

Chapter 10

Conclusions

10.1 The demise of the oratorio Passion in the late-18th century

An important factor in the latter half of the 18th century contributing to the disintegration of the tradition of annual performance of oratorio Passions was the decreasing ability and desire of churches to mount concerted music as part of the service. The ultimate demise of the form was as much the result of liturgical reform as of the problems churches faced in raising the resources to mount performances of large-scale concerted music. 'In general, traditional liturgies decreased in importance and the service became correspondingly simpler...often all parts of the liturgy other than the sermon were abolished, at least in theory. In practice, what frequently remained, following the example of the Reformed church, were sermon, prayers and hymns.'¹ Ultimately the music in church consisted mainly of hymns (often with children's choirs in alternation with the main congregation) and simple motets of the kind produced by G.P. Weimar, sung by the main choir. In this context, lengthy and ornate settings of the entire gospel text in oratorio-style had no place.

Clearly, after 1750, oratorio Passions were still produced in a number of centres (see Table 1.1), but local liturgy and the extent of the increasingly liberal views of the local clergy and congregation greatly determined its style and liturgical context. Often in centres capable of sustaining oratorio performances, the liturgical Passion gave way to the completely lyrical type. Telemann's strong position in the cosmopolitan and liberal city of Hamburg enabled him to experiment with the form, abridge the gospel text, replace it with free verse and create

¹ Feder (1975) p.334.

works which were at times very much nearer to the lyrical Passion in style. An indication that the differences between the liturgical and lyrical Passion were becoming nominal by the 1760s in the works of the Hamburg composers is the manner in which C.P.E. Bach created the Passion oratorio *Du Göttlicher (Die letzten Leiden des Erlösers)*. To do so, he adapted the St Matthew Passion (1767), his first Passion work composed for Hamburg, by the replacement of the gospel text with freely-written recitative and the addition of two other lyrical movements to create one of the most popular Passion oratorios of the second half of the century. Elsewhere, composers were not allowed to be so innovative. The response to the notification from the Leipzig Senate that the 1739 Passion performance was to be cancelled on the grounds of the unsuitability of the text (it is believed this comment referred to a planned performance of BWV 245) was met with the response from J.S. Bach that the work ‘had already been performed on several occasions previously.’² However, despite the general view of J.S. Bach’s contribution to the genre, encapsulated by Smallman³ (‘Bach was no innovator; rather was he content to adopt the methods of the past and infuse into them a new and vital spirit’), the amount of lyrical commentary in BWV 244 shows that J.S. Bach, too, had gone very much further down the route toward the lyrical work than many other Kantors, including his pupils Doles and Homilius.

What is surprising to find in the works of other composers is not the development of the liturgical form along the lines of the lyrical Passion, but that composers generally adopted a rather conservative approach to the composition of the liturgical Passion: the latest examples by composers such as Doles and Homilius (as demonstrated in case study 2) are fundamentally little changed in structure and content from those of the 1720s; only in the arias is there much acknowledgment of new stylistic trends. Undoubtedly, the limitations imposed by the need to retain the gospel text in its entirety as well as the traditional sequence of chorales is the main factor in the apparent conservatism of the music of the genre, so that only a few arias and ariosos might be interpolated. The oratorio Passions produced in other centres reflect both the diversity and rigidity of the local customs. At the opposite extreme to the liberal attitudes of the Hamburg Senate and clergy, the Danzig authorities allowed only settings of St Matthew, proscribed lyrical texts as arias and choruses altogether and insisted on

² David/Mendel (1945) pp.162-163.

³ Smallman (1970) p.72.

a set sequence of 34 chorales to provide the commentary.

In Hamburg, ultimately the style of the liturgical Passion became anachronistic to contemporary taste. Following the death of C.P.E. Bach in 1788, a report commissioned by the authorities to review church music and the training of the choirs recommended the abolition of oratorio Passion performances as part of the liturgy in favour of the more modern and 'tasteful' Passion oratorio, arguments that might have been expressed in any number of centres:⁴

[The Passion] must not remain as now, since according to the presently established rules of good taste, sacred persons, especially our Saviour, may not be rendered in a speaking⁵ role. There must be music in the style of the famous compositions by Graun, Homilius, Wolf and others.

...We say this not to dishonour the most honourable Bach, who was the greatest man in his art, and of whom Hamburg has reason to be proud. The error we are thinking about was almost unavoidable. How could it have been otherwise in the case of far too great an amount of music, that many old compositions would be used with the same and also old and unedifying music text?⁶

These comments marked the demise of the oratorio Passion in the 18th-century. No composer matched Telemann and C.P.E. Bach for their energy in producing new works on an annual basis, and in no centre other than Hamburg was the tradition so long-lived.

⁴ Written by Pastors Johann Jacob Rambach and Georg Heinrich Berkhan in 1788. It appears in *Acta/die nach Absterben des Kapellmeisters Bach gemachte/neuen Einrichtungen/bey den Kirchen Musiken* in *Hamburg Staatsarchiv, Senatarchiv* C1 VII, Lit He2, vol.8b, fasc.6 t, transcribed and translated by Clark (1984) pp.341-6.

⁵ Free recitative only now to be allowed for unnamed commentators as in *Der Tod Jesu* as opposed to important characters of the Passion story?

⁶ Thus the Hamburg tradition of performing oratorio Passions in church was broken after 156 years. The post of *Stadtkantor* was nearly abolished in this review of Church music in Hamburg, but one more appointment was made following Bach's death. Christian Friedrich Gottlieb Schwenke (1767-1822), one of C.P.E.Bach's pupils, was appointed to be musical director of the five principal churches and the Cantor of the Johanneum in 1788. He was not required to provide oratorio Passions in the churches but continued to give yearly performances of Passion oratorio and cantatas which were often *pasticcios* with no biblical text. Schwenke used movements of *Die letzten Leiden* in the 1792 Passion and arias from the 1789 St Matthew Passion may have been used in the 1801 and 1811 Passions (Clark (1984) p.120). Standards in music-making in the Hamburg churches dropped after the death of Bach, and, following the death of his successor, the post of *Stadtkantor* was finally abolished in 1822.

10.2 The historical significance of the Zerbst Passion tradition

The Zerbst tradition stands slightly apart within the general history of the 18th century oratorio Passion, both in its unusual liturgical placement and by the four-yearly cycle. An indication of the relative isolation of the court is also indicated by the longevity of the tradition, the conservatism of the works produced and the lack of innovation in content of the services. Oratorio Passion performances were introduced into the liturgy in 1720, in the first full year following the consecration of the Schloßkirche, just about the time that other central German centres such as Leipzig also performed such works for the first time (see Table 1.1). The cycle of annual performances was then sustained until 1767 (which also the year when Zerbst ceased performing regular cantatas), by which time the great majority of Lutheran centres had ceased to mount regular performances of oratorio Passion. In the case of Zerbst, the demise of the tradition was more likely a result of the running-down of the Kapelle and a move to lessen the amount of music in general in services (always a point of contention between the clergy and the Zerbst Kapellmeisters), rather than being due to any preference for the lyrical Passion: there is no evidence to suggest that such a work was ever performed in the Court.⁷

Zerbst seemed to follow the general trend in Lutheran centres of periodically introducing new settings of the Gospels and repeating works in the repertoire many times. Evidence for this comes from entries in the *Verzeichnis*⁸ and from markings on the scores of the two Oranienbaum sources.⁹ Unique to the Zerbst tradition is the inclusion of Chapter 13 in the settings of St John's account. Other than the well-documented Passion cycle in Hamburg (that lasted from 1691 to 1788) it seems that Zerbst was the only centre in the 18th century to have regular performances in the sequence Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in a four-year cycle. Also unusual was the manner of the performance: Zerbst seems unique for the practice of performing multi-part works with the performance spread over several services from Palm Sunday to Good Friday. Among other centres, it seems that only in Riga, Gotha

⁷ Despite their popularity, works such as Graun's *Der Tod Jesu*, or the complete settings of Brockes text (particularly by Keiser, Händel or Telemann) which were widely performed in sacred concerts and latterly in church services in place of oratorio Passions, were not given in the Court of Zerbst. (See Smither (1977) pp.120 ff. and Smither (1987) pp. 347ff. and 369ff. for a discussion of the Lutheran Passion in the 18th century.) The reasons for this must partly lie in the regularity of the Passion performances given annually in the Schloßkirche during Holy week which probably fulfilled the need for the performance of concerted settings of the Passion story in this centre.

⁸ See Chapter 4.

⁹ See discussion in Chapter 8 and the source descriptions in Appendix 2a.

and Weißenfels were sections of oratorio Passions ever performed in separate services on more than one day. Only in Gotha can be found the practice of performing four-Part Passions on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, albeit before and after the sermon at the two Vespers services. However, the use of the key of F major as the home key and the use of the alto voice for all male members of the *synagoga* in all three surviving examples from Zerbst hark back to the ancient traditions of the performance of the Passions. By the 18th century, these were surprisingly conservative features.

It is significant that there are links between Zerbst and three of the centres named in the paragraph above: Johann Baptist Kuch, the first Zerbst Kapellmeister, received his first musical training in Hamburg, his place of birth, and he had his first professional experience in the Court of Weißenfels.¹⁰ (Indeed, Kun(t)zen also visited Gotha and Weißenfels prior to his alleged musical directorship of the Kapelle in Zerbst.) There was also a close association of the Courts of Zerbst with Gotha and Weißenfels created by marriage, links which were maintained by a regular exchange of musicians. The importance of Gotha, in particular, should not be underestimated, for time and again this centre crops up in the discussion of music in Zerbst. That the four-Part division of the Passion over Maundy Thursday and Good Friday in Gotha, a possible pre-cursor of the tradition adopted in Zerbst in 1720, as well as an extended performance over several Sundays in Lent may well have influenced the multi-Part division of performances of the *Passion aus den 4 Evangelisten* was pointed out in Chapter 4, whilst evidence presented in Chapter 5 strongly suggests that the Gotha hymn book and Cantional were likely to have provided the source of many hymns and tunes used in Zerbst. In addition, Fasch's close friend from university, Stölzel, was also Kapellmeister at Gotha, and the cantat cycle *Das Saytenspiel des Herzens* by the latter were performed in Zerbst.

¹⁰ See section 1.3 for a discussion of 18th-century liturgical Passion-performing traditions. Since 1691, the annual Hamburg Passion performances had followed a largely unbroken four-year cycle in the Gospel order Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. At the court of Weißenfels, where an annual Passion performance was also a strong tradition, Krieger composed at least 14 in the period 1685-1724. Although not in a cyclical order, significantly at least two were performed over several days: anon 1703 in three parts performed on *Litäre* and *Judica* and an anonymous six-Part Passion performed in 1710 over six Sundays from *Estomihi* to *Palmarum* (exc. *Oculi*).

10.3 The question of authorship of the Zerbst Passions

Though not the primary aim of the dissertation, a case can be made for the authorship of the various Passion works associated with the Court of Zerbst. It was established in Chapter 1 that since the majority of oratorio Passions were composed to fit local customs and styles of worship, very few in the 18th century were performed in centres other than that for which they were composed.¹¹ In the case of Zerbst, where the manner of performance was quite unique, we can be even surer about the relationship of the surviving scores and the three Kapellmeisters who were responsible for the production of the yearly Passion performance: Johann Baptiste Kuch, Johann Friedrich Fasch and Johann Georg Röllig (there being no other musicians associated with this centre who composed church music of any quantity or quality).¹² The likelihood of the first three Passions being by someone not directly associated with Zerbst is almost negligible. Kuch, the instigator of the tradition, seems the most likely composer since several of his works were still in the court collection in 1743.¹³ However, the original belief that Kuch's 'four' Passions were performed from 1720 to 1763, as suggested by Wäschke, can be discounted, though the extent of Kuch's involvement in later works performed in the cycle (and, *ergo*, the surviving scores) is difficult to determine. Although Kuch's life dates are unknown and little of his music now survives, it can be assumed, since he had already been working in the courts of Zeitz and Weißenfels by 1713, that he was possibly 10 -15 years older than Fasch. We can be also confident that Kuch's experience of the Passion tradition in Hamburg (the Passion music of Gerstenbüttel, d.1721) and in Weißenfels (Passion music of J.P. Krieger - born, 1649 and Kapellmeister at Weißenfels from 1680 to his death in 1725) were influential in the establishment of the

¹¹ The only examples seem to be those which were modified for use in the Danzig Liturgy (by A.A.Koch, J.B.C. Freislich, G.P.Telemann and J.Th.Römhildt), the Homilius *St Mark Passion* (performed in Berlin), the Keiser *St Mark* and anonymous *St Luke Passion* performed in Leipzig under J.S.Bach and various Telemann Passions performed in Riga by his grandson. In Chapter 9 the possibility that Röllig's *St Mark Passion*, *Gehet heraus und schauet an* was taken to Erfurt by Weimar is also explored. It was far more likely for a lyrical work to be performed in another centre, since they were composed with concert performances in mind rather than a liturgical context.

¹² It has been tentatively suggested that Ulich, the Court organist might also have been a composer of one or more of the first three Passions; though his surviving music is all instrumental, he is known to have composed a German Mass. However, Kuch's association with Hamburg and Weißenfels, notwithstanding his seniority as Kapellmeister, would make the latter far more likely to be the composer.

¹³ See Chapter 2. It may also be significant that one of the important visitors to the court during Kuch's leadership was J.B.C.Freislich, Kapellmeister at Sondershausen and composer of a *St Matthew Passion* performed in 1720. Freislich subsequently moved to Danzig, and the work was later modified by him, in 1750, to be performed as part of the Danzig liturgy.

Passion tradition in Zerbst: why else should Zerbst adopt a quadrennial performing cycle, the only example of such a tradition after Hamburg?¹⁴ This being so, it can be safely proposed that Kuch's music would be somewhat more conservative and less adventurous than that of Fasch who was quite unashamedly influenced by Telemann in his early years.¹⁵ There is also no doubt that Fasch did perform works by his predecessor at Zerbst, as is evidenced by works of J.B.Kuch in Fasch's hand.¹⁶ Thus, it is quite probable, and most likely, that Kuch's Passions were performed for a period after he left until Fasch felt moved to 'improve' or replace them.

Fasch is more likely than Kuch to have been the composer of the fourth Passion performed in this centre, the St John Passion (1723), since Kuch left the Court in a hurry mid-1722 and Fasch was appointed on 29th September the same year. Most authorities suggest, on the basis of his autobiography, that Fasch composed *Mich vom Stricke meiner Sünden* in his first year at Zerbst. However, by his own admission he was extremely busy in fulfilling his obligations in his first year of office. Rather than compose a Passion oratorio, a large-scale choral work that in all probability would not have fitted into the liturgy, would it not have been more likely that the 'starke Passion' he refers to was, in fact, the fourth oratorio Passion in the cycle, according to St John, one which Fasch would have been obliged to compose? Fasch certainly speaks as if describing a single work. The evidence of the style and content of *Mich vom Stricke meiner Sünden* suggests that the work was composed earlier than 1720, most likely during the composer's time in Greiz.¹⁷ Preitz seems to confirm the distinction between Fasch's first effort for Zerbst and *Mich vom Stricke meiner Sünden* by suggesting

¹⁴ In Hamburg, the pattern of a four-year cycle following the biblical order Matthew, Mark, Luke and John was established in 1691. From 1680 to 1690 there were repeat performances of just four Passions, but in all 18 Passions were produced between 1676 and 1721 for which *libretti* only survive. The authors of the text and music are unknown (though several composers have been suggested, including the two *Stadtkantors*: Christoph Bernhard (1628-1692) and Joachim Gerstenbüttel (d 1721), the director of the Hamburg *Ratsmusiken*, Dietrich Becker (1623-1679), and three other musicians associated with Hamburg: Adam Reinicken, Matthias Weckman (c1619-74) and Joachim Theile (1646-1724)). These works can be placed in three groups: 1) The earliest examples of the cycle, which were modelled on the Sebastiani and Theile Passions, were regularly performed up to 1704; 2) those that display the influence of German Opera (1678-1714) (the 1678 libretto was performed again in 1713); and 3) examples influenced by the developments of the Passion oratorio which started to appear from 1707. (See Hörner (1933), p.10) The works that Kuch is most likely to have heard were those of groups 1 and 2.

¹⁵ In autobiography - see Chapter 3.3.

¹⁶ Engelke (1908-9) p 277. refers to a German *Te Deum* by Kuch in Fasch's hand.

¹⁷ See Chapter 6 for a discussion of the compositional date.

that Fasch composed '*der großen Passionsmusik*' in his first year and that he also produced '*ein Oratorium*' and '*mehrere Passionsmusiken*'.¹⁸

One wonders how much of the Passion music of the second period in the Zerbst cycle can be attributed to Fasch, since it has been suggested that the increasingly unwell Fasch stopped composing church music from 1740 onwards to concentrate on instrumental music.¹⁹

However, Fasch may well have had a major input into these late works. The evidence presented by the production of six new five- and seven-Part Passions after 1743 together with Barbara Reul's researches in to the Berlin cantatas indicating the production of at least two cantata cycles by Fasch after 1740, well into the final decade of his life, tends to cast doubt on the assertion that Fasch had more or less 'retired' from the composition of liturgical works.²⁰ Without surviving scores to indicate the style of the music or any possible relationship of the post-1743 Passions with those of the 1720-42 period, the question of authorship of the lost works has to remain open. The style of the St John Passion and its clear relationship with the earlier St Luke Passion suggest strongly the authorship of Fasch. If, indeed, Fasch was composing fewer cantatas, would he have undertaken so many large-scale projects as the new Passions produced in these years (as many as five new works between 1743 and 1748)? The indications are that he did produce the 1752 (=1748?) St John Passion: clearly it was Fasch who made any textural changes to the work in readiness for subsequent performances, so it was more than possible that others also were his work, in particular the St Matthew Passion. (The possible relationship of the seven-Part St Matthew with the earlier four-Part versions is examined in Chapter 4.)

¹⁸ 'Dafür mußte er aber eine ziemlich anstrengende Thätigkeit entfalten; für den Vor- und Nachmittags-Gottesdienst war ein doppelter Jahrgang Kirchenkantaten zu komponieren, sodaß auf jede Woche, worin noch kleine Festtage fielen, vier Kirchenstücke zu komponieren waren, außer der großen Passionsmusik und den Geburtstagsserenaden.....Er schrieb allein zweiundvierzig Ouvertüren für Orchester, eine Opera Seria: *Berenice* ... ein Oratorium, mehrere Passionsmusiken, eine zweichörige und viele andere Messen, Motetten, Konzerte für zwei Oboen und andere Instrumente.' Preitz (n.d) pp. 179-180. Preitz was a musical director in Zerbst in the 19th century and former owner of much of the Zerbst Hofkapelle manuscripts. His reference to 'more Passion music' comes from personal knowledge of the material which now resides in Halle and Oranienbaum (see Chapter 2 above on the fate of the Zerbst scores). *Ein Oratorium* is in all probability, *Mich vom Stricke meiner Sünden* listed in Breitkopf 1770 (presumably Preitz's source of information).

¹⁹ See Stevens (1981) and Pfeiffer (1987) Vol.1 pp.186-8.

²⁰ Reul (1996) pp.108-9 and 115, has demonstrated that Fasch produced the double cycle *Von der Nachfolge Christi* in 1751/52. Engelke also suggests that Fasch is the composer of the cycle *Harmonische Zion* which was performed in Zerbst 1754/55. Engelke (1908) p.41.

Although the authorship of the three surviving Passions *Ja deine Sünd*, *Ach! Wir armen Sünder* and *Gehet heraus und schauet an* can only be established by circumstantial evidence - there is no one piece of evidence that can unequivocally confirm the authorship of any of these works - on the basis of many details such as the interrelations with other works, musical style and orchestration, one can make a confident assertion of the composers of the greater part of each.

One of the main difficulties facing any commentator on Fasch's style is the lack of a comprehensive survey or discussion of the cantata works of this composer. The music of St Luke presents us with a problem since the stylistic disparity of the three instrumental movements and the aria movements leads one to suggest multiple authorship. Chapter 8 describes the close relationship of *Ja deine Sünd* and *Ach! Wir armen Sünder*. Though of contrasting scale, which can be largely explained by the change in the format of the Passion services after 1745, the consistency and style of the writing of the aria movements would suggest that the two works are both by Fasch. However, also noted is the dichotomy in style between two of the sinfonias of *Ja deine Sünd* and the other writing in the work which strongly suggests the hybrid nature of its creation. Comparison with the early *Mich vom Stricke meiner Sünden* and other surviving cantatas of Fasch indicates that the aria movements of *Ja deine Sünd* appear to be contemporary with those of the post-1730 cantatas and in particular, the *Schlußchor* is a clear example of the simple homophonic choral style favoured in the 1730-50 period. That two movements reappear in the later St John Passion strengthens the argument that Fasch is the author of the lyrical movements. On the other hand, the sinfonias that commence Parts I and II appear to be of a much earlier style than the arias. It is quite possible that Fasch, short of time, was happy to keep these short atmospheric instrumental movements from a much earlier work (by Kuch). Rather than produce a new set of parts with all the new music for the lyrical texts interpolated in the gospel music, it is not unreasonable to suggest that he would choose to copy out just the music of the lyrical texts in the vocal and instrumental parts and re-use the music for the gospel text from the original scores or from separate sheets.

With the St John Passion, the question of authorship can be much more confidently answered. There are only two candidates to consider as author, J.F. Fasch and Röllig. The St John

Passion can be firmly dated to post-1748,²¹ and the ‘borrowing’ of an aria movement from this work for the 1753 cantata *Wachet und betet* tends to confirm a more or less contemporaneous composition date for the two. Comparison of the music of the arias of this Passion with other post-1735 cantata works again indicates strongly that Fasch is the composer; as described, in Chapter 8, many characteristics of Fasch’s mid to late style, such as the reduction of the accompaniment to basso continuo only at major structural cadences, the preference for 2/4 and 3/8 time signatures, the more linear and (by comparison) less ‘symphonic’ writing in the ritornelli, are apparent and clearly rule Röllig out as composer. However, as with *Ja deine Sünd*, the work appears to be a composite cobbled together as opposed to a completely freshly composed work. Not only are there the obvious borrowings already alluded to, but it is also very likely that the work was an adaptation of an earlier four- or five-Part version utilising an adapted version of the gospel text of the 1723 setting; the recitative seems quite archaic compared to the contemporary characteristics of the concerted movements. However, despite this, it is clear that the St John Passion is much more likely to be the work of one composer than the 2nd-period settings of St Matthew, St Mark and St Luke, which could all have links back to Kuch’s first offerings for the Court.

In the case of the St Mark Passion *Gehet heraus und schauet an*, the markedly differing features of the construction of the work and the general style of the music point clearly to the third Kapellmeister, Röllig. Several features, such as the opening lengthy lyrical chorus, the dynamic key scheme featuring a catabasis in the crucifixion scene and the use of chorale melodies as *cantus firmi*, all lacking in the surviving Fasch Passions, may reflect Röllig’s knowledge of, and association with, the Leipzig tradition. The use of the medial ritornello in the B section of *da capo* arias (absent in Fasch’s music and by the mid-century quite archaic), and use of gambas also suggest a possible link with Bach. Notable too, are the dynamic treatment of the *turbæ* and the importance of instrumental colour in *Gehet heraus und schauet an*, both quite unlike those in *Ach! Wir armen Sünder*, together with the Lied-like mid-century style of the *Schlußchor* which contrasts with the aria-like final chorus Oranienbaum scores, a product of the 1730s. In the music of the lyrical movements, one can recognise that the composer of *Gehet heraus und schauet an* is further down the road to classicism than Fasch. The arias are more ‘symphonic’ in their approach, often featuring

²¹ See discussion of the Zerbst Passion cycle in Chapter 4.

contrasting thematic material within the *da capo* structure, and the changes of metre in the B section, typical of C.P.E. Bach and C.H. Graun.

However, to what extent *Gehet heraus und schauet an*, like *Ach! Wir armen Sünder*, is a composite work cannot be fully established. A point reiterated several times in the course of Chapter 9 is the mixture of styles displayed in the aria movements. Is there a case to suggest that *Gehet heraus und schauet an*, like *Ja deine Sünd* and *Ach! Wir armen Sünder* is not a wholly original work? Like *Ja deine Sünd*, there is the possibility that the St Mark Passion is a composite work with more than one author. On the one hand the lyrical choral movements and the setting of the gospel text,²² which was composed specifically for this work, can be confidently ascribed to Röllig. On the other hand, the aria ‘Wo is das Kreuz?’ stands apart in the use of an accompanying chamber ensemble of obbligato instruments. Arguments above strongly suggest that the possible influence of Bach would explain Röllig’s treatment of the text in this aria. Yet mention is also made above of the distinctly Faschian characteristics of the aria ‘Dich Petrus, wekt der muntre Hahn’. It is possible that these two movements were taken from a revised version of the Kuch setting made by Fasch in the period up to 1741, or from the anonymous seven-Part setting which was (presumably) newly composed and performed only once in 1746. However, there is little doubt that Röllig is the composer of the greater part of the work, a fact that Fasch commentators realised in 1908 without the proof of the music to guide them: Wäschke clearly states that ‘Röllig ... created the poetry and music for the churchly performance in Easter week 1750,’²³ while Engelke reports seeing a textbook of *Die betrühte und getröstete Sulamith* (1756) ‘by Röllig’ in the possession of Zerbst Music Director Preitz.²⁴

²² None of the divisions of the text between Parts are common with previous settings of the St Mark Passion (see section 4.5.1).

²³ ‘Röllig schauf auch die Poesie und Musik zu den kirchlichen Auffuuhungen in der Karwoche 1750.’ Wäschke (1906) p. 60.

²⁴ Engelke (1908) pp 43-44. The reference is apparently to the word book in Preitz’s collection. However, though the later date and slightly differing title (the lack of the word *Geistliche*, interestingly the same word omitted in the reference to the work as performed in 1764) might suggest that Engelke saw the wordbook associated with a later performance of the work, since it was the turn of St John’s Gospel in 1756, and it is almost certainly the same copy as that in the collection of Heinz-Helmut Schmudt, the date and the title in Engelke’s dissertation are most probably in error.

10.4 Reasons for the survival of sources of the Zerbst St John, St Luke and St Mark Passions

Considering the wealth of the Passion repertoire performed in the Schloßkirche in Zerbst, it is surprising that, other than the three sources of music and one textbook listed above in section 4.1, no other materials appear to have survived. From the omission of any reference to Passion works in the 1743 Inventory, one can surmise that, either the Passion scores were not regarded highly –other ‘occasional’ pieces to celebrate court birthdays and the like are included in the Inventory, but under one blanket entry and not separately listed– or, less likely, the performing materials were held elsewhere.

It has been established that the St Mark Passion, *Die betrübte und getröstete Geistliche Sulamith* attracted the attention of an 18th-century musician who saw the possibility of a) learning from the score and b) overseeing (a) performance(s) of the work in his new place of employment. We can be sure that the 19th-century misattribution to Bach led collectors to take more notice of the source than they might otherwise have given it. Even though the version of the work transmitted by the Köln score is clearly not the original, with the information provided by the extant wordbook of the performance in 1750 and by the Zerbst *Cantional*, it would be possible to reconstruct missing music from this source to provide a close, if not totally accurate, representation of the Passion music performed in Zerbst in Holy Week, 1750. In the case of *Ja deine Sünd* and *Ach! Wir armen Sünder*, these works were performed right up to the final years that Passion performances were given in Zerbst. Obviously the music of the two Oranienbaum Passions (especially that which is common to both) was held in particular esteem by the members of the court - particularly that of the St Luke Passion, for no other four-part work had been performed since 1743.

From these three works and the detailed records of the services in the Schloßkirche, it has been possible to build up a clear picture of the style, scale and richness of liturgical Passion performances in Zerbst, a tradition which, apart from Hamburg, rivals all the major centres that supported regular performances of oratorio Passions in 18th century.