

# ‘FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS’: VIEWING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF JOHANN FRIEDRICH FASCH (1688–1758) THROUGH THE LENS OF FINANCE

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## ABSTRACT

*This article traces the financial profile of Johann Friedrich Fasch, Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst from 1722 to 1758, in order to gain a better understanding of how an early eighteenth-century German court musician tried to manage his money. Factors that contributed to his debt problems ranged from personal choices, matters of faith and the need to maintain a certain standard of living as director of music, to the varying degrees of financial support offered by his employers. The period during which he first began incurring debts – his student days in Leipzig – will be examined prior to viewing his professional career path through the lens of finance, beginning with Fasch’s first official appointment in Gera in 1715 and ending with his death in Zerbst in 1758. Finally, understanding the extent to which Fasch’s personal debts affected his productivity as a composer means not only dealing with the ‘Music-Wechsel’ that he organized and the contents of the court’s ‘Concert-Stube’ music inventory from 1743, but also considering Fasch’s overall work ethic and integrity as a musician.*

During the first half of the eighteenth century, the socio-economic conditions of musicians employed at German courts were as diverse as the sizes of their respective music establishments. Unlike ‘Bratengeiger’ (roast meat violinists) or ‘Bierfiedler’ (beer fiddlers), tenured vocalists and instrumentalists serving kings, dukes, bishops, princes, landgraves or margraves were typically assured a steady income over the course of years, if not decades, and many received rises throughout their careers and old-age pensions when they retired. Musicians in executive positions, such as the Kapellmeister and concertmasters, tended to earn the highest wages, enabling them to lead a reasonably comfortable life, at least compared to lower-ranking colleagues whose salaries were much smaller.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, many musicians struggled financially because of unwise lifestyle choices or experienced hardship for reasons beyond their control, such as the civic music director of Hamburg, Georg Philipp Telemann, whose wife had overspent by the remarkable sum of 5,000 Reichsthaler, and Christoph Graupner, who in 1745 was owed one year’s salary as Kapellmeister of Hesse-Darmstadt.<sup>2</sup>

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- 1 See Richard Petzoldt, ‘The Economic Conditions of the 18th-Century Musician’, in *The Social Status of the Professional Musician from the Middle Ages to the 19th Century*, ed. Walter Salmen (New York: Pendragon, 1983), 161–188, and Samantha Owens and Barbara M. Reul, ‘Das gantze Corpus derer . . . musicirenden Personen’: An Introduction to German *Hofkapellen*’, in *Music at German Courts, 1715–1760: Changing Artistic Priorities*, ed. Samantha Owens, Barbara M. Reul and Janice B. Stockigt (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2011), 1–14. Salaries varied greatly from court to court; for overviews of annual wages earned by musicians serving at the courts of Saxony-Dresden, the Saxon court of the Kingdom of Poland and the court of Brandenburg-Prussia see the tables that accompany the respective chapters in *Music at German Courts*.
- 2 See Steven Zohn, ‘Telemann in the Marketplace: The Composer as Self-Publisher’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 58/2 (2005), 336, and Ursula Kramer, ‘The Court of Hesse-Darmstadt’, in *Music at German Courts*, ed. Owens, Reul and Stockigt, 350. The court used taxes to pay out salaries and would defer the latter if necessary.



Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758), who served as court Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst – where Catherine the Great of Russia, a former princess of Anhalt-Zerbst, had spent part of her childhood – for thirty-six years, presents something of an anomaly. His starting salary in 1722 was 350 Thaler, 50 Thaler more than he had earned in his previous employment in Prague, but 50 Thaler below what the neighbouring court of Anhalt-Köthen paid Johann Sebastian Bach, and over 150 Thaler less than what Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel made as court Kapellmeister in Gotha.<sup>3</sup> In 1737 Fasch's wage increased to 400 Thaler when his employer, Prince Johann August, granted him a huge one-off retrospective payment of 442 Thaler for having served as his director of music for fifteen years.<sup>4</sup> Additional outside income was also generated by Fasch – for example in the 1720s, when he did work for a previous employer as well, and on an annual basis between 1740 and 1753, when the Kapellmeister supplied the neighbouring residence of Anhalt-Köthen with occasional works.<sup>5</sup> One would not therefore expect Fasch to have struggled much financially, given that he did not have a large family to support, own property, pursue expensive pastimes or suffer from addiction-related problems (despite Zerbst's famous *Bitterbier*). Nevertheless, by the age of forty Fasch was carrying a debt of one thousand Thaler, more than three times his annual salary as Kapellmeister. During the last decade of his life he was also forced to borrow money repeatedly from the Consistory of Anhalt-Zerbst to make ends meet.

Was Johann Friedrich Fasch a spendthrift or generally not careful with his money? Who or what could have made a significant impact on his financial situation? This article focuses on how Fasch tried to make a living as a musician. Specifically, his financial profile will be traced in order to determine those factors that led or contributed to the problems he experienced in managing his money. These range from personal choices, matters of faith and the need to maintain a certain standard of living as Kapellmeister, to the varying degrees of financial support offered by his employers. The period during which he first began incurring debts – his student days in Leipzig – will be examined prior to viewing his professional career path through the lens of finance, beginning with Fasch's first official appointment in Gera in 1715 and ending with his death in Zerbst in 1758. Did Fasch's personal debts affect his productivity as a composer? The 'Music-Wechsel', or music exchange, that he organized and the contents of the court's 'Concert-Stube' music inventory from 1743 provide valuable hints, and indeed it was Fasch's overall work ethic, as well as his integrity as a musician, that made it possible for him to make a name for himself.

## FASCH AS A STUDENT IN LEIPZIG

When *Thomaskantor* Johann Kuhnau dragged the thirteen-year old Fasch, born in Buttstedt near Weimar in 1688, 'aus dem Kothe' (out of the mud) in 1701 so that he could attend the Thomasschule, the teenager was so poor he could not even afford music lessons.<sup>6</sup> After teaching himself how to play the 'Clavier', he soon began to compose, taking inspiration from his 'geehrte[sten] und geliebtesten Freundes' (his most revered and beloved friend) Georg Philipp Telemann.<sup>7</sup> In 1708 Fasch began to study theology and law at the

3 See Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: Norton, 2000), 540. According to Armin Fett, 'Musikgeschichte der Stadt Gotha von den Anfängen bis zum Tode Gottfried Heinrich Stölzels' (PhD dissertation, Universität Freiburg im Breisgau, 1951), 239ff, Stölzel's salary throughout his tenure ranged from 280 florins to over 500 florins, plus various payments in kind ('Deputate'). The author acknowledges Bert Siegmund's advice on this matter.

4 Hermann Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', *Zerbster Jahrbuch* 2 (1906), 55.

5 Maik Richter, 'Die Köthener Hofmusik zur Zeit des Fürsten August Ludwig', in *Musik an der Zerbster Residenz* (Fasch-Studien 10), ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft (Beeskow: Ortus, 2008), 178–179, table 4. Fasch received between six and ten Thaler per composition.

6 Andreas Glöckner, 'Johann Sebastian Bach und die Universität Leipzig: Neue Quellen (Teil 1)', *Bach-Jahrbuch* 94 (2008), 173. Fasch's poverty may have been a direct result of his father's early death; see Fasch's autobiographical essay 'Lebenslauf des Hochfürstl. Anhalt-Zerbstischen Capellmeisters, Herrn Johann Friedrich Fasch', in *Historisch-Kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik* 3, ed. Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg (Berlin, 1757), 124–129.

7 Johann Friedrich Fasch, 'Lebenslauf', 125. All translation are mine unless otherwise noted.



University of Leipzig and founded the so-called ‘zweyte’ (second) *Collegium musicum*, which grew steadily to about twenty people, whose names Fasch unfortunately does not specify. Under his direction, university students and alumni sang and played not only in Leipzig coffee houses but also at the opera house on the Brühl.<sup>8</sup> Had Fasch founded this ensemble to support himself financially?<sup>9</sup> Perhaps not initially, since coffee-house owners would not typically have paid musicians. But private individuals did: in Fasch’s case *Oberhofprediger* Pipping and Leipzig’s mayor Rivinius each commissioned him to compose *Abendmusiken* for them.<sup>10</sup>

In 1710 Fasch and his *Collegium musicum* scored a major coup when being asked (and paid) by the university church, the Paulinerkirche, to perform during the Christmas season.<sup>11</sup> This had *Thomaskantor* Kuhnau up in arms. As the academic music director, he pointed out in a letter to the church council on 29 December that some of his former students were part of this ensemble, individuals whom he, in contrast to Fasch, was not allowed to recruit to play at the Paulinerkirche as per an explicit order by the Leipzig city council. Fully aware of Kuhnau’s dilemma, Fasch immediately requested permission from the council

die Musik auch weiterhin – also zum bevorstehenden Neujahrsfest sowie an den folgenden Sonn- und Feiertagen – ‘ohne Entgeld’ und ohne jedwede Hoffnung auf irgendeine finanzielle ‘Erkänlichkeit’ besorgen zu dürfen.

to continue performing [concerted] music – including for the upcoming New Year’s Day holiday as well as on the Sundays and feast days that follow – ‘without being paid’ and without any hope of receiving any kind of ‘honorarium’.

It was after all impossible for Kuhnau to look after the music in all of Leipzig’s churches himself, argued Fasch, and it would be cumbersome ‘die *Instrumenta* hin und her zu tragen’ (to carry the instruments back and forth). In contrast, there was no ‘Mangel an *musicalischen Instrumenten*’ (lack of musical instruments) in Fasch’s *Collegium musicum*, nor ‘[*müßten*] selbige nicht erst mit großen Unkosten . . . angeschaffet werden’ (did these have to be purchased at great expense in the first place).<sup>12</sup> Fasch’s main argument, however, focused on the fact that ‘kein einziger *Studiosus* aus denen *Collegiis musicis* . . . sich H. Kuhnauen zu gefallen unter seine *direction* werde zwingen lassen’ (not a single student from these *Collegia musica* . . . would allow Mr Kuhnau’s direction to be forced upon him).

This feisty letter by Fasch reveals pertinent information about his personality and his attitude towards money. His offer to perform at the Paulinerkirche for free emphasizes not only his generous nature, but also his understanding of the ‘big picture’: if his ensemble continued to impress the church council, it could possibly be swayed to start paying the musicians, and – since the students would play only under his direction – offer Fasch the position of academic music director. At least that was the scenario that Johann Heinrich Ernesti, member of the church council and principal of the Thomasschule, envisaged, and he

8 Glöckner, ‘Johann Sebastian Bach und die Universität Leipzig’, 171. The ‘first’ *Collegium musicum* had supposedly been founded by Telemann in 1702, the year after he became director of the Leipzig opera house and two years prior to his being promoted to organist and music director at the Neue Kirche in Leipzig. For an overview of which works were performed at the Leipzig opera house see Michael Maul, *Barockoper in Leipzig (1693–1720)* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 2009).

9 Johann Adam Hiller, ‘Fasch (Johann Friedrich)’, in *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Musikgelehrten und Tonkünstler neuerer Zeit* 1 (Leipzig, 1784), 63. Hiller suspected that problems of space and ‘merkantilsche Speculationen, die in Leipzig zu Hause sind’ (mercantile speculations, which are common in Leipzig) had urged Fasch to move the ensemble from his small flat into the public eye.

10 Fasch, ‘Lebenslauf’, 126, and Hiller, ‘Fasch’, 61. It is unclear which sources – in addition to Fasch’s autobiographical essay from 1757 – Hiller had consulted for his report in 1784, as he mentions not only Pipping, like Fasch, but also Rivinius.

11 This section is based on Glöckner, ‘Johann Sebastian Bach’, 170–174, from which all quotations are taken.

12 Some could have been bought with money earned collectively by the *Collegium musicum*, since large string instruments, for example, would have been expensive for cash-strapped students to purchase.



promptly advised against accepting Fasch's generous proposal. The church council eventually agreed with him in late March 1711, by which time Fasch had already applied (albeit unsuccessfully) for the vacant cantor post in Chemnitz.<sup>13</sup>

To date, archival sources that document Fasch's spending habits as a student, beyond paying the required university fees, have not come to our attention.<sup>14</sup> Food, rent, clothes and books as well as instruments, paper, pen and ink to write out the music performed by the *Collegium musicum* must have been high on his list of priorities. Over twenty years later Fasch blamed the 'von Jugend auff gehabte Entblößung aller zeit[ichen] Mittel' (lack of funds throughout his youth) and the 'Schuldenlast' (debt burden) incurred during the years spent attending school and university for his owing close to one thousand Thaler in 1728.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, the names of Fasch's Leipzig creditors and the amount of his *Wechsel-Schulden* (debt arrears) are not known. By signing a *Wechsel-Schuld*, the debtor would agree to pay on a specified date either the person who had provided him with the goods or a third party to whom that individual owed money. Since *Wechsel-Schulden* were common amongst merchants, Fasch could have purchased supplies at the popular *Messen*, or fairs, that were held three times a year in Leipzig.<sup>16</sup> It is also possible that he may have used whatever money he had made in 1711 and 1712 from composing operas and directing opera performances for the Naumburg fair to pay off some of his creditors.<sup>17</sup>

#### SEARCHING FOR THE PERFECT JOB – FROM DARMSTADT TO PRAGUE

Fasch left Leipzig at the latest in the summer of 1713, possibly with law and theology degrees in hand.<sup>18</sup> His dream was to go on an all-expenses-paid trip to Italy and study composition; his Naumburg employer, Prince Wilhelm Moritz von Saxony-Zeitz, from whom Fasch was seeking financial support, produced only a recommendation to the court of Gotha. Rather than immediately accepting permanent employment (perhaps as a clerk, given his legal training) and paying off his debts, Fasch, by then in his mid-twenties, set out to take composition lessons with his former Thomasschule prefect, Kapellmeister Christoph Graupner, and his concertmaster Gottfried Grünewald.<sup>19</sup> Fasch spent fourteen weeks at the court of Hesse-Darmstadt in early 1714, having been taken in 'mit vieler Liebe' (with much love) and been taught 'in der *Composition* auf das treulichste' (most faithfully in composition) – and at no cost.<sup>20</sup> Still, he would have had to cover his living expenses, possibly by copying music for Graupner and perhaps by participating in performances at the court.<sup>21</sup> Prior to arriving in Darmstadt, Fasch had visited a number of courts in central, western and southern Germany to perform, if not compose.<sup>22</sup> This not only would have given him the flexibility to head to Italy,

13 Glöckner, 'Johann Sebastian Bach', 173–174, and Wolfgang Eckhardt, 'Johann Friedrich Faschs Bewerbungsschreiben für Chemnitz 1711', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758) für auswärtige Hofkapellen* (Fasch-Studien 8), ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft (Dessau: Anhalt, 2001), 111–125.

14 Fasch had paid twelve Groschen in 1703 when pre-registering at the University of Leipzig, followed by one Reichsthaler in the summer of 1708 when he began his studies; see Werner Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758): Ein Beitrag zur Genealogie des Komponisten und Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters', *Ekkehard Familien- und regionalgeschichtliche Forschungen* 12/2 (2005), 36.

15 Johann Friedrich Fasch, letter to Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, 20 February 1732, in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch 1688–1758: Georg Philipp Telemann und seine zeitgenössischen Kollegen*, ed. Eitelfriedrich Thom (Michaelstein: Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein, 1981), 37.

16 The author acknowledges Michael Maul's advice on this matter.

17 It is not known how much money Fasch was paid for his Naumburg activities.

18 Sources that would confirm that he graduated from university seem not to be extant.

19 Fasch, 'Lebenslauf', 126–127.

20 Fasch, 'Lebenslauf', 127: 'ohne das geringste von mir zu nehmen'.

21 See Ursula Kramer, 'The Court of Hesse-Darmstadt', in *Music at German Courts*, ed. Owens, Reul and Stockigt, 340. Fasch copied out parts for a sacred cantata by Graupner, intended for performance in February 1714.

22 Fasch, 'Lebenslauf', 127. Fasch refers to the courts of Zeitz, Gera, Gotha, Cassel, Mühlhausen, Marburg, Giessen and Frankfurt am Main, which he visited on his way to Darmstadt, followed by stays in Ansbach, Nuremberg and



should an opportunity suddenly present itself, but also would have allowed him to gain more practical experience as a musician and make enough money to travel to Darmstadt in the first place. Perhaps he had expected to pay Graupner and Grünwald for teaching him as well. Or could this seemingly aimless wandering on Fasch’s part have been an intentional decision to avoid his creditors? A lack of relevant primary sources prevents us from answering this question and understanding the possible ramifications of his early career decisions for his debts in later life.

The acceptance of a clerical position as ‘Sekretair und Cammerschreiber’ in Gera in 1715 signals that the twenty-seven-year-old Fasch had abandoned his plans to travel to Italy as well as his freelance lifestyle in favour of more permanent employment. Johann Adam Hiller claimed in his *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Tonkünstler neuerer Zeit* from 1784 that Fasch’s decision to settle down in Gera – which, according to his autobiographical essay from 1757, he had visited prior to arriving in Darmstadt – had been informed ‘eigentlich . . . wohl der Musik wegen’ (really . . . in view of the music [in other words, the court Kapelle]), which Fasch ‘auf fünf Jahre lang besetzen und verstärken half’ (had worked with and strengthened for five years).<sup>23</sup> While it has been impossible to determine the exact nature of Fasch’s activities and his salary, extant sources confirm that he married the fifteen-year-old Anna Christina Laurentius from Roben, near Gera, on 16 November 1717.<sup>24</sup> Following the birth of their first child in January 1719, Fasch and his young family moved to Greiz with his father-in-law, who became the town’s archdeacon in March of that year. Two months later, in early May 1719, Fasch became the local *Stadtschreiber* (civic clerk) before taking on the position of town organist, most likely as of September. His total annual wage amounted to eighty florins, which he occasionally seems to have supplemented with composing.<sup>25</sup> On 3 November 1720, for example, a sacred cantata by Fasch was premiered on the occasion of the consecration of St Trinity Church in Reinsdorf, near Gera.<sup>26</sup> Tragically, Anna Christina Fasch had died a month earlier after giving birth to a son, whom Fasch later buried in March 1721. Moreover, in May the Ober- and Untergreiz council members could not come to an agreement as to whose turn it was to govern the region. This resulted in Fasch being unable to carry out his work duties or to draw a salary.

A letter of 28 October 1721 to the Counts of Greiz indicates that Fasch had removed himself to Prague, having left town without permission.<sup>27</sup> In order to avoid further repercussions (‘Ungnade’), he asked to be dismissed quickly, with ‘[mein] antheil der besoldung und accidentien biß Michael mir annoch mögte ausbezahlet werden, dergleich auch aus dem Kirch-Kasten zu hoffen und erwarten habe’ ([my] share of the salary and additional payments to be paid to me until St Michael’s Day, in the hope and expectation that the same [payments] will also be made by [my employers at] the church). His Greiz employer granted Fasch’s request in early November 1721.<sup>28</sup>

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Bayreuth. However, he fails to provide a specific timeline beyond ‘etliche’ (a number of) and ‘viele Wochen’ (several weeks) or ‘bis in das Frühjahr’ (until the spring). Archival sources that pinpoint exact times of arrival and departure or document Fasch’s activities at these courts seem not to have survived. See also Rashid-S. Pegah, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Musikleben an den Residenzen in Kassel, Ansbach, Oettingen und Bayreuth, 1714–1716’, in *Musik an der Zerzster Residenz*, 81–90.

23 Fasch, ‘Lebenslauf’, 127, and Hiller, ‘Fasch’, 63.

24 Gottschalk, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch’, 41.

25 See Hans-Rudolf Jung, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch in Greiz’, in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch*, ed Thom, 22–25.

26 Rüdiger Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch 1688–1758: Leben und Werk* (Wilhelmshaven: Noetzel, 1994), 32. For *Siehe da, eine Hütte Gottes* Fasch received ‘4 fl 16 Gl’. See also page 26: the ‘Cathallogium des Herren General-Major Frey-Herrn [Friedrich Otto] von [Wittenhorst-]Sonsfeldt’ (1678–1755), a Prussian general, lists four trio sonatas and one solo sonata by Fasch for the time around 1720.

27 Rüdiger Pfeiffer, ed., *Johann Friedrich Fasch 1688–1758: Briefe (Auswahl)* (Michaelstein: Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein, 1988), unpaginated. This letter is erroneously identified as dating from 28 August 1721.

28 Hans Rudolf Jung, *Geschichte des Musiklebens der Stadt Greiz, 1. Teil: Von den Anfängen bis zum Stadtbrand 1802* (Greiz, 1963), 84. See also Fasch, ‘Lebenslauf’, 128.



In the Bohemian capital Fasch enjoyed the highly lucrative post of ‘Componist’ for Count Wenzel Morzin.<sup>29</sup> It paid three hundred florins (Gulden) as well as ‘gute Tafel, Quartier, Holtz [und] Lichtfrey’ (good meals, lodging, firewood and candles).<sup>30</sup> Had Fasch’s ‘Herzensfreund’ (favourite friend) from Leipzig, Gottfried Heinrich Stölzel (1690–1749), facilitated this position? Prior to his appointment as the new Kapellmeister of Gera in 1718 – where he surely must have come into contact with Fasch – Stölzel had spent three years in Prague. How long Fasch intended in the first place to work in the Bohemian capital is unclear; after all, he had left his young daughter behind in Greiz and probably sent money to his in-laws to help out. Stölzel, who had advanced to Kapellmeister of Saxony-Gotha in the meantime,<sup>31</sup> apparently urged Fasch twice to consider the director of music position in Zerbst, which had become vacant in the late spring of 1722. It took a third notice, accompanied by a letter from his father-in-law reminding him of his parental duties, to make Fasch leave Prague for central Germany.<sup>32</sup> Or was he perhaps holding out for the vacant position of *Thomaskantor*, for which he had applied in July 1722?

### FASCH IN ZERBST

News about Telemann’s being selected for the Leipzig post on 11 August 1722 could have reached Fasch prior to his accepting the post of Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst. It is not known whether he visited Zerbst before being offered employment, what an audition would have involved or who the other candidates may have been.<sup>33</sup> But Johann Friedrich Wagner, a member of the Kapelle since 1720, had served for several months as interim director of music.<sup>34</sup> Unlike J. S. Bach, who had written a secular cantata for Prince Johann August’s birthday on 9 August 1722, he was not paid for his efforts, possibly because he did not compose. Perhaps Bach had been asked to apply by the court, but, if so, he had obviously decided against it, probably in light of the more intense workload and lower salary compared to Anhalt-Köthen.<sup>35</sup>

Fasch’s duties as Kapellmeister during his first year in Zerbst, beginning on 29 September (‘Michaelis’) 1722, are itemized in his autobiographical essay from 1757.<sup>36</sup> He was to provide all the music required by the court, including that for weekly services at the court chapel and concerts at the palace, as well as for annual celebrations of princely birthdays.<sup>37</sup> Since Fasch’s appointment letter is not extant, it is impossible to determine other conditions the court may have specified or to identify the job benefits he may have enjoyed,

29 Undine Wagner, ‘Das Wirken von Johann Friedrich Fasch für Prag’, in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 126–145.

30 Fasch, ‘Lebenslauf’, 128. See also Michael Talbot, ‘Wenzel von Morzin as Patron of Antonio Vivaldi’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und der italienische Stil* (Fasch-Studien 9), ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft (Dessau: Anhalt, 2003), 68. Talbot states: ‘In all probability . . . [Fasch] served as Kapellmeister in the full sense, directing Morzin’s orchestra (which according to Vivaldi’s account was an excellent one) and contributing compositions of his own to the repertoire’.

31 Bert Siegmund, ‘The Court of Saxony-Gotha’, in *Music at German Courts*, ed. Owens, Reul and Stockigt, 204–211.

32 Fasch, ‘Lebenslauf’, 128.

33 The development of the Anhalt-Zerbst Hofkapelle before, during and after Fasch’s tenure as Kapellmeister is discussed in Barbara M. Reul, ‘The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst’, in *Music at German Courts*, ed. Owens, Reul and Stockigt, 259–286, while employment practices are examined in Barbara M. Reul, ‘Court Musicians at Anhalt-Zerbst: New Sources for Eighteenth-Century Employment Practices’, in *Haydn and His Contemporaries: Selected Papers from the Joint Conference of the Society for Eighteenth-Century Music and the Haydn Society of North America, Claremont, CA, 29 February – 2 March 2008*, ed. Sterling Murray (Ann Arbor: Steglein, forthcoming).

34 Barbara M. Reul, ‘Musical Life at the Court of Anhalt-Zerbst: An Examination of Unknown Primary Sources at the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau’, in *Musik an der Zerbster Residenz*, 197.

35 Barbara M. Reul, ‘“O vergnügte Stunden . . .”: Ein unbekannter Textdruck zu einer Geburtstagskantate J. S. Bachs für den Fürsten Johann August von Anhalt-Zerbst’, *Bach-Jahrbuch* 85 (1999), 7–17.

36 Fasch, ‘Lebenslauf’, 128–129.

37 From 1746 onward Fasch also composed music annually to mark the occasion of Catherine’s birthday. See Barbara M. Reul, ‘Catherine the Great and the Role of Celebratory Music at the Court of Anhalt-Zerbst’, *Eighteenth-Century Music* 3/2 (2006), 269–309.



such as free meals and lodging, permission to travel and being allowed to earn additional income from outside activities.<sup>38</sup> Entries in the extant court account books detail only his annual wage, 350 Thaler (fifty Thaler more than his predecessor, *Kapelldirektor* Johann Baptist Kuch), and annual payments-in-kind (‘Deputate’), as well as honoraria paid during official times of mourning at the court. Moreover, it is likely that Fasch would have been consulted or been personally involved whenever music and instruments were bought to help expand the princely collection.<sup>39</sup>

When exactly young Sophia Fasch joined her father in Zerbst, or which part of town and type of residence they lived in, is unknown.<sup>40</sup> But Fasch could definitely have afforded a nanny or a maid, or both; one of his unmarried sisters from Suhl could also have joined them occasionally, if not permanently.<sup>41</sup> Primary sources that document the actual cost of living in Zerbst during Fasch’s tenure are few and far between. Extant court account records shed light on how much the court paid for certain items, but it is impossible to determine whether Fasch would have been charged the same or less by merchants, where he shopped or whether he enjoyed vegetables and fruits straight from his own garden. Fasch was probably also not able to afford many of the *Genußmittel*, or baked goods, confectionery and alcohol, in which the princely family indulged increasingly: related expenditures rose by forty-one per cent over four decades, compared to nearly twelve per cent for basic food items. Otherwise, the court’s overall spending habits during the first half of the eighteenth century reflect the external, lasting splendour that rulers strove for at the time, regardless of rank and income.<sup>42</sup>

The first few months as Kapellmeister must not only have involved very intense work, but must also have been an emotional roller-coaster for Fasch. Neither Telemann nor Graupner (the runner-up) accepted the position of *Thomaskantor* in the end, and so the Leipzig mayor, *Hofrath* von Lange, asked Fasch to reapply for the post in November. Fasch, however, felt he could not leave his employer after only a few weeks of service and also stressed that he was not willing to teach at the Thomasschule.<sup>43</sup>

Otherwise, Fasch seems never to have regretted choosing the Kapellmeister position in Zerbst over the *Thomaskantorat* in Leipzig, even though the latter would have been the more prestigious and lucrative of the

38 Two employment contracts for *Kapelle* members, both from 1719, are extant; see Reul, ‘Court Musicians at Anhalt-Zerbst’. It is unclear whether successful applicants would have been able to rely on their future employer to assist with costs incurred prior to their official appointments or were to cover these themselves. Johann Stamitz, for instance, who in 1748 considered leaving Mannheim for Stuttgart, pointed out that he would ‘suffer [enormous] financial damages (because of the house furniture which here [at Mannheim] must be sold at a loss, but there [in Stuttgart] built anew)’ and that he would have to pay for ‘the journey, rendered more difficult because of my family’ at his own expense. Cited by Eugene Wolf, ‘Driving a Hard Bargain: Johann Stamitz’s Correspondence with Stuttgart (1748)’, in *Festschrift Christoph-Hellmuth Mahling zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Axel Beer, Kristina Pfarr and Wolfgang Ruf (Tutzing: Schneider, 1997), volume 2, 1553–1571.

39 Reul, ‘The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst’, 265–277.

40 It is likely that Fasch had been given a house in the *Schloßfreiheit* area of town, which is adjacent to the palace grounds and boasts a number of *Kavaliershäuser* in which higher-ranking court officials resided. See also a primary source extant at the Landeshauparchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau (hereafter: D-LHASA, DE), Z 99, Amt Zerbst, ‘Einwohner- und Musterungslisten’, volume 8. It indicates that in 1753 Fasch did not own a house in any of the five town quarters.

41 These were Regina Rosina Fasch (1690–?) and Sophia Fasch (1692–1726); see Gottschalk, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch’, 41. Since they shared the same first name, Fasch’s sister Sophia may have been godmother to her niece and therefore obliged to help raise her. Was she perhaps also the unnamed sister Fasch mentioned in a letter to Hermann August Francke on 21 September 1726? See Elena Sawtschenko, ‘Briefe von Johann Friedrich Fasch im Archiv der Frankeschen Stiftungen Halle’, in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 104–105.

42 Bettina Schmidt, ‘Musikpflege am Zerbster Hof um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts’, in *Johann Friedrich Fasch und sein Wirken für Zerbst* (Fasch-Studien 6), ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft (Dessau: Anhalt, 1997), 323–330. Interestingly, *Kapelle* members’ salaries rose only by 35.5 per cent, compared to 94.25 per cent for court servants in general. See also Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, Appendix 3, ‘Money and Living Costs in Bach’s Time’, 539–541, and Owens and Reul, ‘Das gantze *Corpus* derer . . . *musicirenden* Personen’, 1–14.

43 What or who had caused this aversion to classroom instruction is unknown, but Fasch was still opposed to teaching at a school in 1755, when he applied for the position of cantor in Freiberg/Saxony.



two. His decision to stay put must have been influenced by his relationship with Prince Johann August of Anhalt-Zerbst, himself a trained musician.<sup>44</sup> The Prince, for example, seemed not to mind that Fasch travelled frequently, privately as well as on business. On these trips Fasch occasionally supplemented his Kapellmeister salary: Table 1 provides an overview of his documented travels over the course of three decades (from 1725 to 1754) as well as the additional income Fasch generated by way of 'Auswärtige Musicalische Arbeiten' (music-related employment outside of Zerbst).<sup>45</sup>

From the overview provided by Table 1 it is evident that there had to have been an understanding, if not an official arrangement, between the princes of Anhalt-Zerbst and their Kapellmeister as to paid leaves of absence. On the one hand, even short(er) trips – nearby Köthen, for example, involved a ferry ride across the river Elbe – would have left the Kapelle without a director for several days; if the destination was far away, like Dresden or Prague, Fasch could have been away for weeks.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, certain court musicians would have been very busy themselves, as they held other jobs, a common occurrence at eighteenth-century German courts. Johann George Sattler, for example, received fifty Thaler for instructing the page boys at court in fencing, while Johann (Christian?) Brasch was required by the court to teach members of the Palace Guard how to play the oboe and the violin.<sup>47</sup> Entries in the Zerbst court account books also indicate that whoever took over Fasch's duties was not remunerated separately; that individual must, therefore, have either volunteered or been ordered to step in during the Kapellmeister's absence, especially during the 1720s. In early 1725 (if not in fact from late 1724) Fasch spent at least six weeks in Prague and received forty-eight Gulden from his former employer, Count Morzin, for non-specified, but probably music-related, activities.<sup>48</sup> A few months later, in May 1725, the court of Anhalt-Köthen paid Fasch even more, fifty Thaler, for '[sich] alhier hören laßen' (having performed here).<sup>49</sup> Such a significant sum implies more than one performance by Fasch and that works were commissioned by the court. Leaving town got much easier in the 1730s, with the newly recruited violinist and later concertmaster Carl Höckh (1707–1773) looking after concerts at the palace when Fasch was away and co-supervising services at the chapel with court organist and cellist Johann Georg Röllig (1710–1790), Anhalt-Zerbst's last Kapellmeister.

Only one of Fasch's many trips was financially supported by the court of Anhalt-Zerbst. In early October 1726 he left for Dresden 'wegen Musicalischer Angelegenheiten' (because of musical matters).<sup>50</sup> In fact, Fasch

44 Reul, 'The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst', 261–271.

45 At home, Fasch also received a fee of up to twenty Thaler for providing funeral music each time a member of the princely family died; see Reul, 'The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst', 272–273.

46 See <<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postkutsche>> (19 August 2010). In 1700 the average speed of mail coaches was two kilometres an hour; by 1850 it had reached ten kilometres an hour. What kind of transport system had been available to citizens of Anhalt-Zerbst during the first half of the eighteenth century (regular or express coach, or both), and whether Fasch possibly owned, rented or borrowed a carriage and horses for travel purposes, cannot be determined. For a general overview see Klaus Beyrer, 'The Mail-Coach Revolution: Landmarks in Travel in Germany between the Seventeenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *German History* 24/3 (2006), 375–386. See also H. Zeidler, '104. Verzeichnis der in hochfürstlicher Hauptstadt Zerbst abgehenden Landkutschen im Jahre 1800', *Alt-Zerbst* (1904), unpaginated. According to this source, at the turn of the nineteenth century, carriages left Zerbst every Friday for Halle/Saale (via Köthen), Magdeburg and Wittenberg (via Coswig), and on Thursdays for Leipzig (via Delitzsch).

47 Reul, 'Court Musicians at Anhalt-Zerbst'.

48 See Wagner, 'Das Wirken von Johann Friedrich Fasch für Prag', 127, and Manfred Fechner, 'Zur Datierung von Johann Friedrich Faschs "Dresdner" Vesperkompositionen und Messen – Annotation', 57–58, both in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*. Bohemian watermarks in paper used by Fasch for liturgical compositions that are transmitted in Dresden hint at the possibility that he may have already written them while in Prague during the mid-1720s. Regarding monetary units in use at the time see Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 539.

49 D-LHASA, DE, Z 73, Kammerrechnungen Köthen 1724/25, Tit. 5, no. 307.

50 Sawtschenko, 'Briefe von Johann Friedrich Fasch', 104–105. The 'kleine Reise nach Halle' (short trip to Halle/Saale) that Fasch had taken during the previous year could have led him to relatives on his father's side who resided in the *Saalestadt*, including descendants of his great aunt Margarethe Catharina Fasch. She had been married to a descendant of Philipp Melancton, a collaborator with Martin Luther. See Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch', 39.

Table 1 Documented trips taken by Johann Friedrich Fasch and additional income generated, 1725–1754

| Year                          | Destination                    | Fasch’s Activities                                                  | Income     | Comments                                                                                                    | References                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1725                          | Prague, January                | ‘Composition’ for Count Morzin                                      | 48 Gulden  | ‘for six weeks’                                                                                             | Wagner, ‘Das Wirken von Johann Friedrich Fasch für Prag’, 127                                                 |
|                               | Köthen, May                    | Performs at court                                                   | 50 Thaler  | May have included compositions by Fasch                                                                     | D-LHASA, DE, Z 73, Kammerrechnungen Köthen 1724/25, Tit. 5, Nr. 307                                           |
|                               | Halle, autumn?                 | Unclear: to visit relatives?                                        |            |                                                                                                             | Letter by Fasch to H. A. Francke, 21 September 1726, in Sawtschenko, ‘Briefe von Johann Friedrich Fasch’, 104 |
| 1726                          | Carlovy Vary / Töplitz, summer | May have accompanied Prince Johann August to spa                    |            | Unknown whether Fasch also accompanied Zerbst princes to Jever (enclave of Zerbst) on their summer holidays | Sawtschenko, ‘Briefe von Johann Friedrich Fasch’, 104                                                         |
|                               | Prague?                        | ‘Paid to Master Fasch for composition’                              | 48 Gulden  |                                                                                                             | Wagner, ‘Das Wirken von Johann Friedrich Fasch für Prag’, 127                                                 |
| October 1726 – April (?) 1727 | Dresden                        | Advanced studies in composition with Heinichen and Pisendel; other? | 275 Thaler | Unclear who took care of daughter Sophia – Suhl relatives?                                                  | D-LHASA, DE, Z 92, Kammer Zerbst, Kammerrechnungen 1726/27, 226                                               |
| 1726                          | Suhl, November?                | To attend funeral of sister Sophia Fasch?                           |            |                                                                                                             | Gottschalk, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch’, 41                                                                      |

Table 1 *continued*

| Year | Destination       | Fasch's Activities                                               | Income        | Comments                                                                                                                                            | References                                                                                                              |
|------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1727 | Groß-Kmehlen?     | Met Johanna Helena Simers (in Dresden?)                          |               | Meeting with future in-laws to ask for Johanna Helena Simers's hand in marriage?                                                                    |                                                                                                                         |
| 1728 | Groß-Kmehlen      | Wedding on 21 April 1728                                         |               |                                                                                                                                                     | Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch', 41                                                                                |
| 1729 | Köthen, March     | Funeral of Prince Leopold von Anhalt-Köthen                      |               | J. S. Bach attended, composed BWV244a, 'Klagt, Kinder, klagt es aller Welt'; unnamed musicians from surrounding regions, including Zerbst, involved | Wolff, <i>Johann Sebastian Bach</i> , 206, and Richter, 'Die Köthener Hofmusik zur Zeit des Fürsten August Ludwig', 169 |
| 1730 | Groß-Kmehlen, May | Picked up wife and children 'after a short stay'                 |               | Johanna Friedericka Fasch born in Groß-Kmehlen on 3 May 1730                                                                                        | Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch', 41                                                                                |
| 1731 | Köthen, December  | Spent time there 'before Christmas Day'                          |               |                                                                                                                                                     | Second letter by Fasch to Zinzendorf, 20 February 1732, <i>Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 40             |
| 1732 | Köthen, April     | Funeral of Princess Christiane Johanne Aemilie von Anhalt-Köthen | 20–25 Thaler? | Set to music texts by Pietist court clergyman Johann Ludwig Conrad Allendorf (1693–1773)                                                            | Fasch's fourth letter to Zinzendorf, 4 May 1732, in <i>Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 35, 39             |

Table 1 *continued*

| Year | Destination                         | Fasch's Activities                                               | Income | Comments                                                                                          | References                                                                                              |
|------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      | Köthen, May                         | Daughter Sophia began education in 'Fräulein[-] Stifft'          |        | Boarding school run by Margarethe von Schlegel and Charlotte Sophie von Dennstädt                 | Fasch's sixth letter to Zinzendorf, 29 August 1732, in Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 67     |
|      | Halle, summer                       | Met Bohemian preacher Lieberthan (also Liperda)                  |        |                                                                                                   | Fasch's seventh letter to Zinzendorf, 27 December 1732, in Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 68 |
|      | Köthen, August                      | Listened to sermon by court preacher Höffer von Lobenstein       |        | Brother-in-law of Allendorf                                                                       | Fasch's letter from 29 August 1732, in Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 67                     |
| 1735 | Groß-Kmehlen                        | Summer trip with family?                                         |        | August Friedrich Christian Fasch (3 January 1735–22 September 1735)                               | Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch', 41                                                                |
|      | Zittau?                             | Audition for 'Director Musices' position?                        |        | Marpurg, 'Lebenslauf', 129: one of the three offers of employment Fasch received while at Zerbst? | Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 60                                                            |
| 1737 | Köthen, May                         | Burial of Assessor J. F. Moogk                                   |        |                                                                                                   | Fasch's tenth letter to Zinzendorf, 11 May 1737, in Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 70        |
|      | Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Wernigerode | Collecting debts from former composition student J. C. Seyffarth |        | Left Zerbst for one month after rumour that the Prince had fired Fasch                            | Fasch's tenth letter to Zinzendorf, 11 May 1737, in Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 70        |

Table 1 *continued*

| Year              | Destination                                                           | Fasch's Activities                       | Income                | Comments                                                                                                                | References                                                                      |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1738              | Eisenach?                                                             | Purchase of a Cremonese violin           |                       | Purchased from a widow named Koch, for personal use?                                                                    | Wäschke, 'Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch', 57                              |
| 1741–1753         | [Köthen?]                                                             | Composing for the court of Anhalt-Köthen | 246 Thaler 6 Groschen | Total of twenty-five vocal works, on the occasion of princely birthdays, Christmas and New Year's Day                   | Richter, 'Die Köthener Hofmusik zur Zeit des Fürsten August Ludwig', 178–179    |
| 1744              | Freiberg, Saxony?                                                     | Audition for vacant cantor position?     |                       | Marpurg, 'Lebenslauf', 129: one of the three offers of employment Fasch received while at Zerbst?                       | Maul, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat', 238–239             |
| 1747–1748         | Köthen?                                                               | Visiting Carl Fasch?                     |                       | An ailing eleven-year old Carl is sent to Köthen for several months to stay with an unidentified 'Freund' of the family | Zelter, <i>Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch</i> , 9              |
| 1749–1750<br>1751 | No trips documented, but private travel possible<br>Strelitz / Berlin | Picking up Carl Fasch?                   |                       | Visit of <i>Musikübende Gesellschaft</i> with concertmaster Höckh                                                       | Pfeiffer, <i>Johann Friedrich Fasch</i> , 72                                    |
| 1752              | Groß-Kmehlen, February                                                | Wedding of Fasch's sister-in-law         |                       | Purchase of new clothes for Johanna Friedericka, age 22, to wear at wedding                                             | Letter by Fasch, 11 July 1752, in Musketa, <i>Was dieser Geldmangel</i> , 18–19 |

Table 1 *continued*

| Year | Destination                             | Fasch's Activities                                                | Income | Comments                                                                                                    | References                                                                                                                       |
|------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|      | Kloster Bergen near Magdeburg           | To drop off Carl at school?                                       |        |                                                                                                             | Zelter, <i>Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch</i> , 11                                                              |
| 1753 | Dresden                                 | With Carl (and Johanna Friedericka?)                              |        | Attendance of Catholic service at Hofkirche with Carl, where 'a <i>Missa tota</i> by Zelenka was performed' | Zelter, <i>Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch</i> , 12                                                              |
| 1754 | Groß-Kmehlen, May?<br>Magdeburg, summer | Death of Fasch's father-in-law<br>Recovering from serious illness |        |                                                                                                             | Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch', 41<br>Letter by Fasch, 19 September 1754, in Musketa, <i>Was dieser Geldmangel</i> , 58–59 |



worked closely with two old Leipzig colleagues, court Kapellmeister Johann David Heinichen and violinist (later concertmaster) Johann Georg Pisendel, and composed Catholic court music to be performed by first-class artists from across Europe who were employed at Dresden by the Saxon Elector Friedrich August, a patron of the arts and architecture.<sup>51</sup> Fasch predicted that he was going to be in Dresden for about seven months, until Easter or mid-April 1727, but he may have stayed longer, since the court of Anhalt-Zerbst sent him the remarkable sum of 275 Thaler in addition to his annual Kapellmeister salary of 350 Thaler (see Table 1). Where in Dresden he resided and specifically what he spent his money on is not known, but it is conceivable that Prince Johann August had ordered Fasch to purchase music and instruments for the court, and to recruit suitable musicians for the Kapelle.<sup>52</sup> Fasch could also have returned to Zerbst while being stationed in Saxony, delivering new music and instruments for the Kapelle, and reporting to the artistically inclined Prince about his progress, if not receiving new instructions from him. Sadly, Fasch's sister Sophia died in Suhl in November 1726, which may have encouraged him to visit his relatives in Thuringia. Perhaps they looked after young Sophia so that her father could focus on his planned activities in Dresden.

That Fasch was not composing or performing day and night is evident, however, from his involvement in so-called *Erbauungstunden* (devotional hours). These had been organized by the influential religious reformer and Lutheran Pietist Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760).<sup>53</sup> He proposed individual piety as an alternative to Lutheran Orthodoxy, the main faith denomination in central Germany.<sup>54</sup> It may have been at one of Zinzendorf's meetings – which were, in fact, Bible studies disguised as *Tafelmusiken* – that Fasch met his future wife, Johanna Helena Simers, who hailed from Groß-Kmehlen near Dresden. When the Kapellmeister first publicly proclaimed himself a Pietist is unknown, but that he did so may seem to have been inevitable, given that Fasch had been in contact with Halle's main proponent of Pietism, August Hermann Francke (1663–1727), prior to October 1726.<sup>55</sup> In any case, Fasch could have shared the news with his (probably surprised) Lutheran Orthodox colleagues and superiors as soon as he returned to Zerbst in 1727.

## LIFE AFTER MARRIAGE

When the long-time widower and single parent wed in spring 1728, his life changed forever – and for the better. Judging from a letter written to Zinzendorf in 1732, Fasch was deeply in love with his young wife

51 See Janice B. Stockigt, 'Fasch Visits Dresden 1726–1727: His Liturgical Works for the Catholic Court Church of Dresden', in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 29–56, and 'The Court of Saxony-Dresden', in *Music at German Courts*, ed. Owens, Reul and Stockigt, 17–50.

52 Two musicians relocated to Zerbst in 1727: oboist Johann George Fröde(l), born in 1683 in Königstein near Dresden, on 29 September, and an alto soloist named Karl (Johann?) Ludwig Weißflock on 24 June; see Reul, 'The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst', 267. Moreover, a collection of sacred cantatas entitled 'Musicalische Andachten, der sogenannte Dresdner Jahrgang' (Musical Devotions, the so-called Dresden Cycle) formed part of the extensive Anhalt-Zerbst court music library and included music by Telemann, Graupner and J. S. Bach. Whether Fasch or someone else had assembled this cycle is unclear. See Marc-Roderich Pfau, "'Pasticcio" Techniques in the Eighteenth Century: New Insights into Fasch's "Dresden" Cantata Cycle', *Faschiana* 14 (2010), 5–6.

53 Martin Petzoldt, 'J. F. Fasch als Briefkorrespondent des Grafen Zinzendorfs: 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*, ed. Eitelfriedrich Thom (Michaelstein bei Blankenburg: Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein, 1984), 34.

54 On the topic of Pietism in Saxony see Tanya Kevorkian, *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig, 1650–1750* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

55 See also Elena Sawtschenko, *Die Kantaten von Johann Friedrich Fasch im Lichte der pietistischen Frömmigkeit: Pietismus und Musik* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2009), 24. Fasch could also have come into contact with supporters of Francke who lived in Dresden, for instance *Oberhofprediger* Bernhard Walther Marperger, one of Francke's students.



(she was half her husband’s age) and they shared the same ‘geistigen Hunger’ (spiritual hunger).<sup>56</sup> Most importantly, Frau Fasch was willing to take on her husband’s Leipzig debts and those caused by ‘andere[n] hier in Zerbst von Gott mir zugeschickte[n] schwere[n] Creützes-Umstände’ (other terrible burdens sent by God to me here in Zerbst), amounting to one thousand Thaler. Fasch reports proudly that his wife made every effort

dann gleich anfangs, ihre Haushaltung auf das genaueste einzurichten, wodurch wir denn auch, ob schon unter unzehl[igen] Troublen und Beängstigungen, in der Zeit von 3 Jahren an die 600 Thlr. getilget haben.<sup>57</sup>

from the very beginning [of our union], to be very careful with her household budget which made it possible for us, despite countless troubles and fears, to pay back close to six hundred Thaler over the course of three years [between 1728 and 1731].

It is clear that Fasch was not telling Count Zinzendorf the whole story in this letter, leaving him (and us) in the dark about who or what had caused his life in Zerbst to become unbearable. Why had Fasch been unable to lower his debt permanently before 1728 – had he perhaps been ashamed even to try? After all, he had been earning a good wage since 1721, supplementing his income with commissions, if not enjoying free housing. But his executive position as Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst would have made him eminently creditworthy in and outside of town.

In June 1728, two months after his nuptials, Fasch contacted Johann Mattheson, editor of the volume *Der musicalische Patriot*, to request that he be put in touch with ‘ietzt–lebenden Capellmeistern, Cantoribus und anderen guten Componisten’ (fellow Kapellmeisters, cantors and other capable composers) in an attempt to engage them in a ‘Brief- und Music-Wechsel’ (exchange of music and letters).<sup>58</sup> Specifically, Fasch wished to exchange cantata cycles, and for good reason: composing, rehearsing and directing these compositions ate up most of his working hours. By programming cantata cycles by colleagues, he would not only lighten his workload, but be able to focus his energy on composing special music that was required by the court, most importantly new settings of the gospel passion and the mass ordinary, as well as annual cantatas and serenatas for princely birthdays. Moreover, the musicians and their audiences would be exposed to new, high-quality repertoire, thus successfully counteracting the musical isolation of Zerbst.

Or was he perhaps trying to carve out even more time in order to provide the Dresden court with instrumental compositions of his own – and make a hefty profit? The Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden holds a great number of works by Fasch that were sent to the Saxon metropolis over the course of about twenty-five years, at least until Pisendel’s death in 1755.<sup>59</sup> However, money never seems to have changed hands. In fact the Anhalt-Zerbst court music inventory from 1743, the ‘Concert-Stube’, whose contents were stored in a large (rehearsal?) room in the basement of the palace’s west wing, implies that scores were used as means of exchange.<sup>60</sup> Of the nearly five hundred compositions

56 Fasch, letter to Zinzendorf, 20 February 1732, in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch*, ed. Thom, 37. Ten letters by Fasch to Zinzendorf, dating from 1731 to 1737, survive at Herrnhut, several of which have been examined from a theological perspective in Petzoldt, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch als Briefkorrespondent’, and Sawtschenko, *Die Kantaten von Johann Friedrich Fasch*. No letters to Fasch by the Count seem to have been transmitted.

57 Fasch, letter to Zinzendorf, 20 February 1732, in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 37.

58 Fasch’s letter to Mattheson is reproduced in Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 78.

59 Up to now, twenty-five concertos, sixty-one orchestral suites, twelve sonatas and thirteen sinfonias by Fasch have been found at Dresden, as part of the ‘[Noten-] Kabinett II’ (Music Cabinet II). Several contain entries by Pisendel, thus shedding light on specific aspects of performance practice at the Dresden court. All of Fasch’s music in Dresden is in the process of being digitized; see <[www.schrank-zwei.de](http://www.schrank-zwei.de)>, which can also be searched via <<http://opac.rism.info>>.

60 Eitelfriedrich Thom, ed., *Concert–Stube des Zerbster Schlosses: Inventarverzeichnis aufgestellt im März 1743*, facsimile edition (Michaelstein bei Blankenburg: Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein, 1983). The inventory contains no



contributed by close to ninety composers that are itemized in the inventory, the majority of music was written by Fasch, followed by Vivaldi (with whom Pisendel had studied in Italy) and Fasch's favourite German composer, Telemann, in addition to other, primarily 'ietzt-lebenden' (contemporary) European colleagues.<sup>61</sup> That musical life at the court must, therefore, have been vibrant is confirmed by the many guest artists who frequented Anhalt-Zerbst during Fasch's thirty-six-year tenure.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, Fasch desperately wished to leave Zerbst in the 1730s, when members of the Lutheran-Orthodox clergy at court, who were opposed to his commitment to Pietism, were making his life miserable. For example, in his letter to Zinzendorf from 20 February 1732 he noted that *Oberhofprediger* Töpfer ensured that Fasch's plan to borrow three hundred Thaler from the court in January 1732 was thwarted by his son-in-law, *Hoffcammerrath* von Rebhun.<sup>63</sup> What exactly Fasch needed this sum for is unclear. Since he still owed over four hundred Thaler at the time, was it perhaps an attempt to consolidate his debts and deal with fewer creditors?

That same year Fasch also applied to the (more pietistically inclined) court of Copenhagen and for a Kapellmeister position in Zittau in 1735, but unsuccessfully. Had he left, he would have taken with him not only his beloved wife, but also their daughter, Johanna Friedericka, born in Groß-Kmehlen on 3 May 1732, and a son, August Friedrich. Born on 3 January 1735 in Zerbst, this son died nine short months later in Groß-Kmehlen, on 22 September 1735. The baby boy had two very special godparents, Prince Johann August and his wife, Princess Hedwig Friedericke – a high distinction for Kapellmeister Fasch.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to providing for a growing family, Fasch may also have financially supported the Institutum Judaicum, the first German Protestant mission to the Jews in the 1730s. In a letter from 24 July 1735 to the Institute's founder, Johann Heinrich Callenberg (1694–1760), Fasch referred to one louis d'or – a considerable sum, equivalent to five Reichsthaler – which he had been entrusted with by unnamed persons (fellow Pietists?) to pass on to Callenberg:<sup>65</sup>

Sie haben vielmahlen Hertzlich gewünschet, daß dieses Werck in Seegen fortgehen, und viele Früchte davon zum Vorschein kommen mögten, wie Sie denn auch beÿgeschoßenen *Louisd'oor* mir gnädigst überlieffert haben, an Ew: hochEdl: solchen, zu einigem beÿtrag oberwehnten *Instituti*, zu übermachen.<sup>66</sup>

Many times have they wished with all their hearts that this work would continue with blessings, and that it would bear much fruit. To that end, they delivered to me the enclosed *louis d'or* to pass on to Your Grace in support of the above-mentioned *Institutum*.

How much of the sum Fasch contributed himself is unknown, but this emphasizes the trust he had earned and the respect he enjoyed amongst his friends and supporters.<sup>67</sup>

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information on the provenance of the works. This makes it difficult to determine in which context the music had been received by Fasch, whether directly from Dresden or as part of his 'Music-Wechsel' activities. But Fasch definitely sent cantata cycles to colleagues who performed them, most importantly Telemann in Hamburg in 1732–1733.

61 The contents of the 'Concert-Stube' have been transcribed in Bernhard Engelke, *Johann Friedrich Fasch: Sein Leben und seine Tätigkeit als Vokalkomponist* (Halle: C. A. Kämmerer, 1908), Anhang II.

62 Reul, 'The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst', 267–271.

63 Fasch, letter to Zinzendorf, 20 February 1732, in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 37.

64 Gottschalk, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch', 37.

65 Sawtschenko, *Die Kantaten von Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 27–38. That Fasch must have been supporting the Institute for years is evident from a letter he wrote to the *Hauptmann* E. M. von List, who acted as 'Geschäftsführer' (business manager) for Callenberg; see Sawtschenko, 27, note 18. As for individuals who could have donated money, the Zerbst *Oberhofmarschall* Christian aus dem Winckel is mentioned by name; fellow Pietists in Zerbst would have included two members of the *Kapelle*, concertmaster Carl Höckh and oboist Johann George Fröde(l).

66 Sawtschenko, *Die Kantaten von Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 36–37.

67 Sawtschenko, *Die Kantaten von Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 32, doubts that Fasch made any monetary contribution at the time.



A horrifying mobbing incident shook Fasch’s world in early 1737 and caused several months of ‘große[s] lärm[n]en’ (literally, ‘a great deal of noise’; here, ‘quite a stir’).<sup>68</sup> In a letter to Count Zinzendorf from 11 May of that year he recalled the following events:

[Als der Assessor Moogk] . . . beygesetzt wurde, u[nd] ich mitt andern freunden mitt zu seiner beerdigung hinaus fuhre, kommen indeß verschiedene Personen zu meiner Frauen, u[nd] bez[e]ügen ihr Mittleyden, weil sie gehört, daß ich von Serenissimi Durl[au]cht] meine Dimission bekommen; unter solchen war der Medicus, Hr. Dr. Kühn, von dem ich den andern Tag erfuhre, daß es üm deßwillen geschehen, weil ich mitt dem seel. auff pietistische Weise gebethet u. ihn auch auff solche art im Sarge eingeseget hätte[;] über dieses [ich] auch die Schwärmer von Cöthen u. der orten, immer beherbergte[.]<sup>69</sup>

When [the Assessor Moogk] was buried . . . , and I went out to the burial together with several friends, various persons visited my wife and expressed their sorrow about the news that I had been dismissed by His Grace. Among these people was the physician Dr Kühn, from whom I learned the reasons [for my bogus dismissal] on the following day: I had prayed in a Pietist manner and given him [Moogk] a blessing of that kind [as he lay] in the coffin; moreover, I had always allowed the enthusiasts from Köthen and other [such Pietist] places to stay with me.

Whether or not Fasch immediately refuted the accusations is unclear. However, his decision not to show up for work on the grounds of physical exhaustion definitely turned out to be a mistake:

Da [ich] nun, durch das viele wachen so abgemattet war, daß den folgenden Sontag nicht in die SchloßKirche, u. an meinen Dienst gehen konte, wurde das Volck in dieser Meynung bestärket, weßwegen denn alles, was noch einige Forderung an mich hatte, mich mitt gröster Heftigkeit anfihle.

Since [I] was too tired to attend to my duties at the court chapel the following Sunday because [I had] been awake so much, the congregation was encouraged to think [that I had indeed been dismissed]. As a consequence, every person to whom I still owed something attacked me with the greatest intensity.

Having his creditors turn up at his doorstep all at once must have been a huge embarrassment for Fasch and severely tarnished his reputation as *Hofkapellmeister*. He escaped this living nightmare by quickly leaving town to chase after one of his own creditors, a former composition student named Johann Caspar Seyffarth (or Seyfert, 1697–1767). We do not know if Fasch actually received permission from his employer to travel, but he had evidently experienced ‘viele Erquickung in geistl. [Dingen]’ (much refreshment in regard to spiritual [matters]), specifically in Magdeburg, Halberstadt and Wernigerode. Documents confirming that he had indeed been paid by Seyfert seem not to be extant; upon his return to Zerbst, Fasch must certainly have been relieved to hear that he had been fully exonerated.

According to Fasch, his enemies – albeit unidentified ones – had maliciously spread these rumours so that his creditors would indeed come and haunt him; apparently, Fasch still owed 250 Thaler, or over half a year’s salary, to at least one of them (‘da unter Ihnen noch auff 250 Thlr schuldig bin’). But what had hurt Fasch the

68 See Fasch’s tenth letter to Zinzendorf, written on 11 May 1737 (Pfeiffer, *Johann Friedrich Fasch*, 70). On Fasch and his relationship with Zinzendorf see Thilo Daniel, ‘Fasch und Zinzendorf: Bemerkungen zur Geschichte eines Briefwechsel’, in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters*, 74–84, and Martin Petzoldt, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch als Briefkorrespondent des Grafen Zinzendorf’, 32–43.

69 See also Karl Friedrich Zelter, *Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch, 1736–1800*, ed. Eitelfriedrich Thom (Michaelstein: Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein, 1983), 9. Zelter failed to provide the identity of a ‘Freund’ of Kapellmeister Fasch from Köthen, but described him as ‘ein geselliger, heiterer Mann, der . . . sich öfter in Zerbst aufhielt und bei dem alten Fasch wohnte’ (a sociable, pleasant man who . . . stayed on occasion in Zerbst, where he resided with Fasch senior).



most was that his enemies wished for ‘die noch wenigen Seelen’ (the few poor souls) who had been supporting him in the past to turn away from him completely. Was their plan successful? Yes, noted Fasch in his letter to Zinzendorf, in as much as he had been experiencing an ‘unbeschreiblich[e] bedrängniß’ (indescribable distress) ever since and had needed to push himself through it all ‘auff wunderbahre art’ (in a wonderful [miraculous?] way). Fasch also expressed the wish to resume his studies in theology, which implies either that he had finished only his law degree earlier, or that he was considering further studies.

The question of whether the Prince or any of his court officials ever got involved in this matter, and how Frau Fasch coped during her husband’s absence, remains open. But an entry in the court account books from mid-June 1737 confirms that Fasch’s endurance had allowed him to benefit from a most generous financial gesture on Prince Johann August’s part (see Figure 1).<sup>70</sup>

Accordingly, all tenured court musicians received a permanent rise at that time. Fasch’s wage rose the most, by fifty Thaler to four hundred Thaler, and he was also the only one to receive a ‘Nachschuss’ (subsequent payment) of 442 Thaler – or more than one year’s salary – for fifteen years of continuing service.<sup>71</sup> That this amount was not paid out immediately is evident, however, from an autograph letter by Fasch at the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau.<sup>72</sup> On 5 April 1738 the Kapellmeister was still waiting for his money and felt compelled to point out to the Prince that ‘die Pressuren aber von meinen noch übrigen Creditoren allbereit starck erfolgen’ (my creditors are pressuring me greatly at present). Exactly when the court released the sum is unclear, but in summer 1738 Fasch bought a Cremonese violin from the widow Koch in Eisenach, only to make her wait for her money for two years.<sup>73</sup> This hints at the fact that the instrument was probably intended for Fasch’s personal use, rather than the court’s musical collection. In 1740 he was paid by the court of Anhalt-Köthen for various pieces of occasional music; Fasch continued to provide them with his compositions virtually every year until 1753 (see Table 1 above).<sup>74</sup>

#### ‘WAS DIESER GELDMANGEL UNS VOR TÄGL. KUMMER MACHET’<sup>75</sup>

The 1740s and 1750s were the most difficult decades in Fasch’s life and career. Within five years, two members of his family and three employers died, beginning with Prince Johann August (1742), followed by Fasch’s wife Johanna Helena (1743), his oldest daughter, Sophia (1746), his favourite Prince, the highly musical Johann Ludwig (1746),<sup>76</sup> and the latter’s brother, Prince Christian August (1747). Christian August’s daughter Catherine, formerly Princess Sophie Auguste Friedericke of Anhalt-Zerbst, had married the future tsar of Russia in 1745, thrusting the small principality into the international political spotlight – and involving the expenditure of huge amounts of money on celebrating the union at home.<sup>77</sup>

70 I would like to thank Dr Andreas Erb, director of the Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt, Abteilung Dessau, for his kind permission to reproduce an image of this primary source.

71 Wäschke, ‘Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch’, 55.

72 D-LHASA, DE, Z 92, Kammer Zerbst Nr. 8457, fols 28r–30r.

73 Frau Koch’s letter from 17 August 1740, which she had mistakenly sent to Köthen, is transcribed in Wäschke, ‘Die Zerbster Hofkapelle unter Fasch’, 57.

74 See also Richter, ‘Die Köthener Hofmusik zur Zeit des Fürsten August Ludwig’, 178–179, table 4. Fasch received between six and ten Thaler per composition.

75 Cited in *Was uns dieser Geldmangel für tägl. Kummer machet: Briefe, Johann Friedrich Fasch betreffend, aus dem St. Bartholomäi-Stift zu Zerbst (1752 bis 1757)*, ed. Konstanze Musketa (Oschersleben: Ziethen, 1997), 102–103, letter from 6 October 1756: ‘Was dieser Geldmangel uns vor tägl[ich] Kummer machet, ist mit dieser Feder nicht zu beschreiben’ (The daily sorrow that this lack of funds causes us cannot be put into words).

76 Prince Johann Ludwig owned numerous works by Italian and German composers, including vocal, keyboard and flute music; see Reul, ‘The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst’, 272.

77 See Reul, ‘Catherine the Great’, 300–301, and D-LHASA, DE, Z 92, Kammer Zerbst, Kammerrechnungen 1745/46, 294–297. Of the four public events that were held in Zerbst in early December 1745, the fireworks and ‘Illumination’ event alone cost over 7,500 Thaler, which was more than Fasch earned as court Kapellmeister between 1737 and 1756.





resulted in Princess Johanna Elisabeth's coming into power in 1747? Like her underage son and successor, Prince Friedrich August, for whom she ruled until 1752, she was more concerned with her own well-being than that of her subjects, which translated into a change in artistic priorities at the court.<sup>79</sup>

Otherwise, Fasch's attention during the 1740s was focused primarily on the musical education of his son Carl Friedrich Christian, born in Zerbst on 18 November 1736.<sup>80</sup> His godfather, first violinist Höckh (like Fasch senior a Pietist), taught 'Carlchen' the basics, and in 1750 he was given to 'dem HochFürstl. Strehlitzischen Cammer *Musico* Herteln . . . zur weitem *Information* auf dem Flügel und auf der *Violine*' (the Princely Chamber Musician at Strelitz [Johann Wilhelm] Hertel to continue his studies on the keyboard and the violin) for one year.<sup>81</sup> As a result, Fasch owed three hundred Thaler by early July 1752, which seems a lot, but this sum may include not only expenses related to room, board and instruction, but also incidentals such as clothing for (the still growing) Carl, travel costs to and from Strelitz, and perhaps some pocket money. His father was 'bekümmert' (distressed) to have to admit to Princess Johanna Elisabeth that 'dadurch [meine Finanzen] wiederum in einige Unordnung gerathen müßen' (because of this my finances will once again have to be in some disarray).<sup>82</sup> On the other hand, Fasch reported proudly that he was saving up for a new keyboard for Carl, so that he could continue to improve his skills. Being granted another loan of fifty Thaler to be paid back after a year would allow the Kapellmeister the 'Wiederherstellung meiner etwas wiederum verfallenen wirtschaftl. Umstände' (restoration of my economic circumstances, which have once again been somewhat on the decline), and would provide him with 'neuen Muth und Munterkeit . . . bey meiner itzigen Kirchen-Arbeit' (new courage and vigour . . . for my current composition of sacred works).<sup>83</sup> The court granted him the loan, but probably never expected Fasch to try and postpone the payment due dates at all costs.

In mid-September 1753 Fasch argued that he could not pay back twenty-five Thaler both on Michaelis (29 September) and at Christmas, because of the wedding festivities for Prince Friedrich August that were to be held at court in November. After all, he needed to look the part of a Kapellmeister with an '*honetten Character*' (honourable character).<sup>84</sup> The court agreed to an extension, only to be told by Fasch in March 1754 that

damahls, in Ansehung der Ausgaben [ich] inetwas übertrieben hatt[e], besonders, da auch vor meinen Sohn Carlchen, obwohl noch außer Diensten, ich bey den *Musiquen* nöthig hatte, eine ganz neue Kleidung machen zu laßen mich *forciret* sahe.

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*als Instrumentalkomponist*, ed. Ständige Konferenz Mitteldeutsche Barockmusik in cooperation with the International Fasch Society Zerbst (Beeskow: Ortus, 2007), 248.

79 The lavish, if not extravagant, birthday celebrations and festivities held in Anhalt-Zerbst on the occasion of Princess Johanna Elisabeth's fortieth birthday in 1752 are described by Stephan Blaut, 'Geburtstagsserenaten für den Anhalt-Zerbster Hof in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts', in *Musik an der Zerbster Residenz*, 235–268.

80 Zelter, *Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch*, 8. Fasch junior 'war von der Wiege an schwächlich gewesen, und kränkelte unaufhörlich fort' (had been weak since birth and was ailing continuously). Apparently Carl had spent his early 'Tage und Jahre einsam . . . ohne Beschäftigung und Bewegung' (days and years . . . without mental and physical exercise), but remembered his father as being 'arbeitsa[m], zärtlic[h] und religiö[s]' (industrious, tender and religious).

81 Musketa, *Was uns dieser Geldmangel*, 18–19, letter by Fasch to Princess Johanna Elisabeth from 11 July 1752, written in Magdeburg. Johann Wilhelm Hertel (1727–1784) had been a student of Höckh (and possibly Fasch himself) in Zerbst during the 1740s. His father was the famous gambist and Kapellmeister of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Johann Christian Hertel (1699–1754).

82 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 18–19, letter from 11 July 1752. Fasch had previously requested a loan of fifty Thaler in 1751 (or perhaps earlier, in 1750) and paid it back on time. See also Zelter, *Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch*, 11. Curiously, expenses associated with the six months Fasch junior spent at Kloster Bergen near Magdeburg upon his return from Strelitz 'um in Sprachen und anderen Schulkenntnissen das Erforderliche zu lernen' (to acquire the necessary knowledge of languages and other school subjects) are not mentioned by his father.

83 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, same letter of 11 July 1752, 20–21. It is unclear to which works Fasch was specifically referring in this context.

84 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 31–33, letter from 13 September 1753.



at the time [in autumn 1753, I] spent a little too much money [in the months leading up to the princely wedding], especially because I felt obliged to outfit my son Carlchen with a set of new clothes since he was needed for musical performances, even though he was not [yet] a regular employee [that is, a tenured member of the Kapelle].<sup>85</sup>

This raises the question of whether Fasch ever spent his money in an extravagant or reckless manner. As the court Kapellmeister and the court official in charge of musical performances, he was undoubtedly always in the public eye and was expected to be a model of professional behaviour. Apparently, he was also acutely aware of how much others would judge his outward appearance and, by extension, that of his Kapelle. Fasch's anxiety regarding the public image of his court music establishment, especially in comparison with other *Hofkapellen*, is evident from a letter he penned to Prince Friedrich August prior to the wedding festivities in September 1753.<sup>86</sup> First, Fasch emphasized that all musicians who had been ordered to participate in musical performances during the celebrations in Zerbst wished to wear appropriate ‘Bekleidung’ (clothing [uniforms?]) and appear ‘vor Eurer Hochfüstl. Durchl: und andern hohen Herrschaften (wie bey denen Capellen von Fürstl. Höfen geschiehen) in reinlich = und guter Kleidung’ (before your Princely Highness and other members of the nobility in clean and good [professional] outfits (as is the case with the Kapellen at other Princely courts)). Fasch and his musicians must have been pleased when the court granted his request, and this led him to overspend. But one could hardly blame him – after all, one's princely employer did not get married every day, and showing off one's Kapelle and a highly musically gifted son to an audience of potential employers must have felt like the opportunity of a lifetime.

The other important reason for Fasch to try to defer loan payments as early as 1754 was his deteriorating health and associated costs. Apparently, that same year he had suffered a ‘doppelt schlimmen Zufall, so wohl am Haupte, als [auch . . . einen gefährlichen] Schaden im Gesichte’ (a pair of unfortunate [medical] incidents, affecting my head as well as [. . . dangerous] damage in my face).<sup>87</sup> If these particular conditions involved some sort of paralysis, caused perhaps by a mild stroke, he must have been thankful that they had not affected his ability to write. That Fasch's state of health continued to be worrisome is apparent from a letter written in September 1754. After undergoing expensive treatment (‘costbare cur’) at an unidentified medical facility (or spa?) in Magdeburg that summer, Fasch returned to nurse two very sick children back to health.<sup>88</sup> This resulted in ‘so viele Unkosten’ (so many expenses) that there was little left from his ‘Gagegeldern’ (salary).<sup>89</sup> Once again, the court was lenient with its Kapellmeister and permitted Fasch to pay back the loan instalments as late as Easter (2 April) and 24 June 1755 respectively. However, when Fasch made another request for fifty Thaler, specifically to pay off a Leipzig *Wechsel-Schuld* – neither the amount nor the identity of the creditor is known – the court respectfully declined.<sup>90</sup>

Thanks to the multi-talented Kapelle member Röllig, who contributed two complete cantata cycles for the chapel in 1754/1755 and 1755/1756 and sang and played other instruments during services when necessary, Fasch's absences seem not to have had adverse effects on musical programming at the court. Interestingly,

85 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 40–43, letter from 21 March 1754. On other unpaid or junior musicians who helped out at the chapel and the palace, such as choral scholars, ‘Kapellknaben’ and students at the local St Bartholomäischule, see Reul, ‘Court Musicians at Anhalt-Zerbst’.

86 Reul, ‘Unbekannte Dokumente zu Johann Friedrich Fasch’, and 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*, 182–185, and 201–202, note 78, which contains a transcription of the entire letter by Fasch.

87 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 46–49, letter from 21 March 1754.

88 Perhaps Fasch had stayed at Magdeburg's municipal hospital in the Knochenhaueruferstraße, which was founded at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

89 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 64–69, letter from 19 September 1754.

90 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 74–75. In the letter from 22 May 1755 Fasch refers to the request and the court's reaction; the corresponding primary sources are, however, not extant. It has also been impossible to determine why and for what reason he had to take out another Leipzig *Wechsel-Schuld*.



Röllig, who was severely cash-strapped himself, never requested payment for his services.<sup>91</sup> Perhaps he reasoned that Fasch's death and his own promotion to Kapellmeister were imminent – or he had become aware that Fasch had secretly applied for the vacant position of Kantor in Freiberg/Saxony on 29 October 1755.<sup>92</sup> Given that his annual salary would have been only eighty Thaler, or one fifth of his Zerbst Kapellmeister wage, Fasch was clearly not seeking to move for financial gain. In fact, he was willing to accept an even lower wage in order to get out of the required 'Schulstunden, zu[r] Informierung der Jugend' (hours in the classroom instructing school pupils). Specifically, Fasch argued that 'bey so vieler in denen bißherigen Diensten gehabter Kopfarbeit und ermangelnder Übung, [ist mir] das meiste zur *lateinischen* Sprache gehörige wiederum entfallen' (owing to so much brainwork having been required in [my] present job up to now and to a lack of practice, [I have] once again forgotten most of what is necessary [to teach] the Latin language).<sup>93</sup> But it was in a follow-up letter to Freiberg superintendent Christian Friedrich Willisch on 30 October 1755 that Fasch shed light on what had motivated him to apply in the first place:

und ich kan nicht leügnen, daß dannhero von Hertzen wünsche, meine noch übrigen Lebens= Jahre bloß dem Dienste Gottes und seiner Kirche widmen zu können . . . Wann nun Ew: HochEhrw: überzeuge seyn mögten, daß zu sothaner *Vacantz* ich nicht nur geschicket seyn dürffte; alß habe ich nur noch dieses an *Hochselbten* versichern wollen, daß

1) mich iederzeit hüthen werde, (wenn ein erwünschtes Ja! über meine *Petitum* erfolgete) der dortigen christl. Gemeinde mit allzulanger Kirchen=*Musique* beschwerlich zu seyn,

2) meine GemüthsGestalt so beschaffen ist, daß äußerst mich dahin bestrebe, Ruhe und Frieden, bey meinen Ampts=Verrichtungen, zum beständigen Augenmerck zu haben, wie denn, bei meinen allhiesigen etl. 30jährigen Diensten, keine eintzige Klag=Sache von mir oder denen mir untergebenen, bey dem Hoch=Fürstl. Marschallambe zum Vorschein gekommen ist, dergl. friedliches Betragen, biß an mein seel. Ende, in obacht nehmen werde:<sup>94</sup>

and I cannot deny that I wish with all my heart to devote my remaining years of life to God's service and his church . . . In the hope that your Eminence will now be convinced that I am a fine candidate for the vacant position, I should like to reassure his Grace [that is, Willisch] that:

1) I will take good care (should my application be received with the desired Yes!) not to burden the Christian congregation there with overlong [performances of] church music,

2) by nature my character is such that I make the utmost endeavours to maintain order and harmony at all times when carrying out official tasks and also [wish to emphasize that] not a single complaint has been lodged against me or my subordinates with the Princely *Marschallamt* over the course of more than three decades of service here [at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst]. [Furthermore,] I will take care to continue this same peaceful conduct until the day I die.

The highly confidential tone of this letter not only implies that Fasch knew Willisch personally,<sup>95</sup> but also shows the extent to which Fasch was willing to reinvent himself. Besides offering to shed his identity as a

91 Reul, 'Musical Life at the Court of Anhalt-Zerbst', 204–210.

92 Maul, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat', 250: 'Diß eintzige bitte ich noch gehorsambst, diese[s] mein Suchen, so viel möglich, niemanden wissen zu lassen' (I humbly request one more favour: that, in as much as possible, nobody shall be made aware of my application).

93 See Maul, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat', 249–250, which contains a transcription of the full letter from 30 October 1755. The adjective *wiederum* (page 250) could mean that Fasch's knowledge of Latin had perhaps been much better in 1744, when he had first considered leaving Zerbst for a position in Freiberg, though it hints at his unwillingness to teach Latin as *Thomaskantor*.

94 See Maul, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat', 248, which contains a full transcription of Fasch's follow-up letter to Willisch from 29 October 1755.

95 In the late summer of 1722, when Fasch began his tenure as Kapellmeister at the court of Anhalt-Zerbst, Willisch was in the running for pastor at Zerbst's Trinitatiskirche and professor at the local *Gymnasium Illustre*. See Maul, 'Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat', 244.



director of music and become a model (Lutheran Orthodox, not Pietist) cantor, Fasch emphasized his spotless employment record as court Kapellmeister and amicable personality. Why? Because Willisich had been involved in a long and difficult dispute with the previous cantor of Freiberg, Johann Friedrich Doles, and did not need to know about Fasch’s ongoing feuds with clergy colleagues at Zerbst. In the end, Fasch’s attempt to win over the superintendent and sway the Freiberg council in his favour had no impact on his career path whatsoever, since small towns such as Freiberg were not interested in appointing a musician who had previously held an executive position at a court.<sup>96</sup>

By September 1756 Fasch’s health and financial situation had deteriorated to the point that a despondent Johanna Friedericka Fasch felt compelled to turn to Prince Friedrich August for help:

Ew: Hochfürstl: Durchl: wird nicht unbekannt seyn, daß mein Vater durch Kranckheiten und andere Unglücksfälle, in Schulden gerathen war, aus welchen er bißher noch nicht völlig hat kommen können, wie wohl ihm nur noch der kleinste Theil davon, zu bezahlen übrig ist. Da er sich nun bereits in einem hohen Alter befindet, und sehnlichst wünscht, so, wie er [gelebt], will sagen: als ein ehrlicher Mann, zu sterben; als ist sein eifr[igstes Be]streben stets gewesen, zu solchem Entzweck zu gelangen und . . . schon, binnen zweyßen Jahren, an dem Ende solcher unsrer Sorgen zu s[ein]. Es hat aber dem Höchsten gefallen, meinen Vater vor etlichen Woch[en mit] einer langwierigen und vielkostenden Kranckheit zu belegen, dur[ch die] wir uns aufs neue in Schuld gesezet sahen, indem wir die Unkos[ten derselben], vielleicht nicht mit achtzig rthl [Reichsthalern] werden bestreiten können.<sup>97</sup>

Your Most Serene Highness must be aware that my father has incurred debts because of illnesses and other calamities, which he has not been able to pay off completely, even though there is only a very small amount left to pay. Since he is advanced in age [sixty-eight years], he now longs to die as he has lived: as an honest man. He has always worked hard to reach that goal and . . .<sup>98</sup> already, within two years, [he] would have reached the end of his worries. But the Lord God allowed my father to be afflicted with a lengthy and expensive illness which caused us to incur new debts; eighty Thaler will probably not be enough to cover [our expenses].

Since her father’s ‘große Kranckheit’ (grave illness) had eaten up almost half of his quarterly wage, they had approached a friend (not identified) to lend them that sum, but now needed to pay him back without fail (‘unwidersprechlich erse[t]zen müssen’). Had the creditor been Höckh, who reportedly loaned money to Johann Heinrich Heil, organist at Zerbst’s St Bartholomäikirche from 1758 until 1764? Or perhaps Fasch turned to the old ‘Freund’ (and fellow-Pietist?) from Köthen who had taken in an ailing eleven-year old Carl for several months around 1747.<sup>99</sup>

Fräulein Fasch – who, judging from the overall tone of the letter, had inherited her father’s charm and her mother’s money-savvy ways – then courageously asked Prince Friedrich August not only to approve a loan of one hundred Thaler immediately, but also to be patient: they would like to pay it back only after two years had passed, ideally in four instalments of twenty-five Thaler over the course of a third year. That this was not too much to ask is evident from her argument that the Prince had ‘schon einstmahls die Gnade gehabt, meinem Vater solchen Vorschuß angedeyßen zu laßen, welchen er denn vor einiger Zeit wieder richtig abgetragen hat’ (had once before been gracious enough to grant my father such a type of advance, which he

96 Maul, ‘Johann Friedrich Fasch und das Freiburger Kantorat’, 245. Exceptions were made in the larger cities of Danzig (J. B. C. Freislich), Frankfurt and Hamburg (Telemann), as well as Leipzig (J. S. Bach).

97 All quotations in this section are taken from Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 84–87, letter by Johanna Friedericka Fasch, from either 17 or 18 September 1756 (handwriting illegible).

98 Words are missing here because of the fragile condition of the primary source.

99 See Barbara M. Reul, ‘Das vakante Organistenamt an der St. Bartholomäi-Kirche zu Zerbst und die “liederliche Lebensart” von Johann Heinrich Heil (1709–1764)’, in *Mitteilungen des Vereins für anhaltische Landeskunde* 19 (2010), 129–143, and Zelter, *Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch*, 9.



paid back properly some time ago). Information on this particular loan seems not to be extant, but there may have been a precedent in 1732, when Fasch wished to borrow three hundred Thaler from Prince Johann August and had also specified the period during which the loan would be repaid as three years.<sup>100</sup> It is evident that the court considered its Kapellmeister creditworthy throughout his tenure.

Another passage from Johanna Friedericka's letter emphasizes how desperately she wanted to secure the loan:

Sollte aber indeßen mein Vater mit [dem] Tode abgehen, so fiehle das *Qvartal* darinnen er verstürbe, an das Hochfürstl. Stift anheim, und könnte ich alsdenn an demselben nichts zu fordern haben; auch deßfalls, auf erfordern, unterschreiben.

Should my father happen to die in the meantime [that is, before the loan was paid back fully], then the Princely Consistory would keep [his wage] during the quarter in which his death occurred. And then I would have no right to make any claims [concerning the money]; also, I would be willing to sign an official document to that effect.

It is unclear whether Fasch had asked his daughter to approach the court on his behalf at the time or found out about it afterwards. But he did take the opportunity to describe his pitiful situation once again in early October 1756. On top of everything else, he had suffered a wound on his left foot ('kalten Brand am linken Fuße'), resulting in bills from medical professionals such as the 'Herrn *Medicum* [and the] Herrn *Chirurgum*', as well as the '*Apotheca*'.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, Fasch assured the court that his son Carl – who had taken a position as harpsichordist at the Royal Prussian Court earlier that year – would not also be a financial burden to the court.<sup>102</sup>

The civil servants in charge of reviewing Fasch's petition were initially not inclined to grant the request. But a determined Fasch kept pressing on and eventually secured the one hundred Thaler loan on 3 March 1757. It came at a steep price: he had pledged 'sämtliches *Mobiliar Vermögen*' (all of his movable assets) as collateral and agreed to begin paying interest after the first year, in March 1758.<sup>103</sup>

Johann Friedrich Fasch died nine months later, on 5 December 1758, having served as court Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst for over thirty-six years. An expensive funeral for the long-time employee was out of the question, forcing Johanna Friedericka Fasch to organize a quiet burial by herself. Her brother Carl had spent the summer in Zerbst together with his colleague Carl Philip Emanuel Bach and his family in order to escape a war-torn Berlin.<sup>104</sup> They left a few days before Fasch's passing, for a good reason. Sixteen thousand Prussian soldiers besieged the town on 4 December 1758 in an effort to keep Prince Friedrich August away from home.<sup>105</sup> In 1801 Karl Friedrich Zelter noted in his biography of Carl Fasch that Fasch senior had continued

100 See Fasch's second letter to Zinzendorf from 20 February 1732, in *Dokumentation zu Johann Friedrich Fasch*, ed. Thom, 37.

101 Perhaps Fasch suffered from peripheral artery occlusive disease, which is linked to diabetes. See <[www.dr-arlt-online.de/Der\\_diabetische\\_Fuss.pdf](http://www.dr-arlt-online.de/Der_diabetische_Fuss.pdf)> (25 March 2011).

102 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 90–95, letter from 29 September 1756. See also Fasch's letter from 6 October 1756, 100–103.

103 Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, letter from 3 March 1757, 142–153. As promised, Fasch had submitted affidavits by Carl Fasch (dated 5 December 1756, from Potsdam, 118–122) and by Johann Andreas Ritter on behalf of Fasch's unmarried daughter Johanna Friedericka (dated 3 March 1757, 154–159).

104 It is unclear where the Bach family resided, if not at Kapellmeister Fasch's house. On C. P. E. Bach's activities as a composer in Zerbst see David Schulenberg, 'C. P. E. Bach in Zerbst: The Six Sonatas of Fall 1758[,] with Contributions on the Early Biography and Compositions of Carl Fasch', in *Johann Friedrich Fasch als Instrumentalkomponist*, 131–152. See also Reul, 'Das vakante Organistenamt an der St. Bartholomäi-Kirche zu Zerbst', 136–137, which discusses Bach's involvement (albeit oblique) in the audition process for a new organist at the St Bartholomäikirche in Zerbst in September 1758.

105 The Prince and his mother had escaped Zerbst in April 1758, following an incident involving a French spy that angered Frederick II, who at the time was at war with Russia.



to pay his son ‘einigen Zuschuß’ (an additional allowance) prior to his death in December 1758.<sup>106</sup> Being able to offer financial support in the first place must have been important to Fasch, whose own father had died when Fasch was very young.

A sympathetic court paid the customary ‘Witwengeld’, half a year’s salary usually reserved for widows, to Fasch’s heirs; it is highly likely that Johanna Friedericka used it to pay off her father’s creditors.<sup>107</sup> What happened to this courageous young woman after her father’s death in late 1758 cannot be determined, only that she would have been the responsibility of a guardian until she married or died.<sup>108</sup> Or had she perhaps left for Groß-Kmehlen to live with her mother’s relatives (and then lost touch with her brother)?

This article has viewed the successful career and eventful life of Johann Friedrich Fasch through the lens of finance, beginning with his student days in Leipzig and ending with his final days as Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst. By examining extant letters to the Leipzig church council, the Pietist leader Count Zinzendorf and the princes and princesses of Anhalt-Zerbst, it has been possible to shed light on Fasch’s lifelong strained relationship with money. An effective leader blessed with a generous spirit, this ambitious and entrepreneurially-minded musician and composer was keen on advancing his career, but a lack of funds repeatedly prevented him from reaching his goals, such as travelling to Italy to study composition, possibly finishing his university studies in Leipzig or leaving Zerbst for a work environment that was more conducive to practising Pietists. Fortunately, Fasch’s finances improved dramatically in 1721, when he was employed as ‘Componist’ for Count Morzin in Prague, and again in 1722, when he moved to Zerbst. His new employer, Prince Johann August, not only permitted his Kapellmeister to travel frequently and generate extra income while away, but also financed a lengthy stay intended to enhance his compositional skills in Dresden in 1726–1727. Moreover, Johann August granted his director of music both a raise and a huge, one-off bonus for a job well done in 1737.

The fact that Fasch’s debt profile was dismal during the 1720s and deteriorated once again during the 1750s was clearly related to his inability to manage his finances and successfully cope with events beyond his control. How Fasch accumulated debts as a student in Leipzig and why he failed (or perhaps refused?) to pay them off in his early years must remain a mystery at this time owing to a lack of relevant primary sources. But the composer obviously spent a lot of money on his family, whose well-being was an important priority for him, especially the education of his children. He sent two of them to boarding school (Sophia to Köthen and Carl to Magdeburg) and also facilitated, at great expense, a year of intensive study for his musically talented son in Strelitz. Nor was Fasch lazy. Zelter described the Kapellmeister of Anhalt-Zerbst as follows: ‘Der Vater [ging] des Morgens gleich nach seiner Andacht und seinem Frühstück an seine Arbeit . . . , [schrieb] den ganzen Tag . . . und [stieg] mit der letzten Note wieder in sein Bette’ (In the morning, the father set to work immediately after his devotions and breakfast . . . , composed all day long . . . and with the last note returned to his bed).<sup>109</sup> Moreover, the impressive size and contents of the – by no means complete – court Zerbst music inventory emphasize Fasch’s work ethic, professional integrity and reputation as a composer, if not, indeed, a compulsive need to work.<sup>110</sup> Did Fasch’s personal debts affect his productivity as a composer? On

106 Zelter, *Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch*, 15.

107 D-LHASA, DE, Z 92, Kammer Zerbst, Kammerrechnungen 1758/59, 113, no. 153, which covered the six-month period (or two quarters) from Christmas to 24 June. The court of Anhalt-Zerbst dealt with Heil’s creditors after his death in 1764; see Reul, ‘Das vakante Organistenamt’, 140–143.

108 See also Musketa, *Was dieser Geldmangel*, 124–125, letter from 30 December 1756. Fasch’s first choice as a guardian for his daughter had been Christoph Heinicke, organist at the St Bartholomäikirche, but he died before Fasch, on 8 June 1758, at the age of 41. Whether Fasch made any further arrangements regarding a guardian (or a potential husband) for his daughter is unknown; her name does not appear in extant Zerbst marriage registers.

109 Zelter, *Dokumentation zu Karl Friedrich Christian Fasch*, 8.

110 The missing parts of the ‘Concert-Stube’ are addressed in Reul, ‘The Court of Anhalt-Zerbst’, 269–270. It is also highly likely that Fasch maintained a personal music collection, but no primary sources have come to light that provide information on its contents.



the contrary: not demanding payment for the hundreds of works he composed for Dresden, but rather exchanging them for new music, and organizing a music exchange from Zerbst for over three decades are poignant examples of the composer's ongoing commitment to building a strong musical community around him. Perhaps he had modelled this after the Pietist faith communities he supported in person, and possibly also financially, both in and outside of Zerbst. Finally, the fact that Fasch was ready to leave behind a lucrative Kapellmeister position for a less prestigious one of cantor that paid only a fraction of the salary demonstrates that he valued a peaceful work environment more than money and prestige.

In conclusion, it is highly likely that Fasch had indeed been an 'honourable man' throughout his life. At the same time, he had only himself to blame for accumulating huge debts in the first place and, as a result, never gaining a solid financial footing. Fasch coped with the social stigma of debt by relying on his own strength of character and deep faith, the love he shared especially with his second wife Johanna Helena, good health and (for the most part) continuously generous and supportive employers. All this made him, the debtor, truly wealthy and his life worth living.