

Preface

Dieterich Buxtehude's sacred concerto *Gen Himmel zu dem Vater mein* is the setting of a chorale text.¹ Two instrumental parts wind around a cantus firmus sung by the soprano – two different verses, somewhat ornamented – above a thorough-bass. The viola da gamba part, as well as that of the violin, has a concertante-like character, which emphasizes the piece's similarity to the well-known cantata *Jubilate Domino*.² Like the latter, the present work also has an instrumental introduction. Due to its extensive instrumental accompaniment, *Gen Himmel* is also reminiscent of Buxtehude's trio sonatas for the same formation.³ Both instrumental parts at times display two-voice writing. This repeatedly results in four-part texture (see, for example, m. 68ff), which lends the concerto a very full sound and a festive character. The instrumental parts are idiomatically written. That is to say, neither the violin nor the viola da gamba can be satisfactorily replaced by another instrument.

Liturgically, the work is intended for performance on Ascension Day, as is also obvious from the original title (see below). The text is by Martin Luther, the last two verses of his hymn *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein* (1523).

To heaven, to my Father
I depart from this life.
There I shall be your master,
and give you the spirit
that shall console you in distress,
and teach you to recognize me
and lead you to truth.

What I have done and taught,
you shall also do and teach;
so that God's kingdom will grow
to his praise and glory.
And beware of the law of man,
for the precious treasure is corrupted by it.
This I leave you as a token of farewell. Alleluya.

There are two sources for this work, both in the Düben Collection in the **Uppsala University Library**:

S1 S-Uu Vok. mus. i hskr. 82:42:6. Score in tablature, unfigured. Title: “Gen Himmel / zu dem Vater / D. B. H.” Moreover, at the beginning is found the indication “Sonata,” which refers to the introduction, as well as the instrument names “violin” and “violdagamba.” S1 is dated “1681 / 3 Maj / scripsi” at the end of the manuscript. This copy of the tablature was thus made in 1681. The transcription into standard musical notation (S2) took place at a later date.

S2 S-Uu Vok. mus. i hskr. 50:18. Parts. Title: “In Festo Ascensionis Christi / Gen Himmel zu dem Vater mein / â 3. / Canto solo Con violino et violdagamba / D. B. H.” The parts are marked as follows: “Canto,” “Violino,” “Violdagamba,” “Continuo,” “Organo” – whereby the last two are for the most part identical. Both are figured.

Our edition is based on S1, because this source is more authentic, and because the parts in S2 display a number of mistakes. In transcribing the tablature, we followed the usual modern notational conventions. The beaming follows that in S2. In our edition, all the parts have a key signature of one sharp – in S2 this is the case for only half the parts. Since S1 does not include basso continuo figures, the “Continuo” part of S2 served as our model for the figuring. In cases of doubt, however, we also consulted the “Organo” part. Slurs are found only very seldom in the voice part of S1, but frequently in S2. We have added slurs in all passages with more than one note per syllable. The spelling and punctuation of the text has been slightly modernized, whereby we largely followed the Buxtehude Collected Edition of 1925.⁴

¹ The work has also been designated a *chorale concerto*. See Kerala J. Snyder, *Dieterich Buxtehude: Organist in Lübeck*, rev. edn. (Rochester NY, 2007), p. 288.

² Dieterich Buxtehude, *Jubilate Domino*, cantata for alto, viola da gamba, and basso continuo, ed. Günter and Leonore von Zadow (Heidelberg, 2006).

³ Dieterich Buxtehude, *VII. Suonate à doi, Violino & Violdagamba, con Cembalo*, Opera prima and Opera secunda, ed. Günter and Leonore von Zadow (Heidelberg, 2006–7).

⁴ *Dieterich Buxtehudes Werke*, vol. 1, ed. Glaubensgemeinschaft Ugrino (Hamburg, 1925), p. 23ff.

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Leonore von Zadow-Reichling
Günter von Zadow
Translation by Howard Weiner

à 3. Canto, Violino e Violdagamba Canto.

Sonata

à 3. Canto, Violino e Violdagamba

Canto.

Bonheur, à Dieu, à Dieu, à Dieu

à 3. Canto solo (con Violino et Violdagamba). Violino.

à 3. Canto solo (con Violino et Violdagamba). Violino.

Sonata.

à 3. Canto solo (con Violino e Violdagamba) Violdagamba

à 3. Canto solo (con Violino e Violdagamba) Violdagamba

Sonata.

Canto solo (con Violino e Violdagamba)

Canto solo (con Violino e Violdagamba)

Sonata

Bonheur, à Dieu

Q2, Anfänge der Stimmen (zuletzt "Continuo")
S2, beginnings of the parts (at last "Continuo")