

Preface

The German composer Clemens Thieme was born in the year 1631 in Großdittmannsdorf near Dresden. In 1642, after completing his first musical training under Philipp Stolle in Dresden, Heinrich Schütz arranged for him to be sent to Copenhagen as a choir boy. In 1646 he returned to Dresden where he received instruction on several instruments, paid for by the elector of the city. In 1651 he received a position at the Dresden Cappella which he had until 1663. Thanks to a recommendation by Heinrich Schütz he was then transferred to the court cappella in Zeitz, becoming first concertmaster and then director of the cappella. He died in 1668, at the age of 37.

Although Thieme's compositions were never published, they were known and popular in Saxony. Unfortunately, of the more than 100 of his titles known to us today, only 18 of the actual pieces have survived. They fall into the categories of secular and sacred music (6 instrumental sonatas, psalm concertos, new testament Cantica and masses).

His instrumental sonatas, with a style much like those of Rosenmüller, alternate between lively homophony and fugue-like episodes over a decided bass. „Thieme composed the sonatas as a structurally well-balanced succession of short movements of varying thematic character with effective alternation of tempo, instrumentation and meter.“¹

Edition Güntersberg presents the first edition of the four sonatas of Thieme composed especially for stringed instruments. The manuscripts are housed in the Universitäts-Bibliothek Kassel – Landesbibliothek und Murhardtsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel. The manuscript consists of parts only, no score.² Included in this booklet are 2 sonatas with 6 parts and basso continuo:

Sonata in E minor

D-Kl 2° Ms.mus. 60 e, Heading on the first part: *Sonata à 6. Clement Tieme*, Designation of the parts: *Violinum primum*. (VC)³, *Violinum 2.* (VC), *Viola 1.* (AC), *Viola 2.* (AC), *Viola 3.* (TC), *Viola 4.* (BC), *Bassus continuus.* (BC figured)

Sonata in D minor

D-Kl 2° Ms.mus. 60 h, Title page: *Sonata à 6. Clemens Time*, Heading on the parts: *Sonata a 6*, Designation of the parts: *Violino primo* (VC), *Violino secondo* (VC), *Braŕzzo 1* (AC), *Braŕzzo 2* (AC), *Braŕzzo 3* (TC), *Basso* (BC), *Basso continuo* (BC figured)

Our edition remains as true to the manuscript as possible. Corrected notes have been indicated as such in the score, corrected accidentals have been set in parentheses. The note values and meter indications remain as they stand in the manuscript, missing bar-lines were added. Any fermatas that appeared in one voice but not in others were added where missing. We have adjusted the clefs to conform with today's conventions, providing two possibilities for the middle voices (alto and octavated treble clef) in order to facilitate a performance by wind instruments or *broken consorts*. The figured bass is unaltered.

These sonatas appear on first viewing to be intended for the violin family (2 violins, 3 violas, 1 cello). However they work on viols just as well as Thieme's 5-part viol sonatas⁴ – including the two highest voices. The manuscript contains two indications that a performance on viols was probably intended or at least not excluded: (1) in Sonata 1 the “Viola 4” part is notated in bass clef. This part lies so low that it could only be played on a bass viol or cello, not however on a viola. (2) In Sonata 2 the bass part (not the continuo part) goes down to the “a” below the cello's lowest open string. In other words these notes could not be played on a cello in the octave written, but on a seven-stringed viol they could.

Baroque performance practice suggests the addition of a harpsichord or other continuo instrument, thus we have included the original figures in our score. However, should no continuo instrument be available, the bass player could take over the notes in the continuo line during rests in his own part. Our bass part is arranged with this possibility in mind.

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Translation by Lynn Dickinson

¹ H. J. Buch: *Bestandsaufnahme der Kompositionen Clemens Thiemes*, Mf, xvi (1963), S. 367

² We unfortunately had to forgo our customary practice of providing a facsimile of sections of the manuscript because the library would not allow such a reproduction free of charge.

³ VC=treble clef, AC=alto clef, TC=tenor clef, BC=bass clef

⁴ Clemens Thieme, *Sonata à 5 Violen*, Edition Güntersberg G007, 2004