

G065 | Two sections of an article in
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The Sonata in D major for viola da gamba and continuo attributed to Dieterich Buxtehude (G065) has long been available in a rather unstylish Schott edition. It survives only in an Oxford manuscript, MS Mus. Sch. D.249, and its authenticity has been called into question by Kerala Snyder in her book *Dieterich Buxtehude, Organist in Lübeck* (New York and London, 1987), p. 300. However, the manuscript does contain pieces by other Lübeck composers of the 1670s, and the editor of the Schott edition, Folkmar Längin, pointed out the similarities between it and the opening of Buxtehude's motet 'Jubilate Domino', for alto, gamba and continuo. Reading through the sonata in this new edition, I was more impressed by it than I remember being when playing it many years ago, and there are several turns of phrase that reminded me of Buxtehude – especially the opening of the central $3/2$ section. However, it is rather aimless in places, which suggests that, if it is by Buxtehude, it is an early work, perhaps written soon after he arrived in Lübeck in 1668. The edition includes a facsimile of the manuscript as well as a modern score and parts. It is generally well thought out, though it would be worth pointing out to performers that the bass part is simple and is often doubled by the gamba, which implies (according to the practice of the period) that it should be played only by continuo instruments, not with a second viol.

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Edition Güntersberg have developed a sensible and effective editorial policy. The introductions are mostly authoritative, though, as we have seen, sources are sometimes missed, and it would have been useful to have an English translation of the interesting preface to the Erlebach sonatas. The editions are provided with realisations, which are mostly idiomatic, though they sometimes have unnecessary decorative ideas or misunderstand the implications of the harmony. Changes are noted either in footnotes or in simple commentaries, and editorial additions are clearly indicated on the page, though added slurs are unfortunately rendered as dotted lines; the slashed slur used in British editions is much more effective. The editions are nicely presented and clearly printed. All in all, Edition Güntersberg are transforming our knowledge of German solo viola da gamba music. Long may they flourish.

Peter Holman