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August Kühnel *Sonata IX und Aria X (Choral) für Viola da Gamba und Basso continuo*, ed. Leonore von Zadow-Reichling and Günter von Zadow, G164 (Heidelberg: Edition Güntersberg, 2011).

August Kühnel (1645-c.1700) was one of the foremost viol players in Germany, working at Zeitz, Darmstadt, Weimar, Dresden, and Kassel. He studied the viol in France and England, and there is mention of him giving a baryton recital in London.

The two pieces in the present edition are taken from Kühnel's *Sonate ô Partite ad una ô due Viole da Gamba con il Basso Continuo* (Kassel, 1698), which was the first collection of viol music to be printed in Germany. The other 12 pieces from that collection are published separately as G161, G162, G163, and G165. There is a facsimile edition published by Fuzeau (cf. <http://www.editions-classique.fr/ProduitClassique.php?&o=0&r=1&c=3&id=767>).

The present edition consists of a short introduction in German and English, the score for viola da gamba and figured bass, a score with the figured bass realised by Dankwart von Zadow, and separate parts for viola da gamba and figured bass. Clefs for the viol are treble (instead of soprano in the original), alto and bass, which reflect the wide range of over three octaves: D-g". Kühnel's contrasting variations are a fine showpiece for the viol, and he must have had his audience on the edge of their seats.

Sonata IX opens with a 40-bar section in which the viol sustains three parts with much double- and triple-stopping. There follow nine virtuosic variations over a repeated ground:

- 1) broken chords with the unusual rhythm of dotted quaver, semiquaver, quaver as a triplet, followed by two quavers as a duplet, and there is much string-crossing;
- 2) continuous semiquavers moving mostly by step;
- 3) semiquavers hopping back and forth across the strings to create broken chords;
- 4) 12/8, with broken chords in quavers;
- 5) repeated rhythm of 4 demisemiquavers, 2 semiquavers, 4 demisemiquavers, 1 quaver, throughout;
- 6) broken chords in semiquavers;
- 7) two-part texture with double-stopping high above the frets;
- 8) a mix of semiquavers and demisemiquavers;
- 9) tremolo melody supported by broken chords (similar to *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*) in demisemiquavers.

These nine variations are followed by an Aria consisting of four variations over an 11-bar ground, with increasingly complex rhythms, and trills involving 24 demisemiquavers. The piece ends with a return to the opening 40 bars.

Aria X is a set of nine variations on the chorale "Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut". Kühnel provided left-hand fingering (maintained in the present edition), but only in three bars. Perhaps he thought everything else was a piece of cake.

Stewart McCoy