



Der Tag der ist so freudenreich: Beginn der zweiten Stimme, beginning of the second part

Preface

The settings by Praetorius have for a long time been a part of Christmas music-making in our families and the families of our parents. Again and again we are astonished to learn that many of our friends, colleagues, and pupils do not know them. With a new comprehensive practical edition, whose preparation brought to our attention many new pieces we were unaware of, we would now like to warmly recommend this wonderful music to all interested singers and instrumentalists. This music was presumably mostly sung, and played *colla parte*. However, it is just as attractive when performed by voices alone, by instruments alone, or by a mixed vocal-instrumental ensemble. Moreover, the original voice ranges can be adapted to the needs and capabilities of the performers by means of octave transposition.

Michael Praetorius (1572–1621), church musician and court Kapellmeister in various places between Braunschweig and Dresden, left us an extensive musical *oeuvre* that was highly regarded by bishops, dukes, and reformers alike during a difficult time of church history. Between 1605 and 1619, he published no less than seventeen volumes of church music. The first nine appeared under the title *Musae Sioniae*.

For the present editions, the following volumes— original exemplars of which are to be found in a number of German libraries, for example in the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel (D-W) and in the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzki in Hamburg (D-Hs)—are of interest to us:

Volume V “MUSAE SIONIAE / MICHAELIS PRAETORII C. / Geistlicher Deutscher in der Christenlichen Kirchen ublicher / Lieder und Psalmen mit II. III. IV. V. VI. VII. VIII. / Stimmen. / Fünffter Theil ... 1607.” Seven partbooks labeled “Cantus,” “Altus,” “Tenor,” “Bassus,” “Quinta vox,” “Sexta vox,” and “Septima vox.” A total of 166 settings.

Volume IX “MUSAE SIONIAE / Michaelis Praetorij, C. / Deutscher Geistlicher in Kirchen und Häusern gebrauchlicher Psalmen und Lieder mit 2. und 3. Stimmen / auff Muteten, Madrigalische und sonsten noch eine andere vom Autore erst erfundene Art / (wie davon in der Nova Autoris ad Lectorem Musicum mehrer Berichte zubefinden) gesetzt seind. / Neundter Teil. ... 1610.” Three partbooks labeled “Prima vox,” “Altera vox,” and “Tertia vox.” A total of 216 settings.

In these volumes are to be found, among other things, many Christmas songs that are still well-known even today, and of which we are initially publishing those in two parts (volume 1 – G151) and in three parts (volume 2 – G152).

The musical text of our edition follows the substance of the original very closely. In the notation of this practical edition, however, we have made several concessions to modern usage.¹ For better orientation, bar lines have been added between the staves. In duple meter, the note values are identical to those in the original – we have adopted 4/2 as the meter. In triple meter, however, we shortened the note values to a quarter of their

¹ In many aspects we have also followed the Collected Works: *Gesamtausgabe der musikalische Werke von Michael Praetorius*, ed. Friedrich Blume, vol. V (Wolfenbüttel and Berlin, 1937) and vol. IX (Wolfenbüttel and Berlin, 1929).

original value – here we have adopted 3/4 as the meter. Thus, a half note in duple meter corresponds to a dotted half note in triple meter. In addition, we have employed the clefs in use today, and indicated key signatures according to modern usage. The original contains a number of contemporary corrections that we have adopted without comment. Editorial changes beyond these are indicated in footnotes. The original displays a number of slurs; although these are not systematically placed, we have included them, but have not added any editorial slurs.

We have circumspectly modernized the texts and standardized the spelling. Praetorius underlaid many settings with several verses of which we have in each case (indicated in a footnote) only included a single verse due to space restrictions.

We would like to thank Howard Weiner for the translation of this Preface.

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

