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**POCZĄTKI PIEŚNI PROTESTANCKIEJ**  
**NA PRZYKŁADZIE TWÓRCZOŚCI CHORAŁOWEJ**  
**MARCINA LUTRA**

**THE ORIGINS OF PROTESTANT CHURCH HYMNS**  
The Choral Works of Martin Luther

**Summary**

Music occupies an exceptional position in Martin Luther's theology, the evidence of which can be found in his preserved letters as well as in the introductions to hymn-books. In his publications Luther grants music the status of art, unlike the previous theoretical concepts which regarded music as a science. Since the very beginning of the Reformation the "art of sounds" has enjoyed a privileged position in church liturgy, which has resulted in numerous and diverse works by cantors and organists. In Protestant Germany music could often be heard in parish schools, princes' palaces and in rich burgesses' houses, influencing the proper upbringing of the youth, enhancing court celebrations as well as accompanying entertainment and prayer. The truths of the Christian faith, prayer and Bible history were all given a special place in the songs – chorales of that time. Several dozen of hymn texts in German have been traditionally attributed to Luther, who also composed melodies to them. He intended the chorales to be sung both in church and at home – depending on the needs. The melodies were contrafactures of medieval plainchant, folk songs and Luther's original compositions. The tonality of these works uses the system of modal scales, while in their structure the binary form predominates, with the first part repeated. The chorales created by Luther prove his good knowledge of compositional technique.