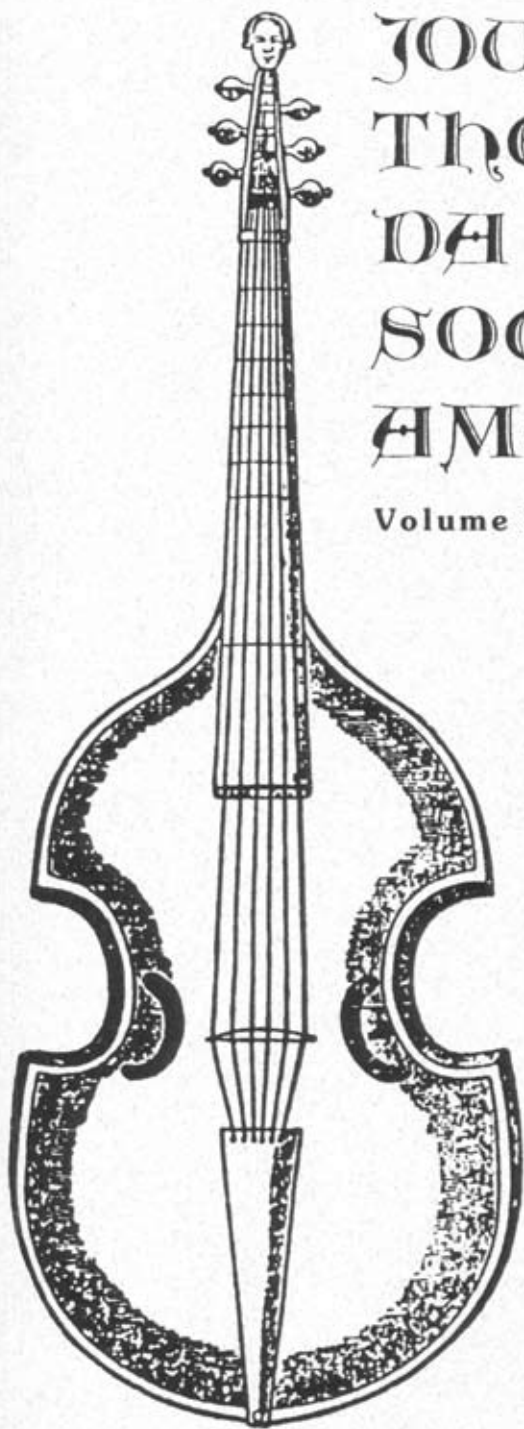


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Eppstein, and Jean-Louis Charbonnier,<sup>7</sup> one would think that the time would be ripe for a thorough and updated summation of the state of knowledge on the sources, and that the first publication in facsimile of these sonatas would be the ideal place for such an essay. Additionally, it would not have been too difficult to add a little more labeling to make it easier to identify the origins of each source, without having to refer back to the preface. The actual appearance of the facsimile with each sonata following the previous one in a booklet does little to discourage the misapprehension that the three sonatas were actually collected into a set by Bach or by one of his pupils, when, in fact, the first known occasion where these sonatas were brought together was their publication by the Bach-Gesellschaft in about 1860.

In short, this is a well-produced and reasonably priced facsimile of the primary sources for three works that are central to the viola da gamba repertoire. All but the most budget-conscious viol player will find it a valuable library addition.

John Moran

**Anonymous.** *Instruction oder eine anweisung auff der Violadigamba* (Instruction or a Method for the Viola da Gamba). Facsimile ed. Bettina Hoffmann. Edition Güntersberg G240, Heidelberg, 2014. xii + 56 pp. ISMN 979-0-50174-240-0. €23.50.

The German/Italian cellist, musicologist, and viola da gamba player Bettina Hoffmann (whose previous publications include several books and articles about the viola da gamba, plus editions of Antonio Vivaldi's cello sonatas, Domenico Gabrielli's cello *Ricercare*, and Silvestro Ganassi's viol music) offers here a true rarity: an anonymous German viola da gamba tutor attributed to the first half of the eighteenth century. As Hoffmann explains at the outset of her five-page introduction to the facsimile, "no other German text from the Renaissance or Baroque periods which deals exclusively with this instrument and provides technical instruction on fingering and bowing has survived or is even known by name."

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<sup>7</sup> See footnote 6.

The volume in question was originally part of the collection of Carl Ferdinand Becker (1804–1877), who, in addition to his activities as organist at Leipzig's Nicolaikirche (one of the four churches for which J. S. Bach had been responsible) and teacher at the Leipzig Konservatorium, amassed a collection that today is among the few large private music libraries of the nineteenth century to have survived virtually intact. Although Hoffmann's introduction speaks of the collection as comprising "over 1,100 printed works" and a "much smaller section of fewer than 20 manuscripts," the website for the University of Leipzig (<https://www.ub.uni-leipzig.de/forschungsbibliothek/projekte/projekte-chronologisch/musikbibliothek-von-carl-ferdinand-becker/>), where the Becker collection now resides, cites around 1900 music items (575 in manuscript and 1325 in print), some 1499 music theoretical works from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries, and 280 volumes of libretti and concert and opera programs. From the publication dates of the two nineteenth-century catalogues of this assembly and a notation in Becker's hand on the title page of the *Instruction*, he apparently acquired it in 1844. The small collection of Becker's manuscript items considered by Hoffmann, unlike the geographically wide-ranging components of his printed collection, are almost all linked to one or another of four Saxon cities: Leipzig, Dresden, Zschopau, and Weißenfels. Becker dated the *Instruction* (identified by the RISM number 225005554) "about 1730." Hoffmann, accepting this timeframe and stressing that the anonymous author of the treatise must himself have been a player, offers a speculative list of the gamba players "active in the political and geographic environs of Leipzig in the first decades of the eighteenth century" that includes some well-known names—Christian Ferdinand Abel (known to J. S. Bach at Cöthen), Michael Kühnel, and Ernst Christian Hesse—among several more obscure ones: Gottfried Bentley, Johann Christian Hertel, Johann Philipp Eisel, and one Müller, whom Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg called "an excellent gambist" in his 1754 *Historisch-kritische Beyträge zur Aufnahme der Musik*.

In his otherwise enthusiastic review of the *Instruction* for the English *Viola da Gamba Society Journal* 8 (2014), Richard Carter

seems to take issue with Hoffmann's easy acceptance of Becker's dating of the treatise: "Without a more closely defined context the significance of the manuscript is difficult to assess. Until we know more about the circumstances of its genesis and the status of its author it is only possible to speculate on how much weight can be attached to its content. Much could change, if Becker were shown to have been wrong about the date, or the manuscript were found to originate elsewhere." But Thomas Fritzsich, in his equally positive review in *Viola da Gamba* 94 (December 2014/January 2015), the magazine of the Viola da gamba-Gesellschaft (based in Switzerland, but catering to the entire German-speaking gamba community), gives a fascinating insider's perspective on the orthography of the *Instruction*. Being a Leipziger, he explains, he is well acquainted with (and loves) many of the peculiarities of the Saxon dialect still spoken in that city, including the way many vowels are drawn out and several consonants frequently exchanged (*d* and *t*, *b* and *p*, *n* and *m*). "I was therefore astonished to find in the *Instruction* many examples of such alterations of words, alterations adhered to with, for the time, surprising consistency." He then lists ten such examples, among them "samft" for "sanft" (gently), "dobbeliret" for "verdoppelt" (doubled), "egahl" for "egal" (equal), etc., concluding: "This is strong proof of the origins of the author. The words sung by the chorus to Peter in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* come to mind: 'Wahrlich, du bist auch einer von denen; denn deine Sprache verrät dich.' [Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee.]" (How many times, one wonders, must Fritzsich, a virtuoso called by the American Bach scholar Robert Marshall "the Casals of the gamba," have listened to those words while "recovering" from playing the tenor aria "Geduld, geduld," and awaiting the great "Komm, süßes Kreuz"....)

The facsimile is presented in landscape paperback format, with the *recto* and *verso* of each of its 18 sheets reproduced—very slightly larger than its original 16 × 20.5 cm size—on the right side of the book's page spread. (At some point, sheets 2r to 18r were numbered in pencil from 1 to 33. The facsimile omits blank pages, and therefore begins with the title page 3, followed immediately by pages 5 to 30.) The left-hand side is reserved for an exact tran-

scription of the page's contents, given both in the original German, and in a finely done English translation by Australian musicologist and gamba player Michael O'Loughlin. Since the majority of the manuscript (with the exception of Latin or Italian terms) is written in *Kurrentschrift*, a kind of "cursive Fraktur" with which today even most German speakers are not very familiar, Hoffmann's transcription into Roman type will serve her German audience nearly as well as O'Loughlin's work will serve English readers. In the last lines of her introduction, Hoffmann points out that the translation occasionally departs from a literal rendering of the German into something a bit more clearly related to gamba playing. In this regard, O'Loughlin may be said to assist bi-lingual German/English readers as well as pure Anglophones. The manuscript is a fair copy, probably penned by a professional. Hoffman suggests that it might have served either as a *Stichvorlage* (final preparation copy) for an intended edition that never materialized, or as one of the numerous handwritten items that circulated throughout the eighteenth century in lieu of printed versions. On only a small handful of leaves, clarifying comments in another, less polished, hand appear, as if a student were making notes.

At first glance, the *Instruction* appears not as detailed as the viol treatises of Simpson (1659, with reprints 1667 and 1713), Danoville (1687), or Rousseau (also 1687), nor, as one might expect from a work of "about 1730," as lengthy or thorough as later German treatises such as those of Johann Joachim Quantz (1752), C.P.E. Bach (1753/62), or Daniel Gottlob Türk (1789). No details about holding the instrument or bow are given, only the bass gamba is addressed, and, with the exception of a few short continuo-like examples encountered in the section devoted to bowing, no pieces or even exercises of any real length are given. And yet, quite a bit of information lies within its modest confines, particularly when one realizes that nearly a third of its pages are taken up with rudimentary matters such as counting notes and rests, tuning the viol by unisons, the meanings of various Italian tempo indications, how sharps and flats function, and how to read seven (!) different clefs. (No octave-transposing treble-clef tenor consort parts here, since "from these clefs comes transposition, for which one imagines one [of them].... Thus with these seven clefs one can

transpose [the notes] on any line or space." The reader will be forgiven if this rather offhand statement brings to mind Simpson's simple admonition following the third of his musical examples, on page 6, which already ascends to a perfect twelfth above the open top D string (*a''*): "If you find any difficulty in this Example, Play it the slower, until your *Hand* shall have overcome it.") Fingerings for an ascending chromatic scale from the low open D string show covering both the first and second frets with the first finger, and no use of the fourth finger until the top string is reached. However, the first complete page's "*ablication*," or the mapping out on the fingerboard the various notes it contains, shows chromatic "1-2-3-4" fingerings from every fret, including the top one. The prospective bass violist is thus shown, at the very outset, a range nearly as large as Simpson's.

One of the most interesting features of the *Instruction* is its discussion of bowing. Two-note slurs are introduced as early as page 5, and pages 12–14 give rules for bowing—illustrated by eighteen short examples in which the direction of each bowstroke is indicated—that correspond closely with those in George Muffat's 1698 *Florilegium secundum*. A vertical stroke indicates a push bow, a "V" a pull bow. The overarching concern is to have a push bow at the beginning of a bar whenever possible. To accomplish this, the examples frequently require the "pull-pull" hooking encountered in Marais's "*t-t*." But lifting the bow following a last-beat-of-the-measure "push" in order to retake and play the next downbeat "push" is also common, and infers a more highly articulated style, perhaps, than many continuo players might be otherwise inclined to adopt. Further on, page 26 shows a variety of different ways to arpeggiate chords (any one of which might, for example, be applied to the *St. Matthew Passion* recitative "Ja, freilich will in uns das Fleisch und Blut"). Present without comment is also an example showing eight sixteenth notes, each with its own staccato dot, under one slur, proof that the author of the *Instruction* was not unfamiliar with more virtuosic bowings.

Five pages are devoted to scales, chords, and cadence formulas. On page 15, the major and minor scales beginning on A, B $\flat$ , C, D, E, F, G, and B $\sharp$  are presented in what may seem—to any modern player familiar with the kind of scale books that contain, on page

after page, only three- and four-octave scales written out in their entirety, ascending and descending—to be a rather peculiar fashion. Only the first, third, fifth, sixth, and seventh notes are given. This format immediately highlights the triad associated with each key. An accompanying prose description informs the reader that “the second and fourth always remain [the same], according to the initial key signature.” The following four pages amplify this theoretical approach, showing, for the same keys, examples that begin with an ascending triad, followed by a complete ascending or descending scale that includes a *cadens*, or cadence point, on what moderns would term the leading tone (for the ascending scale) or supertonic (for the descending one). Each scale terminates in a three-, four-, or six-note chord. Most of these are playable on the bass gamba, but some (such as the E minor chord *E-B-e-g-b-e'*) would require awkward shifts or unusual fingerings. A Bas Clause (translated as “bass formula”) consisting of the two dominants and tonic that would support the sequence “tonic second inversion, dominant, tonic” is also provided for each key. Though the major and minor keys built on C#, D#, F#, and G# are cited, they are not provided with examples, since “these keys are very rarely used.” (In a rather surprising omission, the *Instruction* contains no discussion of keys whose tonics are flatted notes beyond Bb, though surely Eb and Ab major would have been in general use.)

Pages 20–22 discuss the proper placement and execution of trills, and the final four pages give a series of ornaments on forty-six different, frequently encountered two- to six-note intervals or melodic patterns. The student is thus instructed in the art of *extempore* ornamentation by the same combination of careful observation, structured elaboration, memorization, and osmosis advocated in methods from Ortiz through Quantz.

In large letters following the final, quite florid ornament example (which includes twenty-one notes under a single slur!), the anonymous author concludes with: “When the SCHOLAR has understood and put into PRACTICE these INSTRUCTIONS, he needs no further INFORMATION, and can assist himself. FINIS.” Richard Carter finds this “a grandiose claim for such a modest document.” But the gamba player who has thoroughly internalized all of the practical and theoretical knowledge presented in the *Instruc-*

*tion* would indeed be positioned to acquit himself well in most musical situations with which he might be presented. We thus owe Bettina Hoffmann and the Güntersberg Verlag a debt of gratitude for making available, in such an accessible format, this fascinating document.

Kenneth Slowik