

# The Composer's Influence on the Renarration of History

Heinrich Schütz's »Nun danket alle Gott« (SWV 418)\*

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In 1648, the Treaty of Westphalia officially ended the Thirty Years' War and pronounced the long-awaited peace. Messengers brought the news to the inhabitants of Europe, who had suffered from famine, sickness, and raids during the protracted war. Catholics, Calvinists, and Lutherans all welcomed the peace with celebrations, although it was no victory for the Habsburgs – or for anyone.<sup>1</sup> The celebrations differed in size and opulence and depended on the cultural life of the cities. They included church services, theatrical performances, military processions, and thematic music that was composed or revived for these festivities. On their surface, the official celebrations sought to observe the new peace (and the »victories« of those in power) but they can also be interpreted as tools to »overwrite« and forget the cruelties of the war and to legitimize the new borders of Europe. In the words of Ross Poole, the sovereigns aimed to enact oblivion<sup>2</sup> and shape the perception of the peace.

In the case of bi-confessional (Lutheran and Catholic) Osnabrück, one of the two cities in which peace negotiations had gone on for three years, the announcement of the peace had an official character, but Osnabrück's Lutheran inhabitants shaped the celebration in an unplanned way. The peace treaty signed on October 24, 1648, was officially recognized the following day with a procession, including trumpets, military kettle drums, cannon fire, and fireworks.<sup>3</sup> It was followed by a wind ensemble playing from the decorated tower of the Marienkirche, which was immediately echoed by communal singing at the city center of the hymn *Nun Lob mein Seel den Herren*<sup>4</sup> (*Now praise, my soul, the Lord*). By striking up one of the most popular Lutheran hymns of the day, the Protestant burghers of Osnabrück thanked God for peace, which indeed mirrored the ideology of Lutheran imagination. We may presume that the city's Catholic population also was present in the city center. Hence, the communal singing of the Protestants was not only an outburst of gratitude for peace but also a blunt statement of their Lutheran belief at the end of the Wars of Religion. Needless to say, the *casus belli* changed during the course of the wars as the development of transconfessional alliances showed. In other towns, thematic music was composed or revived for these festivities of peace.

Dresden, the city on which this article focusses, also held an official peace celebration. The music that was allegedly composed for Dresden's festivity represents one example of how music-making influenced the perception of belligerent war agents and thus the historiography of the Thirty Years' War. Other forms of media, such as broadsheets, also impacted this process and led to a »canonical memory«.<sup>5</sup> Historian

David van der Linden uses the term canonical memory to describe a set of memories that underwent a process of filtering in which certain memories are forgotten, certain are archived, and others are functional. For instance, music and visual culture formulated canonical narratives about the past, they emphasized certain stories and erased others. Through such practices, media helped to shape the identity of rulers caught up in the war, such as John George I (r. 1611–1656), the Elector of Saxony. John George I held the unofficial title of »foremost Lutheran prince of Germany«. <sup>6</sup> I propose that in Saxony, he was also known as the »peaceful prince«. As elsewhere in Europe, he welcomed the end of the war with music performed at the peace celebrations in Dresden. Many scholars, including Werner Breig believe that Heinrich Schütz composed his *Geistliches Konzert Nun danket alle Gott* (SWV 418) from the collection *Symphoniae sacrae* III (1650) in honor of the Treaty of Westphalia. <sup>8</sup> Still, the Dresden Hofmarschall records offer no ready evidence of a performance. <sup>9</sup> Yet the collection, with its dedication to the elector, shaped the narrative of the peace process in Saxony. More precisely, the celebration and the accompanying media influenced the public perception of John George I; they present a re-shaped image of the Saxon elector and his agency over the course of the Thirty Years' War, especially pertaining to its conclusion.

This article is divided into four parts. In the first part, I explore theories of cultural and body memory and enacted oblivion which affects the narration of history. Next, I outline the political and religio-social situation in 1650 Dresden, before offering an interpretation of Schütz's *Nun danket alle Gott*. I focus on his setting of the word »Friede« (peace) in particular, and how this concerto in the context of the *Symphoniae sacrae* III might have changed the image Saxons had of John George I. Finally, I widen the scope of the article to look at some aspects of contemporary visual culture that serve to further support my reading of Schütz's 1650 concerto and media's influence on historiography in general.

## Forgetting and Remembering

Since sovereigns arranged the official peace celebrations, they were the central authority<sup>10</sup> or the active agents<sup>11</sup> in commemorating the peace. As active agents, they used celebrations like political instruments,<sup>12</sup> and thereby wanted to influence the cultural memory for their purposes. Jan Assmann defines cultural memory as a set of memories that is decided to be worthy of safekeeping by a specific collective.<sup>13</sup> Cultural memory excludes those memories which were deemed unworthy and then forgotten. In 1648, sovereigns wanted to extinguish their subjects' negative memories through peace celebrations – memories of war that were the logical consequence of the ferocity and inhumanity that accompanied this thirty-years-long battle.<sup>14</sup> For instance, the 1648 peace treaty pronounced oblivion and amnesty for crimes committed during the war years.<sup>15</sup> In so doing, the rulers hoped to legitimize the newly segmented Europe and to invoke an acceptance of the challenging post-war situation with thousands of soldiers still roaming through Europe and with

famines and illnesses terrorizing entire regions.<sup>16</sup> In the case of Saxony, the elector also appeared to brush up his own image by aggrandizing his role in the peace process, so as to perhaps compensate for him not having a say in the peace negotiations that led to the Peace of Westphalia.

Paul Connerton has argued that cultural memory is connected to performative memory inscribed in the body; we remember better, when our body is involved, e.g., one can think of music-making and dancing. Active music-making was part of many peace celebrations.<sup>17</sup> As part of these festivities, music's bodily experience created long-lasting memories which took effect as »measure of insurance against the process of cumulative questioning«. <sup>18</sup> In order to quell such a process of cumulative questioning, the Saxons were dissuaded from challenging the tentative peace; they should not insist on the absence thereof with the consequences of the Swedish occupation still lingering. In short, it was the peace that should be remembered, not the inhumanity of the war; the historical narrative should be re-written, and music helped to do so.

## The Peace Celebration in Dresden in 1650

At the end of the war, Dresden stood as a Lutheran court city with close ties to the Holy Roman Empire. Dresden's belated observance (July 22, 1650, almost two years after the official announcement<sup>19</sup>) can be explained twofold. First, most celebrations in the German lands took place after the Nuremberg *Friedensexekutionskongress* (Peace Congress of Nuremberg) in 1650.<sup>20</sup> More to the point, though, the Swedish army continued to occupy Saxony until that year.

Schütz, the court's Kapellmeister since the 1610s published the celebratory concerto in his *Symphoniae sacrae* III on September 29, 1650 – after the festivities in Dresden. Modern scholars, including Clytus Gottwald have argued that Schütz composed *Nun danket alle Gott* by early 1650 at the latest,<sup>21</sup> meaning that the concerto could have been performed at the peace celebration.<sup>22</sup> Schütz attended to the topic of peace before 1650. For instance, during the Thirty Years' War, Schütz set the topic of war and peace to music multiple times: his compositions either were political homages in the early years of the war or later pleas for peace.<sup>23</sup>

The 1650 *Friedensfest*<sup>24</sup> started off with a military procession into Dresden's New Market, followed by a morning Mass and, at noon, around 265 cannons and volleys of gunfire were fired. The morning festivities were followed by a Vesper Mass.<sup>25</sup> The Masses were most likely either held at the court chapel or the Kreuzkirche. A printed announcement for the celebration and the report of the *Hofmarschallamt* indicate that the population of Dresden was encouraged to sing along during the church service.<sup>26</sup> The active participation of the Dresden population, when interpreted in recourse to Connerton's understanding of body memory, helped to conciliate with the new situation of peace without questioning the war or its consequences. Although congregational singing was encouraged, the *Hofmarschallamt* report indicates that various pieces were performed

*instrumentaliter* and *vocaliter* by the congregation, *Discantisten*, *Tenoristen*, and a trumpet choir. Thus, it is conceivable that pieces of larger scale were part of the Holy Mass and Vesper of July 22, 1650.

### Heinrich Schütz's »Nun danket alle Gott« (SWV 418)

Regardless of whether Schütz's *Geistliches Konzert* was performed during the official peace celebration, the text and its setting to music support the assumption that Schütz composed *Nun danket alle Gott* for the achieved peace. The text was well-known to its listeners and gave clear reasons to thank God for the peace. Schütz took the text from the apocryphal *Wisdom of Sirah* (50:24–6<sup>27</sup>) – a book often used in Lutheran sermons throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>28</sup> Parodies of the verses were already well-established Lutheran prayer texts, especially since Martin Rinckart (1586–1649) had published a version of *Nun danket alle Gott* in his 1636 *Jesu Hertz-Büchlein*.<sup>29</sup> Rinckart's text has three stanzas; the first and second stanza are based on *Wisdom of Sirah* 50:24–26 while the last stanza paraphrases the *Gloria Patri* doxology (Lukas 2:14). Around 1647, the composer-editor Johann Crüger (1598–1662) set Rinckart's parody to music and published the hymn in the second edition of his popular collection *Praxis pietatis melica*.<sup>30</sup> A year later, the chorale was published in the influential *Neues vollkommliches Gesangsbuch Augspurgischer Confession*.<sup>31</sup> Rinckart and Crüger's *Nun danket alle Gott* quickly gained currency all over the German lands including Saxony.<sup>32</sup>

Though both contain three stanzas, Schütz's *Nun danket alle Gott* differs from Rinckart's text in that it does not follow the tripartite accentuation of thanksgiving, plea, and praise.<sup>33</sup> Rather, in Schütz's version (see text below), thanksgiving and praise are omnipresent throughout, as each stanza starts with an invitation to give thanks and praise (see line 1 and 2 of each stanza). Moreover, the concerto as a whole begins and ends with a repetition of line 1 and 2 and, thus, with thanksgiving and praise. Line 3 and 4 of the second and third stanza can be read as a plea. The plea is directed to conserve the current situation of peace for the future (esp. »Und verleihe immerdar Friede«, stanza 2, line 4). Thus, it is not farfetched that Schütz's *Symphoniae sacrae* III and its climactic *Nun danket alle Gott*<sup>34</sup> might have encouraged Saxons to thank God for the peace. It is remarkable, though, that the concerto contains a plea for the *conservation* of peace since the peace in Saxony was not actually in effect until after the Swedish army withdrew in 1650. Thus, the concerto pled for a conservation of a peace that might not have been established at the time of its composition.

Heinrich Schütz, *Nun danket alle Gott* (SWV 418) – Text:

Nun danket alle Gott,  
Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden;  
Der uns von Mutterleibe an  
Lebendig erhält und tut uns alles Guts.  
Nun danket alle Gott,  
Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden;  
Er gebe uns ein fröhliches Herz,  
Und verleihe immerdar *Friede*  
zu unsrer Zeit in Israel.  
Nun danket alle Gott,  
Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden;  
Und daß seine Gnade stets bei uns  
bleibe, Und erlöse uns, so lang wir leben.  
Nun danket alle Gott,  
Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden;  
Alleluia.

Now let everyone thank God,  
Who does great things to all ends;  
Who for us, from our mother's wombs,  
Sustains us in life and does good for us.  
Now let everyone thank God,  
Who does great things to all ends;  
May He give us a joyful heart,<sup>35</sup>  
And continually grant *Peace*  
in our time in Israel.  
Now let everyone thank God,  
Who does great things to all ends;  
So that His grace may always be with us,  
And redeem us, as long as we live.  
Now let everyone thank God,  
Who does great things to all ends;  
Alleluia.

In Schütz's *Geistliches Konzert* – scored for two violins, six voices, four voices or instruments *ad libitum* (Complementum), and continuo – »Friede« has great significance not only through its literal textual meaning and its central position in the text, but also for its musical setting. The word »Friede« is highlighted as if printed on a *Spruchband* (bänderole or word balloon) that is hovering calmly over bubbling eighth-note passages.<sup>36</sup>

Schütz varied the musical styles and instrumentation in his concerto greatly. The concerto can be divided into different passages. We find passages in the style of chorale harmonizations that serve as »ritornello« or »refrain« and include all parts – and more polyphonic passages that function as »verse« and in which the *ad libitum* parts rest.

The chorale passages function as ritornelli, and always recur in an F-tonality and in  $\frac{3}{2}$  time. These chorale passages invite listeners to thank God and give the reasons as to why to thank God. They make use of all the instruments and voices at hand: the six vocal parts, the *ad libitum* parts, violins, and basso continuo. The more imitative passages function as verses. They differ from each other, leave the F-tonality in favor of C, G, and, B-flat and feature paired or alternating voices, they use the violins sparsely, and the *ad libitum* parts pause. The verses contain the pleas to God. Put differently: The chorale sets the act of thanksgiving and benediction to music; the polyphonic passages follow with pleas.

Reading this text closely, the second stanza is central, especially the verse »Und verleihe immerdar Friede« that includes the keyword »Friede«. This fourth line of the second stanza is the middle of the entire text (line 8 of 15), and it is also the verse that Schütz focused on in his concerto. The word »Friede« is only mentioned once in the text; however, in the concerto, it is repeated over a length of 22 measures (out of 179). The »Friede« section« (mm. 87–110) is the core of the concerto; its onset coincides with a change in meter from  $\frac{3}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  after the line »Er gebe uns ein fröhliches Herz«. As seen

<b>prelude</b>		<b>symphonia</b>	<b>mm. 1–20</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> stanza	Nun danket alle Gott, Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden; Der uns von Mutterleibe an Lebendig erhält und tut uns alles Guts.	refrain or ritornello, chorale harmonization	A, mm. 21–30
2 <sup>nd</sup> stanza	Nun danket alle Gott, [...]  Er gebe uns ein fröhliches Herz, Und verleihe immerdar <i>Friede</i> zu unsrer Zeit in Israel.	refrain or ritornello, chorale harmonization	A, mm. 55–64
3 <sup>rd</sup> stanza	Nun danket alle Gott, [...]  Und daß seine Gnade stets bei uns bleibe, Und erlöse uns, so lang wir leben.	refrain or ritornello, chorale harmonization	A, mm. 114–123
4 <sup>th</sup> stanza / epilogue	Nun danket alle Gott, [...]  Alleluia.	refrain or ritornello, chorale harmonization	A, mm. 153–162
		verse, polyphonic passage	E, mm. 163–179

Heinrich Schütz, *Nun danket alle Gott* – form diagram

in Example 1, the line is set polyphonically; however, this passage is confined to Tenor primus and secundus and almost recalls a bicinium as the two voices take turns singing melodic phases in relatively large note values:

Example 1: Heinrich Schütz, *Nun danket alle Gott* (SWV 418), mm. 65–71

This stark shift in textural density and metric pulse, following the line »Er gebe uns ein fröhliches Herz«, not only emphasizes the ever-repeated half-verse (»Und verleihe immerdar Friede«) but also highlights the beginning of a new section, shown in Example 2.

85

Violinum primum

Violinum secundum

Altus

Tenor primus

Tenor secundus  
fröh - li - ches Herz,

Bassus  
und ver - lei - he im - mer - dar Frie - de, Frie - de,

Organum Violon

90

und ver - lei - he im - mer - dar Frie - de, Frie - de, Frie - de,

und ver - lei - he im - mer - dar Frie - de, Frie - de,

und ver - lei - he im - mer - dar Frie - de, Frie - de,

und ver - lei - he im - mer - dar Frie - de,

Example 2: Heinrich Schütz, *Nun danket alle Gott* (SWV 418), mm. 85–94

The Bassus presents the text for the first time (mm. 87–89), which then is imitated in the four lower voices (Tenor secundus, Tenor primus, and Altus enter) until, finally, Cantus primus and secundus enter and the line is brought to an end with all voices active. The musical settings of this verse follow a similar pattern. All reiterations of the verse start off with ascending stepwise motion setting the words »und verleihe immerdar« syllabically in six eighth notes and one quarter note. The word »Friede« is emphasized with two half notes. In each reiteration of the line, the melodic phrase cadences on »Friede« which accents the word even more. Schütz strings together different cadences at the word »Friede«. Often, two consecutive cadences can be read as plea and sanction, especially since the first cadence creates tension that is resolved with the second cadence, often in the form of a fifth descent.

These ever-repeating half-note cadences as well as the basso continuo that mostly accompanies in half notes establish a notion of *alla breve*. The eighth-note patterns in the vocal parts are imitated by the violins and function as an embellishment. This all helps to foreground the word »Friede«. Hans Joachim Moser used the term *Spruchband* to describe single words that stand out of a polyphonic fabric.<sup>37</sup> In the case of Schütz's *Nun danket alle Gott*, Moser's banderole fittingly describes the setting of the word »Friede«. For long stretches of the concerto, »Friede« is the only word that is easily understandable – as if printed on a banderole. In music and print culture, a banderole helped to orient the listener and the reader. In Schütz's composition, as in Johann Rist's title page to his play *Das Friedewünschende Teütschland* (Illustration 1) the peace banderole functions as a stabilizing anchor.<sup>38</sup> The visual banderole frames the outcry of personified Peace. Schütz's *Spruchband* stands in contrast to its sonic environment. Neither Schütz's nor Rist's exclamation blurs into the cacophony of war that surrounds each one. In both Rist's title page and Schütz's concerto the word »Friede« shines forth.

The »Friede-section« climaxes in a last half-note cadence that is not accompanied by sixteenth notes in any other voice (Example 3, mm. 109–110). After this section, a chorale-like ritornello with the text »Nun danket alle Gott, Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden« (Now let everyone thank God, Who does great things to all ends) represents another shift (Example 3, m. 114). The solemn homophony without any embellishments and the  $\frac{3}{2}$  meter of the refrain stand in stark contrast to the polyphonic, ornamented and celebratory section in  $\frac{4}{4}$  meter. Encircled by the homophony of the refrain, the lively »Friede-section« seems like a slowly rising outburst of joy, ease, and certitude (Example 3).

How did Schütz's *Geistliches Konzert* change the historiography of the Peace of Westphalia for seventeenth-century Saxons? The collection *Symphoniae sacrae* III can be interpreted as Schütz's ingratiating with John George I. This is also indicated in the collection's dedication and an accompanying letter – all this Schütz handed over to John George I on January 14, 1651.<sup>39</sup> In the dedication, Schütz thanked the elector extensively for his support throughout Schütz's life and the war years.<sup>40</sup> The reality differed from the dedication. As shown by Gregory Johnston and Mary Frandsen through their analysis of documents and extant letters from Schütz to John George I, the elector was by no means a constant supporter of the arts.<sup>41</sup> Schütz used the dedication to »reach« the ruler through musical



Illustration 1: Title page, Johann Rist, *Das Friedewünschende Teutschland*, Hamburg 1649 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Sign. P.o.germ. 1169 m)

publication. He had heightened interest to be in John George's special favor for at least two reasons. Professionally speaking, Schütz hoped to retire as court composer; personally, he wanted to ensure that the musical ensembles he had struggled to keep together during the war years would not fall apart during the upcoming transition in sovereigns.<sup>42</sup>

The image of the elector that Schütz painted in the publicly accessible dedication, intentionally or not, is a different one: Schütz emphasized the story of John George I as the sovereign who led Dresden into peace and who believed in the arts and supported them. The very last concerto of the *Symphoniae sacrae* III *Nun danket alle Gott* can be understood as double syntax, which means that the reader or listener cannot be sure of how to interpret the sentence structure when it flows over a line ending, as in the case of »Und verleihe immerdar Friede«. <sup>43</sup> The elector is not named here, but the phrase »continually grant peace« does not necessarily stress God as the agent of the Treaty of Westphalia, either. More than

107 111 114

Violinum primum

Violinum secundum

Cantus primus  
im-mer-dar Frie - de, Frie - de, Frie-de zu uns - rer Zeit in Is - ra - el. Nun dan - ket al

Cantus secundus  
im-mer-dar Frie - de, Frie - de, Frie-de zu uns - rer Zeit in Is - ra - el. Nun dan - ket al

Altus  
Nun dan - ket

Tenor primus  
Frie - de, Frie - de. Nun dan - ket al

Tenor secundus  
Frie - de, Frie - de. Nun dan - ket al

Bassus  
de, Frie - de. Nun dan - ket al

[Capella omitted.]

Organum Violon

6 2 4 4 4 3

Example 3: Heinrich Schütz, *Nun danket alle Gott* (SWV 418), mm. 107–114

twenty years before his *Symphoniae sacrae* III, Schütz already composed a concerto that emphasized both God and the sovereignty as entities in power regarding war and peace: Schütz's double choir concerto *Da pacem Domine*, (SWV 465) for the Electoral Assembly, or *Kollegtag* in Mühlhausen in 1627 – of course, this was during a time in which Saxony was still neutral and pacifist.<sup>44</sup> In this concerto, one choir pleads God for peace and the second choir addressees the electors as »bringers and guardians of peace«.<sup>45</sup>

Some seven years after the *Kollegtag* in Mühlhausen, in 1635, the elector made his mark, from the Saxon perspective, as a peaceful prince by signing the Peace of Prague. It was he who concluded peace with the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II (in absentia; r. 1619–1637).<sup>46</sup> Although the Peace of Prague did not end the Thirty Years' War, it did conclude the civil war among the imperial estates.<sup>47</sup> Like music, print culture shaped the image of sovereigns and influenced the canonical narration of history. In the case of John George I, his image as a peaceful prince started to evolve before the Peace of Westphalia.

## History Narrated by Print Culture

In the earlier 1640s, a broadsheet from Leipzig depicted peace negotiations as a ballet, a dance genre reserved for the court.<sup>48</sup> The broadsheet conflates constellations of political power with dance, the latter was an elementary part of early modern court ceremonials



and often included the demonstration of power. On the broadsheet, spectators sit and stand around two rows of four dancers who perform *ballonnés*.<sup>49</sup> The right row is comprised of sovereigns and military personnel: Louis XIV of France (A), John IV of Portugal (B), Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange (C), and the Swedish Generalissimo Torstenson (D). The deceased Gustav Adolf of Sweden lies rolled-up in a carpet at their feet. The left row of dancers is composed of sovereigns Philip IV of Spain (E), the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III (F), Maximilian I, Elector of Bavaria (H), and Christian IV of Denmark (G). While the emperor, kings, princes, electors, and the general are partaking in a merry dance, personified Envy (AA) is throwing down apples of discord. In Greek mythology, it is Eris, the Goddess of Discord, who angrily tossed a golden apple into a wedding party to which she was not invited. The apple bore the inscription »Kallisti« (For the most beautiful / fairest) and, as a consequence, the guests argued over its possession. In the broadsheet, this can be interpreted in two ways. Either, John George I (L) is the one not invited to join the ballet (or for that matter the peace negotiations) and this is why he gravitates toward the apples of discord as a means of fighting for his rights. As the fairest, he should receive the apples as recognition for his appearance; figuratively, he should receive praise for his politics. Or, it is John George I who is trying to fix the peace by picking up the apples of discord. In the latter interpretation, John George I does not join the merry-making of the dancers but listens to the warning and the call for peace that the angel with sword (Z) is giving in the last stanza of the text below the image.

Of course, long before the negotiations in Münster and Osnabrück started, peace treaties were negotiated. For instance, print culture captured the above-mentioned Peace of Prague of 1635. An anonymous broadsheet (Illustration 3) celebrating this peace treaty offers a view of the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II and John George I as coequal.

On this broadsheet titled *Deß H. Römischen Reichs von Gott eingesegete Friedens=Copulation*,<sup>50</sup> the personification of the Holy Roman Empire – *Res publica Roma* – occupies the central and highest throne while Peace rests at her feet with an olive branch, Ferdinand II and John George I join hands while Rome blesses the »Copulation« via her right hand. The word »Copulation« was synonymous with the act of marriage in early modern times. With her left hand, Rome points toward heaven where we see God consecrating the peace treaty. God is thus included in the broadsheet but plays a secondary role to the emperor and the elector who made the peace manifest.<sup>51</sup> The text below the image explains the broadsheet and its Latin script.<sup>52</sup>

Most striking is the fact that Emperor Ferdinand II and Elector John George I are depicted symmetrically and in the same size. This hints towards the importance of Saxony for the Habsburg monarchy. This equal depiction was not the norm, because size and positioning were tantamount to power. Inside the Holy Roman Empire, Saxony was second only to the Habsburg lands in territorial importance.<sup>53</sup> It was more common to depict the emperor as an enlarged, elevated and centered figure relative to the electors.<sup>54</sup> Even in comparison with other European sovereigns, the emperor's proportions are often larger and his location higher and more central. For instance, *Danck=Gebet*<sup>55</sup> (Illustration 4), a broadsheet for the Peace of Westphalia from about 1648, shows the more usual

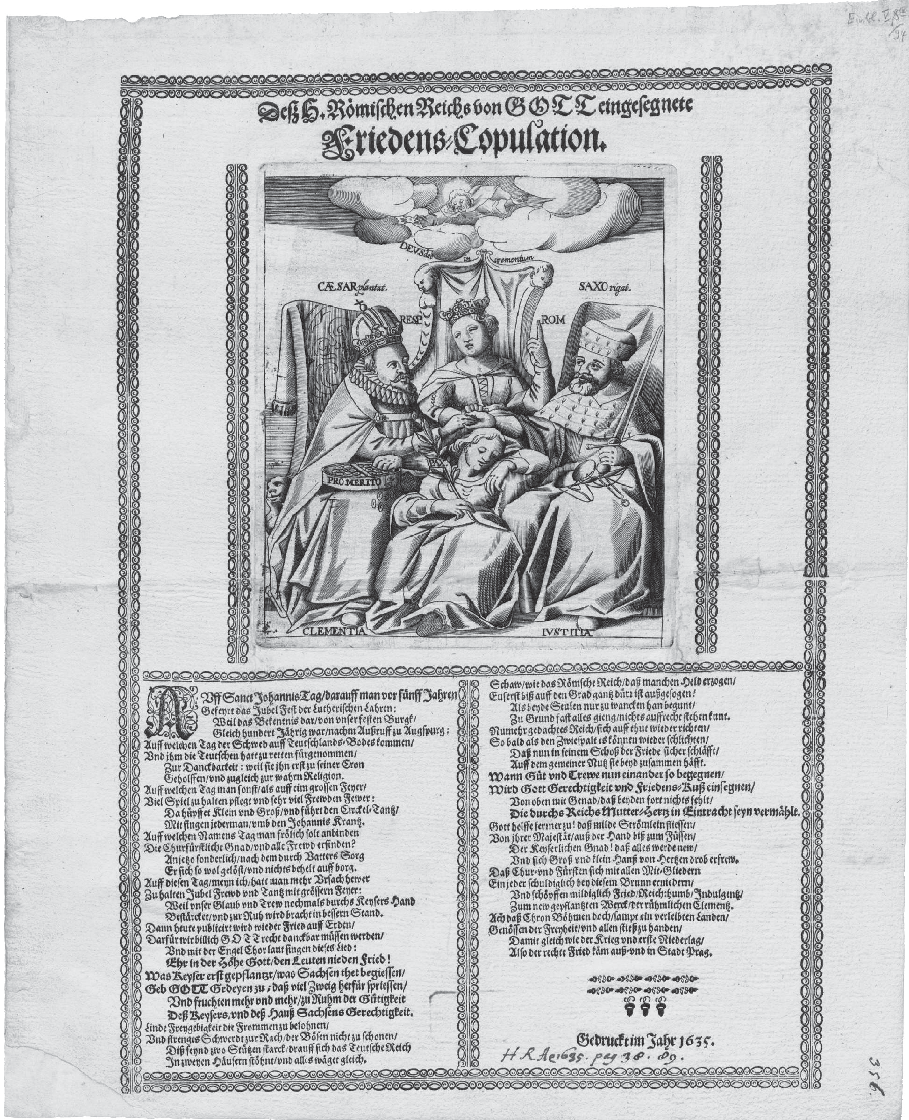


Illustration 3: *Desß H. Römischen Reichs von Gott eingesegete Friedens=Copulation*, [S. I.] 1635 (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München, Sign. Einbl. V, 8 a-94)

political power structures. The oversized Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand III (r. 1637–1657) is placed front and center, with Christina of Sweden and Louis XIV on his right and left, respectively.

Judging by the typographic decorative edging and the entire structure, the print comes from the same workshop as the broadsheet for the Peace of Prague (*Friedens=Copulation*, Illustration 3). Hence, the symmetrical depiction of the Emperor Ferdinand II and John George I is indeed a peculiarity. The 1648 broadsheet's full title is *Danck=Gebet für*



*den so langgewünschten und durch Gottes Gnad nunmehr geschlossenen Frieden* which translates to »Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Long Desired and Through God's Mercy Attained Peace«. The title itself is reminiscent of *Nun danket alle Gott*, but the broadsheet turns up still more clues in its textual exhortations to singing<sup>56</sup> and graphical references to Biblical concordances. The incipits, intentionally or not, moreover recall Rinckart's and Schütz's hymn texts as well as the *Gloria Patri* doxology (Luk 2:14), whose performance is chronicled in the *Hofmarschallamt* report.

Thus, the broadsheet serves as indicator that Schütz indeed composed his *Nun danket alle Gott* for the Peace of Westphalia. Moreover, the broadsheet might have functioned as a reminder of Schütz's concerto, Rinckart's hymn text, or the official peace celebration and, hence, is an example of intermediality; this means that one medium could evoke memories of the other medium and vice versa.

Schütz's concerto and the broadsheets encountered in this article emphasize a historical narrative of the peace that followed the Thirty Years' War from a Saxon perspective. In examining Schütz's *Nun danket alle Gott* as well as its dedication, and by looking at depictions of the Saxon elector and his relationship to the House of Habsburg during the Thirty Years' War, we can come to see an alternative historical narrative. Schütz's concerto, with its words, and the telling way the composer set it to music, can be read as Connerton's »insurance of cumulative questioning«; in visual arts, John George I was depicted as active apple-picking and peace-enforcing elector. With all that, John George I's identity shifts from the not too influential elector of Saxony to the peaceful prince of Europe.