

Unsere Ausgabe

Unsere praktische Ausgabe besteht aus drei Heften mit je zwei Sonaten¹. Neben einer Partitur in relativ kleinem Druck, enthält jedes Heft die beiden Stimmen auch einzeln, weil sich das Umblättern während eines Satzes sonst nicht vermeiden lässt.

Wir geben den Notentext des Manuskripts so getreu wie möglich wieder. Dies bezieht sich auch auf Schlüsselwechsel, Vorzeichenwiederholungen im Takt, Artikulations- und Verzierungszeichen. Auch die Balkensetzung haben wir fast überall übernommen. Dem heutigen Gebrauch folgend wurde jedoch die Triolendreier generell hinzugefügt. Sonstige Hinzufügungen/Korrekturen der Herausgeber kommen selten vor und sind wie folgt gekennzeichnet: geänderte Note (Fußnote), geändertes Vorzeichen (Klammern), hinzugefügter Bogen (gestrichelt), hinzugefügtes dynamisches Zeichen (Klammern), hinzugefügte Satzbezeichnung (Klammern). Die erwähnten Bleistift- und Buntstiftzusätze von anderer Hand haben wir nicht aufgenommen, da sie die Komposition fast in jedem Fall entstellen und verschlechtern.

Bei der Erstellung dieser Ausgabe haben uns ungewöhnlich viele Personen unterstützt (anregen zur Veröffentlichung, hinweisen auf die zusätzlichen Quellen, datieren des Manuskripts, bestätigen, dass der Komponist unbekannt ist, hinzufügen von neuen Spekulationen, „korrekturspielen“ der Entwürfe, übersetzen des Vorworts). Wir danken ihnen allen und nennen sie in alphabetischer Reihenfolge: Johannes Boer, Jonathan Dunford, François-Pierre Goy, Christoph Henzel, Peter Holman, Wieland Kuijken, Michael O’Loughlin, Annette Otterstedt, Monika Schwamberger, Marc Strümper und Howard Weiner.

Wir freuen uns, wenn unsere Veröffentlichung dazu beiträgt, diese Musik bekannt zu machen und vielleicht das Rätsel des unbekanntes Komponisten zu lösen.

Leonore von Zadow-Reichling
Günter von Zadow
Heidelberg, Juni 2005

Preface

The manuscript of this collection of six sonatas for two bass viols is housed in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris under the call number **F-Pn Vm7 6297**. It was written in France ca. 1750.² These interesting sonatas are of extraordinary beauty and great musical value, yet to the present day they have defied attribution to any known composer.

The large manuscript (45 pages, 26 x 33.5 cm) was very carefully and accurately penned in black-brown ink. It contains additional markings in pencil and brown-colored pencil in another hand with a rather cursory character. An original title page is not (or no longer) extant. The top of the first page is heavily damaged. Written there, above the music, in pencil in a different hand is “Pièces de viole avec la basse continue,” with the word “Pièces” crossed out.

The first five sonatas each have four movements (slow – fast – slow – fast), the sixth sonata has only three movements (Allegro – Aria Cantabile – Cantabile). The titles “Sonata Prima” through “Sonata Sesta” are written in large letters at the beginning of the respective sonatas, making it obvious that the penciled-in title “Pièces...” is incorrect. The movement headings are, for example, “Allegro,” “Presto,” “Cantabile,” “Largo,” and also the somewhat older “Corrente,” “Sarabanda,” and “Giga.” The first three movements of the first sonata lack movement headings.

The manuscript is in score form with two systems. Considering the compass and the types of chords, the two parts (in alto and bass clefs) are undoubtedly for seven-string viols. The first part is a decidedly concertante solo part that at first glance appears to be accompanied by a “normal” basso continuo part. The second voice does indeed function mainly as the bass, yet it occasionally makes excursions into sequences of chords that can only be played on a viol. Its range is from AA to b¹. The bass part is not figured. These are thus real duos, yet in general there is a clear allocation of the solo and accompaniment roles. The composer was very well acquainted with viol technique. That the second part is not just limited to the bass function can be seen in two examples from Sonata Terza: In the third movement, Andante, the second viol has practically only double stops, and in the fourth variation of the fourth movement, Cantabile, the part is notated entirely in alto clef.

continued on page 24

¹ Edition Güntersberg G066 (Sonaten I und II), G067 (Sonaten III und IV) und G068 (Sonaten V und VI)

² Papers with corresponding water marks were used in France between 1749 and 1756.

The few annotations added to the manuscript are almost all in French, as are all the ornament and bowing signs: Tremblement, Battement, and Plainte (the latter occurring only once). Up and down bows are indicated by *p* (poussé) and *t* (tiré) under the notes. There are also a few fingerings typical of viols (for example, in Sonata Prima, Allegro, measures 45 and 64), one of them with a designation of the string by two dots above the number (Sonata Seconda, Andante, measure 55). All these markings and the water marks lead to the conclusion that the manuscript was written in France and intended for French viol players.

The Sonatas are carefully worked out in all details, are distinguished by great compositional variety, and demand a high degree of skill of the players. The music itself belongs without a doubt to the sensitive style. Elements such as appoggiaturas, short passages in unison, expressive chords and intervals in the slow movements, and double stops with parallel thirds are clearly reminiscent of viol works of this period, for example, by those Johann Gottlieb Graun or Carl Friedrich Abel.

For many years already, a number of musicologists and musicians have occupied themselves with this manuscript and attempted to uncover the mystery of the unknown composer. Nobody, however, has been able to come up with a plausible attribution. Karl Heinz Pauls called attention to these duos already in 1963.¹ He assigned the music to the Viennese Classic. Mentioned (and rejected) as the possible composer have been: Roland Marais, Forqueray le fils, Ernst Christian Hesse, Carl Friedrich Abel, Johann Christian Bach, and even Mozart, whose theme of the third movement of the D-Minor Piano Concerto is found in the second movement of Sonata Quinta, here in G Minor.

The sixth Sonata from this collection has been recorded by Wieland and Sigiswald Kuijken.² In the CD booklet, the music is brought into connection with Carl Friedrich Abel, who frequently sojourned in Paris. If Abel is our composer, he must have assimilated the French traditions. However, the rather eccentric character of his virtuoso compositions for viola da gamba, which is not to be discerned in the present sonatas, speaks against Abel's authorship.

Our Edition

Our practical edition consists of three volumes with two sonatas each.³ Besides a score in relatively small print, each volume contains individual parts, since it would otherwise not be possible to avoid page turns within movements.

We have attempted to reproduce the musical text of the manuscript as faithfully as possible, including changes of clefs, repetition of accidentals within measures, and articulation and ornament signs. We have also adopted the original beaming in almost all cases. The "3" indicating triples has generally been added to correspond to current practice. Other editorial additions or corrections occur only seldom and are indicated as follows: altered note (footnote), altered accidental (parentheses), added slur/tie (dotted), added dynamic marking (parentheses), added movement heading (parentheses). The abovementioned pencil and colored pencil additions in different hand have been ignored, since in almost every case they represent for the composition a distortion or a change for the worse.

An unusually large number of people have supported us in the preparation of this edition (suggesting the publication, pointing out additional sources, dating of the manuscript, confirming that the composer is unknown, providing new speculations, "proof-playing" the transcriptions, translating the preface). We would like to thank all of them, and list them here in alphabetical order: Johannes Boer, Jonathan Dunford, François-Pierre Goy, Christoph Henzel, Peter Holman, Wieland Kuijken, Michael O'Loghlin, Annette Otterstedt, Monika Schwamberger, Marc Strümper, and Howard Weiner.

We would be very pleased if our edition helps make this music known, and perhaps solve the mystery of the unknown composer.

Leonore von Zadow-Reichling
Günter von Zadow
Heidelberg, June 2005
Translation by Howard Weiner

¹ Karl Heinz Pauls, "Ein beachtenswertes anonymes Gamben-Manuskript," *Die Musikforschung* (1963), pp. 158-163.

² Wieland and Sigiswald Kuijken, *Les maisons de Plaisance' – Music for two viols*, ACC 99132 D (recorded 1999). The attribution given there is "Anonymous (France?, 2nd half of 18th Century)."

³ Edition Güntersberg G066 (Sonatas I and II), G067 (Sonatas III and IV), and G068 (Sonatas V and VI).