

DRAMA / PER MUSICA, / Welches / Bei dem  
Allerhöchsten / Geburts-Feste / Der /  
Allerdurchlauchtigsten und Gross- / mächtigsten /  
Königin in Polen / und / Churfürstin zu Sachsen / in  
unterthänigster Ehrfurcht / aufgeführt wurde / in dem /  
COLLEGIO MUSICO / Durch / J. S. B.

1. *Irene. Bellona. Pallas. Fama*<sup>1</sup>  
Tönet, ihr Pauken! Erschallet, Trompeten!  
Klingende Saiten, erfüllet die Luft!  
Singet itzt Lieder, ihr muntren Poeten,  
Königin lebe! wird fröhlich geruft.  
Königin lebe! dies wünschet der Sachse,  
Königin lebe und blühe und wachse!

Musical drama, which was performed on the most elevated  
birthday celebration of the most serene and most mighty Queen  
of Poland and Electress of Saxony in most submissive reverence  
in the Collegium Musicum by J. S. B.

1.  
Sound forth, you drums; ring out, trumpets.  
Sonorous strings, fill the air.  
Sing songs now, you blithe poets,  
“Long live the Queen!” is cheerfully called out.  
“Long live the Queen!”—the Saxon wishes this;  
“Long live the Queen and blossom and flourish!”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Irene is the Greek goddess of peace (Pax to the Romans); Bellona is the Roman goddess of war; Pallas Athena is the Greek goddess of war; Fama (PHEME, or Rumor to the Romans) was the Greek personification of fame, renown, and rumor. In this Drama per Musica for the birthday of Maria Josepha (1699-1757), Saxon Electress and Queen of Poland on 8 December 1733, all four speaking characters are female.

<sup>2</sup>The words rendered here in quotation marks are in larger type in the original printed libretto, probably implying that these are to be understood as quoted words. In movement 7 the words “Kron und Preis gekrönter Damen!” are printed the same way, as is the last line of the cantata, “Königin, lebe, ja lebe noch lang.” All these, too, are presumably to be understood as quoted words. The libretto also usually singles out “Königin,” “Sachsen,” and “Polen,” presumably for respectful emphasis rather than as quotations.

2. *Irene*: Heut ist der Tag,  
Wo jeder sich erfreuen mag.  
Dies ist der frohe Glanz  
Der Königin Geburts-Fests-Stunden,  
Die Polen, Sachsen und uns ganz  
In grösster Lust und Glück erfunden.  
Mein Ölbaum  
Kriegt<sup>3</sup> so Saft als fetten Raum.  
Er zeigt noch keine falbe Blätter;  
Mich schreckt kein Sturm, Blitz, trübe Wolken, düstres  
Wetter.

3. *Bellona*: Blast die wohlgegriffnen Flöten,  
Dass Feind, Lilien, Mond erröten!  
Schallt mit jauchzendem Gesang!  
Tönt mit eurem Waffenklang!  
Dieses Fest erfordert Freuden,  
Die so Geist als Sinnen weiden.

4. *Bellona*: Mein knallendes Metall,  
Der in der Luft erbebenden Cartauen;<sup>10</sup>  
Der frohe Schall;  
Das angenehme Schauen;  
Die Lust, die Sachsen itzt empfindt,  
Rührt vieler Menschen Sinnen.  
Mein schimmerndes Gewehr  
Nebst meiner Söhne gleichen Schritten

2. Today is the day  
On which everyone may rejoice.  
This is the cheerful splendor  
Of the Queen's birthday-celebration hours  
That have found Poles, Saxons, and all of us  
In greatest delight and fortune.  
My olive tree  
Yields both oil and rich ointment;<sup>4</sup>  
It shows yet no pallid leaves;  
No storm, lightning, dark clouds, gloomy weather frightens me.

3. Blow the well-fingered flutes<sup>5</sup>  
So that enemy, fleur-de-lis,<sup>6</sup> moon<sup>7</sup> may blush;<sup>8</sup>  
Make noise [you flutes] with jubilant song;  
Sound forth with your weaponry-clangor.<sup>9</sup>  
This celebration calls for joys  
That feed both spirit and senses.

4. My roaring metal  
Of the air-quaking demicannons,<sup>11</sup>  
The joyous noise,  
The pleasant spectacle,  
The delight that Saxony now feels,  
Stirs the senses of many a person.  
My gleaming armament  
Alongside my sons' even paces

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<sup>3</sup>Here "kriegen" is an archaic synonym for "gewinnen" ("to yield"). This is the way the word was used, for example, in Psalm 107:37, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "... Weinberge pflanzen möchten, und die Jährliche Früchte kriegeten" ("[they] might plant vineyards, and might yield the yearly fruit").

<sup>4</sup>In this context, "fetten Raum" does not mean "spacious room" or "fertile ground." "Raum" is an archaic synonym for "Rahm" ("milk-cream," here a metaphor for "olive-cream/ointment"), employed to effect a rhyme with "Baum." Irene, the goddess of peace (see fn. 1, above), speaks of the olive tree because it is a symbol of peace; her tree is extremely fecund and therefore well able to foster peace.

<sup>5</sup>Blasen ("blow") and griffen (literally "grip") are the verbs used for the playing of woodwind instruments. "Fingering charts," indicating which holes to cover to produce each of the notated pitches in an instrument's range, are called "Griff Tabellen" (literally, "grip-tables") in German.

<sup>6</sup>This is a reference to "die drei Lilien" ("the three lilies") of the fleur-de-lis that was used by the French as a symbol of their kingdom. The libretto of Cantata 215 claims that Saxony is fortunate, in the face of the threatening "power of the French," to have Maria Josepha and her husband as rulers.

<sup>7</sup>This is a reference to the "Halbmond" ("crescent moon") used by the Turks as a symbol of their power. The librettos of Bach's Cantatas 18 and 126 express strong contempt for Turks.

<sup>8</sup>In one of its early eighteenth-century uses, the flute was strongly associated with the military and military men, and its sound might thus be expected to discomfit enemies.

<sup>9</sup>Cantata 215 also connects flutes with weaponry.

<sup>10</sup>To make a cleaner rhyme with "Schauen," the original sources employed not "Cartaunen" or "Carthaunen" but the alternative spelling "Carthauen."

<sup>11</sup>Technically, the "Cartaune"—from the Latin "quartana" ("of the fourth size")—was shorter and smaller than what was called a "Kanone" ("cannon"). In eighteenth-century England the artillery piece analogous to the Cartaune was called a "demicannon."

Und ihre heldenmässige Sitten  
Vermehren immer mehr und mehr  
Des heutgen Tages süsse Freude.

5. *Pallas*: Fromme Musen! meine Glieder!  
Singt nicht längst bekannte Lieder!  
Dieser Tag sei eure Lust!  
Füllt mit Freuden eure Brust!  
Werft so Kiel als Schriften nieder!  
Und erfreut euch dreimal wieder!

6. *Pallas*: Unsre Königin im Lande,  
Die der Himmel zu uns sandte,  
Ist der Musen-Trost und Schutz.  
Meine Pierinnen<sup>13</sup> wissen,  
Die in Ehrfurcht ihren Saum noch küssen,  
Vor ihr stetes Wohlergehn  
Dank und Pflicht und Ton stets zu erhöh'n.  
Ja, sie wünschen, dass ihr Leben  
Möge lange Lust uns geben.

7. *Fama*: Kron und Preis gekrönter Damen,  
Königin! mit deinem Namen  
Füll ich diesen Kreis der Welt.  
Was der Tugend stets gefällt  
Und was nur Heldinnen haben,  
Sein<sup>14</sup> dir angeborne Gaben.

And their heroic customs  
Increase ever more and more  
The sweet joy of the present day.

5. Faithful Muses, members [of] my [coterie],<sup>12</sup>  
Do not sing long-known songs.  
Let this day be your delight.  
Fill your breast with joy;  
Cast down both quill and writings  
And rejoice three times over.

6. Our Queen in this land,  
Whom heaven sent to us,  
Is the Muses' consolation and protection.  
My Pierians [Muses],  
Who yet kiss her hem in reverence,  
Do know, for her continued welfare,  
To continually lift up thanks and duty and sound.  
Yes, they wish that her life  
May long give us delight.

7. "Crown and praise<sup>15</sup> of crowned ladies,"  
Queen, with your name  
I fill this earthly globe.  
That which always pleases virtue  
And that which only heroines possess  
Are gifts innate to you.

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<sup>12</sup>Pallas Athena was associated with the nine Muses, but technically she was not a member of what was called "das Musenchor" ("the choir of [the nine] muses," lead by Apollo). In line 3 of movement 9, below, Pallas further addresses her coterie members, the choir of muses, about the manner in which they should sing. That is, the choir of four characters performing this cantata—Irene, Bellona, Pallas, and Fama—are neither literally nor metaphorically members of the choir of muses. In the cantatas BWV 1162 (Anh. 18) and 207a, however, the expression "Musenchor" does turn up as a metaphor for Bach's own ensembles. BWV 1162 was designed for the reinauguration of the Thomas School, in 1732; since schools and universities were sometimes called a "Musensitz" ("seat of the muses"), it made good sense for the librettist to call Bach's Thomas-School choir a "Musenchor" in those works. In Bach's "Hercules" cantata BWV 213 the closing ensemble aria is in the voice of the "Chor der Musen."

<sup>13</sup>The "Pierinnen" are the Muses, said to have been born in Pieria.

<sup>14</sup>"Sein" (spelled "seyn" in the original sources), as used here, is a regional form of "sind."

<sup>15</sup>"Preis" here is most probably short for "Lobpreis," as it is in the expression "Gott zum Preis und Ehren" ("to the praise and honor of God").

8. *Fama*: So dringe in das weite Erdenrund  
 Mein von der Königin erfüllter Mund!  
 Ihr Ruhm soll bis zum Axen<sup>16</sup>  
 Des schön gestirnten Himmels wachsen,  
 Die Königin der Sachsen und der Polen  
 Sei stets des Himmels Schutz empfohlen.  
 So stärkt durch sie der Pol  
 So vieler Untertanen längst erwünschtes Wohl.  
 So soll die Königin noch lange bei uns hier verweilen;  
 Und spät, ach! spät zum Sternen<sup>17</sup> eilen.

9. *Irene*: Blühet, ihr Linden in Sachsen, wie Zedern!  
*Bellona*: Schallet mit Waffen und Wagen und Rädern!  
*Pallas*: Singet, ihr Musen, mit völligem Klang!  
*Fama*: Fröhliche Stunden, ihr freudigen Zeiten!  
 Gönnst uns noch öfters die güldenen Freuden:  
 Königin, lebe, ja lebe noch lang!<sup>19</sup>

8. Thus unto the wide earthly orb  
 May my mouth press forward, filled with [praise of] the Queen.  
 Her renown shall flourish as far as the axes  
 Of beautifully star-bedecked heaven;  
 May the Queen of the Saxons and of the Poles  
 Be ever commended to heaven's protection.  
 Thus the pole [of the earthly-heavenly axes]<sup>18</sup> bolsters, by her,  
 The wellbeing long desired by so many subjects.  
 Thus shall the Queen long tarry with us here,  
 And late, ah, late, hasten to the stars.

9. Blossom, you lindens in Saxony, like cedars.<sup>20</sup>  
 Make noise with weapons and chariots and wheels.<sup>21</sup>  
 Sing, you muses,<sup>22</sup> with full clangor.  
 Cheerful hours, you joyous times!  
 Grant us yet again and again the golden joys:  
 "Long live the Queen, yes live yet long!"

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<sup>16</sup>"Die Axe" is an archaic spelling of "die Achse" ("the axis"); "zum Axen" is probably a regional form of "zu den Achsen" (plural), not a grammatically confused rendering of "zur Achse" (singular).

<sup>17</sup>"Zum Sternen" (rather than the plural form "zu den Sternen") is a German equivalent of the aphorism "[per aspera] ad astra" ("through tribulations to the stars").

<sup>18</sup>The axis implied here is an imaginary straight line around which the earth rotates, and the axes of the heavens were thought to revolve around the extension of this line. The "poles" are the top and bottom ends of an axis (e.g., the North and South Poles are the ends of the earthly axis). The idea in the cantata, apparently, is that since the Queen's renown will flourish from pole to pole on the linked earthly-heavenly axes, heaven's blessings will be visited upon her Saxon and Polish subjects. "Der Pol" might additionally refer to natives of Poland. ("Der Pol" means "the pole [of an axis]"; "der Pole" means "the [male] Polish person, and poetically clipping its second syllable would yield "der Pol.")

<sup>19</sup>The printed libretto appears to attribute the last three lines to Fama, but the typography, with the last line in larger type following the colon in the previous line, suggests that two lines might belong to Fama and the last to all the characters. Bach takes neither of these positions, setting the three last lines for all four voices throughout.

<sup>20</sup>The "lindens" (or, "lime trees") represent the city of Leipzig, whose name means "settlement where the lime trees stand"; the text here (see also the last line in movement 1) draws on Psalm 92:13-15, which in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day reads "Der Gerechte ... wird wachsen wie eine Zeder auf Libanon ... Und wenn sie gleich alt werden, werden sie dennoch blühen, fruchtbar und frisch sein" ("The righteous one will flourish like a cedar on [the mountain range called] Lebanon ... And even when [the cedars] become old, they will nevertheless blossom, be fruitful and fresh"). By using this language, the poet declares that the city of Leipzig is "righteous."

<sup>21</sup>Bellona, true to her character, uses language of battle; but to speak, even poetically, of making noise with "chariots *and* wheels" (i.e., as if chariots might generate sound apart from the noise of wheels) may seem a bit strange. The quirky language of this line appears to be derived from Ezekiel 23:24, which in Luther Bibles of Bach's day is sometimes given as "Und werden über dich kommen, gerüstet mit Wagen und Rädern" ("And [the enemies] will overcome you, armed with chariots and wheels"), and sometimes as "... gerüstet mit Wagen und Reutern" ("... armed with chariots and horsemen"). The precise meaning of the original Hebrew is nigh inscrutable, but the librettist of Cantata 214 seems to be closely familiar with the verse's problems, as the phrase "mit Waffen und Wagen und Rädern" may well be a better approximation of the Hebrew in Ezekiel 23:24 than Luther's. Remarking on the various sounds of attacking forces, including their chariot-wheels, Isaiah 5:28-29, in the Luther Bibles of Bach's day, says that "seiner Rossen Hufe sind wie Felsen geachtet, und ihre Wagenräder wie ein Sturmwind; sie brüllen wie Löwen" ("his horses' hooves are taken heed of as [being as hard as] rocks, and their chariot-wheels as a windstorm; they roar, as lions").

<sup>22</sup>On the "choir of muses," see fn. 12, above.