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Cover Page Footnote

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Mark A. Peters

As historical musicology has grown in recent years to embrace cross-disciplinary perspectives and consider music not only on its own terms but also in relation to larger social, cultural, and historical trends, the study of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach has benefited from increased attention to the theological contexts in which he and his Lutheran contemporaries lived and worked. This trend has led to significant focus on the writings of Martin Luther and Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and on how these writings relate both to the texts Bach and his contemporaries set to music and to the musical settings themselves. Scholars have provided significant new insights into Bach's church cantatas, his major vocal works, and even his instrumental music through the lens of historical theology.¹

In this article, however, I seek to turn that lens around. My question is not what theological sources influenced Marian church cantata texts in early eighteenth-century Germany, but rather what Marian theology was communicated to congregants through the texts of church cantatas performed on Marian feast days. In other words, how might Marian theology have been heard by Lutheran congregants through church music of the early eighteenth century? After providing an overview of the three Marian feasts in the Lutheran church year and outlining my research approach, I analyze the cantata texts for these three feast days in 57 sources published between 1704 and 1754. I conclude with some broad reflections on the ways theology is communicated differently in church music (and particularly in church cantata texts in early eighteenth-century Lutheranism) than it is in other theological sources, such as biblical commentaries or published sermons.

This study is intentionally limited to printed annual cycles of church cantatas, since they are texts that were made available to congregants in published form. We know that many of the cantata librettos in this study were set to music and performed in particular church services. For others, we do not have extant compositions based on the texts. However, the fact that these texts were written and published for church performance highlights their role as important resources for the study of theology as conveyed in church music. And the printing of the texts reflects not only their importance in eighteenth-century Lutheranism, but also their value for modern

¹ For an excellent introduction to such an approach, see Stephen A. Crist, "Historical Theology and Hymnology as Tools for Interpreting Bach's Church Cantatas: The Case of *Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen*, BWV 48," in *Historical Musicology: Sources, Methods, Interpretations*, ed. Stephen A. Crist and Robert Montemorra Marvin (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 57–84. The article was first published in German as Stephen A. Crist, "Historische Theologie und Hymnologie als Interpretationshilfen für Bachs Kantate *Ich elender Mensch, wer wird mich erlösen* (BWV 48)," in *Bachs 1. Leipziger Kantatenjahrgang: Bericht über das 3. Dortmunder Bach-Symposium 2000*, Dortmund Bach-Forschungen 3, ed. Martin Geck (Dortmund: Klangfarben, 2002), 303–27. There is now a significant bibliography of studies of the music of J. S. Bach in relation to historical theology. Scholars who have employed historical theology in the study of Bach's vocal music include Elke Axmacher, Eric Chafe, Stephen A. Crist, Don O. Franklin, Michael Marissen, Martin Petzoldt, Markus Rathey, Renate Steiger, Isabella Van Elferen, and Meinrad Walter.

researchers; because the cantata itself was in many ways considered an ephemeral genre, with a cantata expected to be performed only once, only a fraction of the musical settings have survived. By studying the published texts, we arrive at a fuller understanding of the genre than could be achieved by studying only extant musical settings.

As this study makes clear, such cantata librettos did not present a Marian theology that is categorically different from other theological sources such as published sermons and Bible commentaries. They did, however, provide a more intentionally limited, and sharply focused, selection of Marian theology than did sermons and commentaries. The crystallization of Marian theology in church cantatas thus served to bring to German Lutheran congregations rich and clearly defined understandings of Mary through liturgical song. Furthermore, the cantata texts demonstrate that as theology became crystallized in cantata texts, one primary theme tended to emerge for the feast day—generally a theme that was present, but not as prominent, in sermons and commentaries.

Marian Feasts in the Lutheran Church Year

As has been well documented, Martin Luther held Mary in high regard. Luther wrote an extensive, and beautiful, commentary on Mary's Magnificat in which he praised her as the Mother of God and as an example for all Christians. He also encouraged prayer to Mary and affirmed her perpetual virginity.²

Luther did, however, reject medieval practices of Mariology that he saw as dishonoring not only God, but also Mary herself. In his liturgical reforms, he removed three Marian feast days that he saw as closely connected with such medieval Mariology: the feasts of Mary's Conception, Birth, and Assumption.³ But Luther did retain three significant Marian feast days—the Annunciation of Mary, the Visitation of Mary, and the Purification of Mary (see Table 1)—indicating that such Marian observances should be continued as “feasts of Christ.”⁴

² Martin Luther, “Das Magnificat verdeutschet und ausgelegt,” in *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 7 (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1897), 538-604; “The Magnificat Translated and Expounded,” in *Luther's Works*, vol. 21, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1956), 297-358.

See Introduction to Beth Kreitzer, *Reforming Mary: Changing Images of the Virgin Mary in Lutheran Sermons of the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). See also Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 157-61.

³ See Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 367-69. Luther initially included Mary's Birth and Assumption in feasts that could still be celebrated, but later deleted these. Mark Bangert, “The Changing Fortunes of *Festum Visitationis* among Lutherans and Cantatas BWV 147 and BWV 10,” in *Die Quellen Johann Sebastian Bachs: Bachs Musik im Gottesdienst*, ed. Renate Steiger (Heidelberg: Manutius, 1998), 401-16, at 402.

⁴ Martin Luther, “An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg,” in *Luther's Works*, vol. 53: *Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 23. These three Marian feasts were celebrated as full-day feasts in the Lutheran Church until well into the eighteenth century. Mark Bangert, “The Changing Fortunes of *Festum Visitationis* among Lutherans,” 402-03.

Table 1: Marian Feasts in the Lutheran Church Year

Date	Feast Day	Gospel	Epistle
March 25	Mariae Verkündigung (Annunciation of Mary)	Luke 1:26–38	Isaiah 7:10–16
July 2	Mariae Heimsuchung (Visitation of Mary)	Luke 1:39–56	Isaiah 11:1–5
February 2	Mariae Reinigung (Purification of Mary)	Luke 2:22–32	Malachi 3:1–4

All three of these Marian feasts grow out of the Gospel narrative in Luke 1 and 2. Each tells some part of Mary's story in relation to Jesus's birth, and the feasts' dates were chosen so as to fit with the life of Jesus as celebrated in the annual church year, and particularly in relation to Christmas Day.

**Fig. 1:** Image for the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary⁵

⁵ In Paul Vermehren, *Hundert Sinn- und Lehr-Reiche Vergleichungs-Sonnette Über die Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Evangelien*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Johann Theodoro Boetio, 1721), 28. Each sonnet in the collection is headed by a pair of images, such as those included here, that highlight the particular comparison between an Old Testament and a New Testament story. For the present study, the main interest is the New Testament images (on the right), with their accompanying Bible verses.

Mary's story in the Gospels begins in Luke 1:26–38, the Gospel reading for the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary, with the angel Gabriel being sent by God to Mary. The Gospel tells of Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she would bear a son, Jesus the Messiah. Mary asks how this will be since she is a virgin. And at Gabriel's explanation that it would come about through the work of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High (the epigraph for the New Testament image on the right in Figure 1), Mary replies: "Behold, I am the Lord's maidservant; let it happen unto me as you have said."⁶ The Epistle for the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary contains the prophecy of the Messiah's birth: "Behold, a virgin is pregnant and will bear a son, who will be called Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).



Fig. 2: Image for the Feast of the Visitation of Mary⁷

The next Marian feast day in the Lutheran Church, the Feast of the Visitation of Mary, directly follows the account of the Annunciation in Luke 1. The Visitation Gospel begins, after the angel's departure, with Mary traveling to visit her cousin Elizabeth. In its story of Elizabeth and Mary (with the babies John the Baptist and Jesus in their wombs), the Gospel recounts Elizabeth's greeting to Mary: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your

⁶ All English translations of German texts in this article are by the author unless otherwise noted. Bible verses are translations of the 1545 *Luther-Bibel*, accessed through Bible Gateway, www.biblegateway.com/versions/Luther-Bibel-1545-LUTH1545/#vinfo.

⁷ Vermehren, *Hundert Sinn- und Lehr-Reiche Vergleichungs-Sonnette*, 52.

womb!” (Luke 1:42, the epigraph for the New Testament image in Figure 2); her identification of Mary as “the mother of my Lord” (Luke 1:43); and her report of the child John’s leaping in her womb at the sound of Mary’s greeting (Luke 1:44). To this Mary responds with her joyous song of praise to God, the Magnificat: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior . . .” (Luke 1:46–55). The Epistle for the Visitation of Mary is another prophecy about the Messiah from the book of Isaiah: “And a shoot will rise out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his root will bring forth fruit” (Isaiah 11:1).



Fig. 3: Image for the Feast of the Purification of Mary⁸

The third Marian feast, the Feast of the Purification of Mary, is actually the first in the church year, since it comes 40 days after the celebration of Jesus’s birth on Christmas Day. The Gospel recounts the story of Mary and Joseph bringing the baby Jesus to the temple in fulfillment of the law.⁹ But while the feast day is named for Mary, the focus of the Gospel is on Simeon, who has been promised by the Holy Spirit that he will not die until he has seen the Lord’s Messiah. The Gospel culminates with Simeon’s prayer, the *Nunc dimittis*, which begins: “Lord, now you allow your servant to depart in peace” (Luke 2:29, the epigraph for the New Testament image in Figure

⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁹ The ritual purification of the mother took place 40 days after the birth of a male child (Leviticus 12); at the same time, Mary and Joseph were fulfilling the redemption of the first-born son (Exodus 13). See Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, rev. ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 447–51 and 682–84.

3). The Epistle for the Purification of Mary is connected primarily in its first verse: “The Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple” (Malachi 3:1–4).

The three Marian feasts retained in Luther’s liturgy were thus grounded both in the church year and in the Gospel story as told in the opening chapters of Luke. They present Mary as humble and accepting of God’s will, as a servant who pours forth a joyous song of praise to God, and as one obedient to God’s law.

The Printed Cantata Text as Theological Source

While Luther and later theologians wrote extensively—in commentaries and published sermons—about Mary and how she should be understood theologically, most congregants in eighteenth-century Lutheran churches would not have read these writings. Their theology of Mary would instead have been shaped primarily by their experience of the church service on these three Marian feast days each year:¹⁰ through prayers, sermons, hymns, biblical readings, and concerted church music.

By the early eighteenth century, the common form of concerted music in the Lutheran church was the cantata, a six- to eight-movement work for voices accompanied by instruments that was presented immediately after the chanting of the Gospel and before the sermon. Like the sermon, the cantata text was usually based on the Gospel for the day, presenting an exposition, interpretation, and application thereof.

The importance of the cantata in the liturgy led to the practice of printing cantata texts and making them available for congregants to purchase. Leipzig chronicler Christoph Ernst Sicul describes this practice in his 1717 statement:

So that this polyphonic music, especially on high festivals, may be heard with greater devotion, it has become custom for some time for the honorable cantor to have the texts of the music printed beforehand . . . under the title *Kirchen-Music*, so that everyone can provide himself with these and read along.¹¹

In locations such as Bach’s Leipzig, a center of publishing and the book trade, the printed texts were ephemeral: they were inexpensively printed in small booklets containing six to eight cantata texts, with the expectation that they would be discarded. As a result, relatively few such booklets have survived.¹²

¹⁰ It would have also been shaped by Christmas celebrations and the singing of the Magnificat in each Vespers service. See Markus Rathey, *Johann Sebastian Bach’s Christmas Oratorio: Music, Theology, Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹¹ Christoph Ernst Sicul, *Neo annali Lipsiensium Continuatio II: Oder des mit 1715ten Jahre Neuangegangenen Leipziger Jahrbuchs Dritte Probe* (Leipzig, 1717), 570; quoted in Günther Stiller, *Johann Sebastian Bach and Liturgical Life in Leipzig*, trans. Herbert J. A. Bouman, Daniel F. Poellot, and Hilton C. Oswald, ed. Robin A. Leaver (St. Louis: Concordia, 1984), 121–22. See also Martin Petzoldt, *Texthefte zur Kirchenmusik aus Bachs Leipziger Zeit* (Stuttgart: Carus, 2000) for an introduction to the text booklets and for facsimiles of the books known in 2000 to be extant from Bach’s tenure in Leipzig.

¹² See Tatiana Schabalina, “‘Texte zur Music’ in Sankt Petersburg: Neue Quellen zur Leipziger Musikgeschichte sowie zur Kompositions- und Aufführungstätigkeit Johann Sebastian Bachs,” *Bach-Jahrbuch* 94 (2008): 33–98; Tatiana Schabalina, “Recent Discoveries in St Petersburg and Their Meaning for the Understanding of Bach’s Cantatas,” *Understanding Bach* 4 (2009): 77–99; Tatiana Schabalina, “‘Texte zur Music’ in Sankt Petersburg:

However, cantata texts were printed in more substantial, and hence more lasting, form in other locales, with the texts for an entire church year printed in a single bound volume. Such bound cantata cycles are extant especially from court settings, such as Darmstadt, Gotha, and Weimar. In addition, many poets published annual cantata cycles in hope that the texts would be set to music and performed in various locations. Many of these published cantata cycles are still extant and provide a rich resource for the study of church music in early eighteenth-century Germany.

This article addresses cantata texts for the Feasts of Mary's Purification, Annunciation, and Visitation in 57 such printed cycles. While this study does not consider all extant published cantata cycles, it does include works by the best-known librettists of the period and represents a wide range of authors, locations, and publication years. The study could be expanded to consider unpublished cantata texts for which we have musical sources (such as the cantatas of J. S. Bach, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel, Georg Philipp Telemann, and others). However, the high number of extant published cycles from a variety of authors, years, and locations provides a broad range of sources to consider Marian theology as conveyed in these church cantata texts.

The authors represented in these cycles include librettists well known today in relation to Bach, such as Salomo Franck, Johann Knauer, Georg Christian Lehms, Erdmann Neumeister, Christian Friedrich Henrici (Picander), and Christiane Mariane von Ziegler (see Table 2). The study also includes multiple printed cycles by librettists not as commonly cited today, such as Johann Conrad Lichtenberg and Christoph Stolzenberg. Nine of the cycles have no author attributed.

Table 2: Librettists for Cantata Cycles Used in This Study

Author	# of Cycles
Anonymous	9
Johann Conrad Lichtenberg	7
Salomo Franck	5
Erdmann Neumeister	4
Christoph Stolzenberg	4
Johann Heinrich Hilbrandt	3
Gottfried Blümel	2
Georg Christian Lehms	2
Daniel Stoppe	2
Gottfried Ephraim Scheibel	2
Benjamin Schmolck	2
Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel	2
Johann Sebastian Brunner	1

Weitere Funde," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 95 (2009): 11–48; and Tatiana Schabalina, "Neue Erkenntnisse zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Kantaten BWV 34 und 34a," *Bach-Jahrbuch* 96 (2010): 95–109.

Johann Crüger	1
Johann Friedrich Helbig	1
J. F. von Holten	1
Johann Oswald Knauer	1
Benjamin Neukirch	1
Christian Friedrich Henrici (Picander)	1
Johann Jacob Rambach	1
Laurentius Reinhardt	1
Johann David Schiefferdecker	1
Johann Georg Seebach	1
Johann Friedrich von Uffenbach	1
Christiane Mariane von Ziegler	1

The cities represented are throughout German-speaking Lutheran regions, with the most cycles originating in Darmstadt, Gotha, Leipzig, Nördlingen, Regensburg, and Weimar (see Table 3). As would be expected, most of the cycles originated in the central German regions, especially Saxony and Thuringia.

Table 3: Cities Associated with Cantata Cycles Used in This Study¹³

City	# of Cycles
Darmstadt	12
Gotha	8
Leipzig	5
Nördlingen	4
Regensburg	4
Weimar	4
Breslau (Wrocław)	2
Eisenach	2
Frankfurt am Main	2
Hamburg	2
Hirschberg	2
Jena	2
Alten Stettin	1
Budißin (Bautzen)	1
Görlitz	1
Halle	1
Hildburgshausen	1

¹³ This table indicates the city in which the cantatas were first performed, when applicable; for all others, it indicates the city of publication.

Lübeck	1
Schleiz	1
Weißenfels	1

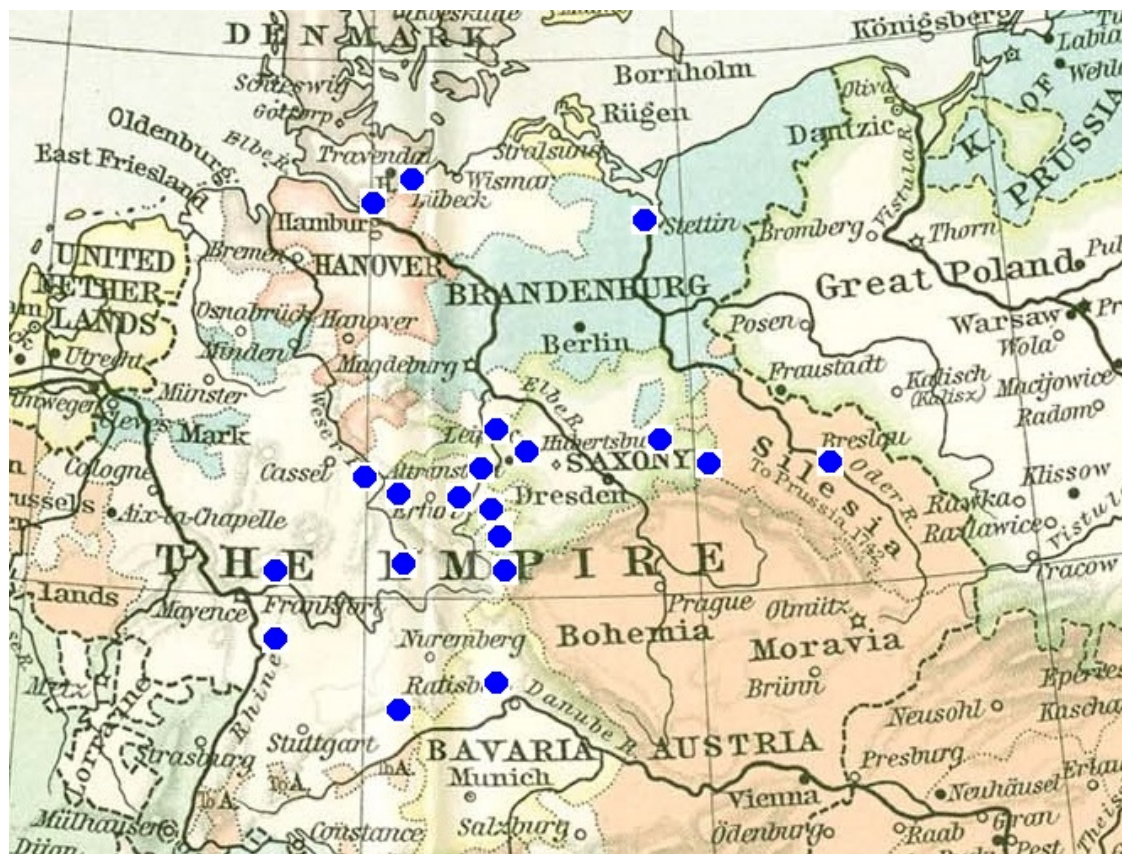
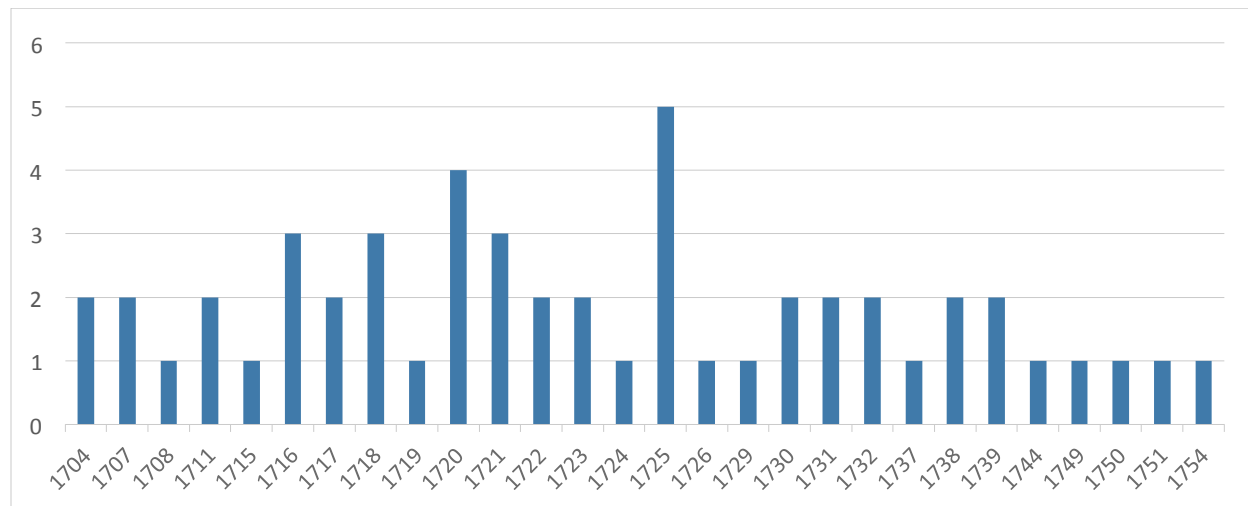


Fig. 4 shows the geographic distribution for the cities in this study.¹⁴

While the publication years range from 1704 to 1754, most of the texts are concentrated between 1711 and 1739 (see Table 4). This time frame covers not only J. S. Bach's compositional career, but, more important, the period during which the church cantata served as the main concerted music in the Lutheran Church in Germany. The period begins with the second edition of Erdmann Neumeister's noted *Geistliche Cantaten statt einer Kirchen-Music*¹⁵ and continues through a few late examples of the genre in the years 1744–1754. While some composers continued to write cantatas after this time, the texts they set were primarily from the first half of the eighteenth century.

¹⁴ From "Europe around 1740," William R. Shepherd, *Historical Atlas* (New York: Henry Holt, 1911); Perry Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas Libraries, www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history_shepherd_1911.html.

¹⁵ Hamburg, 1704.

Table 4: Publication Dates for Cantata Cycles Used in This Study¹⁶

Marian Theology in Church Cantata Texts

On the basis of these 57 published cantata cycles, I return now to the three Marian feasts in the eighteenth-century Lutheran Church. For each, I will consider the theological focus of the feast day, primarily exploring Marian theology as communicated to congregants in these cantata texts. Rather than considering the three feasts in biblical order as above, the following discussion is organized according to the feasts' appearances in the liturgical year: Purification, Annunciation, Visitation.

The Feast of the Purification of Mary (Mariae Reinigung)

A study of cantata texts for the Feast of the Purification of Mary clearly demonstrates that this day was Marian in name only. While almost every cantata is labeled with Mary's name, references to Mary herself or to any aspect of Marian theology are almost entirely absent from the cantata texts for the day. Only two of the 57 cantatas include Mary's name: a recitative in Salomo Franck's 1715 cycle refers to Jesus as "the Son of God and Mary,"¹⁷ and a recitative in Gottfried Ephraim Scheibel's 1738 cycle says of Jesus: "He was Mary's first son, therefore he should also be holy to the Lord."¹⁸

¹⁶ This table does not include five collections used in the study for which publication dates are not listed.

¹⁷ "Den Gottes und Marien Sohn." Salomo Franck, *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer . . . in geistlichen CANTATEN welche auf die ordentliche Sonn- und Fest-Tage in der F. S. ges. Hof-Capelle zur Wilhelmsburg A. 1715. zu musiciren, angezündet* (Weimar: Self-published, 1715), 39.

¹⁸ "Er war Mariens erster Sohn, / Drum sollt er auch dem HERren heilig sein." Gottfried Ephraim Scheibel, *Musicalisch-Poetische Andächtige Betrachtungen über alle Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangelien Durchs ganze Jahr Andächtigen Seelen zur Erbauung ans Licht gestellet* (Breßlau: Johann Jacob Korn, 1738), 38.

The closest other cantatas come to any Marian reference is to mention the offering of a pair of doves in the temple, as Scheibel does earlier in the same recitative.¹⁹ Many cantatas reference Jesus's presence in the temple, but with no indication of Mary and Joseph bringing him there. Others speak of God coming to his temple, with several quoting the opening verse of the Epistle: "The Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple" (Malachi 3:1).²⁰

As with the Gospel for the day, the cantata texts for Purification focus on the words and actions of Simeon rather than on Mary.²¹ In contrast to the two direct references to Mary in these 57 cantatas, Simeon is mentioned by name in 25 cantatas. The Bible verses most often quoted are the opening of the *Nunc dimittis*: "Lord, now you allow your servant to depart in peace, as you have promised, for my eyes have seen your Savior" (Luke 2:29–30).²² And whether or not Simeon's name or the *Nunc dimittis* is specifically cited, the primary theme in most of the cantatas is the Christian believer's desire to die in peace and joy in imitation of Simeon. Mary and Marian theology are essentially absent in cantatas for the day.

The lack of attention to Mary in these cantata texts is striking in relation to other Lutheran sources of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. While most of these sources treat the theme of Simeon and of the Christian's death, they do not do so to the exclusion of Mary. For example, the second prayer for Purification in the *Leipziger Kirchenstaat* presents both Mary and Simeon as examples for the believer, with both given equal attention in the prayer; the theme of the prayer is not death, but Christian obedience in life.²³ Johann Olearius, in his *Evangelischer Glaubens-Sieg*, praises Mary for submitting to the law of purification even though neither she nor the baby Jesus required it; he emphasizes the virgin birth and that Jesus was born without sin, stating that Mary fulfilled this law not because it was required for her own purification but as an

¹⁹ Scheibel, *Musicalisch-Poetische Andächtige Betrachtungen*, 38. See also *Gott-geheilte Kirchen-Arbeit / welche über die ordentliche Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangelia zur Beförderung wahrer Seelen-Erbauung verfertigt / und als TEXTE gewöhnlichen Kirchen-Music in der Hochf. Schloß-Capelle zu DARMSTADT / auf das 1726.te Jahr angegeben worden* (Darmstadt: Caspar Klug, [1725]), 36; and Johann Conrad Lichtenberg, *Texte zur Kirchen-Music, wie solche in der Hoch-Fürstl. Schloß-Capelle, in Darmstadt das ganze 1719.te Jahre hindurch sollen musiciret werden* (Darmstadt: Caspar Klug, 1719), 21.

²⁰ See, for example, *Andächtige Psalter-Lust / oder TEXTE zur Kirchen-MUSIC welche über auserlesene und mit denen Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangeliiis harmonirende Sprüche aus denen Psalmen Davids poetisch aufgesetzt worden; und in Hoch-Fürstl. Schloß-Capelle zu DARMSTADT das 1731.te Jahr hindurch musiciret worden sollen* (Darmstadt: Caspar Klug, [1730]), 39–41.

²¹ The choice of Gospel text for the day, in fact, contributes to the minimal focus on Mary. By ending in verse 32, the reading does not address the continued Marian focus in Luke's account: "And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too'" (Luke 2:33–35). In the Revised Common Lectionary, the Gospel reading continues through Luke 2:40: <http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu>.

²² See, for example, the recitative "Ihr Leibes-Augen schliesset euch!" in Franck, *Evangelisches Andachts-Opfer*, 39.

²³ "O Getreuer GOTT, barmherziger lieber Vater, verleihe Gnade, daß ich heute auch mit der Heil. Jungfrauen Maria fröhlich zum Hause GOTTes gehe, und mit dem alten Simeon deinen geliebten Sohn JESUM, meinen einigen HErn und Heiland, durch wahren Glauben in meine Arm schliesse, und diß Fest Christlich begehe, . . . O GOTT Heiliger Geist, regiere mich durch deine Göttliche Kraft, daß ich mich mit der Mutter GOTTes in die Zeit schicken und um Liebe und Friede willen," *Leipziger Kirchen-Staat* (Leipzig: Friedrich Groschuff, 1710), 184.

example for other women.²⁴ Johann Benedict Carpzov even more clearly states that the law of purification applied to both the mother and the child, and that neither Mary nor Jesus required such purification.²⁵

A consideration of these sources in relation to cantata texts for Purification demonstrates that as theology became crystallized in cantata texts, one primary theme for the day tended to emerge. While sermons could treat multiple themes, a cantata necessarily had to limit these. For the Feast of Mary's Purification, the primary theme came to be dying in peace and joy in imitation of Simeon.²⁶ Whereas cantata librettists do not seem to have been intentionally rejecting Mary or Marian theology in their Purification texts, Mary nonetheless became largely absent from this first feast day in the church year that bore her name.

The Feast of the Annunciation of Mary (Mariae Verkündigung)

By contrast, Mary and Marian theology are much more present in cantata texts for the Feast of Mary's Annunciation. While the cantatas focus on the proclamation of Jesus as the promised Messiah and on the salvation his incarnation accomplishes, a majority of the cantatas for the day specifically address Mary's role in the incarnation. They recognize that while salvation was accomplished through Jesus's incarnation, this incarnation was itself effected through Mary. Moreover, Mary's role in the incarnation is specifically noted as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, particularly those in Genesis 3 and Isaiah 7. While Mary is not the primary focus of cantata texts for Annunciation, she is mentioned often, portrayed positively, and offered as an example for Christians.

As opposed to the very few references to Mary in Purification cantatas, 35 of the 57 cantatas for Annunciation mention her specifically. Mary is referenced by name in 15 of the 57 cantatas, and an additional 20 cantatas refer to her by a common noun such as mother (*Mutter*), maid (*Magd*), or virgin (*Jungfrau*). The Bible verses most often quoted on this day reflect this attention to Mary, as well. The cantatas quote words spoken to Mary by the angel Gabriel from the Gospel for the day; and two cantatas quote Mary's final words to the angel recorded in Luke 1:38: "Behold, I am the Lord's maidservant; let it happen unto me as you have said" (Siehe ich bin des HERRN Magd; mir geschehe, wie du gesagt hast).

²⁴ "Die Jungfrau Maria thut auch also, die wuste wohl, daß sie Jungfrau, und derhalben dem Weiber Gesetz nicht schuldig war, dennoch gehet sie hin, will solcher Freiheit nicht brauchen, weil es andern, so umb solchen Handel nicht wusten, möchte ärgerlich sein, thut was andere Weiber zu thun nach dem Gesetz schuldig waren." Johann Olearius, *Evangelischer Glaubens-Sieg der Kinder GOTTES* (Leipzig: Georg Heinrich Frommann, 1672), 240–41.

²⁵ Johann Benedict Carpzov, *Evangelische Vorbilder- und Frag-Predigten* (Leipzig: Thomas Fritschen, 1703), 274–75.

²⁶ The attention to Simeon and to death and dying may have been influenced by Lutheran theologians recognizing a need to treat death and dying in theological and liturgical contexts during and after the ravages of the Thirty Years' War (1618–48). Because of the story of Simeon in the Gospel reading, the Feast of Mary's Purification became a natural day on which to address this theme. It is also noteworthy that the focus on Simeon on this day did not replace an exclusive focus on Mary in earlier Lutheranism. In her discussion of sixteenth-century Lutheran sermons for the Feast of Mary's Purification, Beth Kreitzer writes: "The sermons on these texts address a variety of themes, including anti-Roman polemic, the law and its fulfillment through Christ, purification, the behavior of parturient women and ritual 'churching,' even the art of dying." Kreitzer, *Reforming Mary*, 66.

Other common Bible verses in Annunciation cantatas focus on God's promise being fulfilled through Mary. The most common verse quoted in the cantatas is from the Epistle for the day, read as a promise of the coming Messiah and of the virgin birth: "Behold, a virgin is pregnant and will bear a son, who will be called Immanuel" (Siehe, eine Jungfrau ist schwanger und wird einen Sohn gebären, den wird sie heißen Immanuel; Isaiah 7:14). Galatians 4:4–5, with its focus on God's fulfilled promise, is also quoted in several cantatas: "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children" (Da aber die Zeit erfüllet ward, sandte Gott seinen Sohn, geboren von einem Weibe und unter das Gesetz getan, auf daß er die, so unter dem Gesetz waren, erlöste, daß wir die Kindschaft empfangen).

Another verse commonly referenced in Annunciation cantatas is Genesis 3:15, quoting from God's words to the serpent after Eve has eaten of the forbidden fruit: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will trample your head, and you will stab his heel" (Und ich will Feindschaft setzen zwischen dir und dem Weibe und zwischen deinem Samen und ihrem Samen. Derselbe soll dir den Kopf zertreten, und du wirst ihn in die Ferse stechen). While the verse itself is quoted in only two of the 57 cantatas, it is frequently referenced, particularly through identifying Jesus as "the woman's offspring" (Weibes-Stamm). Such a reference not only points to Eve and to Jesus fulfilling God's promise, but also highlights Mary's role in the incarnation as the particular woman through whom this promise was fulfilled. Indeed, Mary was often seen in Lutheran theology (and beyond) as a counterpart to Eve: her obedience helped to break the curse caused by Eve's disobedience. An example of this contrast of Mary and Eve, with its clear reference to Genesis 3:15 and its fulfillment, is found in Christiane Mariane von Ziegler's 1729 Annunciation cantata:

Gebenedeite derer Frauen!
 Ein jedes Auge, das auf dich, Holdseelge, fällt,
 Muß mit Verwundrung dich beschauen.
 Die erste Mutter dieser Welt
 War leider wohl des Todes Thür zu nennen,
 Du aber schleust bei freudenreichen Lauff,
 Die Thür des Lebens auf,
 Und findest bei GOtt so Gnad als Huld,
 Wiewohl du nicht allein; den unser aller Schuld,
 Ist durch das Heilige, das du getragen,
 Getilgt; wir können auch von solcher Gnade sagen.²⁷

Blessed among women!
 Each eye that falls upon you, lovely one,
 Must behold you with amazement.
 The first mother of this world

²⁷ Christiane Mariane von Ziegler, *Versuch in Gebundener Schrieb-Art, Anderer und letzter Theil* (Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Braun, 1729), 88. On von Ziegler's church cantata texts, especially those set to music by J. S. Bach, see Mark A. Peters, *A Woman's Voice in Baroque Music: Mariane von Ziegler and J. S. Bach* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

Was unfortunately well called the door of death,
 But you, with a course full of joy,
 Unlocked the door of life,
 And find with God thus grace as well as favor,
 Though not you alone; for all our guilt,
 Which you carried, is through the Holy One
 Paid off; we can likewise speak of such grace.

Within the context of the Gospel reading focused on Mary's obedience to God's will and of the promised redemption accomplished through Jesus's incarnation, cantatas for the Feast of the Annunciation do not shy away from praising Mary as the vehicle through which the promise was fulfilled. Many cantatas for the day simply proclaim that redemption was accomplished through Jesus's incarnation and include Mary in that account. Erdmann Neumeister states this succinctly: "Mary bore the true God to the world" (Maria hat / Den wahren GOTT zur Welt gebohren).²⁸ Salomo Franck treats this theme more elaborately in the following recitative:

Das Wunder ist zu groß,
 Daß Gottes Sohn in Fleisch und Blut sich kleidet,
 Und in der Menschheit leidet!
 Der Herr, den alle Welt und Himmel nicht umfassen,
 Will in Marien Schooß
 Sich nieder lassen!
 Das Wunder ist zu groß!
 Das Weib umgiebt den Mann
 Der alles tragen kan!²⁹

The miracle is so great,
 That God's Son clothes himself in flesh and blood,
 And suffers in humanity!
 The Lord, whom all earth and heaven cannot enclose,
 Desires to set himself in Mary's womb!

²⁸ Erdmann Neumeister, *Fünffache Kirchen-Andachten bestehend In theils einzeln, theils niemahls gedruckten Arien, Cantaten und Oden Auf alle Sonn- und Fest-Tage des ganzen Jahres*, ed. G. T. (Leipzig: Joh. Großens Erben, 1716 [repr. 1717]), 675. An anonymous text from Gotha states: "Das Wort wird Fleisch. Das Weib umgibt den Mann, / Zu Nazareth, im Lande Kanaan. . . / Ein Jungfer-Leib muß heut' empfangen, / Es kömmt darein der wahre Gott gegangen." *Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Andachten, ans Sprüchen heil. Schrift über die ordentlichene Evangelia abgefasset, Auf Gn. Fürstl. Befehl in die MUSIC gebracht, und vom 1. Advents-Sonntage 1704 bis dahin 1705. in Fürstl. Schloß-Kirchen uf Friedenstein abgesungen* (Gotha: Christoph Reihern, 1704), 41–42.

²⁹ Franck, *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*, 63. Benjamin Neukirch similarly speaks both of the wonder of God becoming a human child and of the virgin becoming a mother:

Ihr Weisen dieser Welt, die stolze Wissenschaft
 Und Menschen-Witz auf blehet,
 Hört wie des Höchsten Geist und seiner Hoheit Krafft,
 In eine Jungfrau gehet!
 Gott soll ein Menschen-Kind, die Jungfrau Mutter werden,
 Wer hat diß je gehört?

Benjamin Neukirch, *Andachts Übung zur Kirchen Music. In Cantaten, Oden, und Arien. Nach denen Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Evangelien und Episteln* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1721), 70.

The miracle is so great!
 The woman encloses the man
 Who can carry all things.

Other cantatas go even further in praising Mary. Franck refers to Mary as “the most beautiful crown of virtue upon the earth” (Schönste Tugend-Cron auf Erden) and “the chosen light of women” (Auserwehltes Weiber-Licht),³⁰ and a number of cantatas cite the angel’s address to Mary as “blessed” (Gebenedeite), as well as the angel’s words “You have found grace with God” (Du hast Gnade bei Gott funden).³¹ And Benjamin Neukirch affirms Mary’s perpetual virginity within the context of his 1721 Annunciation cantata:

Eine Jungfrau trägt zur Welt
 Den Immanuel den Held,
 Den GOtt wollen schencken;
 Bleibt doch Jungfrau wie vorhin,
 Keines Menschen Witz noch Sinn
 Weiß diß aus zu dencken.³²

A virgin bears to the world
 The Immanuel, the hero,
 Whom God wishes to give;
 Yet remains a virgin as before,
 Neither wit nor sense of men
 Knows how to imagine this.

The cantatas for Annunciation also present Mary as example for the Christian believer. An anonymous text from Schleiz affirms that the heart of a Christian believer is as fortunate as Mary’s when it finds grace with God and becomes a dwelling place for Jesus.³³ And Benjamin Schmolck presents Mary as example through appropriating her words for the Christian believer:

³⁰ Salomo Franck, “Evangelische Seelen-Lust über die Sonn- und Fest-Tage durchs ganze Jahr,” in *Geist- und Weltliche Poesien* (Jena: Johann Felix Bielcken, 1711), 138.

³¹ See, for example, Franck, *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*, 64; and Salomo Franck, “Singende Evangelische Schwanen, Oder ARIEN Von der Sterblichkeit und Betrachtung der seeligen Ewigkeit aus den Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangelien durch das ganze Jahr,” in *Geist- und Weltlicher Poesien*, vol. 2 (Jena: Johann Felix Bielcken, 1716), 31.

³² Neukirch, *Andachts Übung zur Kirchen Music*, 143. Similarly, J. F. Holten’s 1725 cantata text emphasizes Mary’s purity: “mein Jesus will heut . . . im Schooß der unbefleckten Mutter sein.” J. F. von Holten, *Das Angenehme und Herz-erquickende Jesus-Bild, oder Geist-reiche Cantaten über alle Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangelia, in welchen jedesmahl Jesus unter einem Schriffmäßigen Bilde abgemahlet und vorgestellt wird* (Lübeck: Peter Böckmann, 1725), 92.

³³ *Oratorium, Welches, nach Anleitung derer Sonn- und Fest-tägigen Evangelien, zu Erweckung einer Christlichen Andacht, aufgeföhret wird in der Schloß-Capelle zu Schleiz* (Schleiz: Johann Gottlieb Maucken, [n.d.]), 35.

Nun! meine Seel ist deine Magd,
 So mag es auch geschehen,
 Was du zu mir gesagt,
 Ich werde mit Vergnügen sehen,
 Daß deiner Allmacht nichts unmöglich sei,
 Was die Vernunft nicht kan ergründen.³⁴

Now! My soul is your maid[servant],
 Thus may it also come to be,
 What you have said to me,
 I will behold with delight,
 That for your omnipotence nothing is impossible,
 Which is something that reason cannot grasp.

Johann Oswald Knauer also identifies the Christian believer with Mary. In a recitative responding to the words of the angel, “Do not be afraid, you have found grace with God,” Knauer writes:

Mariä nicht allein,
 Kommt dieser Trost zu Gute,
 Er ist der ganzen Welt gemein.³⁵

Not to Mary alone
 Comes this comfort for good,
 It is for the whole world together.

Gottfried Ephraim Scheibel even more intimately associates the believer with Mary:

Wie JESum schließt der Leib Mariens ein,
 So wünsch ich: könnte doch
 Mein Herz auch deine Mutter sein.³⁶

As Jesus enclosed himself in the womb of Mary,
 Even so I desire [that] likewise
 My heart could also be your mother.

Portrayals of Mary in these cantatas closely reflect her treatment in other Lutheran theological sources of the period. Mary is frequently mentioned in prayers and sermons for the

³⁴ Benjamin Schmolck, *Nahmen-Buch Christi und der Christen, zu heiliger Erbauung in einem Jahrgange eröffnet, und in Hochfürstlicher Schloß-Capelle zum Friedenstein von Advent 1750. bis dahin 1751. musicalisch aufgeführt.* (Gotha: Johann Christoph Reiher, [1750]), 69.

³⁵ Johann Oswald Knauer, *Gott-geheiligt Singen und Spielen des Friedensteinischen Zions, Nach allen und jeden Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Evangelien, vor und nach der Predigt, angestellet Vom Advent 1720. bis dahin 1721* (Gotha: Johann Andreas Reiher, [1720]), 117.

³⁶ Gottfried Ephraim Scheibel, *Poetische Andachten Über alle gewöhnliche Sonn- und Fest-Tage, durchs ganze Jahr, Allen Herren Componisten und Liebhabern der Kirchen-Music zum Ergötzen* (Leipzig and Breslau: Michael Rohrlach, 1725), 73. This text reflects the Lutheran understanding of *inhabitatio Christi*, the dwelling of Christ in the human heart, a popular image in eighteenth-century devotional literature and theology. See Markus Rathey, *Bach's Major Vocal Works: Music, Drama, Liturgy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), chaps. 3 and 6; and Isabella van Elferen, *Mystical Love in the German Baroque: Theology, Poetry, Music*, Contextual Bach Studies. 2 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2009).

day, and in ways similar to those found in Annunciation cantatas: these sources highlight her role in Jesus's incarnation,³⁷ including the fulfillments of Genesis 3 and Isaiah 7,³⁸ they praise Mary and affirm her perpetual virginity;³⁹ and they present Mary as an example for the Christian believer, particularly for her faith.⁴⁰

Theological sources, however, also combated Roman Catholic understandings of Mary, particularly the theological importance assigned in Roman Catholic sources and her consideration as co-redemptrix, as well as the immaculate conception of Mary.⁴¹ For example, the introduction to Erdmann Neumeister's 1716 Annunciation sermon addresses, and rejects, such Roman Catholic Marian theology, and Neumeister does not mention Mary for the remainder of the sermon.⁴² Johann Olearius both rejects Roman Catholic understandings of Mary and warns about making a god of her.⁴³

As I have already posited, the translation of theology from a source such as a commentary or sermon to a cantata necessitated a limitation of focus and a condensation of key points. For Purification, this led to the elimination of Marian theology. But for Annunciation, it led to a portrayal of Mary only in a positive light, as opposed to some more hesitant treatments of Mary in other theological sources.

The Feast of the Visitation of Mary (Mariae Heimsuchung)

In many ways, Visitation can be seen as the primary Marian feast day in the Lutheran liturgical year. Mary is the key figure in the Gospel reading, featured in her actions, in the words of Elizabeth, and in her own words in the Magnificat. In cantatas for the Feast of Mary's Visitation, the crystallization of theological ideas resulted in texts that focused almost exclusively on Mary's words in the Magnificat. So in general, the cantatas for the day are less concerned with Mary herself than they are with her words in the Magnificat. However, Mary is still given significant attention in the cantata texts, both explicitly and implicitly.

That Mary's presence in Visitation cantatas is more often implied than it is clearly stated is evidenced by the fact that she is specifically mentioned only half as often as she is in Annunciation cantatas. While Mary is referenced in 35 of the 57 Annunciation cantatas, she is

³⁷ See Carpzov, *Evangelische Vorbilder- und Frag-Predigten*, 509–15; Heinrich Müller, *Apostolische Schluß-Kett und Krafft-Kern, Oder Gründlich Auslegung der gewöhnlichen Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Episteln*, 5th rev. ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Johann Benjamin Andrea and Heinrich Hort, 1734), 444–45; Erdmann Neumeister, *Worte der Weisten Statt eines Leit-Sterns Zum Wort der mannichfaltigen Weisheit GOTTes. Oder: Hoher Personen Christliche Symbola, Bei Schriftmäßiger und Lehrreicher Erklärung aller Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangelien, Wie auch am Erfromations- und Kirch-Weiungs-Feste, So anmuthig, als erbaulich, angewendet* (Weissenfels and Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Wehrmann, 1706), 1448–50.

³⁸ See Carpzov, *Evangelische Vorbilder- und Frag-Predigten*, 505.

³⁹ See Olearius, *Evangelischer Glaubens-Sieg*, 406–07; Carpzov, *Evangelische Vorbilder- und Frag-Predigten*, 515–19; Neumeister, *Worte der Weisen*, 1440–41.

⁴⁰ See Olearius, *Evangelischer Glaubens-Sieg*, 413–15; Carpzov, *Evangelische Vorbilder- und Frag-Predigten*, 518–19; Neumeister, *Worte der Weisen*, 1436, 1438–39, 1442–46.

⁴¹ See Kreitzer, *Reforming Mary*, 12–15.

⁴² Erdmann Neumeister, *Erster Evangelischer Seegen in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Johann Wolffgant Fickweiler, 1718), 460–61.

⁴³ Olearius, *Evangelischer Glaubens-Sieg*, 411, 417.

referenced in only 17 Visitation cantatas. Of these 17 references, ten mention Mary by name, while seven refer to her by a common noun such as maid (*Magd*) or virgin (*Jungfrau*).

Mary's words, however, are consistently highlighted in cantata texts for the day: 12 of the 56 cantatas quote the Magnificat, while 30 of the 56 paraphrase it in some way.⁴⁴ The words of the Magnificat are by far the most quoted Bible verses in cantatas for the day. The opening verses of the Magnificat, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior" (vv. 46b–47), are quoted in nine of the 56 cantatas. And verse 54, "He has remembered his mercy and helped his servant Israel up," is quoted in five cantatas.

Also noteworthy are two cantatas that quote the Magnificat in its entirety, alternating biblical quotation with poetic responses. Gottfried Blümeln's 1718 Visitation cantata follows this pattern, with quoted verses from Mary's words recorded in the Gospel of Luke alternating with recitatives that react to, and expand upon, the biblical text.⁴⁵ The seventh and eighth movements provide a representative example:

Und seine Barmherzigkeit währet immer für und für, bei denen die ihn fürchten. (Luke 1:50)

Es tröstet sich die Welt
Vergeblich der Barmherzigkeit;
Wer Sünde noch vor sein Vergnügen hält,
Und solche nicht bereut,
Deß wird sich GOtt gewißlich nicht erbarmen;
Er hilfft nur Armen,
Die Furcht vor ihm und seinen Worten haben,
Und sich an seinem Willen laben.
Wer aber noch im Sünden-Bade
Der bösen Lüste pflegt,
Der rühmet sich umsonst der Gnade.⁴⁶

And his mercy continues forever and ever for those who fear him.

To the one who comforts himself with the world,
Mercy is vain;
The one who still holds onto sins as his delight,
And does not repent of such,
That one will God certainly not forgive;
He helps only the poor,
Who have fear for him and his words
And take pleasure in his will.

⁴⁴ And most of the remaining cantata texts—those that do not quote or paraphrase Mary's words in the Magnificat—imitate it instead, offering their own joyous song of praise, often following an opening verse from a psalm of praise.

The study contains 56 cantatas for the Feast of Mary's Visitation rather than the 57 for the other two Marian feast days. The pages containing the Visitation cantata in Lichtenberg, *Texte zur Kirchen-Music* (1719), are missing from the published volume.

⁴⁵ See also Erdmann Neumeister's third cantata for the Feast of Mary's Visitation in his *Fünffache Kirchen-Andachten*, 752–55.

⁴⁶ Gottfried Blümeln, *Geistliche Cantaten auf alle Sonn- und Fest-Tage* (Budißin: David Richter, 1718), 129.

But the one who, yet immersed in sin,
Cultivates the evil desires,
That one in vain extols grace.

Another creative treatment of biblical quotation in Visitation cantatas is the incorporation of lines of biblical text into a poetic movement, as in the following example from Johann Jacob Rambach's 1720 Visitation cantata, which interpolates the opening verses of the Magnificat into the opening stanza of the chorale "Lobet den Herren" (Magnificat text indented in original):

Lobet den HERren, den mächtigen König der Ehren, meine geliebete Seele! das ist mein Begehren.
Meine Seele erhebt den HERren.
Kommet zu hauf!
Psalter und Harfe, wach auf,
Lasset die Musicam hören.
Und mein Geist freuet sich Gottes meines Heilandes.⁴⁷

Praise the Lord, the almighty King of Glory, my beloved soul! That is my desire.
My soul exalts the Lord.
Come, rise up!
Psalter and harp, awake,
Let music be heard.
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

But even more common than direct quotation is paraphrase of Mary's words, the creation of new poetic text that reflects, and generally expands upon, the biblical text. Perhaps the clearest example of a Magnificat paraphrase is the following recitative from Daniel Stoppe's *Sonntags-Arbeit*, which essentially condenses the entire Magnificat in a single poetic movement:

Ich will in meinem ganzen Leben
Meines GOTTes Ruhm erheben,
Sein Lob soll immerdar in meinem Munde seyn.
Er ist mein GOTT von Alters her,
Er ist mein GOTT, mein Hort, mein Trost, mein Schatz allein;
Sein Arm ist über denen schwer,
Die seinen Ruhm durch eigne Hofart schänden;
Die Armen sättigt er mit Gnaden-vollen Händen,
Die Reichen läßt er ler;
Er hebt die Niedrigen aus ihrer tiefen Nacht,
WENN er die Hohen stürzt und ihren Stuhl verächtlich macht;
Er denkt an die Barmherzigkeit,
Und hilft den Seinigen zu seiner Zeit.⁴⁸

I will with my entire life
Exalt my God's glory,

⁴⁷ Johann Jacob Rambach, *Geistliche Poesien, Davon Der erste Theil Zwei und siebenzig CANTATEN über alle Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Evangelia; Der andre Theil Einige erbauliche Madrigale, Sonnette und Geistliche Lieder in sich fasset* (Halle: Neuen Buchhandlung, 1720), 229.

⁴⁸ Daniel Stoppe, *Sonntags-Arbeit oder Geistliche Gedichte auf alle Sonn- und Fest-Tage durch das ganze Jahre* (Hirschberg: Dietrich Brahm, 1737), 116.

His praise shall evermore be in my mouth.
 He is my God from ages past,
 He is my God, my refuge, my comfort, my only treasure;
 His arm is severe upon those
 Who dishonor his glory through their own pride;
 The poor he satisfies with grace-filled hands,
 The rich he leaves empty;
 He exalts the lowly out of their dark night,
 When he topples the high ones and makes their seat contemptuous;
 He thinks upon his mercy,
 And helps his own in his time.

A more common approach for paraphrase is for a librettist to expand upon the entire Magnificat text over the course of the six to eight movements of a cantata. An anonymous text from Darmstadt (1725), for example, is composed of seven movements that clearly trace the Magnificat across an opening chorus, a series of arias and recitatives, and a concluding chorale verse. Movements 3 and 4 provide a representative example. The ideas, and even biblical language, of the Magnificat are foundational to the movements, but they are presented in poetic text with additional ideas and imagery:

Gott der da heilig ist, ein Herr von hoher Macht,
 Hat grosse Dinge an mir Armen
 Aus freiem Liebes-Trieb vollbracht.
 Und sein Erbarmen,
 Währt immer für und für,
 Bei denen die ihn hier
 In kindlich reiner Fürcht verehren.
 Sein Arm übt grosse Stärke;
 Sein Rath zerstreut der Stoltzen Sinn,
 Und ihre Wercke,
 Schlägt er in seinem Eifer hin.
 Kein Fleisch kan seinter Allmacht wehren.

Aria.
 Beuget euch, ihr stolze Geister,
 GOtt ist, der euch stürzen kan.
 Seine Macht bricht alle Höhen,
 Die ihm frech entgegen stehen,
 Alles ist ihm unterthan. D.C.⁴⁹

God, who is holy, a Lord of exalted might,
 Has great things for me, a poor one,
 Accomplished out of the free impulse of love.
 And his mercy
 Continues forever and ever,

⁴⁹ Anonymous, *Gott-geheiligte Kirchen-Arbeit / welche über die ordentliche Sonn- und Fest-Tags Evangelia zur Beförderung wahrer Seelen-Erbauung verfertigt / und als TEXTE gewöhnlichen Kirchen-Music in der Hochf. Schloß-Capelle zu DARMSTADT / auf das 1726.te Jahr angegeben worden* (Darmstadt: Caspar Klug, [1725]), 114–15.

With those who here
 Worship him in childlike, pure reverence.
 His arm exercises great strength;
 His council scatters the proud spirit,
 And their works
 He topples in his zeal.
 No flesh can defend itself against his omnipotence.

Aria.
 Submit yourself, you proud spirits,
 God is the one who can overthrow you.
 His might breaks all the exalted,
 Who impudently stand in his way,
 Everything is subject to him.

In such an approach, librettists tend to remain quite close to the Magnificat text in their paraphrases, re-presenting the biblical text in poetic form with slight elaboration and reflection upon it.

In other cantatas, the librettist treats the Magnificat text more loosely, not seeking to retell the text with some elaboration, but rather using the Gospel as a starting point for more extensive poetic and theological reflection. One such example is Erdmann Neumeister's 1717 Visitation cantata. The opening two movements reflect Mary's attitude of praise to God, but with minimal reference to the Magnificat itself.⁵⁰ But Neumeister continues with an extensive recitative (30 lines long) reflecting solely on the line "for he has done great things for me" (denn er hat große Dinge an mir getan; Luke 1:49a). The movement begins, for example:

Denn er hat grosse Ding' an mir gethan.
 Ich bin ein Mensch, ein Kunststück seiner Hand,
 Das mit Vernunft geadelt.
 Wer hätt' ihn wol getadelt,
 Wenn er aus mir hätt' einen Wurm gemacht?
 Und o wie herrlich hat er mich bedacht,
 Sein Blut hat er an mich gewandt⁵¹

⁵⁰ Lobe den HERRn meine Seele. Halleluja (Psalm 104:35).

Ach daß alle meine Glieder
 Lauter Zungen sollten sein,
 Daß ich sie durch Lobe-Lieder
 Meinem JESu konte weih'n!
 Eine nur ist viel zu wenig,
 Meinen Heiland, GOTT und König
 Zu besingen,
 Und ihm Preiß und Danck zu bringen.

Erdmann Neumeister, *Geistliche Poesien, mit untermischten Biblischen Sprüchen und Choralen auf alle Sonn- und Fest-Tage durchs gantze Jahr aufgesetzt* (Eisenach: Joh. Adolph Boëtius, 1717), 106.

⁵¹ Neumeister, *Geistliche Poesien*, 106.

For he has done great things for me.
 I am a human, an artwork of his hand,
 Who is ennobled with reason.
 Who would have rebuked him,
 If he had made a worm out of me?
 And oh, how marvelously did he think upon me,
 He clothed me with his blood.

While the primary focus of cantatas for the Feast of Mary's Visitation is on Mary's words in the Magnificat, one other aspect of Marian theology is also common: that of Mary as example for the Christian believer. And, in fact, these two aspects come together in a number of the cantata texts, as Mary is particularly offered as example because of her words: the Christian believer is urged to imitate Mary in offering songs of praise to God. Mary's humility and service, as evidenced in the story of her visitation to Elizabeth, are also presented as examples for the Christian. This recitative, from Benjamin Schmolck's 1720 Visitation cantata, presents one of the clearest examples of Mary as model for the Christian believer, highlighting both Mary's attitude of willing service that led her to visit Elizabeth and her response to God in the words of the Magnificat:

Wer JESum in dem Herzen trägt,
 Geht immerfort Berg an,
 Und seine Bahn
 Führt ihn stets zu der Frommen Hütten,
 Wo GOTTes Geist das Herz bewegt,
 Und JESus selbst ist in der Mitten,
 Da jauchzt der Mund,
 Da geht das Herz im Springen,
 Die Seel erhebt den HERRn,
 Der Geist will seines Heilands sich erfreuen.
 Man denckt an GOTTes Bund,
 So geht ein Freuden-Stern
 In unserm Herzen auf,
 Und macht der Stimme freien Lauff,
 Ein heiliges Magnificat zu singen.⁵²

The one who carries Jesus in the heart
 Constantly walks uphill,
 And his path
 Leads him on to the dwellings of the pious,
 Where God's spirit moves his heart,
 And Jesus himself is in the midst,
 There the mouth rejoices,
 There the heart moves in leaps,
 The soul exalts the Lord
 The spirit wishes to rejoice in his Savior.

⁵² Benjamin Schmolck, *Das Saiten-Spiel des Herzens, Am Tage des HERRn, Oder Sonn- und Fest-tägliche CANTATEN, Nebst einigen andern Liedern* (Breßlau and Liegnitz: Michael Rohrlach, 1720), 230. See also Franck, *Evangelisches Andachts-Opffer*, 122–23.

One thinks upon God's covenant,
 Thus rises a star of joy
 In our hearts,
 And makes the voice freely
 To sing a holy Magnificat.

Johann Sebastian Brunner presents both Mary and Elizabeth as examples of praise, of song, of prayer, and of obedience to the Holy Spirit. Brunner explicitly states:

Maria und Elisabeth
 Sind uns bewährte Proben,
 Wie sie so im Gesang, als im Gebet, . . .
 Die Herzen zu dem Höchsten lenken.

Mary and Elizabeth
 Are worthy examples to us,
 Just as in song, so also in prayer, . . .
 To direct our hearts to the Most High.⁵³

The treatment of Marian theology in Visitation cantata texts closely reflects trends in published sermons and commentaries for Visitation. The two primary themes in such sources are the words of Mary in the Magnificat and the presentation of Mary as example for the Christian believer, with the most attention focused on the Magnificat. The following prayer, for example, reflects characteristics presented in much longer form in sermons for the day: first, it quotes, and responds directly to, the words of the Magnificat; second, its structure follows that of the Magnificat; and third, it presents Mary as example for the Christian believer. The prayer begins:

Meine Seele erhebet den HErrn, und mein Geist freuet sich GOTTes, meines Heilandes; Dieses schöne Marien-Sprüchlein gebrauchen wir mit frohlockendem Herzen, und dancken dir, o herzallerliebster, himmlischer Vater! für deine grosse Gnade und Himmel-breite Barmherzigkeit, daß du die heilwärtige Empfängniß unsers treuen Erlösers und Seligmachers so herrlich und tröstlich geoffenbahret, und bitten dich herzlich, regiere uns durch deinen Heil. Geist, daß wir mit Maria in Glaubens-Sachen endelich fortfahren, und unserer Seligkeit wohl wahrnehmen. HERR JESu Christe! du allmächtiger Himmels-König, und hochgebenedeiter Menschen-Heiland, heute singen wir auch das fröliche Magnificat dir zu ehren, und sagen: Meine Seele erhebet den HErrn, und mein Geist freuet sich GOTTes, meines Heilandes.⁵⁴

My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior; we employ these beautiful words of Mary with jubilant hearts, and thank you, O all-beloved, heavenly Father! for your great grace and mercy as wide as the heavens, that you manifested the curative incarnation of our true redeemer and the one who saves us so marvelously and consolingly, and sincerely pray to you, to rule us with your Holy Spirit, that we with Mary in matters of faith ultimately continue, and safeguard well our blessedness. Lord Jesus Christ! you omnipotent heavenly king, and highly blessed Savior of humankind, today we also sing the

⁵³ Johann Sebastian Brunner, *Weimarische Kirchen-Cantaten bei Bestellung des öffentlichen Gottesdienstes in der Pfarr-Kirche S. S. Petri und Pauli auf alle Sonn- und Fest-Tage 1755 sowohl nach der Poesie als Melodie componiret und aufgeführt* (Weimar: Siegmund Heinrich Hofmann, 1754), 59–60.

⁵⁴ [Anonymous], *Gott-wohlgefällige Andachts-Flammen Oder Geistreiches Gebeth-Buch bestehend in auserlesenen Gebethen Sowohl auf jeden Tag in der Woche, als auf die Sonn- und Fest-Tage, auch bei der Beicht und Communion, und auf Reisen andächtig zu gebrauchen Nebst denen gewöhnlichen Kirchen-Gebethen* (Frankfurt an der Oder: Jeremias Schrei and Joh. Gottfried Conrad, 1724), 123.

joyful Magnificat to honor you, and say: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

The main difference between theological sources and cantata texts for Visitation is in the degree of attention given to the themes of the Magnificat and Mary as example. While cantata texts focus on the Magnificat with some reference to Mary as example, published sermons and commentaries for Visitation devote considerable attention to both themes.⁵⁵ Johann Benedict Carpzov's 1683 sermon for the Feast of Mary's Visitation provides a clear example of perspectives on Mary, the Magnificat, and the feast day that appear in many of the Lutheran theological sources at the time. Carpzov begins by identifying Visitation as "a genuine women's feast day" (ein rechtes weiber-fest), noting that this feast day—in contrast to Purification and Annunciation—focuses solely on the actions and words of two women, Mary and Elizabeth.⁵⁶ And one of his key questions in the sermon is whether the Magnificat should be sung in the Lutheran Church, a question he answers strongly in the affirmative.⁵⁷ Carpzov notes that Mary was filled with the Holy Spirit when she spoke these words, going on to state:

Wie Maria mit diesem Magnificat den HErren ihren GOTT gelobet, und sich in ihrem JESu erfreuet hat, also kan auch hiermit ein jedes Christlich-gesinnetes herz den Allerhöchsten preisen, so wohl insgemein vor all das gute, das er ihm und andern Christen an leib und seele bewiesen, als insonderheit vor die gnaden-volle sendung des versprochenen Erlösers, und die seelige menschwerdung JESu Christi.⁵⁸

As Mary with this Magnificat praised the Lord her God, and rejoiced in her Jesus, thus also can each Christianly-oriented heart praise the Most High in this way, even so in general for all the good that he bestows upon him and other Christians, body and soul, as in particular for the grace-filled sending of the promised redeemer, and the blessed incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Carpzov concludes his discussion with a detailed exposition of how each verse of the Magnificat can be sung by the contemporary Christian believer.⁵⁹

In addition to urging the Christian believer to follow Mary's example in her sung praise to God in the Magnificat, theologians present several other contexts for Mary as example. Johann Olearius, for example, offers Mary as example of virtue, faith, humility, and service.⁶⁰ Erdmann Neumeister presents Mary as a model of piety, virtue, service to Elizabeth, and praise to God.⁶¹

⁵⁵ One exception to this analysis is Heinrich Müller's sermon for the Feast of Mary's Visitation, which is entirely an exposition of the Magnificat. Müller, *Apostolische Schluß-Kett und Krafft-Kern*, 558–68.

⁵⁶ "Alleine am gegenwärtigen Fest finden wir nichts, als daß zwei weibs-personen zusammen kommen, ein ander besuchen und sich miteinander unterreden. . . . Nun sind hier zwei reddende weibes-personen anzutreffen, und auf diese beide sollen wir heute achtung geben, wie sie bei ihrer zusammenkunfft ihr gespräch miteinander gehabet." Carpzov, *Evangelische Vorbilder- und Frag-Predigten*, 133.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 151–55.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 152–53.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 154–55.

⁶⁰ Olearius, *Evangelischer Glaubens-Sieg*, 897.

⁶¹ Neumeister, *Worte der Weisen*, 1471, 1475, 1478–85; Neumeister, *Erster Evangelischer Seegen in Hamburg*, 894–95, 897, 905–07. These sermons discuss Mary as example within the context of expositions of the Magnificat, so their overall focus continued to be on Mary's words in the Magnificat.

In his 1716 Visitation sermon, Neumeister identifies the key theological theme of the feast day as “a spiritual example for women” (*Einen Geistlichen Frauenzimmer-Spiegel*).⁶²

Despite the dual focus in theological sources on the Magnificat and Mary as example, the Feast of Mary’s Visitation continued to be primarily focused on Mary’s words in the Magnificat. In addition to the focus on the Magnificat in theological sources such as published sermons and commentaries for the Feast of Mary’s Visitation, the Magnificat was also regularly present throughout the Lutheran church year. The Magnificat would, in fact, have been well known to regular congregants, as the text was sung in either Latin or German in every Vespers service. In Leipzig, for example, Vespers services were held about 100 days each year, with the Magnificat most often sung by the congregation in German in a simple harmonized psalm tone version; about 16 times a year, it was performed in a concerted Latin setting.⁶³ The cantatas for the Feast of Mary’s Visitation, performed immediately after the chanting of the Gospel text that framed the Magnificat within the larger account of Mary in Luke 1, reminded congregants that these words were those of Mary from Luke’s Gospel, while also providing additional ways to think about this familiar Marian text.

As I have sought to demonstrate through the discussion of the cantata texts for the three Marian feast days in the eighteenth-century Lutheran Church, significant Marian theology was communicated to congregants through church cantatas, especially those for Annunciation and Visitation. Far from downplaying or denigrating Mary, cantata librettists often highlighted and even praised Mary on these two feast days. And the Feast of the Visitation in particular provided a valuable context for congregants to think about Mary’s song, the Magnificat, which was sung in Vespers services throughout the year.

In closing, I’d like to broaden the question “How might Marian theology have been heard by Lutheran congregants through church music of the early eighteenth century?” to “How is theology presented differently in a cantata than in theological sources such as published sermons and commentaries?”

First, the theology communicated in a cantata was necessarily crystallized and partial. Working within a much smaller format than a published sermon or commentary forced poets to focus on a primary theme and make no attempt to offer comprehensive theological understandings. Such crystallization of theological themes likewise related to a shift in audience, as the cantata was aimed primarily at lay congregants, not only at pastors or theologians.

In addition, the cantata was a genre well suited for congregants to understand and absorb the theological messages, as the theology was not only crystallized, but also personalized. Whereas sermons tended to address congregants in the second person and speak of God in the third person, cantata texts were generally presented from the perspective of the congregant (the Christian believer). In the cantata, the Christian believer often speaks in the first person (“ich,” “I”), addressing God directly in second person (“du,” “you”), thus personalizing the exchange.

⁶² Neumeister, *Erster Evangelischer Seegen in Hamburg*, 895.

⁶³ See Mark A. Peters, “J. S. Bach’s *Meine Seel’ erhebt den Herren* (BWV 10) as Chorale Cantata and Magnificat Paraphrase,” *Bach: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute* 43 (2012): 29–64.

The cantata's mode of communication itself also reinforced theological themes. If congregants had purchased a libretto from which to read along during the cantata's performance, their experience of the text would be both written and aural. Additionally, if congregants had purchased the cantata libretti, these volumes themselves may have served as a kind of devotional literature, something that might have been read at home either before or after a church service.⁶⁴

Finally, the cantata communicated not through rhetorical argument, but rather through the aesthetics of poetry and music. The very beauty of the language and of the music added an aesthetic dimension to which I assume many congregants responded positively. The surviving musical settings we have for these texts—by composers including Johann Sebastian Bach, Christoph Graupner, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel, and Georg Philipp Telemann—attest the rich musical tradition of cantata composition in early eighteenth-century Germany. These settings emphasize that Marian theology on the feasts of Purification, Annunciation, and Visitation was communicated through both poetic and musical beauty.

⁶⁴ Published cantata cycles may have been used in a similar fashion as devotional books of poetry based on the church year, of which there are many examples in early eighteenth-century Lutheranism. See, for example, Caspar Anders, *Gläubiger Christen Evangelische Hertzens-Lust, Zu dem Nahmen und Gedächtniß des HERRN Oder Geistliche Oden Über alle Sonn- und Fest-Tage durchs ganze Jahr; Zu Unterhaltung öffentlicher und geheimer Andacht, Zn dem Tage des HERRN* (Leipzig and Breslau: Michael Rohrlach, 1726); Gottfried Gottschling, *Balsam aus Gilead, Vor die Mitgenossen am Trübsal, aus den Sonn- und Fest-Tags-Evangelien, in Herz-erquickenden ARIEN, gesamlet* (Leipzig: Joh. Friedr. Gleditsch, 1720); and [Sophie Regina Gräf], *Eines andächtigen Frauenzimmers S. R. G. Ihrem JESU im Glauben dargebrachte Liebes-Opffer, d. i. Poetische Applicationes derer Sonn- und Fest-täglichen Evangelien zu Ihrer eigenen Erbauung und Vergnügung Ihrer Seelen abgefasset, Und Ohne Dero Wissen zum Druck befördert von N. N.* (Leipzig: Johann Christian Martini, 1715).