

CONCLUSION AND PROPOSITIONS FOR THE FUTURE

It is dangerous to speak of history as if it were a teleological march through time, a continuous succession of superseding triumphs. The achievement of Martin Pasi in his Opus 14 is in one sense no nobler than the pioneering efforts of the Burkley family in establishing the first church choir in Nebraska. On the other hand, we recognize in the trail-blazing of every pioneer something new, something better, and something groundbreaking that will make it easier for others to follow and achieve their own success and manifest beauty in their own work. Now that Pasi Opus 14 has been realized and appropriately fêted, a vast field lies ahead of projects for further development and topics for continued research.

Projects for Development

Several projects related to Pasi Opus 14 remain unrealized at this writing. Some are essential, and I raise them here for the information of my current superiors and colleagues and the instruction of those who will succeed us. Those propositions that are peripheral I describe here because I believe them to be good ideas and germane to the continuing realization of the original vision of the instrument.

Endowments

The unique opportunity to build an unusual organ such as Pasi Opus 14 is due in part to the funding coming from a single source and the organ builder being given the freedom to pursue an artistic vision. The maintenance of this work of art, however, becomes the responsibility of a community, and providing for this care is chief among the adjacent projects that now require development. An endowment will need to be raised not only to cover annual maintenance costs, but also to provide for future maintenance needs, such as new bellows leather in thirty or forty years.

When we admire the perfection of an historic instrument, it is not always apparent that this perfection was achieved over many years of improvement, especially during the years the organ builder is living. Like the treasures of old, Pasi Opus 14 may become even better in years to come, especially during the years Martin Pasi is actively engaged in his craft. For instance, there are a couple of stops on the organ which we have mutually identified as candidates for more voicing work. Likewise, the wind system has already been improved once since the organ was installed. There may be an opportunity in the future to make further improvements to this most mysterious dimension of the organ, and thereby improve not only this specific organ, but contribute to the art of organ building—if funds are available. An endowment would also make possible the completion and improvement of several ancillary features of the space around the organ, such as furniture for choir seating and desks for choir materials, lighting of the choir area and of the organ itself, and an integrated audio system for making regular recordings of the organ.

New Ancillary Instruments

While Pasi Opus 14 has magnified many times over the musical capacity of Saint Cecilia Cathedral, it has also contributed to the growing sophistication of its musical and liturgical practice. The frequency with which multiple choirs sing in a single liturgy has posed a problem of where to situate choirs for both musical efficacy and liturgical function. However this is resolved, there will be a need for an auxiliary organ near the front of the cathedral—perhaps composed of 15 stops—capable of basic choral accompaniment and leading the singing of smaller congregations. Since space for “concerted” music is limited in the cathedral, however, there will always be a need to situate small ensembles of musicians in temporary locations. A portable continuo organ is needed for this purpose.

Perhaps most urgent is the need for teaching and practice organs in the Schola Cantorum. Increased activity in the cathedral has also meant decreased opportunities to practice the organ for staff organists and students. Ideally, a teaching instrument would possess at least nine stops over three manuals and pedal. One or two practice instruments could be as modest as two ranks of pipes divided between two manuals and pedal, either pulled-down or coupled.

Subbass Illuminations

One of the original plans for Pasi Opus 14 left unfinished is the naming and decoration of the twelve lowest base pipes of the 32’ Subbass. These pipes stand along the side walls of the organ gallery on electric offset chests. The idea of naming organ pipes stands in the long tradition of dubbing large tower bells after saints, and in line with a unique instance of naming the façade pipes of the famous Gabler organ at Weingarten

in Germany.¹ The names in this latter instance are derived from the letters associated with the pitch of the pipes. Naming pipes after saints further suggests the ecclesiological symbolism of the organ (just as named bells bespeak the evangelical symbolism of bell towers), in which the individual musical bodies collectively bear witness to the Divine Logos, the Word that “holds all things together in harmony.”

The possibility of a numerological allegory suggests naming the twelve basses of Pasi Opus 14 for the Twelve Apostles, the foundation of the Church’s apostolic witness. However, with the exception of low “C” representing Peter, the Rock (*Cephas*), the assignment of the other names to specific pipes would seem to be arbitrary and not allegorical.² The pipe-naming practice employed at Weingarten might therefore be a better choice for allegorically identifying the individual bass pipes of the 32’ Subbass. The letter names of the pitches, along with the saint’s name and some identifying symbol, could be part of an “illumination” above the pipe mouths, proportionate in scale to the pipes themselves. For aesthetic reasons, I recommend that the German scale names be used (“B” for “B-flat,” “H” for “B-natural”) and that the German suffix “is” be used instead of the sharp sign, e.g. “Cis” instead of “C#.” An “open” name scheme would also allow the allegory to include female saints as well as references to the contemporary community related to the instrument (Table 34).

¹ Friedrich Jakob, *Die grosse Orgel der Basilika zu Weingarten: Geschichte und Restaurierung der Gabler-Orgel* (Männedorf: Verlag Orgelbau Kuhn, 1986), 68-69.

² The “apostle allegory” might best be reserved for a 15-stop choir organ. Naming stops, rather than pipes, may in this allow an allegory to be much more richly developed. For instance, a Montre might represent the Blessed Virgin Mary, the one who “shows” the way; a 4’ Octave might stand for the Beloved Disciple John, who is close to Mary, and a 4’ Flute his brother James. A Cornet II might be named Thomas (“Twin”), a 8’ Trumpet the Apostle Paul, a 16’ Posaune Peter, and his brother 16’ Subbass Andrew, and so forth. In this scheme the tonal relationships of voices within the organ would become an allegorical mirror of relationships within the earliest Christian community, and another way in which the organ might explicitly fulfill its historical didactic and catechetical role.

Table 34. Hagiographical Names for the Twelve Wooden Basses

Note	Saint's Name	Significance
C	Cæcilia	Patron saint of the cathedral, the Archdiocese of Omaha, musicians and instrument makers
Cis	Clare	Sister of Francis of Assisi; name of Frank Matthews' mother
D	David	Shepherd-King of Israel; psalmist; type of Christ
Dis	Dominic	Founder of the Order of Preachers; in honor of the Dominican Sisters who founded the cathedral school
E	Elizabeth	Elizabeth Ann Seton, first American-born saint canonized
F	Francis of Assisi	Baptismal name of Frank Matthews and his father
Fis	Francis de Sales	Middle name of Archbishop Elden Francis Curtiss, saint on whose feast day both Kevin Vogt and Martin Pasi's mother, Gretl Pasi, were born
G	Gall	Irish saint; patron of Switzerland; died at Bregenz, birthplace and hometown of Martin Pasi
Gis	Gebhard	Patron saint of the Austrian province of Vorarlberg, how of several builders of Pasi Opus 14; name of deceased brother of Martin Pasi who died during the time the organ was being built
A	Ambrose	Father of hymnody
B	Benedict	Father of Western monasticism
H	Helena	Mother of Constantine; discoverer of the True Cross; baptismal name of Helen Matthews

Liturgical Practice, Improvisation, and New Compositions

The liturgical use of the organ is another area open for development, already prompted by the symbolic and theological contemplation of Pasi Opus 14. Whereas its use in leading and accompanying singing is already flourishing, its role as a discreet

“voice” within or around the liturgical celebration is currently limited to the rendering of inherited organ literature before and after the liturgy itself. While it is no longer possible for the organ to replace voices in the singing of canonical texts of the liturgy, there is still room for creativity in integrating the voice of the organ into the ritual performance of the liturgy. This will depend, however, on the establishment of a sustained practice of the *Missa Cantata*, the modality of public liturgical celebration envisaged by the Second Vatican Council in which the entire liturgy is chanted. It is in this context that some parts of the choral treasury of the Church and the organ as an independent voice may find a home in the reformed rite.

In the meantime, organists will have to begin to cultivate improvisation skills, aiming at least for the level of current interpretive skills. Taking a cue from the role of composed music in the seventeenth century discussed in Chapter Three, we might commission compositions as models for liturgical integration of the organ. A *Saint Cecilia Organ Book* is an example of a commission project that might involve one or several organist-composers (Table 35).

Suggestions for Further Research and Documentation

The already-recognized high quality of Pasi Opus 14, together with its unique features and characteristics, will undoubtedly make it an attractive subject for academic research in organology, tuning and temperament, organ building, as well as a prized instrument for organ master classes and the recording of diverse organ literature. These uses are without doubt tertiary to its primary liturgical function and secondary catechetical function. However, the educational use of an organ such as Pasi Opus 14

Table 35. Sample Commission of Liturgical Organ Music

SAINT CECILIA ORGAN BOOK

Eight Liturgical Suites for Organ

on the “Singing” Clerestory Windows of Saint Cecilia Cathedral, Omaha, Nebraska

First Suite: Vespers (*Magnificat anima Mea*)

- I. Prelude
- II. Eight *alternatim* Versets on the Ninth Tone
- III. Postlude

Second Suite: Christmas Midnight Mass (*Gloria in excelsis Deo*)

- I. Prelude and Introit on the *Missae ‘de Angelis’* and *Dominus dixit ad me*
- II. Intonation and Juxtapositions on the *Gloria ‘de Angelis’*
- III. Resonance of the Word of God (meditation after the homily)
- IV. Intonation and Juxtapositions on the *Sanctus ‘de Angelis’*
- V. Communion on *In splendoribus* (intonation and *inclusion*)
- VI. Postlude

Third Suite: Stations of the Cross (*Stabat Mater dolorosa*)

- I. Prelude
- II. Sequence (Fifteen Meditations and Versets)
- III. Postlude

Fourth Suite: Mass of Easter (*Victimae paschali laudes*)

- I. Prelude and Introit on *Victimae paschali laudes* and *Haec dies*
- II. Alleluia and Sequence (Intonations and Interpolations)
- III. Resonance of the Word of God
- IV. Communion (intonation and *inclusion*)
- V. Postlude

Fifth Suite: Mass of Pentecost (*Veni Sancte Spiritus*)

- I. Prelude and Introit on *Veni Sancte Spiritus* and proper antiphon
- II. Alleluia and Sequence (Intonations and Interpolations)
- III. Resonance of the Word of God
- IV. Communion (intonation and *inclusion*)
- V. Postlude

Sixth Suite: Mass of Corpus Christi (*Pange lingua gloriosi*)

- I. Prelude on *Pange lingua*
- II. Sequence on *Lauda Sion salvatorem* (Intonation and Interpolations)
- III. Processional versets on *Pange lingua*
- IV. Meditation on *Tantum ergo*

Seventh Suite: Mass for the Dead (*Dies irae*)

- I. Meditations on *Dies irae* for the Vigil for the Dead
- II. Introit (Intonation on *Requiem aeternam*)
- III. Offertory on *Dies irae*
- IV. Communion (intonation and *inclusion* on *Lux aeterna*)
- V. Procession (intonation and *sortie* on *In paradisum*)

Eighth Suite: Festivals (*Te Deum laudamus*)

- I. Meditations and Versets on the *Te Deum*

may well be in keeping with the organ's original reception into the Church as a didactic tool.³ It likewise may be a means for the Church to share its cultural goods (and with them, points of access to its sacramental system and articles of faith) with the wider world, thus taking on an evangelical function. For these reasons, it is probably in the Church's self-interest to encourage, support and offer hospitality to academic inquiry into the organ and subjects adjacent to it.

Technical Documentation of Pasi Opus 14

As this study has dealt primarily with the history of Pasi Opus 14 and its precursors, detailed documentation of the instrument remains to be done. A discussion of the physical properties of the organ will involve the detailed description of the organ case, wind system, windchests, stop action, key action and pipes. An in-depth consideration of the tonal scheme of the organ will analyze the characteristics of each division of the organ, as well as a stop-by-stop analysis of pipe scales, voicing and musical utility.

A study of the organ's temperaments and dual-temperament concept is likewise ripe for undertaking. This inquiry might address the problem of tuning organs in general, the various historical solutions in temperament, well-tempered tunings in modern organs, and a survey of modern organs tuned in meantone. A detailed analysis of the two temperaments in Pasi Opus 14 might follow, comparing the well-tempered tuning derived from quarter-comma meantone with both historic and modern well-tempered tunings.

An assessment of the place of Pasi Opus 14 among other dual-temperament experiments—including the Fisk organ at Stanford University, the Wegscheider organs in

³ Quentin Faulkner, *Wiser Than Despair: The Evolution of Ideas in the Relationship of Music and the Christian Church* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996), 217.

Germany, and other known variants of the concept—will benefit from temporal distance. In spite of the independence with which Martin Pasi approached the question of temperament and the resulting immunization from critique, it would be instructive to analyze the Pasi dual-temperament concept through the lens of a published debate over the Fisk Stanford temperaments,⁴ as well as the larger question of historical modifications of meantone temperament.

Even though the *raison d'être* of Pasi Opus 14 has been posited as independent of concern for existing musical repertoire, a study of the effect of the Wegscheider-Pasi well-tempered tuning in musical contexts will be essential in evaluating its worth and usefulness beyond the organ at hand, or even for evaluating some future proposal to change the well-tempered tuning in Pasi Opus 14. Pierre-Yves Asselin has demonstrated an effective subjective method of evaluating temperaments in musical contexts.⁵ Johan Norrback has since introduced a more scientific method using digital sampling.⁶ An organ with the proven significance of Pasi Opus 14 ought sometime to be subjected to such scrutiny.

⁴ See Mark Lindley, "A Suggested Improvement for the Fisk Organ at Stanford," *Performance Practice Review* 1, nos. 1/2 (Spring/Fall 1988): 107-132; also Robert Bates and Kimberly Marshall, "A Response from the Custodians: More Thoughts on the Stanford Temperaments," *Performance Practice Review* 2, no. 2 (Fall 1989): 147-169; also Robert Bates, Mark Lindley, and Kimberly Marshall, "The Stanford Eclectic Tunings," *Performance Practice Review* 5, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 159-197.

⁵ See Pierre-Yves Asselin, *Music et Tempérament* (Paris: Éditions Costallat, 1985).

⁶ Norrback, Johan, *A Passable and Good Temperament: A New Methodology for Studying Tuning and Temperament in Organ Music* (Göteborg, Sweden: Göteborg University, 2002), 95-101.

Theological Interpretation of the Organ

The narrative of this document has exposed the question of how and why Pasi Opus 14 came to be, turning from the accidental and serendipitous to an earnest quest for a valid justification based on something more than pragmatism and utility. This quest for a *bona fide* apology began almost immediately, and found initial inspiration from the rich speculative tradition spanning from Pythagoras and Plato to Athanasius Kircher in the 17th century. But inquiry along this path is likely to lead to the same dead-end met by 19th-century attempts to revive the organ that were founded on historicism and aestheticism: a deadly encounter with a radically different post-Enlightenment worldview.⁷ Faulkner notes that the historical lesson here is that without a coherent theological foundation an apology for the organ's continued existence in the church can only rest on its practical usefulness—or on an ultimately insupportable reverence for the instrument.⁸

Pursuit of a coherent theology of the organ may well depend on the very possibility of “interpreting” an organ in a modern cultural and religious milieu. Extending theories of secular and religious literary criticism, the organ might be treated as both “text” and “artifact,” defining the interpretive limits and possibilities of the “text,” and the relationship between artifact, culture and religion. Construction of an anagogic interpretation of the organ,⁹ together with an historical survey of speculative

⁷ Quentin Faulkner. *Wiser Than Despair: The Evolution of Ideas in the Relationship of Music and the Christian Church* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996), 222-223.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ One of the “spiritual senses” of interpretation defined by Thomas Aquinas, in this case aiming at the renewal of the the “heavenly dimensions” of the Christian liturgy. (M. Francis Mannion, Keynote Address, The Twenty-Third Annual Liturgical Music Conference, St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, 13 June 2000.)

and theological interpretations of the instrument, would constitute an important step toward a “theology” of the organ and the symbolic participation of the organ in a theology of music. Considering the organ in terms of cosmology, Christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, and eschatology, I propose a path for further inquiry following the liturgical theology of Josef Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) and the theological aesthetic of Hans Urs von Balthasar.¹⁰

General Conclusion

Pasi Opus 14 exhibits extraordinary versatility while evading characterization as either “eclectic” or stylistically specific. The organ builder accomplished this by locating the basic musical values of the instrument in a “proto-style” that seems to have preceded national stylistic differentiation. Diverse and distinctive stylistic elements are kept close to the source tonal ideal even as they provide variety and versatility. Adherence to the limitations imposed by mechanical action also serves as a binding, unifying element.

This organ stands as a challenge to the prevailing self-conscious world-view of the developed West, and as a bold remnant of the cosmic-conscious outlook that preceded the Enlightenment. As modern people tend to subscribe and respond positively to both world-views, it is an oversimplification to suggest that the organ is an anachronism or irrelevant. It is rather a traditional artifact, the meaning of which derives from and contributes to a living human culture.

¹⁰ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, 7 vols. (Fort Collins, Colorado: Ignatius Press, 1982).

While the symbolic potential of organs in general may be submerged beneath a prevailing rationale of functionalism, the special feature of dual-temperament in a prominent and highly accessible organ brings such metaphysical values into relief. It is too early to judge the scope of the Pasi Opus 14's impact on the church and on "organ culture" in general, but it is worth noting the number of large, superior quality organ projects that have since developed in Roman Catholic cathedrals of the United States.¹¹ While other factors are no doubt contributing to this renaissance, Pasi Opus 14 is likely to be playing a part, and is most certainly prompting positive conversations about organ temperaments in wider circles.¹²

If the lack of a theological basis contributed to the failure of post-Enlightenment attempts at reviving the organ, the development of such a theological basis may also make such a renewal possible. A revival of the organ as a church instrument, however, may not be equivalent to a revival of popular interest, but rather to a renewal of the cultic, mythological and ethical dimensions of the organ's formal identity and function as a musical medium.

Revival of the organ as widely-encountered and appreciated instrument in the context of a robust musical-liturgical practice will also require the revival of adjacent educational and formational structures. Cultivating a talent pool that will include clergy who can artfully chant their parts of the liturgy, choir directors and singers who have the capacity to aspire to excellence in both art and pastoral care, and organists who can create

¹¹ Contracts are currently pending for monumental organs in Roman Catholic Cathedrals in Sioux City, Iowa, in Columbus, Ohio, in Rochester, New York, in Dallas, Texas, and in Houston, Texas.

¹² As one local example, I have been invited to give a presentation on the merits of meantone temperament to a local chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Before Pasi Opus 14, there would have been little knowledge of or interest in such a topic in this constituency.

music as a responsive primary utterance in the liturgy would demand earlier and more focused efforts in training and formation. Such training and formation has traditionally begun in the choir schools of monasteries and cathedrals. While practical musical training was always carried out within the context of the liberal arts—indeed, the “university” emerged out of the cathedral *maitrise*¹³—the kind of vocation-specific formation often required for service as a church musician is not easily integrated with the educational goals of the university.¹⁴

As described in Chapter Three, one of the early fruits of the building and interpretation of the Pasi dual-temperament organ at Saint Cecilia Cathedral was the establishment in 2000 of the Saint Cecilia Schola Cantorum, an organizational structure meant to embrace all initiatives related to sacred music at the cathedral and in the Archdiocese of Omaha. Central to the future of an exemplary music ministry of the cathedral church is the establishment of a *maitrise*, a choir school nested within the existing cathedral elementary school and a neighboring high school. By extension of the choir school, the Schola Cantorum will develop an institute for sacred music that will have as its model the German *Hochschule für Kirchenmusik*. This institute will seek to complement university education with emphasis on practical skills and supplement musical formation with necessary theological, liturgical and pastoral competence.

Whether the success of these initiatives is continuous or periodic, Pasi Opus 14 will be persistent in its claim of excellence upon those who encounter it. In its very matter and technology it cannot help but to represent human mastery of the cosmic order for the sole purpose of praise of the Creator. It always holds in its architecture the ideals

¹³ Faulkner, *Wiser than Despair*, 84.

¹⁴ Quentin Faulkner. “The Training of Church Musicians in the United States” (unpublished).

and values of the cultural matrices through which the Western world passed on its way from ancient to modern. As a musical medium it is constantly poised to express the musical ideas of those who understand it. And to those for whom it has theological dimensions, the dual-tempered organ of Martin Pasi will continuously symbolize the unity of Beauty, Truth and Goodness, the interdependence of the cultic, mythological and ethical, and the divinely-ordained correspondence between transcendent realities, the integrity of the person, and rightly-ordered human instrumentality. For these, and for all who contemplate the sight and sound and sound of the organ, it will be an embodiment of harmony.