this great tradition may partly be attributed to the late 20th century’s reticence in raising their voices in congregational song. The fabric of this musically and socially oriented church revolved around the local choir and a book of music written in a language that communicated Evangelical Revival doctrines in terms which were understood. Wesley’s musical and poetic drive, like Luther’s, impregnated their respective churches and predestined two or more centuries of characteristic expression. Unlike Luther, Wesley did not have the solid establishment of national churches behind him (e.g. Germany, Sweden, Denmark, England or even convict Australia for that matter).

Thus Wesleyans adopted a narrower scope for their music, but drove it further. Lutherans extended their repertoire to instrumental settings, cantatas and passions, as well as brass groups. To all of this they added the central core of a huge repertoire of dedicated organ music. Methodists developed a Handelian musical language through hymnody, retaining their three eighteenth century doctrines for the duration: Paul, Affekt, and Figur.
EPILOGUE

The artist wants to make himself understood, and utilizes all possible ways to do so. Symbolic image and pure music come from the same creative mind. The difficulty for us is that the ratio and quality of these elements, which are of the utmost importance to both understanding and enjoyment, change, often radically, within a generation or two. Furthermore, the hermeneutical variability of musical constellations, such as intervals, rhythms, and harmonies, is very considerable, if not infinite. Some often-used symbols become practically immanent, but the rest depend on the particular situation and context in which they are used. Such musical metaphors and similes can be extraneous, inorganic, and altogether ornamental; on the other hand, a purely intellectual descriptive symbol, such as “falling” or “rising,” or playful garlands of ornaments, can become entirely emotional in the proper context. The 18th century had far subtler means than the 19th to achieve translation of the optical or intellectual descriptive into the acoustical. This is a different musical language, for not even the polarity of major and minor, which the 19th century invariably interpreted as happy and sad, heroic and tragic, is unconditionally valid in Baroque music. But all this can become a direct and instantaneous experience once the symbols become assimilated. 

It took two centuries for the acoustic symbols of Methodist Hymnody to achieve their rise and begin their fall. The “generation or two” that has passed since publication of the 1933 Hymnal has produced a new breed of churchgoers for whom the 18th century doctrines of Affekt and Figur no longer have meaning. This generation exemplifies precisely that change in “ratio and quality of these elements, which are of the utmost importance to both understanding and enjoyment” of which Lang speaks above.

It was strange that it became the destiny of a hymn book to keep these great musical Doctrines alive for so long. The 100 years of Romanticism had musical concerns other than Affekt and Figur with which to busy itself. Yet this hynmal appeared well after Romanticism’s apogee. It was somehow ironic that these classical attributes of music preserved in the 1933 hymnal actually came back into vogue once Romanticism had run its course. That the rise of 20th century musical neoclassicism, and the fall of an 18th century classical tradition preserved in hymnody were concurrent phenomena is one of the curious paradoxes of Western culture.

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This article was first written for a Festschrift in honour of Professor Eric J. Sharpe, then Chairman of Religious Studies, University of Sydney. It was published in “The Sum of our Choices, Essays in Honour of Eric J. Sharpe” under the aegis of Mecgill Studies in Religion (Vol 4) with Eric J. Sharpe and Arvind Sharma as editors. David Rumsey at the time was a Senior Lecturer at the University of Sydney's Conservatorium of Music where he was Head of both Postgraduate Performance Studies and the Division of Organ and Church Music. Updated biographies for David Rumsey (French, German, English) can now be found at www.davidrumsey.ch/davidrumsey_bio.php
1. My sincere thanks to Kelvin Hastie of Engadine, Sydney, for his reading of this article, his interest, suggestions, corrections and enhancements, many of which I have taken into account in the following pages.

2. This applies more to Australia than Britain: the 1983 “Hymns and Psalms” from the Methodist Publishing House was the rightful heir apparent to the 1933 book. However as a world-wide phenomenon Methodism was past its prime by the time this hymnal came into use.

3. Translated and summarised from Oskar Söhngen, Theologie der Musik, (Johannes Stauda Verlag, Kassel 1967).


5. Quoted from a sermon given by Eric Sharpe during a recreated Methodist Service held at Wesley College, University of Sydney, on Aldersgate Sunday in 1991 as part of a Church Music Symposium.

6. Ephesians 5, 19


8. Musically considered, for our purposes, this means after the era of Plainsong-modal Hymns and even after the era of initial congregational participation (the Lutheran Reformation, and the Calvinist metrical Psalm traditions). The work of Isaac Watts in the early part of the 18th century is where we might logically establish our point-of-departure for what is here termed the modern hymn.


10. Ibid. page 698


12. Ibid. page 305.

13. This also, coincidentally, conjures up memories of contemporary congregational “embellishment” of hymns where it was common enough to “fill in” an interval such as this with the intervening note. A symbol of “enthusiasm” perhaps - and often enough railed against by conferences and clergy. Here a definite rhythm is applied to it turning it into an obligatory performance element. Indeed, the earlier 18th Century setting had even more rhythmic embellishment than the 1933 version given here.

15. Mark 10:14


17. This observation was recently made in conversation by James Forsyth, Senior Lecturer, Australian Catholic University. Kelvin Hastie points out that another claim might be made for crowd-singing at sporting events.

18. It was “No.1” in practically all Methodist Hymn Books, including that published in Sydney in 1821 (Kelvin Hastie).

19. See the settings of the Chorale *Dies sind die heilige zehn Gebot* in *Orgelbüchlein* (Bärenreiter 5171), and *Dritter Teil der Klavierübung* (Bärenreiter 5174).

20. Nikolaus Harnoncourt in *“Musik als Klangrede”* (Residenz Verlag, Salzburg 1982)

21. The *berceuse* (lullaby, or cradle-song) is an interesting combination of both *Figur* - for what it represented and *Affekt* - for what it achieved. Accordingly we might find some examples of it in Incarnation hymns. Indeed we do: MHB 123: *STILLE NACHT “Still the night, holy the night*”, MHB 127(i): *ÖRAN NA PRASAICH “Cradled in a manger*”, and MHB 860: *AWAY IN A MANGER “Away in a manger*” are appropriately endowed with musical *Affekt* of this kind.

22. This was a frequently repeated comment in the 1960's by the late Dr. Alex Burnard, teacher of harmony and counterpoint at the N.S.W. State Conservatorium of Music in Sydney, Australia.


24. The investigation was limited to melody lines only, although it is clear that, with Methodist Hymnody, rhythmic activity in the other parts will count since they sang in parts. In general, however, the rhythms of the melody line are reflected in those of the lower parts and vice versa. Clearly this will always be the case in fugal hymns.

25. Source: Maurice Frost *English & Scottish Psalm and Hymn Tunes c. 1543-1677* (S.P.C.K. and Oxford 1953). The examination was limited to the first 159 examples and did not take into account the polyphonic settings, since these form a special category outside our immediate consideration.


27. See Willem Retze Talsma's book *“Wiedergeburt der Klassiker”* (Wort und Welt Verlag, Innsbruck) for a discourse on the unreliability and difficulty of interpretation of early metronome markings.


30. The Liturgical Section, at the end, was not included in these figures.

31. 45% of these are plainsong settings and are modal. Even if we simply ignore these we still have over 13% of remaining hymns being in minor tonality.
