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### The Practice of Hymn Singing During the Sixteenth Century

Theodore Paul Klammer

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir\_klammert@csl.edu

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THE PRACTICE OF HYMN SINGING  
DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Practical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by

Theodore Paul Klammer

June 1957

Approved by:

Walter E. Puzin  
Advisor

Martin H. Schlemmer  
Reader



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of Purpose

The Lutheran Church has often been called "The Singing Church." That the appellation is a fitting one cannot be denied by anyone who is acquainted with the Lutheran services of worship. Both congregation and choir are prominently active in singing the praises of God, and thus give evidence that they understand and appreciate the Pauline injunction: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."<sup>1</sup> Credit for this emphasis on sacred song in the worship services of Lutheran congregations belongs to Martin Luther himself, of whom Arnold Schering aptly remarks:

We all know that Luther performed an act of great consequences when he opened the mouths and loosed the tongues of congregations which had long been mute in services of worship and enabled them to sing hymns; thus the singing of chorales became an essential feature of the Lutheran services of worship. Luther's act was momentous not only because the congregation became prominently active in its services of worship and was taken out of its isolation and put into the very midst of a living and active circuit of liturgical activity, but above everything also because through this act a complete metamorphosis of all other types

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<sup>1</sup>Col. 3:16.



of worship music took place. The chorale became the core and center of Lutheran church music; it was sung by all and created a new type of traditional church music for the Lutheran Church.<sup>3</sup>

A similar statement is made by von der Heydt, who says:

Die Priesterkirche wird wieder zur Gemeindekirche. Durch die Abschaffung des vom Priester vollzogenen Opfers des Leibes und Blutes Christi (offertorium) erhaelt der Gottesdienst seine urspruengliche Aufgabe zurueck, durch die Wortverkuendigung im Gesang, Lektion, Bekenntnis, Gebet und Predigt das Reich Gottes zu bauen.<sup>4</sup>

The Lutheran Church is "The Singing Church." Unfortunately, the musical heritage of Lutheranism has not always been appreciated. Much of the Lutheran musical treasure was lost as a result of trends within the Church, namely, Pietism and Rationalism, which had a disastrous effect on church music in general and hymn singing in particular. In addition, the pioneer conditions under which the Church of the Reformation was transplanted to American soil, coupled with the slow transition from German and Scandinavian languages to the language of America, were not conducive to a proper appreciation

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<sup>3</sup>Arnold Schering, Evangelischer Gottesdienst und kirchliche Kunst (Halle, 1924), pp. 26-27, quoted in Walter E. Buszin, "The Doctrine of the Universal Priesthood and Its Influence upon the Liturgies and Music of the Lutheran Church," The Musical Heritage of the Church (Thirteenth Bulletin of the Choral Union, Issued by the Lutheran Walther League, 875 North Dearborn Street, Chicago 10, Illinois, 1946), pp. 115-116.

<sup>4</sup>Johann Daniel von der Heydt, Geschichte der evangelischen Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin: Trowitzsch und Sohn, 1926), p. 36.



of good liturgical and hymnological usage.

The writer has expressed similar opinions in a previous essay, from which the following quotation is taken:

During recent years there has been a growing interest on the part of Lutheran church musicians in the musical treasures of the past. This interest has grown out of the realization that musical practice in the Lutheran Church in America today is in spirit far removed from the principles and philosophy which in past centuries have produced a musical heritage second to none. That this musical heritage has in large part been forgotten or neglected is due in part to a trend which has been in progress since before the days of Bach. The prevailing spirit of the times during the periods of Classicism, Romanticism, and the twentieth century has not been conducive to a true appreciation of what constitutes sound and edifying church music. Of even greater significance as a cause for the present condition of music in the Lutheran Church in America is the havoc wrought during the period which saw this denomination's transition from a German-language church to a church body thoroughly integrated into American society. This transition took place most rapidly during the interval between the two World Wars. It is only natural that much of what was distinctive in the musical life of Lutheranism was lost, since ministers and musicians alike felt themselves forced to find and use a substitute for that which was given up through the change in language. As a result many a hymn and melody entirely foreign to the spirit of the Reformation found its way into Lutheran churches.<sup>5</sup>

On the other hand, much has been done during recent years by church music seminars, church music workshops, liturgical institutes, music departments at synodical teachers colleges and seminaries, and similar organizations to foster a return to Lutheran liturgical, hymnological, and

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<sup>5</sup>Theodore P. Klammer, "The Lutheran Chorale Motet during the Reformation Period" (Unpublished Master's Essay, The University of Chicago, Chicago, 1952), pp. 1-2.



musical tradition. Theodore Hoelty-Nickel, in his opening address to the members of the first Church Music Seminar, sponsored by Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, in the summer of 1944, stated the aims of the seminar in the following words, which may be taken to represent the views of many leading church musicians today:

We are assembled here this week to salvage our immortal musical heritage from the wreckage of the last quarter of a century. In close parallel with the world, we have engaged, particularly during the last twenty-five years, in a fatal process of whole or partial imitation of manners, styles, and philosophies which are foreign to the spirit of the Reformation, of Luther and Bach, and of the glorious organization entrusted to us by the fathers of our church. Our strong, simple, and yet characteristically Lutheran apparatus in public worship has too often been amateurishly tampered with. Our Lutheran chorale, recognized by all authorities on church music as the most perfect pearl in the necklace of sacred folk song, has been more and more neglected, while anemic and musically low standard tunes have come into favor.<sup>6</sup>

If this work of restoring an intelligent appreciation and usage of the Lutheran musical heritage and traditions is to continue and become increasingly effective, it becomes apparent that every minister of the Church, whether pastor, choirmaster, or organist, must to a greater or lesser degree study and become acquainted with the musical principles and usages of the Church in her golden age, the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This thesis is an effort in that direction.

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<sup>6</sup>Theodore Hoelty-Nickel (ed.), The Musical Heritage of the Lutheran Church, Valparaiso University Pamphlet Series, No. 6 (Valparaiso, Indiana, n. d.), p. 5.



### Limitations

The previous paragraph already indicates the scope of the period to be investigated. We are here concerned with musical practices as they existed roughly during the first Reformation century, from the year 1523, when the first evangelical hymns began to be printed on single sheets, being collected and published in the same year as the Achtliederbuch, until the first decades of the seventeenth century, when the "new style," the "Italian manner," began to dominate all European music.

The term "hymn" in this essay is used to designate those sacred folk songs prepared by Luther and his co-workers to be sung by the congregation in the vernacular as part of the public worship services or for private devotion at home, in school, at work, in the fields, on the streets, or wherever there was occasion to sing. These hymns are often referred to as Kirchenlieder or chorales.

We are not necessarily concerned here with a chronological history of the origin and development of Lutheran hymns and hymn singing but aim rather to investigate the more practical aspects of the problem. While theory and practice cannot be entirely separated, the one may be emphasized more than the other. Our concern, then, is with the cantus rather than with the musica, with the usus



rather than with the ars. This distinction is explained by Gurlitt in the words:

Schon in seiner Schrift "An die Rats Herrn aller Staedte deutschen Lands, dasz sie christliche Schulen aufrichten und halten sollen" (Anfang 1524) dringt Luther, dem die staedtischen Lateinschulen immer besonders am Herzen liegen, mit groszem Nachdruck auf die Pflege der Sprachen und Kuenste, besonders der Musik: "Ich rede fuer mich, wenn ich Kinder haette und vermoecht's, sie mueszten mir nicht allein die Sprachen und Historien hoeren, sondern auch singen und die Musica mit der ganzen Mathematica lernen." Luther fordert die weltliche Obrigkeit, besonders die Staedte, auf, in ihren Schulen zunaechst das Singen, den Gesang (cantus, cantilena, d. h. den "usus," die Praxis des Kirchengesangs) und weiterhin "die Musica mit der ganzen Mathematica" zu pflegen. Unter der "ganzen Mathematica" ist hier das quadriviale Studium der artes liberales zu verstehen, in dessen Rahmen die Musiklehre, die ars musica, gehoert. Triviales Singen (usus, praktischer Kirchengesang) und quadriviale musica (Musiklehre, "artem lernen") gehoeren fuer Luther (nach hochmittelalterlicher Tradition) zusammen, waehrend das Schwergewicht in der Musik der Reformationszeit immer mehr von der ars auf den usus, von der musica auf den cantus und entsprechend von dem musicus auf den cantor uebergeht. Der reformatorischer Musiker ist deshalb der Kantor.<sup>7</sup>

#### Previous Studies

There are any number of histories of church music and similar works dealing with the topic of hymn singing. They are usually of a more general nature, embracing the entire subject of Lutheran church music and do not deal specifically with praxis. Notable among these works are those by

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<sup>7</sup>Willibald Gurlitt, Johannes Walter und die Musik der Reformationszeit, Sonderdruck aus dem Lutherjahrbuch 1933 (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1933), pp. 43-44.



Blume,<sup>8</sup> Cunz,<sup>9</sup> von der Heydt,<sup>10</sup> Koch,<sup>11</sup> Moser,<sup>12</sup> Schering,<sup>13</sup> Stahl,<sup>14</sup> and Winterfeld.<sup>15</sup>

Of special value in a study of this kind are the prefaces and forewords to the many hymn books published during the sixteenth century. Fortunately, these are available to the student in a collection of reprints of practically all the hymn book prefaces of the period, prepared by Wackernagel.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Friedrich Blume, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik (Potsdam: Akademische Verlags-gesellschaft Athenaion, 1931).

<sup>9</sup>F. A. Cunz, Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes vom 16. Jahrhundert bis auf unsere Zeit (Leipzig: J. T. Loeschke, 1855).

<sup>10</sup>Johann Daniel von der Heydt, Geschichte der evangelischen Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin: Trowitzsch und Sohn, 1926).

<sup>11</sup>Eduard Emil Koch, Geschichte des Kirchenlieds und Kirchengesangs der christlichen, insbesondere der deutschen evangelischen Kirche (Stuttgart: Chr. Belser, 1866).

<sup>12</sup>Hans Joachim Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin-Darmstadt: Verlag Carl Merseburger, 1953).

<sup>13</sup>Arnold Schering, Evangelische Kirchenmusik. In Guido Adler, Handbuch der Musikgeschichte (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurter Verlags-Anstalt A.-G., 1924).

<sup>14</sup>Wilhelm Stahl, Geschichtliche Entwicklung der evangelischen Kirchenmusik (Leipzig: Max Hesses Verlag, 1903).

<sup>15</sup>Carl von Winterfeld, Der evangelische Kirchengesang (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Haertel, 1843-1847).

<sup>16</sup>Philipp Wackernagel, Bibliographie zur Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes im XVI. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag von Heyder und Zimmer, 1855).



### Method

Throughout this work it is the aim to let the sources speak for themselves. In many cases secondary sources must provide the quotations because the primary sources are not available. Almost all the quotations are given in the German language. While an English translation might be desirable, it was felt that the original would be more advantageous, partly because anyone who is sufficiently interested in this topic to read this essay can be expected to have at least a good reading knowledge of the German language, partly because of the difficulty of recreating the intended meaning in translation. It should be stated also that in some sections that follow, applicable material from a previous essay<sup>17</sup> is incorporated in this thesis with slight alterations without benefit of special footnote.

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<sup>17</sup>Klammer, op. cit.



## CHAPTER II

### LUTHERAN PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH MUSIC AND HYMN SINGING

#### Luther the Musician

Luther was a man who by temperament, environment, and training was well fitted for the work of guiding the musical destinies of the young evangelical church. He grew up amidst the musical surroundings which were so much a part of everyday life. The training he received in the various schools which he attended as well as the important part which music played in the church services of his day combined to develop in him not only a deep love for music but also a rather high degree of musical ability. He was able to compose simple motets, at least one of which has come down to us, his Non moriar sed vivam.<sup>1</sup> That he loved music is revealed by his many remarks on the subject. He says:

Musica ist eine schoene, liebliche Gabe Gottes, sie hat mich oft also erweckt und bewegt, dasz ich Lust zu predigen gewonnen habe. . . . Die Musik ist aller Bewegung des menschlichen Herzens eine Regiererin . . . nichts auf Erden ist kraeftiger, die Traurigen froehlich, die Froehlichen traurig, die Verzagten herzhaft zu machen, die Hoffaertigen zur Demut zu reizen, den Neid und Hasz zu mindern, denn die Musik.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Friedrich Blume, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik (Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1931), p. 5



To his friend Johann Walter he wrote: "Ich habe Musicam allzeit liebgehabt." Luther's physician, Matthaeus Ratzeberger, tells the story of Luther's friend, the composer Lukas Edemberger, who one day found Luther unconscious on the floor of his study:

Er fahet darauf an, mit seinen Gesellen zu musizieren; da solches geschicht, kommt D. Luther allgemach wieder zu sich selbst, und verging ihm seine Schwermut und Traurigkeit, also dasz er anfehet mit ihnen zu singen. Hierueber wird er so froehlich und bittet gedachten Magister Lucam und seine Gesellen aufs Fleiszigste, sie wollten ihn ja oft besuchen, insonderheit wenn sie Lust zu Musizieren haetten.<sup>2</sup>

One of Luther's chief delights was making music in the home. He was a good lute player, and in his Hauskantorei he often joined with his friends in singing the compositions of Walter, Josquin, and others. One of his house guests, Georg Forster, later reported in the preface of his first song collection regarding these musical get-togethers:

Wie ich dann oft und dick von einem thewren man (Luther) gehoert, das er unter allen kurtzweilen, damit man die zeyt zuuertreiben fuehret, kein Gootlicher, ehrlicher und schoenere wist dann die edel Music.<sup>3</sup>

Luther himself says of these occasions:

Wir singen so gut wir koennen, ueber Tisch und gebens

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<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Hans Joachim Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin-Darmstadt: Verlag Carl Merseburger, 1953), p. 27.

<sup>3</sup>Philipp Wackernagel, Bibliographie zur Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes im XVI. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt a. M.: Verlag von Heyder und Zimmer, 1855), p. 567.



darnach weiter. Machen wir etliche Saeue darunter, so ists freilich eure Schuld nicht, sondern unsere Kunst, die noch sehr gering ist, wenn wirs schon zwei, dreimal uebersingen. . . . Darum mueszt ihr Komponisten uns auch zugute halten, ob wir Saeue machen in euren Gesaengen. Denn wir wollens wohl lieber treffen als fehlen.<sup>4</sup>

That Luther understood and appreciated the works of the great masters is shown by such statements as the following: "Es sein zweyerley componisten und poeten, die rechten sein der silben und noten herren, die andern ihre Knechte."<sup>5</sup> His favorite composer was Josquin, whom he rates as master of the notes, saying of him: "Er ist der Noten Meister, die haben es machen mueszen, wie er wollte, die anderen Sangmeister mueszen es machen, wie es die Noten haben wollen." He therefore describes him as a "ganz sonderlicher Meister" and says of him that music flowed from his pen "froehlich, willig, mild und lieblich wie Finkengesang."<sup>6</sup> At one time Luther lamented over the death of Josquin, de La Rue, Finck, and many another master: "Ach, wie feine Musici sind in den letzten zehn Jahren gestorben . . . die Welt ist der gelehrten Leute nimmer wert!"<sup>7</sup>

Luther's appreciation and technical knowledge of music is perhaps best shown in his oft-quoted statement:

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<sup>4</sup>Quoted in Blume, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Quoted in Moser, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted in Blume, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>Quoted in Moser, op. cit., p. 22.



Wo aber die natuerliche Musika durch die Kunst geschaeft und poliert wird, da siehet und erkennet man erst zum Teil (denn gaenzlich kanns nicht begriffen noch verstanden werden) mit groszer Verwunderung die grosze und vollkommene Weisheit Gottes in seinem wunderbarlichen Werke der Musika, in welcher vor allem das seltsam und wohl zu verwundern ist, dasz einer eine schlechte Weise oder Tenor (wie es die Musici heissen) hersinget, neben welcher drei, vier oder fuenf andere Stimmen auch gesungen werden, die um solche schlechte, einfaeltige Weise oder Tenor gleich mit Jauchzen rings umher um solchen Tenor spielen und springen und mit mancherlei Art und Klang dieselbige Weise wunderbarlich zieren und schmecken, und gleich wie einen himmlischen Tanzreihen auffuehren, freundlich einander begegnen und sich gleich Herzen und lieblich umfassen, also dasz diejenigen, so solches ein wenig verstehen und dadurch bewegt werden, sich des heftig verwundern mueszen und meinen, dasz nichts Seltsamers in der Welt sei denn ein solcher Gesang, mit vielen Stimmen geschmueckt. Wer aber dazu keine Lust noch Liebe hat und durch solch lieblich Wunderwerk nicht bewegt wird, das musz wahrlich ein grober Klotz sein, der nicht wert ist, dasz er solche liebliche Musika, sondern das wueste, wilde Eselsgeschrei des Chorals oder der Hunde oder Saeue Gesang und Musika hoere.<sup>8</sup>

Above all, Luther believed in the power of music as a handmaid of theology and as a wonderful means of proclaiming the Gospel. Already in his letter to Ludwig Senfl he stated:

Wir wissen, dasz die Musik den boesen Geistern unfaszlich und untragbar ist. Auch urteile ich und schaeme mich nicht zu bekennen, nach der Theologie sei keine Kunst, die der Musik gleichgesetzt werden koenne, da sie allein nach jener vermag, wessen sonst nur die Gottesgelahrtheit faehig ist: ein ruhiges und froehliches Gemuet zu schenken, um dessentwillen, weil der Teufel, trauriger Sorgen und unrastiger Scharen Urheber, auf das Wort Musik fast aehnlich flieht wie auf das Wort Theologie. Darum haben sich die Propheten keiner Kunst so beflissen wie der Musik, haben auch ihre Gottesweisheit nicht nach Geometrie, Arithmetik, Astronomie gerichtet, sondern an die Musik gewandt, um Theologie

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<sup>8</sup>Quoted in Blume, op. cit., p. 6.



und Musik engstens zu verbinden, wenn sie in Psalmen und Liedern redeten. Doch was lob' ich die Tonkunst hier und versuche im engen Briefrahmen solch ein gross Ding zu malen oder gar zu verpfuschen? Doch so ueberwältigt und ueberwältigt mich die Neigung zu ihr, die mich so oft erfrischt und von grossen Leiden befreit hat.<sup>9</sup>

That music has important theological and didactic value is shown also in the following words of Luther:

Die Musika ist eine schoene, herrliche Gabe Gottes und nahe der Theologie. Ich wollt mich meiner geringen Musika nicht um was Groszes verzeihen. Die Jugend soll man stets zu dieser Kunst gewoehnen, denn sie macht feine, geschickte Leute. . . . Wer die Musika verachtet, wie denn alle Schwaermer tun, mit denen bin ich nicht zufrieden. Denn die Musika ist eine Gabe und Geschenck Gottes, nicht ein Menschengeschenck; so vertreibt sie auch den Teufel und machet die Leut froehlich; man vergiszet dabei alles Zorns, Unkeuschheit, Hoffart und ander Laster. Ich gebe nach der Theologia der Musika den naechsten Platz und hoechste Ehre.

. . . . .  
Ein Schulmeister musz singen koennen, sonst sehe ich ihn nicht an. Man soll auch junge Gesellen zum Predigtamt nicht verordnen, sie haben sich denn in der Schule in der Musika wohl versucht und geuebt.<sup>10</sup>

### The Purpose of Music in the Life of a Christian

#### A Means of Praising God

It was a principle of Luther's theology that the assembled congregation should participate in the public worship, responding with prayer and praise, psalms and songs to the grace of God offered in the means of grace.

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<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Moser, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted in Blume, op. cit., pp. 6-7.



He says:

Aber nu hats Gott also geschaffen, das die Menschen ungleich sind und einer den andern regirn, einer dem andern gehorchen sol. Zween koennen miteinander singen (das ist Gott alle gleich loben), aber nicht mit einander reden (das ist regirn).

In 1524 he writes to Spalatin: "Ich bin willens, deutsche Psalmen fuers Volk zu machen, das ist geistliche Lieder, dasz das Wort Gottes auch durch den Gesang unter den Leuten bleibe."<sup>11</sup>

Luther's views, of course, were shared by his colleagues and successors. Thus we hear Martin Bucer echoing the Lutheran principle in his preface to the Straszburger Gesangbuch of 1545:

Seitmal dann uns, wie die alten lieben Freunden Gottes, ja so uil mehr, so uil uns Gott der Vatter, seinen Son, unseren herren Jesum Christum, weiter zuo erkennen gegeben hat, nichts so tieff, ja nichts anders ueberal zuohertzen gehen, und angelegen sein sol, dann das goettliche, Nemlich, wie wir jn, unseren schoepfer und Vatter, recht erkennen, lieben, loben und preisen, durch Jesum Christum unsern Herren und erloeser, und hiezuo meniglich reitzen unnd bewegen, so solte die Music, alles gesang und seiten spiel (welche vor andern dingen, wie gesagt, das gemuet zuobewegen, hefftig und hitzig zuomachen, mechtig sind) nirgend anders, dann zuo goettlichem lob, gebett, lehre und ermanung, gebraucht werden.<sup>12</sup>

J. Speratus, in his preface to the low German Gesangbuch of 1526, says it this way:

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<sup>11</sup>Quoted in Walter Blankenburg, "Evangelischer Gemeindegesang," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Musik Herausgegeben von Friedrich Blume, IV, cols. 1649-1680 (Kassel und Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1955), col. 1650.

<sup>12</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 584.



Alsze nu yn beyden Testamenten genochsam ys beweret, geistlike gesenge Gade annemelyck, und nicht lasterlyck, Schoelen derhaluen van allen Christen gelesen unnd gesungen werden tho lave Gade dem allmechtigen, deme alleyne, loff, prysz, und ere in ewicheit.<sup>13</sup>

J. Spangenberg, in his Vorrede zu den Kirchengesengen von 1545, says:

Diese Kirchengesenge, lieber leser, sind nichtt aus furwitz, gutduencken, oder aus meinung, ablas der suende da durch zuuerdienen, unnd die Justification zu erlangen, Sonder Gott zu lobe und ehren, den Kirchendienern zu gute, und der Christlichen gemein zur besserung, also kurtz und einfaeltig verfasset.<sup>14</sup>

Balthasar Bidenbach and Lucas Osiander wrote in 1569:

Und hat der Allmechtig zuo seiner Ehr, auch dise Kunst den Menschen verlihen, das man zumal nicht nur mit einer, sondern auch mit vilen und mancherley hohen und niedern Stimmen (woelche doch alle sampt lieblich zusammen gericht werden, und wol lauten) Ihne und seine Wunder und Wohlthaten rhuemen und preisen kan.<sup>15</sup>

The preface to the Augsburger Form und Ordnung Gaystlicher Gesang und Psalmen, 1530, states: "Wil hiemit alle so sy singen oder lesen, umb Gottes eer und jrer seelen hayl willen, ermant und gebeten haben, das sy Got dem vattern von hertzen singen."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 546.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 582.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 639.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 549.



If music and song are to serve for the praise and worship of God, it follows that only the Word of God should be sung in church. Music, apart from the text, has no meaning for Luther. Thus, in explaining to Johann Walter how he was able to write such a fitting melody for the German Sanctus, he said:

Der Poet Virgilius hat mich solches gelehrt, der also seine Carmina und Wort auf die Geschichte, die er beschreibet, so kuenstlich applizieren kann. Also soll auch die Musica alle ihre Noten und Gesaenge auf den Text richten.<sup>17</sup>

It is also desirable that the text be versified, for thus the Word is more easily learned and remembered. In the Babst Gesangbuch, following No. LXXXIX, Luther says:

Wo aber jemand tuechtig und lustig were, solche sprueche, in gute feine reime zu stellen, Das were dazu gut, das sie deste leichter behalten und deste lieber gelesen wuerden. Denn reyme oder vers, machen gute sentenz oder sprichwort, die man lieber braucht, denn sonst schlechte rede.<sup>18</sup>

Above all, hymns must be based on Scripture. The Lutheran emphasis on the importance of the Word is well known. It appears in many statements in the sixteenth century hymnals. Thus in the Kirchenordnung of 1557 it is stated: "Es soll auch kein gesang in der Kirchen gesungen werden, es sey dann Christlich und in der Heyligen schrift

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<sup>17</sup>Quoted in Moser, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>18</sup>Geystliche Lieder. Gedruckt zu Leipzig, durch Valentin Babst, in der Ritterstrassen. M.D.XLV. (Facsimile edition, Kassel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1929).



gegruendet."<sup>19</sup> This does not mean that only the literal words of the Bible may be sung. The sense is the important thing, not the words themselves, as Johannes Zwick reminds his readers:

Es muessend alle menschen des verstands gfangner sin, gleert und ungleert, der buochstab aber und die wort sind fry. Wz nun dem verstand glych ist, das ist ouch gschrift, wie unglych die wort: Was dem verstand unglych ist, das ist wider gschrift, wie glych die wort sin moegend, und wann sy schon ytel guldin waerind. Darumb lieszend etlich der alten Christen uff jre gastmaeler, die sy mit den armen hieltend, nit allein usz der gschrift singen, sunder was einer ouch sunst eigens kund, doch frylich nichts das wider Gott und den verstand der heyligen gschrift waere.<sup>20</sup>

Luther himself was very much concerned about the integrity of the text in the new editions, complaining in his preface to the Wittenberg Gesangbuch of 1529 about the fact that so often the hymns "jhe lenger jhe felscher gedruckt werden," and adding in his characteristic way the remark: "Summa, Es wil jhe der Meuse mist unter dem Pfeffer sein."<sup>21</sup>

This emphasis on the Word explains, too, the preference for singing the Psalms, as Wolff Koepffel states in his preface to the Straszburger Gesangbuch of 1533:

Dann wz jeder fuer einen Psalmen fuernimpt, der kan nit on frucht, so andacht desz gemuets und gnad Gottes dabei ist, gehandelt werden, Seitmal an allen orten das einig lebendig wort Christus Jesus mit den windeln

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<sup>19</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 600.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 557.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 547.



des buchstabens verwickelt, fuer getragen ist.<sup>22</sup>

The inviolability of the text is referred to in one of the Schlussreime des Michael Weisseschen Gesangbuechleins von 1531:

Wo ein thon oben an gestelt  
Einem vorsinger nicht gefelt  
Der ticht einn bessern so er kan  
Den nehm jch mit allem danck an  
Er seh nur mit allem fleisz zu  
Das er dem text keinn shaden thu  
Weder sihn, sillaben noch wort  
Verrueck an jrgent einem ort  
Denn die sach jst nicht mein allein  
Sonder einer christlichen gemain.<sup>23</sup>

The Reformers were well aware of the doctrinal implications of the hymns sung by the people. Hymns with faulty texts could easily lead to sectarianism. Thus Cornelius Becker in his Psalter Davids Gesangweis, 1602, complains about the growing popularity of the Lobwasser translation of the Psalms of Beza and Marotto, saying:

Also das auch nach etlicher (sonderlich derer, denen der athem nach dem Caluinismo reucht) vermeinten hohen verstand und iudicio, Lutherus mit seinen Gesengen fuer diesem werck sich wol verkriechen mueste. Darumb auch an etlichen benachbarten orten, diese aus dem Frantzoesischen ins Deutsche versetzte Psalmen in den Kirchenversamlungen zusingen angeordnet, und den Lutherischen Gesengen weit fuergezogen werden. Aber es hat es leider die erfahrung gegeben, das solches gewoehnlich zur Religions verenderung, und zur einfuehrung des hochschedlichen Caluinismi der rechte anfang und eingang gewesen sey.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 549.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 681.



D. Polycarpus, in his preface to the same collection, remarks:

Und wenn es denn von alters her heist: Mutata musica in templis, mutatur etiam genus doctrinae, das wenn man auff eine neue frembde art anfenget in den Kirchen zusingen, gemeinlich auch verenderung der Lehr erfolge.<sup>25</sup>

No doubt it was the concern for the pure Word and doctrine which led to the rule laid down in the kursaechsische Generalartikel of 1580:

Damit das Volk im Singen nicht irre gemacht werde, sollen die custodes keine andere denn D. Luthers Gesaenge und die er ihm gefallen lassen, in den Kirchen singen, damit sie dieselbigen wohl lernen und eins das andere desto leichter singen lehren koenne.<sup>26</sup>

No doubt this same reasoning also led to the fact that the Babst Gesangbuch of 1545, the last to be published during the lifetime of Luther, was taken over bodily by many of the later hymn books.

One cannot help thinking of this as a practical application of Luther's own phrase: "The Word they still shall let remain."

The importance of the Word may also be said to appear in the very nature of the art music in which it was clothed, at least during the formative years of the Reformation. The cantus firmus technique of Johann Walter and his musical colleagues makes this emphasis apparent, as Gurlitt explains

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 683.

<sup>26</sup>Quoted in Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1662.



when he writes:

"Richtschnur" des Tenors ist der Choral, d. h. die plan (ungemessen, nicht mensuriert), einstimmig und ohne Begleitung gesungene Chorweise (musica plana, choralis) in Unterschied zu dem Figural der Nebestimmen, die ihren Namen von den verschiedenen Notenwerten und Ligaturen ("figurae") der gemessenen, mensurierten Musik (musica mensurata, figuralis) tragen. Dieser Contratenor altus und bassus, die den Choral improvisationsgemaess "umspielen," "zieren und schmuecken," (Luther) gewinnt fuer die Choralkunst Johann Walters liturgisch-dogmatische Bedeutung, indem der Tenorchoral in seiner wurzelhaften Einheit von Wort und Weise in seiner planen, kuenstlerisch unbetonten, in den Hofkapellen und Kantoreien zumeist von Geistlichen vorgetragenen Gestalt als gueltige Vergegenwaertigung des Evangeliums, und damit als eine kuenstlerische Weise des Daseins der Lutherischen Kirche erscheint.<sup>27</sup>

#### A Means of Proclaiming the Gospel

Music in the Church is an expression of the Christian's love and praise of God, his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. If music is to be a pleasing sacrifice to God, it must be based upon and related to the Word of the Gospel. It must serve the purpose of teaching and admonition, as St. Paul says.<sup>28</sup> Christian hymns, then, are the musical expression of the Gospel, as it is proclaimed in the Absolution, the Lessons, the Sermon, and the other sacramental acts of the Liturgy. The proclamation of the Gospel of the forgiveness merited by Christ is the purpose of music

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<sup>27</sup>Willibald Gurlitt, Johannes Walter und die Musik der Reformationszeit, Sonderdruck aus dem Lutherjahrbuch 1933 (Muenchen: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1933), p. 86.

<sup>28</sup>Col. 3:16.



in the life of the Christian in relation to his own faith and life. Luther made this very clear already in 1524 when in his preface to the first edition of Walter's Gesangbuch he wrote that they had "ettliche geystliche lieder zu samen bracht, das heylige Evangelion, so itzt von Gottes gnaden widder auff gangen ist, zu treyben und ynn schwanck zu bringen."<sup>29</sup>

This purpose of hymns is restated over and over again in the various hymn books of the sixteenth century. Thus Thomas Muenzer in 1524:

allein das die Psalmen den armen leyen wol vorgesungen und gelesen werden. Denn darin wirdt gar klerlich erkant die wirckung des heylgen geistes, wie man sich kegen got halten sol und zur ankunfft des rechten Christen glaubens kurmen. Ja auch wie der glaub soll bewert sein mit viel anfechtung, dis alles ist vom heylgen geist gar klerlich in den psalmen voffasset. Drumb leeret der heylige Paulus wie man sich wben unnd ergetzen sol in geystlichen lobsengen unnd psalmen.<sup>30</sup>

J. Spangenberg in his Vorrede zu den Kirchengesengen von 1545 states as the purpose of this collection of hymns:

Zum ersten und fuer allen dingen Gott zu lobe, preiss unnd ehren, auff das Gottes wort, und das heilig und seligmachend Euangelion gepflantzet, und der glaube an unsern Herrn Jhesum Christum, teglich inn uns zuneme, und gemehret werde.<sup>31</sup>

Johan Schoenbrun writes in the preface to his Geistlichen und Christlichen Liedern v. J. 1557:

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<sup>29</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 543.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 542.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 582.



Der heilige Apostel Paulus schreibet, . . . Das Christus unser Lobgesang sey, und wir nichtes wissen, noch sagen sollen, denn Jhesum Christum unsern Heyland, auff das sein wort und lehre auff allerlay weise getrieben und geuebt werde, und an demselbigen stettig anhalte, mit lesen, lernen, dencken, schreiben und tichten, also, das recht der Sabbath gefeyert, und Gottes Name geheiligt werde, Das ist, das wir mit seinem wort umbgehen, und uns allein bekuemmern, dasselbe stetz im hertzen, mund und fuer den ohren haben, so wuerde es nimmer ohne frucht abgehen.<sup>32</sup>

Lovable Niclas Herman had his Sonntagseuangelien published in 1560 "damit die reine Lere dadurch ausgebreitet und dem jungen Volck eingebildet wuerde."<sup>33</sup>

Cornelius Becker in his Psalter of 1602 calls attention to Luther's desire to have hymns proclaim the Gospel message, saying:

Darumb und weil Lutherus befunden, das dieses ein sehr gutes unnd bequemes mittel sey, Gottes Wort weit und breit in die Lande zu bringen, hat er seine trewe Gehuelffen und Mitarbeiter am Werck des Herrn, die Psalmen in geistliche Lieder zufassen, fleisig vermahnet.<sup>34</sup>

Hymns have a particular value because they are an effective means of bringing the Gospel to the hearts of the common people, who for one reason or another do not always get the full benefit of a sermon. It matters not whether the Word is proclaimed from the pulpit or in the music; what is important is that it reach the heart of the hearer.

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 602.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 611.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 680.



Balthasar Bidenbach and Lucas Osiander have this in mind when they preface their Psalter of 1569 with the remark:

Und werden one zweiffel dergleichen ubungen bey den Auszerwaehten nimmermehr ohne nutz und frucht abgehen, es werde gleich Gottes wort gelesen, geprediget, oder in Christlichen Psalmen gesungen. Denn es ist und bleibt Gottes wort, man lese oder singe es.<sup>35</sup>

The Vorrede zu dem Gamersfelderschen Psalter, Nuernberg 1542 states the wish

das auch der gantze Psalter Davids, auff's gesang in solche lieder bracht unnd gezogen wuerde, Ob er villeycht also basz, und mehr denn sonst, in den gemeinen Mann moechte gebracht, und eingepflantzet werden, Und sonderlich, das man ein ding im gesang und liedern vil ehe fahet und begreyffet, denn wenn mans sonst fassen unnd lernen solte.<sup>36</sup>

Martin Bucer expressed the same wish in the Vorrede zu dem Straszburger Gesangbuche von 1545,

lieder zuomachen, auff das davon nit allein gesagt, sonder auch gesungen, und dadurch den leuten alles desto gruendlicher zuhertzen gebracht, und eingelassen werde.<sup>37</sup>

Johann Ott had the same thing in mind when he wrote in his Liederbuch of 1544:

Darumb David selb, der heilige Koenig und ubertreffliche Prophet, sich an den blossen Worten nit genuegen lassen, sonder auch seine harpffe in die hand genommen hat, und die wort durch solche Music gescherpffet, freundlicher und lieblicher gemacht.<sup>38</sup>

In a sermon on psalm singing M. Cyriacus Spangenberg

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 639.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 574.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 584.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 578.



in 1581 remarked:

Aber nu ists, Gott lob, dazu kommen, das man in be-  
kandter gewoenlicher sprache, nicht allein den Text  
der Psalmen, sondern auch derselben auszlegung, ge-  
waltiglich, und doch kurtz, von Gottliebenden Mennern,  
in Christliche Loblieder gebracht, lieset, spielet  
und singet.<sup>39</sup>

In the same vein Nicolaus Selnecker writes at length  
in his Psalter, Nuernberg, 1569:

Es ist ja am tage, das man durch feine Christliche  
Lieder die rechten lehr weit bringen und ausbreiten  
kan, und die hertzen damit froelich gemacht werden,  
wie im Teutschland biszher Gott sein gnad darzu hat  
geben, das durch feine Christliche Geseng in der  
Kirchen vil erbawet worden, und oft mehr damit, denn  
mit Predigen auszgerichtet ist, wie auch derwegen  
Augustinus sagt: Viel Leut, die in der Kirchen zusam-  
men kommen, koennen weder der Apostlen Schrifften,  
noch der Propheten hohe Lehr leichtlich lernen und  
verstehen, oder, wenn sie es ja lernen, so koennen  
sie es nicht behalten und gedencken. Aber die Psalmen  
und Lieder koennen sie in jren Heusern singen, und  
oeffentlich in der Gemein, und sich damit selbs unter-  
weisen, erfrewen und lustig machen. O wie ein wunder-  
barliche unnd weise art ist diese unsers rechten  
Meysters des Heyligen Geists, das wir zugleich singen,  
unnd was den nutz der Seelen belanget, gelehret und  
unterwiesen werden.<sup>40</sup>

Spangenberg in the sermon referred to above therefore  
says that

dieses unser Gesangbuechlein, wol mit warheit, Der  
Leyen Loci Communes, Oder: Hauptartickel Christlicher  
Lere, fuer die Leyen, mag genandt werden, Und moechte  
wol, mit ehren, die kleine Bibel heissen, Solt denn  
ein solch edel Buch nicht werdt sein, davon zu predig-  
en?<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 661.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 637.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 658.



The value of hymns for the common people, particularly the illiterate, is taken into account by Cornelius Becker in his Psalter referred to above, when he says:

Dann gewiss und war, das aus diesen Geistlichen Liedern, viel tausend menschen den Catechismum und sonderlich den Artickel von der Rechtfertigung des armen Suenders fuer Gott, richtig gelernet. Welches sonst bey vielen, wegen das sie weder schreiben noch lesen koennen, gemangelt hette.<sup>42</sup>

The same sentiment is expressed by Joachim Aberlin in a hymn collection of 1534. He asks:

Wer waiszt doch nit (wie der Pomeranus sagt) dz unsere gemueter durch sollich vers und reymen vil mer angelickert werden, dann mit ainer schlechten red, man widerefere sy joch als dick man woelle? Ja, er achtet ain nitt fuer ain rechten Christen, er kuende dann sich selbs ye bey der weil auch mit Psalmen troesten.<sup>43</sup>

If music is to serve in the life of a Christian as a means of praising and glorifying God and at the same time as a means of bringing the Gospel message into the hearts of men, it follows that the texts of the hymns must be in a language understood by the people. Hymns, if they are to serve their purpose, must be in the vernacular. That is why Luther already in 1524 expressed his desire, "deutsche Psalmen fuers Volk zu machen, das ist geistliche Lieder, dasz das Wort Gottes auch durch den Gesang unter den Leuten bleibe."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 680.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>44</sup>Quoted in Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1650.



The Enchiridion of 1524 complains about the practices that have been in vogue in the church services, in which, because of the foreign language used by the ministers and choirs, no benefit could be derived by the people, and, in some cases, even by the singers themselves. The preface states:

Als nemlich, das sye allein den gantzen tag ym chor gestanden seyn, unnd nach artt der Priester Baal mit undeutlichem geschrey gebrullet haben, unnd noch yn Stiff kirchen und kloestern brullen, wie die Walt esel, zu eynem tauben Gott. Nicht alleyn zu nachteyl yhr selbert, dyweil sie auch selbert oft nit verstehen, was sye syngen oder lesen, sond' auch der gantzen Christlichen gemeyn.

The same preface goes on to say: "Solche miszbrauch aber nu zu bessren, wirt Christlicher ordnung nach, an vill oerdern ordentlich furgenommen, deutsche Geystliche gesenge und psalmen zu syngen."<sup>45</sup>

Thomas Muentzer in the Vorrede vor seiner Deutsch Evangelisch Messze of 1524 says that his wish is to eliminate that which does not edify, ". . . sondern das Testament Christi offenbar handeln und Deutsch singen und erkleren, uff das die menschen muegen Christfoermig werden."<sup>46</sup> It is for the same reason that we read in the "Beschlusz" des Buechleins: Das Teutsch gesang so in der Mesz gesungen wuerdt etc.: ". . . dann es sol und musz in der versamlung

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<sup>45</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 543.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 542.



nichts gelert, gebet und gepredigt werden, es verstee es dann yederman, und sprech Amen."<sup>47</sup>

Hymn texts must be understood. Hence the use of the vernacular. Nevertheless, for those who use and understand the Latin language, Latin songs can be very useful and should be used. Thus the Kirchenordnung of 1557 makes it clear that German should be used by the common people, whereas Latin may be preferable for the scholars in the Latin schools. It reads:

Hierauf woellen und ordnen wir, Das die Kirchengesang bey uns Teutschen in den kirchen unsers Fuerstenthumbs teutsch gesungen, wie auch die andern empter, mit fuerlesen und fuersprechen in teutscher sprach geschehen sollen. Jedoch nach dem Sanct Paulus die frembde, doch etlichen bekante sprach zu seiner zeyt in der kirchen zur besserung zulest, So moegen die Schuler zu zeiten Lateinisch gesang ausz der heyligen schrift, oder derselben gemesz, jhnen zur ubung in der Kirchen singen, Fuernemlich aber dieweyl dem groessern theyl der Kirchen allein die teutsche sprach bekant, soll auch der merer theyl der gesang teutsch verrichtet werden.<sup>48</sup>

Spangenberg in a similar vein explains the use of both languages in the Kirchengesengen of 1545, saying:

Denn weil der Allmechtige Gott inn allen sprachen und zungen, wil gelobt und gepreiset sein, Ist hie Lateinisch und Deutsch beyeinander gestellt, Das lateinisch umb der schueler unnd gelerten, Das deutsch umb der leyen unnd ungelerten willen, auff das ein iglicher habe, damit er sein hertz inn Gottes dienst erquicke.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 545.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 600.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 582.



This principle is repeated in the preface Vor der Kerckenordeninge der Christliken Gemein tho Niggen Rade, 1564, which says: "De Latinischen Geseng sint nimande muette de se nicht versteet."<sup>50</sup> Likewise the preface of the Bruedergesangbuch of 1566:

Derhalben sol auch nach des heiligen Geistes lere, wie der gantze Gottesdienst, so auch der Kirchengesang nicht in frembder sondern in bekanter sprach, verrichtet werden, auff das die gantze Kirche die Psalmen verstehe und lerne, auch damit Gott helfen preisen, und daraus an erkenntnis, glaupe, liebe, gedult und andern tugenden gebessert werde.<sup>51</sup>

It goes without saying that the use of Christian hymns will lead to a greater degree of sanctification in the life of the Christian. Faith without works is not true faith. If hymns proclaim the Gospel of forgiveness, and are thus a means of justification, they must also be an aid to sanctification. Thus Spangenberg, quoted above, reminds his readers that the purpose of his collection of Kirchengesengen was "der Christlichen gemein zur besserung."<sup>52</sup> Likewise the Kirchenordnung of 1557 purposes "durch das gesang Gottes wort, so darinnen verfasst erinnert, und daraus an rechter erkantnusz Gottes, an glaupe, liebe, gedult, und allen tugenden gebessert werde."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 622.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 625.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 582.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 600.



Again, Conrad Wolffhart, in the preface to the Baseler Gesangbuch of 1559, encourages the reader that the church hymns "von hertzen zuo mercklichem trost unnd erbauung in warem glauben gesungen werden."<sup>54</sup>

Borchardt Waldis in the preface to his Parabel vom verlornen Sohn, 1527, wants the entire Christian life transformed by the use of God's Word, in song, in speech, and meditation. He says:

darum were ydt gudt unnd christlick, dat alle mynschen, de sick Christlikes namens rhomen, mit der schrift ummegingen, dat alle handtwercks luede by ohrem arbeyde, de Buer hynder der ploch, de dresscher ynn der schuenen, de olden wyuer by dem Spynwocken, de kynder up der straten, van Gade und synem worde, sungen, szeden, und trachteden, de schrift up allerley wysze gehandelt unnd tractert mochte werden.<sup>55</sup>

The writer of the preface vor dem Bonnischen Gesangbuch von 1561 writes in verse form:

Alle die dan diese geistliche lieder singen oder lesen  
sollen,  
Ich bitt das jhr doch nicht faul noch trach sein  
woellend.  
Sye mit dem hertzen zuo verstehn, Und auch zu lernen,  
Und einen frommen wandel darausz geberen.<sup>56</sup>

The Reformers recognized the need of teaching God's Word especially to the youth. How often the hymn book prefaces emphasize this need! One reason for this concern is the fact that young people need wholesome activities, lest

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 604.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 546.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 611.



they spend their time in undesirable behavior. Another reason is the fact that, humanly speaking, the welfare of the church in future generations depends on how thoroughly the youth can be indoctrinated. In addition, youth should be taught good Christian hymns for the psychological reason that thus they will more readily remember the teachings of God's Word.

The first of the above reasons Johann Ott has in mind when he writes in 1524:

das damit der jugend gedient wuerde, welche zu unsern zeiten seer vil ursach hat, das sie mit zechen, spielen, und anderm ergerlichem und unehrlichem fuernemen, in allerley unart gerett. Denn sie kan nit muessig sein noch feyren, Darumb wo sie mit ehrlichen nuetzen ubungen die zeyt nit hinbringdt, geht sie mit unehrlichem schedlichem ding umb, und suchet jr kuertzweil.<sup>57</sup>

The same composer amplifies his remarks on this subject by saying about his song collection:

Ob aber dise gesang, so ich yetzund in truck verfertiget, zu solchem nit dienstlich sind (for worship), denn es sind welt gesang und nit kirchen gesang, so dienen sie doch dazu, weyl das junge volck, wie vorgemeldet, nit muessig sein, sonder sein freud und kurtzweil musz haben, das sie diesz und dergleichen ander gesang fuer die hand nemen, und nit wie die groben paurn beim wein und an der zech in hauffen schreyen, sonder fein sit-sam und kuenstlich zusamb singen. Das ist nit barbara, sed erudita uoluptas, welche jungen leuten, sonderlich aber den Studenten wol zimmet, und sie billig dazu von jren Preceptorib. sollen gehalten werden, als zu einer solchen ubung, da nit allein kunst, sonder auch alle erbarkeit bey ist.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 577.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 578.



Others likewise point to the usefulness of good Christian hymns as a wholesome substitute for the many useless and even filthy street and tavern songs then in vogue. The Bruedergesangbuch of 1566 in its preface states that it is necessary to teach young people Christian hymns in order "das man sie . . . von den unnuetzen und schedlichen weltliedern abfueren moege."<sup>59</sup> Luther himself recommended Walter's collection of 1524 to the German youth, "da mit sie der bul lieder und fleyschlichen gesenge los worde, und an der selben stat, etwas heylsames lernet, und also das guete mit lust, wie den iungen gepuert, eyngienge."<sup>60</sup> The Bruedergesangbuch of 1538 was published, among other reasons, also for this purpose, "ob man doch moecht eins mals der groben und boesen welt, jre unnuetze fraeche und verfluochte gassenlieder hindern und vertreiben."<sup>61</sup> Martin Bucer in his preface to the Straszburger Gesangbuch of 1545 urges that the church leaders, "die Kinder . . . leeren . . . und alle leichtfertige, weltliche, buolerische lieder, jnen weder zuhoeren, noch zuosingen in einigen wege gestatten."<sup>62</sup> He goes on to say:

Darumb, wer koennte oder moechte, der solte dazuo raten

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 625.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 543.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 565.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 585.



und helfen, das sollich ueppige, teuffelische, verderbliche gesaeng abgethan und verspulget, und die heiligen Psalmen, und gotselige lieder, allen Christen, jungen und alten, gemein, und lustig gemacht, und in stetige uebung gebracht wuerden, Und zum fuernemisten die Fuersteher und Diener der kirchen Christi.<sup>63</sup>

The second reason for the great concern shown for the youth of the church in the matter of hymn singing is that the young people might the more readily learn the Word of God, "damit solche heylsame erinnerung von vilen hohen Artickeln des heyiligen Christlichen glaubens der Kirchen nicht entzogen oder verloren werde,"<sup>64</sup> as the Kirchenordnung of 1557 states it. Martin Agricola prepared his Gesangbuechlin of 1560, as Wolfgang Figulus explains in the preface, for the sake of "die iugent, die da musz in Gottes forcht und guten kuensten erzogen werden."<sup>65</sup> The Rigaisches Gesangbuch was published in Luebeck, 1548-49, for the purpose "allermeist oeuerst umme der Joegent willen, welcker ane soelcke Ceremonien und Gesenge nicht wol kan loeflick ertagen werden."<sup>66</sup> This same hymnal had already been reissued in 1537 in Rostock "deme Almechtigen Gade thon ehren, der hilligen Gemeyne thor oeuinge, unnd der Joegent thom denste unnd beteringe."<sup>67</sup> According to the Vorrede zu

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 601.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 606.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 590.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 559.



dem Gamersfelderschen Psalter, Nuernberg 1542, the church should conscientiously see to it, "wie oder in was masz, weg und gestalt, Gottes wort in die gelirnige Jugendt koendte eingebildet, gebracht und getrieben werden, es were durch Gesang, Lieder, Versz, oder in ander weg."<sup>68</sup>

The pedagogical principle which prompted the concern for youth and hymn singing is stated by Niclas Herman in the preface to his Sonntagseuangelien of 1560, "das auch unwidersprechlich war ist, das alles, was im gesang verfasst wird, leichtlicher zu lernen, und besser zu behalten ist, denn was man sonst lieset und hoeret."<sup>69</sup> Herman also says that youth "solches Wort mit den Gesengen bey sich behelt und heim tregt." The result is that a young person, or anyone, for that matter, "da es allein ist, neben anderer arbeit, davon singet, und also jm das Wort Gottes tieffer eingebildet, und von tag zu tag dem Wort besser nachdenckt."<sup>70</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that some hymn collections were prepared for the particular purpose of providing material for the proper training of youth. Georg Rhaw, in the preface to his Newe Deudsche Geistliche Gesenge of 1544, says expressly that he is publishing this work, "Sonderlich

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 574.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 610.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 609.



aber, weil auch die liebe jugend bey euch, jnn der MUSICA, neben andern freien kuensten, vleissig geuebt wird."<sup>71</sup> Nor is it surprising to hear Luther himself remark: "Ein Schulmeister musz singen koennen, sonst sehe ich ihn nicht an. Auch soll man junge Gesellen zum Predigtamt nicht verordnen, sie haben sich denn in der Schule in der Musica wohl versucht und geuebt."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 579.

<sup>72</sup>Quoted in Moser, op. cit., p. 38.



## CHAPTER III

### HYMN SINGING IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

#### The Liturgy

Before undertaking a study of the practice of hymn singing in public worship, it is necessary to give some attention to the liturgical framework of the service. Luther supplied two orders of service which were generally accepted and used and upon which all subsequent service books in the Lutheran Church were based. The one was his Formula missae et communionis of 1523;<sup>1</sup> the other was his Deutsche Messe of 1526.<sup>2</sup>

The Formula missae was intended primarily for the larger city churches. It was essentially the Roman liturgy, cleansed of all unscriptural elements. It retained the use of the Latin language almost throughout. The distinction between Ordinarium--that is, those parts of the liturgy which do not change from Sunday to Sunday, namely, Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus--and the Proprium de

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<sup>1</sup>D. Martin Luthers Schriften von der Messe und Ordnung des Gottesdienstes, Abdruck aus dem zehnten Bande der Saemtlichen Schriften Luthers, aufs neue herausgegeben von der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), pp. 2230ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 226ff.



tempore--that is, those portions of the service which change from day to day, namely, the Introit, the Collect, the Epistle, the Gradual, the Gospel, and the Communio--was upheld. All these portions of the service were sung by the choir except those chanted by the minister, for example, Collect, Epistle, Gospel, and in some cases the Credo. The celebration of the Holy Supper itself began after the Sermon. This included the consecration of the bread and wine by the minister and the distribution to the communicants. The Canon missae of the Roman ritual was dropped. Only the Preface remained, followed by the Sanctus, the Lord's Prayer, the Verba, and the Agnus. After the distribution followed a brief Post-communio.

As far as congregational singing was concerned, this order of service made no provision for it. Indeed, at this date very few hymns had been provided. However, a number of reasons, not the least of which was Luther's growing concern for the universal priesthood of all believers, prompted him to provide a somewhat simplified liturgy, particularly for use in smaller parishes and rural churches. The result was his Deutsche Messe of 1526, which not only emphasized the use of the German language, but also provided for a more active participation on the part of the common people in the service by means of congregational hymns. While the general plan of the service remained the same as in the Formula



missae, provision was made for hymn singing as follows:

"Zum Anfang aber singen wir ein geistliches Lied oder einen deutschen Psalm."<sup>3</sup> "Auf die Epistel singt man ein deutsches Lied: Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist, oder sonst eins, und das mit dem ganzen Chor."<sup>4</sup> "Nach dem Evangelium singt die ganze Kirche den Glauben zu Deutsch: Wir glauben all an Einen Gott usw."<sup>5</sup> Following the consecration and distribution of the bread "singe das deutsche Sanctus, oder das Lied: Gott sei gelobet; oder Johann Hussens Lied: Jesus Christus unser Heiland. Darnach segne man den Kelch und gebe denselben auch, und singe, was uebrig ist von obgenannten Liedern, oder das deutsche Agnus Dei."<sup>6</sup>

The Augsburg Confession of 1530 refers to the introduction of German hymns into the liturgy with the words: "Nearly all the usual ceremonies (of the Mass) are also preserved, save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people."<sup>7</sup>

On these two orders of worship were based all subse-

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 235.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>7</sup>Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 65.



quent forms used in the Lutheran Church. Some leaned more to the earlier, Latin, order; others more to the German. Most of them were a mixture of elements from each. And in all the liturgies prepared for various parishes or groups of parishes during the following years changes were made, omissions here, additions there. Blume states: "Es gibt keine Kombination, die nicht in irgendeiner Kirchenordnung vorkaeme."<sup>8</sup> Even in Wittenberg as early as 1536 it is evident that neither of Luther's two forms was used in exact detail. Wolfgang Musculus in his Itinerarium of 1536 describes a service which he attended at Wittenberg on Exaudi of that year. The following excerpts serve to show the manner in which both languages were intermingled and the part that organ, choir, and congregation played in this particular service. He writes in part:

Primum ludebatur Introitus in organis succinente latine. . . . Post Introitum ludebatur in organis et vicissim canebatur a pueris kyrie eleyson, quo completo cantabat minister gloria in excelsis, quod canticum vicissim complebatur in organis et choro. . . . Post (after the Epistle) ludebatur in organis subjungente choro: Herr Gott vatter wohn uns bey etc. . . . Postea (after the Gospel) ludebatur in organis et a choro subjungebatur: wir glauben all an eynen Gott. . . . Post contionem canebat chorus latine: Da pacem Domine. . . . Sub communione canebatur Agnus Dei latine. . . . Cantato Agnus Dei subjungebant germanicum canticum: Jesus Christus etc.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Friedrich Blume, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik (Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1931), p. 32.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in Georg Rietschel, Die Aufgabe der Orgel im Gottesdienste bis in das 18. Jahrhundert (Leipzig: Verlag der Duerr'schen Buchhandlung, 1893), pp. 19-20.



The service at Eisenach, which Musculus attended on Cantate, 1526, was similar. An interesting variation, however, was the manner of singing after the Gospel. Choir with organ sang the Latin sequence, and between its verses the congregation sang the three stanzas of the hymn Christ ist erstanden. Musculus' words are the following: "Deinde rursus ludebatur in organis, succinente choro victimae paschali etc. populo vero intercinente: Christ ist erstanden."<sup>10</sup>

From these descriptions it is possible to determine at least some of the musico-liturgical practices common during this period. The choir sang in either language. Instrumental music was an important part of the service. The congregation was active in singing the hymns. Alternation between instruments, choir, and congregation was common. Choir and instruments performed simultaneously. However, with regard to congregational singing, it must be remembered that its introduction into the liturgy was slow. Blankenburg says:

Die Betrachtung sowohl von Kirchenordnungen wie von Berichten lehrt somit, dasz zwischen Theorie und Praxis Unterschiede bestanden und dasz wir uns die Einfuehrung des Gemeindegesangs im protestantischen Gottesdienst sehr nuechtern vorzustellen haben.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Walter Blankenburg, "Evangelischer Gemeindegesang," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Musik Herausgegeben von Friedrich Blume, IV, cols. 1649-1680 (Kassel und Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1955), col. 1652.



The numerous variations possible in the performance of the Lutheran liturgy are summed up and explained by Blume, who refers to the "Substitutions- und Additionsprinzip,"<sup>12</sup> which made this great variety possible. The principle of substitution and addition offered the following possibilities: (1) A service could be conducted entirely in Latin. (2) A service could be conducted entirely in German. (3) A German prose translation could be substituted for any Latin portion of the service. (4) A German hymn could be substituted for any German or Latin prose portion of the service. (5) A German hymn could follow any German or Latin prose text. (6) At certain places in the liturgy, for example, before and after the sermon, or during the communion, German hymns could be freely inserted. Obviously, these substitutions and additions had to be fitting. Those hymns which were used as substitutes for the Ordinarium had to be the German version of that particular text. As substitutes for all the Propers of the service only de tempore hymns could be used.

It was in this liturgical framework that the Lutheran congregational hymn developed to its pre-eminent place in Lutheran worship. In the following we propose to examine more thoroughly the musical practice of the time with regard to the singing of these hymns.

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<sup>12</sup>Blume, op. cit., pp. 33-34.



### The Alternatim Praxis

Hymns were sung in the service by the choir or the congregation and under circumstances by a soloist. They were at times also played by the organ or other instruments without vocal participation. The choir sang the hymns either figuraliter or choraliter; the congregation sang choraliter; the organ or other instruments alternated with either or both of these groups. This practice of alternating between various performing groups was called the alternatim praxis. As stated, it involved the congregation, the choir, sometimes a soloist, and instruments, particularly the organ.

While it was Luther's wish that the hymns should be sung by the entire congregation, this ideal could not be carried out immediately, for the congregation first had to learn the hymns. This was accomplished in several ways. We are told, for example, by Gesius in the preface to his hymn book:

Hierzu wollen die Cantores in den Schulen und Kirchen erinnert sein, und dis merken, das solche Lieder bei der Christlichen Gemein sonderlichen angenehm, auch lieblich und nuetzlichen anzuhoeren sein, wen sie alternatim in choro und organo gebraucht werden, also dz ein Knabe mit lieblicher reiner Stimme einen Vers im Organo mitsinge, darauff den andern Vers der chorus Musicus, und also jederman neben dem Concentu auch die verstendliche Wort in gebrauchlicher und gewoehnlicher Melodia hoeren und mitsingen kann, welches denn ohne grossen und merklichen Nutzen nicht abgethet.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Quoted in R. Freiherr von Liliencron, Liturgisch-musikalische Geschichte der evangelischen Gottesdienste von 1523 bis 1700 (Schleswig: Julius Bergas, 1893), pp. 114-115.



It is to be noted that both the choir and the organ are aids in teaching the congregation; the choir by singing some polyphonic setting of the hymn, the organ by playing perhaps the same setting, but the melody being sung by one of the choir boys.

A similar expression is to be found in the preface of a Hamburg hymn book of 1604:

Denn wann solche Christliche Gesenge, entweder die liebe Jugend auffm Chor her quinckeliret, oder auch der Organist auff der Orgel kuenstlich spielet, oder sie beide ein Chor machen, und die Knaben in die Orgel singen, und die Orgel hinwiederumb in den Gesang spielet, . . . alsdann mag auch ein jeder Christ, seine schlechte Leyenstimme nur getrost und laut genug erheben usw.<sup>14</sup>

Sometimes the choir sang only the first stanza of the hymn in some four- or more voice setting, while the congregations sang the remaining stanzas. This was the case in a Christmas service at Naumburg described by Stiphelius in the words: "Qua (prophetia) perlecta Cantor figuraliter incipit Christum wir sollen loben schon, reliquos versus cantat aedituus cum populo."<sup>15</sup> This method of rendition was also common in Strehla in 1595, for the Kantores there prescribed

einen Deutschen Kirchengesang Lutheri, so sich auff denselben Sonn- oder Festtag reymet, und zwar nur den

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-116.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 88.



ersten Vers aus demselben zu Chore figuraliter, die anderen Versus aber mit dem Volcke choraliter vol-  
lendts hinaussingen.<sup>16</sup>

Then again, the choir and congregation alternated stanza for stanza. The Pommersche Kirchenordnung of 1535 prescribed,

dasz die vorgesetzten Gesaenge umschichtlich gesungen werden, dasz das Chor und das Volk einen Vers um den anderen singen, auf dasz sie alle zugleich den Schulen und der Gemeinde gebrauchlich werden.<sup>17</sup>

Naturally, in this case it was obvious that while the congregation sang choraliter, the choir sang a polyphonic setting. Otherwise there would have been no need for the alternation.

A further variation of the alternatim praxis is reported by Rautenstrauch, namely, that on January 20, 1542:

bei der Weihe des evang. Bischofs Amsdorf von Naumburg wurde zuerst die Motette Senfls "non moriar" gesungen. Dann sang das Volk der Festzeit entsprechend, das Weihnachtslied: "Ein Kindelein, so loebelich." Hierauf predigte der Superintendent D. Medler. Dann folgte das alte Ordinationslied: "Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist" (veni sancte spiritus), -- welches zuerst auf der Orgel gespielt, dann vom Chor fuenfstimmig gesungen und endlich von Trompetern "aufs herrlichste mit fuenf Stimmen geblasen wurde." Im Anschluss hieran vollzog Luther den Weiheakt. Hierauf wurde das Tedeum auf dreifache Weise wie oben gespielt und gesungen.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Quoted in Johannes Rautenstrauch, Luther und die Pflege der kirchlichen Musik in Sachsen (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Haertel, 1906), p. 181.

<sup>17</sup>Quoted in Liliencron, op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>18</sup>Rautenstrauch, op. cit., p. 137.



In this case the congregation did not participate in the performance, only the choir, the organ, and an ensemble of trumpets.

The Itinerarium of Musculus, previously referred to,<sup>19</sup> also sheds light on the alternatim practice of the Reformation period. Concerning hymn singing he has this to say, namely, that the organ and choir together performed the victimae paschali ("ludabatur in organo, succinente choro") and the congregation alternated with the German Christ ist erstanden ("populo vero intercinente"). Furthermore, the choir, congregation, and organ joined forces in singing the German Credo ("Post hanc lectionem ludabatur in organo, succinente ecclesia: wir glauben all an eynen Gott").<sup>20</sup>

The most important place in the service for alternatim singing was the rendition of the so-called Hauptlied, also called Graduallied, sung between the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel. Michael Praetorius, in the preface to his Musae Sioniae of 1606, gives directions how this might be done. He writes:

Stehet nun zu eines jeden selbst eigener Discretion und gut achten, wie und welcher gestaltdt er dieser meiner und sonsten dergleichen Arbeit gebrauchen wolle: Dann einen jeglichen seiner Chor und Kirchen umbstende und gelegenheit selbstenn erinnern und geben wird, ob er . . . den ersten Versz mit 5. 6. oder 8. Stimmen Fugweisz, alszbalddt im Anfang nach geschlagener Orgel

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<sup>19</sup>Supra, p. 38.

<sup>20</sup>Rietschel, op. cit., p. 19.



anfangen, und den anderen Versz mit der Gemein schlecht Choral: den dritten mit 4. oder 5. Stimmen simpliciter absq; fugis schlecht hingesetzt, sampt dem Choro und der Gemein zugleich: den vierden wiederumb Choral, den fuenfften Figural (doch das die Gemeine allezeit mit-singe) und so fortan einen Versz umb den andern singen wolle.

Another place for the alternatim singing of a hymn was during the distribution of the Lord's Supper, as we learn from the Chorordnung of the Church at Halle-Neumark: "Unter der Communion singett man Jesus Christus unser heilandt, do der Chor undt das Volk allezeit 2 versch alternatim singett und der Organist darzwischen schlegt."

The same source gives information on the singing of the Tedeum, the Magnificat, and the Nunc dimittis during Vespers. We read:

Nach gehaltener predigt schlegt der Organist das deutsche Magnificat, der Chor singett mitt dem volck alternatim zwen versch dar zwischen undt wen die Antiphona (Christum unsern heilandt) ist gesungen worden nach dem letzten versch: do sol der organist mitt dem gantzen werck anfahren das deutsche Nunc dimittis: Der Chor undt das volck singen zwen versch: den meine augen etc.: Ein liecht zu erleuchten p. Nach dem schlegt der Organist wieder darzwischen: der Chor undt das volck singen das Gloria.<sup>21</sup>

Further light is thrown upon the alternatim praxis, particularly in the beginning 1600's, by Praetorius in his Syntagmatis Musici of 1619. Here we notice already the influence of the Italian figured bass. He speaks of the various combinations of "Concertat-Stimmen" which the choir

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<sup>21</sup>Quoted in Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1664.



director can "bey die Orgel oder ein Regal-Werck ordnen, und der Organist, aus dem General-bass darzu schlagen und spielen musz."<sup>22</sup>

In describing the various Manieren, according to which the music may be performed, he says, among other things:

Man kan auch zur umbwechselung, solche beyde Cantus allein mit Instrumenten, alz 2. Violin, und 2. Cornetten oder 2. Floetitlin, oder 1. Cornet und 1. Violin Musiciren, und humanas voces aussen lassen. Oder zum ersten mahl voces humanas: zum andern mahl Instrumenta: zum dritten mahl beyderley zusammen gebrauchen.<sup>23</sup>

Somewhat later in his discussion he says:

Wenn hernachmahls auch der Choral, nach und zwischen dem Figural biszweilen solte gesungen werden, . . . mus, so bald der antepenultimus versus choraliter auszusungen, der Organist mit einer starcken Stimmen, in der Orgel dreinfallen, und etwa nach drey oder vier Tacten das Final machen, damit das Volck in der Kirchen still halte; darauff sol der letzte Vers figuraliter angefangen und also der Gesang damit beschloßen werden. Diweil aber an etlichen Orten, alsz ich selbsten observiret und befunden, die Gemeine in der Kirchen, sonderlich ehe sie es gewohnet und recht innen wird, sich nicht wol auffhalten lesset: So ists fast besser, dasz man sie den letzten Versz, auch immer vollendts hinaus singen lasse, und dann alsobald denselben Versz noch einmal darauff zu Musiciren anfangen und damit beschliesse.<sup>24</sup>

Praetorius also describes the possibility of a solo voice alternating with the choir. He says:

Wenn der erste Vers also figuraliter hinausgesungen

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<sup>22</sup>Michael Praetorius, Syntagmatis Musici, Tomus Tertius (Wolffenbuettel: Elias Holwein, 1619), p. 176.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 184.



worden, dasz alsdann der 2. Vers oder Gesetz, von ein guten Tenoristen, der 3. Vers von ein guten qualificirten Discantisten allein in vorerwente fundament-Instrumenta, rein und wohl mit lieblichen Diminutionen unnd passaghien gesungen: Und darauff der letzte Vers (den man unter die Noten bey dem 1. Vers appliciren und unterlegen kan) gleich wie der erste mit 5. oder 6. Stimmen, oder aber in Contrapuncto simplici, mit 4. oder 5. Stimmen im vollen Choro musiciret werde.<sup>25</sup>

### The Choir

In the previous section the various groups active in the singing of the hymns were mentioned. These were the choir, sometimes a soloist, the congregation, and the organ and other instruments. These groups should be studied in more detail in order to get a better understanding of the musical practice of the period.

There were several types of choirs, all known by the term Kantorei. The information presented in this paper is based on an essay by Leo Schrade,<sup>26</sup> who describes the various choirs in their organization and function. There was the Hofkantorei which gained considerable splendor until the Thirty Years War cut short the story of its fame. Then there was the Schulkantorei, which functioned as church choir. It had various names, for example, Schulchor, Chorus

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>26</sup>Leo Schrade, "The Choral Music of the Lutheran 'Kantorei,'" The Musical Heritage of the Church, Thirteenth Bulletin of the Choral Union (Issued by the Lutheran Walther League, 875 North Dearborn Street, Chicago 10, Illinois, 1946), pp. 70-83.



musicus, Chorus symphonicus, or Figuralchor. A third type was the Kantorei in the narrower sense. It was called the Kantoreigesellschaft if applied to the city, Adjuvantenverein if applied to the village.

The Hofkantorei, the choir at the courts, need not be discussed here, since it was not directly concerned with hymn singing.

The school choir was directly connected with music in the church. Here school and church worked side by side. The musical education was entrusted to the school. The results of the education were presented in the church. The cantor of the church was the teacher in the school. His position was held in high esteem. Together with the rector he decided upon the admission of pupils. Naturally, musical interests were often brought to bear upon the decision. The Schulkantorei comprised all the students of the school. All had to participate in choral singing. This is not to say that all students were equally skillful in polyphonic singing. Moser points out that not all the students sang the figural music. He says:

Jeder Schueler musste ohne Befreiungsmoeglichkeit den Cantus planus (einstimmige Choraale, Hymnen, Antiphone und Responsorien) singen lernen, waehrend die Begabteren im chormaeszigen Figuralgesang fuer die Sonntagsmotette und den Kurrendedienst geuebt wurden. Hierfuer war in vielen Schulen taeglich eine Stunde angesetzt, z. t. schon aus gesundheitlichen Gruenden, sah man doch im Singen eine dem Turnen verwandte vorzuegliche Koerperuebung, und jeder Schultag, ja jede Stunde



wurde mit Choral- oder Odengesang eroeffnet und beschlossen.<sup>27</sup>

Thus it was usually the best singers of the upper grades, from Tertia to Prima, that made up the choir that performed the figural music in church or on festival occasions of the community.

In general, these choirs were of very high quality and proficiency. Rigid regulations made outstanding results possible. The compulsory singing of all students, regardless of talent or interest, promoted a musical education so widespread and general as to make music a part of a man's life. Musical education was not meant to involve only those who had their minds already set upon music, but to provide as broad and fertile a ground as possible, so that the finest would grow thereon actively to be shared by all. This explains also the great fame attained by some of the school choirs in the age of the Reformation, for example, those in Leipzig, Dresden, Schulpforta, Nuremberg, Halle, Hamburg, Lueneburg, Wittenberg, and others.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that all school choirs were of equal ability and reputation. There were also some of rather meager attainments, particularly in the villages. No doubt this is what Johannes Matthesius

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<sup>27</sup>Hans Joachim Moser, Geschichte der deutschen Musik von den Anfaengen bis zum Beginn des Dreisszigjaehrigen Krieges (Stuttgart und Berlin: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1926), p. 391.



had in mind when he wrote regarding Niclas Herman's desire to hear the music of heaven, because

es werde ein Organist oder Lutenist in jenem Leben auch ein heiligen Text inn sein Orgel unnd Lauten schlagen, Und ein jeder werd allein und auswendig auff vier oder fuenff stimmen sortisiren und singen koennen. Es werde auch kein fehlen oder Confusion mehr werden, welchs jetzt manchen guten Musicum unluestig machet, zumal, wenn man oft mus anheben.<sup>28</sup>

An interesting example of a really inefficient choir is that reported by Rautenstrauch who tells of the choir at Zittau:

Der Pastor Prim. Martin Tectander fuehrte oft beim Rate Klage "ueber den Kantor und seine Adjuvanten wegen der schlechten Harmonie, die sie im Tone hielten." Am Ostertag 1558, bald nach seinem Amtsantritt, warf er dem Kantor vor, dasz er allzulange auf dem Chor gesungen haette, und urteilte ueber den Gesang des Chors ueberhaupt: "Wenn ein alter Pelz zusammengenacht waere und steckte voller junge Hunde und Katzen und Saeue, und man schluenge mit einem Knittel darauf, so wuerden dieselben ebenso juchzen, heulen und leiern, gleichwie die auf dem Chore gethan haetten."<sup>29</sup>

The criticism of the Pastor need not be taken too seriously, since it is obviously exaggerated. In any case, the incident points out the exception rather than the rule.

The third type of choir, Protestant in a particular way, was the Kantoreigesellschaft. While this type of organization, like the others, had an earlier model, namely, the so-called calends, the connection between the two was not very strong. The calends were already dying out when

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<sup>28</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 614.

<sup>29</sup>Rautenstrauch, op. cit., p. 122.



Luther came, and the Kantoreigesellschaften were not the old brotherhoods with new, Protestant ideas. They were formed by the burghers of the city, who, often with some pupils of the school, had regular gatherings in order to study the music to be sung in the services. The study was usually conducted by the cantor. This was voluntary choir practice for the purpose that members of the congregations should enable themselves to take part in the liturgical music of the service. An original source states that the citizens of the town should meet that "to the honor of the Almighty, on the high feasts and Sundays, they should help in singing the musica figurata to the service of Mass and Vespers so that subsequently youth may be kept in practice and be able to improve upon the art of music."<sup>30</sup>

These three organizations, then, contributed to the realization of Lutheran church music: the Kantoreigesellschaft most to the congregational singing, the Hofkantorei most to the artistic development, the school Kantorei most to the advancement of musical education. They all reached their height from about 1550 to 1620 in Protestant regions.<sup>31</sup>

As far as hymn singing is concerned, it was the function of the choir to perform the polyphonic settings in

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<sup>30</sup>Schrade, op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 76.



alternation with the congregation and the organ. Another equally important function of the choir was to lead the congregational singing and thus also to teach the hymns to the people. This practice we shall discuss under the next heading.

### The Congregation

Cunz describes the introduction of a new hymn into the service in the following words:

Man liesz das neue Lied von dem Schulmeister tuechtig einstudieren und brachte es dann durch den Gesang des Chors zur Probe. Waehrend des Chorgesangs hoerten die Zuhoerer andaechtig zu, gefiel das Lied nach Text und Weise, so war es bald von der uebrigen Gemeinde eingeuebt und das neue Lied in der Kirche aufgenommen und eingefuehrt.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, when the hymns were sung by the congregation, it is to be assumed that the choir took the leading part. Naturally, the entire rendition was in unison, choraliter.

Blankenburg puts it this way: "Gefuehrt und getragen wurde der Gemeindegeseang vom einstimmig singenden chorus choralis und nicht etwa vom mehrstimmig singenden chorus musicus, auch chorus figuralis genannt, wie die Forschung zuweilen angenommen hat."<sup>33</sup> This practice is mentioned in many of the early service books. For example, the Kerckenordeninge

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<sup>32</sup>F. A. Cunz, Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes vom 16. Jahrhundert bis auf unsere Zeit (Leipzig: J. T. Loeschke, 1855), p. 13.

<sup>33</sup>Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1651.



der Christliken Gemein tho Niggen Rade of 1564 states:

"An duessen is eth genoch, de dat Chor langsam und duedlik singen sal dat se dat volck doerch vake anhoerent, unnd uth gewohnheit lere und mit singen koenne."<sup>34</sup> To aid the congregation in learning to sing an unfamiliar hymn, the advice was given that a number of Schulgesellen be stationed among the people in the nave to lead the singing.<sup>35</sup>

The Kirchenordnung of Halle gives the following information on this point:

undt wen das volck singett ihren versch, sol der Cantor denselbigen allezeit anfahen undt so es von noten mit singen, undt damitt das volck seine stimme hoere, undt sich darnach richte, sol er sich zum volck . . . keren. So aber wenig volck vorhanden undt den Versch schwewlich singett, oder sonst den gesang nicht wol kan . . . sol der Cantor allein singen, undt sol der Cantor alle knaben, die lesen können, do hin halten, dasz sie ihre gesangbuecher mit in die Kirche nehmen, undt mitt singen. Undt können die tertiani auff die stufen stehen undt mit singen allein dasz sie sich nach dem tact richten. Damit auch nit immerdar einer gesungen undt die andern vergessen werden, so sol diese ordnung stricte gehalten werden: das einer nach dem ander gesungen werde.<sup>36</sup>

The following instructions were given already in 1525 in the Vorrede des Buechleins: Das Teutsch gesang so in der Mesz gesungen wuerdt etc.:

Darumb bitten wir trewlich, eltern und Schulmeyster, das sie hierinnen jres beruffs trewlich und emsig warten woellen, und ein stetigs einsehen haben, dann Got

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<sup>34</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 622.

<sup>35</sup>Liliencron, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>36</sup>Quoted in Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1665.



wirdt warlich von jn rechenschafft fordern, Und teglich, im lesen, schreyben, und singen, dise nachfolgende Psalmen, geystlich lieder, fuer halten, und sie darinnen ueben, und alsdann sie in der Kirghen fueren und da mit einer gantzen gemain Got loben.<sup>37</sup>

In smaller churches, where there was no school choir available, the teaching of the hymns was the duty of the diacon. Thus the Wittenberger Kirchenordnung of 1533 states: "fuer und nach der Feiertagspredigt soll der diacon mit den pauern einen deutschen psalmen singen, so sollen die pauern mit iren kindern und gesinde vleissig und recht singen lernen, dazu kan der diacon auf gelegene zeit wol vermanen." And in the Kirchenordnung of Saxony, 1540, the villages are told: "Wo man nicht Schulen hatt soll man des Sonnabents zu bequemer Zeit am abent leutten lassen, Und wo sich das volck alt oder jung samlet, ettliche Deudsche Psalm oder Geystliche Gesenge singen, und mit dem Gebete beschliessen."<sup>38</sup>

Thus the congregation learned to sing the hymns chiefly under the leadership of the choir. As indicated, this was the "unison" choir, which did not, indeed could not, accompany the congregation by means of the polyphonic settings, for reasons to be discussed presently. Such an accompaniment would have to assume that the congregation had the ability to find its way through the polyphonic web of

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<sup>37</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 545.

<sup>38</sup>Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1655.



the outer voices and join in the singing of the tenor melody. It must be remembered that in this early period practically all of the choir settings of the hymns placed the melody in the tenor voice. In Walter's Gesangbuch of 1524 the melody is placed in the soprano part only twice. Also, at this time the practice of composition did not yet favor the simple nota contra notam type of counterpoint, which came into general use somewhat later. The prevailing technique of composition, as exemplified in the Walter and Rhaw collections, was more complex. For the choir to accompany the congregation with one of these settings would have been impossible for the same reason that organ accompaniment was impossible.<sup>39</sup>

That these conclusions are correct is evident from a number of contemporary statements. We know, for example, that it was the difficulties experienced by the congregation in following the choir that led Lucas Osiander to experiment with a solution to the problem in 1586 by placing the melody in the soprano and leading the other voices in simple counterpoint. The preface to his work is very enlightening in this regard. Already the title implies that the congregation had found it impossible to join in singing the melody to the accompaniment of the choir. It reads: "Fuenfzig Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen mit vier Stimmen

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<sup>39</sup>Infra, p. 60f.



auf contrapunctsweise also gesetzt, dasz eine ganze christliche Gemeine durchaus mitsingen kann." In the preface Osiander says regarding the hymn settings in use at that time: "So koenne doch ein Lay, so der Figuralmusik nicht berichtet, nicht mitsingen, sondern muesse allein zuhoeren." He therefore determined to provide settings in four voices "und doch ein jeder Christ wohl mitsingen koennte." He continues:

Hab derowegen als zur Probe . . . diese 50 geistlichen Lieder und Psalmen mit vier Stimmen also gesetzt, dasz ein ganze christliche Gemein, auch junge Kinder mitsingen koennen, und dennoch diese Musik daneben zur Zierde dieses Gesangs ihrn Fortgang hat. . . . Ich weisz wohl, dasz die Componisten sonsten gewoehnlich den Choral im Tenor fuehren. Wenn man aber das tut, so ist der Choral unter anderen Stimmen unkenntlich, der gemeine Mann verstehet nicht, was es fuer ein Psalm ist und kann nicht mitsingen. Darum habe ich den Choral in den Diskant genommen, damit er ja kenntlich und ein jeder Laie mitsingen koenne.<sup>40</sup>

Statements of Eccard lead one to the same conclusion. In his publication of 1597 he remarks that others had already placed the melody in the upper voice so that it could be plainly heard, "und die Gemeine denselben zugleich mit einstimmen und singen kann."<sup>41</sup> He hopes that his work will be of value to the congregation, "welche die gewoehnliche Kirchenmelodei aus dem Discantu wohl und verstaendlich hoeren und bei sich selbst, nach ihrer Andacht singend, imitieren

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<sup>40</sup>Quoted in Rietschel, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 49-50.



koenne."<sup>42</sup> Andreas Raselius published a collection of hymns in 1598, "Mit 5. Stimmen also gesetzt, dasz jederman den Choral und bekandt Melodey jedes Gesangs ungehindert wol mitsingen kan."<sup>43</sup> Any number of other sources express the same thought. Thus the Hamburg Gesangbuch of 1604 states:

Alsdann mag auch ein jeder Christ, seine schlechte Leyenstimme nur getrost und laut genug erheben, und also nunmehr nicht als das fuenffte, sondern als das vierdte und gar fuegliche Radt den Musicwagen des lobes und preises Goettliches Namens gewaltiglich mit fortziehen und bisz an den Allerhoechsten treiben und bringen helfen.<sup>44</sup>

A few years later we find Praetorius writing in his Syntagmatis Musici: "Die Teutsche Gesaenge sind im anfang meistentheils von mir dahingerichtet gewesen, dasz das Volck und die gantze Gemein in der Kirchen zugleich mit darein singen koennten."<sup>45</sup> Later again he says: "die Psalmen und Lieder (sind) schlecht in Contrapuncto simplici gesetzt, damit die Gemeine in der Kirchen mit einstimmen koenne."<sup>46</sup> He defends the resulting parallel octaves by saying:

So habe ich doch allda unter andern diese rationes

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 441.

<sup>44</sup>Quoted in Liliencron, op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>45</sup>Praetorius, op. cit., pp. 169-170.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 219.



eingefuehrt, dieweil die gantze Gemeine in der Kirchen klein und gross, hoch und niedrig zugleich den Choral mit ein zu singen pflaget, etc. Welches aber sonsten ausserhalb des Chorals, ich gantz nicht kan passiren lassen.<sup>47</sup>

Thus was the congregation "accompanied"; perhaps it would be more correct to say that thus the congregation was lifted into the realm of art music. That this was Osiander's intention can be seen from his demand that

die Schueler sich in der Mensur oder Takt nach der Gemein allerdings richten und in keiner Noten schneller oder langsamer singen, denn ein christliche Gemeine selbigen Orts zu singen pflegt, damit der Choral und figurata musica fein beinander bleiben und beide einen lieblichen Concentum geben.

This can be seen, too, in Eccard's friendly reminder:

Endlich und zum Beschlusz, will ich einen jeglichen Cantorem hiemit obiter gantz freundlich erinnert haben, das er im singen der Kirchen Lieder, sich eines feinen langsamen Tacts beflissigen und gebrauchen wolle, dadurch wird er zuwege bringen, das der gemeine Man die gewoehnliche Melodiam desto eigentlicher hoeren, und er mit seiner Cantorey um so viel leichter und besser wird fortkommen koennen.<sup>48</sup>

Regarding the use of hymnals on the part of the congregation members, this was the exception, rather than the rule.

Moser says:

die geringen Auflagen des 16. Jahrhunderts (auf denen auch die Seltenheit der erhaltenen Stuecke beruht) beweisen, daz meist nur der Geistliche, der Kantor und vielleicht noch der eine oder andere patrizische Gemeindeaelteste ein Exemplar besessen hat, der Groszteil der Gemeinde dagegen auf das Auswendigsingen angewiesen

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>48</sup>Quoted in Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1666.



war.

This explains the frequent exhortations to the people that they should be more diligent in learning the hymns, as Luther himself reminded the people of Wittenberg already in the late 20's.<sup>49</sup>

That hymn books were not plentiful is shown by a statement in the preface to the Rigaisches Gesangbuch, 1548-49:

De ander orsacke dith Bock tho drucken, ys duesse gewest, dat beide yunge und olde geklaget hebben, dat men wedder by den Bockuoerers noch by andern lueden keines van den olden Sanckboekern hefft bekamen koennen, und soenderlick dat de Joeget jn den Scholen gar nene mer hedde, und derhaluen vorhindert woerde mede tho singende, und Gott tho lauende, Welcker orsake allene genoch were nye Sanckboecke tho druecken laten.<sup>50</sup>

Mahrenholz reports: "Noch um 1700 herum wurde auf dem flachen Lande der Erwerb eines Gesangbuchs durch ein nicht mit besonderen gottesdienstlichen Aufgaben betrautes Gemeindeglied als ungewoehnlich angesehen."<sup>51</sup> Blankenburg tells of the case of the farmer near Halle who was forbidden by his pastor near the end of the seventeenth century to use his hymnal which he had brought to church with him.<sup>52</sup> The same

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<sup>49</sup>Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>50</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 590.

<sup>51</sup>Christhard Mahrenholz, "Gesangbuch," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Musik Herausgegeben von Friedrich Blume, IV, 1876-1889 (Kassel und Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1955), col. 1887.



author says: "Die Einfuehrung von Nummerntafeln (in the late seventeenth century) war das aeuszere Zeichen fuer die Tatsache, dasz nun der Kirchgaenger mit dem Gesangbuch zur Kirche kam."<sup>53</sup>

### The Organ and Other Instruments

Musical instruments, particularly the organ, played an important part in the services. This is obvious from many contemporary statements. Cyriacus Spangenberg, in the preface to his Christlichen Gesangbuechlein of 1568, writes:

So haben wir dessen auch viel feiner Exempel beide im Alten und Newen Testament, das die lieben Vaeter, Propheten und Heiligen Gottes, gar schoene und wol abgesetzte Psalmen gestellet, gesungen, und auff allerley Musicalischen Instrumenten Gotte zu Ehren gespielet haben, welches sie freylich nicht wuerden also ernst und fleissig getrieben, und auff die Nachkommen geerbet und gebracht haben, wo sie nicht als die Hoherleuchten Gottes Menner eigentlichen gewust hetten, das solches Gotte dem Herrn angenehm und gefellig, und gemeiner Christenheit nuetzlich und besserlich sein wuerde.<sup>54</sup>

Nicolaus Selnecker, in his Psalter of 1569, says:

Zwar ist es noch fein, andechtig und lieblich, wenn man in den kirchen eine feine Musicam helt, Figural und Choral, Orgeln und andere Instrument, und damit das hertz ermuntert und erfrewet.<sup>55</sup>

Similar quotations could be multiplied. Let these suffice to show the Lutheran attitude toward instrumental music in

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 632.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 637.



the church services.

However, the above refers to figural music in general and not to the singing of the hymns. That the organ and other instruments at times accompanied the choir by doubling the voice parts is well known. The criticism leveled against the choir at Zittau by the pastor<sup>56</sup> resulted in the provision made by the council in 1567 that "ein Chor von Stadtpfeifern" should accompany the choir in the divine service.<sup>57</sup> At Zwickau in 1569 there is a similar notice which reads: "Inn der Kirchenn so offt man figural singett, soll er mitt den Instrumenten den Chor stercken helffen."<sup>58</sup>

But it appears that during the entire first century of Lutheranism there was rarely an organ accompaniment of congregational song. The first specific reference to an organ accompaniment of hymn singing we find in Hamburg, 1604, Danzig, 1633, and Nuernberg, 1637.<sup>59</sup> Organ music, indeed, polyphonic music in general, knew no form which could have made possible such an accompaniment. The chordal accompaniment common in our day was unknown to sixteenth century polyphony. This was still the time of a many-voiced compositional technique. The melody was still very often in the tenor, not in

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<sup>56</sup>Supra, p. 50.

<sup>57</sup>Rautenstrauch, op. cit., p. 122.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

<sup>59</sup>Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1666.



the upper voice. The other three or more voices were built around this tenor, often in fugue-like imitation. It also occurred quite frequently that the melody itself was extended by melismas and shortened by rests, making it practically impossible for a congregation to follow such an "accompaniment."

The service books of the sixteenth century do not mention the organ in connection with the singing of hymns by the congregation. Both of Luther's liturgies are silent regarding organs. The same is true with regard to his prefaces to various hymn books. Musculus' Itinerarium<sup>60</sup> mentions various uses to which the organ was put during the service, but none in connection with the singing by the congregation. This is the case throughout the sixteenth century. Whenever the organ is mentioned, it is reckoned with the figural music as opposed to the unison singing of the congregation. Liliencron says:

Wenn die Straszburger Kirchenordnung von 1598 sagt: "solche figurata musica und das Orgeln" solle den Gemeindegang nicht behindern, d. h. ihm seinen Platz nicht beschraenken, was die Coburger Kirchenordnung von 1645 wiederholt, so ist damit das in dieser Zeit allgemein gueltige Verhaeltnis angedeutet.<sup>61</sup>

Liliencron has summarized the functions of the organ during the sixteenth century in the following outline:

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<sup>60</sup>Supra, p. 38.

<sup>61</sup>Liliencron, op. cit., p. 85.



(1) It introduced the service itself as well as various of its individual parts with a preamble or prelude. The preamble was a short motive which served chiefly to give the pitch for minister or choir. This short preamble developed into the prelude, an independent composition. (2) It provided an interlude between the parts or verses of various liturgical songs. (3) At times it accompanied the choir by doubling the voice parts. It was common practice during the sixteenth century for string or wind instruments to accompany the singing of secular songs (Lieder) in this manner. For the organ to provide such an accompaniment, it was merely necessary to prepare a tablature. Tablatures of motets transcribed for organ are numerous during the following period. (4) It was a pre-Reformation custom to perform those portions of the liturgy which consisted of several parts alternately between choir and organ. These parts were the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus, the Antiphons, Hymns, and Canticles. During the organ rendition, however, a singer would either sing or speak the respective words. This practice carried over into the church of the Reformation and was also applied to the singing of congregational hymns.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 111-112.



## CHAPTER IV

### HYMN SINGING APART FROM PUBLIC WORSHIP

#### In the Home

##### In General

It was Luther's desire that German hymns be provided for the people so that they might become active participants in the church services. The success of this undertaking on the part of Luther and his co-workers has been amply testified in the previous portions of this paper. Of equal or possibly greater significance was the by-product of this hymn writing activity. For in providing material for use in the services, the Reformers at the same time provided a vast fund of devotional literature for every conceivable occasion in the life of the individual. The hymn book became "Der Leyen Loci Communes," "Hauptartickel Christlicher Lere, fuer die Leyen," "die kleine Bibel," as Spangenberg describes it.<sup>1</sup>

The Reformers were well aware of the value of Christian hymns in the private life of the believer and often referred to their usefulness in this regard in their sermons and hymn book prefaces. Borchardt Waldis in 1527 reminded

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<sup>1</sup>Philipp Wackernagel, Bibliographie zur Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes im XVI. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt a. M.: Verlag von Heyder und Zimmer, 1855), p. 658.



the reader:

darumm wre ydt gudt unnd Christlick, dat alle mynschen, de sick Christlikes namens rhomen, mit der schrift ummegingen, dat alle handtwercks luede bey ohrem arbeyde, de Buer hynder der ploch, de dresscher ynn der schuenen, de olden wyuer by dem Spynwocken, de kynder up der straten, van Gade und synem worde, sungen, szeden, und trachteden, de schrift up allerley wysze gehandelt unnd tractert mochte werden.<sup>2</sup>

Nicolaus Selnecker rejoices over the fact

das man durch feine Christliche Lieder die rechten Lehr weit bringen und ausbreiten kan, und die hertzen damit froelich gemacht werden, wie im Teutschland biszher Goot sein gnad darzu hat geben, das durch feine Christliche Geseng in der Kirchen vil ist erbawet worden, und oft mehr damit, denn mit Predigen auszgerichtet ist, wie auch derwegen Augustinus sagt: Viel Leut, die in der Kirchen zusammen kommen, koennen weder der Aposteln Schrifften, noch der Propheten hohe Lehr leichtlich lernen und verstehen, oder, wenn sie es ja lernen, so koennen sie es nicht behalten und gedennen. Aber die Psalmen und Lieder koennen sie in jren Heusern singen, und oeffentlich in der Gemein, und sich damit selbs unterweisen, erfrewen und lustig machen.<sup>3</sup>

Because the hymns lend themselves so well to private worship and instruction, Katherina Zellin says regarding her Gesangbuechlein of 1534: "Ja ich muosz es vil mehr ein Leer: Gebett und danckbuoch (dann ein gsangbuoch) heysen: wiewol das woertlin gsang recht und wol geredgt ist."<sup>4</sup> The Rigaisches Gesangbuch reminds the reader that in addition to the public worship in the church service "ock ein yder

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 546.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 637.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 553.



Godtseliger Hussvader mit sinen kindern und gesinde in sinem huse Gade danckbar sy, mit Psalmen und Loffgesengen, sick suluest ym gelauen dardoerch tho troesten und tho stercken."<sup>5</sup> The same preface promises the user "dat ydt froewde und grote lust dem Christliken Leser und senger bringen wert."<sup>6</sup> That the use of hymns at home can sometimes bring a greater blessing than the church service itself is emphasized by Paul Eber, personal friend of Niclas Herman, to whose Sonntagsevangelien he wrote a preface in 1560. He says:

Solche Hauspredigten schaffen one zweuel grossen nutz, das manches einfoltigs, ungelertes mensch in noeten und anfechtungen oft mehr aus einem solchem Gesang sich erinnert und troestet, denn aus einer langen und wolgesetzten Predigt.<sup>7</sup>

A similar thought is expressed by David Wolder in his Gesangbuechlein of 1598, when he says:

Wie dann auch ja war ist, und gibts die erfahrung bey einem jeglichen, das die kurtzen unnd in Reime meist-erlich gefaste Gesenge mehr frucht schaffen, das Hertz zur Andacht zu erwecken, denn sonst viele und weit-leufftig Predigten und Schrifften.<sup>8</sup>

It was considered the pastor's obligation to remind his parishioners of their duty in this regard. Thus Martin Bucer's preface to the Straszburger Gesangbuch of 1545

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 589.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 590.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 609.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 677.



states:

Der Herr woelle geben, das alle verscher und diener der Kirchen, sampt allen Christen, jres besten vermögens dran seien, das bey der jugent, und aller gemein Gottes, solche schoene Christliche Geseng, in brauch und uebung kommen, oder auch die leute fuer sich selbs singen, das man sich mit solchen Psalmen und Liedern etc.<sup>9</sup>

Paul Eber likewise encourages his people in these words:

Dieselbe schick ich Euch zu, Erbare, tugentsame Frawen und Jungfrawen, . . . jr wollet dieselbe ewern Kindern, Bruederlein und Schwesterlein sampt dem andern hausgesind fuerlegen, welche selbs lesen koennen, vorsingen, also das sie alle Wochen des vergangenen Sontags oder Fests Lied aus dem buch singen lernen, Denn alle Geseng auswendig zu behalten, wuerde den Kindlen zu schwer und zu viel sein, welche inn jren jungen tagen auch nicht zu sehr sollen getrieben und beladen werden.

In the same connection he says:

Derhalben wir solche Christliche Deudsche reine Geseng solten lieb haben, unser Gesindle in den Heusern vleissig dazu halten, das sie dieselbe auswendig lernen, oft und mit andacht suengen.<sup>10</sup>

The Wittenberg Kirchenordnung of 1533 also refers to this duty, saying: "so sollen die pauern mit iren kindern und gesinde vleissig und recht singen lernen."<sup>11</sup>

Many of the hymn collections were published specifically for home or private use. Johannes Matthesius prepared

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 585.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 609.

<sup>11</sup>Quoted in Walter Blankenburg, "Evangelischer Gemeindegeseang," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Musik Herausgegeben von Friedrich Blume, IV, cols. 1649-1680 (Kassel und Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1955), col. 1655.



"Ein Wiegenlied fuer gotselige Kindermeidlein, und andere Christliche personen, so der lieben Kindlein warten, damit sie zu schweigen oder ein zu wiegen," and states specifically, "nicht in der Kirchen, sondern im Hause zu singen."<sup>12</sup>

A collection with the title Hundert Christenliche Hauszgesang, 1569, states:

Es sind aber diese Geseng nicht der gestalt zusammen gezogen, als ob sie in Kirchen, und andern Christlichen Versamblungen solten gesungen werden, Sondern sind nur (nach laut des Tittels) Hauszgesenge, dann jhr vil darinn in Weltlichen Melodyen gedichtet sind, ohne zweiffel, ausz diser ursach, damit das Junge volck, von denselbigen schamparen und unzuechtigen Bulenliedern abgehalten, und anstat derselben boesen Text, feine Christliche, und zur besserung dienstliche Lieder, in denselben lieblichen Melodeyen singen moegen.<sup>13</sup>

Niclas Herman says regarding his collection of 1560:

Auch hab ich hiemit Christlichen Hausvetern, welche am Feiertag mit jren Kindern geistliche Lieder daheim zu singen pflegen, woellen zu gefallen werden. Darumb ich auch diese und andere meine Gesenge nur fuer Kinder und Hauslieder ausgabe und gehalten haben wil, Acht sie jemand wirdig, das er sie in der Kirchen brauchen wil, der mags thun uff sein ebenther, Ich hab es fuernemlich dahin nicht gerichtet, wil solches Gelertern und Geistreichern beuehlen, und die in heiliger Schrift guebter sein, denn ich bin.<sup>14</sup>

Johan Spangenberg says about his Alte und Neue Geistliche Lieder und Lobgesenge, von der Geburt Christi, etc., 1544:

Diweil ihr denn offtmals angesucht und begeret hat, euch, diese Lobgesenge und Geistliche Lieder mit zu teilen, damit jr euch daheim mit ewern lieben Kindern,

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<sup>12</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 641.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 611.



Gott zu Lobe ueben moechtet, Hab ich dieselbigen auff's kuertzeit souiel der geburt Christi belangen, inn dis Enchiridion verfasset, und auch, als einem sonderlichen woltheter zugeschrieben.<sup>15</sup>

Burcard Waldis prepared his Psalter of 1553 so that he might "dieselbigen, ewern lieben kindern, und unsern andern freunden, zu lernen, zu lesen unnd zu singen geben."<sup>16</sup> Cornelius Becker says that he prepared his Psalter of 1602 for this purpose,

das wenn je einer eine sonderbare lust hette einen gesang auff mehrern stimmen zu singen, dieselbe von bewerten Componisten also uebergesetzt sind, das man sie zu Hause, auff der Gassen, in der Kirchen und auff der Reise also gebrauchen kan, das auch die einfeltigsten und die Kinder in jrer stimme mit singen, und also den Gesang zieren und stercken helfen koennen, das man auch deszwegen keiner frembden auszlandischen und Franzoesischen Composition bedoerffte.<sup>17</sup>

That the common people followed the advice and example of their spiritual leaders and made use of the hymns for their private devotions as well as for their musical and spiritual pleasure and edification is well attested. Luther's fondness for Hausmusik has already been mentioned.<sup>18</sup> Johannes Matthesius relates: "Wenn nun Doctor Luther sich muede und hellig gearbeitet, war er am Tische froehlich,

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 577.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 598.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 683.

<sup>18</sup>Supra, pp. 10-11.



lies er bisweilen eine Cantorei anrichten."<sup>19</sup> The Catholic Johann Leisentritt in the preface to his Gesangbuch of 1567 complains about the Lutherans and their custom of singing their hymns, saying:

und werden teglich allerley troetzige, auffruerische, lester und schandlieder, so wol zuuerachtung ordentlicher Obrigkeit, als zuuertilgung des alten Christlichen Glaubens, gemacht, Gesungen und gebraucht, nit allein vor und in den Heusern, Sondern auch offentlich in dem Hausz Gottes, Dadurch der gemein man wird verbittert, sonderlich aber die unschuedlige Jugent jhr dieselben zu ihren lebtagen eingeildet.<sup>20</sup>

Another Catholic, Adam Walasser, complains in the preface to his Gesangbuch of 1577:

Will jetzt nit sagen von andern leichtfertigen unzuechtigen schandliedern, so bey tag und nacht in jhren Haeusern unnd Gassen erschallen, also dasz wesz sich die alten Catholischen Christen beschaemen, desselben sich die newen Sectischen Christen beruehmen.<sup>21</sup>

Hymn singing at home and in the streets became so common in Lutheran regions that Johann Zwick in 1537 calls attention to the fact that: "Darnach ergerend sich etlich daran, das die Psalmen hin und her uff der gassen und in heusern nit mit ernst und zucht gesungen werden."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin-Darmstadt: Verlag Carl Merseburger, 1933), p. 77.

<sup>20</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 629.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 653.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 557.



## Hymn Singing at Work

Regarding the use of hymns at work Moser says:

Die Gewalt echter Volkslieder . . . blieb den Gemeindegeseungen jenseits des Gotteshauses treu: die Texte und Weisen erklangen bei der haeuslichen Arbeit der singfreudigen unteren Staende; bezeichnend etwa, dasz die Sendboten der Gegenreformation vor allem darauf zielten, bei den Handwerkern in den Werkstaetten die "Lutherischen Psalmlieder" auszu-rotten, wo sie sich mit unglaublicher Zaehigkeit hielten.<sup>23</sup>

The Augsburg Gsangbuechlin of 1557 refers to St. Jerome's praise of the people of Bethlehem in regard to their singing of Christian songs with the implication that contemporary Christians do likewise. The pertinent words are:

Der Baurman wann er den Pfluog in seiner hand hebt, so lobt er got, und singt ein froelich Alleluja. Ain Schnitter, dem der Schwaisz ueber sein angesicht ablauffet, erquicket sich mit ainem froelichen Psalmen. Und ain Weinhaecker, wann er die Reben beschneidet, so singt er ettwas holdsaeligs, unnd troestlichs ausz den Psalmen Davids, das, sagt er, seind unsere gesaeng und liedlein.<sup>24</sup>

## Hymn Singing on Special Occasions

Hymns also played an important part in the life of a Christian on the various special occasions which occur in the family circle from time to time. Michael Vehe refers to this use of his hymn collection of 1537 in the hope that

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<sup>23</sup>Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland, op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>24</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 601.



his hymns "moechten in und ausser der kirchen, vor und nach der predig, Auch zur zeit der gemeinen bitfarten, und zu andern heyligen gezeiten gesungen werden."<sup>25</sup>

Wolff Koepffel, 1533, refers to the use of hymns "mit infuerung der Ee, dem Tauff, und des Herrn Nachtmal."<sup>26</sup> Luther says in regard to his Begraebnisliedern of 1542: "Die deutschen Gesaenge . . . mag man eins um ander singen, wenn man vom Begræbnis heimgohn will."<sup>27</sup> Moser says about this and other occasional singing:

es bestanden haeufig Stiftungen, einem Verstorbenen zu ehrendem Gedæchtnis bestimmte Choraele an seinem Namens- oder Todestag am Wohnhaus oder Grab zu singen, . . . So begleitete der Kirchenliedbestand Taufe, Schulbeginn und Konfirmation, Hochzeit, Amtseinfuehrung, Jubilæen und Begraebnis als trauer Gefaehrte eines christlichen Lebens allezeit.<sup>28</sup>

### The Kurrende

In this connection the so-called Kurrende were very active, usually student groups, who went about the town singing for the benefit of the townspeople. One is reminded of Luther's own school days and his relationship to the Cotta family. Of the activity of the Kurrende Moser says:

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 588.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>27</sup>Quoted in Blankenburg, op. cit., col. 1655.

<sup>28</sup>Moser, Das evangelische Kirchenlied in Deutschland, op. cit., p. 84.



"Die Choraele erklangen aber vor allem durch die Kurrende, die sich damit fuer ihre pauperes das Brot verdiente, in schoenen A-cappella-Saetzen etc."<sup>29</sup>

### Hymns and Instrumental Music

Hymn singing in the home was not limited to unaccompanied chanting or even to a-cappella singing on the part of more ambitious groups. Instruments were important in the general culture of sixteenth century Germany as well as in specifically spiritual exercises. Every home possessed instruments of one kind or another, such as recorders, lutes, viels, and the like. Instrumental and vocal, as well as mixed music making was the ordinary means of entertainment and edification. Nicolaus Selnecker takes this for granted when in the preface to his Psalter of 1569 he says:

Wo feine Eltern sind, da werden die Kinder in zucht unnd Erbarkeyt auff erzogen, und so sie tuechtig sind, gehalten zu guten Kuensten, da sie neben jrem Catechismo und der Grammatica, singen, rechnen, und Versz schreiben lernen, unnd etwa mit Gott unnd ehren auf einem ehrlichen Instrument, Harpffen und Orgel, sich ueben und Gott loben und rhuemen. Denn diese ding soll man in der Jugend lernen. Darnach kan mans im Alter nicht auswarten.<sup>30</sup>

Heinrich Knaust in the preface to his Gassenhawer, Reuter und Bergliedlin of 1571 likewise takes the use of instruments for granted when he says:

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Wackernagel, op. cit., p. 638.



so wil uns nicht weniger gebueren, demselben frem und unserm Gotte, lob, ehr unnd danck, in allen sprachen unnd zungen, auff allerlei weisz unnd gestalt, Choral, Figural, auff Instrumenten unnd Seitenspiel, daheimen in haeusern, Buden und Kellern, auff dem felde unnd wasser, in bueschen und welden zu singen.<sup>31</sup>

Composers and publishers of sacred and secular songs so often call attention to the usefulness of their songs when played instrumentally. Of the literally dozens and dozens of such collections we quote only a few. Georg Forster's Liederbuch of 1534 has this title: "Ein auszug guter alter und newer Teutscher liedlein, einer rechten teutschen art, auff allerley Instrumenten zebrauchen auszerlesen." Of this collection he says that he has placed texts under the notes, so that the songs could either be sung or played.<sup>32</sup> The collection published by Formschneyder, 1534 and 1536, has the title: "Schoene auszerlesene lieder, des hochberuempten Heinrich Finckens, sampt andern neuen Liedern, von den fuernemsten diser kunst gesetzt, lustig zu singen, und auff die Instrument dienstlich."<sup>33</sup> Another similar title adds the remark: "auff vier Jar nicht nachzutracken bey peen zehen Marck goldts. . . . Vinum et Musica laetificant cor hominis."<sup>34</sup> In 1575 Antonio Scandello of Dresden published his "Newe schoene auszerlesene Geistliche Deudsche

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 643.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 568.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 191.



Lieder, mit Fuenff, und Sechs Stimmen, gantz lieblich zu singen, Und auff allerley Instrumenten zugebrauchen."<sup>35</sup>

In 1578 Johann Eccard published a collection with practically the same title.<sup>36</sup> But there is no need to multiply instances.

Not to be overlooked is the fact that the Lutheran hymns were used a great deal also as tower music by brass ensembles and similar groups. Moser says of this activity:

Von den Kirchtuermen erklangen an den Hauptfesten die mehrstimmigen Kantoreigesaengen weithin durch die Luft. . . . Und vielerorten bliesen die Tuermer oder Zinkenisten allstuendlich zur Tag- und Nachtzeit Choralweisen bald ein-, bald vollstimmig nach "allen vier Ecken der Welt." Wo eine Stadt mehrere Kirchen besasz, wurde durch Tuermerordnungen genau festgelegt, in welcher Reihenfolge die Kirchspiele dieserhalb zu blasen hatten, um sich nicht ins Gehege zu kommen und erbaulich auf die Hoergemeinde wirken zu koennen.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 488.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 489.

<sup>37</sup>Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland, op. cit., p. 84.



## CHAPTER V

### REPERTOIRE

#### The Early Collections

During the Reformation age hymnals were not generally called Gesangbuch but rather Enchiridion, geistliche Lieder, Psalmen, also Psalter or Psalmen Davids. The first hymn books published during the Reformation period actually were the result of the labors of John Hus and a group of his later followers, known as the Bohemian Brethren. Their first hymnal appeared in 1501. But it remained for the Lutheran movement to develop this rivulet of sacred song into the mighty river known as the Lutheran musical heritage. It is well known that Luther's concern for the common man and his active participation in the liturgy led to the mighty stream of hymns and hymn books during succeeding years. For this purpose Lutheranism took over everything useful that was available: the traditional sequences and hymns of the pre-Reformation Church; the Latin hymns of the Middle Ages, translated, of course, into the vernacular; furthermore the pre-Reformation German Kirchenlied, as well as contemporary folk songs, with a revised or newly created text; finally also German versifications of the psalms and canticles, and especially new chorales, original both as to text and melody.



Most of the early hymn books appeared with merely the unison melody accompanying the text. The collections of polyphonic settings were specifically for the use of the choirs to be sung as one part of the alternatim praxis. Following is a list of the hymn books which appeared during the lifetime of Martin Luther. In 1523 or 1524 there appeared a collection of eight hymns which had previously been distributed as single sheets. In 1524 Johann Walter's Geystliche gesangk Buchleyen for choirs was published. During the same year two Enchiridien were published in Erfurt. In 1525 the Straszburg Deutsch Kirchenamt appeared, in 1526 the Straszburg Psalmen, Gebet und Kirchnuebung, in the same year the Wittenberg Enchiridion of Hans Lufft, two years later the Leipzig Enchiridion of Michael Blum. The year 1529 produced the important Klugsche Gesangbuch, which was later to appear in new editions. In 1531 the first German edition of the hymn book of the Bohemian Brethren was produced by Michael Weisz; its second edition appeared in 1544. Valentin Schumann issued his Leipzig hymnal in 1539 (also later editions). The large Straszburg hymnal, prefaced by Bucer, appeared 1541. The last hymnal to appear during Luther's lifetime was the so-called Babstsche Gesangbuch of 1545. By this time the number of hymns had grown from thirty (Walter) to eighty, not counting the appendix in



Babst.<sup>1</sup>

The De Tempore Hymns

The repertory of hymns provided by Luther and his co-workers remained of special importance, even though a host of other hymns was gradually added to the hymn books. This was in part because of the development of the so-called de tempore hymns, hymns with a special liturgical significance, chosen to be sung on a particular Sunday or feast day each year, even as the other Propers in the service. This practice is explained by Nicolaus Selnecker in the foreword to his Kirchengesenge, Leipzig, 1587. He says:

In unsern Kirchen behalten wir D. Lutheri Gesenge, unnd singen dieselben sampt den andern in seinem Gesangbuechlein, mit freuden mit einander, und lassen andere newe Gesenge anstehen, das wir (wie es sonst leichtlich geschicht) der alten Lehr, Trost, Danck unnd Lobgesenge nicht vergessen, wie wir derwegen allhie zu Leipzig eine gewisse Christliche gute ordnung haben, was man fuer Christliche Lieder alle Sontag und Fest, die zu eim jedem Sontags Evangelio auff's best sich schicken, mit der gemein zu singen pflegt, wie dieselbige Ordnung bisz auff diese Stund gehalten worden.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The above information is to be found in greater detail in Christhard Mahrenholz, "Gesangbuch," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Musik Herausgegeben von Friedrich Blume, IV, cols. 1876-1889 (Kassel und Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1955), cols. 1876-80.

<sup>2</sup>Philipp Wackernagel, Bibliographie zur Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes im XVI. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt a. M.: Verlag von Heyder und Zimmer, 1855), p. 667.



That is why it was not the duty of the pastor to choose the main hymn for the service, as we learn, for example, from a rule laid down in 1580:

Damit das Volk im Singen nicht irre gemacht werde, sollen die custodes keine andere denn D. Luthers Gesaenge und die er ihm gefallen lassen, in den Kirchen singen, damit sie dieselbigen wohl lernen und eins das andere desto leichter singen lehren koenne.<sup>3</sup>

Cunz in discussing this topic distinguishes between two kinds of hymns:

(1) Es gab feste Lieder (cantica fixa), diese wiederholten sich Jahr aus, Jahr ein, fuer gewoehnliche Sonntage, Communion- und Festtage bestimmt. Gesaenge fuer Taufen, Trauungen, Begraebnisse, Metten und Vesper waren noch besonders geordnet. Diese Lieder muszten feststehende sein, denn sie waren Theile der Liturgie, am Sonntage nach den Stuecken der Messe gerichtet, im Uebrigen nach anderen Formularen der Kirche bestimmt. Denn der Chor bewegte ihren Gesang, dem sich spaeterhin auch die Gemeinde im Schiff der Kirche mit anschlosz. Diese Lieder wurden nicht angezeigt, denn sie kannte jeder, welcher sonntaeglich zur Kirche kam. (2) Sind waehlbare (cantica mobilia) Lieder zu unterscheiden. In Beziehung auf die Predigt hatte der Pfarrer das Recht ein Lied auszuwaehlen. Es musste bekannt, beliebt, im Mund und Herzen des Volks gelaeufig sein. . . . Dies sollte der Chor oder die ganze Kirche singen. Die gewaehlten Lieder wurden der Gemeinde angezeigt. Dieses geschah so: An den Kirchthueren des Gotteshauses wurde eine schwarze Tafel gehaengt oder "aufgesteckt," und die Anfangszeile des Liedes bezeichnet.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Walter Blankenburg, "Evangelischer Gemeindegesang," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Musik Herausgegeben von Friedrich Blume, IV, cols. 1649-1680 (Kassel und Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1955), col. 1662.

<sup>4</sup>F. A. Cunz, Geschichte des deutschen Kirchenliedes vom 16. Jahrhundert bis auf unsere Zeit (Leipzig: J. T. Loeschke, 1855), pp. 11-12.



For lists of the de tempore hymns as they were used in various localities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the reader is referred to Liliencron.<sup>5</sup>

These brief remarks are intended merely to indicate in outline, as it were, the development of the Lutheran hymnological repertoire. The scope of this paper, dealing mainly with the practice of hymn singing, does not allow further detail. The topic is so vast that a lengthy book could easily be written on the subject. Such a task is left for future research.

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<sup>5</sup>R. Freiherr von Liliencron, Liturgisch-musikalische Geschichte der evangelischen Gottesdienste von 1523 bis 1700 (Schleswig: Julius Bargas Verlag, 1893).



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY WITH REFERENCE TO PRESENT DAY PRACTICE

If it is true, as stated in the introductory chapter, that the musical heritage of Lutheranism is not appreciated to the extent it ought to be, that musical practice in the Lutheran Church in America today is in spirit all too often far removed from the principles and philosophy which in past centuries have produced a musical heritage second to none, and that this musical heritage has in large part been forgotten or neglected, it then follows "that every minister of the church, whether pastor, choirmaster, or organist, must to a greater or lesser degree study and become acquainted with the musical principles and usages of the Church in her golden age, the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries."<sup>1</sup>

It is our purpose in the paragraphs that follow to make suggestions for present day practice, based on the findings of this study. It should be stated here that while this chapter is not an essential part of this paper, its purpose is to synthesize the results of the research of the previous chapters in terms of present day conditions.

A first requirement for Lutheran pastors and church musicians today is that they develop for themselves an

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 2ff.



adequate philosophy of church music. Such a philosophy must be Bible-based and grounded in theology. The Lutheran pastor and church musician must recognize the source and purpose of music in the church. Music is a gift of God. The fact that man responds to music, not only with his sense of hearing, but particularly also with his inner being, his emotions, is an evidence of God's love to man. It is therefore man's obligation to use also this gift, not for purposes of carnal satisfaction and pleasure, but above all to praise and glorify his Creator. It follows therefore that music is a means of glorifying God not only in a general way as the occasions of day by day living provide opportunity, but especially also in the formal worship of the Christian. Church music in a particular sense is a means of praising God, because it provides one method for the Christian to respond to the grace of God in Christ Jesus in an artistic way: in his petitions, prayers, and praises. Church music, then, cannot be separated from the Word, expressed or implied. It is the Word, either as it is communicated from God to the worshiper, or as it is communicated to God from the worshiper, that gives music its meaning. That is what makes Christian hymns such valuable aids in worship. For they are essentially texts, which either proclaim the grace of God to the sinner, or conversely express the sinner's gratitude for grace bestowed and received. However, the foregoing applies not only to hymns and other



vocal or choral music but also to the textless music of the service, such as instrumental preludes and interludes.

These, too, insofar as possible, ought to be related to the Word. It is for this reason that the so-called chorale or hymn preludes for organ form such a valuable body of material to be used in the service. For they are intended to recall to an attentive congregation the content of the words on which they are based.

Obviously, then, church music, particularly hymns, in addition to providing a medium for praising God, are an invaluable aid in the proclamation of the Gospel. It ought to be an aim of all those who are charged with the conduct of worship to provide only music and hymns which implement this ideal. Certainly the pastor should choose hymns for the service which are soundly evangelical. And the choir-master should make sure that his selection of choral music is in keeping with these principles. In practice, this is not at all self-evident. For many a hymn and choir anthem, though it contain nothing contrary to the Gospel, may, because of what it lacks in a positive way, be described as weak in this respect.

Truly evangelical hymns have this advantage, too, that when they are known and loved by the congregation, they become an excellent means of private worship for those who for one reason or another cannot join their fellow-Christians in public worship. What instruction and real comfort



has come to many a sick and shut-in child of God through the use of Christian hymns, only the Lord knows.

Such hymns, too, are the only means (musically speaking) by which a Christian can hope to grow in grace and increase in sanctification. For, since they proclaim Christ, they impart the Holy Spirit, who is the only Source of a truly Christian life. How important it is therefore, that particularly the young people be taught to love and use such hymns in their daily life! An appreciation of truly Christian music will do much to counteract not only the musical trash with which young people are so often surrounded day in day out, but also the many evil influences of worldliness in general.

A second requirement for Lutheran pastors and church musicians is a thorough knowledge and understanding of the history and principles of the Liturgy and the many ways in which the Liturgy may be adapted for the greater edification of the congregation. The Lutheran Liturgy is good and useful, being essentially the public worship of the ecumenical Church for centuries. But it is not rigid and lifeless; rather it is a living and pliable form, adaptable to all the needs and conditions of men. When circumstances demand, and in keeping with the practice of the past, let the Liturgy serve the Church and not vice versa. For example, it is desirable occasionally to substitute good familiar hymns for some of the more formal elements in the service. Let



one of the hymn versions be substituted for the Kyrie, the Gloria in Excelsis, the Credo, the Agnus, the Sanctus, etc. Or the congregation may sing these hymns in addition to their formal counterpart.

Let choir directors and organists revive the old alternatim practice in their congregations, as is indeed being done here and there. Have the organ or some instrumental ensemble introduce a hymn through the use of a good hymn prelude; let the hymn itself be sung alternately by the choir, a soloist, and the congregation, accompanied or unaccompanied. There is hardly a limit to the many variations possible under such a method of rendition.

Much can be done to improve the usefulness of church choirs. Admittedly, there are difficulties because of the very nature of a volunteer choir. The Kantorei, as it existed in the sixteenth century, is no longer with us. Nevertheless, even a volunteer choir can do much under proper direction to make worship more meaningful and effective. A sincere rendition of a hymn verse is much to be preferred to an inadequate rendition of an anthem of dubious musical worth. Where a congregation maintains its own school, the children's choir can likewise be of great service to the worshiping congregation. True, the repertoire is more limited than for an adult choir, since our parish schools do not ordinarily have voices capable of singing the male parts, as was the case in earlier centuries. Yet hymns



arranged for treble voices are plentiful, or can easily be prepared by the choirmaster. It should be remembered, too, that the unison singing of hymns by well directed children with organ accompaniment is a very satisfactory means of worship. Perhaps much more could be and ought to be done by our schools in training our children to sing the praises of God.

A congregation will be helped immeasurably in the singing of hymns if the choir at all times remembers its obligation to lead the singing as a real chorus choralis. This is true both of adult and children's choirs. But it requires constant rehearsing of the hymns. It requires, too, that the choir director be informed of the hymns to be sung early enough to be rehearsed. Here is where many a pastor could be of greater service to his congregation by choosing appropriate hymns well in advance of the service rather than waiting "until the last minute," as it were. Parish school children can be particularly helpful, because they are in a position to rehearse the hymns thoroughly, if given the opportunity. Helpful also is the custom of congregational "hymnsings," special assemblies for the purpose of learning unfamiliar hymns. If such a custom is not feasible, at least portions of the meetings of the various church organizations could be used for this purpose. Such a procedure is particularly valuable in young congregations, where many members are unfamiliar with the Lutheran musical heritage.



The organ, of course, is always a real help. It is well, however, in the case of familiar hymns to let the congregation sing a stanza occasionally without instrumental accompaniment. This will serve to focus attention on the text, and at the same time give the worshipers a greater feeling for corporate worship, each individual joining his fellow members and praising God as one body.

Another means of increasing the effectiveness of hymn singing is the use of de tempore hymns. This is a practice, which to this writer's knowledge, is not in use in America at all, but is coming into favor again in Germany. In our opinion the use of specific hymns for specific Sundays, feasts, and festivals during the church year could result only in blessing for the church. The Music Department of Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, has made a beginning by providing for choirs a series of compositions called Choral Music for the Day. While these compositions are not hymns, but are based on the Propers for the day, their purpose is similar to that of de tempore hymns. It is to be hoped that the Church at large will one day provide a selection of appropriate liturgical hymns and encourage their widespread use.

A third requirement for Lutheran pastors and church musicians is that they consciously aim to make the church's treasury of hymns the common property of all in their day by day living. Private worship, in its very nature, need



not be concerned about time, place, or circumstance. Next to the Bible itself, one could hardly imagine a better devotional book than the hymnal. For it contains the essence of Biblical theology in a form easily used and readily understood. Like Scripture itself, it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.<sup>2</sup> That every Christian home ought therefore have its hymnal(s) available for frequent use should be taken for granted. The fact that most churches supply the worshipers with hymnals for the public services should be no reason why each Christian should not have his own hymnal. The custom of giving a hymnal to the confirmands for their own personal use ought to be continued.

Families that make use of the hymnal in their daily family devotions derive much benefit from this practice. Particularly is this true when conditions hinder regular attendance at divine services. Many a sermon is contained in the great hymns of the church. Perhaps it is well at this point to distinguish between hymns intended for common worship, the worship of the formal church service, and hymns of a lighter, more personal nature. The latter type, which do not ordinarily fit well in a public service of

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<sup>2</sup>2 Tim. 3:16-17.



worship, may often be used with great blessing by individuals in their homes.

There are many occasions when hymn singing is very appropriate. Some Christians have favorite hymns which they sing on their birthday, baptismal day, and similar occasions. Family gatherings at the death of a loved one, or for anniversaries of one kind or another, are also favorite occasions for hymn singing. It is also a fine custom to sing the table prayer in the home, as is often done at church conventions and conferences. Another worthwhile custom is the singing of carols and hymns in the streets at Christmas time and similar seasons. Many young peoples' organizations carry on a similar activity throughout the year by forming little Kantoreien and bringing cheer and comfort to hospital patients and other invalids. All these and similar activities can and should be encouraged by pastors and church musicians.

This applies equally to the encouragement and promotion of instrumental music and its application to hymn literature. There can be no doubt that in time past families gave much more attention to the musical training of the children than is the case today. Home entertainment today is largely a matter of passively listening to radio programs or viewing television offerings. The need of creative entertainment is no longer felt. Church leaders can do much to encourage home music making, as it was practiced in bygone centuries.



There is a certain thrill in creating one's own music which must be experienced to be appreciated. Performing all kinds of music, but especially also hymns, on keyboard instruments and by various combinations of woodwinds and strings has its own rewards. It is to be hoped that the movement begun in Europe some years ago and continued also in America, namely, the movement that made the ancient recorder a popular instrument again, will increase and gain in momentum. Hymns and similar musical compositions are ideal for an instrument of this kind.

Brass music also has its uses in the service of the church. A brass ensemble playing the hymns from the church tower or any convenient location is a musical activity to be encouraged. Where this cannot be done for lack of performers, the modern electronics industry can be of service. Recorded music broadcast over church music systems is an effective means of propagating the hymn literature of the church. Nor should the fact be overlooked that bands and orchestras sponsored by the church have at their disposal a wealth of performance material if they will but make use of their treasury of Christian hymns. These will be not only effective program material, but will impart a spiritual blessing as well.

If pastors and church musicians will be aware of their obligations to themselves, to the church, and to the community in general, as these obligations pertain to church music







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**THE PRACTICE OF HYMN SINGING  
DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY**

**ADDENDUM**

**Translations of German/Latin Quotations**

Summer, 1983

Theodore P. <sup>Paul</sup> Klammer



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CHAPTER I

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4) The church of the priesthood becomes once again the church of the congregation. Through the abolition of the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood consummated by the priest (offertorium) the worship service recovers its original purpose: to build the kingdom of God through the proclamation of the Word in song, lesson, creed, prayer, and sermon.

7) Already in his writing "To the Nobility of All the Cities of the German Nation that They Should Establish and Maintain Christian Schools" (early 1524) Luther, for whom the Latin schools in the cities were always especially dear, insists with great emphasis on the cultivation of the languages and arts, especially music: "I speak for myself, if I had children, and had it in my power, they would not only have to learn the languages but also study singing and music and the whole mathematics." Luther challenges civil government, especially the cities, first of all to encourage in their schools singing, song (cantus, cantilena, that is, the "usus," the practice of sacred song), and then also "music with the whole of mathematics." Under the term "the whole of mathematics" is to be understood here the quadrivium study of the artes liberales, in the domain of which the study of music, the ars musica, belongs. Trivium singing (usus, practical church singing) and quadrivium musica (the study of music, "learning the artem") belong together for Luther according to the tradition of the high Middle Ages, while the emphasis in the music of the Reformation era passes more and more from the ars to the usus, from the musica to the cantus, and correspondingly from the musicus to the cantor. The Reformation musician is therefore the cantor.

CHAPTER II

1) Music is a beautiful, lovely gift of God; it has often aroused and moved me to a desire to preach. . . . Music is a mistress of all the emotions of the human heart . . . nothing on earth is more powerful than music to make sad people cheerful and cheerful people sad, to make the discouraged courageous, and to move the proud to humility.

2a) I have always loved music.

2b) Thereupon he begins to make music with his fellows; while this is going on, Dr. Luther gradually comes to himself again, and his sadness and depression disappears, so that he begins to sing with them. With this he becomes very cheerful and requests the aforementioned Magister Lukas and his fellows most earnestly that they might visit him often, especially if they feel like making music.

3) As I have often heard about a beloved man (Luther), that among all the pastimes in which people engage to pass the time he knew of none more godly, more honorable, more beautiful, than the noble art of music.



Chapter II continued

4) We sing as well as we can, at the table, and then continue thereafter. If we make some mistakes, that is, of course, not your fault but our lack of skill, when we repeat two or three times. Therefore you composers must make allowances for us when we make mistakes in your songs. For we really would rather hit the right note than miss it.

5) There are two kinds of composers and poets; the real ones are masters of the syllables and notes; the others are their servants.

6a) He is master of the notes; they had to do what he wanted; the other composers have to do as the notes demand.

6b) very remarkable master.

6c) cheerfully, willingly, mellow and lovely as the song of a finch.

7) Oh, what fine musicians have died in the last ten years . . . the world is never worthy of these learned people.

8) But where simple, artless music is ground and polished by art, there one sees and recognizes to some extent (for it cannot be grasped and understood completely) the amazingly great and perfect wisdom of God in His wondrous creation of music. Especially singular and astonishing is the fact that one singer sings a simple melody or tenor, as the musicians call it, alongside which three, four, or five other voices are sung, and these play and dance all around this plain and simple tune or tenor in jubilation and thus wondrously embellish and ornament it with all manner of sound. It is as if they were performing a heavenly dance in which the dancers meet, caress, and embrace one another in such a way that those who have some understanding of this and are affected by it are mightily amazed and surely think there is nothing more wonderful in the world than such a song embellished with many voices. But whoever has no desire or fondness for this, and is not affected by such a charming phenomenon, must surely be an uncouth clod, who is not worthy to hear such lovely music, but rather the noisy, vulgar braying of asses or the howling of dogs and grunting of pigs.

9) We know that music is incomprehensible and intolerable to the evil spirits. Also, it is my opinion, and I am not ashamed to admit, that after theology there is no art that can be compared to music, since it alone after theology is able to give a quiet and cheerful disposition, of which otherwise only theology is capable, for this reason, because the devil, creator of sorrowful cares and hosts of restlessness, flees at the word music as at the word theology. Therefore the prophets devoted themselves to music as to no other art and also directed their divine wisdom not to geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, but applied it to music, in order to combine theology and music most intimately, when they spoke in psalms and hymns. But why am I praising the art of music here and attempting to picture such a great thing in the narrow space of a letter, or even to make a mess of it? Yet, so much



## Chapter II continued

does my love for it grow over me and overpower me, something which has often refreshed me and freed me from great suffering.

10) Music is a beautiful, glorious gift of God and close to theology. I would not want to give up my meager musical ability for anything great. We should constantly train the youth in this art, for it produces refined, capable people. . . . Whoever despises music, as all (religious) enthusiasts do, with such I am not pleased. For music is a gift and endowment of God, not a human talent. And so it also drives away the devil and makes people cheerful. Thereby one forgets all anger, unchastity, pride, and other vice. After theology I give to music first place and the highest honor. . . . A schoolteacher must be able to sing or I will not consider him. Nor should one ordain young men to the ministry unless in school they have been well trained and practiced in music.

11a) But now God has created men in such a way that they are dissimilar so that one rules over another, one obeys the other. Two can sing together (that is, equally praise God), but not talk together (that is ruling).

11b) I have in mind to prepare German psalms for the people, that is, spiritual songs, so that the Word of God may remain among them also through song.

12) Since to us, as to the old dear friends of God, yes, especially since God the Father has given us to know our Lord Jesus Christ even better, He would have us take to heart nothing more deeply and nothing anywhere more earnestly than this godly thing, namely, how we might rightly know, love, honor, and praise our Creator and Father through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and be stirred up and moved thereto, so it is that music and all singing and playing (which are especially powerful, as said, to move and excite and warm the spirit) should be used for no other purpose than divine praise, prayer, teaching, and exhortation.

13) As it is sufficiently established in both Testaments, that spiritual songs are pleasing to God and not blasphemous, therefore they should be read and sung by all Christians for the praise of God the Almighty, to whom alone be praise, glory, and honor to eternity.

14) These church songs are briefly and simply composed, dear reader, not out of cleverness, self-praise, or the opinion that one could earn indulgence for sin and obtain justification, but rather for the praise and honor of God, the benefit of the sacristans, and the betterment of the Christian congregation.

15) The Almighty has also for His honor granted to men this art, especially so that they can glorify and praise God and His wonders and kindnesses, not only with one, but also with many and various high and low voices (and yet they are all together beautifully arranged and are euphonious).



## Chapter II continued

16) It is my wish that all who sing or read them, for God's honor and their soul's salvation, be encouraged and entreated to sing to God the Father from the heart.

17) The poet Virgil, who so artistically applies his carmina and words to the history he is describing, taught me this. So also music should direct all its notes and melodies to the text.

18) But if anyone is qualified and has the inclination to put these passages into rhymes, that would be good for this, that they might remember them the more easily and read them the more readily. For rhymes or verses make good aphorisms or proverbs, which people prefer to simple prose.

19) No hymn shall be sung in the churches unless it is Christian and based on Holy Scripture.

20) All people must be bound to the sense, learned and unlearned, but the letters and the words are free. Whatever is in agreement with the sense, that is also Scriptural, no matter how dissimilar the words. Whatever is not in agreement with the sense, that is contrary to Scripture, no matter how similar the words, even if they were pure gold. Therefore some of the Christians of the past, when they held banquets for the poor, had songs sung, not only out of Scripture, but also others that anyone knew, nothing, of course, against God or the sense of Holy Scripture.

21) are being printed more and more incorrectly . . . In short, you will always find mouse droppings in the pepper.

22) For, whatever psalms anyone takes in hand, it will not be without fruit, if a devotional spirit and the grace of God are present, since in all places the one living Word of Jesus Christ, swaddled in the wrappings of the letters, is proclaimed.

23) Whenever a prescribed melody does not please the leader of the singing, let him compose a better if he can. I will receive it with thanks. But let him take earnest heed that he does no damage to the text. Let him nowhere disturb the sense, the syllables, or the words. For these things are not mine alone; they belong to the Christian congregation.

24) Also, according to the presumed great intelligence and judgment of some (especially those whose breath reeks of Calvinism), Luther with his hymns ought to hide before this work. Therefore in some neighboring areas these psalms, translated from the French into the German, have been directed to be sung in the church services and are given the preference over Luther's hymns. But unfortunately experience has shown that such practice has usually been the real beginning and entry of a religious change and of the introduction of highly dangerous Calvinism.

25) There is an old proverb which says: Mutata musica in templis, mutatur etiam genus doctrinae. That means that when people begin to sing in the churches in a new and strange fashion, generally also a change in doctrine will follow.



## Chapter II continued

26) So that the people may not be led astray in their singing, the sacristans (custodes) should not sing any other hymns in the churches than Dr. Luther's and those that are acceptable to him, so that they (the people) might learn these well, and teach them the more readily one to another.

27) The tenor's "plumb line" is the chorale, that is, the plain (unmeasured, nonmensural) unison and unaccompanied choral melody (musica plana, choralis) as distinguished from the figural of the accompanying voices, which get their name from the various note values and ligatures ("figurae") of the measured, mensural music (musica mensurata, figuralis). This contratenor altus and bassus which "play all around," "embellish and ornament" (Luther) the chorale in improvisatory manner gain for the chorale art of Johann Walter liturgical-doctrinal significance in this way that the tenor chorale with its inherent unity of word and melody as it was performed in the courts and church choirs, generally by the ministers, in a plain and artless manner, appears as an authentic representation of the gospel and thereby as an artistic manner of expressing the essence of the Lutheran church.

29) assembled several spiritual songs in order to promote and bring into ascendancy the holy gospel, which by the grace of God has appeared again.

30) only that the psalms be well sung and read to the poor lay people. For therein the working of the Holy Spirit is clearly seen, how one should behave toward God and come to the true Christian faith. Yes, even how faith should be preserved amid much temptation, this all is written very clearly by the Holy Spirit in the psalms. Therefore St. Paul teaches how one should exercise oneself and take delight in spiritual songs of praise and psalms.

31) Firstly and above all things for the praise, honor, and glory of God, so that God's Word and the holy and saving gospel might be planted and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ daily grow and be increased in us.

32) The holy apostle Paul writes, . . . that Christ is our song of praise, and that we should neither know anything, nor speak anything, but Jesus Christ our Savior, so that his word and doctrine might be promoted and practiced in every way, and (we) should firmly cling to him by reading, learning, thinking, writing, and meditating, in such a way that the Sabbath be rightly observed, and God's name be hallowed. That means that we be occupied with His Word and concern ourselves only that we might have it constantly in our heart, mouth, and ears. Then it would never be without fruit.

33) so that the pure doctrine might thereby be spread abroad and be inculcated into the youth.



## Chapter II continued

34) Because Luther found that this was a very good and convenient means to spread God's Word far and wide into the provinces, he diligently encouraged his helpers and fellow workers in the Lord's work to form the psalms into spiritual songs.

35) And without a doubt this kind of practice among the elect will not be without benefit and fruit, whether God's Word is preached, read, or sung in Christian psalms. For it remains God's Word, whether it is read or sung.

36) that the whole Psalter of David be put into hymns and songs so that they might possibly the more easily be brought to the common man and implanted in him, especially because one much more readily catches and grasps a thing in songs and hymns than if he should grasp and learn it otherwise.

37) to compose hymns so that it (God's Word) is not only spoken but also sung and thereby the more thoroughly is brought and welcomed into the heart.

38) Therefore David himself, the holy king and outstanding prophet, did not let the bare word suffice, but took his harp in hand and through his music intensified the words and made them more friendly and lovely.

39) And now, praise God, it has come to this, that people read, play, and sing, not only the text of the psalms, but also their interpretation, put into Christians songs of praise, powerfully, yet briefly, by men who love God.

40) For it is evident that one can spread abroad and extend the true doctrine through fine Christian hymns and thereby make cheerful the hearts, as God has now given His grace for this in Germany, that through fine Christian hymns many are edified in the churches. Often more is accomplished in this way than with sermons. Wherefore Augustine says: Many people, who assemble in the churches, cannot easily learn and understand the writings of the apostles and the lofty doctrines of the prophets, or if they do learn them cannot retain and ponder them. But the psalms and hymns they can sing in their houses, and publicly in the congregation, and thereby teach themselves and make themselves cheerful and joyous. Oh, what a wonderful and wise art is that of our true Master, the Holy Spirit, that at one and the same time we sing and are taught and instructed in the things that belong to the welfare of our soul.

41) this our hymn book in truth can be called the layman's Loci Communes, or: chief articles of the Christian doctrine for lay people. And it might well, with honor, be called the little Bible. Should such a noble book not be worthy to be preached on?

42) For it is certain and true that from these spiritual songs many thousand people have rightly learned the Catechism and especially the article on the justification of a poor sinner before God. This would have been lacking in the case of many who cannot read or write.



## Chapter II continued

43) For who does not know (as Pomeranus says) that our spirits are often much more attracted through such rhymed verses than by a poor discourse, no matter how closely we listen? Yes, he does not consider a person a true Christian unless that person is able to comfort himself at his leisure also with psalms.

44) to prepare German psalms for the people, that is, spiritual songs, so that the Word of God may remain among them also through song.

45a) For, you know, they used to stand apart all day in the chancel and howl with unintelligible noises like the priests of Baal, and still do so in monasteries and cloisters, howling like jackasses in the forest to a deaf god. This to the detriment not only of themselves, since even they often do not understand what they are singing or reading, but also of the entire Christian congregation.

45b) To correct such abuse the singing of German spiritual songs and psalms is now being regularly undertaken according to good Christian order.

46) . . . but rather to treat the Testament of Christ plainly and to sing and teach in German so that the people might become Christlike.

47) Conclusion of the Booklet: That German Song Be Used in the Mass etc. . . . for nothing should be taught, prayed, or preached in the congregation, unless everyone can understand and say Amen.

48) Hereupon it is our desire to arrange that the hymns be sung in German among us in the churches of our principalities, as also the other offices, with lections and intercessions being done in German. However, according as St. Paul at his time permitted strange languages, yet known to some, (to be used) in the churches for their edification, so also students may at times sing Latin songs taken from Holy Scripture, or agreeing with it, in the churches for their training. But particularly since only the German language is known to the majority of churches, therefore the majority of the hymns should be done in German.

49) For since the Almighty God wants to be honored and praised in all languages and tongues, Latin and German have been placed together here, the Latin for the sake of the students and the learned, the German for the sake of the lay people and the unlearned, so that each might have whereby to refresh his heart in the divine service.

50) The Latin songs are useless for anyone who does not understand them.

51) For this reason, according to the Holy Spirit's teaching, the hymns, as well as the entire divine service should not be performed in a foreign but rather in familiar language, so that the entire church may understand and learn the psalms, and thereby help to praise God, and from them be built up in knowledge,



Chapter II continued

faith, love, patience, and other virtues.

52) for the edification of the Christian congregation.

53) that (people) by their singing might be reminded of God's Word contained therein, and by it be edified in the right knowledge of God, in faith, love, patience, and all virtues.

54) might be sung from the heart for noticeable comfort and edification in the true faith.

55) Therefore it would be good and Christian, that all people who boast of a Christian name might be occupied with God's Word, that all craftsmen at their work, the farmer behind the plow, the harvesters in the hayloft, the old women at the spinning wheel, the children on the streets, might sing, speak, and think about God and His Word, that Scripture in many ways might be handled and dealt with.

56) All who sing or read these spiritual songs,  
I ask that they be not lazy or dull,  
That they might understand and learn them from the heart,  
And bring forth from them a pious way of life.

57) that thereby the youth might be served, who in our times have much occasion to fall into all kinds of bad behavior by carousing, gambling, and other irritating and dishonorable activities. For youth cannot be unoccupied or idle. Therefore if they do not spend their time in honorable and useful activities, they will associate with evil and thus seek their amusement.

58) Although these songs which I have now published are not useful for this (for worship), for they are secular songs and not church songs, yet they serve a purpose, because young people, as noted above, cannot be idle and must have their enjoyment and amusement. Therefore they ought to undertake these and similar other songs and not shout with the rabble like coarse peasants as they carouse with their wine, but rather sing together properly and artistically. That is not barbara, sed erudita voluptas (not rough, but refined pleasure), which is fitting for young people, but especially students. And they should be held to this in a reasonable way by their instructors as to a practice that is not only artistic but also honorable.

59) to purge them from useless and harmful secular songs.

60) that they might be rid of lewd songs and carnal ditties, and in their place learn something wholesome, and thus the good might enter into them with pleasure, as is fitting for the youth.

61) once and for all to thwart and drive away from the coarse and evil world its good-for-nothing shameless and accursed street songs.



## Chapter II continued

62) teach the children and in no way permit them either to listen to or sing any frivolous, worldly, lewd songs.

63) Therefore, whoever has the opportunity ought to advise and assist in doing away with and exterminating such arrogant, devilish, destructive songs, and make the sacred psalms and godly songs popular and pleasureable for all Christians, young and old, and bring them into regular use. Especially the elders and servants of the church of Christ (ought to do this).

64) so that the salutary admonition of many great articles of the holy Christian faith might not be taken away or lost to the church.

65) the youth who must be brought up in the fear of God and in fine arts.

66) especially for the sake of the youth who cannot be brought up laudably without such ceremonies and songs.

67) for the glory of the Almighty God, for the training of the sacred congregation, and for the service and improvement of the youth.

68) how and in what measure, manner, or form God's Word might be inculcated in and impressed upon the pliable youth, whether through songs, hymns, verses, or in some other way.

69) which is undeniably true, that everything composed in song form is easier to learn and better remembered than what one otherwise reads or hears.

70a) retain the words with the melodies and take them home with them.

70b) when he/she is alone, sings while at work, and so impresses the Word of God more deeply in his mind, and day by day ponders the Word better.

71) particularly because among you the dear youth are being studiously trained in musica in addition to the other liberal arts.

72) a schoolteacher must be able to sing, or I will not consider him. Nor should one ordain young men to the ministry unless in school they have been well trained and practiced in music.

## CHAPTER III

3) At the beginning we sing a hymn or a German psalm.



Chapter III continued

- 4) After the Epistle a German hymn is sung: Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist, or some other, and that with the entire choir.
- 5) After the Gospel the entire church sings the creed in German: Wir glauben all an einen Gott etc.
- 6) sing the German Sanctus, or the hymn: Gott sei gelobet, or Johann Huss' hymn: Jesus Christus unser Heiland. Thereafter consecrate the cup and also distribute, and sing the remaining stanzas of the abovementioned hymns, or the German Agnus Dei.
- 8) There is no combination which might not occur in some liturgy.
- 9) First the introit was played, the organ alternating with the choir in Latin. . . . After the introit the kyrie eleison was played on the organ and sung alternately by the boys. When this was finished, the minister sang gloria in excelsis, which was then completed alternately by organ and choir. . . . After (the Epistle) Herr Gott vatter wohn uns bey etc. was played on the organ, the choir joining in. . . . After (the Gospel) Wir glauben all an eyenen Gott was played on the organ and was joined by the choir. After the sermon the choir sang in Latin: Da pacem Domine. . . . During the communion Agnus Dei was sung in Latin. . . . When the Agnus Dei had been sung, they added the German hymn: Jesus Christus etc.
- 10) Then once more victimae paschali etc. was played on the organ and alternately sung by the choir; in between, the people sang: Christ ist erstanden.
- 11) Taking into consideration the liturgies as well as reports, one learns that differences arose between theory and practice and that we must conceive of the introduction of congregational singing in the Protestant worship service as very moderate.
- 12) principle of substitution and addition
- 13) Let the cantors in the schools and churches be reminded, and take note, that such hymns are especially pleasing to a Christian congregation, and are also lovely and useful to listen to, when they are used alternately with the choir and the organ, in this way that a boy with a pleasing clear voice sings a stanza with the organ, whereupon the choir sings the next stanza, and so everyone along with the harmony can also distinctly hear the words combined with the appropriate melody, and can sing along, something which cannot but bring about great and noticeable profit.
- 14) For when the dear boys in the choir sing forth these Christian songs, or when the organist plays them artistically on the organ, or when they both combine into one chorus, and the boys sing to the accompaniment of the organ, or again the organ joins in the singing, . . . then every Christian can joyfully and loudly lift up his simple layman's voice.



Chapter III continued

15) When the Old Testament lesson had been read, the cantor (leading the choir) began figuraliter Christum wir sollen loben schon; the remaining stanzas were sung by the sacristan with the people.

16) one of Luther's German hymns, appropriate to the Sunday or feast day, and in the following manner: the first stanza by the choir polyphonically (figuraliter), and the remaining stanzas by the people in unison (choraliter).

17) that the appointed hymns be sung in alternation, so that the choir and the people sing alternately, stanza by stanza, and the hymns thus become common custom both in the schools and in the congregation.

18) at the consecration of the Lutheran bishop Amsdorf of Naumburg Senfl's motet "non moriar" was sung. Then the people, in keeping with the festival season, sang the Christmas hymn: "Ein Kindelein so loebelich." After this, the superintendant Dr. Medler preached. Then followed the old ordination hymn: "Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist" (veni sancte spiritus),--which was first played on the organ, then sung by the choir in five voices, and finally played by trumpeters "most gloriously in five voices." Following this, Luther completed the consecration. Thereupon the Tedeum was played and sung in threefold manner as above.

21a) It is a matter of one's personal choice and discretion how and in what form he chooses to use my work or other similar work. The circumstances and opportunities of each choir and church will determine whether he will begin immediately after the organ strikes the tune with a fugal rendition of 5, 6, or 8 voices, and the second stanza by the congregation in simple chorale manner, the third with 4 or 5 voices simpliciter, simply set, not fugally, with the choir and congregation joining together; the fourth again chorale; the fifth figural (but with the congregation at all times singing along); and so on, singing one stanza after the other.

21b) During the communion they should sing Jesus Christus unser Heilandt, with the choir and the people singing alternatim every two stanzas, the organist playing in between.

21c) At the end of the sermon the organist plays the German Magnificat. The choir sings two verses alternatim with the people, and when the Antiphona (Christum unsern heilandt) has been sung, after the last stanza the organist should begin the German Nunc dimittis with full register. The choir and the people sing two verses "for mine eyes etc.": "a light to enlighten." After this the organist again plays in between; the choir and the people sing the Gloria.

22) direct at the organ or a regal, and the organist must play and accompany from the figured bass.



### Chapter III continued

23) For variety one can also perform both Cantus with instruments alone, e.g. two violins and two cornetti or two recorders, or one cornetto and one violin, and omit the human voices. Or use the humn voices the first time, and both together the third time.

24) If after this the chorale is occasionally sung after and between the figural, . . . the organist, as soon as the antepenult stanza has been sung choraliter, must fall in with a strong registration and after three or four beats make a cadence, so that the people in the church will stop. Thereafter the last stanza is begun figuraliter and thus the hymn concluded. Since however in some places, as I personally have observed and found, the congregation in the church will not let itself be stopped, especially if they are not accustomed to this and do not understand, it is much better to let them sing the last stanza to its end and then immediately repeat the same stanza with the choir and thus conclude.

25) When the first stanza has been sung figuraliter, then the second stanza or strophe may be sung by a good tenor, and the third stanza by a good qualified soprano (Discantist) clearly and well with pleasing diminutions and passages, accompanied by the aforementioned instruments. After this the last stanza (which one can place under the notes of the first stanza) can be sung just like the first with five or six voices, or also in simple counterpoint with four or five voices by the full choir.

27) Every student, without the possibility of exemption, had to learn to sing the Cantus planus (unison chorales, hymns, antiphons, and resposories), while the more gifted were trained in the choral figural music for the Sunday motet and their service as Kurrende (student groups, who went about the town singing for the benefit of the townspeople as well as to enhance their financial resources). For this purpose in many schools one hour daily was set aside, in part already for reasons of health. For they saw in singing an excellent physical exercise, related to gymnastics. Every school day, yes, every class period, was opened and closed with the singing of chorales or odes.

28) in that life an organist or lutenist will play a sacred text on his organ or lute. And everyone will be able, alone and from memory, to improvise and sing in four or five voices. There will also be no more mistakes or confusion, which now makes many a good performance unpleasing, especially when one has to start over often.

29) The head pastor Martin Tectander often complained to the council "about the cantor and his singers on account of the bad harmony in their singing." On Easter Day, 1558, soon after his installation, he reproached the cantor for having had the choir sing too long, and in general gave his opiniin of the singing with the words: "If an old hide were sewn together and stuffed full of young dogs and cats and pigs, and one would beat upon it with a club, these (animals) would yell and howl and screech just as the singers in the choir had done."



Chapter III continued

32) The new hymn was thoroughly drilled by the schoolmaster and his students and then demonstrated in the choir rendition. During the choir performance the congregation listened attentively. If they were pleased with the hymn in text and melody, it was soon drilled into them, and the new hymn was taken up and established in the church.

33) The hymn was led and carried by the unison singing chorus choralis, and not by the polyphonic chorus musicus, also called chorus figuralis, as research has sometimes taken for granted.

34) With these (hymns) it is enough that the choir should sing slowly and distinctly, so that the people through attentive listening and from habit can learn and sing along.

36) and when the people are singing their stanza, the cantor should always begin and sing along according to the notes. And so that the people can hear his voice and be guided by it, he should turn toward them. But if there are few people present and they sing the stanza weakly or do not know the tune, the cantor should sing alone and should remind all the school boys who can read to bring their hymn books along to church and sing along. Also, the tertiani can stand on the steps and sing along, but always according to the beat. And so that one (stanza) not be sung over and over and the others be forgotten, this order should be strictly adhered to: one after the other should be sung.

37) Therefore we faithfully ask of parents and schoolmasters that in these matters they conscientiously and diligently attend to their calling and have a constant regard for it, for God will truly demand an accounting from them. Daily they are to train them in reading, writing, and singing, and hold up to them the following psalms and hymns, and then take them to church, where they praise God with the entire congregation.

38a) Before and after the Sunday sermon the deacon should sing German psalms with the peasants. Thus they with their children and farm hands should learn to sing diligently and properly. At a convenient time the deacon can exhort them to (do) this.

38b) Where there are no schools, they should ring the bells at a convenient time on Saturday evening, and when the people, old and young, have assembled, they should sing several German psalms or hymns, and close with prayer.

40a) Fifty hymns (geistliche Lieder) and psalms composed contrapuntally in four voices so that an entire Christian congregation can sing along throughout.

40b) After all, a layman who is not versed in figural music cannot sing along but must just listen.

40c) and still every Christian can easily sing along.



Chapter III continued

40d) Therefore as an experiment . . . I have composed these fifty hymns and psalms in four voices, so that an entire Christian congregation, even young children, can sing along. And yet for all that the music flows along as an embellishment to the singing. . . . I know well that composers usually place the chorale (melody) in the tenor. But when that is done, the chorale is not recognizable among the other voices; the common man does not understand what psalm it is and cannot sing along. Therefore I have placed the chorale in the soprano (Diskant), so that it can be recognized and every lay person can sing along.

41) and the congregation can together join in and sing it.

42) which can easily and distinctly hear the customary melody in the soprano and itself imitate and reverently sing it.

43) composed in five voices in such a way that everybody can easily sing the chorale and familiar melody of every song unhindered.

44) Then also every Christian can raise his simple layman's voice with confidence and vigor and thus henceforth powerfully draw the musical chariot of the honor and glory of God's name, not as the fifth but as the fourth and very suitable wheel, and help drive and bring it to the Most High.

45) The German songs were originally prepared by me mostly for this purpose that the people and the whole congregation could altogether sing along.

46) the psalms and hymns are plainly composed in Contrapuncto simplici so that the congregation can join in singing them.

47) So among other things I have taken this into consideration that the entire congregation, small and great, high and low, usually sing the chorale together etc., something which otherwise, outside the chorale, I certainly cannot allow to happen.

48a) In any case the students should let themselves be guided in measure and beat according to the congregation and not sing any notes faster or slower than a Christian congregation at that place usually sings, so that the chorale and the figural music stay nicely together and both give a pleasing harmony.

48b) Finally and in conclusion I want incidently and in a friendly way to remind every cantor that in singing the hymns he should adopt and use a careful and slow beat. Thereby he will bring about that the common man can hear the customary melody the more properly. And he with his choir will the more easily and pleasantly be able to proceed.

49) the scanty editions of the sixteenth century (on which the scarcity of preserved examples is based) show that mostly only the clergyman, the cantor, and perhaps one or another patrician church elder possessed a copy. The majority of the congregation, on the other hand, were directed to sing from memory.



### Chapter III continued

50) The other reason to print this book was this that both young and old have complained that they have not been able to obtain any of the old song books, either at the book sellers or at other stores, and especially that the youth in the schools had none anymore and for that reason were prevented from singing along and praising God, which reason alone were enough to have new song books printed.

51) Around 1700 in the low country the acquisition of a hymn book by a church member not entrusted with any particular church duties was still considered unusual.

53) The introduction of hymnboards (in the late seventeenth century) was the outward testimony for the fact that the churchgoer now came to church with his hymnbook.

54) Of this we have many fine examples, both in the Old and New Testaments, that the beloved fathers, prophets, and saints of God composed beautiful and well arranged psalms, sang them, and played them on various musical instruments to the glory of God. This they would not have done so earnestly and zealously and would not have passed down to their descendants if they had not really known, as the enlightened men of God, that this would be acceptable and pleasing to God the Lord as well as useful and beneficial for Christianity in general.

55) Indeed it is fine, devout, and pleasing when in the churches they perform a grand Musicam, figural and choral, with organ and other instruments, and thereby cheer and delight the heart.

57) an ensemble of town musicians

58) Whenever one sings figural in church, instruments should help support the choir.

61) When the Straszburger liturgy of 1598 says: "such figural music and the organ playing" should not hinder the congregational singing, that is, not restrict its importance, which the Coburger liturgy of 1645 repeats, it thereby indicates the commonly accepted situation of that time.

### CHAPTER IV

1) The layman's Loci Communes, chief articles of Christian doctrine for lay people, the little Bible.

2) Therefore it would be good and Christian, that all people who boast of a Christian name might be occupied with God's Word, that all craftsmen at their work, the farmer behind the plow, the harvesters in the hayloft, the old women at the spinning wheel, the children on the streets, might sing, speak, and think about God and His Word, that Scripture in many ways might be handled and dealt with.



Chapter IV continued

- 3) that one can spread abroad and extend the true doctrine through fine Christian hymns and thereby make cheerful the hearts, as God has now given His grace for this in Germany, that through fine Christian hymns many are edified in the churches. Often more is accomplished in this way than with sermons. Wherefore Augustine says: Many people, who assemble in the churches, cannot easily learn and understand the writings of the apostles and the lofty doctrines of the prophets, or if they do learn them cannot retain and ponder them. But the psalms and hymns they can sing in their homes, and publicly in the congregation, and thereby teach themselves and make themselves cheerful and joyous.
- 4) Yes, I must much rather call it a doctrine, prayer, and praise book (than a song book), albeit the little word song is rightly and well spoken.
- 5) also every godly father with his children and servants can in his home be thankful to God with psalms and songs of praise, and thereby comfort and strengthen himself in the faith.
- 6) that it will bring joy and great pleasure to the Christian reader and singer.
- 7) Such house-sermons without doubt provide great benefit, that many a simple unlearned man often recalls and comforts himself more from such a song than from a long and well prepared sermon.
- 8) For it is certainly true and a part of everyone's experience that those short songs, skillfully rhymed, bear more fruit in arousing the heart to devotion than many long-winded sermons and writings.
- 9) May the Lord grant that all overseers and servants of the church, together with all Christians, put forth their best effort, that these beautiful Christian songs may come into use and practice, among the youth, as well as in the entire congregation, and also that the people might sing by themselves and thus with such psalms and hymns etc.
- 10a) These I send to you, honorable, virtuous ladies and maidens, . . . that you would place them before your children, little brothers and sisters, together with the rest of the household, who themselves can read, and sing to them, so that each week they may learn to sing the hymn of the previous Sunday or feast day. For to retain all songs in the memory would be too difficult and too much for the younger children, who in their youthful days ought not be driven and burdened too much.
- 10b) Therefore we ought to love such Christian German chaste songs and diligently encourage our household to learn them by heart and sing them often and devoutly.
- 11) So the peasants with their children and household should learn to sing diligently and correctly.



Chapter IV continued

12) A cradle song for pious girls and other Christian persons, who are tending little children, whereby to quiet them or sing them to sleep, . . . to be sung, not in church, but at home.

13) But these songs were not assembled in such a way, as to be sung in churches or other Christian assemblies, but rather (according to the title) are house songs. Many of them are set to secular melodies, no doubt for this reason, that the young people might be deterred from those shameful and indecent love songs, and in their stead might sing fine Christian songs, useful for improvement, set to those lovely melodies.

14) Also, I want to be of service to Christian fathers who on Sunday customarily sing hymns with their children at home. Therefore I am providing these and other songs of mine only for children as house-songs and want them to be considered as such. If anyone deems them worthy to be used in church, he may do it at his own discretion. I have not intended them for that but leave it to the more learned and more gifted and those who are better versed in Holy Scripture than I am.

15) Inasmuch as you have often sought and desired of me to share with you these hymns and songs of praise, so that you might occupy yourself at home with your dear children for the praise of God, I have drawn them up briefly in this handbook, as many as concern the birth of Christ, and have dedicated them to you as a special benefactor.

16) give them to your dear children and our other friends, to learn, to read, and to sing.

17) that whenever someone has a special desire to sing a song in several voices, these have been adapted by worthy composers in such a way that they can be used at home, in the streets, in the churches, and on a journey, that even the simplest and the children can sing along in their voice(range) and thus help to embellish and support the song. Also for that reason no one will need any foreign, alien, French compositions.

19) When Dr. Luther had worked himself tired and pale, he sat at the table joyfully and sometimes would have a Cantorei formed.

20) and daily all kinds of spiteful, inflammatory, blasphemous, shameful songs are made, sung, and used, not only in contempt of proper authority but for the destruction of the ancient Christian faith. This is done not only outside of and in their homes, but also publicly in the house of God. Thereby the common man is embittered, but especially are they (these songs) inculcated into the innocent youth for all their life.

21) I will not speak now of other frivolous, indecent, disgraceful songs which day and night sound forth in their homes and on the streets, so that what the old Catholic Christians were ashamed of, the new sectarian Christians boast of.



Chapter IV continued

- 22) Some people are offended by the fact that the psalms, sung to and fro on the streets and in the homes, are not being sung with seriousness and decorum.
- 23) The power of genuine folksongs . . . remained true to the church hymns beyond the pale of the house of God: the texts and melodies resounded at the domestic activities of the songful lower classes; it is noteworthy that the emissaries of the counterreformation aimed especially to root out "Lutheran psalmhymns" among the craftsmen in their places of work, where they held out with unbelievable tenacity.
- 24) The peasant, when he lifts the plow in his hand, praises God and sings a joyful Allelujah. A harvester with sweat running down his face refreshes himself with a cheerful psalm. And a vinegrower, when he is pruning the vines, sings something sweet and comforting from the psalms of David. These, says he, are our songs and hymns.
- 25) might be sung in and outside the churches, also at the time of common pilgrimages, and at other sacred times.
- 26) when entering upon marriage, baptism, and the Lord's Supper.
- 27) These German hymns . . . may be sung one after the other when you are going home from a burial.
- 28) Numerous foundations existed with the purpose of singing selected chorales as an honoring memorial to a person who had died, either on his birthday or his death day, at home or at the grave. . . . Thus the stock of church hymns accompanied baptism, the beginning of school, confirmation, wedding, installation, anniversaries, and burial, at all times as the faithful companion of a Christian life.
- 29) But especially through the Kurrende did the chorales ring forth, as they earned their scanty keep with beautiful a-cappella settings.
- 30) Where there are good parents, their children are brought up in discipline and honor, and if they have ability, are trained in the fine arts, learning in addition to Catechism and grammar, singing, doing sums, and writing verses, and perhaps training themselves with the help of God on a musical instrument, harp and organ, and in that way praising and honoring God. For such things should be learned in one's youth. In later life one can no longer attend to them.
- 31) so it behooves us no less to sing to their and our God praise, honor, and thanks, in all languages and tongues, in every form and manner, choral, figural, on instruments and strings, at home in houses, lodgings, taverns, on the field and at sea, in the brushwood and in the forest.
- 32) A selection of good old and new German songs, the real German kind, chosen to be used on all kinds of instruments.



## Chapter IV continued

33) Beautiful selected songs of the celebrated Heinrich Finck, together with other new songs, composed by the foremost (men) of this art, to be sung joyfully and useful on instruments.

34) not to be reprinted within four years on penalty of ten gold marks. . . . Vinum et Musica laetificant cor hominis.  
(Wine and music cheer the heart of man.)

35) New beautiful choice German hymns in five and six voices, very delightful to sing, and to be used on all manner of instruments.

37) On the chief festivals the polyphonic choir songs resounded from the church towers far and wide through the air. . . . And in many places the tower musicians or brass players played chorale melodies every hour, day and night, now in unison, and then in full chorus, "to all four corners of the earth." Where a city had several churches, it was determined by precise regulations in what sequence the church music of this kind was to be played, in order not to encroach on another's rights, and to have an edifying effect on the listeners.

## CHAPTER V

2) In our churches we retain the hymns of Dr. Luther and sing them with the others in his song book joyfully with one another. And we hesitate to receive other, new songs, so that we do not forget the old songs of teaching, comfort, thanksgiving, and praise (which might otherwise easily happen). Here in Leipzig we have a certain fine Christian arrangement, to have the congregation sing a certain Christian hymn on each Sunday and feast day most suitable to the Gospel for that day. This arrangement has been kept to this hour.

3) So that the people may not be led into error in their singing, the sacristans (custodes) should have no other hymns sung in the church than Dr. Luther's and those approved by him. In this way they will learn them well, and they can the more easily teach one another to sing them.

4) (1) There were fixed hymns (cantica fixa).. These were repeated year after year, appointed for ordinary Sundays, communion days, and feast days. Hymns for baptisms, weddings, funerals, matins, and vespers were separately regulated. These hymns had to be constant, for they were parts of the liturgy, determined on Sundays according to the parts of the Mass, for the rest, appointed according to other schedules of the church. The choir realized the church's song, joined later on by the congregation in the nave of the church. These hymns were not announced, for everyone who came to church every Sunday knew them.

(2) Distinguished from these were elective hymns (cantica mobilia). In reference to the sermon the pastor had the right to choose a hymn. It had to be well known, popular, the common possession of the people in their heart and on their tongue. . . .



## Chapter V continued

This was to be sung by the choir or by the entire church. The elective hymns were announced to the people. That was done in this way: on the door of the church a blackboard was hung or "put up," and the beginning line of the hymn was designated.