

**University of Pécs Faculty of Music and Visual Arts
Doctoral School**

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*The role of Frederick II in flute literature, the significance
of culture patronage in the Prussian royal court*

THESIS OF DLA DISSERTATION

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1. Brief summary of the research

The aim of the dissertation is to describe a unique system of relations, not yet discussed in depth in Hungary, to study the connection between patronage and performing arts along the presentation of works written under the influence of King Frederick of Prussia. The two main areas: on the one hand representing the cultural heritage of the ruler, and the historical impact of the patronage of the cultural supporter on the other, have not been published before on flute literature nor on the development of the flute.

In addition to presenting the historical background, the economic, social and cultural environment, the members of the royal family and the art-loving activities of Frederick the Great, the research aims to explain the historical types of patronage: church, traditional, bureaucratic and market patronage.

2. Brief description of the research performed, presentation of the method of material collection and listing of the main elements of the research

The process of the research work was divided into several topics. Examining the sources available in printed and electronic form, documents were available mainly in German and English.

Due to the spread of literacy the importance of the press increased in the age of the Enlightenment, the role of studies and dissertations published in print, as well as correspondences belonging to everyday life served as another important source. Frederick II. corresponded extensively on various topics, but the surviving correspondences of Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach, Johann Sebastian Bach, Johann Joachim Quantz during the research also helped the investigation.

Sources include for example:

- A memoir of Frederick's eldest sister, Sofia Vilma Friderika in which she wrote down her remarks and memories about the everyday life of the ruling family in the most meticulous, sincere but truly sophisticated style, is an important document presenting his personality and individuality. Frederick's favorite sister, Countess Vilma, was undoubtedly one of the most important female figures of the 18th century, a significant representative of the Enlightenment.
- In 1736, the heir to the throne moved to a new residence with his wife in Rheinsberg. This year he wrote his first letter to Voltaire and Frederick II himself kept records. They have published several volumes of their correspondences over many years.
- Nicolaus Harnoncourt's book, *Speech-like Music, The Road to a New Understanding of Music*, published in Hungarian in 1988, and the studies of Johann Joachim Quantz and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach 'Versuch' were decisive elements in the research.

Research topics:

1. It is essential to present the historical background and the period, to explore the historical environment and to describe it in sufficient detail, as the development of culture and various branches of art, or even the formation of an instrument, is often significantly influenced by historical and social circumstances.
2. Exploring the personality traits of Frederick II which led to diplomatic and economic success. Examining the relationship with his parents and siblings.
3. The main part of the dissertation is the presentation of the direct or traditional patronage: emphasizing the role of the king as a patron and artist at the same time, and to give a summary of the economic and financial habits of the musical life of the time.
4. Presentation of the age of the classics, in the context of the benefits musicians received, the "value" of a musician, the strata of the music society, the position of celebrated soloists, popular composers, orchestra members, regional boundaries between courts.
5. Interpretation: The only purpose of historical musical performance, original sound, authentic interpretation, was to play the music as conceived by the contemporary authors on contemporary instruments. Next to the presentation of old and new instruments, notation, tempo and articulation are closely related to the topic of interpretation.

6. The period in consideration, Frederick II's age, with its rich culture, made the lives of receptive aristocrats interested in science and the arts (including music) beautiful and pleasant. The royal and noble courts not only “enjoyed” the products of art, but the lords, according to their talents, played musical instruments themselves, entertaining themselves. Their inner need was to be preoccupied with noble music, high-quality works and thoughts, so it becomes clear why they sacrificed so much money for bands and culture in general.
7. Frederick II and the arts: his passion for culture was already evident in his youth. Philosophy, music, mathematics, history and literature were decisive in his studies. During his reign, he invited prominent scholars of his time to the cathedrals of Berlin, founded German and French-language newspapers, and made Berlin the center of the Enlightenment; including the founding of the Berlin Opera, the reorganization of the Academy of Sciences, and the construction of Sanssouci Castle.
8. Frederick II's passion for flute, a detailed account of the composer's oeuvre, and the influence of his court musicians on flute literature.
9. The work of composers who have played a prominent role in creating the gallant style (including Johann Joachim Quantz, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Franz and Georg Anton Benda, Johann Gottlieb and Carl Heinrich Graun, Johann Friedrich Agricola); analysis of the musical structure and structure of a masterpiece.
10. The permanent memory of Johann Sebastian Bach and Frederick II's personal encounter in 1747, the famous “thema regium” and the resulting *Musikalisches Opfer* analysis.
11. Investigation of the flute's structural assembly and changes, historical background and research of the characteristic style of the period; in the process of which the source written by Johann Joachim: *Quantz Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte Traversière zu spielen II* is essential and perhaps the most detailed material, which was recommended to King Frederick in 1752.

3. Results

Knowing all the details of age and events, one can understand the Significance of Frederick II and his predecessors: Members of the Brandenburg Electorates and the Hohenzollern Dynasty, Elector Frederick III, William I and Frederick II. Frederick's work made it possible for the long-awaited unity to emerge and for Prussia to become a European superpower. With his 'extravagant' personality, Frederick, as an enlightened ruler, achieved economic success in organizing and modernizing the Prussian state.

The generous musical life of the Prussian royal court and the vibrant artistic atmosphere of Berlin provided new experiences and new opportunities for everyone. Representatives of different branches of art had a great influence on each other, and although Frederick II was a strong, determined individual - and this characterized his tastes and views on culture - yet, as a result of a post-concert debate or reading books by secular philosophers and writers, his purposeful views were formed and he was able to accommodate to the new times, the spirit of enlightenment.

His artistic activity, of course, did not stand the test of comparison with the legacy of outstanding musicians of his age; but as an experienced performer and composer, one could feel how his personality was enticed by the flood of musical revolution of the era. And as a wise patron, he did his best for the almost sacred reverence of this fleeting world of music.

This era is decisive for flute literature, not only in the light of the birth of many masterpieces, but also in framing studies developing the flute playing style. By examining the structural assembly and changes of the flute, several significant technical innovations can be linked to the era which had different causes; among other things, the spacious interiors of monumental buildings had to be filled with sound and music, primarily requiring appropriate instruments. Thanks to its continuous technical development, the transverse flute has grabbed a leading role both in chamber ensembles and as a solo instrument with its larger, more colorful melodic world.

Compared to the 18-19 century, the dramatic difference is that although today the chances of accessing culture are vast; the majority of society - in the words of László Németh - does not listen "noble music", but lives its life in the world of the so-called "mass culture". The sincere musical interest of the patrons, which was not merely a representation of their rank, but an expression of their own commitment to culture, decisively determined the existence of contemporary composers and musicians. Musicians lived their daily lives in the immediate

vicinity of aristocrats and the king, albeit as quasi-servants, but often in the company of an “enlightened absolute ruler”.

Frederick has been a supporter of culture all his life, though he was only enthusiastic about French culture and did not pay attention to German literature and the arts. He believed that the artistic arts were reserved for a few people. His life was characterized by a kind of duality: he was considered an enlightened ruler, he had outstanding merits in organizing, flourishing and modernizing the Prussian state, but he was unable to resolve the tension between the inherited personality from his father and the ideas he wanted to follow; he did not like the forward-looking, new sound in his musical taste either, but preferred conservative compositions.

The dissertation shows how the reign of Frederick the Great, and his unique and complex personality had an extraordinary impact on the development of the artistic sectors in an era of significant cultural, economic and social change.

With his interest in and love of flute music and the encouragement of his court composers and musicians, he created the rudiments of flute literature.

Without Frederick’s pro-cultural, economic and pro-military policies European cultural history would have suffered a great deal.

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