

# CATHERINE THE GREAT AND THE ROLE OF CELEBRATORY MUSIC AT THE COURT OF ANHALT-ZERBST

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## ABSTRACT

*As Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great (1729–1796) shaped not only history in general but also, as a member of its princely family, the history of Anhalt-Zerbst. Drawing upon little known eighteenth-century manuscripts housed at the Landeshauparchiv of Saxony-Anhalt in Dessau and the Franciscumsbibliothek in Zerbst, this study assesses the impact of Catherine's marriage in 1745 to Grand Duke Peter of Russia (1728–1762) on musical life at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst during and after the thirty-six-year tenure of Kapellmeister Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758). First the role of music at the court prior to 1745 will be considered – specifically the 'Concert-Stube', an inventory of the Hofkapelle's musical library prepared according to Fasch's specifications in March 1743. The second section of this article focuses on the celebrations held at the court in 1745 on the occasion of Catherine the Great's wedding. The Hofkapelle premiered a large-scale serenata by Fasch, the music to which has been lost. However, an examination of the extant libretto and of other music by Fasch that was performed at the court during the 1740s sheds light on the musical forces he would have employed and the compositional approach he might have taken. The Hofkapelle also performed a secular wedding cantata for bass solo and instruments by an anonymous composer as part of a spectacular fireworks display in three acts, the 'Anhalt-Zerbstisches Freuden-Feuer' (Fire of Joy), chronicled by Zerbst headmaster Johann Hoxa. Finally, it is possible to reconstruct a performance schedule of sacred music premiered in honour of Catherine the Great from 1746 to 1773. Despite Fasch's death in 1758 and the Seven Years War, which led to the town of Zerbst being occupied by 16,000 Prussian soldiers for three years until 1761, new music was commissioned by the court from Fasch's successor Johann Georg Röllig (1710–1790), Catherine the Great's keyboard instructor at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst. He not only provided occasional compositions to commemorate her birthday and accession to the Russian throne but also composed a new cycle of Sunday cantatas to reflect the changing artistic priorities and practices of the Hofkapelle in the early 1760s.*

The German roots of Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia, are well documented.<sup>1</sup> Born Princess Sophie Auguste Friederike in Stettin in 1729, she and her family moved in the autumn of 1742 to the small principdom

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This study is dedicated to my sister Gabriele Reul and my friend and colleague Lynn Channing on the occasion of their fiftieth and sixtieth birthdays, respectively. In addition to thanking Lynn Cavanagh, Pauline Minevich and Nigel Springhorpe as well as the two anonymous readers of this journal for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article, I would like to express my gratitude to Frau Angela Erbacher, Landeshauparchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau, and Frau Iruta Völlger and Frau Petra Volger, Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst, for their kind permission to reproduce images of primary source material examined in this article.

1 Standard secondary sources in English include John T. Alexander's *Catherine the Great: Life and Legend* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Henri Troyat, *Catherine the Great*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Dutton, 1980). German scholars have published much on the Russian empress, most recently Erich Donnert, *Katharina II, die Große*



of Anhalt-Zerbst, about ninety kilometres north of Leipzig and one hundred and twenty kilometres south of Berlin. While Sophie's father, Prince Christian August (1690–1747), spent his time governing the principality together with his cousin Prince Johann Ludwig (1688–1746), her mother, Princess Johanna Elisabeth (1712–1760), was busy matchmaking. Johanna's brother, Karl August of Holstein-Gottorp, had (prior to his untimely death in 1727) been betrothed to the Empress of Russia, Elizabeth I (1709–1762). She welcomed the idea of a marriage between her nephew and heir, Grand Duke Karl Peter Ulrich of Holstein-Gottorp (1728–1762), and young Sophie. When the Prussian king, Frederick the Great, also supported the proposal – deeming the alliance advantageous in view of his own interests at the court of St Petersburg – a bargain was struck. On 10 January 1744 the fourteen-year-old princess, accompanied by her mother, left Zerbst for St Petersburg. The following year, on 21 August 1745, Grand Duchess Catherine and Grand Duke Peter took their marriage vows, much to the delight and pride of her family and relatives and the citizens of Anhalt-Zerbst. The momentous occasion warranted major festivities at the small court which included musical compositions by Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758), who had served as Kapellmeister since 1722. In keeping with a long-standing tradition at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst,<sup>2</sup> Catherine continued to be honoured by the orchestra for almost three decades, from 1746 to 1773. Each year the Hofkapelle performed cantatas and serenatas on the occasion of Catherine's birthday on 2 May, despite the fact that the Empress of Russia never set foot on Zerbst soil again after 1744.

Drawing upon little known eighteenth-century manuscripts housed at the Landeshauptarchiv of Saxony-Anhalt in Dessau and the Franciscumsbibliothek in Zerbst, this study assesses the impact of Catherine's advantageous marriage on musical life at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst during and after the tenure of Kapellmeister Johann Friedrich Fasch (1722–1758). First the role that music played at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst prior to 1745 will be considered, specifically in light of the 'Concert-Stube', an inventory of the orchestral library prepared in March 1743.<sup>3</sup> This invaluable primary source documents the remarkably large and diverse repertoire of the Hofkapelle and throws light on the number of works by well and little known composers in and outside of Germany that Fasch knew and performed regularly at the court. The Kapellmeister's access to music scores was also facilitated greatly by his own entrepreneurial activities: from 1728 on Fasch excelled at organizing a 'Musicalien-Wechsel' (an exchange of sheet music) in central Germany, and he served as 'court supplier of music' to the Dresden court for three decades, until 1755.

The second section of this article focuses on the celebrations held at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst in 1745 on the occasion of Catherine the Great's wedding. The court orchestra premiered a large-scale serenata by Fasch, the music for which has been lost. However, an examination of the extant libretto and of other music by Fasch that was performed at the court during the 1740s suggests the musical forces he could have employed and the compositional approach he might have taken.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the orchestra performed a

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(Regensburg: Pustet, 1998), and Dieter Wunderlich, *Vernetzte Karrieren: Friedrich der Große, Maria Theresia, Katharina die Große* (Regensburg: Pustet, 2002). Catherine's relationship to Germany and the Germans has been examined in detail by Claus Scharf, *Katharina II, Deutschland und die Deutschen* (Mainz: Zabern, 1996).

2 The earliest surviving libretto to a musical work performed on the occasion of a princely birthday (for Prince Carl Wilhelm of Anhalt-Zerbst) dates from 16 October 1696; Zerbst, Franciscumsbibliothek (hereafter D-Zeo), A.11.k., fol. 9.

3 The label 'Concert-Stube' actually describes the physical location of the library: according to a hitherto unknown document, it was situated in the basement ('Sous Terrain') of the 'Alter Flügel' (west wing) of the palace; see Landeshauptarchiv Saxony-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau (hereafter D-LHASA, DE), Kammer ZE, no. 4520b, fol. 42r. (pages and folios in the Dessau archive are customarily identified with the abbreviations 'pag.' and 'fol.'). The contents of the library are listed in the 'Concert-Stube des Zerbster Schlosses', an inventory of the Hofkapelle's library prepared in March 1743; facsimile edition published as *Studien zur Aufführungspraxis und Interpretation der Musik des 18. Jahrhunderts: Dokumentationen/Reprints* (hereafter StAI D/R) 4, ed. Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein (Michaelstein/Blankenburg: Harz, 1983). For a transcription of the inventory's contents see Bernhard Engelke, *Johann Friedrich Fasch: sein Leben und seine Tätigkeit als Vokalkomponist* (Halle: C. A. Kaemmerer, 1908), Appendix 2.

4 D-ZEo, A.13.e., fol. 16. A facsimile edition has been published as Johann Friedrich Fasch, *Serenata zum Vermählungs-Fest von Peter Feodorowitsch und Katharina Alexejewna*, StAI D/R 16 (1988).



secular wedding cantata for bass solo and instruments by an anonymous composer as part of a spectacular fireworks display in three acts, the ‘Anhalt-Zerbstisches Freuden-Feuer’ (Fire of Joy). The latter was chronicled by Zerbst headmaster Johann Hoxa in a ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’ (Short Description).<sup>5</sup> He also provided a detailed and enlightening discussion of a festive outdoor ‘illumination’, a most impressive and ingenious outdoor exhibition honouring the noble families of Anhalt-Zerbst and Russia as they were joined together in matrimony.

Finally, drawing upon information contained in the multi-volume collection of Zerbst court chapel chronicles housed at the Landeshauptarchiv of Saxony-Anhalt in Dessau, it is possible to reconstruct a performance schedule of sacred music premiered in honour of Catherine the Great from 1746 to 1773.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, musical life at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst did not come to a complete and sudden halt because of the onset of the Seven Years War in 1756, nor was it greatly affected by Fasch’s death in 1758, as has been suggested by both Rüdiger Pfeiffer and Guido Bimberg.<sup>7</sup> Rather, performances of newly commissioned music – including occasional compositions to commemorate important events in the life of the princely family and a new cycle of Sunday cantatas reflecting the changing artistic priorities and practices of the Hofkapelle – took place at the palace until the mid-1760s under the leadership of Fasch’s successor, vice-Kapellmeister, court organist and composer Johann Georg Röllig (1710–1790); he had given young Catherine the Great keyboard instruction prior to her departure for Russia in 1744.<sup>8</sup> Special music during normal services held weekly in the court chapel ceased in 1768, but occasions such as Catherine’s birthday warranted the involvement of the Hofkapelle (albeit reduced) until 1773.

## FROM ‘MUSICALIEN-WECHSEL’ TO ‘CONCERT-STUBE’: FASCH AND MUSICAL LIFE AT THE COURT OF ANHALT-ZERBST BEFORE 1745

When Johann Friedrich Fasch was commissioned in 1745 to compose a lengthy wedding serenata for Grand Duchess Catherine, he had served as Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst for twenty-three

5 ‘Kurtze Beschreibung bey auf das Höchsterfreuliche Vermählungsfest Ihre beyderseits Kayserl. Hoheiten Des Durchlauchtigsten Fürstens und Herrn, HERRN Peters Feodorowitz . . . wie auch Der Durchlauchtigsten Fürstin und Frauen FRAUEN Catharina Alexiewna . . . an dem Hochfürstl. Anhalt-Zerbstischen Hofe feyerlich vorgestellten Illumination und des Feuerwercks . . . von Johann Hoxa’ (Short Description of the Solemnly Presented Illumination and Fireworks Display on the Occasion of the Most Delightful Wedding Feast of Both Imperial Majesties His Grace Prince and Lord, LORD Peter Feodorowitz . . . as well as Her Grace Princess and Lady, LADY Catharina Alexiewna . . . by Johann Hoxa), in Samuel Lentz, *Historisch-Genealogische Fürststellung des Hochfürstlichen Hauses Anhalt und der davon abstammenden Marggrafen zu Brandenburg, Herzoge zu Sachsen und Sachsen-Lauenburg: Weiterführung und Erg. durch Becmannus* (Cöthen, 1757), 595[a]–603. Copies of this chronicle are housed in D-LHASA, DE, as well as in D-ZEO. Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this article are mine.

6 D-LHASA, DE, Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep.15A-IXa, volumes 364–377. For a description of these twenty-five volumes (‘Verzeichnisse’) see Barbara M. Reul, ‘Musical-liturgical activities at the Anhalt-Zerbst Court Chapel from 1722 to 1758: The *Konsistorium-Zerbst Rep. 15A IXa* Primary Source at the *Landesarchiv* Oranienbaum’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst*, ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft e. V., Fasch-Studien 6 (Dessau: Anhaltische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1997), 59–70.

7 Rüdiger Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Leben und Werk* (Wilhelmshaven: Noetzel, 1994), 59, and Guido Bimberg, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch – ein Europäer in seiner Zeit’, in *Fasch und die Musik im Europa des 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Bimberg and Pfeiffer, Fasch-Studien 4 (Weimar: Böhlau, 1995), 22. See also Guido Bimberg’s rather general article, ‘Musikalische Geselligkeit um die russische Großfürstin aus der Fasch-Stadt Zerbst’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758)*, Studien zur Aufführungspraxis und Interpretation von Musik des 18. Jahrhunderts (hereafter StAI) 41, ed. Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein (Michaelstein/Blankenburg: Harz, 1989), 29–37.

8 Hermann Wäschke, ‘Rölligs Kantate für St. Jakobs-Tag’, *Zerbster Jahrbuch* 4 (1908), 7: ‘Ihro Kaiserl. Maj. von Rusland KATHARINA der zwoten 2 Jahr auff den *Clavier* informiret’ (For two years instructed Her Imperial Majesty of Russia Catherine the second on the keyboard).



years.<sup>9</sup> He was also well respected by his peers: Johann Adolph Scheibe, editor of the *Critischer Musicus*, had praised Fasch's outstanding skills among Germans as a composer of overture-suites, considering them equal to those of Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767), the civic music director of Hamburg.<sup>10</sup> Fasch's musical talent had been nurtured early on at the prestigious St Thomas School under Johann Kuhnau (1660–1722) in Leipzig and put to the test in founding and directing a Collegium musicum in 1708. From 1713 to 1715 Fasch undertook a two-year musical 'Gesellenreise', or apprenticeship tour, through Western and central Germany, followed by administrative positions in Greiz and Gera. After a short stint as 'Componist' for Count Morzin in Prague, Fasch finally settled in Zerbst, Saxony-Anhalt, in 1722 – and promptly turned down an offer to be Leipzig's new cantor the following year.<sup>11</sup>

As the court Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst Fasch maintained a heavy work schedule. A minimum of three cantatas per week were needed at the court chapel, and the prince and his family wanted to be entertained with *Tafelmusiken* and concerts, as well as cantatas and serenatas on special occasions such as birthdays and weddings. Luckily the court orchestra had grown by over sixty per cent, from twelve to twenty permanent members, over the years; this not only encouraged but also required Fasch to expand its repertoire.<sup>12</sup> From 1728 on he also organized and facilitated a flourishing 'Musicalien-Wechsel', or exchange of sheet music, between Zerbst and other German cities, especially Dresden, where almost one third of his three hundred surviving works are held.<sup>13</sup>

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- 9 The most comprehensive article on J. F. Fasch to date is Stephan Blaut's essay in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2001; hereafter *MGG*), Personenteil, volume 6, columns 760–775. Its English counterpart is much less satisfactory; see Gottfried Kuntzel, 'Fasch, Johann Friedrich', in *Grove Music Online*, ed. Laura Macy (accessed 4 May 2006). Moreover, an autobiographical essay by Fasch is published in Friedrich Wilhelm Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik* 3 (Berlin: Lange, 1757–1758; reprinted Georg Olms, 1970), volume 2, 124–129 and 131ff. This essay is included in *Georg Philipp Telemann und seine zeitgenössischen Kollegen: Dokumentation zu J. F. Fasch*, *StAI* 15 (1981), 10–16.
- 10 Johann Adolph Scheibe, *Critischer Musikus* (Leipzig: Breitkopf, 1745), 73, section 673. Scheibe was referring to overture-suites that included solo instruments, such as the French woodwind trio (two oboes and bassoon).
- 11 Fasch pointed out that he did not want to leave Zerbst so soon after his arrival (his previous employment in Bohemia had lasted not even two years) and felt uncomfortable teaching at the Thomasschule because he had forgotten all his Latin. See Ulrich Siegele, 'Bachs Stellung in der Leipzig Kulturpolitik seiner Zeit', *Bach-Jahrbuch* 69 (1983), 7–50. Perhaps Fasch, who spent his youth in Leipzig, also had some reservations about his future employers and the work environment awaiting him at the Thomasschule.
- 12 According to a hitherto unknown document dated 'Johannis' (24 June) 1699 (D-LHASA, DE, Kammer ZE, no. 2872, fos 684–687), the first Hofkapelle of Anhalt-Zerbst was assembled in 1699. In this draft of an employment contract a court official acting on behalf of Prince Carl Wilhelm of Anhalt-Zerbst instructed the town (later court) *Musicum* Grahmann to form, direct and participate in an ensemble consisting of a least six musically experienced individuals, including one 'good' vocalist. Specifically, Grahmann was to put together a chorus of (two?) violins and a double bass, woodwind (a chorus of oboes, a bassoon and a chorus of recorders) and a 'Partie' of at least two to three 'viol di gamben'. Performing works composed by Grahmann and others, these musicians were expected to provide entertainment at the 'Tafel', at dances and on occasions such as court assemblies. Incidentally, the ensemble's participation in church services (at St Bartholomäi Church, not at the Schloßkirche, which was finished only in 1719) does not seem to have been required. For an overview of Fasch's musical forces between 1722 and 1758 see Hermann Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', *Zerbster Jahrbuch* 2 (1906), 47–63. See also Figure 1 in the main body of the text.
- 13 Fasch may have begun exchanging music as early as 1725; see Stephan Blaut, 'Zur Überlieferung der Ouverturen-Suiten von Johann Friedrich Fasch in der Sächsischen Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758) für auswärtige Hofkapellen*, ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft e. V., *Fasch-Studien* 8 (Dessau: Anhalt-Edition Dessau, 2001), 59–84, especially 73. For an overview of Fasch's oeuvre see Blaut in *MGG* 2 and Rüdiger Pfeiffer, *Verzeichnis der Werke von Johann Friedrich Fasch (FWV)*, *Kleine Ausgabe*, Dokumente und Materialien zur Musikgeschichte des Bezirkes Magdeburg 1 (Magdeburg: Zentrum für Telemann-Pflege und -Forschung Magdeburg, 1988). The International Fasch Society is currently preparing an updated and expanded version of a thematic catalogue of Fasch's works.



Fasch spent about nine months (October 1726 to June/July 1727) in the Saxon capital, whose axis of cultural influences extended from Rome to Hamburg.<sup>14</sup> Composing vocal works specifically for the Roman Catholic court chapel as well as instrumental music for the Hofkapelle, he worked closely with two former members of his Leipzig Collegium musicum ensemble, Kapellmeister Johann David Heinichen (1683–1729) and concertmaster Johann Georg Pisendel (1687–1755).<sup>15</sup> Both offered many stylistic and practical insights to ensure that Fasch's works would suit the musical *gusto* of Dresden. Heinichen, for example, modified Fasch's early Vesper settings and masses written for Dresden, not only entering corrections but, as Janice Stockigt notes, tailoring these works to the skills of the musicians who were active at the court.<sup>16</sup> She adds that these alterations point towards Fasch's music initially having been kept in Heinichen's and Pisendel's private, rather than the court's official, music library.<sup>17</sup> Manfred Fehner argues that while Heinichen's modifications were geared towards italianizing Fasch's compact and sturdy approach to composition,<sup>18</sup> Pisendel's heavy-handed editing practices in Fasch's concertos indicate that these works appear not always to have met the concertmaster's expectations.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that their relationship was of a collegial nature, with Fasch being eager to polish his own – advanced – compositional skills in a different and culturally stimulating environment.

During his sojourn in Dresden Fasch also came into contact with Pietist leader Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760) and converted from Orthodox Lutheranism to Pietism, a faith community which stressed personal piety and devotion. In the 1730s Fasch wished to leave conservative Zerbst but was unable to secure employment at a more Pietistically inclined court.<sup>20</sup> He also struggled greatly with the fact

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- 14 Elena Sawtschenko, 'Briefe von Johann Friedrich Fasch im Archiv der Frankeschen Stiftungen Halle', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 85–110; see Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 51. Fasch received 275 florins (approximately seventy-nine per cent of his yearly salary) from the court to finance this trip.
- 15 Fasch had initiated the Collegium musicum in 1708; Heinichen seems to have conducted the ensemble from the harpsichord for a short period of time in 1709. In 1723 J. G. Görner took over this Collegium musicum, after which it was commonly referred to simply as the 'Görnersche'.
- 16 Janice B. Stockigt, 'Fasch Visits Dresden 1726–1727: His Liturgical Works for the Catholic Court of Dresden', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 29–56, especially 47.
- 17 These manuscripts were passed on to the court or the court church only after the death of Heinichen and Pisendel; see Stockigt, 'Fasch visits Dresden', 53. Manfred Fehner leaves this particular question open when it comes to Fasch's Dresden concerto autographs; see his *Studien zur Überlieferung von Instrumentalkonzerten deutscher Komponisten des 18. Jahrhunderts: Die Dresdner Konzert-Manuskripte von Georg Philipp Telemann, Johann David Heinichen, Johann Georg Pisendel, Johann Friedrich Fasch, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel, Johann Joachim Quantz und Johann Gottlieb Graun: Untersuchungen an den Quellen und Thematischer Katalog*, *Dresdner Studien zur Musikwissenschaft* 2 (Laaber: Laaber, 1999), 30–31.
- 18 Manfred Fehner, 'Zur Datierung von Johann Friedrich Fasch's "Dresdner" Vesperkompositionen und Messen-Annotation', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 57.
- 19 Fehner, *Studien zur Überlieferung*, 30ff. Interestingly, the highly critical Pisendel refrained from offering comments on overture-suites that had been sent to him from Zerbst, most likely because he was not interested in this genre, which enjoyed increasing popularity in Germany after 1722; see Fehner, 12–16.
- 20 Of their correspondence only nine letters by Fasch to Zinzendorf survive; three are reproduced and transcribed in *Georg Philipp Telemann und seine zeitgenössischen Kollegen*, 27–40. See also Thilo Daniel, 'Fasch und Zinzendorf: Bemerkungen zur Geschichte eines Briefwechsels', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 74–84, and Martin Petzoldt, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch als Briefkorrespondent des Grafen Zinzendorf: ein Beitrag zur theologischen Lokalisierung Faschs', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Wissenschaftliche Konferenz in Zerbst am 5. Dezember 1983 aus Anlaß des 225. Todestages*, *StAI* 24 (1984), 32–43. Both Daniel and Petzoldt suggest that Zinzendorf used Fasch as an informant in Zerbst because of its close proximity to Köthen, an important Pietistic stronghold. Moreover, Zinzendorf had misled Fasch by encouraging him to apply in 1732 to the Danish court, which welcomed Pietists, but not if they were musicians seeking employment. Pietistic influences in Fasch's cantatas, specifically his librettos, have been discussed by Elena Sawtschenko, 'Das Schaffen von Johann Friedrich Fasch im Lichte der pietistischen Frömmigkeit – Pietismus und Musik', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst*, 83–100.





that as a devout Pietist he enjoyed huge success as a composer of Orthodox Lutheran music.<sup>21</sup> Fasch's compositions were known in and outside of Germany, particularly in Vienna and Prague, and his idol Telemann even requested a cantata cycle be sent from Zerbst to Hamburg in 1732, much to Fasch's delight.<sup>22</sup>

Upon his return to Zerbst in 1727 Fasch continued to supply the Dresden court orchestra with his own instrumental works (mostly overture-suites and concertos) for almost thirty years, at least until Pisendel's death in 1755.<sup>23</sup> Ortrun Landmann emphasizes that the task of writing music that was *not* custom-made for the small (and, with regard to musical forces, limited) court of Zerbst, but intended for one of the leading German Hofkapellen, would have attracted Fasch and challenged his ambition, creativity and compositional skills – and impressed his employer.<sup>24</sup> Wolf Hobohm considers professional recognition from his peers and major financial struggles on Fasch's part (he carried a huge personal debt throughout his life) similarly compelling reasons for the Anhalt-Zerbst Kapellmeister to provide the Dresden court with his compositions.<sup>25</sup> Little is known about the actual transmission of scores: were they sent through official channels or did they arrive at Pisendel's backdoor as a gift from a friend?<sup>26</sup> In any case, Fasch ranked second only after

21 Regarding performances of vocal and instrumental music, specifically cantatas, in Pietist faith communities during the first half of the eighteenth century see Anja Wehrend, 'Über die Pflege vokal-instrumentaler Figuralmusik in der Herrnhuter Brüdergemeinde von 1727 bis 1760', in *Musikkonzepte – Konzepte der Musik*, ed. Kathrin Eberl and Wolfgang Ruf (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2000), volume 1, 248–262.

22 In a letter of 18 September 1731 to Zinzendorf transcribed in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch 1688–1758*, 31, Fasch wrote: 'Besonders, da die in mir noch zieml[ich] herrschende ambition bey der so wohl hier, als auch auswärts in Wien, Praag, Drestden u. mehr orthen erhaltenen approbation meiner composition sich immer wieder empor-schwingen will, welches mir dann vielfältige schwere Kämpfe verursacht.' (Especially because the ambition which is still quite alive within me and which, in view of the approbation for my compositions here and elsewhere, in Vienna, Prague, Dresden and other places, again and again attempts to take flight, which then causes me manifold and bitter struggles.) See also Fasch's letter of 29 December 1736 to Zinzendorf, as quoted in Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 66: 'von dem Hamburgischen Capellmeister Telemann, aus eigener bewegung, ersuchet worden, Ihm einen Kirchen-Jahrgang zu communiciren, welcher auch dieses Jahr daselbst auffgeführt wird, und mich in dortiger gegend so bekanter macht.' (The Hamburg Kapellmeister Telemann felt motivated to request a cycle of [my] church cantatas to be sent to him; it shall be performed there this year, increasing my popularity in that area.) See also Gottfried Gille, *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Kirchenkantaten in Jahrgängen; ein Katalog der gedruckten Texte*, StAI 19 (1989), 53. Gille states that Fasch's cycle *Evangelische Kirchenandachten* from 1732/33 was performed in Hamburg in 1733/34; however, evidence to support this claim has yet to be found.

23 This timeline is supported by the fact that Fasch received annual funds from his Zerbst employer for 'Verlag' (shipping and handling costs) over the course of three decades; see D-LHASA, DE, Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1725/26, pag. 203, no. 34.1695; Kammerrechnungen 175/55, pag. 298, no. 27.2831; and Blaut, 'Zur Überlieferung der Ouverturen-Suiten', 59–84. Pfeiffer notes that an examination of scribes' handwritings as well as entries by other individuals indicates that Fasch's works were performed at the Dresden court after 1755, possibly even after 1763, following the end of the Seven Years War; see Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 87.

24 Ortrun Landmann, 'Zur Spezifik der Fasch-Handschriften in der Sächsischen Landesbibliothek', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758)*, StAI 24, 94. See also Fechner, 'Vom "Dresdner" Umgang mit Faschs Kompositionen', 10; he notes that Fasch may have craved 'artistic acknowledgement' because he was a practising Pietist employed at an Orthodox Lutheran court.

25 See Wolf Hobohm, 'Johann Friedrich Faschs Lautentranskription seines Oboenkonzerts d-Moll', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758)*, 76. Fasch's financial struggle, especially towards the end of his life, is discussed by Konstanze Musketa, 'Johann Friedrich Faschs letzte Lebensjahre, dargestellt an Dokumenten aus dem St. Bartholomäi-Stift zu Zerbst', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst*, 312–322. See also *Was dieser Geldmangel uns vor tägl. Kummer machet, Briefe, Johann Friedrich Fasch betreffend, aus dem St. Bartholomäi-Stift zu Zerbst (1752 bis 1757)*, Schriftenreihe zur Mitteldeutschen Musikgeschichte 1/3, ed. Konstanze Musketa with Dietrich-Karl Bischoff (Oschersleben: Ziethen, 1997), 7–15.

26 Fechner, *Studien zur Überlieferung*, 30.



Telemann among German composers of instrumental music represented in the huge holdings of the Dresden court Kapellarchiv, and bar counts and timings entered in Fasch's compositions indicate that they were performed (or were at least intended to be performed) at Dresden.<sup>27</sup>

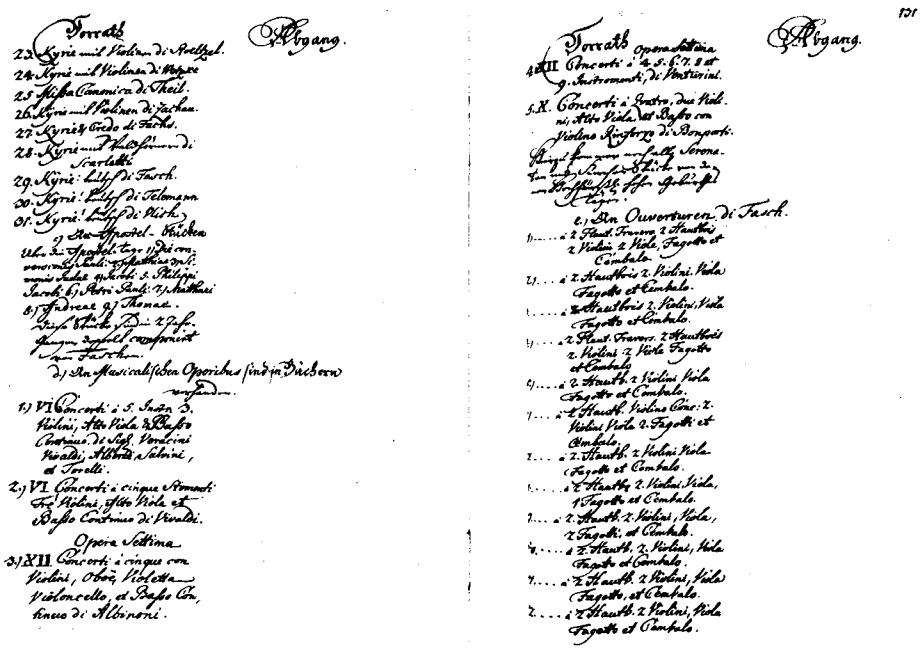


Figure 1 D-LHASA, DE, Fach-Archiv ZE, F 109 Nr. 6, fol. 131r from *Concert-Stube des Zerbster Schlosses*, facsimile edition of the Hofkapelle's library inventory, prepared in March 1743 (also published as *Studien zur Aufführungspraxis und Interpretation der Musik des 18. Jahrhunderts: Dokumentationen/Reprints 4*, ed. Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein (Michaelstein/Blankenburg: Harz, 1983)). Reproduced with permission

Since money never seems to have exchanged hands, Landmann has argued in favour of Fasch's having been compensated for his services with music scores.<sup>28</sup> This particular scenario is supported by the musical repertoire listed in the Zerbst 'Concert-Stube', an inventory of the Hofkapelle's library which was prepared according to Fasch's specification on the occasion of Prince Johann August's death in 1742. The 497 entries underscore not only the prominent role music played at this small yet very active court during the first twenty years of Fasch's tenure, but also emphasize the expert technical skills of the musicians he had at his disposal. The Kapellmeister's own 113 specified contributions include no fewer than nine yearly cantata cycles (seven regular and two 'Disciple Day' cycles) and ten *missae breves* (four include a Credo setting), as well as sixty-nine orchestral suites, twenty-three concertos, nineteen *sinfonias* and thirty-two sonatas.<sup>29</sup> Eighty-seven other composers are listed in the inventory, among them several musicians who were active as composers in the Saxon capital (Heinichen, Zelenka, Volumier, Hebenstreit, Lotti, Veracini, Hundt, Cattaneo and J. G. Graun). Moreover, copies of works by famous composers from faraway places such as

27 For an overview of these works see Fechner, *Studien zur Überlieferung*, 29–43 and 287–332.  
 28 Landmann, 'Zur Spezifik der Fasch-Handschriften', 94.  
 29 Engelke, *Johann Friedrich Fasch: sein Leben und seine Tätigkeit*, Appendix 2. Neither serenatas nor cantatas composed on the occasion of princely birthdays are specified by title and/or scoring.



Venice (Vivaldi),<sup>30</sup> Vienna (Ragazzi, Conti) and London (Handel, Pepusch) could have been sent to Zerbst from Dresden as well.

With regard to vocal music, the ‘Concert-Stube’ specifies the ‘Musicalische Kirchenandachten . . . Der sogenannte Dresdner’ (Musical Church Devotions . . . The so-called Dresden [cycle]), which was premiered at the Zerbst court chapel in 1726/27.<sup>31</sup> While the identity of its composer(s) has yet to be determined,<sup>32</sup> it is reasonable to assume that Fasch stopped in Dresden while on his way to or returning from Prague (where he worked for his previous employer, Count Morzin, for about six weeks in 1724/25) to acquire this particular cantata cycle or have it sent to Zerbst directly.<sup>33</sup> This cantata cycle, incidentally, is the only reference – albeit oblique – to contributions by J. S. Bach in the ‘Concert-Stube’. Specifically, a compact version of his lengthy cantata *Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis* (BWV 21) was identified by Peter Wollny in an extant Zerbst textbook of the *Musicalische Kirchenandachten* cycle.<sup>34</sup> He comments that Fasch could have received this cantata directly from Leipzig, or it could have found its way to Zerbst later when Bach, Kapellmeister in nearby Cöthen, was commissioned to compose a birthday cantata for Prince Johann August of Anhalt-Zerbst in 1722.<sup>35</sup> Incidentally, Fasch’s ardent request in June 1728 to exchange complete cantata cycles with ‘Capellmeistern, Cantoribus or other good composers’ (he had asked Johann Mattheson, the editor of *Der musicalische Patriot* in Hamburg, for direct assistance) seems to have fallen on deaf ears.<sup>36</sup> Of the *Jahrgänge* that were premiered at the court chapel from Advent 1728 on and are listed in the ‘Concert-Stube’, all but one (Röllig’s musical setting of Erdmann Neumeister’s *Neue Geistliche Gedichte*) were contributed by Fasch himself.<sup>37</sup>

30 On Fasch and the Italian style see *Johann Friedrich Fasch und der Italienische Stil*, ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft e. V. Zerbst, Fasch-Studien 9 (Dessau: Anhalt-Edition Dessau, 2003), especially Konstanze Musketa, ‘Werke italienischer Komponisten im Inventarverzeichnis der Zerbster ‘Concert-Stube’ von 1743’, 77–90; Michael Talbot, ‘Wenzel von Morzin as a Patron of Antonio Vivaldi’, 67–76; Karl Heller, ‘Johann Friedrich Faschs Sinfonien als Zeugnisse italienischer Stilprägung’, 129–152; and Janice Stockigt, ‘Italian Influences Observed in the Vespers Psalm Settings of Johann Friedrich Fasch’, 175–202. Watermarks in the autographs suggest that the psalm settings were probably written in Prague (c1721); see Manfred Fechner, ‘Zur Datierung von Johann Friedrich Faschs ‘Dresdner’ Vesperkompositionen und Messen-Annotation’, in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 58.

31 Reul, ‘Musical-liturgical Activities’, 67. Entries in court records hardly ever provide specific dates for payments, but the Zerbst ‘business’ year covered the period from 24 June (St John the Baptist) to 23 June the following year.

32 Peter Wollny, ‘Aufführungen Bachscher Kirchenkantaten am Zerbster Hof’, in *Bach und seine mitteldeutschen Zeitgenossen*, ed. Rainer Kaiser (Eisenach: Karl Dieter Wagner, 2001), 21, note 21. Wollny draws attention to Christian Pezold (1677–1733), who was serving as the organist at the Sophienkirche during Fasch’s Dresden stay in 1726/27.

33 Reul, ‘Musical-liturgical Activities’, 68; see also Talbot, ‘Wenzel von Morzin’, 68–69. He refers to two payments made to Fasch by the Prague count, one dated February 1725, which indicates that Fasch spent six weeks in residence, and the other a receipt dating from June 1726 that refers directly to compositions. See also Wollny, ‘Aufführungen Bachscher Kirchenkantaten am Zerbster Hof’, 203–207.

34 Wollny, ‘Aufführungen Bachscher Kirchenkantaten am Zerbster Hof’, 204–207; D-ZEO, A550.

35 Wollny, ‘Aufführungen Bachscher Kirchenkantaten am Zerbster Hof’, 205–206, and Barbara M. Reul, ‘“O vergnügte Stunden / da mein Hertzog funden seinen Lebenstag”: ein unbekannter Textdruck zu einer Geburtstagskantate J. S. Bachs für den Fürsten Johann August von Anhalt-Zerbst’, *Bach-Jahrbuch* 85 (1999), 7–17. Or perhaps Bach’s brother-in-law, who was a trumpeter at the Anhalt-Zerbst court, had been involved. See also Stephan Blaut, ‘Die 1898 von Hugo Riemann in der Leipziger Thomasschul-Bibliothek gefundenen Fasch-Ouverturen-Suiten – Verlorene Quellen, verlorene Werke?’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch als Instrumentalkomponist*, ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft e. V. Zerbst, Fasch-Studien 10, forthcoming. Blaut proved that of the ten overture-suites by Fasch that Bach had copied and Riemann located in the library of the Leipzig Thomasschule, not one but several have survived, in Dresden.

36 Fasch’s letter to Johann Mattheson, dated 16 June 1728, was printed in full in *Der Musicalische Patriot* (Hamburg, 1728), 340–342.

37 Reul, ‘Musical-liturgical Activities’, 63–64, 67–68. Röllig’s cycle was first performed at the Schloßkirche in 1741/42. See also Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 90–95. Performances of sacred cantatas by Fasch took place in a number of central German cities, including Wittenberg (1728), Coswig (no date is indicated in the *Probsteibuch* (Book of the Provost)),





But there is no doubt that the Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst was heavily involved in an exchange and loan of music scores for approximately three decades. The most heavily represented German composer in the ‘Concert-Stube’ (with regard to both the number of items listed and the genres to which he contributed) was Telemann. This comes as no surprise: Fasch had idolized Telemann’s music ever since his early days as a junior composer in Leipzig, and copies of Telemann’s compositions circulated widely in Germany.<sup>38</sup> It is therefore rather odd that his ‘Sicilian Cycle’, a cycle of cantatas from 1719–1720 composed during his tenure at Frankfurt am Main, was not listed in the ‘Concert-Stube’, even though it was performed a total of five times at the court chapel between 1722 and 1750.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, a cantata cycle by Philip Heinrich Erlebach (1657–1714), which the Hofkapelle performed only once during Fasch’s tenure, right after his arrival in 1722/23, can be found in the inventory.<sup>40</sup> Could the cycle by Telemann have been part of someone’s private musical collection or on permanent loan to the court, or both? Either scenario is possible, but it is likely that the ‘Telemann *Jahrgang*’ which the court purchased in mid-January 1722 was none other than the ‘Sicilian Cycle’.<sup>41</sup> And should Fasch or a member of his Hofkapelle (Röllig or Hoekch, perhaps) have indeed maintained personal musical collections, we lack primary source evidence to describe their contents. The absence of Telemann’s cycle indicates, in my opinion, that the Zerbst Kapellmeister may not have been as comprehensive in his ‘specification’ of works as the inventory’s contents imply at first glance.

From the hundreds of vocal and instrumental works by colleagues that Fasch did list, it is evident that he was personally acquainted with a fair number of them, including his younger colleague Röllig, who joined the Zerbst Hofkapelle in 1737, and Gottfried Heinrich Stöltzel (1690–1747), the Kapellmeister at the court of Gotha and a very close friend of Fasch. Curiously, Darmstadt’s Kapellmeister Christoph Graupner (1683–1760), Fasch’s former prefect at the St Thomas School in Leipzig, with whom he studied composition in 1713 as part of his *Gesellenreise*, is rarely mentioned in the ‘Concert-Stube’, even though the Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek owns seventy-seven, mostly instrumental, pieces by Fasch. Various scenarios come to mind that could explain such an imbalance: Fasch’s compositions were not part of a musical exchange, but sent as gifts from a grateful student to his former teacher; they could have been taken to the Darmstadt court by musicians whom Fasch and Graupner knew from their mutual time in Leipzig; or Fasch may have sent his own works in exchange for copies of music to which Graupner had access, in particular works by Telemann, many of which survive at Darmstadt.<sup>42</sup>

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Delitzsch (1735/36, cantor C. G. Fröber), Leipzig (probably after 1729 by C. G. Gerlach), Weissenfels (most likely before town cantor Lenke’s death in 1741) and Grimma (Cantor J. Ulich?). How eleven cantatas by Fasch were transmitted to the Lutheran Dreifaltigkeitskirche in Kaufbeuren near Augsburg remains unclear.

- 38 Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge*, 125. Fasch admitted in 1757 that during his Leipzig days he had successfully passed off his own orchestral suites as being by Telemann, having continually modelled (‘beständig zum Muster nahm’) his own works on the latter’s contribution to that genre. See also Ute Poetzsch, ‘Telemann-Werke in der Zerbst ‘Concert-Stube’’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst*, 71–82. Of the forty-four entries pertaining to Telemann, she was able to identify three overture-suites, one concerto, two ensemble and one set of solo sonatas as well as three cycles of cantatas.
- 39 Barbara Reul, ‘Neuerkenntnisse zu Aufführungen von Kantatenzyklen in der Anhalt-Zerbst Schloßkirche nach 1743’, in *Musikkonzepte – Konzepte der Musik*, volume 2, 265.
- 40 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1721/1722, no. 1308. It is unclear from the wording in the court records – ‘vor Anschaffung des Liebisch- und Erlebachischen Jahrgangs’ (for the purchase of the Liebisch- and Erlebach cycle) – whether this cycle also included works by the Schleiz Kapellmeister Gottfried Sigismund Liebich, and not just works by Erlebach.
- 41 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1721/1722, pag. 155, no. 1306.
- 42 Ursula Kramer, ‘Faschs Beziehungen zu Darmstadt: Die Bestände der Hessischen Landesbibliothek’, in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbst Hofkapellmeisters*, 146–160, especially 149–151. She lists J. M. Böhm, G. Grünewald, K. Knöchel, J. S. Endler and J. G. Vogler as intermediaries. It is unclear when exactly – that is, in which year – a transfer of music could have begun, but Graupner, who was in charge of providing music for *Tafelmusiken* and concerts at the palace, was



A third-party transfer of music scores and a direct request of music by Fasch are supported by entries in the Zerbst court records: they show that a steady stream of artists from far and near was welcomed at the palace.<sup>43</sup> These musicians probably premiered newly composed works by Fasch or brought fashionable music with them to play, or both. Among the many distinguished guests who entertained the reigning prince and his relatives were gambist Christian Ferdinand Abel (c1683–1737) in 1729/30 and violinist Franz Benda (1709–1786) in 1733, as well as an unidentified musician from as far away as Italy (or possibly Dresden, where many Italian musicians were active) who played the David's harp in 1743/44.<sup>44</sup>

Did Fasch's long-time employer Johann August of Anhalt-Zerbst (1677–1742) support the Kapellmeister's efforts to ensure that the contents of the 'Concert-Stube' – and consequently the music performed at the court – remained fresh and up-to-date? Indeed, the Prince regularly provided money for Fasch to buy new compositions, purchase new instruments and hire new, expert players.<sup>45</sup> I would argue that this active endorsement allowed the Kapellmeister not only consciously to counteract his own geographic isolation and that of his Hofkapelle members by way of a diverse and challenging repertoire as outlined in the 'Concert-Stube', but also to shape significantly the musical taste of his noble benefactors at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst.

Upon Prince Johann August's death in 1742 Catherine's father, Prince Christian August, and his very musical cousin Prince Johann Ludwig II (1688–1746)<sup>46</sup> continued to be generous with their support of the arts as co-rulers of the small principality. Hence when extensive celebrations were held at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst in 1745 on the occasion of the Imperial nuptials in Russia, music played an important role.

#### MUSICAL PERFORMANCES AT THE ANHALT-ZERBST COURT ON THE OCCASION OF CATHERINE'S WEDDING IN 1745

To celebrate the Imperial nuptials, the Hofkapelle performed two musical works in Zerbst in 1745: *Weichet! ihr verdickte Schatten!* (Be Gone! Ye Thickened Shadows!), a serenata by Johann Friedrich Fasch (see Figure 2); and *Heut strahlt bey dunckeln Abend-Stunden* (Today shines during dark evening hours), a cantata for bass soloist and unspecified instruments. This secular *Abendmusik* formed part of the 'Anhalt-Zerbstisches

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probably delighted to accept works by Fasch. On Telemann's works at Darmstadt see Poetzsch, 'Telemann-Werke in der Zerbster "Concert-Stube"', 76. She further suggests that Fasch may have requested works by Telemann from his Dresden contacts and could have possibly even copied them out himself during visits.

43 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1722–1744 and Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 53–56.

44 Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 59.

45 Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 47–63.

46 Sybille Heinen, 'Katalog der ehemaligen Bibliothek der Fürsten von Anhalt-Zerbst im Schloss zu Jever', in *Bibliophile Kostbarkeiten: Die Bibliothek der Fürsten von Anhalt-Zerbst im Schloss zu Jever*, Ferne Fürsten – Das Jeverland in Anhalt-Zerbster Zeit 1, ed. Antje Sander and Egbert Koolman (Oldenburg: Isensee, 2003). Johann Ludwig ruled Jever (near Oldenburg), an enclave of Anhalt-Zerbst, from 1722 to 1742. He owned scores of fifty-four unidentified German and Italian songs for voice as well as fifteen sonatas for violin and bass (basso continuo?) by Rosier, Va[?]racini and Autgarden. Also listed in the catalogue are works by Corelli, J. J. Quantz and Pepusch, as well as text booklets of cantata cycles by Fasch and Erlebach that had been performed at the Anhalt-Zerbst court chapel during Fasch's first year of tenure, 1722/23. See Michael Maul, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat-Neuerkenntnisse zur späten Fasch-Biographie anhand eines Dokumentenfundes', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch als Instrumentalkomponist*, Fasch-Studien 10, forthcoming. Kapellmeister Fasch expressed his affection for the Prince in a letter from 1755, while at the same time noting that his situation at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst had changed to his disadvantage after Johann Ludwig's death in 1746. This puts into context the three large-scale sacred vocal works dating from 1739 and 1741 which the Prince also had in his possession (no titles are given, and only the wrappers survive): they could have been gifts from a grateful Fasch.



Den der,  
 über das hohe und höchsterfreulichste  
**Vermählungs = Fest**  
 Ihro benderseits Kaiserl. Hoheiten  
 Des Durchlauchtigsten Fürstens und Herrn,  
 S E R G E R  
**Peters Soedorowiz,**  
 Groß-Fürstens und Thron-Erbens  
 des Russischen Reichs,  
 Erbens zu Norwegen, regierenden Herzogs zu Schleswig-Holstein, Stormarn,  
 und der Dithmarsen, Grafens zu Oldenburg und Delmenhorst, u. s. w.  
 wie auch  
 Der Durchlauchtigsten Fürstin und Frauen,  
 S E R A L I E N E  
**Satharina Alexiewna,**  
 vermählten  
 Groß-Fürstin des Russischen Reichs,  
 Erbin zu Norwegen, regierender Herzogin zu Schleswig-Holstein, Stormarn,  
 und der Dithmarsen, Gräfin zu Oldenburg und Delmenhorst, u. s. w.  
 Erbhoener Fürstin zu Anhalt, Herzogin zu Sachsen, Engern und Westphalen,  
 Gräfin zu Spanien, Frauen zu Zerbst, Bamburg, Jever und Kniephausen, u. s. w.  
 an dem Hochfürstlichen Anhalt-Zerbstischen Hofe  
 gnädigst angeordneten Festivität  
 führete nachstehende SERENATA  
 unterthänigst devote auf  
**Johann Friedrich Fasch,**  
 Hochfürstl. Anhalt-Zerbstischer Capellmeister.

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Zerbst, gedruckt bey Christian Kögeln, Hochfürstl. Anh. Hof- und Regierungsbuchdrucker.

Figure 2 *Weichet! ihr verdickten Schatten!*, title page of libretto. Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst, D-Zeo: A.13.e., fol. 16. Reproduced with permission



Freuden-Feuer', which included an elaborate fireworks display that followed a special exhibition called 'illumination' in the court yard.

The music for neither work is extant, but librettos for both survive at the Francisceumsbibliothek Zerbst (D-ZEo, A.3.e.). Pfeiffer states that the printed text for the wedding serenata 'gives only a pale impression of Fasch's artistic expressiveness'.<sup>47</sup> However, a closer examination of the libretto, characterized by allegorical figures that pay homage to the happy couple and their families,<sup>48</sup> as well as information presented in Zerbst court records from 1745/46, shed light on how Fasch may have approached what must have been one of his most stunning vocal works.

Let us begin with an examination of the musical forces available to Fasch, himself an accomplished violinist and keyboard player, in 1745/46 (see Figure 3).<sup>49</sup> That year the Hofkapelle consisted of a total of nineteen performing members, including the Kapellmeister.<sup>50</sup> All were expected to perform sacred cantatas as well as Lutheran *missae breves* for up to nine weekly worship services at the court chapel (including sixteen Catholic feast days!), to play or sing regularly for *Tafelmusiken* and concerts at the palace and to honour members of the princely family with special music to mark important events such as their birthdays. Specifically, Fasch had access to the violinists Höck[h] and Vent as well as the oboists Ritter and Fröde, a bassoonist named Unger and two keyboard players, court organist Röllig (who also played the viola da gamba) and 'Clavizymbalist' Heinike, organist at the nearby church of St Bartholomäi. Judging from the over thirty instruments listed in the 'Concert-Stube', several, if not all, senior members of the Hofkapelle played more than one instrument.<sup>51</sup> These musicians were assisted by three instead of the regular two 'Kapellknaben' (the two young sons of soprano soloist Kettner as well as a male youth named Zipprich); it is likely that they played string instruments.

There were four solo singers – Kettner (a soprano who also served as the court secretary), Poll (tenor), Förster (bass) and Weißpflock (alto) – supported by four unidentified 'Choralknaben' (choral scholars<sup>52</sup>) whose well-being (food, lodging and musical training?) Cantor Gattermann ensured. The sexton, Möhring, who also played the violin, received thirty florins 'Incl: des Kleides' (to include clothing), possibly to provide new uniforms for the orchestra on the occasion of the Imperial wedding celebrations. His colleague, the 'Kalkant' Müller (who filled the bellows with air when the organ needed to be played) was paid twelve groschen for serving as 'Bibliotheque-Aufw[ärter?]' (library steward?). Six court trumpeters and a timpanist also regularly supported the Hofkapelle but were not listed in the court records.<sup>53</sup>

In 1745/46 the Zerbst court had acquired a number of new instruments, probably at Fasch's request. Six new trumpets and a viola from Leipzig as well as a transverse flute from Berlin were purchased,

47 Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 54.

48 Annemarie Clostermann, 'Johann Friedrich Faschs höfische Festmusiken – eine analytische Studie anhand der Kantate "Die Gott geheiligte Freude" (1722) und der Serenata "Freudenbezeugung der vier Tageszeiten" (1723)', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Bericht über die wissenschaftliche Konferenz in Zerbst am 16. und 17. April 1988 aus Anlaß des 300. Geburtstages*, Part 1, StAI 40 (1989), 51. The serenata, Clostermann points out, belongs to the genre of *Abendmusiken*, indicating that performances often took place in the evening.

49 As noted in Fasch's autobiographical essay published in Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge*, 124 and 127.

50 Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 58.

51 The instruments specified were a pair of kettledrums, a 'clavicymbal' or keyboard, a large and a somewhat smaller violone, two violoncellos, eight violins, three violas, three transverse flutes, two bass flutes, two bassoons, two oboes, two 'Waldboen' and five 'Waldhörner'.

52 Fasch himself had been a *Kapellknabe* at the court of Weissenfels in 1700, singing soprano (and possibly playing with the orchestra) before relocating to Leipzig to attend the Thomasschule in 1701; see Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge 1757–1758*, 124.

53 An overview of the 1757 Anhalt-Zerbst Hofkapelle is provided in Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik* 3, 130. The 'violinists' Rühlmann, Nicolai, Fliedner, Thieß and Wüllicke could be identified as trumpeters in the Zerbst court records, while Wolland was the resident timpanist and Möhring served as Hof-Kirchner.

1744.

Ausgabe

Cassa huerer Geld Besoldungen

Dritter Classe

Denen zur Fürstl. Capelle gehörigen Bedienten

No.	Bedienter	1744.	No.
150	von Joh. Seb. Bach 1745. im Jahr 2. Sup. Diacono 38. May.	155. a	2
		156.	
150	von Bach 1745. im Jahr 2. Sup. Diacono 38. May.	157. a	3
		158.	
100	von Joh. 1745. im Jahr 2. Sup. Diacono Schramburger	159.	1
200	ff. Capell. Meisters Singsch.	160.	1
200	Violinst. Singsch.	161.	
207	Discantist. Singsch. inc. d. J. 1744.	162.	
	Secretarwerk		
160	Tenorist Toll.	163.	
150	Organist Dilling	164.	
144	Bassist Singsch.	165.	
130	Alteist. Singsch.	166.	
150	Flautist. Singsch.	167.	
120	Violoncellist Singsch.	168.	
120	Violoncellist Singsch.	169.	
20	Clarinettist Singsch.	170.	
172	Cantor Galtmann	171.	
170	Sup. Musiciant Perle	172.	
99	Sup. Musiciant Singsch. inc. d. J. 1744.	173.	189
14	Quart. Altk. 1745. im Capell. Singsch. Singsch.	174.	19
18	von Bach. d. Joh. Capell. Singsch. Singsch.	175-176	16
57	von Bach. 1746. im Capell. Singsch. Singsch. inc. d. J. 1744.	177.	16
	und Bibliothec. amphy.		72
8	von Bach. 1746. im Capell. Singsch. Singsch.	178.	76
			17
2676	Latus.		

Figure 3 Overview of ‘those servants who belong to the ducal Chapel’ (denen zur Fürstl. Capelle gehörigen Bedienten). Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau, Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 104. Reproduced with permission





complementing the six new violins and new bassoon that had been bought the year before.<sup>54</sup> In addition, the Kapellmeister received nineteen florins for shipping and handling costs.<sup>55</sup> This implies that he may have sent for new music to be performed on the occasion of the festivities, possibly drawing upon his contacts in Dresden or elsewhere.

A libretto pertaining to Röllig's serenata *Auf! Anhalt-Zerbst, berühmter Fürsten-Sitz!* (Rise! Anhalt-Zerbst, Famous Princely Residence!), also composed on the occasion of Catherine's nuptials in 1745, provides clues as to which of the newly purchased instruments Fasch may have employed in his musical contributions to the historical event.<sup>56</sup> Röllig's final chorus 'Wir jauchzen für guten und fröhlichem Muthe' (We cheer for good and happy courage) includes the verse 'Das Donnern der Pauken, der Schall der Trompeten, Das Rauschen der Saiten, das Lispeln der Flöten, Der Jubel der Stimmen' (The thundering of kettledrums, the sounding of trumpets, the whirring of strings, the whispering of flutes, the rejoicing of voices). This onomatopoeic description denotes the musical forces Röllig might have been able to draw upon, and Kapellmeister Fasch as his superior perhaps attempted to surpass.

Regarding other musicians hired on the occasion of the ducal wedding, entries in the Zerbst court records indicate that the court had paid the violinist Heil thirty florins, almost a quarter of the annual salary of a court musician. Heil had evidently performed with the orchestra himself and hired extra players, the so-called 'Capell Adjuvanten', whom he was expected to pay from the funds received.<sup>57</sup> Since it was customary to record at least the place of residence for (and occasionally the last names of) guest artists who received payments from the Anhalt-Zerbst court, these musicians were most probably locals.<sup>58</sup>

What would Fasch's wedding serenata have sounded like? Without access to an actual score or supporting anecdotal evidence, it is difficult to assess how he would have approached this wedding serenata, possibly the most significant commission he ever received as the court Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst. I would argue that in 1745 Fasch probably drew upon his vast experience as a composer of occasional music and the large number of festive sacred cantatas and masses (written by himself and others) the Hofkapelle regularly performed at the court chapel. Of the many serenatas Fasch composed during his tenure, only two have survived.<sup>59</sup> Since one dates from his first year (*Freuden-Bezeugung der Vier Tages-Zeiten* (Declaration of Joy of the Four Times of the Day), 1723), and the other was written in the penultimate year of his tenure in Zerbst (*Beglückter Tag* (Joyous Day), 1757), neither is suitable to draw significant conclusions from regarding Fasch's compositional approach to incidental music in 1745. An examination of the vocal music that was performed during the 1740s, specifically those of Fasch's compositions that had German texts, is more profitable.<sup>60</sup> In 1745/46 the Hofkapelle repeated Fasch's double cantata cycle *Evangelische Kirchenandachten*

54 See the respective entries in Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 298; the six violins would have provided all string players (Fasch, Hoeck, Vent and the three *Kapellknaben*) with new instruments; violas and cellos are not specified. See also Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 58–60. Moreover, new covers had been put on the kettledrums, and older instruments were being repaired: the organist Heinicke had modernized ('einer Erneuerung unterzogen') their 'Konzertflügel' instruments, the keyboards used for performances.

55 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 298, no. 28.2892.&3.

56 Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 54 and 165, note 181. The music for this work has not survived, but a copy of the text booklet found its way to the Imperial Court in Russia. Pfeiffer draws upon information presented by B. von Bilbassoff, *Geschichte Katharina II* (Berlin: Rade, 1897), 6. I located another copy of the libretto in D-LHASA, DE, Facharchiv Zerbst Fach 103 N. 21a. Compared to the 'Russian' copy, the Dessau libretto lacks the date, but Röllig's Christian names (Johann George) are given in full. Thus the Dessau copy may have served as the model for the 1746 'Russian' version.

57 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 297, no. 28.2779, and Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 60.

58 Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 47–63.

59 For an overview of serenata texts set to music by Fasch between 1722 and 1758 see Barbara M. Reul, 'Performances of Sacred Birthday Cantatas by J. F. Fasch (1688–1758) at the Court of Anhalt-Zerbst', *Lumen* 22 (2003), 27–46.

60 Cantatas from Fasch's 1741/42 cycle *Das Lob Gottes in der Gemeinde* (The Praising of God in the Congregation) have





(Lutheran Church Devotions), premiered in 1732/33; two cantatas survive in the archive of the Evangelische Dreifaltigkeitskirche Kaufbeuren.<sup>61</sup> The most frequently repeated cantata cycle scheduled during the 1740s was Fasch's setting of *Das in Bitte, Gebeth, Fürbitte, und Dancksagung bestehende Opfer* (The Sacrifice Consisting of a Request, Prayer, Supplication and Gratitude), first performed in 1735/36.<sup>62</sup> A total of thirty-six cantatas from this particular collection are now housed at the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek – Preußischer Kulturbesitz mit Mendelssohn-Archiv in Berlin.<sup>63</sup> These works share two important features with the Kaufbeuren cantatas: first, Fasch frequently involved two, if not four, singers in his recitatives,<sup>64</sup> and, second, he preferred to set these movements as *accompagnatos*.<sup>65</sup>

The overall structure of Fasch's wedding serenata *Weichet! ihr verdickten Schatten!* (see Table 1) indicates that there are indeed four recitatives in which more than one allegorical character participates. In these *accompagnatos* Fasch would have employed a minimum scoring of strings and basso continuo to support his singers, the four vocal soloists (SATB) and the four choral scholars (SATB?; see Figure 1). But who sang which solo part and who participated in which chorus?<sup>66</sup> The four allegorical figures – 'Das Altherthum' (Antiquity), 'Die neuere Zeit' (Modern Times), 'Die Liebe' (Love) and 'Das Glücke' (Happiness) – had most certainly been conceived with the four senior singers in mind. They could also have formed any of three choruses mentioned specifically in the libretto. This would have saved the court money, since additional singers would have had to be paid. That this was done is substantiated by the fact that the Zerst court did not pay guest singers on the occasion of the wedding in 1745/46 – unless only unpaid singers participated in the performance.

In the serenata's choral sections Fasch could have used a standard four-part (SATB) texture or provided variety by splitting his singers up. 'Antiquity' and 'Modern Times', for example, would have been excellent choices to participate in the 'Chor der Jahre und Tage', (Chorus of the Years and Days), while 'Love' and 'Happiness' could have sung in either the 'Chor derer Amouretten' (Chorus of the Little Cupids) or the 'Chor derer Glückseligkeiten' (Chorus of the Enraptured), or participated in both. Since two vocal parts seem too few to constitute a chorus, the four junior singers certainly could have joined the soloists and may even have constituted one of the choruses themselves.

It seems logical that all singers together would have performed an important refrain that functioned like a motto in Fasch's serenata (see Table 1): 'Es leebe zu des Landes Seegen / DER GROSSFÜRST und die GROSS-FÜRSTIN! / Weil einer grossen KAYSERIN / Und ANHALTS FÜRSTEN dran gelegen'<sup>67</sup> (Long live the Grand

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not been transmitted; see Gille, *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758), Kirchenkantaten in Jahrgängen*, StAI 20 (1989), 4–17.

61 Gille, *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Kirchenkantaten in Jahrgängen*, StAI 19 (1989), 68.

62 The congregation enjoyed this particular collection of cantatas in 1738, 1741, 1743, 1746, 1750 and 1752; see Reul, 'Musikalisch-liturgische Aktivitäten', 64. A booklet containing the printed texts of these cantatas from 1735/36 can be found at the Anhaltische Landesbücherei Dessau, call number BB 25509. I would like to thank Bert Siegmund, Michaelstein, for drawing my attention to this hitherto unknown primary source.

63 Barbara M. Reul, 'The Sacred Cantatas of Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758)' (PhD dissertation, University of Victoria, British Columbia, 1996), 117–154.

64 Barbara M. Reul, 'Motivic Interplay: Fasch and the Italian Style', in *Nationalstile und Europäisches Denken in der Musik von Fasch und seinen Zeitgenossen*, Fasch-Studien 5, ed. International Fasch-Gesellschaft e. V. (Dessau: Anhaltische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1997), 40–54, and 'Unification Procedures in Selected Sacred Cantatas by J. F. Fasch', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und der italienische Stil*, 203–224.

65 Gille, *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Kirchenkantaten in Jahrgängen*, Part 1, 68.

66 Since performances of operas (or theatrical productions for that matter) at the court of Zerst were rare, it is difficult to determine whether the singers would have worn special costumes. Only one opera by Fasch, *Berenice*, a remake of his *Lucius Verus* from 1711, was ever performed at Zerst, in 1739. In total, Fasch composed four operas between 1711 and 1715, but the music to these works is lost. See Gottfried Kuntzel, 'Fasch, Johann Friedrich. Opera', *Grove Music Online* (accessed 4 May 2006).

67 Emphasis in original.



**Table 1** Design of *Weichet! ihr verdickten Schatten!* by J. F. Fasch (1688–1758), premiered on the occasion of Catherine the Great's nuptials at the Anhalt-Zerbst palace in 1745 (Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst, D-ZEO, A.13.e., fol. 16)

'Reciting Individuals': Allegorical Characters

1. Das Althertum (Antiquity)
2. Die neuere Zeit (Modern Times)
3. Die Liebe und (Love and)
4. Das Glücke (Joy)
5. Chöre der Jahre und Tage, derer Amouretten und derer Glückseligkeiten  
(Chorus of the years and days; [Chorus] of the little cupids; [Chorus] of the enraptured)

Structure	Title of piece	Performed by
Aria da capo	'Weichet Ihr verdickten Schatten'	Antiquity
Recitative	'Die schon vorlängst entwichnen Jahre'	Antiquity
Chorus	'Von deinem Ruhm, der uns erfreut'	Chorus of the Years and Days
Recitative	'Die Allmacht hieß'	Modern Times
Aria da capo	'Die Ehrfurcht sieht'	Modern Times
Recitative	'Ascanien fieng an'	Antiquity
Chorus	'Seht Anhalt-Zerbst'	Chorus of the Years and Days
Recitative	'Hier sieht man den Seegen'	Modern Times
Accompagnato?	'Die Anverwandtschaft'	Antiquity, Modern Times, Love
Chorus	'Was deiner Flammen'	Chorus of the Little Cupids
Accompagnato?	'Verdienst und Schönheit'	Love, Modern Times, Joy
Chorus	'Ein solch glückseeliges Vermählen'	Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured
Recitative	'Mein Seegen'	Joy
Aria	'Ihr alte Monarchien'	Modern Times
Accompagnato?	'Wer rühmet nicht'	Joy, Antiquity, Love
Aria	'Mein Wachstum'	Joy
Accompagnato?	'Hat vohrmals die verstrichnen Zeiten'	Antiquity, Modern Times, Love, Joy
Aria da capo	'Hymnens Kertzen'	Joy
Recitative	'Auf! Anhalt'	Joy
Chorus	'Es lebe zu des Landes Seegen' [refrain]	Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured
Recitative	'Bey der Durchlauchtigsten'	Modern Times
Chorus	'Es lebe zu des Landes Seegen' [refrain]	Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured
Recitative	'Die edelste getreu'ste Bruder-Liebe'	Joy
Chorus	'Es lebe zu des Landes Seegen' [refrain]	Choruses of the Years and Days
Recitative	'Auch die verwittwete Durchlauchtigste Hertzogin'	Love
Chorus	'Es lebe zu des Landes Seegen' [refrain]	Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured
Recitative	'Hieraus entsteht bey denen Unterthanen'	Modern Times

Table 1 *continued*

Structure	Title of piece	Performed by
Chorus	‘Es lebe zu des Landes Seegen’ [refrain]	Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured
Recitative	‘Durch dieses Festes güldnen Strahl’	Love
Chorus	‘Es lebe zu des Landes Seegen’ [refrain]	Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured
Recitative	‘Durchlauchtigste!’	Joy
Final Chorus	‘Ja, ja! Von den Saphirnen Höhen’	[Choruses of the Years and Days, the Little Cupids and the Enraptured]

Duke and Grand Duchess / who thus bless their country / because it means much to a great Empress / and Anhalt’s Princes). Referring in the libretto to the individuals honoured by name or addressing them directly was a common feature of eighteenth-century congratulatory texts.<sup>68</sup> It emphasized the high, if not saint-like, rank that members of a reigning family held in the eyes of their subjects.<sup>69</sup> In *Weichet! ihr verdickten Schatten!* the character ‘Antiquity’ begins by announcing that a new era of keeping time has begun, followed by ‘Modern Times’, who proudly traces the impressive lineages of Catherine and Peter. ‘Love’ and ‘Joy’ then continue to praise specific members of the noble families, paying particular attention to Empress Elisabeth of Russia and, of course, the happy couple.

New information has come to light regarding the identity of the poet who wrote the text for Fasch’s wedding music from 1745.<sup>70</sup> In a letter dated 20 June 1752 Johann Jacob Ulich, who served as sexton of the Church of St Bartholomäi from 1738 to 1758, requested payment for several ‘poetische Arbeiten’.<sup>71</sup> These included ‘der Text in zween Bogen zu der Serenade, welche 1745 bey der hohen Feier des höchstglücklichen Vermählungs Festes beyder kaiserlichen Hoheiten in Rußland allhier aufgeführt worden’ (the text of the serenata on two sheets which was performed here in 1745 on the occasion of the solemn celebration of the most fortunate wedding of both Imperial Highnesses of Russia). One wonders why the court commissioned Ulich rather than Christian Gotthelf Jacobi (1690–1750), a blind organist from Magdeburg, to write this particular libretto.<sup>72</sup> As the resident (freelance) poet for the court of Anhalt-Zerbst from 1731 to 1750, Jacobi

68 See, for example, two such librettos set to music by J. S. Bach, BWV173a (‘Durchlauchster Leopold’), and BWV134 (*Die Zeit, die Tag und Jahre macht*).

69 Although the members of the ruling family at Anhalt-Zerbst were not royal, the notion of the divinity of kings might still have applied, at least prior to Prince Friedrich August’s coming to power in 1752.

70 Barbara M. Reul, ‘Unbekannte Dokumente zu J. F. Fasch und seiner Hofkapelle’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch als Instrumentalkomponist*, Fasch-Studien 10, forthcoming.

71 Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 54 and 164, note 153. The document referred to by Pfeiffer as ‘Landesarchiv Magdeburg Außenstelle Oranienbaum, Sign. 123–87’ is in fact D-LHASA, DE, Kammer ZE, no. 8457, fol. 41. I would like to thank Frau Anke Boeck, Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau, for providing me with this information. Moreover, correspondence between Ulich and the Zerbst ‘Musico’ Johann Andreas Friedrich Vent from 1746 is also extant; see Konsistorium-Zerbst-IXa, Nr. 273, fol. 1–2.

72 See the respective entries in Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1731/32–1750/51. Jacobi was born in Thuringia; see <[www.thueringer-komponisten.de](http://www.thueringer-komponisten.de)>, ‘Thüringer Komponisten alphabetisch, Jacobi, Chr. G.’. He seems to have trained with Johann Nicolaus Bach (1669–1753), J. S. Bach’s cousin and organist at the Jena city church, and then made his living as a travelling organ virtuoso, settling in Magdeburg. When exactly Jacobi settled permanently in Magdeburg could not be ascertained, but he may have known Johann Heinrich Rolle (1716–1785), composer and organist at the Magdeburg Cathedral. See also <[www.lutecorner.ch/jacobi.pdf](http://www.lutecorner.ch/jacobi.pdf)>.



had also provided 'die an beyden hohen Geburths-Tagen Serenissimi verfertigen Texte für Musik' (both texts for music prepared on the occasion of the solemn birthdays of Serenissimi [the Prince and the Princess]) in 1745 and 1746.<sup>73</sup> Ulich, in contrast, seems to have submitted a sample of his poetic gifts to the court only once before, in 1738.<sup>74</sup> At least Ulich must have been an accomplished singer: from Christmas 1754 to June 1756 he served as the bass singer with the Hofkapelle.<sup>75</sup> But what could have prompted the poet to request payment for a libretto many years after the actual event? Since Ulich listed several other poetic texts in his letter from June 1752,<sup>76</sup> it is safe to assume that he was interested first and foremost in being paid for his services, especially because an earlier request in 1751 seems to have fallen on deaf ears.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, referring back in 1752 to his activities in 1745 could have been a clever ploy on Ulich's part, to draw attention to his earlier achievements and to underscore his superior skills as a poet.<sup>78</sup>

73 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 269. Jacobi received six florins on 13 July 1745 (no. 3.2471) and another six on 27 May 1746 (no. 48.2472). Since princely birthdays were celebrated in Zerbst during the months of August (Catherine's brother Friedrich August), October (mother Johanna Elisabeth) and November (father Christian August), the payment in July may have been made upon early submission from Jacobi. It remains unclear who supplied the texts for the other two *Geburtstagsmusiken*. The date in May 1746 refers unequivocally to the text for a musical work performed on the occasion of Catherine's birthday on 2 May; see Table 3 in the main body of the text.

74 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1737/38, pag. 228, no. 36.1844. Ulich was paid eighteen florins and twenty-two groschen for his work; this seems high compared to his customary honorarium of between four and eight florins. The scribe also referred to 'darauff verwandter Unkosten' (expenses related to this), implying that Ulich's poetic homage may have been unusually long and the printing of the latter (quality of paper, variety of fonts and so forth) rather costly. On the other hand, that year the court may just have been a little more generous than usual: 'ein musico von Dreßden so sich auf der Schloßorgel hören lassen' (a musician from Dresden who had himself been heard on the palace's organ; no. 9.1837) as well as a singer from Gotha (no. 51.1845) were each paid twelve florins for their services.

75 Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 61, and Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1754/55, pag. 113, no. 167.168.vid.159, as well as 1755/56, pag. 111, '24 [Reichsthaler] dem Cust. Ulich, als Bassist' (24 [florins paid to] the sexton Ulich, as bass [soloist]); no. 152.

76 Reul, 'Unbekannte Dokumente zu J. F. Fasch und seiner Hofkapelle', in Fasch-Studien 10. The texts pertaining to musical works included two serenatas on the occasion of Prince Friedrich August's birthday in 1750 and 1751, a serenata for Princess Johanna Elisabeth's birthday in 1751 and the libretto for a St Luke passion (premiered in 1751; see Nigel Springthorpe, 'The Zerbst Passion Tradition', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst*, 104, Table 2). Neither the libretto nor the music has survived for any of these works. Moreover, Ulich had also transformed a single cantata cycle by Fasch performed in 1751/52 at the court chapel into a double cycle, a procedure he called 'Theilung' (division).

77 At the beginning of the letter Ulich pointed out that he had already approached Zerbst Hofmarschall Burckersroda about this issue the previous year (1751), implying that he had not been paid an honorarium. However, in the last paragraph of his letter, Ulich expressed his gratitude for having received a total of fifteen florins for writing the libretto for a (lost) *Tafelmusik* that was performed when Prince Friedrich August returned from a trip to Switzerland, and preparing a cantata as well as a serenata libretto on the occasion of the Prince's birthday in 1751. Librettos survive in D-ZEo, A.11.c., fol. 14 and 23: a cantata, *Die auf den Herren harren* (They who Endure in the Lord), and a serenata, *Die reiche Erndte der Freude* (The Rich Harvest of Joy). It is unclear why Ulich asked to be paid again for the latter serenata.

78 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1752/53, pag. 256, no. 6.2376 (ten florins) and pag. 287 ('Auf die fürstliche Capelle': Regarding the ducal orchestra), no. 32.2755 (twenty florins). Ulich seems to have provided all texts for special musical occasions in 1752/53; see also Barbara M. Reul, 'Unification Procedures in Selected Sacred Cantatas by J. F. Fasch', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und der italienische Stil*, 221–222, note 49. Ulich continued in his capacity as resident court poet until 1761/62, when he was promoted to 'Stiftskommissar und Bibliothekar' (Commissary and Librarian of the [St Bartholomäi] Foundation); see Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1753/54–1761/62, 'Ausgaben Insgemein' (General Expenses). Ulich died on 10 January 1767 in Zerbst at the age of fifty-eight; see *Evangelisches Pfarramt St. Bartholomäi zu Zerbst*, Death Register of the Zerbst Palace, pag. 345.



I would also argue that Ulisch may have felt compelled to address the issue of additional funds because of the wedding serenata's unusual length. With its thirty-two arias, recitatives and choruses, this congratulatory text from 1745 is the longest of all surviving eighteenth-century Zerbst serenata librettos.<sup>79</sup> In comparison, the birthday music composed by Fasch in 1723 for Prince Johann August (*Freuden-Bezeugung der Vier Tages-Zeiten* (Declaration of Joy of the Four Times of the Day)) contained only fifteen movements,<sup>80</sup> while Röllig's *dramma per musica* entitled *Auf! Anhalt-Zerbst, berühmter Fürsten-Sitz!* (Rise! Anhalt-Zerbst, Famous Princely Residence!) from 1745 consisted of twelve movements.<sup>81</sup> Seven years later, in 1753, when Catherine's brother Friedrich August wed Caroline Wilhelmine von Hessen-Kassel, the Hofkapelle premiered two considerably shorter serenatas: Fasch's Italian drama *Sacro Dio* (Holy Day) had seven movements and Röllig's setting, entitled *Die Glückfälligkeit eines Landes* (The Good Fortune of a Land), twelve.<sup>82</sup> Finally, *Beglückter Tag*, the serenata Fasch composed during the penultimate year of his tenure in 1757 on the occasion of Catherine's birthday, was only seven movements long.<sup>83</sup> In view of the steadily decreasing number of sections in occasional pieces, it appears that the court had imposed (or perhaps threatened to impose) a time limit on all compositions involving the Hofkapelle in the early 1750s.

No restrictions on length seem to have been in effect in 1745. Ulisch began the libretto for Catherine's wedding serenata *Weichet! ihr verdickten Schatten!* with a da capo aria (see Table 1). Judging from extant serenata texts by the resident court poet Jacobi, this seems to have been the custom at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst.<sup>84</sup> The orchestra may have preceded the aria with instrumental music, probably a newly composed festive overture or sinfonia to emphasize the significance of this event.<sup>85</sup> In other years and on less important occasions, however, Fasch could have drawn upon some of his earlier musical contributions for the opening of a serenata.<sup>86</sup>

Finally, let us address the question of where the Hofkapelle could have premiered *Weichet! ihr verdickten Schatten!*<sup>87</sup> Since an indoor performance would have ensured ideal conditions for the players and singers, the 'Große Saal' (the biggest indoor room in the palace, extending over two floors in height) is the most likely venue; Dirk Hermann notes that it was used to host birthdays and weddings as well as staged theatrical productions.<sup>88</sup> Erich Hänze also draws attention to the 'Gelber Saal' and the 'Grüner Saal', as well as the luxurious 'Zedernzimmer' (Cedar Room) as possible performance venues.<sup>89</sup>

79 Texts are contained in D-ZEo, A.11.m., A.11.k., A.12.c., A.12.k.

80 Eitelfriedrich Thom, 'Einige Bemerkungen zum Vokalschaffen von Johann Friedrich Fasch am Beispiel der Serenata von 1723 "Freudenbezeugung der Vier Tages-Zeiten"', *StAI* 24, 44–51, and Clostermann, 'Johann Friedrich Faschs höfische Festmusiken', *StAI* 40, 50–53.

81 Recitatives and da capo arias alternated, and only twice did all 'persons' – including 'Die Botschafft' (here, Messenger), 'Die Verwunderung' (Wonderment), 'Die Liebe' (Love) and 'Die Tugend' (Virtue) – perform together: in the quartet 'Geh zum Altar' (Proceed to the Altar) and in the final chorus.

82 D-ZEo, A.11.c., fol. 42 (Fasch), fol. 43 (Röllig).

83 Elena Sawtschenko, 'Zwei bisher unbekannte Werke von Johann Friedrich Fasch', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und der italienische Stil*, 232–242.

84 Some of the serenata texts begin with a recitative; see Barbara M. Reul, 'Musikalische Aufführungen anläßlicher Geburtstage am Anhalt-Zerbster Hof während der Amtszeit Johann Friedrich Faschs (1722–1758)', in *Bach und seine mitteleuropäischen Zeitgenossen*, Schriften zur mitteleuropäischen Musikgeschichte 4, ed. Rainer Kaiser (Eisenach: Karl Dieter Wagner, 2001), especially 103–111.

85 Fasch's colleague and successor Röllig composed a full three-movement symphony to precede at least two of his celebratory cantata works. I would like to thank Nigel Springthorpe for providing me with this information.

86 In the 'Concert-Stube' see the overview of overture-suites and *Symphonien* by Fasch provided on fos 131–135 and 148–149, respectively.

87 The issue concerning the performance date of this serenata will be addressed separately, in connection with the 'illumination' and the fireworks display.

88 Dirk Herrmann, *Schloss Zerbst in Anhalt: Geschichte und Beschreibung einer vernichteten Residenz*, second edition (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2005), 121. See also Herrmann's 'Das Zerbster Residenzschloss und das Fürstentum Anhalt-Zerbst im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert', in *Der Hof, die Stadt, das Land*, Ferne Fürsten – Das Jeverland in



A large-scale serenata by Kapellmeister Fasch was only one of many cultural activities that the court had organized as part of the imperial wedding festivities in 1745. The main event consisted of a spectacular 'illumination' in the courtyard, followed by a fantastic all-night fireworks display, intended to impress guests and visitors alike.

## JOHANN HOXA'S 'KURTZE BESCHREIBUNG' (SHORT DESCRIPTION) OF THE ZERBST WEDDING CELEBRATIONS IN 1745

Between 1745 and 1753 Johann Hoxa, the 'wohlverdienter Rektor' (honourable headmaster) at the St Bartholomäi School,<sup>90</sup> was in charge of all 'Schriften, Sinnbilder und Ueberschriften bey Freuden- und Trauer-Begebenheiten' (writings, symbols and headings on the occasion of joyful and sorrowful events) at the Zerbst court.<sup>91</sup> Samuel Lentz's chronicle of the house of Anhalt from 1757 contains his 'Kurtze Beschreibung' (Short Description; see Figure 4) of festivities organized by the Zerbst court on the occasion of the wedding of Catherine and Peter in 1745.<sup>92</sup> A hitherto unknown, slightly differing, version of his 'Kurtze Beschreibung' has been preserved at the Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst.<sup>93</sup> In this undated copy Hoxa is not identified as the author,<sup>94</sup> but a specific reference on the title page highlights a 'Tabelle auf welcher alle Figuren, Inscriptionen und Devisen angezeigt werden' (Table in which all figures, inscriptions and devices [included in the illumination] are shown). Moreover, ten additional pages preface the 'Erster Theil des Anhalt-Zerbstischen Freuden-Feuers'. The 'Kurtze Beschreibung' that Lentz included in his 1757 chronicle could have been a 'second edition' of this original Zerbst source, possibly revised by Hoxa himself. The latter had based his survey on an important visual account prepared by Zerbst court architect Johann Christoph

Anhalt-Zerbster Zeit 2, ed. Antje Sander (Oldenburg: Isensee, 2004), 203–229, as well as Herrmann's website <[www.schloss-zerbst.de](http://www.schloss-zerbst.de)>.

89 Erich Hänze, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch Wirkungsstätten in der fürstlichen Residenz Anhalt-Zerbst', in *Fasch und Zerbst – Teil II: Musikräume in der fürstlichen Residenz Anhalt-Zerbst*, Fasch-Studien 3, ed. Guido Bimberg and Rüdiger Pfeiffer (Zerbst no publication 1993), 8–9. See also Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 62.

90 Biographical information on Hoxa is scarce, so it remains unclear when he took over as the headmaster of St Bartholomäi, possibly after Johann Heinrich Denzer's death in 1744. Hoxa died in Zerbst in 1768 at the age of sixty-three and must therefore have been born around 6 May 1705; see *Evangelisches Pfarramt St. Bartholomäi zu Zerbst*, Death Register of the St Bartholomäi Church, no pag.: 'Am 29ten Maimonats frühe halb 5. Uhr anno 1768 . . . ist Herr Johann Hoxa, wohlverdienter Rektor hierselbst, gestorben und den 31ten Maimonats beygesetzt worden. Seines Alters 63. Jahr, 3. Wochen und 2. Tage.' (On the 29th day of May in the year 1768 Herr Johann Hoxa, our honourable headmaster, died at half past four in the morning and was buried on the thirty-first day of May. He was sixty-three years, three weeks and two days old.). The entry found in the Death Register of the Zerbst Palace, pag. 357, differs slightly in that the time of death is given as half past five in the afternoon, and the scribe mistakenly entered 13 May rather than the correct 31 May as the day of the burial. I would like to thank Frau Wiegelmann, Evangelisches Pfarramt St Bartholomäi zu Zerbst, for providing me with this information.

91 See also D-LHASA, DE, Kammer ZE, no. 2767, fol. 46–49, dated 12 December 1753. Among these were writings related to birthdays of the 'großmächtige Rußische Kayserin' (great and powerful Russian Empress) Elisabeth celebrated in 1754 and 1755, for which Hoxa received ten florins; see Kammer ZE no. 2767, fol. 19.

92 Lentz, *Historisch-Genealogische Fürststellung des Hochfürstlichen Hauses Anhalt, 1757*, 595(a)–603.

93 D-ZEO: A.13.e., fol. 19ff. See also Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 297, no. 28.2776. Zerbst printer Christian Lägeln received almost 174 florins from the court for 'allerhand Schriften und Sachen von dieser Begebenheit' (assorted writings and matters related to this event [the Imperial nuptials]); the 'Kurtze Beschreibung' could have been one of them.

94 An examination of other extant Zerbst librettos indicates that it was common in the eighteenth century either cleverly to 'hide' the name of the author (see Hans-Joachim Schulze, 'Johann Sebastian Bach und Zerbst 1722: Randnotizen zu einer verlorenen Gastmusik', *Bach-Jahrbuch* 90 (2004), 209–213) or to leave the information out altogether (see Reul, 'O vergnügte Stunden', 7–17).



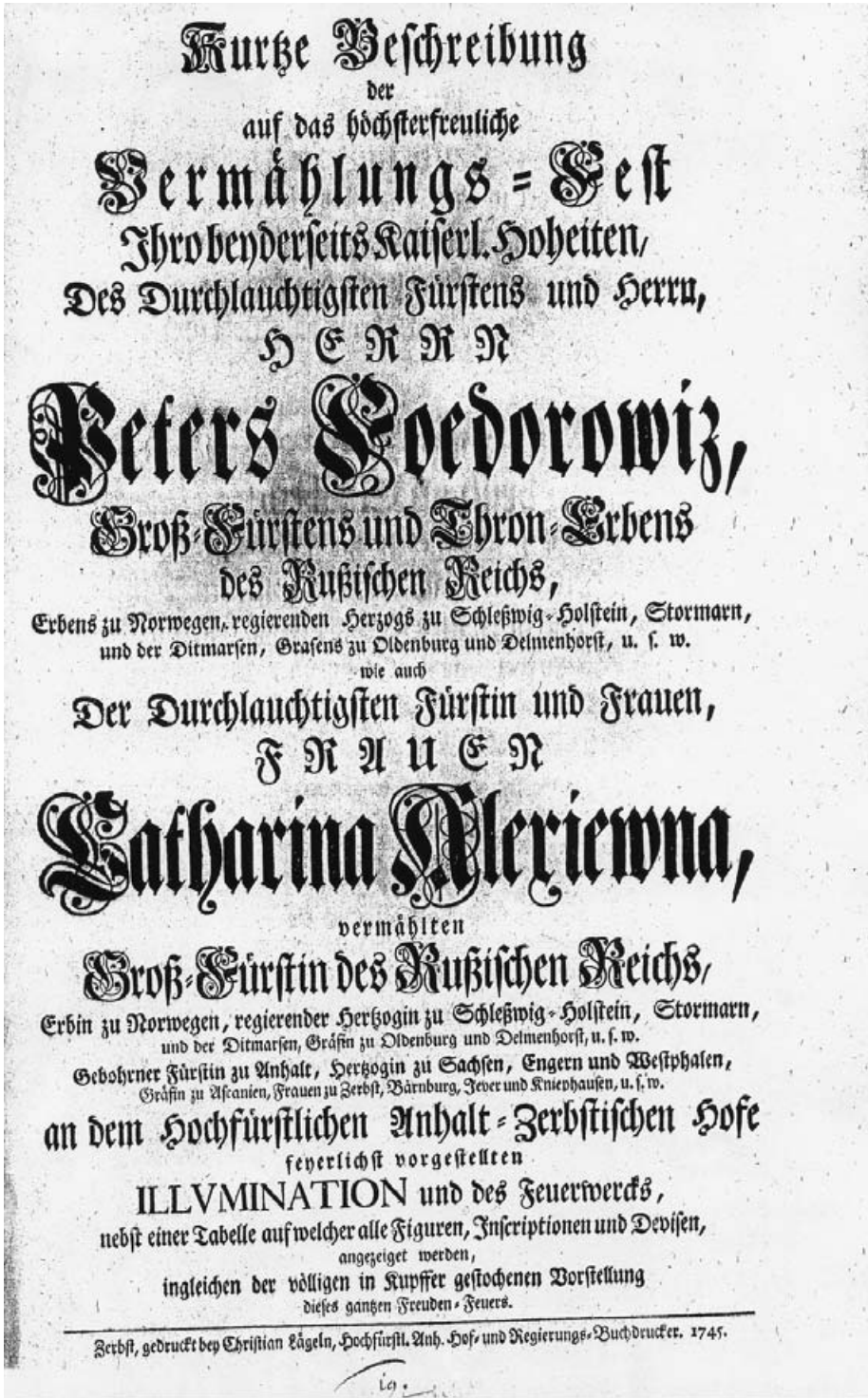


Figure 4 Title page of 'Kurtze Beschreibung', anonymous copy. Francisceumsbibliothek Zerbst, D-ZEO: A.13.e., fol. 19. Reproduced with permission



**Table 2a** Structure of Part 1 of Johann Hoxa's 'Kurtze Beschreibung' (Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst, D-ZeO, A.13.e, fol. 19ff: original German, including numbering)

Dieser Theil stellet uns das wichtigste und vornehmste von allen Figuren, Inscriptionen, Bildern und Sinnbildern, der einmahl beliebten, und in der Tabelle angezeigten Ordnung nach, in der Kürtze dar. Die gantze Vorstellung besteht überhaupt

- I. In der Haupt=ILLUMINATION.
  - II. In dem Anhaltischen und
  - III. In dem Holsteinischen Ehren= und Triumph=Bogen. Wie auch
  - IV. In denen besonders verfertigten lateinischen Inscriptionen.
- Das 1. Stück von der Haupt-Illumination. Die Haupt=Illumination ist eine Abbildung der hohen Vermählung beyderseits Rußisch=Kaysersl. Hoheiten durch gantze Bilder und Sinnbilder, so alle aufs herrlichste illuminiret.

I. TEMPLVM CONCORDIAE	Tempel der Eintracht	
[Hochfürstlicher Garten: Elisabeth (Mitte), Wasser=Canal, Erdkugel, Sonne, 4 Elemente]	[Buchstabe E]	Gott ist ein Wunder=Gott in allen seinen Wegen, An seiner Vorsicht ist ja alles hier gelegen.
II. PETRVS FEODOROVITZ	Peter Feodorowitz	Der Großfürst blüthe stehis im höchsten wohlhergehen, So wird so Cron als Reich beständig
[Grosses Bild, rechts [Sinnbilder im Bogen:]]	[Buchstabe P] feste stehen.	
III. VIRTUS RADIANs	Strahlende Tugend	Der Russen prächtige Kayser=Crone Bekommet er von mir zum Lohne.
IV. AQVILA SOLEM SPECTANS	[Ein] nach der Sonne fliegenden Adler	Hoher Ursprung kann erheben, Tugend muß die Kräfte geben
A. TROPAEVM IMPERIALE	Kaysertliches Ornament	[s. Anhang: 40 Fuß Rhein Maass]
V. ADAMAS FVLGENS	Funckelnder De[ja]mant	Des großen Demants Schein, Muß großer Zierrath sein.
VI. BVCEPHALVS ALEXANDRO DVCTORE	Den Bucephalum, welchen niemand, als ein Alexander M. zu führen vermögend	Klugheit nur und Tapferkeit, Zwinget mich zu aller Zeit.
B. TROPAEM IMPERIALE	[B. = Pferd Alexanders] Eine mit Kriegs= und Sieges=Zeichen ausgeschmückte Pyramide	[s. Anhang: 40 Fuß Rhein Maass]
VII. SALAMANDRA IN IGNE	[Ein] Salamander im Feuer auf der Spitze des Berges	Die wahre Liebe muß dem Leben, Wie mir das Feuer, Nahrung geben.
VIII. FORTVNA CONSTANS	Ein Bild des beständigen Glückes	Tugend ist mein stetes Licht; Ohne Tugend bleib ich nicht.

Table 2a *continued*

IX.	CUPIDO CVM CORNV COPIAE	Ein fliegender Cupido . . . die Abschilderung der wahren Liebe	Alles, was die Liebe hat, Theilt sie mit, hilfft in der That.
X.	CLIO GESTA SCRIPTIS MANDAT	Clio, eine Geschichtsschreiberin	Die Geschichte dieser Zeiten, Wir die Nachwelt stets ausbreiten.
XI.	CVPIDO IN CIRCVLO	[E]in Cupido in einem Schlangen Creise	Nichts kan wahre Liebe stöhren, Ihre Gluth kan nicht auföhren.
II.	CATHARINA ALEXIEVVNA (grosses Bild zu Linken der Kaiserin Elisabeth) [Sinnbilder im Bogen:]	Catharina Alexiewna	Sie wird, (Gott laß' es wohl gelingen,) Nun wachsen, blühen, Früchte bringen.
III.	VERITAS MICANS	Die glänzende Wahrheit	Klug, redlich, ohne falschen Schein, Muß eine reine Liebe sein
IV.	CUPIDNIES IGNEM ELICIENTES	Beyde [Cupidines] schlagen ein Feuer an	Wahre Treu' und wahre Liebe Sind die Früchte wahrer Triebe.
V.	A. ORNAMENTA HEROICA COR CORONATVM	[Heroisches Ornament] Gekröntes Hertz	[der Buchstabe A über Pyramide] Ein Hertz, so wahre Tugend zieret, Ist's, dem das größte Lob gebühret
VI.	PEGASVS PRVDENTIA RECTRICE	[Pegasus, von der Klugheit regiert]	Der läßt Kunst und Klugheit spühren, Wer mich glücklich kan regieren.
VII.	B. ORNAMENTA HEROICA COR FLAGRANS	[Heroisches Ornament] Ein Sinnbild des mächtigen und sich nie verzehrenden Feuers der Liebe	Der Liebe Feuer nimmt das Hertze völlig ein. Drum wird die reine Glut gewiß beständig sein.

Table 2a *continued*

VIII.	VIRGO VESTALIS	[Die] Vestalisch[e] Jungfer	Wahre Liebe dauret immer; Ihre Gluth verlöschet nimmer.
IX.	DVU CORDA ARDENTIA	[Das von der Vestalischen Jungfer] ewig zu bewahrende Feuer	Eine Glut isst nur zu nennen, Obgleich beyde Herten brennen.
X.	FELICITAS CORONATA	Eine Vorstellung der Glückseligkeit . . . im Königlichen Habit	Die Liebe pflegt mit ihren Schätzen Auch andre reichlich zu ergetzen.
XI.	LVNA CVM STELLIS	Der Mond mit strahlenden Sternen	Von der Sonne kommt allein Unser Licht und heller Schein.
Das II. Stück von dem Anhaltischen Ehren=Bogen			
I.	ARCVS ANHALTINVS	Anhaltischer Ehren= oder Triumph=Bogen	[mehrere Sinnsprüche]
II.	INSCRIPTIO	Inscription	[Glückwünsche an das Paar]
Das III. Stück von dem Holsteinischen Ehren=Bogen			
II.	ARCVS HOLSATICVS	[Der] Holsteinische Ehren=Bogen	[mehrere Sinnsprüche]
III.	INSCRIPTIO	Inscription	[Glückwünsche an das Paar]
Anhang			



**Table 2b** Structure of Part 1 of Johann Hoxa's 'Kurtze Beschreibung' (Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst, D-ZeO: A.13.e, fol. 19ff; English translation)

This part provides a short outline of the most important and noble characteristics of all figures, inscriptions, pictures and symbols of the once favoured order as shown in the table. The entire display generally consists

- I. Of the Main ILLUMINATION.
  - II. Of the Anhalt and
  - III. Of the Holstein Honour and Triumphal Arches. As well as
  - IV. Of the especially prepared Latin Inscriptions.
- The 1st section of the Main Illumination. The Main Illumination is an illustration of the noble marriage between both Russian=Imperial Highnesses by way of full pictures and symbols, all being illuminated in the most splendid manner.

	Translation of Latin Symbol	Translation of Inscription
I. TEMPLVM CONCORDIAE Princely Courtyard: Elisabeth (middle), Water – Channel, Globe, Sun, 4 Elements	Temple of Unity [Letter E]	God is a miracle – God in all his ways, everything on earth certainly rests on his care. May the archduke's well-being always be ensured, then his crown and empire will be permanent and firm.
II. PETRVS FEODOROVVITZ	Peter Feodorowitz [Letter P]	
[Symbols used in the Arch:] III. VIRTUS RADIANS	Radiant Virtue	The Russian [people's] splendid Imperial crown he will receive from me as a reward. Noble birth can be claimed, virtue must give the strength. [12.5 metres tall]
IV. AQVILA SOLEM SPECTANS A. TROPAEVM IMPERIALE	[An] Eagle flying toward the Sun Imperial Ornament	The sparkle of a big diamond must be a great decoration. Only prudence and courage compel me at all times. [12.5 metres tall]
V. ADAMAS FVLGENS	Sparkling Diamond	
VI. BVCEPHALVS ALEXANDRO DVCTORE B. TROPAEM IMPERIALE	The [horse] Bucephalum, whom none other than Alexander is capable of controlling A pyramid decorated with symbols of war and victory	
VII. SALAMANDRA IN IGNE	[A] salamander in a fire on top of a hill	As I need the fire for food, so true love is food of life.
VIII. FORTVNA CONSTANS	A picture of everlasting happiness	Virtue is my constant light; without virtue I will not be.

Table 2b *continued*

	Translation of Latin Symbol	Translation of Inscription
IX.	CUPIDO CVM CORNV COPIAE A flying cupid . . . the description of true love	Everything that love has, is transmitted and [thus] helps indeed.
X.	CLIO GESTA SCRIPTIS MANDAT Clio, a historian	The history of these times we will continue to pass on to posterity.
XI.	CVPIDO IN CIRCULO A Cupid in a circle of snakes	Nothing can disturb true love, its passion can never end.
II.	CATHARINA ALEXIEVNA (large picture on the left of Empress Elisabeth) [Symbols in the Arch:]	[Love] (may God ensure its success) will now grow, bloom and yield fruit.
III.	VERITAS MICANS The brilliant truth	Prudent, honest, without false pretense, true love must be.
IV.	CUPIDNIES IGNEM ELICIENTES Both [Cupids] make a fire	True faithfulness and true love are the fruits of true desires.
V.	A. ORNAMENTA HEROICA COR CORONATVM [Heroic Ornament] Crowned Heart	[the letter A on top of the pyramid] A heart adorned by true virtue is the one which deserves the greatest praise.
VI.	PEGASVS PRVDENTIA RECTRICE B. ORNAMENTA HEROICA [Heroic Ornament]	He who shows artistry and wisdom will conquer my heart.
VII.	COR FLAGRANS A symbol of the mighty fire of love that never ceases to burn	The fire of love conquers the heart completely. Therefore pure passion will surely be constant.





**Table 2b** *continued*

	Translation of Latin Symbol	Translation of Inscription
VIII.	VIRGO VESTALIS	True love lasts forever, its passion will never die.
IX.	DVU CORDA ARDENTIA	Only one passion must be named, even both hearts are burning.
X.	FELICITAS CORONATA	Love with its treasures also tends to delight others in abundance.
XI.	LVNA CVM STELLIS	From the sun alone comes our light and shining brightness.
The II. Part of the Anhalt Arch of Honour:		
I.	ARCVS ANHALTINVS	[several mottos]
II.	INSCRIPTIO	[Congratulatory to the couple]
The III. Part of the Holstein Arch of Honour		
II.	ARCVS HOLSATICVS	[several mottos]
III.	INSCRIPTIO	[Congratulatory to the couple]

Appendix



Schütze (1687–1765):<sup>95</sup> the splendid engraving of the 1745 ‘Illumination and Fireworks Display’ prepared on the occasion of the imperial wedding, which was produced by the Leipzig printer Bernigeroth in 1746 and reproduced by Lentz in his chronicle in 1757 (see Figure 5).<sup>96</sup>

An examination of the headings used in the ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’ (in Latin, translated into German) shows that Schütze and Hoxa took their inspiration from Greek, Roman and Egyptian mythology (see Table 2). Schütze put together a most luxurious exhibition featuring numerous tall statues with inscriptions, pictures and emblems in the shape of ‘Eintrachtstempeln’ (Temples of Unity) and ‘Ehrenbögen’ (Arches of Honour) decorated with heroic ornaments and had them ‘lit with many thousands of lamps’. Hoxa, in turn, carefully explained each detail of this ‘illumination’, comparing, for instance, the bridegroom, Grand Duke Peter, with the historic figure of Alexander the Great, the famous general commanding his steed, Bucephalus. Another horse, the (immortal) winged Pegasus, ‘regiert von Klugheit’ (governed by prudence), accompanied the bride, Grand Duchess Catherine. She was to care for the ‘mächtige[s] und sich nie verzehrende[s] Feuer der Liebe’ (mighty fire of love that never ceases to burn) like one of the Vestal virgins, the powerful priestesses of ancient Rome. The ‘Andere Theil’ of Hoxa’s ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’ outlines a fireworks display that featured music in all three acts, including trumpeters and a timpanist playing an ‘Intrade’ in Acts 2 and 3, and also closing the latter with a ‘Salve’.<sup>97</sup> A secular cantata entitled *Heute strahlt bey duncklen Abend-Stunden* (Tonight Shines [a Bright Star] during Dark Evening Hours) for bass soloist and unspecified instruments was performed ‘unterthänigst’ (in a most submissive manner) by the Hofkapelle.<sup>98</sup>

Information regarding the librettist or composer who collaborated on this special *Abendmusik* in three movements is not provided in the ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’. The resident court poet, C. G. Jacobi, comes to mind, but, as mentioned earlier, the court paid him only for services rendered on the occasion of two princely birthdays in 1745/46, not for any poetry related to the imperial wedding.<sup>99</sup> Since Hoxa had written a congratulatory text on the occasion of Princess Hedwig Friederike’s (1691–1752) birthday in 1735,<sup>100</sup> he could have contributed this cantata libretto for the ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’ himself. Or someone else may have supplied it, possibly Johann Friedrich Fasch. Shortly after his arrival in Zerbst in 1722 he had written both the text and the music for the serenata that was premiered on 29 October to celebrate the anniversary of Princess Hedwig Friederike’s birth.<sup>101</sup> If writing poetry and setting it to music were too time-consuming for Fasch in 1745, he also had the option of doing either or neither of these, in which case another composer

95 Herrmann, *Schloß Zerbst in Anhalt*, 47–50. Johann Christoph Schütze (1687–1765) served as architect of the court (‘Hofbaumeister’) of Anhalt-Zerbst from 1722 to 1742 and was in charge of princely palaces in and outside of Zerbst, including Friederikenberg (see <www.schloss-zerbst.de>) and Dornburg (see <www.stefan-schueler.de>).

96 Hoxa had also relied on a separate architectural plan of the ‘illumination’ exhibition in the courtyard. This document was printed by Bernigeroth in 1746 as well but not included in Lentz’s 1757 chronicle. See D-ZEO, A.13.e, fol. 21: ‘Tabulam Luminum Festiorum’. Herrmann, *Schloß Zerbst in Anhalt*, 48–49, provides a list of Schütze’s other commissions by the Zerbst court after 1745, including the ‘Prunksarg’ (Coffin of Splendour) commissioned on the occasion of Prince Christian August’s death in 1747.

97 Hoxa, ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’. In the third act, following the firing of canons, a ‘water-fire-work’ was presented to the audience. This spectacle must have involved an astonishing variety of pyrotechnic articles and designs, including ‘Bienen-Schwärme’ (swarms of bees) and ascending ‘Lust-Kugeln’ (orbs of pleasure).

98 The libretto of this ‘Cantate’ is also transmitted as a separate booklet in D-ZEO, A.13.e, fol. 18.

99 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 269, no. 3/2471.

100 D-ZEO, A.11.m., fol. 47: *Erwünschtes Licht, vergnügungs-voller Tag* (Desirable Light, Joyful Day).

101 D-ZEO, A.11.m., fol. 35. The complete text of *Die GOTT geheiligte Freude* (The Joy Sanctified by GOD), original spelling) is reproduced in Engelke, *Johann Friedrich Fasch: sein Leben und seine Tätigkeit*, Appendix 3. Fasch may also have been active as a poet between 1722 and 1745, writing the texts for his 1735/36 cantata cycle *Das in Bitte, Gebeth, Fürbitte und Dancksagung bestehende Opffer*, as has been suggested by Martin Petzoldt; see his ‘Zur theologischen Spezifik von Kantatentexten Johann Friedrich Faschs’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758)*, StAI 40, 54–64. However, an entry in the Zerbst court records from 1735/36 indicates that the resident court poet Jacobi was reimbursed that year for a ‘Poesie zum Jahrgange’ (poetry for the yearly cycle [of cantatas]) in addition to a serenata; see Reul, ‘Neuerkenntnisse zu Aufführungen von Kantatenzyklen’, 267.



(Vice-Kapellmeister J. G. Röllig, perhaps) could have made an important musical contribution to this extraordinary wedding celebration. It is, however, safe to assume that, as the court Kapellmeister, Fasch would have been inclined to contribute as much of his own music to this historical event as possible.

The luxury and splendour inherent in the illumination and the fireworks display, or 'Lust-Feuer', undoubtedly must also have had an impact on the musical scoring.<sup>102</sup> In the opening da capo aria the librettist refers to an unusually bright light; this could have been represented musically by a high woodwind or brass instrument, possibly the transverse flute or one of the trumpets newly purchased in 1745/46. The charming second movement, a recitative entitled 'Mit Zischen, Rasseln, Brüllen, Krachen' (With Hissing, Rattling, Roaring, Crashing), describes the sounds associated with the fireworks display. In honour of the special occasion it may have been an *accompagnato*, even though only one singer (rather than the customary two or more) was involved. The instruments Hoxa mentioned in his 'Kurtze Beschreibung' of Act 1 were probably a large ensemble (strings, woodwinds, brass and basso continuo?) used to emphasize the significance of the occasion.

Entries in the Zerbst court records from 1745/46 do not refer to singers from out of town. Therefore the bass must have been resident soloist Förster, offering his congratulations to everyone. First and foremost he addressed the happy couple, but he also paid homage to Catherine's mother-in-law, the Russian Empress Elisabeth, as the highest-ranking member of the bridal party. Moreover, he encouraged the 'citizens of this city' and the foreigners 'welches dieses Festes Schimmer Anher gezogen hat' (who had been drawn hither by the feast's lustre) to join him in wishing the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess a blessed married life ('Rufft alle mit mir aus': Everyone proclaim with me).

The question of who exactly participated in the 'starck besetzte[r] Chor' (large chorus), as Hoxa described the final movement, cannot be answered with certainty. The reference to the size of the chorus hints at the fact that additional musicians had been asked to participate. While a Collegium musicum seems to have existed at the Zerbst Gymnasium Illustre, I would argue that pupils attending the school attached to the Hof- und Stiftskirche St Bartholomäi, a short walk from the palace, would have been approached first.<sup>103</sup> These students honoured their headmasters and pastors with 'geringe' (humble) 'Abend-Musiken' for several decades during the first half of the eighteenth century, an indication that music education must have been an integral part of the school's curriculum.<sup>104</sup> The youngsters were probably taught by the resident cantors and organists of St Bartholomäi and possibly also by members of the Hofkapelle; musical works premiered at the school could have been contributed and performed by graduating students. On special occasions, such as the arrival of the new head pastor Johann Daniel Kluge in October 1745, professionals like Vice-Kapellmeister Röllig seem to have been commissioned to write music,<sup>105</sup> possibly by Johann Hoxa, the

102 Among many special effects the audience enjoyed a brightly shining sun rising above a 'große Welt-Kugel' (large globe) prior to a bass soloist entering.

103 Franz Münnich, *Geschichte des Gymnasium Illustre* (Duderstadt: Wagner, 1960), 183. He refers to a list of Collegium musicum members among school records, but fails to provide additional primary source evidence such as names of students, directors, repertoire lists or shelfmarks to support his claim. Therefore his statement that it 'goes without saying' that these students also performed at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst can not be taken at face value.

104 One of the individuals honoured with musical performances on the occasion of his birthday was the school's 'Pastor Primii' Andreas Töpffer, principal from 1711 until 1744. A total of twenty-four alumni (!) congratulated him 'in deepest respect' by way of an 'Abend-MUSIC' in 1723 (D-ZEO, A.12.k., fol. 58) and again in 1728 (fol. 96), 1730 (fol. 97) and 1731 (fol. 98). Librettos for musical works performed on the occasion of the birthday of vice-principal (later principal) Joachim Heinrich Denzer survive as well, specifically from 1728 (D-ZEO, A.12.k., fol. 82), 1729 (fol. 136) and 1731 (fol. 139), as well as 1732 (A.11.m., fol. 227), 1734 (fol. 228) and 1735 (fol. 229). Moreover, in 1737 (A.11.m., fol. 230) a cantata in nine movements was performed in Denzer's honour, involving '7 rezitierende Personen sowie die "Chöre der freyen Künste"' (seven reciting persons as well as the 'Choruses of the Free Arts') and the 'Musen' (muses) residing at the school.

105 On 25 October 1745 students who were part of the graduating class at St Bartholomäi and 'Verehrer der freien Künste' (admirers of the free arts), performed a 'schlechte [here humble, not faulty] Abend-Music' on that occasion (D-ZEO,



author of the ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’. He was, after all, the school’s headmaster and may have especially encouraged his students to participate in this historic celebration.<sup>106</sup>

An experienced composer like Fasch would have probably set the three verses of the final chorus as a straightforward strophic setting in four parts (SATB) and drawn upon a pre-existing, well known sacred melody familiar to his performers. Including obbligato parts for trumpet would have made the arrangement sound more festive and showed off the new instruments that had been purchased in 1745/46. On the other hand, by setting each verse individually, the composer could have highlighted the significance of the members of the Russian and the Anhalt-Zerbst noble families specifically mentioned in the verses.

We can only speculate as to where exactly the orchestra and the singers were positioned in the northern ‘Lustgarten’ during the three acts of the fireworks display (see Figure 5). Hänze points out that the orangerie, the building in which exotic plants were kept all year round, would have protected players from the wind when performing outdoors, while inviting indoor performances (with the front doors closed) underneath its large, dome-shaped roof. Indeed, Hänze recalls that ‘a concert by candlelight, surrounded by the large green orange trees, was a unique experience’.<sup>107</sup> The best view of the spectacle was reserved for those who watched from the north side of the Corps de Logis, the building that connected the east and west wings of the palace.<sup>108</sup> ‘An der hintersten Schloß-Seite’ (at the rearmost side of the palace) the moat had been converted to a water channel and lit up by burning lamps on both sides. Tritons, Greek gods of the sea, swam ‘gegeneinander’ (against each other) and ‘bliesen’ (blew). Schütze’s visual account (see Figure 5) gives the impression that these Tritons were statues, which also explains why they did not seem to be wearing clothing of any kind. On the other hand, these Tritons could have been floats moving towards each other and spouting water rather than blowing musical instruments.

Court architect Schütze and his assistants had also successfully constructed the ‘Freuden-vollen Worte: VIVANT – VIVANT’ (Joyful Words: THEY LIVE – THEY LIVE) on the water channel via lamps, delighting the ‘eyes of the countless spectators’. The most impressive detail of the illumination and fireworks display must have been the forty-foot ‘Rhein[ischen] Maasses’, brightly lit, twelve-and-a-half-metre-high pyramids. They had been erected at both ends of the water channel and kept turning continuously on their pedestals, ‘ein ungemein vergnügende[s] und seltene[s] Kunst-Stück’ (an incredibly pleasurable and rare feat), according to Hoxa, which could be admired throughout the night.

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A.11.m., fol. 135). This particular musical work may have been composed by Vice-Kapellmeister Röllig, because he received three florins and sixteen groschen for composing a ‘Musique’ that was performed at the St Bartholomäi School that year; see Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 297, no. 29.2784.

106 Librettos to musical works performed at the St Bartholomäi School on the occasion of the birthday of Johann Hoxa seem not to have survived, but entries in the Zerbst court records show that a ‘Choro Musico’, later called ‘Choro Symphonico’, was financially supported by the court from 1662 on (no court records survive for the years 1655–1661). The chorus continued to exist until the late eighteenth century and, as hitherto unknown primary sources at the Evangelisches Pfarramt St Bartholomäi Zerbst indicate (see Sup. Archiv Zerbst Abt. XI, no. 5, unfoliated), included graduating students from the St Bartholomäi School. Music was taught as a separate subject to grade three pupils from at least 1726 on, and in 1748 we find among the *Catalogus Alumnorum prima classis* a ‘Chori Symphoniaci Praefectus’ named Jo[h]annes Michael Weber, a Chorus ‘Adj[uvant]’ (assistant) named Jo[h]annes Christophorus Ewald and a certain Martin Wihelm Zipprich who, I would argue, was none other than the *Kapellknabe* Zipprich who was listed as a member of the Hofkapelle in 1745/46 (see Figure 3).

107 ‘Ein Konzert bei Kerzenlicht, umgeben von den großen grünen Orangenbäumen war ein einmaliges Erlebnis.’ See Hänze, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch Wirkungsstätten’, 8–9. Concerts also took place in the ‘Liebhabertheater’, which was officially known as the ‘Kämmereigebäude’ and housed the court’s finance department. The orchestra performed twice in the riding hall (now the Stadthalle Zerbst) in 1753, on Thanksgiving and on the occasion of Prince Friedrich August’s wedding. In 1754 they played in the ‘Gelber Saal’ and the ‘Grüner Saal’ to celebrate the birth of Grand Duchess Catherine’s first child.

108 For floor plans of the Zerbst palace (ground floor and two upper floors, first and second floor) see Herrmann, *Schloss Zerbst in Anhalt*, 371–373. Ground plans of the Zerbst courtyard from 1714 and 1798 are included in the section ‘Der Schloßgarten im 18. Jahrhundert’ on Herrmann’s website <[www.schloss-zerbst.de](http://www.schloss-zerbst.de)>.

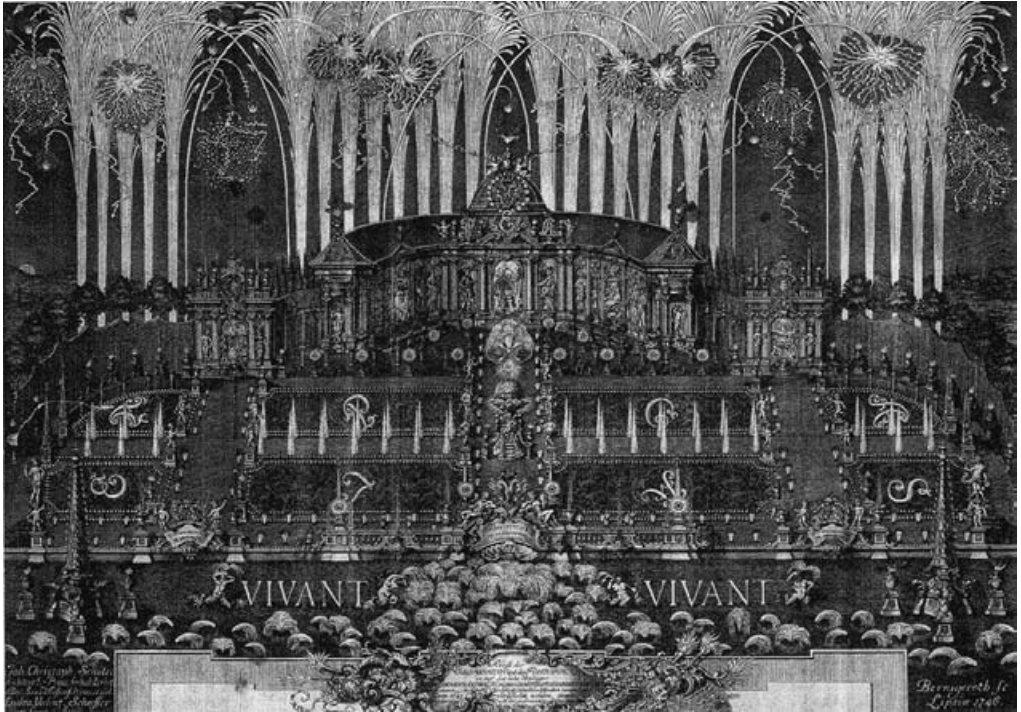


Figure 5 Bernigeroth's engraving of the 1745 Imperial Wedding Festivities in Zerbst, Leipzig 1746, as reprinted in the copy of Samuel Lentz, *Historisch-Genealogische Fürststellung des Hochfürstlichen Hauses Anhalt und der davon abstammenden Margrafen zu Brandenburg, Herzoge zu Sachsen und Sachsen-Lauenburg: Weiterführung und Erg. durch Becmannus, Cöthen u.a. 1757*. Franciscumsbibliothek Zerbst, D-ZEo. Reproduced with permission

As is evident from both Hoxa's description and contemporary eighteenth-century visual accounts by Zerbst court architect Schütze, the many months it must have required to prepare such an impressive exhibition and stunning fireworks display in the courtyard had clearly paid off. A great number of gifted artists (architects, painters, carpenters, scholars and musicians) from Zerbst had outdone themselves to commemorate the eternal union of two important noble European families in 1745. Because as the childhood home of the future Empress of Russia the Zerbst court was expected and obliged to celebrate 'in grand style', close to 7,600 florins were spent on the illumination and the fireworks display alone.<sup>109</sup> In comparison Kapellmeister Fasch, who earned a yearly salary of four hundred florins, would have had to work close to nineteen years to earn that amount of money.

Since dates are not provided in Hoxa's 'Kurtze Beschreibung', we must address this question: on what day in 1745 did this illumination and fireworks display in the courtyard take place? Since Catherine and Peter had exchanged vows on 21 August 1745, celebrating this occasion in the late summer or early autumn must have seemed ideal from the organizers' perspective. Hermann declares that the wedding festivities in Zerbst took place on 17 September but does not provide any primary source evidence to support his claim.<sup>110</sup> Both

109 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, pag. 296: 'Wegen dieser Gelegenheit praesentierten Feuer-Werks nebst *Illumination* und was dahin gehörig [The fireworks display presented because of this occasion, together with the *Illumination* and related matters]: 7285 Reichsthaler, 11 Groschen and 6 Pfennige.' On pag. 297 there is another section entitled 'Insgemein. Annoch zu vorigem Behuf' (In general; also relating to the previous matter). It refers to an additional amount of 293 reichsthaler, twenty-one groschen and two pfennige.

110 Herrmann, *Schloß Zerbst in Anhalt*, 49.





Pfeiffer and Konstanze Musketa rely on Lentz's chronicle, or, more precisely, the author's memory.<sup>111</sup> Lentz reported that Catherine's mother, Princess Johanna Elisabeth, stayed in Berlin from 26 to 30 November 1745 before returning to Zerbst 'am Dienstagabend, nehmlich den 3. oder 4. Dec.' (on Tuesday, namely 3 or 4 Dec[ember]) 1745.<sup>112</sup> An overview of the festivities held on the occasion of the imperial wedding at the beginning of December follows:

'On the first [of December] there was a great dinner' – the court orchestra may have premiered Fasch's wedding serenata on this occasion.

'On the second [of December] a beautiful fireworks display was shown in the courtyard and an illumination was lit' – the fireworks display included the premiere of *Heut strahlt bey dunkeln Abend-Stunden*, an anonymous cantata for bass and orchestra.

'On the third [of December] a ball took place' – local musicians may have provided the music on this occasion.<sup>113</sup>

'And on the fourth [of December] a hymn of praise was proclaimed at the Gymnasium' – An 'Ode bey der prächtigen Feyer der Vermählung Ihro Beyderseits Kayserlichen Hoheiten' (Ode on the splendid celebration of the wedding of both Imperial Highnesses) was presented by 'sämtlichen Professoren des Gesamten Hochfürstl. Anhalt Gymnasii zu Zerbst' (all professors at the entire Princely Anhalt Grammar School at Zerbst). The libretto is extant at the Francisceumsbibliothek Zerbst and contains a handwritten date: '2. [not 4.] Christmonat [December] 1745'.<sup>114</sup>

If Princess Johanna Elisabeth indeed arrived in Zerbst as late as 3 December, she would have missed not only most of the festivities, but also her husband's birthday on 29 November. However, the court of Anhalt-Zerbst commemorated special occasions such as princely birthdays whether the individual honoured was present or not.<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless, one wonders whether the court had initially scheduled the celebrations much earlier than December to avoid freezing temperatures, which would have jeopardized such exciting stunts as 'Tritons' swimming in the palace moat. Perhaps the Princess had been expected back much earlier, having left Russia on 9 October.<sup>116</sup> Only one month later, on 9 November, the following 'fremde Herrschaften' (foreign ladies and lords) arrived in Zerbst, possibly to partake in the wedding celebrations:<sup>117</sup> Prince Christian Wilhelm of Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg (1706–1748), a nephew of the late Prince Johann August of Anhalt-Zerbst; Prince August Wilhelm of Braunschweig-Bevern (1715–1781), general of the infantry and governor of Stettin<sup>118</sup> and the Abbess Princess Maria-Elisabeth of

111 Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 53, and Konstanze Musketa, 'Musik am Zerbster Hof', in *Residenzstadt Sonderhausen: Beiträge zur Musikgeschichte* (Sondershausen: Starke Druck, 2004), 121–122.

112 According to the Julian calendar 3 December was indeed a Tuesday. But Zerbst followed the Gregorian calendar at the time.

113 See Konstanze Musketa's article 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und die Zerbster Feierlichkeiten zur Hochzeit des Fürsten Friedrich August von Anhalt-Zerbst 1753', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch als Instrumentalkomponist*, Fasch-Studien 10, forthcoming.

114 D-ZEo, A.13.e., fol. 5.

115 Reul, 'Musikalische Aufführungen', 99.

116 Lentz, *Historisch-Genealogische Fürstellung des Hochfürstlichen Hauses Anhalt*, 962. See also Konstanze Musketa, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und die Zerbster Feierlichkeiten zur Hochzeit des Fürsten Friedrich August von Anhalt-Zerbst 1753', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch als Instrumentalkomponist*, regarding possible delays which could have caused the Zerbst court to change the dates of the festivities.

117 Wäschke, 'J. F. Fasch und die Zerbster Hofkapelle', 59.

118 <[www.preussenweb.de/regiment1.htm](http://www.preussenweb.de/regiment1.htm)>. Prussian Field Marshall Christian August resided in Stettin from 1716 to 1742 and commanded infantry regiment 8, while Colonel August Wilhelm was the chief of infantry regiment 7 in 1741. See also Herrmann, *Schloß Zerbst in Anhalt*, 74–75.





Holstein-Gottorp (1678–1755), an aunt of Princess Johanna Elisabeth.<sup>119</sup> Since Prince Christian August had to entertain

these relatives and friends, it is safe to assume that they would have stayed to enjoy the festivities in early December as members of the ‘all the nobles’ who were part of the ‘many spectators and locals and foreigners’ in attendance.<sup>120</sup>

Only once did the court of Anhalt-Zerbst resort to similar outdoor pomp and circumstance after 1745, on the occasion of Princess Johanna Elisabeth’s fortieth birthday and her official acceptance of the position of dowager princess (residing in the nearby, newly designed Dornburg palace) in 1752. From 24 October to 1 November Johanna Elisabeth was honoured by way of an elaborate illumination (no fewer than one thousand lamps had been lit in the courtyard), not one but two fireworks displays and many musical performances, including a serenata that was premiered by the court orchestra in the ‘Große[r] Saal’.<sup>121</sup>

Finally, participants and audience alike must have appreciated the pleasant weather conditions that year. According to Bernigeroth’s engraving, there was no snow to contend with in Zerbst in early December of 1745, but perhaps that was a detail omitted intentionally so as not to distract from the actual event.

## MUSIC PERFORMED AT THE COURT OF ANHALT-ZERBST IN HONOUR OF CATHERINE THE GREAT AFTER 1745

In keeping with their long-standing tradition of commemorating princely birthdays with musical performances, the court of Anhalt-Zerbst continued to honour the former princess of Anhalt-Zerbst annually on the occasion of her birthday. From 1746 to 1773 the morning service held at the court chapel on the Sunday following the anniversary of Catherine’s birth on 2 May featured a special birthday cantata; it replaced the regularly scheduled *Kirchenstück* (see Table 3).<sup>122</sup> A festive *Missa brevis* (Kyrie and Gloria) was also customarily performed during that service, unless the congregation sang an appropriate liturgical chorale (No. 426, *Kyrie, Gott Vater*).<sup>123</sup> Afternoon services held on Sundays were, in general, not affected by solemn occasions celebrated by the court, with the orchestra performing the cantata designated for that particular Sunday of the church year.<sup>124</sup>

119 <[www.thepeerage.com](http://www.thepeerage.com)>.

120 Hoxa, ‘Kurtze Beschreibung’, Preface.

121 A libretto for this birthday serenata has not been transmitted, but see D-ZEo, A.11.c., fol. 7, for Johann Dieterich Hauptmann’s descriptions of these 1752 ‘Festivitäten’. In general, Johanna Elisabeth seemed to favour outdoor rather than indoor activities, especially hunting: she brought down a stag during a huge hunt organized by the court on the occasion of her birthday in 1752.

122 The year 1747 was an exception – the death of Catherine’s father, Prince Christian August, on 16 March 1747 prompted a period of mourning of several months during which festive worship services involving the Hofkapelle were prohibited.

123 For an overview and examination of Fasch’s extant masses see Raymond Dittich, *Die Messen von Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758)* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1992). References to hymns in the Zerbst church chronicles are based on the Zerbst *Kantional*, the organist’s accompaniment edition from 1738. A copy has been transmitted in Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volume 380. In contrast, hymn numbers in printed librettos of (birthday or regular) cantatas match those given in the hymnal in use at the time.

124 Reul, ‘Musikalische Aufführungen am Zerbster Hof’, 98–100. See also Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volumes 370 and 371. On 3.5.1761 (volume 370) ‘der Aposteltag *Die Jacobi*’ (the apostle’s day *Die Jacobi*) was celebrated in the afternoon, resulting in a special apostle’s day cantata being substituted for the regularly scheduled cantata. Incidentally, Fasch composed two sets of apostle’s day cantatas during his tenure in Zerbst; see the entries ‘An Apostelstücken’ (Number of apostle day pieces) in the ‘Concert-Stube’. On 1 May 1763 (that year the court celebrated Catherine’s birthday one day early) the scribe referred to ‘den anderen Theil der ersten [?] Kirchen-Musick’ (the other part of the first [?] church music). Either this entry was an oversight on the part of the scribe, or the sacred work performed on that occasion in 1763 was a double, instead of the customary single, cantata.



**Table 3** Special music performed during Sunday morning services held at the Anhalt-Zerbst court chapel on the occasion of Catherine the Great's birthday, 1746–1773 (Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau, D-LHASA, DE, Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volumes 363–377)

Date	Title of Cantata / Comments	'Kyrie'p lateinisch' (= missa brevis, includes Gloria) or congregational Kyrie chorale	Composer
8 May 1746	<i>Sey Herr Jesu</i>	chorale No. 426, <i>Kyrie Gott Vater</i>	J. F. Fasch?
1747	no entry because of the mourning period following the death of Prince Christian August on 16 March 1747		
1748/49	volume lost		
3 May 1750	<i>Der Herr ist nahe</i>	no entry	J. F. Fasch?
2 May 1751	<i>Ich werde mein</i>	missa brevis	J. F. Fasch?
7 May 1752	<i>So ihr</i>	no entry	J. F. Fasch?
8 May 1753	<i>Das Lamm</i>	chorale No. 426	J. F. Fasch?
2 May 1754	<i>Ach Gott</i>	no entry	J. F. Fasch?
11 May 1755	Psalm 65:1–2 <i>Gott wir loben dich</i>	missa brevis	J. F. Fasch?
2 May 1756	<i>Meine Schafe</i>	missa brevis	J. F. Fasch?
8 May 1757	Psalm 95:1–2 <i>Kommt herzu</i>	missa brevis	J. F. Fasch?
7 May 1758	Psalm 9:1 <i>Ich dancke</i>	missa brevis	J. F. Fasch?
6 May 1759	John 16–22 <i>Euer Herz soll schlafen</i>	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
4 May 1760	<i>Wenn ich mitten in der Angst wanderte so erquickest du mich</i>	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
2 May 1762	Psalm 50:20 <i>Wer Danck opfert</i>	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
1 May 1763	Psalm 117:1–2 <i>Lobet den Herrn</i>	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
6 May 1764	Psalm 97:12 <i>Ihr Gerechten</i>	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
5 May 1765	No entry	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
4 May 1766	Psalm 36:8–9 <i>Wie teuer ist deine Güte</i>	missa brevis	J. G. Röllig?
3 May 1767	Psalm 36:8–9 <i>Wie theuer</i> [repeat of work performed in 1766?]	chorale No. 268, <i>Kyrie Gott</i>	J. G. Röllig?
8 May 1768	'Musüg vor Mittage'	chorale No. 268, <i>Kyrie Gott</i>	J. G. Röllig?
2 May 1769	no entry, but reference to occasion	chorale No. 268	?
1770/71	volume lost		
3 May 1772	no entry, but reference to occasion	chorale No. 268	?
9 May 1773	no entry, but reference to occasion last entry in volume on 27.11.1773	chorale No. 268	?

The blind Magdeburg organist C. G. Jacobi provided the texts for virtually all solemn occasions celebrated at the Anhalt-Zerbst court between 1731/32 and 1750/51. These included the librettos for sacred cantatas (and for all serenatas) premiered between 1746 and 1750 on the occasion of Catherine's birthday; in 1751/52 J. J. Ulisch took over Jacobi's duties.<sup>125</sup> Jacobi's and Ulisch's texts were set to music by Kapellmeister Fasch, who was in charge of providing special music for all solemn occasions at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst throughout his thirty-six-year tenure, ending with his death in 1758.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1751/52–1762/63; see 'Ausgaben Insgemein' (General Expenses).

<sup>126</sup> Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge*, 1757–1758, 124–129. See also Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1758/59, pag. 113, nos 151, 152, 153. A hitherto unknown document housed at the Evangelisches Pfarramt St Bartholomäi Zerbst (Sup. Archiv Zerbst Abt. VIII, 14, no. 1, unfoliated) indicates that on 7 December 1758 Johanna Friedericka Fasch had



Neither the libretto nor the music for any of the sacred cantatas premiered at the court chapel in honour of Catherine seems to be extant. Only *Beglückter Tag*, the serenata Fasch composed for her birthday in 1757, survives as part of the music collection of the Berlin Sing-Akademie. The serenata dates from Fasch's most mature period as a composer; its brevity (seven movements) reflects the 'less is more' attitude towards musical performances prevalent at the Anhalt-Zerbst court in the early 1750s. The work's scoring (solo trumpet, two oboes, two flutes, two bassoons, strings and continuo) is consistent with that of cantatas performed at the court chapel on regular Sundays and on the occasion of minor feast days.<sup>127</sup>

Sawtschenko has identified discrepancies between the serenata's textual message and Anhalt-Zerbst's political situation in 1757.<sup>128</sup> In 1756 the Seven Years War pitted Great Britain, Prussia and Hanover against France, Austria, Russia, Sweden and Saxony. In the fourth movement, a recitative for tenor and basso continuo, however, the author of the libretto, resident court poet Ulich, specifically praised the reigning Russian empress Elisabeth, Catherine's mother-in-law and Prussia's arch enemy. Sawtschenko concludes that either the text had been written prior to the onset of the Seven Years War in 1756, or it was meant as an incentive for Catherine to protect the principality of Anhalt-Zerbst during her brother's reign.

The latter scenario seems more plausible, since the Prussian king was so annoyed when the princely family welcomed a French enemy spy to the palace in 1757 that in April 1758 he sent sixteen thousand soldiers to Zerbst, who quickly wreaked havoc.<sup>129</sup> Reinhold Specht notes that a few months later Catherine's brother and their mother escaped to Paris,<sup>130</sup> leaving behind his wife Caroline Wilhelmine and appointing a 'völlig verwirrt[es] und ratlos[es]' (completely confused and helpless) Privy Council.<sup>131</sup> The princess pleaded for mercy with the Prussian king, but her appeal on behalf of Anhalt-Zerbst fell on deaf ears. Meanwhile, Prince Friedrich August, having relocated to Vienna from Paris, continued to rule Zerbst by proxy.<sup>132</sup>

Remarkably, special music continued to be commissioned for and performed regularly at the Zerbst palace during this time of extreme unrest. Court records confirm that Röllig consistently provided

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been given permission by the court to bury her father quietly ('in der Stille'); J. D. Kluge, pastor at the Hofkirche, was to look after the interment. Unfortunately, the letter does not specify Fasch's burial site in Zerbst. The court paid Fasch's full salary of four hundred florins that business year, half to cover the period of June to December 1758 (when the ailing Fasch was still officially employed) and the other half, the 'Gnadengehalt' (a six-month allowance customarily paid to widows by the court), to his heirs, a son, Carl Friedrich Christian, and a daughter, Johanna Friedericka. After her father's death Johanna Friedericka had formally applied to the court to receive these funds to help defray the costs of the funeral and debts Fasch had left behind. See Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 13. The primary source listed in note 11 (Signatur Kammer Zerbst 8457) is not housed at the Staatsarchiv Magdeburg, but at D-LHASA, DE.

127 In 1736, for example, Fasch had used two flutes, two oboes, strings and continuo in *Gott ist ein rechter Richter* (God is a Fair Judge), a cantata for the tenth Sunday after Trinity, and added three trumpets and timpani to that ensemble in *Es erhob sich ein Streit* (And There Arose a Great Strife) on the occasion of St Michael and All Angels.

128 Sawtschenko, 'Zwei bisher unbekannte Werke', 230–241.

129 Reinhold Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst* (Dessau: Anhaltische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), volume 2, 78; and Franz Kindscher, 'Marquis de Fraigne', in *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Anhaltische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 9 (1904), 204–216.

130 Johanna Elisabeth lived (as the Countess of Oldenburg) well beyond her means in Paris, despite receiving an annual pension of 15,000 roubles from her daughter (Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 79). She died in the French capital but was buried on 22 December 1760 at the princely family's vault in the St Bartholomäi Church in Zerbst. A special service was held, for which members of the orchestra (including the heirs of Kettner and Ritter, who must have died shortly after the event) received special honoraria; see Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1760/61, entries on pag. 243.

131 Sawtschenko, 'Zwei bisher unbekannte Werke', 234, and Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 81. The Privy Council was a motley crew of irresponsible schemers and indecisive denounciators whose membership the Prince changed several times a year. Moreover, Friedrich August demanded that all Zerbst soldiers who wanted to serve, including those in the employ of Prussia, should proceed to Vienna to join his regiment (Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 78).

132 Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 79ff.



compositions for princely birthdays from 1759 to 1764.<sup>133</sup> The busiest and by far most lucrative period for Röllig was June 1762 to June 1763, the year in which Catherine the Great ascended to the Russian throne. The court paid Röllig for three sets of cantatas and serenatas, one commissioned on the occasion of Friedrich August's birthday and one each for Catherine's birthday and her accession to the Russian throne.<sup>134</sup> In addition, Röllig – who received payments in 1761/62 for unspecified compositions on 'Dancktagen' (Days of Thanksgiving) and for 'various musical works'<sup>135</sup> – may have set to music a cantata text that honoured Peter III's accession to the Russian throne and birthday in early 1762.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, Röllig provided cantatas and serenatas on the occasion of Prince Friedrich August's birthday in August 1763 and that of his sister, Catherine the Great, in May 1764.<sup>137</sup>

An examination of non-incidentally sacred music commissioned from Röllig in the early 1760s shows that basic artistic priorities were changing at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst. In 1762/63 he received ten florins for composing thirteen cantatas that had apparently been missing in the yearly cycle by (Christoph?) Förster.<sup>138</sup> This amount seems rather low compared to the eleven florins the court paid to Röllig for producing one single new work, his 'Passionßmusique' for Eastertide in 1763.<sup>139</sup> Labelled 'Passions Oratorium' in the Zerbst church chronicles, it must have quite been a substantial composition.<sup>140</sup> Much of Röllig's time must, however, have been devoted to composing a new yearly cycle of cantatas. The court paid him the astonishing sum of 192 florins – of which he received thirty as an advance and fifty as a subsequent payment in February and April 1763, respectively, and 112 in 1764 – for this *Jahrgang*.<sup>141</sup> This amounted to an additional eighty-five per cent (!) of his annual salary of 170 florins as a regular member of the Hofkapelle.

133 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1762/63, pag. 245, no. 19.2004: '50 [Reichsthaler] für dergleichen Arbeiten an solennen Tagen, vom 6. Majii 1759 bis 25. Dec. 1760' (fifty [florins] for similar work [texts] for solemn days, from 6 May [!] 1759 to 25 December 1760); see also the entries in the Kammerrechnungen for 1761/62, pag. 235, and for 1763/64, pag. 254.

134 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1762/63, pag. 245, no. 7.2003 (Friedrich August's birthday), no. 47.2008 (Catherine's birthday: *Lobet den Herren*; see Table 3 in the main body of the text), and no. 33.2006 (Catherine's accession to the Russian throne).

135 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1761/62, pag. 235, no. 7.1772: Röllig received five florins and twenty groschen for 'Dancktagen und wegen 2. Kirchenstück[e]' (days of Thanksgiving and because of two church pieces), and no. 1674: twenty florins and sixteen groschen for 'various musical works'. Moreover, the court paid Röllig five florins for having composed the 'Musique' on the occasion of Friedrich August's birthday that year (see entry no. 7.1772), while the poet Ulisch received eight florins for texts for a cantata and a serenata on that occasion (see also Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1761/62, pag. 215, no. 36.1462). Ulisch noted on the title page that this 'Dankundfreudenfest' (Feast of Thanksgiving and Joy) had been commanded by Prince Friedrich August himself.

136 D-ZEo, A.11.m., loose folio. This sacred cantata was premiered at the court chapel on the first Sunday in Lent, 7 February 1762, which fell between Peter's accession to the throne on 5 January and his birthday on 22 February.

137 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1763/64, pag. 254, no. 20.2179 (27 August 1763) and 47.2175 (15 May 1764).

138 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1762/63, pag. 245, no. 19.2005. Christoph Förster (1693–1745) was Vice-Kapellmeister at the Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt court. Sacred works by Förster are not listed in the 'Concert-Stube'; however, this cycle could be one of the *Jahrgänge* that were performed at the chapel after 1743 and have yet to be identified. See Reul, 'Neuerkenntnisse zu Aufführungen', 267–270. For biographical information on Förster and his relationship to Fasch see Undine Wagner, 'Zum italienischen Einfluss im Konzertschaffen von Johann Friedrich Fasch und Christoph Förster', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und der italienische Stil*, 208–210.

139 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1762/63, pag. 245, no. 2007. In comparison, in 1749/50 Röllig received twelve florins for a new setting of the Eastertide Passion; see Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1749/50, pag. 272, no. 49/2393.

140 Springthorpe, 'The Zerbst Passion Tradition', 105. In this article he surmises that it could have been a setting of the passion according to St John. His reassessment in *Johann Georg Röllig, a Thematic Catalogue* (in preparation) suggests that the four-year cycle continued through the years 1761–1763, indicating that the new passion composed in 1763 was based upon the gospel of St Luke. This would have followed the model of St Mark in 1750, with five self-contained cantatas performed over five services between Wednesday Vespers and Good Friday Vespers.

141 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1762/63, pag. 245, no. 32.2009 (thirty florins as a 'Vorschuss' or advance on a total of 144 florins on 1 February 1763) and no. 44.2010 (fifty florins as a 'Nachschuss' or additional contribution on 26 April



One wonders what may have prompted this overly generous financial gesture by the court. A separate honorarium for setting a new cantata cycle had never been paid out during Fasch's tenure (1722–1758), indicating that it was part of the Kapellmeister's regular duties. It may have been comparatively easy for Röllig to convince the civil servant in charge that this particular long-term project was much more work-intensive (and therefore more expensive) than producing single occasional works such as birthday cantatas, serenatas and Holy Week passions. I would also argue that this particular commission and subsequent payment may have been the court's way of acknowledging financially Röllig's professional frustration at not having been promoted officially to Kapellmeister after Fasch's death in 1758. While we read in Röllig's autobiographical sketch that he had been declared 'würlklicher' (acting) Kapellmeister by Prince Friedrich August and his mother Johanna Elisabeth – thus sometime prior to the Dowager Princess's death in 1760 – a different picture emerges from the information provided in the Kammerrechnungen, in which Röllig continued to be identified as court organist until 1776.<sup>142</sup> Curiously, when he was finally referred to as Kapellmeister in the 1777 court records, Röllig's annual salary continued to stay at 170 florins; in fact, he still made eighty florins less than the most senior member of the orchestra, concertmaster Hoeckh.<sup>143</sup>

While Röllig surely must have felt undervalued as the court's 'acting' Kapellmeister, supporting the fine arts in the early 1760s seems to have been important to Zerst court officials, back in power after the death of Catherine's mother-in-law, Empress Elisabeth of Russia, in 1762.<sup>144</sup> Adopting a 'business as usual' policy, they reckoned that a busy social calendar, specifically regular musical performances at the chapel and the palace, would help restore or at least give the impression of, normality at the court. However, despite the best intentions of the court, the Hofkapelle underwent significant changes. Of the twenty full-time positions for professional musicians Anhalt-Zerst boasted in 1757,<sup>145</sup> only four were left in 1763; these were filled by concertmaster Höckh, tenor soloist Poll (who seems to have taken on the position of 'Waysen-Inspector' at the local orphanage as well), acting Kapellmeister Röllig and 'Clavizymbalist' Heyl. While this constitutes an eighty per cent decrease over a six-year period, at least four choral scholars, a cantor (Schöne) and a sexton (Möhring) continued to support the ensemble.<sup>146</sup>

The unavailability of capable musicians is also reflected in the repertoire that was being performed at the court chapel. On the second Sunday in Advent 1762 we read: 'In diesem Jahre ist der im vorigen Jahre aufgeführte Jahrgang Poetische Aufmunterung aufgeführt worden' (This year last year's cycle *Poetische Aufmunterung* is being repeated).<sup>147</sup> The cantata titles listed for services on Sunday mornings correspond to Telemann's single 'Sicilian Cycle', which, incidentally, is the *Jahrgang* that Fasch neglected to list in the

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1763). According to DE, Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1763/64, pag. 254, entry no. 2173, Röllig received only 112 of the 114 florins promised earlier. According to an unknown letter by Röllig dated 12 March 1755 (D-LHASA, DE, Kammer ZE, no. 2928, fos 101–102) he had composed one of the three cantata cycles that were performed at the court church in 1754/55 and been commissioned to write a new *Jahrgang* to be premiered at the beginning of Advent 1755. In addition, the multi-talented Röllig complained about being expected to help out whenever other members of the Hofkapelle were indisposed. His request for a raise of twenty florins was granted by the court, taking effect in June 1755.

142 Wäschke, 'Rölligs Kantate für St. Jakobs-Tag', 6. See also Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1776, pag. 215, no. 51. The fact that the scribe referred to him as 'Capellmeister Röllig' elsewhere in the 1776 court records may be an indication of his impending promotion, see Kammerrechnungen 1777, pag. 126, nos 26.29b.375,76 and 52.377, 78.

143 See the respective entries in Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1759/60–1777.

144 Sawtschenko, 'Zwei bisher unbekannte Werke', 234. She quotes Hartmut Ross, 'Katharinas Herkunftsheimat: Anhalt', in *Rußland und Europa: Beiträge zur internationalen Forschung*, ed. Claus Scharf (Mainz: Ph. V. Zabern, 2001), 531: 'Die preußische Unterdrückung Anhalt-Zerst endete dann abrupt mit dem Tode der Zarin Elisabeth.' (The Prussian oppression of Anhalt-Zerst ended abruptly with the death of Empress Elisabeth.) Moreover, by 1762 both Princess Caroline Wilhelmina and her mother-in-law, Princess Johanna Elisabeth, had died.

145 See the overview listed in Marburg, *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge*, 124–129. Only eighteen of the twenty positions were filled in 1757.

146 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1762/63, pag. 110.

147 Konsistorium-Zerst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volume 371.



‘Concert-Stube’.<sup>148</sup> As Brit Reipsch has observed, while Telemann required, in addition to a string ensemble and basso continuo, two obbligato oboes in this *Jahrgang* to evoke the music of the *Pifferari*, shawm-playing shepherds from southern Italy, he opted for uncomplicated coloraturas in his arias.<sup>149</sup> Since Telemann’s cycle was repeated year after year until 1766, the players must have adapted the music to suit their forces and individual abilities. The mystery of why the repertoire was not more varied (considering the vast holdings of sacred music contained in the ‘Concert-Stube’) is solved by a scribal entry at the beginning of the new church year in 1765. The person chronicling the activities at the court chapel indicated that it was a general lack of singers that prevented the ensemble from performing different music.<sup>150</sup>

Since musical works by Röllig from the 1760s seem not to have survived, it is impossible to determine how this drastic decline in Hofkapelle members affected the scoring of the occasional works he was commissioned to write in honour of Catherine and her relatives at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst.<sup>151</sup> However, Röllig’s artistic rationale for composing a new complete cycle of cantatas (approximately sixty-five works) to be premiered in the 1763/64 church year is clear. The cantata cycles in the orchestra’s ‘Concert-Stube’ library require musical forces much larger than the permanent ensemble that Röllig had at his disposal in 1763.<sup>152</sup> A new custom-made cantata cycle would not only allow regular performances of special music to continue at the chapel, but would also support the court’s ‘business as usual’ policy. Since an unspecified single cantata cycle was indeed performed during Sunday afternoon services between 1763 and 1767,<sup>153</sup> I would argue that it was probably Röllig’s new setting. Furthermore, new repertoire would also have signalled in musical terms the end of political unrest in Zerbst, and it was bound to impress Prince Friedrich August, should he return.<sup>154</sup> Much to his subjects’ relief, the eccentric ruler – whom Frederick the Great of Prussia considered a ‘fou’, or fool – never set foot on Zerbst soil again.<sup>155</sup>

148 Reul, ‘Neuerkenntnisse zu Aufführungen’, 265 and 270.

149 Brit Reipsch, CD booklet, ‘Mitteldeutsche Barockkantaten: Georg Philipp Telemann und Johann Friedrich Fasch’, Kammerchor Johann Friedrich Reichardt of the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and the Johann Friedrich Fasch Ensemble, directed by Jens Lorenz, Metrix Classics CD 87402, 1998.

150 Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volume 373. See also an entry in the 1765 court records (Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1763/64, pag. 255, no. 13.2.77). Two retired (‘abgedanckten’) oboists had helped out ‘bey der Musique’ (with the music [on the occasion of the Prince’s birthday]). Perhaps they assisted the Hofkapelle on other occasions as well.

151 The court paid Hoeckh annually for ‘Auslagen’ (expenses) – see, for example, Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1763/64, no. 28.2178 (almost fifteen florins) – which he could have used to hire additional players. Moreover, balls were again being held at the court in the early 1760s, including one on 6 May 1764 (possibly in conjunction with Catherine’s birthday on 2 May) for which unspecified ‘Musicanten-Gesellen’ (musical apprentices) received two florins; see Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1763/64, no. 46.2179.

152 See the scoring of extant cantatas by Fasch listed in Pfeiffer, *Verzeichnis der Werke von Johann Friedrich Fasch (FWV), Kleine Ausgabe*.

153 Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volumes 371 and 372. Rather than providing actual cantata titles, the scribe would merely indicate that it was the second part of the sacred work scheduled for that particular Sunday or feast day.

154 Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 80. While Anhalt-Zerbst was ready to celebrate a ‘Friedensfest’ (Festival of Peace), newly promoted Imperial Lieutenant-General Prince Friedrich August kept requesting recruits from Zerbst for his army; see 75ff for an overview of ‘Das unrühmliche Ende des absoluten Zerbster Fürstentums und seine Auswirkungen auf die Stadt Zerbst’ (The inglorious decline of the absolute Zerbst principedom and its repercussions for the city of Zerbst). See also Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1764/65. Despite his absence, the court paid Friedrich August the sum of 52,000 florins (!) between June 1764 and June 1765, possibly on account of his marriage to Princess Auguste Sophie Friederike von Anhalt-Bernburg in May 1764. After 1765 the funds set aside for the prince varied greatly, his wife always receiving considerably less. Kriemhild Ysker, ‘Das Leben der Fürstin Friederike Auguste Sophie von Anhalt-Zerbst’, in *Historienkalender auf das Jahr 1996* (Jever, 1995), 60–61. I would like to thank Sybille Heinen, Jever, for providing me with a copy of this article.

155 Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 81: ‘Der Fürst von Anhalt-Zerbst ist ein Wahnsinniger, ein Narr (“fou”), den man längst hätte einsperren müssen, wenn nicht seine Schwester Katharina von Rußland wäre.’ (The Prince of





Regular musical performances at the court chapel during Vesper services on Saturday evenings ended abruptly after the first Sunday in Advent 1765; special music during Sunday afternoon services had ceased on the preceding Easter Sunday, because of the (obviously by then chronic) lack of singers.<sup>156</sup> Until 29 September 1766 (the feast day of St Michael and All Angels) the drastically reduced Hofkapelle ensemble performed cantatas from Telemann's 'Sicilian Cycle' on Sunday mornings. From 1767 to 1773, when the chronicling of activities at the court chapel ended, only special occasions such as Christmas, New Year's Day and Pentecost, as well as princely birthdays, including Catherine's, warranted the involvement of the ensemble.<sup>157</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know whether singers were involved in these so-called *Musügen*, or whether these were performances of familiar repertoire or premieres of newly composed works.

A final question remains. Did Catherine the Great ever come to the rescue of her former childhood home, a stricken Anhalt-Zerbst that had been weakened considerably by Prussian occupation in the 1760s? As the mother of the future Empress of Russia, Princess Johanna Elisabeth spared no expense when building a new and imposing dowager residence in nearby Dornburg. Perhaps anticipating an imperial visit in the 1750s, she even hired the renowned Saarbrücken architect and Zerbst native Friedrich Joachim Stengel (1694–1787) in 1751 to draw up architectural plans, some of which have recently surfaced in St Petersburg. Georgi Smirnov surmises that Catherine probably requested these copies much later, some time during her reign (1762–1796).<sup>158</sup> Taking into account the fact that Röllig's *dramma per musica* written on the occasion of Catherine's wedding found its way to St Petersburg,<sup>159</sup> she could also have asked to be sent librettos, if not music scores, from the court of Anhalt-Zerbst.

The Empress of Russia began to show a personal interest in Anhalt-Zerbst shortly after ascending to the throne in June 1762. To announce her 'Huld und Gnade' (benignity and mercy), Catherine had sent the subjects of Anhalt-Zerbst a golden coronation medal, and in 1767 and 1768 was paying for many citizens of Zerbst (and from nearby Roßlau and Coswig) to emigrate to Russia.<sup>160</sup> From 1765 to 1773 the court also officially celebrated the birthday of her son Paul at the court chapel. His birth on 1 October 1754, and that of his sister Anna (born on 20 December 1757, she died in 1759), had been commemorated by way of special church services. Specifically, the Hofkapelle performed *Singet fröhlich dem Herrn* (Sing Joyfully unto the Lord) on 10 November 1754 and *Lobet Ihr Völker* (Praise Ye Nations) on 29 January 1758; a *missa brevis*, as was customary on princely birthdays, preceded each of the cantatas.<sup>161</sup> Less than a decade later elaborate special music was no longer an option at the court chapel. On the occasion of Paul's birthday the small Hofkapelle ensemble played *Laßet uns Gott lieben* (Let us Love God) on 6 October 1765, and *Wohl dem*

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Anhalt-Zerbst is a maniac, a fool ('fou') who should have been locked up long ago if Katharina of Russia had not been his sister.)

156 Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volumes 371 and 372.

157 Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volumes 375 and 377 (volumes 374 and 376 do not exist). In 1769 changes made in the existing Zerbst 'Kirchenordnung' to prevent idleness among citizens took effect on the first Sunday in Advent. These included abolishing the third feast days in the Christmas, Easter and Pentecost and moving minor feast days to the preceding Sundays, but did not have an impact on the (already low) frequency of musical performances; see Konsistorium-Zerbst-IV-17. On 28 June 1776 a completely overhauled 'Ordnung des öffentlichen Gottesdienstes in den Anhaltzerbstischen und Jeverschen Landen' (Order of public worship services in the Anhalt-Zerbst and Jever Lands) was introduced; see Clark, 'When Brevis Just Isn't Short Enough', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst*, 137, as well as Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volume 332.

158 G. K. Smirnov located five drafts of architectural design plans for the Dornburg Palace at the Hermitage in St Petersburg in 2002. While these could have been prepared during Johanna Elisabeth's lifetime, possibly around 1750, they would have had to be sent to Russia by someone other than the Dowager Princess, who was prohibited from corresponding with her daughter during her lifetime; see <[www.stefan-schueler.de/petersburg/smirnov2002.html](http://www.stefan-schueler.de/petersburg/smirnov2002.html)>.

159 Sawtschenko, 'Zwei bisher unbekannte Werke', 237.

160 <[www.anhalt-zerbstde/to\\_katha.htm](http://www.anhalt-zerbstde/to_katha.htm)>.

161 Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep. 15A-IXa, volumes 367 (Paul) and 369 (Anna).



(Blessed is He) on 5 October 1766.<sup>162</sup> Both were the regularly scheduled Sunday cantatas from Telemann's 'Sicilian Cycle'.<sup>163</sup>

In October 1772 the court of Anhalt-Zerbst spent an entire week celebrating Paul's eighteenth birthday and coming of age, and in December commemorated the name day of his mother, the Empress.<sup>164</sup> While the Hofkapelle's services were apparently not required for either event (no special music was commissioned), it is safe to assume that the court had requested some ceremonial and background music. A few players could also have travelled to the city of Coswig, southeast of Zerbst, where illuminations were held on both occasions, probably at the palace or the courtyard.<sup>165</sup> Despite Anhalt-Zerbst's dismal financial situation, Prince Friedrich August (who kept close tabs on the court's expenditures) allowed over 550 florins to be spent to celebrate his nephew Paul's birthday and almost one hundred florins to commemorate the anniversary of Catherine's birth.<sup>166</sup> These were undoubtedly token events and do not compare to the wedding festivities held in Zerbst in 1745 or any of the princely birthdays celebrated during the 1750s.

In 1778 processions involving citizens from Zerbst, Roßlau and Coswig were held on the occasion of Catherine's birthday and to commemorate the birth of her grandson Alexander on 12 December 1777.<sup>167</sup> That same year Prince Friedrich August entered a six-year contract with Britain to recruit 1,160 soldiers from Anhalt-Zerbst to fight in the American War of Independence. He received 30,000 florins for this type of human trafficking, which Specht calls the 'saddest and most humiliating chapter in Zerbst history'.<sup>168</sup> In 1779 the court honoured Catherine's son Paul and his wife with processions on their respective birthdays, but they did not do the same for the Empress, it seems. The entry 'Ihro hochfürstl: durchl: unserer gnädigsten Fürstin' (Her solemn gracious and most merciful Princess)<sup>169</sup> may refer to Prince Friedrich August's second wife, Princess Friederike Auguste Sophie (1744–1827). Living in exile for thirty-five years in Switzerland, she was probably appalled by the living standards in Zerbst, which had greatly deteriorated by the mid-1780s. In 1787 the court finally informed the Prince that it was no longer able to cover his enormous expenses.<sup>170</sup> General

162 Konsistorium-Zerbst-Rep.15A-IXa, volumes 373, 375 (374 does not exist), and 377. The volume covering the church years of 1769/1770 and 1770/1771, no. 376, is lost, but it is safe to assume that Paul's birthday was commemorated in those years as well.

163 The cantata *Gott ist die Liebe* by Telemann has been recorded as part of the release 'Mitteldeutsche Barockkantaten: Georg Philipp Telemann und Johann Friedrich Fasch, Metrix Classics CD 87402.

164 < [www.anhalt-zerbst.de/to\\_katha.htm](http://www.anhalt-zerbst.de/to_katha.htm)>. That year Zerbst was stricken by a severe famine, prompting Catherine to send huge amounts of rye to feed the poor. In July 1773 the price of wheat had stabilized, but the city council decided to build a poorhouse rather than give out the remaining Russian corn. Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 83, notes that Catherine had also sent money for the poor, which the corrupt city council chose, without further thought, to withhold.

165 Dieter Breitreutz, 'Zum Musikleben der Städte Burg, Zerbst und Genthin', in *Bedeutende Musiktraditionen der Bezirke Halle und Magdeburg*, edited and published by Bezirksverband Halle-Magdeburg der Komponisten und Musikwissenschaftler (Halle and Magdeburg, 1981), 62. Music by Fasch and Röllig is listed in the *Probsteibuch* of Coswig from 1716, specifically in an appendix to a music inventory. Performances must have taken place until the 1760s, when a cantor, organist and Collegium musicum received funds from the court of Anhalt-Zerbst; see Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1764/65, pag. 118.

166 Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 83 and Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1772/73, pag. 247, no. 46.2988 (Paul) and nos 2989 and 2990 (Catherine).

167 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1778, pag. 221, nos 1907–1911 (Alexander) and nos 1912–1915 (Catherine).

168 'das traurigste und beschämendste Kapitel der Zerbster Geschichte'; Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 84.

169 Kammer ZE, Kammerrechnungen 1779, pag. 239, nos 2322–2324 (Friedrike Auguste Sophie?), nos 2324–2329 (Paul), nos 2330–2334 ('der Fr[au] Großfürstin': our Lady the Grand Duchess).

170 Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 89. Since the number of poor people in Zerbst had increased tremendously over the years, Prince Friedrich August established a law the previous year, in 1786, which was to attract strangers and simultaneously increase the number of taxpayers: members of all faith denominations were now welcome to settle in Zerbst.



relief was felt by all citizens in Anhalt-Zerbst and Jever when Prince Friedrich August passed away in 1793; he was buried in Luxemburg.<sup>171</sup>

While the House of Anhalt-Zerbst ceased to exist with the death of Friedrich August, as he had no heir, his widow was appointed to govern the enclave of Jever in 1793, by none other than Catherine the Great.<sup>172</sup> The Zerbst city council turned to the Empress even after her brother's death, hoping for assistance with 'Kontributionszahlungen' (hefty payments left over from the Seven Years War). Catherine abated the Principdom's debts of 50,000 florins in 1796 before dying at St Petersburg.<sup>173</sup>

Thus Catherine the Great shaped not only history in general as the Empress of Russia, but also the history of Anhalt-Zerbst as a member of its princely family. This study has shown that music performed in her honour at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst ranged from an elaborate serenata and attractive secular cantata on the occasion of her wedding in 1745 to birthday cantatas and serenatas premiered at the Schloßkirche and palace over the course of almost three decades. Two individuals were responsible for providing special music on solemn occasions celebrated at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst, setting to music congratulatory texts written by the resident court poets, C. G. Jacobi and J. J. Ulich. One was long-time court Kapellmeister Johann Friedrich Fasch, who excelled as a 'Musicalien-Tausch' entrepreneur in central Germany and supplied the court orchestra of Dresden with his music for several decades. The other was his successor Johann Georg Röllig, Catherine's keyboard teacher at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst; he provided the court with compositions from at least 1745 until his death in 1790. Supported by appreciative employers, the Hofkapelle, and with its musical life, flourished at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst, and even the city's massive occupation by Prussian troops in 1758 did not immediately affect the orchestra's busy performance schedule. Since the court consistently commissioned new music from Röllig – especially in 1762/63, when Catherine ascended to the Russian throne and the Prussian occupation had ended – it comes as somewhat of a surprise that by that time the Hofkapelle had shrunk to a fifth of its original size. In addition, the latter's repertoire, as outlined in the impressive 'Concert-Stube' inventory of 1743, had been significantly reduced and adapted to accommodate the small musical forces available. Luckily, the subjects of Anhalt-Zerbst knew they could count on continued support from the Empress of Russia. As the experienced ruler of a large and powerful European country, Catherine the Great knew that the citizens of Anhalt-Zerbst appreciated her personal interest in their lives, something to which Friedrich August, her emotionally unstable brother and ruler of Anhalt-Zerbst from 1752 to 1793, never aspired.

It is truly unfortunate that compositions written and performed at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst in honour of Catherine the Great seem to have been lost. However, little known primary sources in Dessau and Zerbst have allowed us to shed light on what musical life at the German childhood home of the Russian Empress was like between her marriage in 1745 and her death in 1796.<sup>174</sup>

171 In his sermon on the occasion of the Prince's death, Pastor Sintenis of the St Trinitatis Church in Zerbst courageously noted that the Prince personified the devil and that his death had taken away Satan's power. See Ysker, 'Das Leben der Fürstin', 62–69, as well as Specht, *Geschichte der Stadt Zerbst*, 91.

172 The much loved and respected Auguste Friederike Sophie died there in 1827.

173 <[www.anhalt-zerbst.de/to\\_katha.htm](http://www.anhalt-zerbst.de/to_katha.htm)>. For a month all churches of Anhalt-Zerbst rang their bells daily for an hour in the morning to commemorate Catherine's death.

174 An analysis of musical activity at four small to large German courts – Brandenburg-Culmbach-Bayreuth, Stuttgart/Ludwigsburg, Anhalt-Zerbst and Dresden – was presented as a roundtable entitled 'The Changing Artistic Priorities of German Hofkapellen, 1715–1760' on the occasion of the Twelfth Biennial Conference on Baroque Music in Warsaw, Poland, in July 2006. Publication of these papers as part of a book on the evolution of German Hofkapellen in the eighteenth century is planned.