

Introduction

The richly ornamented viols from the workshop of the instrument maker Joachim Tielke are familiar to all viol players. The Königsberg-native Tielke (1641–1719) settled in Hamburg in 1666 and ran a very successful workshop for string instruments of which many have survived to the present day.⁸

The pieces for viol presented here are by Joachim Tielke's son Gottfried, the eldest of his seven children.⁹ The future musician Gottfried Tielke was born in 1668 in Hamburg. In 1699 he succeeded the well-known viol player August Kühnel,¹⁰ who had died that same year, at the court of Kassel – initially as court musician, later also as *valet de chambre*. He enjoyed a unique position of trust vis-à-vis Landgrave Carl of Hessen-Kassel – probably because of the business relationships his father maintained with the court of Kassel. He held these positions until 1720, and died in 1725.

Gottfried Tielke's surviving compositions presumably date from the first years of his tenure at the court of Kassel,¹¹ and are today in the holdings of the Kassel University Library. The nine dance movements for viol and bass are notated in French lute tablature. The first eight movements are contiguous and have been preserved in three sources, whereby Q1 was our main source:

- Q1** D-Kl¹² 2° Ms. Mus. 61.L2 Nr.1 (1^r–5^v)
per la Violadaganbe del Sigr. G. Tielche (or *Tielcke*)
 viola da gamba notated in tablature (7 pages),
 bass in modern notation, figured in a few places (2 pages)
- Q2** D-Kl 8° Ms. Mus. 9
Joachim Tielke: Suite für die Violdagamba, aus der französischen Tabulatur übertragen von Wilh. Tappert (Berlin), dated on the last page: 24/8/1900
 viola da gamba in modern notation, treble and bass clefs (11 pages)
- Q3** D-B¹³ Mus. ms. 21890
Cassel. Landesbibliothek. Mus. fol. 61 e, per la Violadagambe del Sigr. G. Tielche
 transcription made in 1920 (according to RISM)
 viola da gamba in modern notation, alto and bass clefs (4 pages)

The ninth dance movement is preserved separately:

- Q4** D-Kl 4° Ms. Mus. 108.5 Nr. 88 (63^v–65^r)
Rondeau G: T:
 viola da gamba (2 pages) and bass (1 page) notated in tablature

We are very grateful that the Kassel University Library has allowed us to include complete reproductions of sources Q1 and Q4. We undertook the transcription into modern notation ourselves, since both Q2 and Q3 display a number of errors.

⁸ The information provided here about Joachim and Gottfried Tielke is taken from Friedemann und Barbara Hellwig, *Joachim Tielke: Kunstvolle Musikinstrumente des Barock* (Hamburg and München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011).

⁹ In the widespread Tielke family, the name Gottfried crops up repeatedly. The person in question here is “Gottfried (III).”

¹⁰ See also August Kühnel, *Sonate ô Partite ad una ô due Viola da Gamba con il Basso Continuo*, eds. G. and L. v. Zadow, Güntersberg G161–G165 (Heidelberg, 2009–2012).

¹¹ *Die Handschriften der Gesamthochschul-Bibliothek Kassel, Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel*, vol. 6, ed. Clytus Gottwald, *Manuscripta Musica* (Wiesbaden, 1997), p. 655.

¹² Universitätsbibliothek Kassel, Landesbibliothek und Murhardsche Bibliothek der Stadt Kassel.

¹³ Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv.

The eight contiguous movements are divided into two keys. The first three movements (Aria, Sarabande, Menuet) are in F Major, the following five movements (Aria, Sarabande, Aria, Aria, Presto) in G Minor. The designation “suite” is hardly appropriate here. The basso continuo is in modern notation.

The ninth dance movement (Rondeau) does not fit in the series of the first eight, which is why we have designated it as “Appendix: Rondeau.” It is in a simpler style than the other pieces, and does not contain any fingerings. In contrast to the above-mentioned pieces, the basso continuo part of the Rondeau is in tablature.

In the tablature section of source Q1, there are an unusually large number of fingerings, all of which we have taken over into the transcription. Whereas in tablature notation, the open strings are self-evident (indicated by the letter “a”), in the modern transcription we have added the fingering “0” in cases of doubt. Tielke’s fingerings are not always what one would expect. In our view, they are at times even rather unconventional, but do however provide information about how this music was played.

In manuscript Q1, there are a number of places where the note values do not correspond to the indicated meter. Thus, for example, measure 4 of the first movement (“Aria”) lacks a thirty-second note. Moreover, the combined note values of concluding measures are not always correct. Since a comparison with the source is possible in our edition, we have corrected these passages without comment in order to avoid burdening the already full look of the music with additional markings.

The numbers with horizontal double dots under bass notes, mainly in the seventh movement (page 7), are a distinctive feature of manuscript Q1. The bass notes marked in this fashion are on open strings and to be plucked by a free finger of the left hand, while the other notes of the chord are bowed. The number under the double dots indicates the finger that should execute the plucking. The execution requires a bit of practice, which is however rewarded by a strikingly baryton-like timbre. This technique is known from the English tablature literature, where the plucking of the strings is indicated by the word “thump,” and the finger that does the plucking by the number of dots. In the German repertoire, this technique is rather uncommon.¹⁴

With this edition, we want to give viol players the opportunity to look more closely at Gottfried Tielke’s rather out-of-the-ordinary, yet attractive music.

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Translation by Howard Weiner

¹⁴ We are indebted to the members of the Facebook “Viola da gamba” group for this information.