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MARC-ANTOINE CHARPENTIER AND THE BASSE CONTINUE

by GRAHAM SADLER and SHIRLEY THOMPSON

Studies of French continuo practice have tended to survey wide repertoires, often involving many composers or genres. But French Baroque composers each tended to handle the notation of the *basse continue* in subtly different ways. Moreover, their treatment of these notational conventions might well change from one genre to another. Since the indiscriminate study of so many composers and genres has sometimes led to over-generalization, the time seems ripe for individual studies of individual composers.

In this respect Lully's great contemporary Marc-Antoine Charpentier makes a good choice: his large output, amounting to some 550 works,¹ includes almost every type of French music that involved basso continuo – music for the stage, oratorio-like compositions, secular chamber works and instrumental pieces, as well as a far larger and more diverse sacred output than that of any French contemporary. We are also fortunate in having no fewer than 28 volumes of his manuscripts (the *Meslanges autographes*²) – a larger corpus of holograph material than exists for any other major composer of his generation. Further, Charpentier marked his scores with copious indications relating to performance, and that makes them specially valuable in the present context. This article examines the various kinds of continuo instruments which Charpentier specifies, together with aspects of the composer's notation that provide clues as to how the continuo was realized. It also considers places where the continuo was omitted.

Instruments

For all their wealth of evidence on matters of performance, Charpentier's autographs are often inconsistent or even contradictory in the way in which information on instrumentation is conveyed. Thus on the precise scoring of continuo lines, as on many other matters, we do not always have as much

¹ These are catalogued by H. Wiley Hitchcock in *Les oeuvres de/The works of Marc-Antoine Charpentier: Catalogue raisonné* (Paris: Picard, 1982). A list of works appears in Hitchcock, 'Marc-Antoine Charpentier', *The New Grove French Baroque Masters* (London: Macmillan, 1986), pp.89–112. Recent studies of Charpentier include Catherine Cessac, *Marc-Antoine Charpentier* (Paris: Fayard, 1988); Hitchcock, *Marc-Antoine Charpentier* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, = Oxford Studies of Composers: 23); Jane Lowe, *The Psalm Settings of Marc-Antoine Charpentier* (PhD thesis, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1991). Bi-annual bulletins are published, in January and July, by the Société Marc Antoine Charpentier.

² *Meslanges autographes*: F-Pn Rés.Vm¹ 259; 28 volumes. Volumes 1 and 2 are available in facsimile (Paris: Minkoff, 1991). Other autograph material consulted in this study includes Vm⁶ 18, partbooks of *Les arts florissants* (H487a) and Vm¹ 942, partbooks of the *Mass Assumpta est Maria* (H11a).

evidence as we would like.³ Nearly 300 works, many but by no means all of them small-scale pieces,⁴ include no labelling of the bass line whatsoever. Where the composer does provide information, it is often by means of vague terms like 'basse continue', 'accompagnement' or even 'petit chœur'.⁵ More specific labelling of the bass tends to occur only when the composer wishes to avoid ambiguity – at the moment, for example, when the number of staves changes from one system to another; or when instruments or voices suddenly have to share the same staff; or, conversely, when a line divides into two. Indeed, such 'internal' labelling may well be the first and only time we learn which continuo instruments are involved. It follows, therefore, that if a piece contains no ambiguities of this kind, we may well have no clear indication as to the continuo instruments required. This situation was not unusual in the Baroque period: as an active practical musician, Charpentier often directed his own performances and would not need to mark his scores with self-evident information. In the case of works which would be written with particular establishments, and therefore particular forces, in mind, the required instrumentation would have been obvious.⁶ Yet even if it may be difficult or even impossible, in any given work, to determine the precise forces Charpentier had in mind, there are enough sporadic clues in his output for us to build up a coherent and remarkably varied picture of his general practice.

(a) *Chord-playing instruments.*

Predictably, where only one continuo instrument is specified, it is usually (though not always⁷) the keyboard – organ or harpsichord, the former normally in sacred and the latter in secular pieces. Exceptions do, however, exist: several sacred works call for a harpsichord – the *Psalmus David nonagesimus primus* (H185),⁸ for instance, and the *Gratiarum actiones* (H326),⁹ and a *Miserere*

³ A fuller discussion will appear in Shirley Thompson, *Problems of scoring and performance practice in the music of Marc-Antoine Charpentier* (PhD thesis, The University of Hull, GB, in preparation).

⁴ H402, for example, is scored for soloists and four-part chorus, with the verbal instructions 'avec' and 'sans' instruments.

⁵ E.g. H53, H170, H256, H392, ('basse continue') and H10, H180b, H230 ('accompagnement'). Alternations of *petit chœur* and *grand chœur* can be seen throughout H145a and in the Prelude of H167.

⁶ Some Comédie Française works, for instance, carry no details of continuo scoring: H494, H497, H500, H507. Similarly, there is no such information in the scores of a number of works for the Guise household (H195, H339, H345, H412, H414, H415, H483b, H484, H486) nor in some works probably intended for the Jesuits (H126–134, H160, H209, H211, H220).

⁷ In H471, for instance, 'viole' is the only named continuo instrument; even given this instrument's capacity to play chords, it seems likely that a keyboard instrument would also have been involved in this work.

⁸ Nothing is known of the circumstances for which this work was written.

⁹ The work celebrates the recovery of the Dauphin from illness.

des Jesuites (H193) which, despite its title (with the implication that it was composed for the Jesuit church¹⁰), was originally written for the household musicians of the Duchesse de Guise. The fact that an organ is specified in three dramatic works may initially seem surprising, yet these miniature operas,¹¹ written for this same Guise household, are all on sacred themes and may thus have been presented in the duchess's chapel.¹²

Of the two keyboard instruments, the organ is the more frequently mentioned, being specified in some 100 works. The way in which it is indicated is rarely as straightforward as in the *Elevation* (H245), with its rubric 'pour un dessus[,] deux violons et l'orgüe'.¹³ More often, references to the presence of an organ are oblique: indications of manual-pedal contrasts;¹⁴ instructions to improvise organ couplets between movements;¹⁵ suggestions for registration or for doubling of obbligato parts (both discussed in more detail below).

Can we assume that, because the organ is the sole continuo instrument alluded to in these pieces, it is therefore the only one? Such a conclusion does seem plausible in a majority of those concerned. Well over two-thirds are either small-scale or early works (there is reason to believe that Charpentier, like others of his time, gradually favoured larger continuo groupings) or both. Typical is the *Messe pour les trepasses* (H2), an early work, scored for soloists, chorus, recorders and strings. Here, whenever the string group plays, the organ shares the bass line with the *basses de violon*, yet is marked 'orgüe' or 'orgüe seul' (never 'orgüe et ...') when accompanying reduced forces; in other words, the *basses de violon* are deployed solely as the bass of the string group and never as continuo instruments in their own right. We shall, however, see that Charpentier made liberal use elsewhere of organ combined with a mixture of bowed string continuo instruments, and we must accept that such may have been his intention even in works where he did not specify as much.

In only a small proportion of pieces – about 20 works – does Charpentier call for harpsichord, or *clavecin*. (Mindful, perhaps, of the etymology of the latter term, the composer usually spells it *clavecim*). There are two instances where organ and harpsichord are specified, yet in neither case is it certain that both

¹⁰ Hitchcock (*Catalogue*, p.192) notes that the words 'Miserere des Jesuites' may have been added to the original title (*Psalm[us] David 50^{mus}*) when the work was revised or when Charpentier composed another setting of the psalm. The performers' names originally given in the score are those associated with the Guise household.

¹¹ H482, H483 and H483a (a substitute composition for part 2 of H483).

¹² Another indication of organ in what would seem a secular work is seen in H547, the *Marche de triomphe* and *Second air de trompettes*. These pieces may, however, have been intended for a sacred occasion.

¹³ See also H284, *Domine salvum a 3 voix pareilles avec orgue*.

¹⁴ See the indications 'pedale' and 'main' in *Motet de la Vierge* (H322).

¹⁵ Examples can be seen in H63, H64, H65, H67, H68 and H356. In H67, we also find the indication 'basse continüe'.

were intended to be used together. The work entitled *Pour un reposoir: Ouverture dès que la procession paroist* (H523) and its untitled accompanying motet (‘Ave verum corpus’, H329) were designed to be performed at Corpus Christi, one after the other, before a street altar (‘reposoir’). Given the outdoor setting, the fact that the harpsichord is specified at the start of the overture (the bass is marked ‘clavecim et violons’) seems eminently practical, and the motet likewise is marked ‘viol[on] et clavecim’ towards the beginning. Yet at b.121 we find the rubric ‘voix[,] orgue et basse contin[ue]’. Did Charpentier have access to a portable chamber organ to take into the street (possible: see note 41)? Or is this, as Hitchcock suggests,¹⁶ a ‘slip of the pen’ (conceivable)? Or is the rubric at b.121 a later addition, made in connection with an indoor performance (perhaps the most likely)?

A parallel case is the little ‘opéra’ *Les arts florissans*. Here we have both an autograph score in the *Meslanges autographes*¹⁷ and what appears to be a complete parallel set of autograph partbooks.¹⁸ In the *Meslanges* the only continuo instrument required to play throughout is the organ, though the passage marked ‘Bruit effroyable’ specifies ‘[basse de] violes’ on an independent line. The performing material, by contrast, contains no part for the organ but one marked ‘clavecin’, while there is also a partbook for ‘[basse de] viole’ containing the entire bass line. It is of course conceivable that both keyboard instruments were used together, the organist playing from the full score and the harpsichordist from the partbook, the bass line being additionally supported by a basse de viole. Yet there is reason to believe that Charpentier’s usual practice, at least in larger-scale works such as this, was to have a part copied for the keyboard continuo player.¹⁹ In which case, the discrepancy between score and part-books may be no more than an oversight, reflecting perhaps a change of venue or some similar practicality.

A further chord-playing continuo instrument used by Charpentier was the theorbo. Surprisingly, it is only rarely specified.²⁰ It appears, for example, in the eight-part *Sonate* (H548), where it reads from a partbook almost identical with that for harpsichord. In modern performances, the two instruments often alternate, but there is no evidence that that was the composer’s intention.

¹⁶ Hitchcock, *Catalogue*, p.261.

¹⁷ Volume vii, ff.63^v–86^v

¹⁸ See note 2.

¹⁹ The performing materials for the Mass *Assumpta est Maria* and *Sonate* include separate partbooks for organ and clavecin respectively. Though not autograph, the partbooks to *Judicium Salomonis* Vm¹ 1481 (H422a), dated 1702 and thus contemporary with Charpentier, include a separate book entitled ‘Basse continue p[ou]r l’orgüe’. This matter is discussed further below.

²⁰ Jean Duron (‘L’orchestre de Marc-Antoine Charpentier’, *Revue de musicologie* 72 (1986), pp.23–65) is incorrect in stating that ‘Le théorbe n’est jamais mentionné dans les sources chez Charpentier’ (p.40).

In Charpentier's only other work to specify the theorbo, *Pro omnibus festis BVM* (H333),²¹ the instrument is identified in a way that nicely illustrates the composer's haphazard labelling. At the start of the piece the continuo line is unmarked. Later it becomes clear first that bass viol and organ are needed on the continuo. Then later still we find the first and only indication – at the point where the number of staves changes from one system to the next – that the continuo team also includes theorbo. Yet two bars later, the line marked ‚violle et theorbe‘ ends with a minim, and the rest of the stave is taken over

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a piece titled 'Pro omnibus festis BVM'. The score is written on seven staves. The top staff is labeled 'voix et viol' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri annunti a'. The second staff is also labeled 'voix et viol' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri'. The third staff is labeled 'violle et Theorbe' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri annunti'. The fourth staff is labeled 'l'orgue' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri narrate ce li annunti ate fuge ri narrate'. The fifth staff is labeled 'orgue' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri annunti a de annunti ate fuge'. The sixth staff is labeled 'orgue' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri annunti a'. The seventh staff is labeled 'orgue' and contains the lyrics 'annunti ate fuge ri annunti a'. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, and rhythmic values.

Example 1

by voices singing from the mezzo-soprano clef. The ‚violle‘ and ‚theorbe‘ are clearly not intended to join the organ line at this point, since there would be little point in giving them their own stave at the beginning of this system. On the other hand (and this is not untypical of Charpentier), there is no indication later in the piece as to where these instruments should re-enter.

²¹ Added to the score are indications for adaptation of the work for a different group of singers (described in Hitchcock, *Catalogue*, p.263). However, we cannot identify either of the intended performing groups. It is, of course, possible that ‚theorbe‘ was added to the score when the alterations were being made.

Although Charpentier specifies the theorbo in only two works, we may surmise that he intended it elsewhere. During his association with the Guise household, the duchess's musical establishment was directed by the theorbo player Philippe Goibaut, sieur de Bois, known as Mr Du Bois.²² It is thus no surprise that the above-mentioned *Sonate* – written, it would appear, for the duchess's musicians – includes this instrument. Doubtless it was included in other works for the Guise musicians. It has been noted, for example, that *Les arts florissans* seems to be a companion work to the *Sonate*:²³ the instrumental scoring is virtually identical except that the opera lacks any mention of theorbo.²⁴ The combination of theorbo and harpsichord, found in the *Sonate*, was, in any case, common enough in France: it was the norm at the Paris Opéra in Charpentier's day, where two theorbos remained part of the *petit chœur*, which included the continuo players, until at least 1719. It must presumably have been used in Charpentier's one work for the Opéra – the tragédie *Medée* (1693).²⁵ Duron observes that Charpentier's failure to specify the instrument may be regarded as an argument *a silentio*, the theorbo being taken so much for granted that it was not thought necessary to specify it.²⁶ This is a line of reasoning that should be used with due reserve, yet in view of the known existence of theorbos in some of the establishments for which Charpentier worked, it undoubtedly carries some weight.

(b) *Melody instruments.*

Although some works would no doubt have been performed with *basse continue* or organ alone, there is abundant evidence that in many others, as we might expect by the later 17th century, the continuo line was doubled by further instruments. The composer does not always indicate which: he often contents himself with such general directions as ,orgue et basse contin[ue]‘ (*Messe a 8 voix et flutes*, H3), ,orgue et basse contin[ue] seuls‘ (*Litanies de la Vierge*, H84) or ,orgue et accomp[agnement]‘ (*Exaudiat*, H162).

Still, enough works survive in which Charpentier's intentions are made more specific to allow us to see a pattern of sorts. In a few cases the scoring can be established by identifying players named in the score. *Psal[mus] David 5^{tus} post septuagesimum*, ,Notus in Judea‘ (H206), includes indications as to which lines should be played by ,Mr Converset‘ and ,M^r Marchand pere‘, whom Catherine Cessac suggests were respectively *basse de violon* and *basse*

²² Patricia Ranum (,A sweet servitude[:] A musician's life at the Court of Mlle de Guise‘, *Early Music* 15, (1987), pp.346–360) provides details about the personnel in the Hôtel de Guise.

²³ Julie Anne Sadie, ,Charpentier and the early French ensemble sonata‘ *Early Music* 7 (1979), pp.330–335.

²⁴ It is possible that the theorbo part has not survived with the other partbooks.

²⁵ *Medée* (Paris: Ballard, 1694). Further possible use of the theorbo is discussed below.

²⁶ Duron, ,L'orchestre‘, p.41.

de viole players.²⁷ Usually, however, instruments are specifically named. Yet rarely is that information found at the start: *Gratiarum actiones* (H326), in which the bass is entrusted to ,viole[,] basse de violon [et] clavecim', is one of only a handful of works where the continuo scoring is given at the outset. More typically, the presence of doubling instruments becomes apparent from passing references in the course of the piece: in *Psalmus 147* (H191), for instance, bass viol and organ are specified separately, the former on f.38, the latter in several other places.

The composer's many permutations of the continuo instruments available to him are discussed separately below. It is enough to note here that the most common doubling instruments are, as previous examples have suggested (and indeed as one would expect), the *basse de viole* and *basse de violon*. The latter could be used either singly or in groups as continuo instruments. Of the two, the *basse de viole* is marginally the more often indicated, though exact proportions are not possible to establish, since Charpentier has the unfortunate habit of using the abbreviation ,viol' to mean either instrument.²⁸ Occasionally his directions are more cryptic. From the rubric ,orgue et basses continue [sic] avec sourdines' (*Dialogus inter angelos et pastores Judeae*, H420) one might infer the doubling instruments to be *basses de violon*; but even then, there is reason to believe that Charpentier sometimes intended his bass viol players to use mutes.²⁹ On the other hand, ,avec sourdines' in this context may mean that the continuo group accompanied the main body of (muted) strings.³⁰

Where the bass instruments have rests, Charpentier sometimes follows what was by now common practice in calling upon the violas to double the high-lying organ line.³¹ More unusual, perhaps, is his occasional use of treble viols for this purpose. In *Pro omnibus festis BVM* ,Annuntiate superi, narrate coeli' (H333) the two obbligato treble viols and, ,if possible', the *basse de viole*, are instructed to double the organ line when it ascends into the mezzo-soprano clef (C²) with the rubric: ,les petites violes et la grande si elle [peut] avec l'orgue en haut'.

²⁷ Cessac, *Charpentier*, pp.75, 82 and 193.

²⁸ The question of terminology is discussed further in Thompson, *op.cit.*

²⁹ See H488, *La descente d'Orphee aux enfers*. On f.49 a section scored for three bass viols, harpsichord and voice is headed ,avec sourdines'.

³⁰ If this is the case, it tends to confirm that the string player(s) in the continuo group were regarded as distinct from the main string body, analogous to the distinction between *petit chœur* and *grand chœur* at the Paris Opéra. We have indeed noted that Charpentier occasionally labels the continuo section *petit chœur*.

³¹ See H189, for instance. It is clear that the continuo body in this work normally comprises organ and bass violins. However, at ,Et ipse redimet', the continuo line is written in the alto clef and accompanies an ensemble of high voices and two obbligato violins. At this point it is labelled ,orgue[,] taille et quinte de violons'. Earlier in the work, where the pitch of the continuo line rises to accompany high voices, ,orgue seul' appears on the continuo line. Meanwhile, all the *grand chœur* basses are resting, but *taille* and *quinte* lines have a written-out doubling of the continuo line.

A significant number of works include wind instruments among the continuo group. Where a piece involves obbligato recorders and oboes or (in one instance) piva,³² Charpentier sometimes specifies one or more bassoons. In H547, for instance, ,orgue et basson sans vi[ol]ons‘ accompany passages marked ,pr[emier] hautb[ois] et fl[ute]‘ and ,s[econ]d hautb[ois] et fl[ute]‘, while ,org[ue] et vi[ol]on sans basson‘ accompany ,pr[emier] vio[lo]n‘ and ,s[econ]d vio[lo]n‘. Where recorders are the sole obbligato wind instruments, Charpentier occasionally calls for a *basse de flute* on the continuo line, as in the *Prelude pour l'esté à 3 flutes* (H336a).³³

Jean Duron³⁴ draws attention to Charpentier's use of serpents and cromorne in the *Offerte pour l'orgue et pour les violons flutes et hautbois* (H514). Here the two lines in the bass clef are entrusted respectively to *basse de violons* and ,serpents[,] cromorne[,] basson et orgue‘. The work in question, considered by Hitchcock to be an early one, has been redated by Jane Lowe to the period after 1685. When Charpentier was *maître de musique* at the Sainte-Chapelle (1698–1704), he had access to several serpent players,³⁵ though whether he did so before that period is not known. Boydell describes the cromorne as a wind instrument ,of uncertain identity‘ probably related to the bassoon.³⁶ The composer's rubric suggests that the instrument, whether or not related to the bassoon, was not identical with it. Duron notes the virtuosic nature of Charpentier's cromorne parts.

Combinations of instruments

In a brief article there is only space to hint at the richness and variety of Charpentier's grouping of continuo instruments. The numbers deployed on the *basse continue* are not necessarily related to the size of the overall performing forces. On the one hand, we have noted large-scale works in which, on available evidence, the continuo group may have been small (see note 4);

³² For a discussion of this instrument, see Duron, ,L'orchestre‘, pp.50–51 and Don L. Smithers, *The Music and History of the Baroque Trumpet before 1721* (London: Dent, 1973), p.239. See also the definitions by Sébastien de Brossard in *Dictionnaire de musique* (2nd edition, 1705; R Hilversum: Knuf, 1965): „Piva“, p.289; „Haut-Bois“, p.267.

³³ The presence of bass figuring indicates that a chord-playing instrument is required – perhaps, in this case, a theorbo. The [*basse de*] *flute* is also required to double the high continuo line in a section of H409. Some passages in *Medée* specify doubling of the continuo by a bass recorder (see pp.125, 126, 135, 136, 138 and 241). In one section (p.275f) the *basse de flûte* has an independent line with only minor differences from that labelled BASSE-CONTINUE.

³⁴ Duron, ,L'orchestre‘, pp.49–50.

³⁵ This is clear from details provided by Michel Brenet, *Les Musiciens de la Sainte-Chapelle du Palais* (Paris: Picard, 1910), pp.263, 265 and 266.

³⁶ Barra R Boydell, ,Cromorne‘, *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments* (London: Macmillan, 1984), Vol I, p.516. Boydell's suggestion is supported by Brossard in the following definition: ,FAGGOTTO. Instrument à vent, qui répond à nôtre BASSON, ou *Basse de Chromorne*‘, *Dictionnaire*, p.25.

on the other, it has also been noted that a modest work like the *Gratiarum actiones* (H326), comprising obbligato parts for three singers and three recorders, has a continuo section comprising three instruments. It goes without saying that the choice of instruments was influenced by what was available and where the performance would take place. In composing a large-scale *Epithalamio* (H473) for the Dauphin's brother-in-law,³⁷ Charpentier was writing for the musicians at the Munich court, for whom a continuo section of 'cembalo[,] violone e fagotto' was more the norm than it was in France. In writing the *Simphonies pour un reposoir* (H515) for an outdoor ceremony, he specifies at one point 'trois basses et clavecin', the three 'basses' almost certainly *basses de violon*. To the examples already given we may add the further combination of organ, bass viol and theorbo (discussed above) in *Pro omnibus festibus* (H333).

Example 2

³⁷ According to Hitchcock (*Catalogue*, p.343) the work, with its Italian text, was probably commissioned by the Dauphin to celebrate the marriage of his wife's brother, Maximilian II Emanuel, Elector of Bavaria.

The scores of a handful of Charpentier's sacred works include more than one set of figures simultaneously – the *Troisième Magnificat* (H79), for example, and the *Prose des Morts* (H12). In the former, the figuring in one of the parts is far more sporadic than in the other, but the fact that it appears in three different places suggests that it is probably not a copying error. The sparseness of the figuring itself may suggest that this second instrument was a theorbo, sparseness of figuring being characteristic of theorbo parts. Multiple continuo lines may indeed have been more widespread in Charpentier than at first appears. Evidence for their use in the *Prose des morts*, for example, survives almost by accident: for the most part the autograph reveals only one continuo line; but at the upper system on f.40 (ex. 2), the score is expanded from four to eight staves in double-choir format. Here the bass lines of both choirs are figured, the upper one marked 'viol[on] et voix' and the lower one marked 'orgue et voix'. Given the unlikelihood that the *basse de violon* was expected to realize the figures, we must conclude that a second chord-playing instrument was required – possibly, once again, the 'phantom' theorbo that Charpentier seems to have been so reluctant to specify.

Four separate continuo parts are found in Charpentier's *Messe à quatre chœurs* (H4), each choir having its own continuo line. The instruments involved are never fully stated, though where the texture is reduced to two choirs the composer refers to 'les deux orgues'. The fact that all four parts are generally referred to in identical terms (e.g. 'les quatre basses continues accompagnent') suggests that he intended four organs. There are no clear indications that each line was doubled by a string bass: throughout Charpentier indicates string doubling of the voices by writing above the score 'avec violons' and 'sans violons', but it is unclear whether this extended to the doubling of the *basse continue* in passages where the string body does not play. As originally copied, all four continuo lines were virtually identical and played almost throughout, even when one, two or three of the choirs were resting. Crossings-out in the score provide evidence that at some stage Charpentier had second thoughts. At all events, it seems unlikely that the crossings-out were done to adapt the work for a later performance when four organs were not available: while the number of occasions where the continuo lines play simultaneously is much reduced, there remain places where all four play together.

The *Salve regina* for three choirs (H24) is another work with multiple continuo lines, one for each choir. Here the continuo of both first and second choirs play together for most of the piece, even where the first choir sings on its own. A third continuo part plays only when the third choir enters – i.e. about half-way through. Interestingly the third choir is labelled 'exules' (exiles). This raises the intriguing possibility that the third choir and its continuo were spatially separated from the others. If so, it is a rare and possibly unique example in late 17th-century France of this Italianate practice.

Cues to performance

Charpentier's manuscripts, as well as providing data on continuo instruments and combinations of instruments, also contain information on how, what and (sometimes) when to play. In a handful of works,³⁸ the composer specifies or at least hints at organ registration. For example, in *Caecilia virgo et martyr* (H413) he distinguishes between 'petit jeu' and 'grand jeu'. In the *Magnificat* (H78) the specified registration includes 'cornet' and 'jeux doux'. These terms, especially *plein jeu* and *grand jeu*, indicate a substantial instrument, one on which alternations between manuals was involved. We have also noted that Charpentier's directions to the organist sometimes involve manual/pedal contrasts. Further information on registrations may be gleaned from the composer's instructions to the organists as to the *couplets* they should play between movements of the *Messe pour le samedi de Pasques* (H8). At the start of the work, for example, he writes: 'L'orgue commence sur le plain jeu'; between the Kyrie and Christe he adds 'icy l'orgue joue un couplet sur les jeux agreables'.

All in all, such instruments seem not to have been the kinds of chamber organ we so often hear today in concerts and on recordings. Felix Raugel provides evidence that the organ in the Jesuits' church for which Charpentier wrote a significant number of works comprised three manuals and pedals, and around 20 stops.³⁹ And although we do not know the exact specification of the organ at the Sainte-Chapelle where Charpentier worked for the last six years of his life, a picture of the case published by Brenet⁴⁰ indicates a substantial instrument including pedals. At the same time Charpentier did of course have access to chamber organs: there was a portable instrument at the Sainte-Chapelle, for example,⁴¹ while according to Ranum a chamber organ 'in a *fleur-de-lys* painted cabinet' was situated in the *gallerie basse* at the Hôtel de Guise to accompany the musicians at Mass and Vespers on feast days.⁴²

Caecilia virgo et martyr, discussed above, is one of several works in which the organist is given instructions to play the other instrumental parts: at one point we find the rubric 'l'orgue joüe les mesmes parties que les instrumens' (in this case the obbligato treble viols). Such wording suggests doubling rather than replacement, an interpretation supported by such later directions as 'violes et grand jeu' and 'violes et orgue'. Elsewhere the organist was occasionally expected to double the voice parts: in the *Miserere* (H173) he is instructed to 'joüe comme la voix'. It is possible, however, that in some of the works

³⁸ See H3, H8, H78, H148, H397, H413, H422, H534.

³⁹ Raugel, *Les Grandes Orgues des Eglises de Paris et du Département de la Seine* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1927), p.215.

⁴⁰ Brenet, *Les musiciens*, p.2. No instrument survives in the Sainte-Chapelle.

⁴¹ Documented in *ibid.*, p.261

⁴² Ranum, 'A Sweet Servitude', pp.354–355

under discussion the intention was for the organist, for whatever reason, to replace the instruments.⁴³

Among those pieces which possibly throw light on the manner of continuo realization, one of the most interesting is *Caecilia virgo et martyr octo vocib[us]* 'Est secretum, Valeriane' (H397).⁴⁴ Until the final movement the continuo line comprises a straightforward figured bass, but at the words 'jubilemus cantemus in chordis et organo' Charpentier – taking his cue from the text – provides a written-out part for the organist. Where the composer provides material for left and right hands, he marks the part 'grands jeux'; where the bass reverts to a continuo role, he labels it 'petits jeux'. At times fully written-out passages contain independent thematic material, as if the organ were an obbligato instrument; at times the organ doubles the obbligato instruments; and at other times the player is provided with what amounts to a continuo realization.

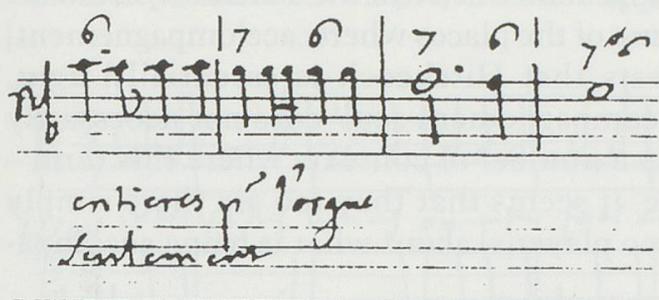
The image displays three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system shows a treble staff with chords and a bass staff with a simple bass line. The second system shows the organ part with 'Gr[ands] jeux' and 'P[etits] jeux' markings, and the bass line with a sequence of notes and figures 5 and 6. The third system shows the organ part with 'Gr[ands] jeux' and 'Gr[ands] j[eu]x' markings, and the bass line with notes and figures #, #6, and #.

Example 3

⁴³ This is how the indications in H526, for example, may be interpreted: 'l'orgue jouë les parties des flutes' and 'l'orgue joue les flutes'. Similar instructions can be found in H78, H416 and H525.

⁴⁴ An edition of the final sections may be found in Hitchcock, *The Latin Oratorios of Marc-Antoine Charpentier* (PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 1954), Vol. III, pp. 1–46.

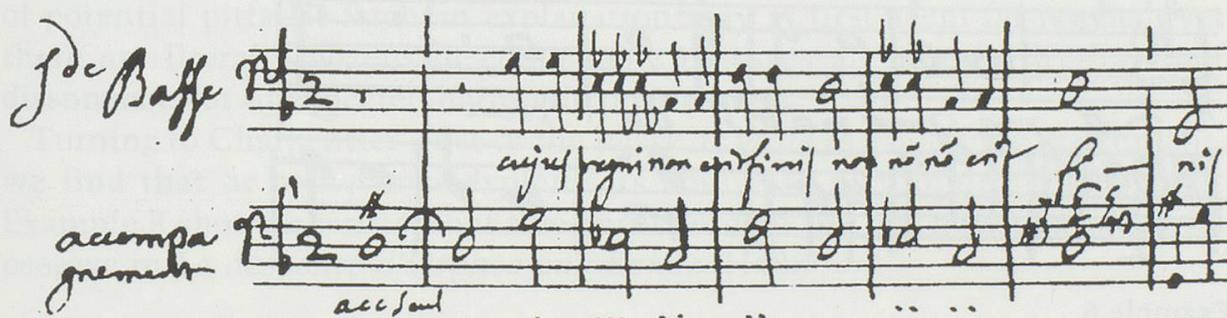
A significant number of Charpentier's marginalia are clearly intended for the copyist's benefit, and among these are some that reveal his care in distinguishing between the bass line played by the organ continuo and that played by the doubling instruments. In the *Messe ... p[ou]r Mr Mauroy* (H6) a passage marked ,acc[ompagnement] seul' bears the following additional rubric: ,entieres [i.e. semibreves] p[ou]r l'orgue seulement' (ex. 4) – instructions to the copyist, it would seem, that the string bass part should be copied with the written



Example 4

rhythms but that the organ part should be simplified as shown. (This tends to confirm other evidence that the organist played from a partbook rather than the score.) A further example can be found in H365, *In honorem Sancti Ludovici*, where Charpentier adds, to a bass line notable for its general activity, the words: ,plus simple pour l'orgue pendant tout ce chœur'. Supporting evidence of a different sort is revealed by Example 5 from the *Messe ... p[ou]r Mr Mauroy*,

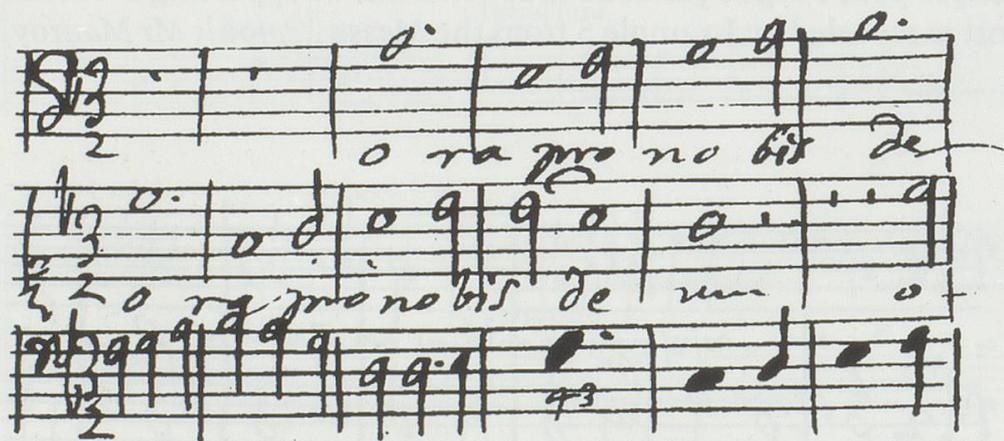
Example 5



where a series of little wedges appear below the bass line marked ,accompagnement'. It may be observed that the wedges correspond to the rhythm of the vocal bass immediately above. They therefore seem an indication to the copyist to write the vocal rhythm when he came to copy the string bass part (and presumably to retain the less active rhythms in the organ part).

Charpentier's manuscripts reveal his concern to keep the continuo player(s) informed as to what else was going on. The continuo lines in his full scores include a significant number of markings (,duo', ,trio', ,tous' etc.) which, in view of their redundancy in the scores, seem designed for transference to the organist's partbook both as rehearsal cues and as indications to adjust registration. Among these markings is a capital R, which, according to Hitchcock ,means „récit“ [i.e. a passage for solo singer(s)] ... and implies a minimal continuo group (usually indicated „accompagnement seul“), as opposed to a full one ([indicated by] „tous“).⁴⁵ The appearance of ,R' in the continuo partbooks of the *Mass Assumpta est Maria* in some of the places where ,acc[ompagnement] seul' occurs in the full score suggests that Hitchcock is essentially right. However, it should be noted that ,accompagnement seul' does not necessarily indicate a *reduced* continuo group; in a number of contexts where this term – and ,tous' – appear in a continuo line, it seems that they too are there simply to provide information to the continuo player(s) about what is being accompanied.⁴⁶

A different aspect of Charpentier's notation of the continuo is his treatment of coloration. For the most part his use of this device follows orthodox 17th-century practice, in that the coloration indicates hemiola; the prominence given to this notation in the bass line is no doubt connected with the keyboard player's vital role in controlling the harmonic rhythm. Elsewhere, however, coloration appears to have other, quite unexpected functions. The coloration in Example 6, from *Regina coeli* (H16), has no effect on the rhythm and at first sight seems redundant.



Example 6

But when the passage in black notation is compared with the upper parts in the previous three bars, its function becomes clear: to draw the continuo players' attention to an imitative entry that might otherwise have gone un-

⁴⁵ Hitchcock, *Catalogue*, p.134.

⁴⁶ Discussed further in Thompson, *op.cit.*

noticed. It is thus analogous to notation found in collections of 16th-century English keyboard works such as the Mulliner Book, where a cantus firmus in an inner part might be written in black notation to make it visually more distinct.⁴⁷

There are further instances of coloration deployed, it would appear, to signify something other than rhythmic change. Charpentier's use of coloured notes often seems to be warning the player to be ready for some specially colourful harmony. In Example 7, from *Confitebor a 4 voix et 2 violons* (H151), the black semibreves emphasise first an augmented triad and then a 9/7-8/6

Example 7 is a handwritten musical score for four voices. The lyrics are: "intellectus bonus omnibus faci entibus e. nus". The score features several instances of coloration (black notes) and asterisks marking specific notes. The notation includes various rhythmic values and clefs.

Example 7

double suspension. Was this designed to warn a relatively inexperienced player of potential pitfalls? Such an explanation may at first seem far-fetched, yet there are literally dozens of comparable passages all noteworthy for their dissonances or unexpected harmonic progressions.

Turning to Charpentier's use of the *basse de viole* as a doubling instrument, we find that he sometimes exploits its ability to play multiple stoppings. Example 8 shows a written-out five-part chord on the last note of a cadential passage in *La descente d'Orphee aux Enfers* (H488).

Example 8 shows a single note on a bass clef staff with five different fingerings indicated below it: 4, 3, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3. The note is followed by a double bar line and a final chord symbol.

Example 8

⁴⁷ Ed. Denis Stevens, *The Mulliner Book*. Musica Britannica 1 (London: Stainer and Bell, 1951); see facsimile, p.xiv.

In a similar context in *Psalmus David nonagesimus 9^{nus}* (H194) the composer marks the final note: ‚Il faut q[ue] la viole fasse l’acord de d la re sol avec 3#. Elsewhere, in the *Elevation* (H408), multiple-stopping in one of the obligato bass viol parts gives the impression of being a written-out continuo realization. Though not strictly speaking part of the continuo group, which on a preceding page is labelled ‚basse de violon et clavecim‘, the second of the two obligato bass viols (fourth staff) is playing chords in such a way that it is in effect realizing the figures – an interesting clue, perhaps, to the kind of realization continuo viol players may sometimes have improvised.

Example 9 (vocal parts omitted)

Continuo tacet

We come to the question of where the continuo did not play at all. We are concerned here with the secular works, both vocal and instrumental, particularly those in the field of dramatic music, though there is evidence that in the sacred music, too, the continuo was sometimes silent.⁴⁸

An article in *Early Music* some 15 years ago, by one of the present writers, drew attention to evidence that in French Baroque opera a proportion of each work was performed without chord-playing continuo instruments.⁴⁹ Since that article appeared, its findings have been confirmed by other scholars in the

⁴⁸ Discussed further in Thompson, *op.cit.*

⁴⁹ Graham Sadler, ‚The Role of the Keyboard Continuo in French Opera, 1673–1776‘, *Early Music* 8 (1980) pp.148–157, was not the first to draw attention to this phenomenon: see Henry Prunières, *J.B. Lully: Oeuvres complètes, Les Opéras, 2, Alceste* (Paris, 1932; R New York, 1966), preface p.xxii; and Paul-Marie Masson, *L’Opéra de Rameau* (Paris: Laurens, 1930; R New York, 1972), p.514; these writers produced no supporting evidence, however.

same and in different fields.⁵⁰ Yet there are still those who, despite a large body of evidence, find it hard to accept that the continuo keyboard player did not play from beginning to end.

To summarise the evidence, at least for the Lully-Charpentier period:

1. In the full scores of 17th-century operas by Lully and Charpentier that were published under the composers' direction,⁵¹ a clear, thorough and consistent distinction is made between those bass staves labelled BASSE CONTINUE and those labelled BASSES DE VIOLON or, alternatively, not labelled at all.

2. In the full scores, passages labelled BASSE CONTINUE are consistently figured. Passages labelled BASSE DE VIOLON or unlabelled are not figured.

3. More important, this distinction is maintained in contemporary partbooks such as the complete set of Lully's opera *Isis* published by Ballard under the composer's direction in 1677. Here the BASSE CONTINUE partbook contains *only* those passages (for the most part, the vocal music) which in his full scores are typically labelled BASSE CONTINUE.⁵² Meanwhile the BASSE DE VIOLON partbook contains *only* those passages which are labelled Basse de Violon or are unlabelled, including those passages (typically the instrumental music) not in the BASSE CONTINUE partbook.

4. The keyboard continuo players at the Paris Opéra played, not from a full score but from a mainly single-line partbook. They cannot therefore have played the movements that were not included in their partbooks (those labelled BASSE DE VIOLON or unlabelled). This needs to be stressed, since there are those who try to ignore the evidence by pointing out that it is easy enough to play from an unfigured bass. Of course, but only if you have the bass itself.

The printed score of Charpentier's *tragédie Medée* closely follows the method established by Lully of indicating the presence or absence of continuo. The words BASSE CONTINUE are found under the start of every single system in

⁵⁰ Thomas R. Green, *Early Rameau Sources: Studies in the Origins and Dating of the Operas and other Musical Works*, (diss., Brandeis University, 1992); Peter Holman, 'Reluctant Continuo', *Early Music* 9 (1981), p.75-78; Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court 1540-1690* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 383-385; Judith Milhous and Curtis Price, 'Harpsichords in the London Theatres, 1697-1715', *Early Music* 18 (1990), pp. 38-46.

⁵¹ In the case of printed scores of the Lully operas, a distinction must be made between, on the one hand, those which appeared during the composer's lifetime and which were prepared under his own supervision - *Bellérophon* (1679), *Proserpine* (1680), *Persée* (1682), *Phaëton* (1683), *Amadis* (1684), *Roland* (1685), *Armide* (1686) and *Acis et Galatée* (1686), all published by Christophe Ballard - and, on the other, those which appeared posthumously, often many years after the composer's death. All the former group but few of the latter display the characteristics described above.

⁵² In this respect the title of the partbook is revealing: 'Basse continue. Qui comprend toute la Piece, excepté les Airs de Danse qui sont dans la Basse de Violon'.

the vocal pieces as well as in certain other movements.⁵³ By contrast those words are completely lacking in some 14 movements, all instrumental.⁵⁴ Moreover, the continuo figuring confirms this distinction, figures being restricted to movements marked BASSE CONTINUE.

For Charpentier the presence or absence of continuo was, among other things, a textural and coloristic resource to be exploited not only between but within movements. In addition to the movements listed in note 54, a further three involve partial exclusion of the continuo. All three contrast the full five-part orchestral texture with passages involving the famous Lullian 'trio des hautbois'. In the five-part passages the bass is labelled 'Basse de Violon' (*Menuet en Rondeau*, p.lij) or unlabelled (*Canaries*, p.1; *Passepied*, p.liv); in three-part passages it is consistently labelled BASSE-CONTINUE. In the five-part *Suite de l'Air des Corinthiens* beginning on p.71, each system of the bass is marked 'Basse de Violon & Continuë' until the episode on p.73, where until the direction 'On reprend le Rondeau' (p.74) the bass is unlabelled.

Very occasionally, almost certainly through carelessness on the part of the printer, this pattern is broken. In the Chaconne (p.128), in which continuo realization is clearly intended throughout, the printer has omitted the BASSE CONTINUE label under eight of the thirteen systems; yet unlike those movements where the bass is completely unlabelled, the line is figured throughout. Similar inconsistency is found in the Passecaille (p.139).

Certain foreigners seem to have been aware of difference between Italian and French practice in this respect: for example, dances by Giovanni Maria Bononcini 'in stil Francese' either have a continuo part marked 'tacet' (*Varii fiori del giardano musicale*, Bologna 1669) or form part of a collection where the composer makes clear that the continuo part 'Violone o Spinetta' was primarily intended for the former (*Arie, correnti, sarabande, gighe, & allemande*, Bologna, 1671).⁵⁵ Muffat, in the preface to his *Second Florilegium* modelled on the music of the Vingt-quatre Violons, tells us that his dances 'can be played satisfactorily in four or five parts, with Basso Continuo ad libitum';⁵⁶ and Mattheson comments on the fact that the French sometimes did without chordal continuo.⁵⁷ So do the French themselves: Brossard, for example, main-

⁵³ Among instrumental movements that evidently required continuo are the Overture, Chaconne and Passacaille. The same is true of several of the equivalent movements in the Lully scores listed in note 51.

⁵⁴ Premier air, p.xvij; Loure, p.xlviii; Second air pour les Argiens, p.74; Sarabande, p.78; Entr'acte, p.80; Entr'acte, p.168; Premier air pour les Demons, p.214; Second entrée des Demons, p.228; Intermede, p.239; Charge, p.267; Les combattants, p.268; Fantomes et gardes, p.282; Ritournelle, p.290; Intermede, p.300. In addition, the final four systems of the opera, beginning at the end of p.348, were probably designed to be performed without continuo.

⁵⁵ See William Klenz, *Giovanni Maria Bononcini of Modena* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1962), pp.52 and 66, and supplement pp.95 and 105.

⁵⁶ Georg Muffat, *Second Florilegium*, ed. Heinrich Rietsch (DTÖ, ii, Jg.i/2, 1895), p.224.

⁵⁷ Mattheson

tains that ,we also often play [the continuo] simply, and without figures, on the Bass Viol or the Bass Violin'.⁵⁸

At the Opéra, the practice of omitting continuo seems to have arisen in the following way. When Lully assembled the large and varied forces for his newly founded Académie Royale de Musique, he drew on existing French performance traditions. In France in the 1670s continuo instruments had for some time been associated with vocal music but not with instrumental. There is no evidence, for example, that the Vingt-quatre Violons or the Petite Bande ever had a continuo player. Why should they? Both orchestras played full-textured, rhythmically clear-cut music that needed neither the harmonic filling nor the rhythmic control that are the continuo player's main functions. The rhythmic function was taken by the *batteur de mesure*. Moreover, an organisation like the Vingt-quatre Violons had been in existence long before the importation of continuo playing; given its conservative disposition, there seems little likelihood that this orchestra would have adopted a new-fangled, foreign and seemingly redundant practice.

For the singers of the *musique du roi*, by contrast, continuo instruments were, by the nature of the music they sang, indispensable. The distinction between vocal and orchestral practice is nicely illustrated in the list of those who took part in the numerous rehearsals for Lully's *Le triomphe de l'Amour* (1681).⁵⁹ the keyboard players, Jean-Henri D'Anglebert and his son Jean-Baptiste-Henri, were present at the singers' rehearsals but not at the orchestral ones. It seems probable that Lully adopted the same distinction at the Opéra. Such a division of labour is primarily practical. As anyone knows who has realized the continuo in a complete Baroque opera, two or more hours is a long time to be playing more or less continuously. (There were no intervals at the Paris Opéra.) No one else in such works was expected to play throughout. If Lully realized what now seems obvious – that given large and varied resources there is scope for some players, including the keyboard and string continuo players, to sit a few movements out – that is one more testimonial to his legendary organizational skills.⁶⁰

A survey of the extensive music he wrote for the Comédie Française (H494–507) suggests that Charpentier adopted a similar practice there. While the sources do not distinguish verbally between BASSE CONTINUE and BASSE DE VIOLON, the distribution of figuring shows much the same pattern. Table 1 lists the items of two typical works, together with clef combinations in the

⁵⁸ Brossard, *Dictionnaire*, p.7.

⁵⁹ See André Tessier, 'Un document sur les répétitions du *Triomphe de l'Amour* à Saint-Germain-en-Laye (1681)', *Congrès d'histoire de l'art* (Paris, 1921), p.874ff.

⁶⁰ Holman (*Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, p.384), shows that Grabu imported to England Lully's system of labelling the bass: the continuo line of *Albion and Albanus* (1687) is frequently marked 'the BASS continued'; it often differs from the bass of the orchestra and seems not to have played in the dances and other instrumental numbers.

(i) H494 *Ouverture de la Comtesse d'Escarbagnas / Intermèdes nouveaux du Mariage forcé*

Ouverture	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Les marys	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Dialogue	(Vocal)		F
Trio	(Vocal)		F
Menuet	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
[Solos]	(Vocal)		F
Gavotte	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
[Trio]	(Vocal)		F
Les grotesques	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
[Trio]	(Vocal)		F
incl. 2 [ritornelles]	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Le songe	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Sarabande [et gigue]	(Voc./Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U

(ii) H502 *Endimion: tragedie meslee de musique*

Ouverture	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Prelude	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
[Chœur]	(Vocal)		F
Fantaisie	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Prelude	(Inst.)	G1, G1, F4	U
[Solo]	(Vocal)		U
Prelude	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
[Duo]/Chœur	(Vocal)		F
Sarabande	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Gavotte	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
Gaillarde	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U
[Prélude]	(Inst.)	G1, G1, F4	F
[Solo]	(Vocal)		F
[Prélude]	(Inst.)	G1, G1, F4	F
[Solo]	(Vocal)		F
Gigue	(Inst.)	G1, C1, C2, F4	U

Table 1

case of instrumental pieces and whether each movement is figured or not (F = figured; U = unfigured). The table reveals that, where figuring occurs, it is in movements involving voices (though figures are often sparser than in *Medée*⁶¹) or in instrumental trios (which in French operas of the period often involve

⁶¹ For example, in *La pierre philosophale* (H501) a few figures occur in the opening *chœur* but not in the rest of the work, not even in other vocal sections.

basse continue). Moreover, the only references to ,clavecim' or to ,basse continüe' occur in vocal items (in the original prologue of *Le malade imaginaire* (H495), for example, such markings as ,basse du petit chœur' and ,basse cont[inue]' or ,bc' appear only in vocal solos, vocal ensembles, or ensembles combining voices and instruments), while such labelling as occurs on the bass line of instrumental items uniquely involves instruments other than the keyboard.⁶²

Less inconclusive is the labelling in *La pierre philosophale* (H501). In the first six bars of example 10, a brief instrumental interlude, the bass ist marked

The image shows a musical score for Example 10, consisting of four staves. The first two staves are for violon (violin) and the last two for violon et clavier (violin and keyboard). The music is in G major and 3/4 time. The lyrics 'vous fuyez de cet heureux chariotons de tom' are written below the staves. The first two staves are marked 'viol' and the last two are marked 'viol et clavier'.

Example 10

,viol[on]' and is unfigured. Where the voices enter at b. 7, the bass is labelled ,viol[on] et clav[ecin]' and is subsequently figured. Moreover, the bass of the passage preceding ex. 10, which involves voices, is also labelled ,clave[cin]' and also figured, albeit scantily.

It cannot be claimed that the continuo remained silent in all the four-part instrumental items at the Comédie Française. In *Les fous divertissants* (H500) and *Andromède* (H504), for example, the overtures – though not the other four-part instrumental items – are patchily figured, while *Circé* (H496), *Venus et Adonis* (H507) and *Le malade imaginaire* (H495) contain a small number of figured instrumental items. But then again, so do *Medée* and the Lully operas. The present article does not claim that the continuo was never used in instrumental pieces at the Comédie Française, but rather that, in view of the clear-cut pattern of evidence at the Opéra, we should not brush aside comparable albeit less clear-cut patterns in comparable repertory.

Some may feel that where the *basse continue* is concerned Charpentier's autographs raise as many questions as they answer. Certainly there are still gaps in our knowledge, and the composer himself frequently adds to our

⁶² In H498 the ,*Marche de triomphe rondeau*' is scored in five parts labelled: G1 ,viollons et trompettes' / C1 / C2 / F4 ,trompette et timballe' / F4 ,viollon'. In H499, the bass line of the ,*Marche pour les flutes*' is simply marked ,bassons'. ,[basse de]'

uncertainty through the inconsistency with which he marks his scores. Even so, a picture emerges of considerable richness of resources and diversity of practice. To find such richness and diversity at the court of Louis XIV would not, of course, be surprising: yet it must be remembered that Charpentier worked largely outside court circles. The evidence of his autographs in respect of the *basse continue*, as of so many other issues of performance practice, thus provides a useful antidote to an excessively court-centred view of mid-Baroque French music prevalent among scholars. It is evidence that the performer, too, will not wish to ignore.

BASSO CONTINUO ON THE ORGAN IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ITALIAN MUSIC

by ARNALDO MORELLI

The last few decades have witnessed growing interest in the study of theoretical and practical problems concerning the performance of basso continuo. Although the organ appears to have been involved in this practice to a much greater extent than the harpsichord or other instruments, there is a noticeable lack of studies on this subject, particularly regarding Italian music.¹ Even the most philologically accurate performances and recordings betray uncertainties and even prejudice in the use of the organ in basso continuo. A „conditioned response“ still produces the equation „harpsichord: secular music – organ: sacred music“, an equation undiscerningly applied by many performers.

It is certainly not my intention to fill this gap, but rather to present a series of seventeenth-century Italian documents concerning organ continuo practice.

Before going any further, I think it would be appropriate to take a cursory view of the main features of organs in use in Italy between the end of the sixteenth century and the first decades of the eighteenth century. This is necessary because, although single articles published over the last fifteen years have led to an increase in knowledge and a change of attitude on this subject while dissolving stereotypes still to be found in some music dictionaries and in a few organ history monographs, no updated monograph exists on the Italian organ.

Following Antonio Barcotto's manuscript treatise of 1652,² we may divide organs into two great classes:

I. Great fixed organs, usually church organs, called by Barcotto „grossi da muro“ („great wall-organs“); they generally have a single keyboard, but a few have two;³ their main body consists of the Principale stop (open), 16' or 8', and of a separate

¹ The only study to have dealt with this problem, albeit concentrating mostly on the German area in Bach's time, is: Peter Williams, „Basso Continuo on the Organ“, *Music and Letters* 1 (1969) pp. 136–152, 230–245; little is added by Tharald Borgir, *The Performance of the Basso Continuo in Italian Baroque Music*, Ann Arbor 1987.

² Antonio Barcotto, *Regola e Breve raccordo per far rendere agiustati ogni sorta di instrumenti da vento, cioè organi, claviorgani, regali e simili [...] (1652)*, Ms. in I-Bc, published by Renato Lunelli, „Un trattatello di Antonio Barcotto colma le lacune dell'arte organica“, *Collectanea Historiae Musicae I*, Florence 1956, pp. 135–155.

³ Concerning the period in question, evidence exists of the following two-keyboard organs: Trento, S. Maria Maggiore (K. Zimmermann, 1536); Rome, S. Apollinare (S. Hay, 1581) and S. Maria in Aracoeli (D. Benvenuti – F. Palmieri, 1586); Orvieto, Cathedral (V. Fulgenzi, 1591); Cremona, S. Bartolomeo (L. Stanga, 1596); Pisa, Cathedral (F. Palmieri – G. Steininger, 1599); Rome, S. Lorenzo in Damaso (G. C. Bursi, 1638–42); Modena, S. Bartolomeo (A. Colonna, about 1650, enlarged by W. Hermans, 1661); Rome, S. Apollinare (W. Hermans, 1663) and S. Agnese (W. Hermans, 1666–70); Palermo, Jesuits (W. Hermans, 1674); Padua, S. Giustina (G. Bonatti, 1716); Vignanello, S. Maria (G. Alari, 1723). The organ builder Willem Hermans also built three-keyboard organs: Como, Cathedral (1650) and Genoa, Nostra Signora Assunta di Carignano (1658).

group of Ripieno ranks; in almost all specimens there are Flauto stops – usually „in ottava“, but also „in duodecima“ and „in quintadecima“ –, and sometimes reed stops, mainly with a short resonator („Regale“ or „Voce umana“) or a long one („Tromboni“); open wooden Principali are rare but not common, and even less so are the „coperti“ Flauti (stopped Flutes), in unison with the Principale.

II. „Portable“, or positive organs, based on an 8' or 4' Principale (ottavino); usually their first octave is stopped, whilst the remaining pipes are open; they may be subdivided into the following types:

a) „wing-shaped“ organs („organi ad ala“), particularly common in Rome and the central part of Italy, consisting only of Ripieno stops;

b) „wooden pipe“ organs („organi di legno“), with Principale and Ottava stops, and Flauti 8' or 4' – and sometimes 2' 2/3 – but, as pointed out by Barcotto, „omitting all of the Ripieno stops“; they are used above all „in accademia halls and chambers, so that the listeners' ears not be disturbed by the vicinity of too strong a sound.“⁴

c) „regal“ organs („regali“), consisting of a single reed stop with a very short wooden or tin resonator; they are used in both secular and sacred music.⁵

d) „table-shaped“ organs („organi in forma di tavolino“), whose wooden or metal pipes are placed inside a table-shaped case.⁶

e) „claviorgans“ („claviorgani“ or „graviorgani“), much more common than one might expect, a combination of a „table-shaped“ organ and a harpsichord placed on top of the pipes' case.⁷

⁴ Barcotto, pp. 148–149. The wooden organ is required, for instance, in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (1607) and in Francesca Caccini's *La Liberazione di Ruggero dall'isola di Alcina* (1628). Peri in his *Euridice* (1600) and Cavalieri in *Rappresentazione d'Anima e Corpo* (1600) probably refer to this when they mention an „organo suave“. Surprisingly, the only wooden organ from the early seventeenth century which has survived is in a church, Santa Maria delle Grazie in Montepulciano (Tuscany); however, it does not have a particularly soft sound, although closely resembling the sound of metal-piped organs.

⁵ For instance, the regal was used during the first half of the seventeenth century to play continuo in Como Cathedral (see Mario Longatti, „La cappella musicale del duomo di Como“, in: *La musica sacra in Lombardia nella prima metà del Seicento*, edited by Alberto Colzani, Andrea Luppi, Maurizio Padoan, Como 1988, pp. 301–302). In secular music we find it was used, for instance, in a sinfonia of Cristofano Malvezzi's famous Florentine *Intermedii e concerti* from 1589 („organo di pivette“) and in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, where it is associated with infernal scenes.

⁶ A splendid example of table-shaped organ is in the Museum of musical instruments of Basel's Musik-Akademie. For further information concerning this kind of instrument cf. Patrizio Barbieri, „Organi ‚in forma di tavolino‘ del Seicento romano“, *Amici dell'organo*, s. ii,i (1982), pp. 8–11. I would also like to point out that „a small table-shaped organ“ was donated to the Vallicella oratory in Rome at the end of the sixteenth century; see Arnaldo Morelli, *Il tempio armonico. Musica nell'oratorio dei Filippini in Roma (1575–1705)*, Laaber 1991 (*Analecta Musicologica* 27), p. 103.

⁷ Claviorgans were frequently to be found in the palaces of Italian noble families; see Franca Camiz, „Gli strumenti musicali nei palazzi e nelle ville della prima metà del Seicento a Roma“, in: *La musica a Roma attraverso le fonti d'archivio*, a cura di Bianca Maria Antolini, Arnaldo Morelli, Vera Vita Spagnuolo, Lucca 1994, pp. 595–608. About this kind of instrument, cf. Umberto Forni, „Nota sul claviorgano“, *L'organo* 24 (1986) pp. 79–89.

Accordingly, so great a variety of types – and those listed above are but the main ones – is related to an extraordinary variety of uses for the organ. Its main use was not in church music: it was employed for chamber music and even in theatres. Many documents testify to its use in chamber music, and further indirect proof is supplied by the personal property inventories of aristocratic homes, which very frequently list wooden organs and claviorgans as well as harpsichords and spinets.⁸ For instance, Monteverdi used an organ in 1611 to play madrigals at the Gonzaga's Court in Mantua.⁹ Frescobaldi also recommends the organ for some of his madrigals, published around 1621–22.¹⁰

As pointed out earlier, there is evidence of use of the organ in theatre music by Monteverdi, Cavalieri, Peri, Francesca Caccini,¹¹ and lastly in the only seventeenth century treatise about the staging of musical drama, *Il corago*, written in the 1630s and ascribed to Pierfrancesco Rinuccini, son of Ottavio, the better-known poet and librettist. In the thirteenth chapter of this interesting treatise, its anonymous author examines the instruments accompanying theatrical music and lists the advantages of the organ over other instruments. This description may be summarized as follows:¹²

1. „In ordine alle voci che cantano il fondamento migliore di tutti è comunemente stimato l'organo, ché per questo le chiese l'hanno eletto e non solo per la gravità sacra [...] massime se abbia canne di legno.“ („As regards the voices singing the foundation, the organ is considered the best of all: this is the reason why churches have chosen it, besides its sacred graveness [...] especially if it has wooden pipes.“)

⁸ For inventories of Roman aristocratic homes, see Franca Camiz, „Gli strumenti musicali“, *op. cit.*, and, for the Florentine court, Frederick Hammond, „Musical Instruments at the Medici Court in the Mid-Seventeenth Century“, *Analecta Musicologica* 15 (1975) p. 202–219.

⁹ See Paolo Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, Turin 1985, p. 171, who quotes one of Monteverdi's own letters: „farò sonare li chitarroni a li Casaleschi nel organo di legno, il quale è soavissimo, et così canterà la sig.ra Andriana et d. Gio. Batt.a il madregale bellissimo „Ahi che morir mi sento“, e l'altro madregale nel organo solamente.“ („I'll have the musicians from Casale play the chitarroni with wooden organ, which has a very soft sound, and the same goes for signora Adriana and don Giovan Battista who will sing the beautiful madrigal „Ahi che morir mi sento“ and the other madrigal with the organ only.“)

¹⁰ See Gabriele Giacomelli, „La fortuna dell'opera frescobaldiana in Toscana attraverso il carteggio di Francesco Nigetti (1618–1657)“, *L'organo* 25 (1987–88) pp. 102–103, quoting a letter addressed to the organist Nigetti: „As for Frescobaldi, he has printed nothing new, except four madrigals to be sung with an organ, which he said should not be sung without an organ.“

¹¹ See note 4. In 1624, the organ builder Tommaso Meiarini (or Migliarini) built „a portable little organ, to be used both in church and in the theatre“, for the Gonzaga court in Mantua; see Mario Levri, *Gli organi di Mantova*, Trento 1976, p. 34.

¹² *Il corago o vero alcune osservazioni per mettere bene in scena le composizioni drammatiche*, modern edition edited by P. Fabbri and A. Pompilio, Florence 1983, pp. 84–85.

2. „Non vi è istromento che toccato resti fermo con il suono durabile meglio dell'organo, dove l'istromento a corde getta il suono che fugge [...]“ („No other instrument holds its notes with long-lasting sound better than the organ. A note produced by a plucked instrument just fades away [...].“)

3. „L'organo tien fermo il tuono dell'accordazione né vi è pericolo che con il caldo, quale suole essere grandissimo in simili spettacoli, si stemperi o cali di voce, dove l'istrumenti di corde non tengan punto fermo.“ („The organ keeps its tuning well, and there is no danger that heat, which is usually considerable during theatre performances, might cause its voice to decrease or fade. Plucked instruments, on the contrary, do not keep their tuning.“)

4. „Un organo si può tenere drento alle scene senza incomodità delle machine, si può anche fattamente accomodare con i registri chiusi et aperti a buona ragione o vero con le canne di sopra coperte che non offuschi la voce del cantante. [...]“ („An organ can be kept backstage without causing any inconvenience to the machinery. Its stops may also be adjusted to be drawn or pushed in according to the occasion, and its pipes may even be covered so as not to overwhelm the singer's voice.“)

I would now like to turn to the playing peculiarities which distinguish the organ from other continuo instruments.

In the words of Saint-Lambert „the organ, more self-sufficient than the harpsichord, does not need any of those devices one must resort to with the harpsichord to compensate for the instrument's dryness.“¹³ With the harpsichord, the main problem for correct execution of basso continuo is centered on the art of „not leaving the instrument without sound“, in Frescobaldi's words; in organ playing, the problem lies in adjusting the sound's density by controlling the registration, the number of voices harmonizing the bass, and their distribution on the keyboard. This also depends on the variety of genres the organ may accompany, ranging from one-voice compositions to polychoral works.

Any problem concerning the practice of organ continuo (registration, number and distribution of voices in chords etc.) depends essentially on the number of voices that the instrument is accompanying, as expressed by Agostino Agazzari, the first theorist on our subject:¹⁴

„Si deve suonare con molto giuditio, havendo mira al corpo delle voci, perché se sono molte convien suonar pieno e raddoppiar registri, ma se sono poche scemarli [i.e. scemarli] e metter poche consonanze, suonando l'opera più pura e giusta che sia possibile, non passagiando o rompendo molto ma sì bene aiutandola con qualche contrabasso.“ („One must play with good judgement, considering the number of voices, for if there are many it is best to play a full

¹³ M. de Saint-Lambert, *Nouveau traité de l'accompagnement de clavecin, de l'orgue et des autres instruments*, Paris 1707, p. 132.

¹⁴ Agostino Agazzari, *Del sonare sopra l basso con tutti li stromenti*, Siena 1607 (facsimile edition Bologna 1979) p. 6.

sound and double the stops, but if there are few one must reduce the stops and use less consonances, and play the music as purely and correctly as possible, without too many passages or divisions, and helping it along with some Contrabasso [lower octave]"

The Roman composer Romano Micheli also maintains that registration should depend strictly on the number of voices that the organ is accompanying, in his *Compieta a sei voci* (1616):¹⁵ „E' stato necessario fare il basso particolare per lo maestro di cappella, dove nel principio delle cantilene è annotato quali parti doveranno cantare, senza mettere dilatione di tempo & parimente sarà nel basso continuo per l'organo, acciò il perito organista possa sapere quando doverà dare più o meno organo nel concertare secondo le parti che canteranno.“ („It proved necessary to write a special bass part-book for the choir-master, specifying which voices are to sing at the beginning of the sections ... and likewise in the organ continuo, so that the experienced organist may know when to draw more or less organ stops depending on the number of voices.“)

Regarding registration in motets for few voices (one to four), the player is usually advised to use only the Principale and eventually to increase the amount of sound by filling in the chords and using the pedal. Viadana suggests as much in his *Concerti ecclesiastici*:¹⁶ „Quando si farà i ripieni dell'organo faransi con mani e piedi, ma senza aggiunta d'altri registri perché la natura di questi deboli & delicati concerti non sopportano quel tanto romore dell'organo aperto, oltre che nei piccioli concerti ha del pedantesco.“ („Filler parts on the organ, when needed, shall be played with hands and feet, but without adding any stops because the very nature of these weak and delicate concertos cannot sustain the full sound of the full organ, and in small concertos it would sound somewhat pedantic.“)

Accordingly, Ercole Porta advises the organist to play¹⁷ „... con poco numero di consonanze nel ristretto d'una, due voci, riserbando di porre in opera mani e piedi nei ripieni, senza però l'aggiunta d'altri registri.“ („... with a small number of consonances when accompanying no more than one or two voices, possibly using the hands and feet in the filler parts, but without adding any stops.“)

Costanzo Antegnati also confirms the use of „Principale solo quando si vol cantare mottetti con poche voci“ („the Principale alone when singing motets with few voices“), but allows the use of „Principale, Ottava & Flauto in ottava“ o „Principale & Flauto in ottava per far d'ogni cosa e concertar mottetti“ („Principale, Ottava, & Flauto in ottava“, and „Principale & Flauto in ottava to play any music and to accompany motets.“)¹⁸

¹⁵ Romano Micheli, *Compieta a sei voci*, Venice, G.Vincenzi, 1616, preface „Alli signori musici“ in the „*Basso particolare*“ and „*Basso per l'organo*“ part-books.

¹⁶ Ludovico Viadana, *Cento concerti ecclesiastici a una, a due, a tre e quattro voci*, Venice, G. Vincenzi, 1602, preface „A' benigni lettori“; see the modern edition, edited by Claudio Gallico, Kassel etc. 1964, p. 121–128, with contemporary Latin and German translations.

¹⁷ Ercole Porta, *Sacro convito musicale [...] opera settima*, Venice, A.Vincenzi, 1620, preface „A' benigni lettori“.

¹⁸ Costanzo Antegnati, *L'arte organica*, Brescia 1608 (facsimile edition Bologna 1971) c. [9v].

But the *concertato* polychoral style, which started to assert itself at the beginning of the seventeenth century, soon had an effect on the way organists registered their accompaniments: sudden changes in sound during the passage from „Soli“ to „Tutti“ were accompanied by an appropriate registration. This ranged between the use of the Principale alone and the Ripieno and vice versa, with the gradual drawing or pushing in of single Ripieno ranks, depending of course on the number of voices and instruments which were to be accompanied.

The registrations prescribed by Monteverdi in two Magnificats (for 7 voices and instruments, and for six voices) from the *Vespri della Beata Vergine* (1610) – previously studied by Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini¹⁹ – are fundamental to our subject. These prescriptions can be summarized as follows:

1–3 voices	Principale ²⁰ / Principale and Fifara
1 voice+instruments	Principale
4–6 voices	Principale and Ottava
6–7 voices	Principale, Ottava and Quintadecima
7 voices+instruments	Full organ („A organo pieno“)

We see that Monteverdi makes almost exclusive use of Principale family stops, with two exceptions only: in the first Magnificat's *Fecit Potentiam* for „three voices and three instruments“ we find indications for „Principale et registro delle fifare o voci humane“; and in the second Magnificat's *Fecit Potentiam* we find „Principale e Pifara.“ The Italian expression „Voce umana“ (or „voci umane“, human voices) was extremely ambiguous at the time, for it indicated two different registers: the former was a labial register, tuned with a slight beat to the Principale, the latter was a short-piped reed register equivalent to the regal. As the music in question is rather vigorous, I believe that Monteverdi was referring to the second kind, that is to the reed register. Indirect proof of this is the fact that during the same years, organ builders Giuseppe and Giovan Angelo Vitani built an organ for St. Andrew's church in Mantua which also had a „voce humana“ register. It was almost certainly a reed register, because it had 50 pipes, thus covering the whole range of the keyboard.²¹ In fact, a labial „voce humana“ register would have had about half that number of pipes, covering more or less the

¹⁹ Luigi Ferdinando Tagliavini, „Registrazioni organistiche nei ‚Vespri‘ monteverdiani“, *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia* 2 (1967) pp. 365–371.

²⁰ It must be noted that in the second Magnificat's *Quia Respexit* for tenor solo, at the words „ancillae suae“, „tremolari“ is prescribed along with the Principale: it is probably the „tremolo“ or „tremolante“ effect, which was in use in Italian organs since mid-sixteenth century.

²¹ Oscar Mischiati, „Documenti sull' organaria padana rinascimentale: II. Organari a Cremona“, *L'organo* 23 (1985) pp. 212–213. For a survey of the ambiguous term „voce umana“ (and of its two synonyms „cornamuse“ and „fiffaro“ or „piffaro“) in Italian organ building of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, see Pier Paolo Donati, „Regesto documentario“, in: *Arte nell'Aretino. La tutela e il restauro degli organi storici*, Florence 1979, pp. 179, 186, 251–253.

keyboard's upper half. The use of the Principale together with a reed register is confirmed also by Giovan Battista Doni, who believes the „zampogne, che s'usano massimamente ne' regali [...] fa ottimo effetto negli organi mescolato col registro ordinario [Principale]“ („zampogna“ register, which is used mostly in the regals [...] produces excellent results when played on the organ along with the Principale.“)²²

There are a two exceptions to the above-mentioned scheme, but both have an explanation: in the first Magnificat's *Quia Respexit*, tenors and six instruments „li quali sonaranno con più forza che si può“ („which shall play as loud as they can“) are accompanied by the organ with Principale, Ottava and Quintadecima. Accordingly, in the second Magnificat's *Quia Respexit*, at the words „Omnes generationes“, where „la voce canta forte“ („the voice [of the tenors only] sings loud“), the organ plays Principale, Ottava and Quintadecima for obvious „color“ reasons. Other – albeit merely apparent– exceptions can be found, e.g. in the first Magnificat's *Et misericordia*, in the *Quia Fecit* for six voices and in the second Magnificat's *Sicut locutus*, for five voices. Here the use of the Principale in five- or six-voice polyphony would appear to be contradictory, but it is justified by the dialogical style of these three sections, in which the voices are divided into two half-choirs.

Monteverdi's suggestions seem to be in line with other prescriptions offered by the composers in the organ part-books of works published in the decade following the *Vesperi*'s first appearance. Such prescriptions mostly concern the *concertato* genre with a choir of soloists and one or more *ripieno* choirs. Introductory suggestions and prescriptions enclosed by other composers in the organ part-books of works published in the decade following the first issue of the *Vesperi* also seem to coincide with Monteverdi's indications.

In his *Modo di concertar i detti salmi a quattro cori* (published in 1612) Ludovico Viadana writes:²³ „L'organista starà vigilante per registrare a luogo e a tempo, e quando troverà queste parole VOTO e PIENO, doverà registrare voto e pieno. Quando nel detto choro canterà una voce, due tre, quattro, cinque, l'organista sonerà semplice e schietto non isminuendo, né facendo passaggi niente. Ne' ripieni poi suonerà come gli piacerà perché all'hora è il suo tempo.“ („The organist shall take care to register at the right time and place, and on finding the words Empty or Full, shall register empty and full. When the choir is singing with one, two, three, four or five voices, the organist shall play simply and sincerely without diminishing and without playing any passages. He shall play as he likes in the filler parts, because that is his moment.“)

²² Giovan Battista Doni, *Compendio del trattato de' generi e de' modi*, Roma 1635, p. 57, quoted by P. P. Donati, „Regesto“, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

²³ Ludovico Viadana, *Salmi a quattro chori per cantare e concertare nelle gran solennità di tutto l'anno*, Venice, A. Vincenzi, 1612. This „Modo di concertar“ has also been republished in Claudio Gallico, *L'età dell'umanesimo e del Rinascimento* („Storia della musica a cura della Società italiana di musicologia“ 3) Turin 1978, pp. 144–145.

An inspection of the organ part-book reveals that a „full“ organ is required in the sections in which the choirs are singing together and to accompany the four-voice „chapel choir“, actually composed of no less than sixteen singers, as suggested by Viadana himself. Only in one case, in the psalm *Laudate Dominum*, in order to accompany the „Tutti“ sung by the four choirs, the composer explicitly prescribes „Principale, Ottava and Quintadecima up to the Ripieno“, i.e. to be added at the end of the passage. An „empty“ organ (i.e. Principale alone) is used constantly to accompany the „first choir“, consisting of five vocal soloists.

Such indications are in line with those given by Sebastiano Miseroca in his *Messa, vespro [...] a otto voci* (1609):²⁴ „[i cantori] staranno avvertiti che quando sarà tempo di replicare [raddoppiare con le parti di ripieno] il sig. maestro di cappella ne darà segno, et anco udiranno l'organo accresciuto di registri, poiché essorto li signori organisti che in gratia mia l'acrescano in quel tempo di dua o tre registri.“ („[The singers] shall be informed that, when it is time to double [with the ripieno parts], the choir-master will signal, and they will also hear the organ play with more registers, for I ask the organists kindly to add two or three registers at that moment.“)

In a nutshell, Miseroca is asking the organist to add „two or three registers“ – probably Ottava and Quintadecima – when the soloists' choir joins the *ripieno* choir (or, *ad libitum*, choirs).

Similarly, in his *Il primo libro delli salmi a sette voci* (1613) arranged for two „split“ choirs, the Veronese Marcantonio Negri prescribes that the organ should use Ripieno when the choirs sing together:²⁵ „Avertisca il sig. organista che quando troverà nel basso continuo segnati ,a 3', che denoterà quando canta tre solli (sic). & anco segnato ,a 4' quanda canta il secondo coro a quattro, & quando havrà segnato ,tutti' lì metterà il ripieno, & queste notazioni saranno tra una riga e l'altra dove si anotanno le parole.“ („The organist must note that ,a 3' written in the continuo' part indicates three singers only, and also tha ,a 4' indicates that the second four-part choir is singing, and ,Tutti' indicates that he must use *Ripieno*, and these prescriptions will be placed between the lines where the words are usually printed.“)

The same ideas are subscribed even more explicitly in Giovanni Ghizzolo's *Messa, Salmi, Lettanie* (1619):²⁶ „Li organisti per haver più facilità nel mettere o levare li registri secondo il bisogno, potranno riguardare agl'infrascritti segni e primieramente dove troveranno questa parola ,FORTE' tutta distesa, sarà inditio

²⁴ Sebastiano Miseroca, *Messa, vespro, motetti et letanie*, Venice 1609 „avvertimento“ *Alli signori musici* in the organ part-book, quoted in Paolo Fabbri, *Tre secoli di musica a Ravenna*, Ravenna 1983, pp. 32–33.

²⁵ Marcantonio Negri, *Il primo libro delli salmi a sette voci*, Venice, heir of A. Gardano, 1613, preface „A' lettori“.

²⁶ Giovanni Ghizzolo, *Messa, Salmi, lettanie della B.V., falsibordoni et Gloriapatri concertati a cinque o nove [...] opera decimaquinta*, Venice 1619, „Avvertimenti dell'autore alli cantori et organisti“.

che entri il secondo choro et si facci ripieno; ma quando troveranno la sola lettera ,F', sarà segno che entri il secondo choro, ma senza ripieno; e quando si troverà la parola ,PIANO', sarà cenno che cessi il secondo choro e canti solo il primo. [...] ritrovandosi le infrascritte lettere ,C.A.T.Q.B.' sarà segno che sotto a dette lettere entrino le parti del Canto, Alto, [Tenore], Quinto, [Basso], sì che secondo la necessità di più o meno organo per il concerto potranno l'organisti porre più o meno registri conforme il bisogno.“ („In order to make it easier for organists to know each time when to draw or push in the stops, they may look at the indications written between the part lines, and especially for the word ,FORTE' written in full, indicating that the second choir is singing and *Ripieno* is required; but when they find the letter ,F' alone, that indicates that the second choir will sing, but without *Ripieno*; on finding the word ,PIANO', the second choir will stop singing and the first choir will sing alone. [...] The letters ,C.A.T.Q.B.' signify that beneath these letters Canto, Alto (Tenor) Quinto, (Basso) voices are joining in, and the organists will be able to use more or less stops and therefore produce a greater or lesser sound, as the need arises.“)

A further example of registration for organ continuo is in Cesare Bianchi's *Secondo libro de' mottetti* (1620): in the introtus *Gaudeamus omnes* and in the Kyrie-Christe-Kyrie and Credo of the later *Messa della gloriosissima Vergine Maria* (for four voices) alternation between „Principale“ and „Ripieno“²⁷ is prescribed for the „soli“ – for one and two voices – and four-voice „tutti.“ Only twenty years earlier, Viadana would have judged this solution „somewhat pedantic.“ Nevertheless, this kind of registration – empty organ/full organ –, like those suggested by Negri, Micheli and Ghizzolo, reflect changes which had occurred in the practice of polyphony over a period of just a few years: polyphony based on counterpoint, which usually employed only one voice for each part, had changed to a polychoral, concertato style polyphony which was especially common in northern Italy and required great contrast between soloist and ripieno group, each of whose parts were executed by two or three voices.

Besides, in spite of what Tagliavini wrote 25 years ago, Monteverdi's indication may no doubt be considered a model of organ registration.²⁸ It does not seem to differ from the general practice of the time, and in fact Viadana's (1602) and Ercole Porta's (1620) suggestions for dealing with motets with a limited number of voices conform to Monteverdi's scheme.

Willem Hermans, a Flemish organ-builder who worked in Italy for many years, supplies us with further rules for the registration of organ continuo. His *Descrizione dell'organo nuovo della cattedrale di Como*, published anonymously in 1650 for the inauguration of his famous three-keyboard organ,

²⁷ Giulio Cesare Bianchi, *Secondo libro de' mottetti [...] a una, due, tre, quattro e cinque voci et una messa a quattro [...] con le Letanie a sei del sig. Claudio Monteverdi*, Venice, A. Vincenzi, 1620.

²⁸ Tagliavini, „Registrazioni“, pp. 368–369.

describes that instrument's stops and features:²⁹ „Le canne del principal secondo [16'] sono di legno, unisono con il primo, il qual serve per cantar a voce sola overo con istrumenti.“ („The second principale pipes [16'] are wooden, and in unison with the first, which is for accompanying both a solo voice and instruments.“)

This stands as significant proof of what could easily be guessed: that wooden stops were used in the Italian organ. Furthermore, after compiling an extraordinary list of suggestions for registration, the organ-builder adds six more rules „per la musica“ („for the music“), i.e. for the accompaniment of vocal music:³⁰

- „1. Il principal primo overo secondo. (The first Principale and the second)
2. Li due principali insieme. (The two Principali together)
3. Li due principali ed ottava. (The two Principali and the Ottava)
4. Il principal secondo ed ottava. (The second Principale and the Ottava)
5. Si aggiunge qualche volta la tromba e tromboni. (Add Tromba and Tromboni sometimes)
6. Il principal terzo e voce umana. (The third Principale and Voce umana).“

The last two, suggesting the use of reed stops in basso continuo, are quite remarkable: „Tromba and Tromboni“ (on the first keyboard) and „Voce umana“ (on the second), always with their own keyboard's Principale stops.

Nevertheless, considering that the regal was often used for accompanying voices and instruments, the use of reed stops in organ continuo should not be surprising.³¹ It must also be pointed out that, like Hermans, Monteverdi and Doni prescribe use of the short-piped reed register („voci humane“, „cornamuse“) together with the Principale.

A further remark about Hermans' rules: one must recognize that very few Italian church organs had wooden stops like the ones his instrument had; on the other hand, almost all of them were built with two Principale stops, open and in unison, made of metal (tin or lead). In spite of the high cost, it was decided that the organ should have two Principale stops probably because the instrument was often intended for continuo playing: these two stops differ slightly in sound intensity – above all, because the first is almost completely on the façade, the second inside the case – and were used both singly and together, making three different timbre nuances possible.

Speaking about organ registration, allow me to make an organological annotation. The above-mentioned composers (Ghizzolo, Negri, Viadana) all agree in suggesting the use of Ripieno in the „Tutti“, that is when the choirs sing to-

²⁹ *Descrizione dell'organo nuovo della cattedrale di Como, fabbricato l'anno 1650, da Guglielmo Herman religioso della Compagnia di Gesù, Como 1650; modern edition in Renato Lunelli', „Descrizione dell'organo di Como e l'attività italiana di Guglielmo Hermans“, Collectanea Historiae Musicae 2, Florence 1956, pp. 255–276: 273.*

³⁰ Lunelli, *Descrizione*, p. 276.

³¹ See note 5.

gether. For this reason, as polychoral music gradually became more frequent – at least in the most solemn occasions – it became necessary to build organs with a device which would enable the organist to quickly draw all the stops of the Ripieno ranks at the same time, „per la prestezza della musicha e concerti“ („for the quickness of music and concerts“), as organ-builder Michele Colberg explained in 1697.³² In fact, at the end of the first half of the seventeenth century a new device started to come into use, the „Tiratutti“ which could be worked by hand and could draw all of the Ripieno ranks starting usually from the Ottava. The earliest known Tiratutti, called „registro universale“ in the documents, is still visible inside a surviving organ which was sold to the Roman church of Santa Maria della Consolazione by Everardo Troncaro, a Lorenese organ-builder, in 1646.³³

It is also likely that two-keyboard organs, which were not common but certainly not a rarity in Italy during the seventeenth century,³⁴ were useful for accompanying the sudden Solo/Tutti passages of the concertato style. It is important to note that two of the organs built under the supervision of Emilio de' Cavalieri – one of the fathers of the monodic style –, one in S.Maria in Aracoeli in Rome (1586) and the other in Pisa Cathedral (1597–99), both have a double keyboard. Another motivation for the double keyboard may be found in an interesting, if somewhat later, example: in 1720 organ-builder Filippo Testa presented a project for changes to be made on the organ inside the choir-chapel of the Vatican basilica. The project included a second keyboard „per concertar dal piano al forte come si richiede dal sig. maestro di cappella [Giuseppe Ottavio Pitoni] e dall'organista [Giacomo Simonelli]“ („for the accompaniment to change from piano to forte, as requested by the choir-master [Giuseppe Ottavio Pitoni] and the organist [Giacomo Simonelli].“)³⁵

As mentioned earlier, problems regarding organ continuo concern not only registration but also the number and distribution on the keyboard of the different parts harmonizing the basso continuo. Regarding the number of parts, obviously it must be related to the number of voices they are accompanying. Thus, for one-voice compositions theorists recommend „pure consonances“: third, fifth, and octave, while compositions for many voices allow or even require that all consonances be doubled.

Among the host of contributions on the matter, I will quote the one by Penna, who is not as inaccurate as most of those who treat this problem:³⁶ „Quando si accompagna una sol voce, non si deve suonare più di tre overo [ma di rado]

³² Renato Lunelli, *Studi e documenti di storia organaria veneta*, Florence 1973, p. 89. The quoted sentence refers to Colberg's work on the organ in the Chiesa del Carmine in Padua in 1696–97.

³³ Jean Lionnet, „La musique à Santa Maria della Consolazione de Rome au dix-septième siècle“, *Note d'archivio per la storia musicale*, n.s., 4 (1986) pp. 192–193.

³⁴ See note 3.

³⁵ Renato Lunelli, *L'arte organaria del Rinascimento a Roma e gli organi di San Pietro in Vaticano dalle origini a tutto il periodo frescobaldiano*, Florence 1958, p. 87, n.42.

³⁶ Lorenzo Penna, *Li primi albori musicali*, Bologna 1672, p. 198.

quattro tasti, e non è bene che vi ponga l'ottava di sopra. A due similmente si devono adoperar pochi tasti & fuggir l'ottava. A tre & quattro voci si può empire un poco più, ma rare volte si deve raddoppiare il fondo, quando è su li Mi o su li diesis [ossia negli accordi di sesta]. A otto, tre chori e a quattro chori etc. si empia e radoppi pure le repliche, li diesis e ciò si vuole, perché farà bel sentire tanta varietà d'armonia. („When accompanying a single voice, never play more than three or [rarely] four keys, and it is not advisable to add the higher octave. With two, one must still use few keys and avoid the octave. With three or four voices, one can fill in a little more, but seldom double the bass-line, when it is an E or a sharp note [i.e. in sixth chords]. With eight voices, three choirs, four choirs etc. it is allowed to fill in and double the parts, the flat notes and anything one pleases, because such a varied harmony will produce a pleasant sound.“)

Concerning the problem of the distribution of parts on the keyboard, basso continuo treatises usually maintain that in one-voice compositions chords must be in the same range as the solo part.

Alessandro Poglietti³⁷ and a late seventeenth-century anonymous treatise³⁸ agree in limiting the right hand's range to the d'' of the tenor's range, as suggested by the above-mentioned Giulio Cesare Bianchi:³⁹ „Si compiaceranno li signori organisti di dar li accompagnamenti al basso con la mano destra in voce di tenore, mentre canterà una parte sola, e sarà il simile anco quando canteranno due e tre parti concertate ché così le voci havranno maggior soavità e s'intenderà più chiaramente l'oratione, altrimenti facendo si occuperebbero le voci e non sarebbe il canto tanto grato alli ascoltanti.“ („Organists will be so kind as to realize continuo with the right hand within the tenor's range when there is only one voice singing, and will do the same when there are two or three parts singing together, so the voices will sound sweeter and the words will be more understandable; otherwise, the voices would be overwhelmed and the result unpleasant for the listeners.“)

But one problem remains unsolved, which keyboard-players are confronted with when playing continuo on ancient Italian church-organs: how to control the Principale's sound intensity, particularly when accompanying a small number of voices or instruments.

In order to understand the problem, one must not underestimate the role played by the left hand in the execution of continuo; it plays the fundamental chords in the positions „ottava vuota“ and „ottava piena“ (i.e. with the fifth in the middle), „quinta vuota“ and „quinta piena“ (with the third in the middle) and „tasto solo“, as the bass-line moves gradually from low to high notes. Thus the right hand

³⁷ Alessandro Poglietti, *Compendium* (1676) quoted in Georg Muffat, *An essay on thoroughbass*, edited by Helmut Federhofer, Rome, American Institute of Musicology 1961, p. 9.

³⁸ *Artis magnae consoni et dissoni*, quoted in Muffat, *An essay, op. cit.*, pp. 28–29.

³⁹ Bianchi, *Secondo libro de' mottetti*, „Avvisamento alli signori organisti“, op. cit.

will have only one or two keys to play, and will find it much easier not to play higher than the voices or instruments it is accompanying.

Galeazzo Sabbatini provides another interesting outlook on the subject. His treatise (1628) has always been somewhat neglected by scholars, probably because it was only partially published; in fact, no trace remains of its second part. Sabbatini writes the following:⁴⁰ „Tutto il fondamento del sonar sopra il basso sta nella mano sinistra, la quale dovrà caminare regolatamente toccando la nota o col tasto solo o in compagnia d'esso una sol consonanza come è l'ottava o la quinta o la sesta, ovvero la terza. [...] quelle consonanze le quali deve haver la nota e che non saranno toccate dalla sinistra si dovranno supplire dalla destra, ma però dal G 2° fino al B 3°“ („The foundation of performing continuo is in the left hand, which must move in an orderly fashion, playing the note either with a single key or accompanying it with a single consonance; that may be the octave, the fifth, the sixth, or the third. [...] The necessary consonances that cannot be played by the left hand will have to be produced by the right, between G and b'.“)

Above all, we must remark that Sabbatini confines the right hand's extension to the space between G and b', entrusting the harmonization mainly to the left hand, whose notes more or less depend on the bass' position on the keyboard. For this reason Sabbatini divides the bass's keys into five „sections“, each of which implies different possibilities for the left hand:⁴¹ „Nelle note della prima divisione [Do₁-Fa₁] [...] con la sinistra si toccheranno l'ottave o i tasti soli [...] Nelle note della seconda divisione [Sol₁-Re₂] [...] la sinistra toccherà l'ottava o la quinta o la terza [...]. Nelle note della terza divisione [Mi₂-Sol₂] [...] si tocca o la quinta o la terza, l'ottava non si tocca perché nel dare il restante de gl' accompagnamenti con la destra si verrebbe troppo negli acuti. [Nel discendere] tasto solo o terza [...].

Nella quarta divisione [La₂-Si₂] si tocca solamente o la terza o il tasto solo [...]. Nella quinta divisione [Do₃-Re₃] si toccano i tasti soli [...]. („For the notes of the first section (CC-FF) [...] the left will either play the octaves or only the keys [...]. In the second section (GG-D) [...] the left hand will play either the octave, the fifth, or the third [...]. In the third section (EE-G) either the fifth or the third may be played, but not the octave because the rest of the accompanying notes played by the right hand would rise too high. [Descending] either only one key, or the third [...]. In the fourth section (A-B) it is either the third alone, or the key alone [...]. In the fifth section (c'-d') the keys alone shall be played.“)

Sabbatini also supplies an example of how to distribute the notes in the chord between the right and the left hand, and he is concerned more with keeping the right hand away from the high notes of the keyboard than with contrapuntal rules.

⁴⁰ Galeazzo Sabbatini, *Regola facile e breve per sonare sopra il basso continuo nell'organo, manacordo & altro simile istrumento*, Venice, Salvadori, 1628, pp. 10-23.

⁴¹ Ibidem.

In this excerpt – transcribed in full as indicated by Sabbatini himself – the left hand’s typical positions are easily recognizable: „empty“ positions, when only the simple consonances, octave and fifth, are played (two keys); „full“ positions, when a middle note is added to an octave or a fifth, respectively a fifth or a third (three keys).

(3, 5, 8 ... = terza, quinta, ottava ...; S = tasto solo; P = pieno/a; V = vuoto/a).

Example 1. G. Sabbatini, *Regola facile e breve per sonare sopra il basso continuo nell'organo* [...] (Venice, 1628); reconstructed by the author.

This example clearly indicates that low notes are in a *lata* (wide) position, and as we proceed towards the higher notes, they tend to draw closer together, and are reduced from four to two.

Galeazzo Sabbatini’s ideas can be found basically unchanged even in other theoretical works of the second half of the seventeenth century, such as those by Pietro Paolo Sabbatini (1650),⁴² Bartolomeo Bismantova (1677)⁴³ and Angelo Furio,⁴⁴ up to Gasparini.⁴⁵

As I said at the outset, this essay lays no claim to being more than a collection of documents introducing the subject of organ continuo; most of the documents are unknown or at least have never been considered useful to this subject. I believe that the problem of organ continuo will be greatly clarified by the study of treatises, by examination of the many organological documents available in Italy, and by the study of musical iconography.⁴⁶

Let us conclude, as far as sacred music is concerned, by considering the use of the Italian organ, with its typical Principale (the diameter of its pipes is me-

⁴² Pietro Paolo Sabbatini, *Toni ecclesiastici [...] Modo per sonare il basso continuo [...] libro primo, opera decimottava*, Roma 1650, p. 17.

⁴³ Bartolomeo Bismantova, *Compendio musicale* (Ms. Ferrara, 1677, in I-REm) facsimile edition Florence 1978.

⁴⁴ Angelo Furio, *Armonica cultura* (Ms. in I-Bc, D.52, cc. 3–4; other copy in I-Rli, Mus.F.5).

⁴⁵ Francesco Gasparini, *L'armonico pratico al cimbalo*, Venice 1708, pp. 25–26.

⁴⁶ See Arnaldo Morelli, „Storia dell'organo italiano. Bibliografia (1958–1992)“, *Le fonti musicali in Italia* 6 (1992) pp. 25–92.

dium-sized, its mouth low, and the wind pressure low) and relative ranks of Ripieno. Use of the pedal in supporting the bass should not be neglected, especially in 16' organs, which an organist would obviously play in the upper octave; the great 16' Italian organs of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had between 15 and 22 pedals. Nor should the use of reed stops (especially of the „regale“ kind), used in specific cases to render the force of the words also from the point of view of timbre (for instance, the masterful example of Monteverdi's *Fecit Potentiam*) be neglected. Even when the continuo in sacred music is played by a small positive organ instead of a large „wall-organ“, I would certainly avoid the use of instruments based on the 8' stopped Diapason. Because the old Italian positive organs had stopped, at most, only the first octave of the 8' Principale, while all the remaining pipes were open.

To my way of thinking, the organ could also be used more in *concerti grossi* and in the so-called „church sonatas“, as this kind of music was prevalently used in major liturgical celebrations (masses and vespers) and oratorios.

As mentioned above, various kinds of organ were used in stage-music and opera: an „organo di pivette“ is used in Malvezzi's music, e.g. in the *Intermedii et concerti* of *La Pellegrina* (Florence, 1589); an „organo soave“, which was probably a wooden organ, was requested by Cavalieri for the *Rappresentazione di Anima e Corpo* (Rome, 1600) and plays in Peri's opera *Euridice* (Florence, 1600) and *L'Amor pudico* (Rome, 1614); the „regale“ and the „wooden organ“ are indicated in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* (Mantua, 1607), while a wooden organ is used in *La Liberazione di Ruggiero dall'Isola di Alcina* by Francesca Caccini (Florence, 1625) and in later Italian works such as Antonio Cesti's *Il pomo d'oro* (Vienna, 1666) which requires a „regale“ and a „graviorgano“. From this short, certainly incomplete, but quite representative list, it emerges that the different kinds of Italian organ were used above all in operas and other musical performances which took place in the aristocrats' palaces and courts. There is no doubt that the large collections of instruments owned by these noble families encouraged the use of a wide range of instruments for these performances. The great variety of timbres was used to enhance the multitude of symbols in the „*drammi per musica*“, „*favole pastorali*“, and „*favole marittime*“ of seventeenth-century Italy.

There is no instrument that incarnates the essence of „concerto“ in its baroque meaning, better than the organ. Thanks to its flexibility of sound, and its ability to accompany musical forces of all kinds – from the single-voice motet to polychoral music, from the *concertato* to the *stile osservato* motet, from the solo-sonata to the *concerto grosso* –, and thanks to the variety of existing organs (great organs, positive organs with metal or wooden pipes, regals, etc.), this instrument can adapt to any situation both in sacred and in secular music.

I hope that the documents I have presented above will encourage performers to reconsider the use of organ in Italian music of the Baroque period.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ An appeal for greater use of organ continuo in Italian baroque music was made also by Denis W. Stevens, „Why not get Organized?“, *The Diapason*, Dec. 1992.

THE ITALIAN INFLUENCE IN HEINICHEN'S *DER GENERAL-BASS*
IN DER COMPOSITION (1728)

by GEORGE J. BUELOW

When examining the question *Was der Generalbass sey?* Heinichen's monumental work gives wide-ranging and particularized answers. Completed one year before his death in 1729, *Der General-Bass in der Composition* established the author's international reputation. Charles Burney referred to him as „the Rameau of Germany,“ Johann Scheibe said „Nature guides his every note,“ and Johann Mattheson commented: he „does not just compose, he contemplates and thinks ... and shows the world what knowledge is.“² The justification for Mattheson's praise lies in Heinichen's great work, its organization and comprehensiveness. It is the single most important resource on the thoroughbass written during the Baroque, and the most practical and inclusive tool for reconstructing the style and form of thoroughbass accompaniments for music written after 1700 in the German-Italian theatrical styles. The particular strength of Heinichen's explanations lies in his examination of aspects of Italian continuo practice, making *Der General-Bass* a unique document among all the sources available for reinventing the thoroughbass practice in Baroque music. That a German should write with such authority about Italian performance practices is not as paradoxical as it might seem at first. Why this is the case can be explained by a brief review of his life and career.

The basic facts are found in Walther's *Musicalisches Lexicon* (1732): „[Heinichen] ... son of a pastor, born the 17th of April, 1683 in Crössuln, a place two hours from Weissenfels [reckoned in an 18th century concept of travel time], close to Teuchern, studied in Leipzig, made a trip to Italy around 1710, and was appointed Capellmeister in 1715 [sic] by his Royal Highness, the Prince-Elector of Saxony.“³ In his twelfth year (on 30 March 1695) Heinichen

¹ For a complete study of Heinichen's work see the author's *Thorough-Bass Accompaniment according to Johann David Heinichen* (3rd edition, Lincoln, Nebraska & London 1992), from which some of the material of this article is drawn.

² Charles Burney, *A General History of Music* (London, 1776–1789). New ed. Frank Mercer (London, 1935; repr. New York, 1957) II, p. 459; „Die Natur begleitet alle seine Töne.“ Johann Scheibe, *Der critische Musikus* (Leipzig, 1737), p. 764; „Mein Heinichen componirt nicht bloss, er sinnet nach, er dencket ... und zeigt der Welt was Wissen sey.“ Johann Mattheson's *Ode auf des S.[alvo] T.[itulo] Hrn. Capellmeister Heinichen[s] schöne neues Werck von General-Bass*, printed as an introduction to Heinichen's treatise, *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (Dresden, 1728).

³ „Heinichen ... eines Priesters Sohn, war gebohren an 1683 den 17ten April in Crössuln, einem 2 Stunden von Weissenfels nahe bey Teuchern liegenden Orte, studirte in Leipzig, that ohngefehr ums Jahr 1710 eine Reise nach Italien, wurde anfänglich an 1715 bey Sr. Königl. Hoheit, dem Chur-Prinzen von Sachsen, und, nach Absterben Herrn Johann Christoph Schmidts, Königlich-Polnischer und Chur-Sächsischer Capellmeister.“ Johann Gottfried Walther, *Musicalisches Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1732), p. 306.

enrolled in the Leipzig Thomasschule, where he became a student of keyboard instruments with Johann Kuhnau, who at that time was organist in the Thomaskirche. After Kuhnau succeeded Johann Schelle as cantor of the Thomasschule, Heinichen continued his studies with him and served as his assistant, copying and correcting the composer's music. It was certainly Kuhnau's tutelage that encouraged and developed Heinichen's talents as a composer. Subsequently, however, he studied law at Leipzig university, and in 1706 he began a short-lived practice in Weissenfels. Here he found a lively musical milieu at the residence of Duke Johann Georg, Elector of Saxe-Weissenfels, where Johann Philipp Krieger (1649–1725) was court Kapellmeister. It is unknown whether Heinichen had success as a lawyer. But it is clear that his abilities as a composer continued to mature, for in 1709 he returned to Leipzig to write operas for that city's opera house and to direct the Collegium musicum. He also found the time and motivation to write his *Neu erfundene und gründliche Anweisung ... zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Bass*, published in Hamburg in 1711, frequently and misleadingly considered to be the first edition of his later treatise.

Sometime late in 1710 Heinichen traveled to Venice. During the next seven years (which are as yet still poorly documented) he had a variety of experiences, as composer for the Sant'Angelo opera house, for a while in the service of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, and as a composer and performer frequently invited into the homes of the wealthy Venetians. In 1713 two of his operas received unusually strong public favor. One can imagine the rich musical experiences Heinichen had during the seven years he spent in and around Venice. He would have made contacts with many of his contemporaries in Venice, including Tomaso Albinoni, Francesco Gasparini, Carlo Francesco Pollarolo, Antonio Lotti, and certainly Antonio Vivaldi.

His musical successes brought him to the attention of the Prince-Elector of Saxony who usually spent long periods in Venice, and in August, 1716, Heinichen was employed as a Kapellmeister to serve the Dresden royal court, beginning in early 1717. Dresden, under the rule of Friedrich August I (the Strong), became a model of an absolute monarchy in which the arts including music played a central role. Heinichen's employment was partly related to the pending marriage of the crown prince to Maria Josepha, daughter of Emperor Joseph I. Taking place in September 1719, these month-long ceremonies rose to the zenith of cultural display and confirmed the Dresden court's reputation for ostentatious spending of enormous sums of money on elaborate festivities. Among the major musical events were performances of several large cantatas by Heinichen. His opportunity to continue to compose operas in Italian style, however, was abruptly ended when the King disbanded the Italian opera company. From 1721 Heinichen served as Kapellmeister to the court's Catholic chapel. Also he must have devoted much of his time to rewriting and greatly expanding the earlier thoroughbass manual into *Der General-Bass in der Composition*.

It is a common misunderstanding to consider the *Neu erfundene Anweisung ... zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Bass* the first edition of his later treatise. Indeed, it might not be too speculative to believe that it was while writing his first thoroughbass treatise that Heinichen realized how little he knew about Italian contemporary music and especially about Venetian opera. The desire to gain such knowledge probably was the primary reason for undertaking the arduous trip to Italy and Venice. The original treatise, which served as the model for the second, has been ignored as unimportant when compared to its greatly enlarged successor.⁴ The *Neu erfundene Anweisung*, however, has the distinction of being the first German work giving keyboardists detailed instructions on how to realize continuo accompaniments from figured as well as unfigured basses and to draw careful distinction between the *stylus gravis* and the *stylus theatralis*. It is also the earliest German guide for creating a stylistically correct realization of recitative accompaniments in the theatrical style. If Heinichen had written only the *Neu erfundene Anweisung* it would remain one of the best sources of information for the thoroughbass and its usage in the theatrical style. In addition, it includes extensive commentary concerning the relationships between musical composition and rhetorical principles employed in German compositional practice in the first decades of the eighteenth century.⁵ A comparison of the two works clarifies in their differences the intellectual and musical impact on Heinichen of his Italian years that gave him important new knowledge about the thoroughbass practice.

The title-pages of the two treatises emphasize the significant shift of viewpoint regarding the value of learning the thoroughbass. In 1711 he stated:

Neu erfundene und gründliche Anweisung / wie ein Music-Liebender auff gewisse vortheilhaftiger Arth könne zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Basses, entweder durch eigenen Fleiss selbst gelangen/oder durch andere kurtz und glücklich dahin angeführet werden dergestalt/ daß er so wohl die Kirchen also Theatralischen Sachen/ insonderheit auch das Accompagnement des Recitativs-Styli wohl verstehe/ und geschicht zu tractiren wisse.

In contrast, in 1728 the emphasis has been refocused:

Der General-Bass in der Composition, oder neue und gründliche Anweisung / wie eine Music-Liebender mit besonderm Vortheil, durch die Principia der Composition, nicht allein den General-Bass im Kirchen, Cammer- und Theatralischen Stylô vollkommen, & in *altiori Gradu* erlernen; sondern auch zu gleicher Zeit in der Composition selbst, wichtige *Profectus* machen könne.

Heinichen was the first of several eighteenth-century writers to advocate teaching composition with principles derived from the thoroughbass. This development adds a new dimension to the implications of the question *Was*

⁴ For example, while *Der General-Bass* is available in a facsimile edition, the *Neu erfundene Anweisung* is not.

⁵ See this author's article, „The *loci topici* and Affect in Late Baroque Music, Heinichen's Practical Demonstration," *The Music Review* 27 (1966), p.161.

der Generalbass sey! The only clue to Heinichen's purpose in rewriting his treatise appears in the preface to *Der General-Bass*. Having been persuaded to take up his pen again, Heinichen says he would rather

... dieses, von dem alten *Tractat* gantz unterschiedene, und bald 4.mahl so starcke Werck dergestalt einrichten wollen, damit sowohl Geübte als Ungeübte, Gelehrte und Ungelehrte, sowohl *Accompagnisten* als *Componisten* mit besonderm Nutzen davon *profitiren* können. Dahero ich durch das gantze Buch nicht allein die nöthigen *Fundamenta Compositionis*, sondern auch solche wichtige, und zum Theil noch unbekannte Materien beyhergeführt, wovon uns zur Zeit weder alte noch neue, weder Deutsche, Italiänische, noch Französische *Autores* etwas zu lesen gegeben haben.⁶

A comparison of the two treatises highlights other usually overlooked reasons for Heinichen's changing concepts regarding the thoroughbass, how it was to be learned, and what this knowledge encompassed for the amateur as well as for the professional composer. Each version consists of two *Abtheilungen*: Part One for the beginner, Part Two for the advanced accompanist and, significantly, in the second version also for the composer. Part Two in each instance places its emphasis on accompaniments and their realization in the theatrical style. In *Der General-Bass* each part begins with a new chapter, Part One with an elaborate classification of intervals, Part Two with an invaluable explanation of dissonances and their irregular resolutions in the theatrical style. Although in 1711 Heinichen had grouped the study of intervals together with those other elementary concepts of musical knowledge he thought could be learned in one or two months,⁷ in 1728 he had come to believe that „zu Erfindung dieser *Harmonia* gehöret vor allen Dingen eine genaue Erkenntniss der Musicalischen Intervallen.“⁸ It is clear from the abundant explanations for those aggressively dissonant chord formations found in Italian theatrical works, both operas and cantatas, that his new, rigorous, and almost obsessively detailed attention to the study of intervals had become supremely important to his method of realizing late Baroque and particularly Italian harmonic innovations.

Heinichen's first treatise, with an almost total absence of references to other composers or theorists, suggests a limited intellectual awareness of other composers and writers on music. There is but a single reference even to his

⁶ Heinichen, *Der General-Bass*, p.[vii]: „... fully differentiate this work from the old treatise, making it four times as strong a work so that experienced as well as inexperienced, learned as well as unlearned accompanist as well as composer could gain special usefulness from it ... [The new work includes] not only the necessary fundamentals of composing, but also such important and still partly unknown material about which, to date, we have been given nothing to read by old or new, German, Italian, or French authors.“

⁷ Heinichen, *Neu erfundene Anweisung*, p.14–15: „Also kan nur derjenigen bey guter Anführung schon mit Nutzen den General-Bass zu spielen anfangen welcher nur auff gestrichenen oder ungestrichenen *Octaven*, ingleichen was *Secunda*, *Tertia*, *Quarta*, *Quinta*, *Sexta*, *Septima*, *Octava*, und *Nona* sey/ vollkommen inne hat; ... welches ein Arbeit von 1/ oder höchst 2 Monathen seyn kan.“

⁸ Heinichen, *Der General-Bass*, p. 96.

teacher, Johann Kuhnau – to the *Biblische Historien* – and a mention of Kircher's description of a musical circle to facilitate modulations. The *General-Bass*, in contrast, refers to a significant number of composers and theorists, including Johann Mattheson and all of his major books published up to 1728, Francesco Gasparini's *L'armonico pratico al cimbalo*, Saint-Lambert's *Nouveau traité de l'accompagnement du clavecin*, as well as citations of works by Kircher, Werckmeister, Boyvin, and Rameau. Composers who are mentioned include Lotti, Caldara, d'Astorga, Vivaldi and, perhaps most significantly, Alessandro Scarlatti.

Each version gives a table of what Heinichen labels the common thoroughbass figures. The one in the *Neu erfundene Anweisung* consists of twelve symbols, the usual forms of triad, their inversions, seventh chords and the $\frac{2}{6}$ chord. This table omits the $\frac{2}{7}$ figure which in the section on recitative he adds to his list of usable figures. The list of thirteen symbols grows to thirty-two in *Der General-Bass* (but not including variations of the symbols by adding accidentals nor the symbols for a triad with a single sharp or flat). The original table was expanded by adding a number of dissonant chords built on the minor second, augmented fifth, various sevenths, and a new category for ninth chords.

Example 1:

	(2)									(1.)		
Signaturen.	6.	43.	76.	7.	98.	9.	6.	6r.	7.	4.	4.	5.
							r.	43.		3.		
Die hierzu gehörigen Stimmen.	3.	r.	3.	3.	3.	3.	3.	8.	3.	6.	2.	3.
	8.	8.	8.	r.	r.	r.	::	::	r.	5.	6.	6.

Table of Thoroughbass Figures from Heinichen's *Neu erfundene Anweisung* (1711), p.65.

	2		3		4				5		6						
Gewöhnliche Signaturen des General Basses	2	3	#	b	4	4	4	4	43	5b	5r	6	6	65	6b	6	6
		$\frac{2}{6}$			2		3						4	43	4	5	54
Die dazu gehörige Stimmen.	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	5	5	6	3	3	8	8	2	3	8
	4		8	8		2		8	8	3	8	*8				*8	
									*8								

	7								9							
Gewöhnl. Signaturen des General-Basses	7	76	7	7	7	76	67	67	9	98	9	9	9	9	98	
			2	$\frac{4}{2}$	4	56	56	65			4	$\frac{9}{6}$	7	7	76	
Die dazu gehörige Stimmerz.	5	3	4	*5	5	3	3	3	5	5	5	3	3	5	3	
	$\frac{3}{*8}$	5	*5		*8	*8	*8	*8	3	3			3			

Table of Thoroughbass Figures from Heinichen's *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (1728), p.256.

The rapidly growing complexity of thoroughbass figures faced by accompanists did not end with Heinichen's compilation, for Mattheson, a few years later, published an expanded table of seventy figures and took the opportunity to criticize the incompleteness of Heinichen's list.⁹

It needs to be emphasized that no chapter from the *Neu erfundene Anweisung* was left intact in *Der General-Bass*, and the substantial increase in size from the 284 pages in the first version to some 960 pages in the second version results in part from the addition of numerous long footnotes. They enable Heinichen to infuse his text with wide ranging reflections on aesthetic questions concerning musical taste and styles and also aspects of practical performances. Many of these have the character of a continuous monologue by the author that preserves the immediacy of Heinichen's intense involvement with the revision of his treatise. The expanded size of *Der General-Bass* also resulted from the extraordinary increase in the number of musical examples, making it the only entirely practical thoroughbass manual for keyboardists published in the Baroque.

A comparison of the two treatises underscores the practical, aesthetic, and philosophical distance Heinichen had traveled between 1711 and 1728, an experience enriched by his exposure over seven years to distinguished composers and outstanding performances of opera and chamber music in Venice and elsewhere in Italy. *Der General-Bass* not only demonstrates a variety of practical considerations about the state of the thoroughbass practice that had evolved in Italy during the early decades of the eighteenth century, but Heinichen also provides insights into the changing concepts of musical styles and aesthetic values for music. While much of this material lies beyond the purpose of this article, it should not be overlooked that the treatise of 1728 remains a major source of information regarding the development of the *style galant* and of an evaluative standard of good taste (*bon goût*) as a guide to musical excellence. Here, however, I shall concentrate on four of the most important additions of content to *Der General-Bass* concerning the thoroughbass practice. These concern four significant developments in the Italian practice of the

⁹ Johann Mattheson, *Kleine General-Bass-Schule* (Hamburg, 1735), p.136.

thoroughbass in the theatrical style from the first decades of the eighteenth century: I. the treatment of the full-voiced style of accompaniment, II. a theory of the resolution of dissonances in the theatrical style, III. a discussion of embellishments in accompanying, and IV. instructions for accompanying from unfigured basses, especially recitatives.

I. The Full-Voiced Style of Accompaniment

More than one writer on the thoroughbass in the eighteenth century voiced concerns about the ever-increasing sonorities of music and began to suggest ways to prevent a harpsichord realization from being covered over by the instrumental and vocal textures. It is a concern that all too few performers of Baroque music take seriously even today. Yet clearly, in order to generate a louder sound from the harpsichord, the eighteenth-century keyboardist was expected, when necessary, to double as many tones as possible of the chordal realization in the left hand as were played by the right hand. Heinichen makes *Vollstimmigkeit* an integral part of the basic knowledge of thoroughbass accompanying, and he gives the most detailed account of it found in any source. And it is significant that he places these instructions in part one of the treatise where the beginner receives instruction on the basic principles of the continuo practice. The full-voiced style was not, of course, appropriate for realizations on the organ, for, as Heinichen comments, „Je vollstimmiger man auf denen *Clavecins* mit beyden Händen *accompagniret*, je *harmonischer* fällt es aus. Hingegen darff man sich freylich auf Orgeln, (sonderlich bey schwacher *Music* und ausser dem *Tutti*), nicht zusehr in das allzuvollstimmige *Accompagnement* der lincken Hand verlieben, weil das beständige Gemurre so vieler tieffen *Tone* dem Ohre unangenehm, und dem *concertirenden* Sängern oder *Instrumentisten*, nicht selten beschwerlich fällt. Das *Judicium* muss hierbey das beste thun.“¹⁰

To form such an accompaniment one must be careful to keep the top and lowest parts free of parallel octaves and fifths. Then one fills in the space between the hands with as many chord tones as the fingers can play. The resulting parallel octaves and fifths between inner voices are inoffensive, according to Heinichen, because they are heard as resulting from the crossing of parts. To assure this illusion, however, it is essential that the chords of the two hands are not too widely separated (making what Heinichen calls a vacuum). *Vollstimmigkeit* frees the inner parts from the rules of correct contrapuntal writing, and Heinichen offers extensive comments and illustrations as to how

¹⁰ Heinichen, *General-Bass*, p.132 (fn.d): „The more full-voiced one accompanies with both hands on the harpsichord, the more harmonious it will sound. Contrarily, on the organ one must not become too enamoured with the all too full-voiced accompaniment in the left hand (particularly in music of a few parts and except in *tuttis*), because the constant rumble of so many low notes is unpleasant to the ear and not infrequently burdens the solo singer or instrumentalist. Here judgment must do its best.“

5 6 7 6 7 6 7 6 7 4 3 7 4 2 7 #

7 # b7 6 7 6 7 7 6 7 7 6 7 6

7 6# 6 7 6 5 6 4 5 4 3 6 4 7 5 6 5 3

5 6 5 7 3 4 3 5 4 2

Example 2: A four-part realization of chords with sevenths

various dissonance intervals are treated freely when doubled between the hands. (See Example 2 illustrating how to make a full-voiced accompaniment from a four-part realization of chords with 7ths.)

Heinichen was not the first to suggest this method for increasing the sonority of chordal realizations on the harpsichord. Already in the seventeenth century writers such as Praetorius (1619) and the Carmelite monk Lorenzo Penna (1672) both recommended including chord tones in the left hand when accompanying a large ensemble of instruments or voices.¹¹ In France the first men-

¹¹ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma musicum* III (Wolfenbüttel, 1619), p. 145, and Lorenzo Penna, *Li primi albori musicali* (Bologna, 1672), p. 82–83.

The sample example realized in full-voiced style

tion of a full-voiced realization occurs in Jean D'Anglebert's, *Principes de l'accompagnement* (Paris, 1689) and Etienne Delair's *Traité d'acompanement* [sic] (Paris, 1690). But as late as 1707 Saint-Lambert remained conservative and cautious about this practice, recommending its use only when many voices were singing and when there was insufficient support from other orchestral instruments. Unlike Heinichen he would not permit doubling any dissonance in the left hand other than the second.¹² Francesco Gasparini's thoroughbass manual *L'armonico pratico al cimbalo* (Venice, 1708), which

¹² Saint-Lambert, *Nouveau traité de l'accompagnement* (Paris, 1707), p. 129.

seems to have been a key influence on Heinichen, also mentions the practice of doubling tones in the left hand from the right hand. This included the doubling of consonances as well as dissonances, in arpeggios played between the two hands, but reserved only for recitative accompaniments.¹³

Heinichen's detailed description of this practice and his numerous examples greatly expanded his work. One of his aims in *Der General-Bass* was to achieve a treatise of practical demonstrations, and clearly he thought this material was indispensable for training accompanists. Other writers, especially of elementary manuals, may have been reluctant to introduce beginners to a practice ignoring the very principles of good voice leading usually taught as the foundation of continuo realization. For example Sorge, in 1745, warned against informing beginners about this practice: „Anfänger verschone man damit, und halte sie lieber an, daß sie den Bass, so viel sichs thun lasset, durch Octaven verdoppeln, und die Dissonantzen allein mit der rechten Hand abfertigen, weil sie sonst leicht auf Irrwege gerathen können. Niemand wage sich an diese vollstimmige Spiel-Art biss er erst in 4. stimmigen *Accompagnement* recht gesetzt und fertig ist.“¹⁴ Sorge's caution is understandable; however, the failure to recommend the full-voiced style of continuo realizations in modern editions of Baroque opera and orchestral scores continues to mislead many keyboardists.

II. *The Resolution of Dissonances in the Theatrical Style*

Heinichen's account of dissonances and their irregular resolutions is a major contribution to our knowledge of the continuo practice and also an original contribution to Baroque music theory. Heinichen's theory of free dissonant treatment had some precedent in those musical-rhetorical explanations for exceptional dissonances in the theatrical style already included in German treatises of the previous century, for example in Christoph Bernhard's *Tractatus compositionis augmentatus*. It would seem plausible, however, that Heinichen's experiences as a performer and composer of music in the Italian operatic style, with its aggressively vertical and powerfully dissonant harmony, led him to open the second half of his reconstituted treatise with an extensive and new chapter entitled „Von Theatralischen Resolutionibus der Dissonantien.“ The originality of these ideas stands out in the fact that before Heinichen no Italian discussion of the continuo practice or any Italian music theorist ever touched these issues. The absence of a theoretical examination of the new use

¹³ Gasparini, *L'armonico pratico*, p.23.

¹⁴ Georg A. Sorge, *Vorgemach der musicalischen Composition* (Lobenstein, 1745–1747), p.418–419: „Spare the beginners this [the full-voiced accompaniment] and preferably restrain them so that as much as possible they double the bass in octaves and prepare the dissonances in the right hand alone, because otherwise they could easily fall upon the wrong way. Nobody should venture into this full-voiced manner of playing until first he is correctly trained and prepared in the four-part accompaniment.“

of dissonances in the theatrical style was, in fact, what led Heinichen to his theory of dissonance resolutions. For in defending the theatrical style against the accusations of those who charged that it was without rules and that it employed dissonances without fundamental procedures of resolution, he argued:

Es ist nichts gemeiners, als daß man den *Stylum Theatralem* blamiret, er *observire* keine Regel, und verfare man mit denen *Dissonantien* und derselben schönen *resolutionibus* nicht *fundamental*. Wir wollen aber allhier solcher Leute Unwissenheit deutlich zeigen, und beweisen, daß dieser *Stylus* gar *fundamentale*, und zugleich weit künstlichere und schönere *Resolutiones Con- & Dissonantiarum* habe, als der *regulirteste antique stylus* selbst. Und weil dieses eine Materie ist, welche heut zu Tage bey denen meisten, ja auch so gar (welches zu verwundern) bey sonst berühmten *Componisten* und grossen *Contrapunctisten* annoch *inter terras incognitas* gehöret, da doch gleichwohl die *Fundamenta* des gantzen *Theatralischen Styli* darauff beruhen: so hoffe, es werde manchen ein Gefalle geschehen, wenn wir diese so nützliche Materie (darinnen man keinen Vorgänger weiß) allhier gründlich zu untersuchen, uns bemühen.¹⁵

Heinichen believed that a freer approach to dissonance occurred gradually as composers modified the rules pertaining to the *stylus gravis*, and, in his opinion, because of the monotonous regularity of always preparing dissonances and resolving them down by step. Composers began „to invert chords more freely, and particularly to alter in various ways suspensions and the resolutions of dissonances according to Nature’s guidance“:

Dergleichen Verwechselung der Stimmen, oder Verwechselung der *Harmonie* (nach der bekandten Arth zu reden) ist nun sonderlich nach Erfindung des *Theatralischen Styli* auf das höchste und gleichsam *ad excessum* getrieben worden, weil immer einer dem andern es in solchen Neuigkeiten, und vermeinten *Libertaeten* zuvor thun wollen, ohne zu wissen, warum? oder aus was *Fundament* solches geschehen könne?¹⁶

To bring order and logic to what had become a musical practice seemingly bordering on chaos, at least as viewed from the accepted principles of continuo practice, Heinichen proposed to re-examine the theory of irregular resolutions of dissonance in the theatrical style according to the following principle:

¹⁵ Heinichen, *General-Bass*, p. 586: „For nothing is more common than to accuse the theatrical style of not observing rules and of permitting one to proceed contrary to fundamentals. We shall, however, show here the ignorance of those individuals and prove that this style is absolutely fundamental and, in addition has far more artful and beautiful resolutions of consonances and dissonances than the most regular, antique [church] style. And since this material currently is *inter terras incognitas*. . .for most, even for otherwise famous composers and great contrapuntists – though at the same time all the fundamentals of the theatrical style depend on it – one hopes that many will consider it a favor if we try to give a basic study of this most useful material (for which one knows of no predecessors).“

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 587: „After the invention of the theatrical style this inversion of parts – or of harmonies (to speak in the accepted fashion) – has been advanced to perfection but at the same time to excess, because one will always try to outdo others in new things and imaginary freedoms without knowing why or the fundamental principle on which such things are based.“

DASS ORDENTLICHER WEISE KEIN, IN DISSONANTIEN BESTEHENDER THEATRALISCHER SATZ ODER GANG VOR RICHTIG PASSIREN KÖNNE, WO NICHT ZUGLEICH EINE LEGALE RESOLUTION DER DISSONANZ DARAUFF ERFOLGET, es geschehe nun solches vor oder nach der Verwechselung der *Harmonie*, in der obern- mittlern- oder untersten Stimme. Hält der Satz diese Probe, so ist er *fundamental*; wo nicht, so ist er allerdings verdächtig ...¹⁷

Heinichen strove to systematize complex harmonic practices that previously had received neither theoretical nor practical explanations. Unlike his contemporary Rameau, whose theory of chord inversions he seems to have rejected, Heinichen attempted to codify the various types of dissonant chordal progressions. This he did by defining basic principles of harmonic procedures underlying the Italian practice in the theatrical style. He admitted that exceptions existed that fit into no convenient category but which must be recognized as part of current harmonic freedoms. To him this was part of *Was der General-Baß sey*. He divides theatrical resolutions of dissonances into eight categories, and all of them observing his fundamental rule that every dissonance must have a resolution. The categories involve delayed resolutions, the anticipated or omitted passing tone, the inversion of the dissonance before resolution as well as the inversion of the resolution itself. The complexity of the subject can only be understood by examining the rules and numerous examples provided by Heinichen.¹⁸ Clearly, however, continuo realizations for Italian and German Baroque music of the eighteenth century are inadequately achieved until performers have absorbed these important guidelines to resolving dissonances.

III. Adding Embellishments to a Thoroughbass Accompaniment

Of all the questions involved with restoring a continuo practice appropriate to the style and period of the music being performed, perhaps nothing seems more controversial than the degree of musical independence an accompaniment should be permitted. The subjects of ornamentation and independent melodic lines as applied to thoroughbass realizations have frequently been debated. While the very improvisatory nature of continuo playing must always result in a wide variety of solutions, there are, at least from Heinichen's viewpoint, rather clear guidelines as to what is or is not appropriate. After warning that no beginner should be permitted to employ the considerable numbers of existing embellishments until he has learned the fundamentals, he adds:

¹⁷ Ibid.: „Normally [in the theatrical style] no chord or progression can be considered correct that is not followed by a correct resolution of the dissonance, whether it occurs before or after the inversion of harmonies, in the upper, middle, or lowest part. If the chord passes this test, it is fundamental; when it does not, it is incorrect.“

¹⁸ This I have done in my book on Heinichen's treatise. See Appendix C, p. 381–438.

Der General-Bass ist ohne diß nicht deswegen erdacht worden, daß man damit, wie in denen *preludiis concertiren* solle, sondern nur denen *concertirenden* Stimmen *accompagniren* solle ... Ist man aber zuvor in *fundamentis* richtig, alsdenn erst ist es Zeit an die Neben-Dinge, *flosculos* und Zierrathen des *General-Basses* zu gedencken, umb selbige bey schwacher *Music*, und wo ein vollstimmig *Accompagnement* (zumahl auf Orgeln) nicht allzeit nötig ist, mit *Discretion* anzubringen.¹⁹

It seems obvious that Heinichen does not consider the art of melodic ornamentation an essential skill for accompanists, for he describes only adequately those embellishments applicable to the chords of a realization as distinguished from melodic ornamentation of the top part. He admits that ornaments are numberless, and that each performer will have individual preferences. Moderation, however, is Heinichen's rule: „Es bestehet aber die Kunst eines manierlichen *General-Basses* überhaupt darinnen, daß man seine *Accorde* nicht überall platt niederschlage, sondern in allen Stimmen (besonders in der äusersten Stimme der rechten Hand, die am meisten vorsticht) hier und dar eine Manier mit anbringe, und dadurch dem *Accompagnement* mehr *Grace* gebe ...“²⁰ Since he maintains that the harpsichordist must frequently use the full-voiced style, it is, therefore, impossible for more than a few ornaments to be added because all of the fingers are already engaged.

There are better sources²¹ from which to learn the nature of those ornaments Heinichen briefly describes: the trill, *transitus* or passing tone, appoggiatura (Vorschlag), slide (Schleiffung), and mordent. The exception, however, is his discussion for the *acciaccatura*, dissonant semitones, types of mordents, struck below as many chord tones as the fingers make physically possible which are immediately released again. These, he says, have a grand effect on the harpsichord and are particularly useful for expressing the affective meaning of words in recitatives and other vocal music. No German writer on the thoroughbass prior to Heinichen mentions the *acciaccatura*, and Heinichen himself must have learned of the practice only in Italy. His explanation relies largely on Gasparini's description in *L'armonico pratico al cimbalo*. It would appear that for both Gasparini and Heinichen the *acciaccatura* was considered part of the performer's improvisational technique since neither writer suggests a distinctive sign to indicate when these ornaments are to be played.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 521: „Besides, the thoroughbass was not conceived to enable one to perform with it as in preludes, but only so that the concerted parts would be accompanied ... When, however, one is trained previously in the fundamentals, only then is it time to think of secondary things, *flosculos* and decorations of the thorough-bass, in order that these can be applied discreetly to music of a few parts, and where a full-voice accompaniment is not always necessary (particularly on the organ).“

²⁰ Ibid.: „The art of the embellished thoroughbass, however, really consists of one not simply playing chords, but of using an ornament here and there in all parts (particularly in the outermost part of the right hand which usually stands out), and thereby giving more elegance to the accompaniment.“

²¹ The most comprehensive being by Frederick Neumann, *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music* (Princeton, 1978).

In Heinichen's experience, a second class of embellishment depends upon a performer's musical inventiveness and includes: melody, *passaggi*, arpeggios, and imitation, all of which, when appropriate must be improvised without any indicated signs or other instructions from a composer. Heinichen, as the experienced composer-accompanist, illustrates ways in which an uninteresting and stylistically inadequate accompaniment might be made more musical, more appropriate to the work being performed. Example 3 shows what Heinichen considers a very simple realization of a bass line. To improve this accompaniment, he suggests the upper part can be given a more interesting melodic line, either (1) by dividing the accompaniment between the hands, as shown in Example 4, or (2) by taking the full accompaniment in the left hand and creating the melody in the right hand without supporting chord tones as in Example 5. He stresses that the best opportunities for this kind of improvisation occur in a *cantabile* solo, or in the „empty ritornellos of arias.“ In no circumstances does Heinichen consider this kind of embellished realization appropriate to the normal character of a continuo part when another vocal or instrumental part or parts have the focus of musical interest. *Was der General-Baß sey*, in this context of realizing chords from a bass line, remains always an accompaniment to a concentration of musical substance found in other solo or ensemble parts. According to Heinichen these continuo realizations should be unobtrusive, sonorous in the fullness of their harmonies, but never having an independent musical interest, except when the continuo itself is given a solo opportunity in a composition.

Example 3: A conventional four-part thoroughbass realization without melodic interest in the top part

The musical score consists of five systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 6/8. The top staff of each system contains a melodic line with frequent trills (tr) and slurs. The bottom staff contains harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Fingering numbers (6, 7) are indicated below notes in both hands. The score concludes with a final chord in the bass staff.

Example 4: The same example with the accompaniment divided between the hands and with the top part provided with melodic interest.

The image shows five systems of musical notation for piano. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The bass staff in each system contains a consistent accompaniment of chords and eighth notes, with the number '6' written below it. The treble staff contains a more elaborate melody, often featuring trills (marked 'tr'), slurs, and various note values. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The systems are arranged vertically, with the first system at the top and the fifth at the bottom.

Example 5: The same example with the accompaniment entirely in the left hand and with the top part free to play a more elaborate melody, „the best opportunities for which are found in a *cantabile* solo and in the empty ritornellos of an aria without instruments“.

IV. Accompanying Recitatives and Arias from Unfigured Basses

The unfigured thoroughbass was controversial from almost the beginning of the Baroque. As early as 1607 Aggazzari warned of the ambiguities inherent in the practice,²² and Praetorius²³ rejected the practice out of hand. Despite the frequent complaints about the lack of figures in thoroughbass parts, the practice became well-established in the seventeenth century and a commonplace in secular as well as sacred music of the later Baroque. Heinichen did not avoid the challenge of establishing practical rules for determining correct harmonies when the accompanist had only a bass line and a melodic part as a guide.

Already in 1711 he had provided a set of rules and practical suggestions for playing from unfigured basses as well as some special guidelines for the problems of unfigured recitative basses. They consisted of some rather simple observations, such as: (1) the harmonies will usually conform to those that the accompanist had already learned earlier in Heinichen's instructions. (2) In general the harmony can be derived from the vocal part; (3) there are general rules, largely from counterpoint and already established early in the seventeenth century, by which conventional bass progressions usually require the same harmonies; (4) the *ambitus* of a scale usually suggests a particular chord formation for each note of the scale, what became known as the „rule of the octave.“²⁴ Based on these principles Heinichen included as a practical example of realizing an unfigured bass, a cantata entitled *Della mia bella Clori*, by an anonymous composer. Stylistically the music is typical of various cantatas in Italian style written at the beginning of the eighteenth century. As far as I am aware this is a unique and admirably practical lesson from the first decade of the eighteenth century in which Heinichen explains how to divine chords for each unfigured bass note in the cantata, and it is regrettable that no modern edition of this demonstration has as yet been published.

In *Der General-Bass* Heinichen replaces the anonymous cantata with Alessandro Scarlatti's, *Lascia deh lascia al fine di tormentarmi più*. Heinichen knew that Alessandro Scarlatti more than any other contemporary composer employed highly irregular and extravagant harmonies. Therefore, he thought that if an accompanist could become accustomed to such a difficult and unconventional style, he need not fear other, commonly appearing regular styles of music.²⁵ He explains the special difficulties of Scarlatti's music and his dislike of their results as follows:

²² Agostino Aggazzari, *Del sonare sopra 'l basso con tutti li strumenti* (Siena, 1607).

²³ Praetorius, *Syntagma musicum*, III, p. 147.

²⁴ For a comprehensive study of this important guide to thoroughbass realization see Thomas Christensen, „The Règle de l'Octave in Thorough-Bass Theory and Practice“, in *Acta musicologica* 64 (1992), p. 91–117.

²⁵ Heinichen, *Der General-Bass*, p. 798.

Denn es bindet sich dieser *Autor* selten oder niemahls an einen *regulirten ambitum modi*, sondern er verwirfft die *Tone* gantz ungleich auf eben die *Arth*, und öffters mit mehrer Härtigkeit, als man jemahls im flüchtigen *Recitativ* thun kan. Meines wissens hat ihn biss *dato* unter unzehligen *Practicis* noch kein einziger *imitiren* wollen ...“²⁶

He regrets that Scarlatti would make a general style out of such harshness that is opposed to the true purpose of agreeable music. He suggests this music finds approval only with those he calls „bizarre“ amateurs, but nevertheless concludes that the accompanist can profit from the study of such irregularities. And certainly Heinichen's experiences in Italy with the music of Scarlatti, even if he found the music at times distasteful, convinced him that accompanists must have a familiarity with the performance problems it contained. Therefore, his practical example (which has been published in a modern edition) reveals Heinichen's own attempts to rationalize many aspects of Scarlatti's highly chromatic and dissonant harmonies. In addition to using the guidelines he had developed for accompanists in the first treatise, he now employs the principles of irregular resolutions for dissonances, which it would seem, may have been born out of the very problems of harmonic analysis contained in Alessandro Scarlatti's music. As with the earlier example, the Scarlatti cantata receives a detailed discussion for every note of the bass line. Filled with Heinichen's practical observations, it is a lesson of singular value for all continuo performers, unlike anything else available from the Baroque period in Italy or Germany in the second and third decades of the eighteenth century.²⁷

These are only four of the contributions Heinichen made to our knowledge of the thoroughbass, each of them reflecting Italian aspects of that practice learned by the composer during his Italian years. *Der General-Bass*, however, is encyclopedic in its content, and its immense value to continuo performers as well as theorists and historians is beyond summarizing. But Heinichen does suggest an apt definition as to *Was der General-Baß sey* with which to conclude this essay. The following passage first appeared in the *Neu erfundene Anweisung* in 1711, and was repeated *verbatim* in *Der General-Bass*:

Daß der *Bassus Continuus*, oder so genannte *General-Basse* nechst der *Composition* eine der wichtigsten und *fundamentalesten Musicalischen* Wissenschaften sey/ dessen wird kein *Music-Verständiger* in Abrede seyn. Denn woher entspringet derselbe anders/ als aus der *Composition* selbst? und was heißet endlich *General-Bass* spielen anders/ als zu der einzigen vorgelegten *Bass-Stimme* die übrigen Stimmen einer völligen *Harmonie ex tempore* erdencken/

²⁶ Ibid., p.797 (footnote): „For this composer seldom or never conforms to a controlled scale system, but throws the tones in a way and often with a harshness as one can normally do in rapid recitative. As far as I know not one among countless composers has to this day wished to imitate him.“

²⁷ The cantata together with a suggested realization of the continuo part is given in the author's *Thorough-Bass Accompaniment According to Johann David Heinichen*, Appendix A, p. 293–306.

oder darzu componiren? So edel aber als der Ursprung des *General-Basses* ist/ so groß ist auch der Nutz and Vortheil/ welcher allen *Musicus aus deßen Erkänntniß zuwächset ...* so darff man nur überhaupt erwegen/ daß uns der *General-Bass* eben wie die *Composition* selbst/ zu völliger Untersuchung des gantz *Musicalischen* Gebäudes anführe²⁸

²⁸ Ibid., p. 1: „No music connoisseur will deny that the *Basso Continuo* or so-called thoroughbass is, next to composition, one of the most important and most fundamental of the musical sciences. For from what source other than composition itself does it spring forth? And what actually is the playing of a thoroughbass other than to improvise upon a given bass the remaining parts of a full harmony, or to compose [to the bass]? As noble as the origin of the thoroughbass is, so equally great is the benefit and advantage accruing to all musicians from this knowledge. ... Thus one need only consider that the thoroughbass, like composition itself, leads to the complete investigation of the entire musical edifice.“

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH AND THE BASSO CONTINUO

by PETER WILLIAMS

At first glance, this might seem a topic to have received more than enough attention during the twentieth century, from both musicologists and musicians. Not only does every Bach performance have to deal with this question in some way but certain players have made a speciality of *Bach and the Basso Continuo*. Perhaps this is something of a late twentieth-century phenomenon, for in earlier times, when practical musicians were more rigorously trained in counterpoint than they are today, the ability to realize some figured bass-lines – *correctly* as to harmony, *stylishly* as to accompaniment – was taken as something any trained musician could do.

Some years ago now the late Professor of Music at Oxford, J. A. Westrup, complained about a newspaper reviewer who had praised the continuo-player in a certain opera-performance (Handel, I think it was). His point was that it was ridiculous to praise continuo-playing: by definition it is a self-effacing art, and if you are so aware of the player's great abilities, then *ipso facto* those abilities are not so great. I sympathize with this viewpoint, understanding the pedagogic tradition that gave rise to it and (I have to admit) wishing so often in concerts to close the harpsichord lid – not so that the harpsichord is unheard but so that it does not obtrude. One needs to sense the harpsichord's harmonic fundament without its conspicuous upper partials and of course without too many ingenious or conspicuous *obbligato* flourishes added by the harpsichordist.

It is towards describing *a self-effacing art* that I would like to look at some of the questions concerning Bach continuo, examining evidence in the hope that this might lead to the next level of thought, in fact the next layer of questions. A tendency in recent decades towards an assertive musicology, one that researches and establishes facts in order to assert that such-and-such happened or that such-and-such was intended by the composer, is, I would like to think, beginning to die of natural causes now that we see how complex are any musical-historical questions. I see many statements beginning „of course, Bach expected that ...“ or „there is no doubt that Bach felt that ...“ to be a more recent version of the nineteenth century's speculative biography: such statements may often appear to be backed by evidence, but evidence is a complicated phenomenon, and it tends to get used to prove a point instead of leading gradually and subtly towards it.

When Dr. Rapp kindly sent me her invitation to join this week, I was struck by the title she proposed: *Bach and the basso continuo*. I took for granted that „Bach“ meant Johann Sebastian and not his second surviving son or his youngest son – a natural assumption in the later twentieth century, of course, but not in the London or Berlin of the later eighteenth. My first thought was: why in English does it sound scholastic, even scientific, to include „the“ in this title

Bach and the basso continuo, rather than *Bach and basso continuo*. Well, even in these days of deconstruction I was not able to squeeze much significance out of this! – but my second thought seemed more interesting: did Bach himself ever use the phrase *basso continuo* or, for that matter, *il basso continuo*? Either way, what would this signify?

It might be that these two questions lead nowhere very conclusive, but they do have the benefit of taking one immediately into the crucial region of source-study. After all, with a question about what is the authentic terminology, one is trying to begin at square one, whether its significance turns out to be great or small. As a matter of fact, only with the new *Bach Compendium* is it at all easy to check on such little details as this, and you often have to search carefully to establish quite simple facts. When the *Compendium* volumes are complete, one will probably find that in neither scores nor parts did Bach say *basso continuo* but something else: in early cantatas, *basso per l'organo* or *coll'organo*; in the case of the Violin solos, *senza basso accompagnato*; in most other cases, simply *continuo*. The last includes ensemble works like the *Brandenburg Concertos*, Italianate sonatas like the *Musical Offering*, and mature choral works such as the Leipzig cantatas – that is to say, both works for harpsichord continuo and for organ continuo.

Now obviously, continuo is an adjective to the missing word *basso*, but I have wondered whether, in using a succinct up-to-date Italian term, Bach had a more up-to-date Italian idea of figured-bass realization than he did as a younger church composer, before he was familiar with Italian concertos or operas or even very much chamber music. (By the way, early Italian church musicians too labelled their parts *basso* or *per l'organo*, so the issue here is not what is Italian but what is up to date.) Wittingly or unwittingly, when we create the phrase *Bach and the basso continuo*, we are speaking with far more knowledge of different types of continuo than Bach himself ever had. For us, *basso continuo* is a phrase important in an uncontrollably vast amount of music, from at least Caccini's *Nuove musiche* to at least Bruckner's *Requiem*, and we use the phrase as a kind of neutral, textbook concept. Since every composer employed basso continuo, we adopt different styles across a spectrum of music broader than any known to the original musicians. But unfortunately the intimate knowledge *they* had of their narrow band of music made them totally familiar with the conventional manner of playing it, whatever that convention was, and we are obviously less familiar.

In the case of J.S. Bach, continuo-playing has something else in common with other topics: our evidence about details of his playing, frequently made use of by writers and players today, concerns the composer only in his maturity, even his old age. This is so even though the original writers do not make it clear – Philipp Emanuel, for instance, can not have known much about his father's playing of anything, with or without the thumb, before his father was about 40 years old. In the second place, written evidence necessarily says as much about the writer as his topic, and we *have* to ask why or how a theorist

comes to say anything about any topic. That is a complex question. And thirdly, it is not always clear at what level a writer is writing. Although Mattheson recommended continuo-players to play a lot of solo music in order to learn a sense of melody, it by no means follows from this that he is expecting the player to invent new colourful melodies in the right hand: he may be speaking merely of learning to use the right hand in a musical way, something we today would take as obvious. In his day, one could have learnt figured bass before solo music, but I assume that this is inconceivable today.

Similarly, when Forkel points out that Bach's technique for harmonizing chorales is to distribute the four parts equally between the hands – thus not playing the chords entirely in the right hand above single bass-notes – he can have had no idea whatever how Bach had actually accompanied chorales when he was a young organist in Arnstadt or Weimar. Besides, although Forkel is most familiar to us as the author of the first complete Bach biography, he wrote other successful volumes on musical pedagogy and therefore had his own ideas on what was a good way to harmonize. So, to use fashionable terms, he had his own *agenda* which cries out to be *contextualized*, in the manner alas more familiar to today's students of comparative literature than of music. Fifty years after Bach died, Forkel looked back to find his music a model for all that was or had been good – that is to say, something very different from the modern and startling symphonies being composed at that very time, over there in Vienna. Perhaps Forkel even made use of Bach specifically to justify his own conservatism.

Now I have my own reasons for thinking that there is something in this – and therefore that Forkel is no reliable witness to Bach's continuo playing or anything else – because of being brought up within a pedagogical tradition not so different from Forkel's. I too have assumed in the past, for example, that equal distribution of the notes between the two hands is musically superior to playing the chords entirely in the right hand. Perhaps it is, considered as a way of creating four-part harmony in one's general musical studies. But the whole background to continuo-playing known to German organists in the early eighteenth century suggests that this is not how most of them realized their *Generalbaß* – hence perhaps Heinichen's demonstration of such shared chords, made for the benefit of such players, in his book of 1728? It is much more likely that unless playing in the very full manner, the left hand played only the bass. Similarly, the idea that the right hand should not duplicate or cross or appear to interfere with the soloist was something that music-students of my generation learnt in harmony classes; but various kinds of evidence suggest that by the early eighteenth century, especially for less formal music, the German, Italian, English or French continuo-player had no qualms about this at all. On the contrary.

The problem, I think, is not so much that Forkel or any of us has to form views about Bach's practices too long after the event to get at the truth, but that we do not always recognize what our own assumptions are. Especially in

practical matters such as continuo-playing, we want quick answers and don't see that the questions we ask are already based on assumptions. Hence the tendency to take written evidence uncritically.¹

Let me give some examples. Virtually all the first-hand observations of Bach's continuo-playing that have come down to us describe his fanciful realizations, and one still sees them quoted to justify such playing today. Here are the earliest and the latest:

Lorenz Mizler in 1738:

[Capellmeister Bach accompagnirt] einen ieden General-Baß zu einem Solo so ..., daß man denket, es sey ein Concert, und wäre die Melodey so er mit der rechten Hand machet, schon vorhero also gesetzt worden ... ich [habe] es selbsten gehöret.

(Bach ... plays every thorough bass accompaniment to a solo in such a way that one thinks it is a concerto, and that the melody he makes in the right hand had already been pre-composed ... I have heard this myself.)

Johann Christian Kittel in 1808:

... man [durfte] sich da mit einer magern Generalbaßbegleitung ohnehin nicht vor wagen ... Demohnerachtet mußte man sich immer darauf gefaßt halten, daß sich oft plötzlich Bachs Hände und Finger unter die Hände und Finger des Spielers mischten und ... das Accompagnement mit Massen von Harmonien ausstaffirten

([In front of Bach] one did not dare to come forward with a thin thorough-bass accompaniment. Whatever the case, one needed always to be prepared to have Bach's hands and fingers often mingling suddenly with the hands and fingers of the player [of continuo] and ... garnishing the accompaniment with masses of harmonies.)

Now Mizler and Kittel appear to be describing things they personally witnessed – in fact, they draw attention to this, which itself is interesting, I think, and makes one wonder what Professor Westrup would have thought of the picture they painted. And because these authors claim to be eye-witnesses, one begins by trusting them to be telling the truth. But can one equally assume that they are speaking of Bach playing his own music, or that they would even see this to be an interesting question, as it would be to us? Kittel was remarking on the performance of cantatas in church („eine Kirchenmusik“), but since he was only eighteen years old when Bach died, he must have had only the composer's last year or two in mind, when cantatas were revived less regularly

¹ *Author's postscript.* In the Basel continuo conference of March 1993, I felt that lectures examining e.g. the references to violoncello continuo in German sources of the eighteenth century, or demonstrations of continuo „realizations“, failed to examine a key question. This is not, What do these references tell us and what do they leave unsaid, but, Why do they say anything at all?

than before and who knows with what changes in the manner of performance? Was a Bach cantata performance in 1749 really identical to the first performance of the same work a quarter of a century earlier? In the case of Mizler, the music he was speaking about is also quite uncertain: he could well have been speaking of second-rate chamber music, with its thin textures and tired counterpoint.

Now I know that it looks as if Mizler's report is corroborated later when Philipp Emanuel, in describing his father's techniques to Forkel, spoke specifically with respect to music by *other* composers. J. S. Bach, he said, „... hat ... mehr als einmahl Trios accompagnirt, und, weil er aufgeräumt war, u. wuste, daß der Componist dieser Trios es nicht übel nehmen würde, aus dem Stegereif u. aus einer elend beziferten ihm vorgelegten Baßstimme ein vollkommenes Quatuor daraus gemacht, worüber der Componist dieser Trios erstaunte.“

(„... accompanied trios [that is, played basso continuo to two soloists] on more than one occasion and, because he was in a good humour and knew that the composer of the trio would not be offended, he made out of it a complete quartet extempore on the basis of a sparsely figured continuo part set before him, over which the composer of the trio was astounded“.)

As well he might be, if his music was in the simple up-to-date Italian *galant* style of the 1740s! But here the question is, can we take at face-value what Philipp Emanuel says? How do we know he is not merely glossing the remarks published thirty-six years earlier by Mizler? One little detail in these remarks *is* rather curious: Philipp Emanuel says that his father played trios „on more than one occasion“ („mehr als einmahl“). Now why would he say that? Is he implying that in fact Sebastian did not play chamber music very often and that when he did, he could not help improving on the feeble efforts of his contemporaries? Was Emanuel really intimately acquainted with his father's habits, and if so, over what periods?

My point would be that although he probably was, Emanuel might be writing such things (and doing so for publication) only because Mizler had already written something similar. Thus Evidence B exists because Evidence A exists, and there is no real corroboration. One possibility is that since on this occasion Emanuel was giving Forkel examples of his father's grasp of harmony („vermöge seiner Grösse in der Harmonie“), he is implying that the added counterpoint was new on each occasion, therefore that his father could be constantly inventive and never repeat himself. If so, then perhaps counterpoints added by the continuo-player were unusual. It would certainly have been important in a biography, or notes towards a biography, to make clear that its hero-subject was infinitely inventive. In addition, much of what Philipp Emanuel says about his father is also aimed at showing him to have been „something of a character“, as we might say: this was another motif of the then new genre of *heroic biography*.

Also rather close to Mizler's remarks were those made by Johann Friedrich Daube in 1756, for like Forkel, Daube was making use of Bach for ideas he was developing in a book on harmony-instruction. Meanwhile, and shortly before Daube was writing, Johann Sebastian had died and his *Obituary* had been published. Now this is a document rich in up-to-date literary agendas, in particular those belonging to the Enlightenment genre of heroic biography, with its aim of praising its subject according to certain criteria. For example, the subject of a biography had to have been a gifted child and one preferably thwarted, and he had to have vanquished all rivals, just as he had vanquished early parental resistance. Clearly, one way for a composer to vanquish a rival was to add another part to his feeble trio sonata, so the story of new counterpoints introduced by the continuo-player does at least – to say no more – fit in with contemporary views on the irrepressible *Will of the Genius*.

Of course, I am not asserting that J. S. Bach never added new counterpoints in the right hand. The point is that even if he did, what I have said about these eye-witness reports would still remain true and fair. One might better ask, How can we begin to know whether he did add counterpoints or not? Furthermore, since at best these reports relate to the last dozen or so years of the composer's life, do they tell one very much about when most of his music was composed? Well, they are better than nothing, and it would be a pity to demolish what little evidence we seem to have. But we need to define the terms of reference. Daube does refer to imitation in the right or left hand – that is, realizing a continuo bass with bits of motivic imitation that have the effect of encouraging the soloist. But knowing neither the context of which Daube speaks nor whether his testimony is authentic in any way, we should surely not build too much on it. It is not even clear whether he is speaking of instrumental or vocal music. Being able to improvise good counter-melodies is a criterion now of good musicianship, and our enthusiasm for it as a musical skill can give a false impression of how performances actually were in the past.

To take a particular example: let us consider a pair of treatments for the same aria, a difficult, unfigured movement in Cantata 3, *Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid*. (By the way, even the new *Bach Compendium* does not say whether, in any given set of parts, the continuo is figured or not; but this could be important information for the scholar, and I have recommended to the editors that they include it.) In Music Example 1 (a) you will see what might be called a standard German organist's continuo; this was made, no-one knows for what reason, by a former chorister of St. Thomas, Leipzig, the organist Christian Friedrich Penzel.

Ex. 1a:

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 3/4. The bass line is heavily figured with numbers and symbols. The first system has 15 bars, the second has 15 bars, and the third has 15 bars. The figures are as follows:

System 1:
 Bass line: 6, 4+, 2; 6, 5b, 6, 6, 4, 2; 5, 6, 6, 4+, 2; 6, 5b, 6, 4, 2; 5, 6, 7, #

System 2:
 Bass line: 6, 5, 6, 4+; 6, 7, 4, #; 6, 6; 6, 3, 6, 4+, 4, 3; 6, 7, 6, 5, 6, 4, 4+, 2; [6, 4, 3]

System 3:
 Bass line: 6, 5b, 6, 4+; 7b, 4, 3; [6, 4+, 2]; 6, 6, 4, 2; 6, 4+, 2; [7b, 5b]; [6, 4+, 2]; [7b, 5b]; [6, 4+, 2]

Version by C. F. Penzel (1737–1801), incomplete; ms lost. See Y. Kobayashi, *Franz Hauser und seine Bach-Handschriftensammlung*, Göttingen 1973, p. 183 and *Bach Compendium I*, p. 160.

Like the Leipzig organ-assistants during Bach's time, Penzel added figures to the part, though here they break off after fifteen bars; he also interpreted the harmony as right-hand chords, mostly on the beat. It is possible that Penzel was trying not to make a complete organ-part but simply to write out the difficult harmony implied by this awkward bass-line. The result is something

that might seem to us neither very organ-like nor very musical: one could imagine continuing in this vein today only if one were deliberately setting out to create a performance that imitated most run-of-the-mill performances in the middle of the eighteenth century. Of course, this could be a perfectly worthwhile aim, and each of us surely knows that as we play today in contexts that are technologically quite anachronistic – for example, the context of edited recordings for commercial sale – we are compelled to go for standards of polished performance mostly unknown in the eighteenth century. Polish is a historic phenomenon of its own.

Ex. 1b

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system is a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. It contains a complex contrapuntal melody with various rhythmic values and accidentals. The second system also consists of a grand staff. The upper staff features a vocal line with the lyrics "Emp-find' ich Höl-len-angst und Pein, —". The lower staff is a piano accompaniment, beginning with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns and accidentals throughout both systems.

Version by D. F. Tovey, pencil notes in his personal copy of *Bach-Gesamtausgabe* 1 (University of Edinburgh, Faculty of Music Library)

I don't know when it was that Donald Francis Tovey made his little counterpoint to this aria – about 1900, I would guess, on the very threshold of the Performance Practice movement. Now Tovey was incapable of doing anything unmusical, but what interests me in particular about this version is that it belongs to the same cultural context – it has the same musical-pedagogical priorities – as the polished performance required for today's recordings. For insofar as it gives a nicely prepared and thought-out version of a difficult aria, this contrapuntal melody – most people would agree that it is really rather Bach-like – expresses on paper the same attitude to performance that is assumed by today's record-market. They are both seeking ways to realize this music, not in its localized, liturgical setting but in an abstractly ideal way for musically educated listeners long after the event, and have little sense of its liturgical weight.

There is another point: Tovey's version is giving particular meaning to the word *interpretation*. „To interpret“ has come to mean to give a thought-out, more or less strongly characterized, practical demonstration of what it is one thinks was ideally intended by the composer. But expressed like that, you can see that interpretation can be a vain thing: *vain* in the sense that one is presuming to have grasped what someone of Bach's gifts was intending, and *vain* in the sense that in any case it cannot really be brought off authentically, since there was no „ideal performance“ in his mind. I rather think that if we were to meet Bach and ask him „how did you interpret the continuo part to this aria“ he would not understand the word „interpret“, which would have had for him a deeper, more theological meaning. We would have to re-frame the question: „How did your organist Christian Gräbner play this aria in 1726 when you first performed the cantata? Did he use the unfigured part made by the copyist Andreas Kuhnau or did he write out chords like Christian Penzel? Did he really master the harmony?“ Put like this, the question seems to me to point more towards Music Example 1a than towards Tovey's 1b.

Let us turn to another point of importance to the continuo-player: how full the accompaniment should be. In the remarks quoted earlier, Kittel is speaking not of interesting new counterpoints as such but of rich or full harmonies: „One did not dare to come forward with a thin thorough-bass accompaniment ... one needed always to be prepared to have Bach's hands and fingers often mingling suddenly with the hands and fingers of the player [of continuo] and ... garnishing the accompaniment with masses of harmonies“.

Though an interesting piece of evidence, providing one tries to contextualize it in the manner I have already suggested, one can not say from this *how* rich are the harmonies Kittel is talking about. The chords of the seventh and ninth in the mature Bach idiom do often require realization in five or six parts, and the young Kittel would not have found this easy. Judging by his own music, his understanding of harmony was not, shall we say, very sophisticated. He may therefore have been speaking merely of the need there was to realize Bach's harmonies more fully than, say, Telemann's, which one can quite believe, and his words are not necessarily any evidence for the big eight or ten-part chords such as were illustrated by certain Italian theorists. However, one might certainly conjecture that in the more massive choral works, pupils or organ-assistants were expected to fill out the *tutti* harmonies to the best of their abilities, as they were for the seventeenth-century Italian repertoire. Even the beginner must have been encouraged to distinguish between a solo aria and, say, a big *Gloria* or *Sanctus* for two choirs. One could imagine something like this for the *B minor Mass* on which Bach was working when Kittel would have known him. Perhaps he even put the Mass into rehearsal while Kittel was present?

I realize that if one begins to doubt whether those close to Bach do authorize either very full accompaniment or improvised counter-melodies, then all one seems to have left is plain four-part harmonies in the right hand; nothing

much in the way of tied notes and articulate phraseology; and all music – cantatas, sonatas, arias, concertos – sounding much the same. Writers do not even make so very much of the distinction between harpsichord and organ, giving only such generalities as „don't use arpeggios much on the organ“. And even this advice about not playing arpeggios needs some thought: any player knows that an occasional spread chord can be very effective on the right kind of organ, and one needs to know what „arpeggio“ means – as Frescobaldi used the word, or Johann David Heinichen, or who? When Heinichen says „Accompany recitative on the organ without arpeggios“, he seems to mean not so much *without an occasional gentle spread upwards* but *without chords broken up in regular and distinct patterns*, many forms of which would indeed be strange on an organ.

But to return to the plain four-part harmonies: there is good evidence that these played a major part in all musical study. Four-part harmony was something learnt at various stages of training. Thus the student following advice in the *Clavier-Büchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach* of 1725 on how to realize figures would learn an ideal harmony, whether it was written on paper or played on the keyboard. Philipp Emanuel told Forkel that his father taught harmony and part-writing this way rather than through the abstract rules in Fux's *species* counterpoint. Of course, Emanuel would – would he not? – tell Forkel that his father taught more in the manner of protestant German organists than of catholic maestros like Fux; for all we know to the contrary, Emanuel may have been consciously ignoring Mizler's translation of Fux, published in Leipzig at about the same time as the *Goldberg Variations*. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to imagine that at least earlier in his life, Sebastian had taught harmony in a practical way, i.e. by means of figured bass. The lessons he gave Johann Tobias Krebs, for example, probably included this kind of exercise. But teaching the reverse is also valuable, as any teacher still knows: one learns to make good keyboard realizations in direct proportion to one's knowledge already of harmony and voice-leading.

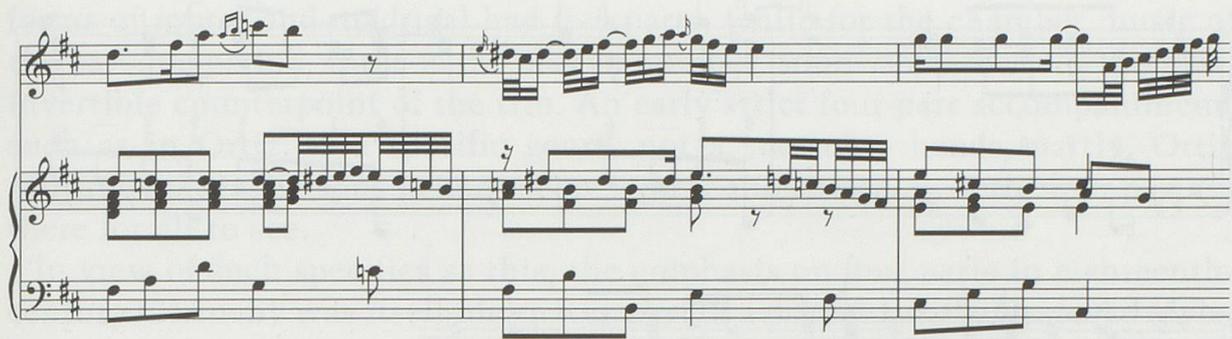
After the *Clavier-Büchlein*, a similar approach is developed in the so-called *Precepts and Principles for Playing a Thorough Bass in four Parts* (*Vorschriften und Grundsätze zum vierstimmigen Spielen des Generalbaßes*), a little treatise dated 1738 and attributed to Bach himself by one Carl August Thieme, a pupil of the St. Thomas School in Leipzig. Rather like a medieval theorist's treatise on organum, this MS is a compilation drawing on three or more older sources, including Friedrich Erhardt Niedt's *Musicalische Handleitung* Part 1. Whoever did the compiling, and whether or not J. S. Bach did authorize its many interesting details, it is certainly a valuable indication of how in 1740 or so young musicians in Leipzig taught themselves. By including sample bass-lines, the treatise shows that to play continuo was itself part of learning music, for these basses sound like the simple up-to-date cello lines of many a galant chamber sonata:

H. N. Gerber, realization of Sonata No. 6 from T. Albinoni, *Trattenimenti armonici per camera*, Op. VI (Amsterdam, c. 1712).

Here too are the same three-part chords in the right hand, but at least a few ties between the upper parts are beginning to suggest an articulated part-writing. As players know, chords can be shaped or phrased in such a way as to be rather melodious, and this Albinoni realization does have some felicitous touches. It also represents up-to-date interests: although published ten or more years or earlier, an Albinoni sonata was typically fashionable, as much so in its way as Vivaldi's concertos Opus III/VIII had been for J. S. Bach back in Weimar.

Nevertheless, in comparison with the Gerber realization, Bach's own written-out accompaniment for the Largo of the Flute Sonata in B minor BWV 1030 a few years later does represent a considerably further step:

Ex. 4:



BWV 1030, from autograph score BB mus ms Bach P 975, f. 4.

From time to time the left hand takes a note or two, so the texture is more even, a little less top-and-bottom; and the right hand adds filling-in runs between the soloist's phrases. These little right-hand runs, which could become irritating with a lesser composer, remind me of the organ's flourishes between the lines of a chorale sung by a congregation, a type of performance with which any German organist in 1730 would have been familiar. Although most organ interludes may have been disruptive and boorish compared to those in the suave Flute Sonata, one might think that part of the art here had been to assimilate an old accompanimental device into the highly polished manner of an elegant and modern chamber sonata.

My final example of a four-part realization – Johann Philipp Kirnberger's version of the Sonata in the *Musical Offering* – gives the player a literal interpretation of the complex harmony that supports the flute and violin soloists above. I would not recommend harpsichordists to play from it, despite being encouraged to do so by the current Peters edition of the *Musical Offering*, where all the movements are edited according to these realizations by Kirnberger, or by musicians in his circle. In the faster movements, this four-part treatment is particularly pedantic and becomes almost unplayable, but even the slow movements are to be seen as contributions to „Generalbaß“ study rather than to basso continuo accompaniment:

Ex. 5:



J. P. Kirnberger, realization of *Andante* from the Sonata in *Musicalisches Opfer*, BWV 1079 (see List of References, under J. P. Kirnberger).

Notice that for performance itself – for music played by an ensemble – the very second chord is unnecessary: the flat 7th doubles what the soloists are playing and in the process becomes at best unnecessary, at worst a quite unacceptable intrusion. Kirnberger puts in the flat 7th because he has a rule that discords like 7ths should always be prepared.

There are at least two purposes behind this so-called realization. Kirnberger is writing out the figured harmony of a difficult piece, and as such is offering an „Exemplum“ for „Generalbaß“ or „Harmonielehre“; but he is also using it to prove an idea of his own, namely that whatever his contemporaries might say, trios need harmony in four parts. In effect, although he does not say so, he is making a critique of contemporary trios in „Galantem Stil“ and showing that such chords as sevenths, normally a 7/3 in Fux or Palestrina, really need four parts now that one writes them as 7/5/3. Unfortunately, Kirnberger succeeds only in presenting something without variety, something with neither a sense of effective harpsichord tessitura nor the lightness of touch known to continuo-players on the period's fortepianos. You would never know from a German harmonist of the Kirnberger kind that – to take one example – a very effective way of accompanying a cadence is to play nothing at all above the bass line, whatever the figures. There seems to me no more reason to play Kirnberger's „realization“ of the *Musical Offering* than to accompany the B minor Fugue from *WTC1* with the same kind of four-part figured harmony that he began to supply it with in another of his books (Kirnberger 1773: 55–6).

Despite such remarks as these, however, I think we should hesitate to discard the literal four-part realization merely on principle. The emphasis on four-part harmony has itself interesting historical roots, and although it would take the present discussion too far to trace this history, there are various things one could point out about it. In the first place, four parts are by no means an obvious texture in either modal or diatonic harmony: the classic

forms of motet and madrigal had five parts, while for the chamber music of the baroque period, three is the classic number, from which derives the ideal invertible counterpoint of the trio. An early strict four-part accompaniment, such as in Ortiz, is a specific genre, not a „norm“ – hence, partly, Ortiz printing his realizations in open score, where the strictness of the four parts is there for all to see.

In view of such specifics as this, the emphasis on four parts in eighteenth-century Germany was itself idiomatic, part of a particular if widespread style, something by no means as neutral as it now seems. And, by the way, it must have had some influence on the emergence of the Classical period's invention, the string quartet, explaining perhaps why this medium was such a German-Austrian speciality. (The Italians, the English and the French gave far less of an emphasis to four parts.) Consequently, players today would be appropriately distinguishing between well-established musical styles if they accompanied, say, a Purcell song or a Handel aria predominantly in three parts, but a Bach cantata aria or a Bach continuo sonata in predominantly four.

There is some evidence in Germany that players were sometimes encouraged to work towards a more „künstlerisches“ accompaniment than can easily be produced from a merely „schulmeisterliche“ harmonization in four parts. Of course, when in putting it in these terms, I am expressing the post-Enlightenment assumption that the „Künstler“ is somehow superior to the „Schulmeister“. But in 1700 it is doubtful if anyone would have thought that accompaniment was anything but a job of work, straightforward, a craft requiring not conspicuous artistry but a solid, workmanlike understanding of harmony. When books do begin to include hints that seem to authorize a more imaginative continuo, they probably represented a major shift in the concept of the artist-performer. I am thinking in particular of the books by Johann David Heinichen, and I can quite see why he is popular today in discussions of performance practice. Again, however, one needs to contextualize. The titlepage to Heinichen's book of 1711 says the following:

„Neu erfundene und gründliche Anweisung, wie ein Musik-Liebender auf gewisse vortheilhaftige Arth könne zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Basses, entweder durch eigenen Fleiß selbst gelangen, oder durch andere kurz und glücklich dahin angeführet werden, dergestalt, daß er so wohl die Kirchen als Theatralischen Sachen, insonderheit auch das Accompagnement des Recitativs-Styli wohl verstehen und geschickt zu tractiren wiße.“

(Newly thought-out and basic Method how a music-lover can profitably attain a complete learning of Thorough Bass either through his own industry or be brought to it by someone else, in such a manner that he will understand, and be able to play knowledgably, church things as well as theatrical, especially the accompaniment of the recitative-style.)

Heinichen's books were published in Hamburg and Dresden, two cities with a more cosmopolitan music-culture than anything known on a regular basis by J. S. Bach. I wonder if in Weimar or Leipzig in c1710 there really were

amateur musicians anxious to learn how to accompany recitative. Is that very likely? One significance of Heinichen's reference to recitative *styles* and to theatre music (primarily meaning opera) is not so much that he was writing for players of both sacred and secular music as that he was now actually saying so. This is interesting, for recent German books, such as the one by Johann Philipp Treiber, had focused more on organists and their need to accompany in church. Notice where it was that Treiber published his book, and how his titlepage makes a point of saying that he is not using secular examples but, instead, a pair of chorales.

So Heinichen was making important attempts to write for the most up-to-date interests, and for their regular Sunday church-duties few if any German organists in 1711 would have required much advice on how to accompany free recitative. And even when Bach did begin to develop his recitative around 1714 – this was for biblical texts, something very different from secular cantatas – nothing that Heinichen had said would have seemed very relevant, I think, unless one can make out a case that the Weimar cantatas were noticeably operatic in their *manner* of performance. It is certainly imaginable that most of the earliest German organists needing to learn about accompanying *recitativo secco* were those directing music in the galleries of the more important „Hofkirchen“ and „Schloßkapellen“. But the time would surely come when any talented musician played many kinds of imported music and showed enthusiasm for learning to do interesting things in his continuo-playing. Since Venetian *concertos* soon became popular and formative, why should not Venetian continuo-practices also?

I mention Venetian because it was in Venice in 1708 that Francesco Gasparini published the book from which Heinichen later drew some of his ideas on imaginative harpsichord continuo. I would agree with him that Gasparini's *l'Armonico* is a most valuable source for the continuo-player, perhaps the best and most valuable single volume, even if one does not have an Italian harpsichord available. Better than current French treatises such as St-Lambert, it would have opened any musician's eyes and ears to a freer continuo realization. But so would new Italian music itself, the arias and recitatives that *demanded* variety and imagination from the accompanist. When, for example, Heinichen in 1728 advises that the left hand should take some of the harmony so as to leave the right more free to develop its melodies or to imitate the soloist, he is thinking of music written under Italian influence. As a composer himself, Heinichen was not so very gifted, perhaps, so one has to take his own examples with a pinch of salt: especially their plain rhythms belong to the archaic idioms of provincial Germany. But when he points out that ornaments may be added to inner voices and can create imitation between parts, he is encouraging rich and imaginative music, as he does when he gives his own versions of Gasparini's *acciaccatura* chords. He also knows the virtues both of playing *tasto solo* and of attempting to improvise in strict, trio counterpoint. In short, he knows the range of effects which the harpsichordist has at his disposal, and

if Heinichen did by the late 1720s, it seems hardly likely that J. S. Bach did not. But not only harpsichord effects: Heinichen's book of 1711 makes the first clear and unambiguous reference to one striking effect in organ continuo, namely lifting the right-hand chord in recitative and leaving only the bass playing.

Perhaps we can think a little more about the specifics of *genre*, *chronology* and *geography*. For example, take the particular technique of lifting the right hand in recitative if the sustained sound becomes irksome or covers the singer. This technique became familiar again in our period through the Harnoncourt-Leonhardt recordings of Bach cantatas, where at times one can also hear another technique recommended much later in the eighteenth century, namely, taking both hands off and playing an occasional little chord alone in the right hand, without bass. Now in so many performances given in the middle years of the twentieth century, recitative-playing veered crazily between the heavy sustained organ-style and the frivolous, flirtatious harpsichord style – say the old St. Thomas, Leipzig recordings on one hand and Glyndebourne Opera on the other. So it was reasonable that the Harnoncourt-Leonhardt *Kantatenwerk* should, amongst other things, *freshen up* the approach to recitative-continuo. The problem is that it may be false to assume what Heinichen said at Hamburg in 1711 or Türk at Halle in 1800 to be directly relevant to Bach's church cantatas, particularly if it means that one then makes no distinction in his output – between cantatas composed for Weimar and cantatas composed for Leipzig, or between two versions of the same cantata.

On the other hand, I know it makes good musical sense to play recitative-continuo on the organ very sparingly, just as I know it makes good sense to rely on well-worked four-part chords for making J. S. Bach's harmony clear to the listener. But can one really expect that there were no changes in continuo practice over his forty or more years of producing and revizing cantatas? (Of course, one could ask the same about other details – pitch, say, or the type of choir.) Can we not mark in performance the difference between a Weimar cantata as originally heard in the court chapel, and the same work later revized for Leipzig and heard in one of the city's parish churches? I cannot believe they were identical, and would find it instructive to consider what would or might have been different. For example, in preparing his Sunday performances, did Bach himself pay any attention to the simple fact that a smaller proportion of his congregation in Leipzig than in Weimar could actually read – and therefore follow the text-books? What difference might that make to a performance? Or, is it not likely that the Leipziger sitting in a big gothic hall-church needed the words of the text to be made clearer to them than the courtiers of Weimar did? Are not the Weimar cantatas, for social reasons alone, likely to have been more *operatic* in at least some details of performance, perhaps in their very recitative? Should we not therefore distinguish between them in modern reconstructions?

And then there is the question of genre. Suppose one could answer the question about congegations in Leipzig and prove that indeed by the time of Bach's revivals of the *St. Matthew Passion*, certain techniques were the order of the day – the continuo-organist played short recitative chords on the „Rückpositiv“ Gedackt, for example. What then happened when the Cantor stepped out to the Coffee House, seated himself at the keyboard and put on a concerto in a crowded, smoke-filled room of little resonance? Did he play only a series of discreet four-part chords on the harpsichord? That is hard to believe. There is a hint in the earlier *Fifth Brandenburg Concerto* score that the concerto continuo-player filled up as best he could: the part begins with a seven-part chord in the fair-copy score:

Ex. 6:

BWV 1049, from autograph score BB Am. B. 78, f. 57.

And this surely invites one to keep up full harmonies. The same chord signals the return to the final ritornello of both the first and last movements, and although it obviously does not prove that all the chords played by the soloist when he is accompanying have to be in seven parts, it certainly shows that tutti chords were not unknown in concerto continuo. Something very similar is suggested in the harpsichord version of the *Fourth Brandenburg* (the Concerto in F major, BWV 1057) where seven-part chords, played higher on the keyboard than one might expect, signal the opening theme whenever it returns. Even here, however, in a brilliant harpsichord concertino/continuo part that varies between two and seven parts, there is a tendency always to return to four. This is also the case at those moments in the harpsichord concertos or violin sonatas when Bach writes in a few continuo chords in the right hand, which he does from time to time.

In this respect, the written obbligato part to the second aria of the secular cantata *Amore traditore* BWV 203 is interesting, for whoever composed it, it does suggest that Italian ideas of harpsichord accompaniment had penetrated central Germany during the period in question. They surely gave a great degree of freedom, with textures ranging from single semiquaver lines divided between the two hands to big chords in eight parts for both hands. Unfortunately, Heinichen says nothing helpful about a question of great interest that I can only touch on here: whether in Italianate concertos of the kind played by the Bach family in Leipzig concerts in the 1730s, solo harpsichord concertos had a second harpsichord to play continuo. This may be suggested by the sources for the Concerto in A major (BWV 1055) and offers a certain parallel to performances of Handel's *Concerti grossi* in London during the very same

years. It is by no means obvious what a second harpsichord, if there were one present, actually played: was it only simple four-part chords or something more extravagant during the *tuttis*, when the string bass doubles at the octave?

I would like to close by stressing that questions like these are matters for careful consideration; they are not merely tricky little problems that need to be dealt with as quickly as possible so that we can get down to the reality of *playing music*. It could be that performers asking about the original attitudes towards the music they are playing are bound to remain somewhat schizoid: what they do as players is one thing, what they understand as scholarly thinkers may be quite different. I don't myself find this objectionable because Performance Practice is not only about performing music but about trying to understand how it was heard and understood during its period. Raising questions about practical matters is something without which our understanding of music itself – not merely its performance – will suffer.

Postscript

The edition of the 1738 *Vorschriften* referred to above as 'forthcoming' (Pamela L. Poulin, *J.S. Bach's Precepts and Principles for Playing the Thorough-Bass or Accompanying in Four Parts*, Oxford University Press, 1994) re-translates Spitta's Appendix II.913ff and describes a background to the treatise. It assumes throughout that differences between it and Niedt's *Handleitung* are changes and additions made by J.S. Bach. However, the source yields no new information either to establish this or to say when, where and by whom the ms was actually written out. A bare translation of Thieme's (later?) titlepage for the new edition's own title is therefore misleading.

The question raised above – why Niedt rather than Heinichen would have been used in Leipzig in 1738 – is not developed, nor what the implications are of Bach's retailing Heinichen 1728 (see *Bach-Dokumente* II, No. 260), nor whether Thieme was correct in the first place to see the ms as concerned with both playing accompaniment and learning four-part harmony. Also misleading is a remark in the new edition's preface (by C. Wolff) that Bach's continuo practice „is apparently also quite well reflected in some later thorough-bass realizations ... such as Kirnberger's keyboard accompaniment for the *Andante*“ of the Musical Offering.

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„REGELN DES GENERALBASSES“
Eine Berliner Handschrift des späten 18. Jahrhunderts

VON JÖRG-ANDREAS BÖTTICHER

In der Berliner Staatsbibliothek befindet sich ein bis jetzt wenig beachtetes Manuskript mit dem Titel *Regeln des Generalbasses von dem Herrn Musico Heering* (Mus.ms.theor. 348)¹. Peter Williams, dem ich den Quellenhinweis verdanke, kommentiert die Handschrift als: „important 4-part realizations of Corelli's op.I trio sonatas.“² Bei einer ersten Durchsicht entpuppte sich die Quelle jedoch als ein Konvolut mit knapp 400 Seiten ausgesetzter Generalbässe, weit mehr als „nur“ Corellis Triosonaten. Dazu auf den ersten 28 Seiten Generalbaßregeln, d.h. ausgesetzte und zum Teil erweiterte Kadenz in einer didaktischen Ordnung. Eine solche (praxisbezogene?) Sammlung ist für heutige Generalbaßspieler und -spielerinnen von höchstem Interesse, sind doch historische Aussetzungen gerade in Deutschland nur spärlich überliefert. Doch scheint bis heute niemand die Quelle hinsichtlich ihres praktischen Werts für das Generalbaßspiel wirklich durchgearbeitet zu haben.³ Im *Bach-jahrbuch* 1993 habe ich bereits eine Darstellung der in dieser Handschrift überlieferten Aussetzungen zu den Werken Johann Sebastian Bachs vorgenommen.⁴ In diesem Aufsatz möchte ich nun einen Einblick in die gesamte Quelle geben und versuchen, ihre Bedeutung für die Interpretation des späten Generalbaßstils kritisch darzustellen. Dazu wird im Anhang die Möglichkeit gegeben, anhand der Edition ausgewählter Stellen einer Triosonate mit originaler Aussetzung (aus dem vorliegenden Manuskript) diese im Zusammenhang spielen, bzw. prüfen zu können.⁵

¹ Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung; in der Folge abgekürzt als SBB.

² Peter Williams, *Figured Bass Accompaniment I*, Edinburgh 1970, S.110; „Basso Continuo on the Organ“, *Music and Letters* 50 (1969) 241.

³ Die Existenz der Quelle erwähnte Werner Neumann 1959 in einer Fußnote (*NBA I/21*, Krit. Bericht, S. 56).

⁴ Jörg-Andreas Bötticher, „Generalbaßpraxis in der Bach-Nachfolge“, in: *BJb* 79 1993, S. 103–125.

⁵ Es handelt sich um die bisher nicht edierte Triosonate C-Dur für zwei Flöten und Basso continuo von Johann Gottlieb Graun. Eine vollständige Edition wird 1995 im Amadeus-Verlag erscheinen.

Inhalt und Beschreibung der Quelle

Wie die Tabelle I zeigt, sind in dem Berliner Manuskript Aussetzungen zu den verschiedensten Werken erhalten:

Tabelle. I: Inhaltsübersicht (alphabetisch) zu Mus.ms.theor. 348

<i>Komponist</i>	<i>Werk</i>
C.Ph. E. Bach	7 Triosonaten
J.S. Bach	Johannespassion BWV 245 (unvollständig ⁶) Ouvertüre in h-moll BWV 1067 Triosonate aus dem Musikalischen Opfer BWV 1079
W.Fr. Bach	Sinfonie d-moll für 2 Flöten und Streichquartett (Fragment)
A. Corelli	Sonate a tre op. I-IV
J.G. Graun	Ouvertüre d-moll 8 Triosonaten
G.Fr. Händel (Heering)	4 (?) Ouvertüren, u.a. zu Oreste Generalbaßregeln (fol.1v-15r)
G.B. Pergolesi	Stabat Mater

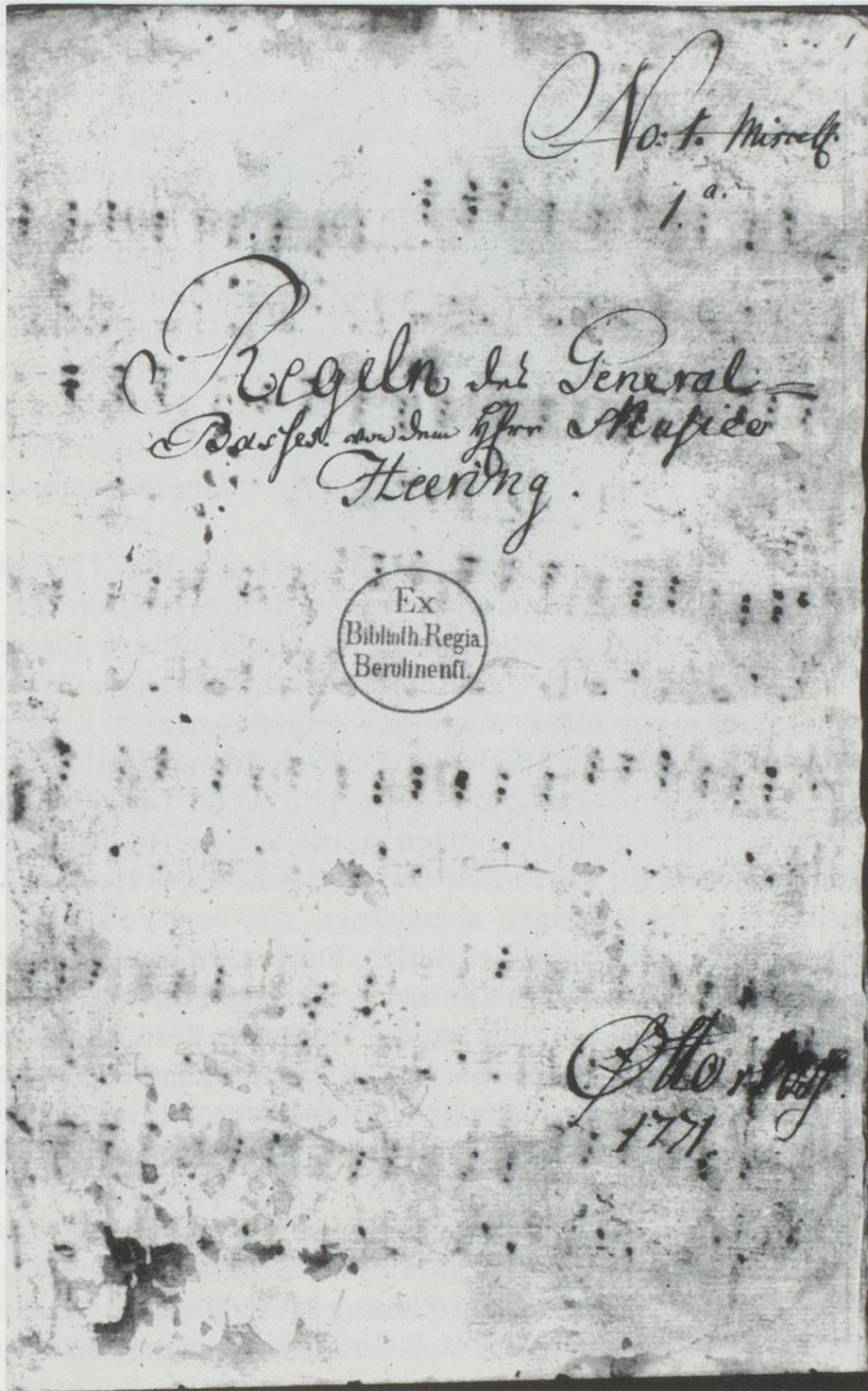
Die Werke tragen bis auf wenige Ausnahmen keine Komponistenangaben. Die Kompositionsvorlagen zu den Aussetzungen erstrecken sich über den Zeitraum von 1681 (Corelli, *Sonate à tre* op. I) bis ca. 1760 (Graun und C.Ph..E. Bach, Triosonaten).

Dieses umfangreiche Manuskript besteht aus insgesamt 214 Blättern in der Größe 4°, die in mehreren Papierlagen und vermutlich zu unterschiedlichen Zeiten zusammengebunden wurden. Dies läßt sich an der nur teilweise originalen Paginierung erkennen. Das Hauptwasserzeichen ist FR = Fridericus Rex mit gekreuzten Schwertern⁷, also eindeutig ein Berliner Papier. Das Konvolut wurde später in einem kartonierten Folioband zusammengebunden und gelangte in dieser gebundenen Form 1851 aus dem Besitz der Familie Voß-Buch in die damalige Königliche Bibliothek zu Berlin.

Die Titelseite lautet: *Regeln des General-/ Basses von dem Herrn Musico / Heering*. Darunter der Besitzervermerk: „Otto von Voß 1771.“

⁶ Ohne Nr. 19, bricht ab nach Nr. 24, Takt 128 (Nummern nach NBA II/4).

⁷ Freundliche Mitteilung von Matthias Wendt, Düsseldorf.



Faks. I: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz,
Mus. ms. theor. 348.

Auf den ersten Blick ist das Schriftbild in der ganzen Quelle ziemlich einheitlich und läßt einen Hauptschreiber vermuten. Es macht einen eher unruhigen und etwas flüchtigen Eindruck. Der Notentext trägt viele Korrekturen und scheint nur in wenigen Fällen eine Reinschrift zu sein. Bevor ich auf nähere Schreiberfragen eingehe, sind einige biographische Untersuchungen notwendig.

Die zwei Namen im Titel Otto von Voß und Heering sind vor allem in der Bachforschung nicht unbekannt. Sie spielen beide eine wichtige Rolle in der Berliner Bachüberlieferung. Allerdings gibt es viele offene Fragen bezüglich der Identität der Person mit dem Nachnamen Heering. Der Name Heering mit zwei e oder auch Hering, Häring taucht im Berliner Musikleben des 18. Jahrhunderts mehrfach auf. Die Bachforschung kennt einen Hering 1738, Hering 1760 und einen S. Hering, alle ohne genaue Lebensdaten. Im Umfeld C.Ph.E. Bachs begegnet – allerdings meistens ohne Nennung eines Vornamens – häufig ein „Musicus Hering, der ältere, in Berlin“. Dieser war offensichtlich Musiker und Musikalienhändler und vertrieb Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs Werke in Berlin nach dessen Weggang nach Hamburg (1768). Aus Briefen Carl Philipps und Subskriptionslisten erfahren wir, daß das in Frage kommende Mitglied der Familie Johann Friedrich Hering ist.⁸ Nähere Lebensdaten fehlen leider bisher.

Otto Carl Friedrich von Voß (siehe Bild) wurde am 8. Juni 1755 als Sohn des Friedrich Christoph Hieronymus von Voß in Berlin geboren. Er verbrachte seine Jugendzeit in Berlin und studierte ab 1773 in Frankfurt, später in Göttingen Jura. Nach seinem Studium wurde er preußischer Oberpräsident und Staatsminister und spielte vor allem auch mit seinen sozialen Reformen in der Entwicklung des preußischen Staates eine entscheidende Rolle. Kontakte zum Königshof bestanden einerseits durch seine politische Tätigkeit, andererseits durch verwandtschaftliche Beziehungen: Seine Schwester, Julie von Voß, die Gräfin Ingenheim, war für kurze Zeit Gattin des Königs Friedrich Wilhelm II.

Nach politischen Fehlschlägen abgedrängt, zog von Voß sich zurück auf seine Güter in Buch und Karow bei Berlin. Dort starb er am 30. Januar 1828. Die Musik nahm Zeit seines Lebens einen wichtigen Platz ein. So legte er eine bedeutende Musikaliensammlung an, die in ihrem Kern aus Handschriften mit Musik vom ausgehenden 16. bis ins 18. Jahrhundert bestand; sie wurde nach seinem Tod von seinen Söhnen weiterbetreut, durch Musik aus dem frühen 19. Jahrhundert ergänzt und schließlich 1851 der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin als Schenkung überlassen.⁹

Das Manuskript *Regeln des Generalbasses von dem Herrn Musico Heering* stellt offenbar das erste Dokument in dieser Sammlung dar. Von der Sammlung existieren mehrere Kataloge. Im Katalog 21 der Berliner Staatsbibliothek, dem ältesten und ausführlichsten Voß-Katalog, figuriert unsere Quelle auf

⁸ So findet sich in der Ankündigung des Nachlaßverzeichnisses von C.Ph.E. Bachs (Hamburg 1790) folgende Nachricht: „In Berlin nimmt der Musikus Johann Friedrich Hering ... Pränumeration an.“

⁹ Frau Bettina Faulstich aus Göttingen bereitet eine Dissertation über die gesamte Sammlung vor. Ich verdanke ihr einige Hinweise zu diesem Thema. Siehe auch: Bettina Faulstich, „Die Werke Johann Sebastian Bachs in der Musikaliensammlung der Familie von Voss“, in: *Jahrbuch des Staatlichen Instituts für Musikforschung Preußischer Kulturbesitz* 1993, S.131–140.



Otto Carl Friedrich von Voß

König. Preuss. wirkl. Geheimer Staats-Kriegs- und
dirigirender Minister; Ritter des rothen Adler u.
Schwarzer-Ordens, Domprobst zu Havelberg,
Domdechant zu Magdeburg, Erbherr auf Birk

Seite 149 unter *Miscallanea 1a. Regeln des Generalbasses ...* Dieser Katalog enthält zudem noch ein Verzeichnis mit den im Besitz der Familie Voß-Buch befindlichen Musikinstrumenten. Nahezu alle im Katalog aufgeführten Stücke sind mit diesem Instrumentarium spielbar. Einzig ein Tasteninstrument fehlt. Es gibt jedoch Hinweise, daß sich das sogenannte „Bach-Cembalo“ für einige Zeit im Besitz der Familie Voß befand.¹⁰ Ebenfalls ist bekannt, daß Prinz Ludwig von Preußen 1788 eine der beiden Amalien-Orgeln Otto von Voß für die Bucher Schloßkirche, den Voßschen Familiensitz, schenkte.¹¹ Im Havelberger Dom ließ von Voß 1795 eine Orgel nach eigenen Plänen erweitern.¹² Dies alles deutet auf eine rege Musikpflege und nicht nur auf eine Musikaliensammlung aus bibliophilem Interesse.¹³ Daß Otto Carl Friedrich von Voß selbst musikalisch tätig war, ist gut belegt. Dazu drei kleine Notizen:

¹⁰ Georg Kinsky, „Zur Echtheitsfrage des Berliner Bach-Flügels“, in: *Bf* 21 (1924) 128–138; ferner: *Kielklaviere, Bestandskatalog des Berliner Musikinstrumenten-Museums*, Berlin 1991, S.102.

¹¹ Nachweis in: *500 Jahre Orgeln in Berliner Evangelischen Kirchen*, Berlin 1991, Band 1, S. 129.

¹² Uwe Czubatynski, „Biographische Notizen zu Otto Carl Friedrich von Voß“, in: *Bfb* 78 (1992) S.119.

¹³ Darauf weist schon Werner Neumann hin: siehe KB zur *NBA* I/21 (1959), S. 55.

- Ein Vermerk in Werdens Taschenbuch auf das Jahr 1803:
„Privat Concerts und kleinere Zusammenstellungen giebt es hier häufig. Das bedeutendste ist das wöchentliche Winter-Concert des Ministers von Voß, das aus reiner Liebe zur Kunst von dem großen Geschäftsmann, der zugleich ein braver Violinist und Fortepianospielder und in der Theorie der Kunst vertraut ist, gegeben wird, und woran außer den berühmtesten Virtuosen auch fürstliche Personen Antheil nehmen.“¹⁴
- Aus der „Gedächtnispredigt“ auf von Voß (1823):
„Der Minister spielte sehr fertig das Klavier, kunstgerecht die Orgel, größtentheils schwere Bachsche Sachen, und hatte Kenntniss vom Generalbaß.“¹⁵
- Im *Neuen Nekrolog der Deutschen* (1824) lesen wir über von Voß:
„Seine einzige Erholung von den Geschäften des Tages suchte und fand er in abendlichen Stunden, in dem Genuß der Musik, die er sehr schätzte, und selbst, mit nicht geringer Fertigkeit, übte.“¹⁶

Von der Handschrift Otto von Voß' gibt es nur wenige gesicherte Proben. Dank der freundlichen Hilfe des Schriftexperten Yoshitake Kobayashi vom Bachinstitut Göttingen konnte sich jedoch meine Vermutung erhärten: dieser auf dem Titelblatt als Besitzer unterzeichnende O. v. Voß ist gleichzeitig der Hauptschreiber unserer Quelle. So können wir die Entstehung der Quelle nachverfolgen: der 1771 16 Jahre alte Otto von Voß nahm Generalbaßunterricht bei dem Musicus Johann Friedrich Heering dem Älteren. Wenn wir annehmen, daß Johann Friedrich Hering und S. Hering identisch sind, so schließen sich die Kreise: Das S. vor Hering könnte somit als Senior aufgelöst werden. Eine nähere Schriftuntersuchung bestätigt diese Annahme: Besonders auf den ersten Seiten können einzelne Schriftzüge von S. Hering beobachtet werden. Zudem ist auf einigen Seiten der Generalbaßregeln der Baß zunächst vorge-schrieben und danach ausgesetzt worden (siehe Faksimile II).

Wer selbst Generalbaßunterricht oder Harmonielehre erteilt, kann sich einen solchen Arbeitsprozeß leicht vorstellen: der Lehrer schreibt einige Beispiele vor und läßt den Schüler die restlichen Bässe selbst aussetzen. Vielleicht hilft er an einigen Stellen nach, setzt in einer komplizierteren Tonart wieder ein paar Kadenz vollstän-dig aus; ansonsten läßt er den Schüler spielen bzw. schreiben und greift, wenn nötig, unterstützend und korrigierend ein. Im weiteren Verlauf des Manuskripts lassen sich Heering-ähnliche Schrift-züge beobachten; eine zunächst verwirrende Erkenntnis, aber an sich ein natürlicher Vorgang: der Schüler imitiert die Schriftweise des Lehrers und nimmt sie mehr und mehr an.

Um die Person des Lehrers Heering ziehen sich durch die Schreibertätigkeit, das Tradieren und nicht zuletzt auch die praktische Benutzung von Musi-kalien mehrere Überlieferungskreise. Durch den Kontakt zu C.Ph.E.Bach

¹⁴ Zitiert nach B. Faulstich, *Jahrbuch* 1993, S.133f.

¹⁵ Zitiert nach Uwe Czubatynski, a.a.O. S. 119.

¹⁶ *Neuer Nekrolog der Deutschen*, Jg.1, 1823, Ilmenau 1824, S.87.

und sein Umfeld hatte Heering u.a. Zugang zu Werken J.S.Bachs, die Carl Philipp von seinem Vater geerbt oder in Abschriften mitgebracht hatte. Auch der Kontakt zu anderen Musikern ist nachweisbar. Ein weiteres Indiz für den Kontakt zwischen der Familie von Voß und Heering ist die Tatsache, daß die Familie Voß-Buch 1806 viele Musikalien „aus dem Heeringschen Nachlaß“ erbt, was durch eine Notiz im Katalog 21 belegt ist.¹⁷ Deshalb halte ich es für sehr naheliegend, daß in dieser Unterrichtssituation zwischen J.Fr.Heering und O. von Voß der Grundstock für das Manuskript gelegt wurde.

Die Generalbaßregeln

Die Generalbaßregeln nehmen nur gerade 28 Seiten des Konvoluts ein. Sie bilden jedoch die Basis für die folgenden knapp 400 Seiten Aussetzungen. Deshalb seien die wichtigsten Merkmale der Regeln hier kurz beschrieben.

- Die Beispiele sind nach zunehmendem Schwierigkeitsgrad geordnet: von einer leichten I-V-I-Kadenz in C-Dur bis zu erweiterten Kadenzbässen, Oktavharmonisierungen und Sequenzen mit Dissonanzhäufung.
- Vor jeder Beispielgruppe (Klasse) ist die zu übende Bezifferungsart notiert.
- Fast alle Beispiele erscheinen in verschiedenen Lagen und (anfänglich) durch alle Tonarten.
- Die Aussetzung ist streng vierstimmig (rechts dreistimmig und links der Baß).
- Dissonanzen werden übergebunden.
- Die harmonische Bewegung verläuft meistens in Vierteln, entsprechend sind die Aussetzungen rhythmisiert. Nur auf den letzten drei Seiten (26–28) ist eine Achtelbewegung in V-I-Kadenz beziffert und ausgeschrieben.
- Die oberste Stimme (der Sopran) der Aussetzungen erstreckt sich von f¹ (einmal auch c¹) bis a². Das Mittel liegt um c².
- Die allgemeinen Stimmführungsregeln wie Gegenbewegung, Quint- und Oktavparallelen-Verbot, keine unnötigen Sprünge, eine schöne Oberstimmführung etc. können bei (fast) allen Beispielen beobachtet werden.

Zur Veranschaulichung seien auf den nächsten Seiten zwei Beispiele¹⁸ wiedergegeben, das erste aus der Beispielklasse 1, das zweite aus der Klasse 11:

Generalbaßbeispiele dieser einfachen Art, welche die Grundstufe repräsentieren, sind im deutschen Raum im 18. Jahrhundert weit verbreitet. Die Lehrbücher, angefangen bei Niedt, über Heinichen, Mattheson etc. zeugen von dieser Praxis.¹⁹

¹⁷ SBB Mus.ms.theor. K 21, nach Nr. 510 der Partituren.

¹⁸ In Mus.ms.theor. 348 wird für das obere System immer der Sopran-C-Schlüssel verwendet. Im folgenden erscheint bei den Übertragungen dagegen der G-Violinschlüssel.

¹⁹ Vgl. dazu E. Ulrich, *Studien zur deutschen Generalbaßpraxis in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Kassel 1932.

Pag: 1.

The image shows two systems of handwritten musical notation. The first system consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a treble clef, containing a series of notes with stems pointing up and down, some with flags. The second staff is a lower voice line with a bass clef, containing a series of notes with stems pointing up. The third and fourth staves are accompaniment staves with a bass clef, featuring chords and individual notes. The second system also consists of four staves, with a similar structure to the first system, including a vocal line and accompaniment staves.

The image shows two systems of handwritten musical notation. The first system consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a treble clef, containing a series of notes with stems pointing up and down, some with flags. The second staff is a lower voice line with a bass clef, containing a series of notes with stems pointing up. The third and fourth staves are accompaniment staves with a bass clef, featuring chords and individual notes. The second system also consists of four staves, with a similar structure to the first system, including a vocal line and accompaniment staves.

Notenbeispiel 1: Heering fol. 1r-2r (= Faksimile II)

The image shows a musical score for a four-part setting. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature. The bass staff contains a sequence of notes with figured bass notation underneath: 9/7, 8/6, 9/7, 8/6, 9/7, 8/6, 9/7, 8/6, 7/5. The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs.

Notenbeispiel 2: Heering fol. 14v.

Man erinnere sich auch an die Aussage Carl Philipp Emanuel Bachs über den Kompositionsunterricht seines Vaters (im Nekrolog an Forkel): „Den Anfang mussten seine Schüler mit der Erlernung des reinen 4stimmigen Generalbasses machen“.²⁰

Diese Generalbaßtechnik wird nun als Grundlage für die in der Quelle folgenden Aussetzungen verwendet (fol. 16^v–214^v). Allein schon in Bezug auf die Quantität dieser Aussetzungen kann die vorliegende Handschrift Einzigartigkeit beanspruchen, da nach meinem Wissen bis jetzt – außer den Tonelli-Aussetzungen zu Corellis op.V und einigen kleineren Werken – keine vergleichbare Sammlung von Continuo-Aussetzungen bekannt sind!²¹

Die Aussetzungen

Während die Generalbaßregeln sowie einige Aussetzungen wohl im Unterricht bei Heering entstanden sind, halte ich es für unwahrscheinlich, dasselbe auch für die zahlreichen erhaltenen weiteren Aussetzungen anzunehmen. Abgesehen davon, daß uns heute eine solche Fleißarbeit eher fremd erscheint, führen uns weitere Beobachtungen zu folgender These: Der Großteil der erhaltenen Aussetzungen in Mus.ms.theor. 348 ist originales Stimmenmaterial aus der Musizierpraxis eines Berliner Adelhauses. Das möchte ich an folgenden Punkten zeigen:

1. Alle Triosonaten sind fortlaufend numeriert mit *Trio. Nr.15* o.ä.
2. Die Kompositionsvorlagen zu den ausgesetzten Stücken sind mit wenigen Ausnahmen alle in der Voß-Buchschen Musikalien-Sammlung vorhanden. Das entnehme ich dem Berliner Katalog 21, den ich anfangs nur zur Hilfe bei der Identifikation der Vorlagen beigezogen hatte. Bei größeren Werken existieren nicht nur die Partitur, sondern häufig auch ausgeschriebene Stimmen. Die Numerierung der Triosonaten wurde doppelt geführt: Eine innere (erste) auf einzelnen Stimmen und eine äußere (spätere) auf den Titelseiten der Stimmsätze. Die äußere stimmt mit dem Katalog 21 überein, die innere korrespondiert mit den erhaltenen Aussetzungen (siehe Tabelle II).

²⁰ C.Ph.E. Bach, *Biographische Mitteilungen über J.S. Bach*, Hamburg 1775, wiedergegeben in *Dok.III*, 803 D.

²¹ Siehe dazu die Anmerkung 35 in *Bjb* 79 (1993), S.110.

Komponist/Werk	Tonart	Heering fol.	Heering Nr.	Mus.ms.theor. K 21*	Andere Nachweise	SBB Mus.ms.	Nr. ^o
Heering/Von Voß Generalbaßregeln		1'-16					
Graun Ouverture	d	16'	-	Sinfonien Nr. 23			
Händel (?) Ouverture	d	21'	Ouverture 16				
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc	F	24	Trio Nr. 12	Trio Nr. 6	Wendt ^o 112	8297/2: III No 6	12
(dito), andere Aussetzung		28					
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc	C	32	Trio Nr. 13	Trio Nr. 7	Wendt 90	8297/3: III No 7	13
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc	D	36	Trio Nr. 14	Trio Nr. 8	Wendt 33a	8297/4: III No 8	14
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc	G	40	Trio Nr. 15	Trio Nr. 9	Wendt 56	8297/5: III No 9	15
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc	D	44	Trio Nr. 17	Trio Nr. 11	Wendt 50	8297/6: III No 11	17
(dito), andere Aussetzung		52					
CPEB Trio Fl, VI, bc / Wq 147	C	48	Trio Nr. 16	TrioNr. 10	Helm [#] 571		
Graun Trio Fl I+II bc,	h	56	Trio Nr. 18	Trio Nr. 12	Wendt 44	8297/13: III No 12	18
(dito), andere Aussetzung		60					
(dito), andere Aussetzung		68					
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc	G	64	Trio Nr. 19	Trio Nr. 13	Wendt 84	8297/10: III No 13	19
(dito), andere Aussetzung		72					
CPEB Trio VI I+II, bc / Wq 148	a	76	Trio Nr. 20	Trio Nr. 18	Helm 575		
CPEB Trio VI I+II, bc / Wq 159	B	80	Trio Nr. 21	Trio Nr. 14	Helm 587		
CPEB Trio VI I+II, bc / Wq 154	F	84	Trio Nr. 27	Trio Nr.17	Helm 576		
CPEB Trio Fl, VI, bc / Wq 161/2	B	89	Trio Nr. 28	Trio Nr. 19	Helm 578		
CPEB Trio VI I+II, bc / Wq 155	e	93	Trio Nr. 29	Trio Nr. 20	Helm 577		

	G	99	-	Trio Nr. 5	Wendt 71	8297/1: III No 5	11
Graun Trio Fl I+II, bc (dito), andere Aussetzung		99	-				
Händel Ouverturen		211					
Ouvertüres zu Orestes		103	Ouverture 20	Quart-, Quint- und Sextettos			
CPEB Trio VI I+II, bc / Wq 152		104	Ouverture 22	Nr. 7 „27 Ouvertüres ... di Händel“			
Corelli, op. I-IV		105	Ouverture 23				
JSB Johannespassion/BWV 245	G	107	Sonata 30	Trio Nr. 21	Helm 581 Am.B. ^Δ 249		
WFB Sinfonie	d	109	-	Partitur Nr. 517			Mus.ms. P 29
		177	-	-	Falck ⁶ , S.123		
		189'	-	-	Schreiber S.Hering, Prov.: Voß-Buch (vgl. KB zu NBA VII/1, S.37)		Mus.ms. P 291/6;
Pergolesi „Stabat Mater“		195	-	Partitur Nr. 13	Am.B. 523		
JSB Trio VI, Fl, bc/BWV 1079	c	205'	-	Trio Nr. 28			
JSB Canon perpetuus Nr. 8		210'	-				

* SBB, Mus.ms.theor. K 21, „Verzeichnis von den Musicalien des Freiherrn v. Voß“.

◊ Numerierung auf einzelnen Stimmen (ausgenommen Titelseite)

◦ Matthias Wendt, *Die Trios der Brüder Johann Gottlieb und Carl Heinrich Braun*, Diss. Bonn 1983, Incipit-Verzeichnis S. 253ff.

Eugene E. Helm, *Thematic Catalogue of the Works of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach*, New Haven & London 1989.

Δ Martin Falck, *Wilhelm Friedemann Bach*, Leipzig ²1919.

3. In vielen Vorlagen beobachten wir die gleiche Schrift wie in der vorliegenden Quelle. Aus dem Grund liegt es nahe, O. von Voß als Schreiber sowohl der Stimmen als auch der dazugehörigen Aussetzungen anzunehmen.

3. Die Aussetzungen sind meistens bezeichnet mit „Basso“ oder „Cembalo“: ein deutlicher Hinweis auf die Verwendung dieser Stücke als Stimmenmaterial.

4. Einige Aussetzungen tragen Vortragsbezeichnungen wie Verzierungen, Artikulationszeichen und dynamische Angaben, *tasto solo* oder *unisono* (nur im Baß).

5. Über zwei Triosonaten von Johann Gottlieb Graun finden wir folgende Bemerkungen: „So wie es muß *accompagnirt* werden und ich es habe spielen müssen“ (fol. 32^r) und „So wie ich es habe spielen müssen“ (fol. 68^r). Auch wenn eine solche Bemerkung vielleicht im Unterricht geschrieben wurde, nimmt sie Bezug auf eine praktische Situation: der Schüler/Generalbaßspieler beruft sich auf eine Autorität (seinen Lehrer oder einen Kapellmeister?) und verifiziert die geschriebene Aussetzung durch diesen Kommentar. Die Schrift könnte die Spätschrift von Otto von Voß sein.

Man kann sich natürlich bei allen erhaltenen Aussetzungen des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts die Frage stellen, inwiefern diese Stücke nur harmonische Übungen, inwiefern sie originales Stimmenmaterial sind und ob sie wirklich so gespielt wurden. Gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts gewinnt diese Frage aber an Bedeutung, in einer Zeit, in der trotz einer Unmenge an gedruckten Generalbaßschulen das Spiel nach Ziffern immer altmodischer wurde. Das Generalbaßspiel – bisher den ausgebildeten Musikern überlassen – weicht, dem musikalischen Stilwandel nachhinkend, immer mehr dem vorgefertigten Klaviersatz. In dieser Funktion könnten auch die Aussetzungen in unserer Quelle betrachtet werden.

Die Tabelle (vgl. S. 96–97) bietet eine ausführliche Inhaltsangabe der Quelle. Die verwendeten Konkordanzen werden in den Anmerkungen erwähnt.

Beobachtungen zum Stil der Aussetzungen

Der Stil der Aussetzungen richtet sich nicht nach dem Stil oder der Besetzung der Kompositionen. Eine *Sonata a tre* von Corelli ist auf die gleiche Art ausgesetzt wie eine Triosonate von C. Ph. E. Bach, der Eingangschor zur Johannespassion gleich wie eine Soloarie; d.h. wir können in allen Aussetzungen nahezu identische Stilmerkmale beobachten.

Entsprechend den *Regeln* verlaufen auch die Aussetzungen im allgemeinen als vierstimmiger Satz. Teilweise gibt es in der rechten Hand einige vierstimmige Akkorde, jedoch meistens aus harmonischen Gründen (Dissonanz-

²² So z.B. in SBB, Mus.ms.8297/1–17 (Graun-Triosonaten). Einige tragen auf dem Titelblatt den Besitzer- (und Schreiber-) Vermerk „O.v. Voss“.

häufungen) bzw. wegen der Stimmführungsregeln – sicher nicht aus Gründen der Dynamik. Zweistimmige Akkorde kommen nur in besonderen Zusammenhängen (Parallelführung der Oberstimmen) vor. Im allgemeinen werden die Akkorde nur im oberen System notiert und entsprechend rechts gespielt, d.h. das Akkompagnement ist, wie man das – außer im vollstimmigen Spiel – um diese Zeit auch nicht mehr erwarten würde, nicht geteilt.²³

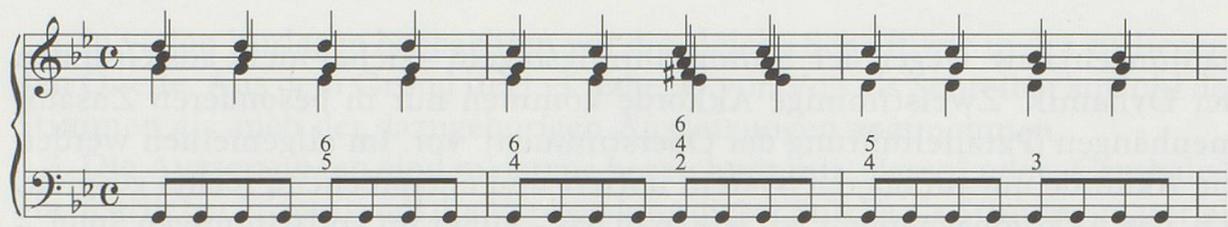
Die Akkordlage wird meist nicht nach der Position der Melodiestimme, sondern hauptsächlich aus dem bezifferten Baß und wegen einer beabsichtigten schönen Stimmführung gewählt. Hohe und auch weite Lagen werden nicht gescheut. Der Akkordrhythmus folgt im wesentlichen dem Baß, unter Verwendung von Komplementärrhythmen und regelmäßigen Repetitionen bei langsamen Sätzen bzw. langen Baßnoten. Dieses Wiederholen vollzieht sich in der Regel auf Achtel-Basis und wird durch die Aussagen mehrerer Theoretiker, allen voran J.D.Heinichen bestens bestätigt. Dazu drei Beispiele:

Adagio

Notenbeispiel 3a aus dem Anfang einer Triosonate in F-dur von Johann Gottlieb Graun („Trio: No: 12. di Sign. Graun“): Heering fol. 24r

Notenbeispiel 3b: Heinichens Aussetzung aus: *Der Generalbaß in der Composition*, Dresden 1728, S. 266.

²³ Ab fol. 212 ändert sich die Schrift und auch der Stil der Aussetzungen: Es kommen viele Dezimengriffe vor, die zwangsläufig auf beide Hände aufgeteilt werden müssen.



Notenbeispiel 4: Anfang der Johannespassion (Heering fol. 177r)

Damit sind wir bei der Frage, für welches Instrument diese Sammlung von Ausetzungen gedacht ist, für Orgel, Cembalo, Clavichord oder Fortepiano? Auf der Orgel hätte man die konsonanten Akkordtöne liegen gelassen oder allenfalls jedes Viertel neu angeschlagen.

„Auff dem Clavecin aber würde es (zumahl bey langsamer Mensur) viel zu leer ausfallen, weswegen man auff dergleichen Instrumenten die Harmonie gern zu verdoppeln, i.e. bey der durchgehenden Note den vorhergehenden Accord zu wiederholen pfliget“,

wie Heinichen empfiehlt.²⁴ Von dieser instrumentenspezifischen Continuo-Praxis zeugen auch Aussagen wie Friedrich Erhard Niedts Bitte an die Organisten,

„wenn geschwänzte Noten stehen/... sie nicht zu jeder Note mit der rechten Hand in dem sogenannten Discante mit darzuhacken und dreschen wollen.“²⁵

So erscheint in der Quelle auch mehrmals die schon erwähnte Überschrift „Cembalo“ im Titel eines Stückes, jedoch nie Orgel oder etwas anderes. Allerdings sind die *Sonata da chiesa à tre* von Corelli (op.I und III) ursprünglich sicher eher für Orgel bestimmt gewesen, während die *Sonate da camera* (op.II und IV) im Titel „Cembalo“ angeben.

Da die Aussetzungen nach und nach entstanden sind und der Inhalt nicht chronologisch geordnet ist, ist es auch sehr gut denkbar, daß Voß oder Heering für verschiedene Stücke unterschiedliche Continuo-Instrumente verwendet haben.

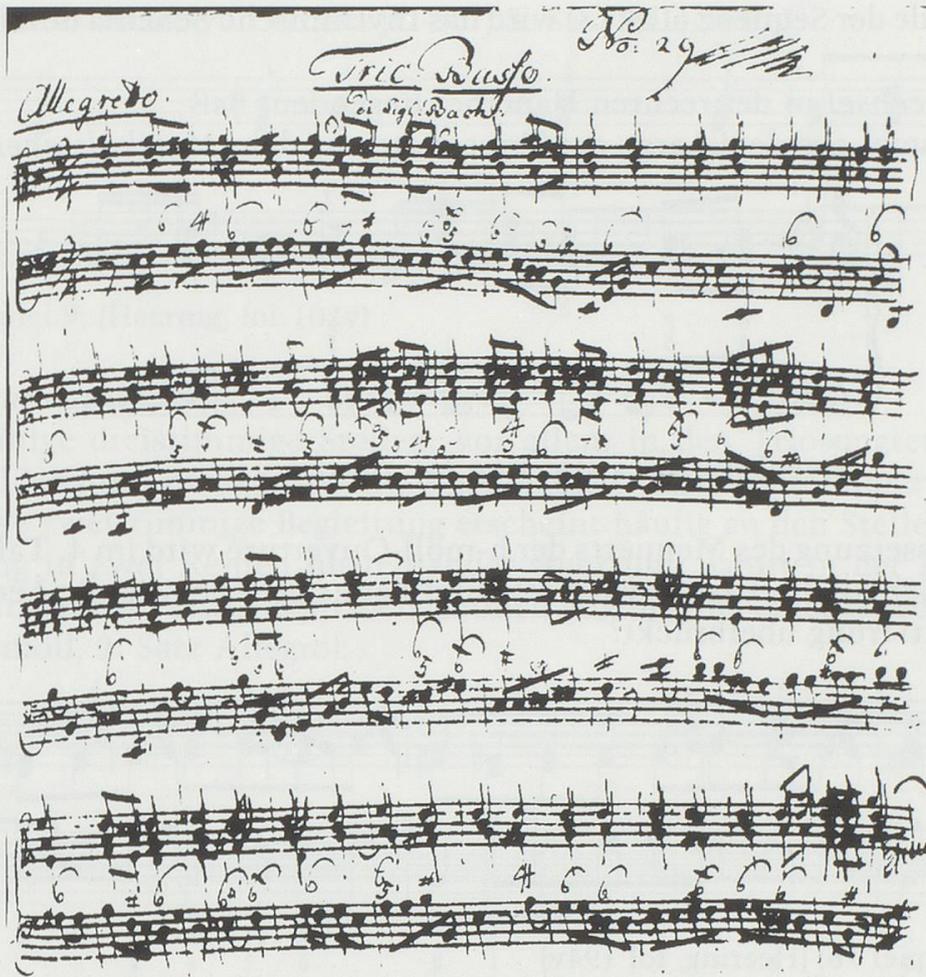
Weitere Einzelbeispiele

Die rechte Hand ist nur an sehr wenigen Stellen in der gesamten Quelle *figuriert*, d.h. in 95% der Fälle ist die Aussetzung rein akkordisch, ohne zusätzliche Harmonien oder Durchgangsnoten. Trotzdem gibt es einige interessante Einzelbeispiele zur Continuoaussetzung:

– Das *Vorschlagen* der rechten Hand auf Pausen im Baß begegnet in der Quelle so häufig, daß man von einer standardmäßigen Verwendung dieser bekannten Aussetzungstechnik sprechen kann. Hier ein Beispiel aus einem Trio von C.Ph.E. Bach in e-moll. Durch das regelmäßige Anschlagen des Akkords auf die Pause entsteht im Continuo ein stabiles Gerüst.

²⁴ Johann David Heinichen, *Der Generalbaß in der Composition*, Dresden 1728, S. 264.

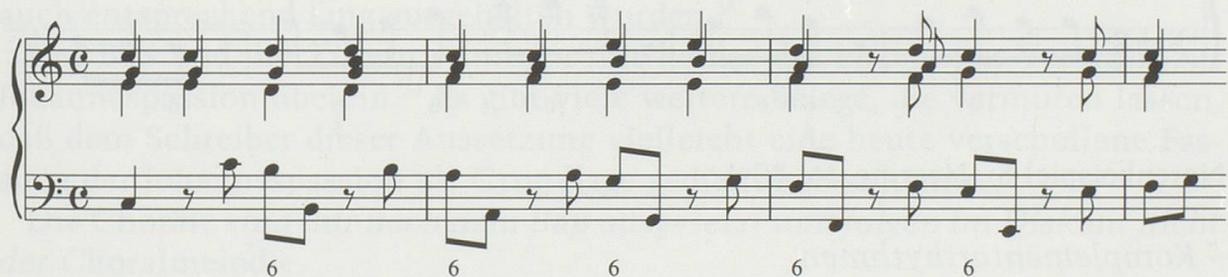
²⁵ F.E. Niedt, *Musicalische Handleitung*, Teil II Hamburg 1717, S. 41.



Notenbeispiel 5: (Heering, fol. 93r; (Facsimile III)

Darüber schreibt Georg Philipp Telemann in den *Singe-, Spiel- und Generalbaß-Übungen* (1733/34), diese Art sei „bey zärtlichen ausdrückungen und zu unterhaltung des tactes die beste.“²⁶

Stilistisch interessanter werden dann die Fälle, in denen *kein* Akkord über einer Baß-Pause gespielt wird, wie zum Beispiel im Allegro der Sonata VIII aus op.III von Corelli:



Notenbeispiel 6: (Heering, fol. 172r-172v)

²⁶ G.Ph. Telemann, *Singe-, Spiel und Generalbaß-Übungen*, Hamburg 1733/34, Anmerkung zu No. 21.

Aus einer Triosonate von Graun (G-dur, 3. Satz Allegretto)

The image shows a musical score for a piano triosonata by Graun. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains several chords, some of which are beamed together. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with eighth notes and rests. A fingering '7 5' is written below the bass line.

Notenspiel 9: (Heering, fol. 102v)

– Dreistimmige Stellen

Es gibt einige dreistimmige Stellen, vor allem in den Triosonaten C.Ph.E. Bachs und Johann Gottlieb Grauns; d.h. die rechte Hand spielt nur zwei Stimmen. Diese zweistimmige Begleitung erscheint häufig an den Stellen, wo die Bezifferung in zwei Reihen übereinander steht und damit in der Regel den (häufig parallelen) Verlauf der Oberstimmen angibt. Aus einer Ouvertüre von Graun (d-moll, 2. Satz Allegro):

The image shows a musical score for an overture by Graun. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb). It contains several chords, some of which are beamed together. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line with eighth notes. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 and sharps (#) below the notes.

Notenspiel 10: (Heering, fol. 17v)

– Aussetzung Bachscher Werke

Für die Analyse der Aussetzungen Bachscher Werke in unserer Quelle verweise ich auf meinen Aufsatz im *Bachjahrbuch* 1993. Trotzdem sollen hier einige ergänzende Bemerkungen zur Johannespassion folgen:

Die Rezitative sind in der Johannespassion in vollen Notenwerten vierstimmig und teilweise mit Überbindungen ausgeschrieben. (Notenbsp. 11.) Diese Schreibweise bedeutet allerdings nicht zwangsläufig, daß die Akkorde auch entsprechend lang ausgehalten wurden.²⁸

Der Baß und die Ziffern stimmen mit keiner der bekannten Vorlagen zur Johannespassion überein.²⁹ Es gibt viele weitere Belege, die vermuten lassen, daß dem Schreiber dieser Aussetzung vielleicht eine heute verschollene Fassung der Johannespassion als Grundlage gedient haben könnte.

Die Choräle sind nur nach dem Baß ausgesetzt und folgen im Diskant nicht der Choralmelodie.

²⁸ Vgl. die Quellenzusammenstellung zum Rezitativspiel von G. Darmstadt, „Kurz oder lang?“, in: *Musik und Kirche* 50 (1980) 130–134 und ders. in *BjBHM* 19 (1995). Im Druck.

²⁹ Vgl. KB II/4 zur Johannespassion.

Evangelista

Tenore
Evangelista,
tutti

Continuo

Aussetzung
Heering

Je - sus ging mit sei - nen Jün - gern ü - ber den Bach Ki - dron, da war ein

senza Bassono grosso

6b
b 6 4

3

Gar - ten, dar - ein ging Je - sus und sei - ne Jün - ger.

7 5b 4# 2 6 6 6 4 5 #

7 5b 4# 2 6 6 6 4 5 #

5

Ju - das a - ber, der ihn ver - riet, wuß - te den Ort auch, denn

6 4# b 4# 2 6 5 6

6 4# b 4# 2 6 5 6

7

Je - sus ver - sam - mel - te sich oft da - selbst mit sei - nen Jün - gern. Da nun

b 6 6b 4 5 # b

6 5 b 6 6 4 5 #

9

Ju - das zu sich hat - te ge - nom - men die Schar und der Ho - hen - prie - ster und

4 \sharp 2

11

Pha - ri - sä - er Die - ner; kommt er da - hin mit Fak - keln,

6 5 6 4 \sharp

13

Lam - pen und mit Waf - fen. Als nun Je - sus wuß - te al - les, was

6 5 6

15 *Tenore*

ihm be - geg - nen soll - te, ging er hin - aus und sprach zu ih - nen: Sie ant - wor - te - ten

Jesus

Wen su - chet ihr?

5 \flat 6 5 6 5 6 4 3 6 5

Notenbeispiel 11: (Partitur nach NBA II/4, Aussetzung Heering, fol. 178r)

J.S. Bach: Choral „O große Lieb“ aus BWV 245

Soprano
Flauto traverso I, II
Oboe I
Violino I

O gro - ße Lieb, o Lieb ohn al - le Ma - ße, die

Alto
Oboe II
Violino II

O gro - ße Lieb, o Lieb ohn al - le Ma - ße, die

Tenore
Viola

O gro - ße Lieb, o Lieb ohn al - le Ma - ße, die

Basso

O gro - ße Lieb, o Lieb ohn al - le Ma - ße, die

Continuo

7 6 4 3 # 4+ 6 6 7 5 #

col Bassono grosso

Aussetzung
Heering

7 6 4 3 # 4+ 6 6 7 5 #

4

dich ge - bracht auf die - se Mar - ter - stra - - ße! Ich leb - te mit der -

dich ge - bracht auf die - se Mar - ter - stra - ße! Ich leb - te mit der

dich ge - bracht auf die - se Mar - ter - stra - ße! Ich leb - te mit der

dich ge - bracht auf die - se Mar - ter - stra - ße! Ich leb - te mit der -

6 2 6 6 4 7^b 4 3 6 7 5

6 2 6 6 4 7^b 4 3 6 7 5

8

Welt in Lust und Freuden, und du mußt leiden.

Welt in Lust und Freuden, und du mußt leiden.

Welt in Lust und Freuden, und du mußt leiden.

Welt in Lust und Freuden, und du mußt leiden.

Welt in Lust und Freuden, und du mußt leiden.

Welt in Lust und Freuden, und du mußt leiden.

Notenbeispiel 12: (Partitur nach *NBA II/4*, Aussetzung Heering, fol. 178v)

Das ist an sich nicht verwunderlich; es widerspricht nur der heute üblichen landläufigen Praxis, wo der Organist bei Bachchorälen – aus Ehrfurcht vor dem Bachschen Satz – meist aus der Partitur spielt.

Beurteilung der Quelle im Kontext anderer Zeugnisse

Daß diese Art der Generalbaß-Aussetzungen nicht nur didaktische Hintergründe hat und als bloße Harmonieübung abgetan werden kann, sondern als Beleg für eine historische Praxis sehr ernst genommen werden muß, zeigt sich auch an den Aussagen eines wichtigen deutschen Theoretikers des 18. Jahrhunderts, Johann Friedrich Daube. In seinem Traktat *General-Baß in drey Akkorden*, Leipzig 1756 bezeichnet er diesen Stil als die „simple oder gemeine Art.“ Dabei unterscheidet er dreierlei Arten „der vollkommenen praktischen Ausübung des Generalbasses:“

„1) die simple oder gemeine; 2) die natürliche, oder die der Eigenschaft einer Melodie oder eines Stücks am nächsten kommt. 3) Die künstliche oder zusammengesetzte. Die erste von diesen dreyen ist die leichteste. Sie wird bey Solo, Trio, Concerto, Arien etc. gebraucht. ... Die simple oder gemeine Bespielung des General-Basses wird erlangt: wenn man sich bemühet, den musikalischen Dreyklang jederzeit hören zu lassen; sehr wenige Fälle sind hier ausgenommen. ... Es ist eine besondere Schönheit des Accompagnirens, wenn man die Accorde ganz deutlich, ohne Zierrathen oder Brechung derselben hören läßt: es sey denn, daß eine kurze Pause erfolgte, unter deren Zeitraum, die rechte Hand die Harmonie des darauf kommenden

Basses anschläget. ... Die zweyte Art des Accompagnirens besteht darin, daß man nach der Eigenschaft des Stücks accompagnire. Hier ist zu erinnern, daß diese, und die letzte Art, aus den vorhergehenden entspringen, und nur wegen einiger Verschiedenheit abgesondert ist.“³⁰

Leider bringt Daube keine Notenbeispiele als Illustration zu den verschiedenen Arten des Continuospieles. Seine Worte beschreiben aber genauestens diesen Stil, den wir in der vorliegenden Quelle beobachtet haben. Es gibt dazu – abgesehen von den Beispielen in anderen Lehrbüchern (z.B. Heinichen 1728 und Mattheson 1731) – mehrere Beispiele aus dem Umkreis Johann Sebastian Bachs, welche ebenfalls diese erste Art des rein akkordischen Spiels, den Basis-Continuostil repräsentieren:

- a) G.Ph. Telemanns *Singe-, Spiel- und Generalbaßübungen* 1733/34
- b) Einige Passagen in J.S. Bachs Sonaten für Violine, bzw. Flöte und obligates Cembalo.
- c) Fragment einer Aussetzung zu BWV 3, Satz 3:³¹

The image shows three systems of musical notation for a fragment of BWV 3, Satz 3. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system (measures 1-5) shows a simple harmonic accompaniment. The second system (measures 6-10) continues this style. The third system (measures 11-15) shows more complex chordal textures, with square brackets in the treble staff indicating corrections in the original manuscript.

[] = Korrekturen im Original

Notenbeispiel 13: Fragment einer Aussetzung zu BWV 3, Satz 3.³²

³⁰ J.Fr. Daube, *General-Baß in drey Accorden*, Leipzig 1756, S.195ff.

³¹ Paris, Bibliotheque nationale Ms. 21008; Faksimile im Versteigerungskatalog 60 von L.Liepmannsohn, Berlin 1930, wiedergegeben in moderner Übertragung in MGG 4, Sp. 1727.

³² Wiedergegeben nach dem Faksimile (s.o.) in der original transponierten Form (Chorton d.h. 1 Ganzton tiefer).

Obwohl dieses Fragment schon an einigen Orten diskutiert worden ist,³³ scheint es mir sinnvoll, in diesem Zusammenhang noch einmal darauf hinzuweisen und den direkten Vergleich mit den Aussetzungen aus Mus.ms.theor. 348 zu ermöglichen.

Ein halbfertiger Takt 3, Oktavparallelen in Takt 13 sowie einige Korrekturen (im Original) deuten darauf hin, daß die Aussetzung noch nicht ganz vollendet ist. Trotz der tieferen Lage dieser Aussetzung (Baßarie!) sind Ähnlichkeiten mit den Voßschen Aussetzungen vorhanden: Das akkordliche Grundgerüst, die regelmäßig wiederholten Akkorde, das Verbleiben auf der anfangs gewählten Lage. Zu recht schreibt Helmut Schultz dazu: „Die Lösung erscheint endgültig und kann für Zweifelsfälle aus der Generalbaßliteratur zur Richtschnur dienen.“³⁴

Diese Aussetzungen sind zwar nur für eine Stimme/Instrument und (obligates) Continuo, aber, gemäß den Aussagen Daubes, wird diese Art „bey Solo, Trio, Concerto, Arien etc. gebraucht.“ Deswegen ist es nicht verwunderlich, wenn sich der Aussetzungsstil auch in der vorliegenden Quelle nicht oder kaum ändert, sei es nun ein Choro-Satz, eine Soloarie oder eine Triosonate.

Aus dem Berliner Kreis sind folgende Autoren zu nennen, die Generalbaßtraktate in dieser Zeit veröffentlicht haben:

Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*, Berlin 1752.

Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg, *Handbuch bey dem Generalbass und der Composition*, Berlin 1755–58, Anhang 1760.

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art, das Clavier zu spielen*, Teil II, Berlin 1762.

Johann Philipp Kirnberger, *Grundsätze des Generalbasses als erste Linien zur Composition*, Berlin ca.1781.

Quantz geht noch von der Vierstimmigkeit als allgemeiner Regel aus, sagt aber gleich dazu, daß „es oft bessere Wirkung thut, wenn man sich nicht so genau hieran bindet,“ und gibt dann auch detaillierte Beschreibungen eines dynamischen Continuos. Sein Kollege Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach geht 1762 schon einen Schritt weiter mit seiner viel zitierten Regel im Paragraph 23 des ersten Kapitels: „Das Continuo kann ein- zwey- drey- vier- und mehrstimmig seyn.“ Davon ist jedoch in den Voßschen Aussetzungen – mit Ausnahme der schon erwähnten kurzen dreistimmigen Passagen – nichts zu sehen. Viel eher wird dort Kirnbergers Haltung und mit ihm ein altmodischerer, dem Vater

³³ Helmut Schultz, „Eine Continuoaussetzung Bachs und eine Messenskizze Mozarts“, *ZfMw* 15 (1932/33) 225ff. F. Oberdörffer, „Über die Generalbaßbegleitung zu Kammermusikwerken Bachs und des Spätbarocks“, *Mf* 10 (1957) 67f; P. Williams, *Basso Continuo...* (1969), 242f.

³⁴ Siehe Fußnote 32, S. 227.

Bach näherer Geschmack bezeugt.³⁵ Ein Vergleich des Aussetzungsstils zeigt, daß die Voßschen Sätze nicht grundverschieden von den Kirnbergerschen sind und im weiteren Sinne aus der gleichen Schule stammen müssen.

Somit bleibt festzuhalten, daß auch noch zwanzig Jahre nach dem in C. Ph. E. Bachs *Versuch* beschriebenen neuen, variablen, an Größe, Besetzung, Dynamik und Instrument angepaßten Continuostil in gewissen Kreisen das vierstimmige Generalbaßspiel in der Heeringschen bzw. Voßschen Art praktiziert wurde. So schreibt Kirnberger im Kommentar zu J. S. Bachs Andante-Beispiel gewissermassen als Verteidigung einer älteren Schule:

„Um endlich einen überzeugenden Beweis von der Nothwendigkeit der Kenntniss der verschiedenen Bezifferungsarten zu haben, habe ich Fig. LI ein Exempel von Johann Sebastian Bach aus einem Trio beigefügt, welches, ohngeachtet es nur ein Trio ist, dennoch vierstimmig accompagnirt werden muß, und kann dieses zur Wiederlegung der gemeinen Meinung dienen, als müßten Trios, Sonaten, für eine concertirende Stimme und dem Baß, imgleichen Cantaten, die nur von einem Flügel begleitet werden, nicht vierstimmig accompagniret werden.“³⁶

Hinsichtlich der praktischen Realisierung der Aussetzungen sollten wir die Möglichkeit des „manierlichen Generalbaßspiels“, wie Heinichen es nennt, nicht außer acht lassen, das heißt: eine solche vierstimmige Aussetzung bietet in der Interpretation die Basis für die Anwendung von Manieren, wie z. B. Verzierungen, freien und rhythmisierten Arpeggi etc. Nur ausnahmsweise wurden diese Manieren – wie auch die Verzierungen und Artikulationszeichen in den Melodiestimmen – ausgeschrieben; wir haben aber genügend Anhaltspunkte dafür, daß sie in der Praxis häufig eingesetzt wurden.

Wenn wir in dieser Berliner Sammlung auch keine Continuo-Aussetzungen der nach Daube „dritten, künstlichen oder zusammengesetzten Art“ – also der Continuo-Spielart die Johann Sebastian Bach häufig verwendete – vorfinden, welche sicher eine Ausnahme darstellen und äußerst selten wirklich notiert, sondern viel eher den „Practicis“ überlassen wurden, so wäre es dennoch verfehlt, die Qualität und technische Anforderung dieser Aussetzungen zu unterschätzen: Will man die ausgeschriebenen Akkorde, wie Daube und andere es fordern, in langsamen Sätzen klangvoll und mit Nachdruck, in schnellen Sätzen präzise und ohne willkürliche Arpeggi spielen, so ist doch einiges an Fingerferigkeit vorauszusetzen. Eine dilettantische Beschäftigung mit dem Tasteninstrument kann diesbezüglich nicht angenommen werden. Dem Zitat in der Voßschen Leichenpredigt zufolge, spielte der Minister ja „gößtentheils schwere Bachsche Sachen“!

*

³⁵ Siehe dazu den Vergleich zweier Ausschnitte aus der Triosonate des *Musikalischen Opfers* (Andante) in der Fassung von Kirnberger 1781 und Heering/Voß im *Bjb* 79 (1993) S. 120ff.

³⁶ J. Ph. Kirnberger, *Grundsätze des Generalbasses*, Berlin 1781, S. 87; so auch Daniel Gottlob Türk, *Anweisung zum Generalbaßspielen*, 2. Aufl., Halle und Leipzig 1800, S. 108f: „Am gewöhnlichsten wählt man die vierstimmige Begleitung“; dazu F. Oberdörffer, *Der Generalbaß in der Instrumentalmusik des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts*, Kassel 1939, S. 106ff.

Dieses Berliner Manuskript ist nach meinem Wissen die umfangreichste Sammlung von Generalbaß-Aussetzungen aus der Barockzeit. Ein Glücksfall also für wissenschaftliche und praktische Studien! Trotz der späten Abfassungszeit reflektieren die Aussetzungen immer noch einen Stil, der in Deutschland das ganze 18. Jahrhundert hindurch als „Basis-Continuostil“ gelehrt und gepflegt wurde.

Wenn wir von der These ausgehen, daß der Hauptteil dieser Aussetzungen originales Stimmenmaterial (einer Hauskapelle) darstellt – und viele Hinweise sprechen dafür –, so haben wir in dieser Sammlung einerseits ein nicht hoch genug zu achtendes Zeugnis einer häuslichen Musizierpraxis aus dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, deren Linien sich über das (halb)öffentliche Musizieren eines musikversessenen Grafen hinaus über Heering, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach und Kirnberger zurück in die Bachschule verfolgen lassen; andererseits öffnet sich der Blick weg vom „Generalbaßzeitalter“, vom beziferten Generalbaß zum ausgeschriebenen Klavierakkompagnement.

Anhang:

Teil-Edition der C-Dur Sonate von Johann Gottlieb Graun (Wendt-Verzeichnis 90) mit der dazugehörigen Generalbaß-Aussetzung aus Mus.ms.theor. 348

Largo

Flauto 1^{mo}

Flauto 2^{do}

Aussetzung
Mus. ms.
theor. 348

Basso

3

6

p *f* *p* *f*

6 7 5 8 6 5 8 6 3 6 4 5 6 7 #

9

7 6 8 7 6 6 5 6 6 6 5 6 6 4 3 6

Vivace

6 4 6 6 5 6 6 6 6 5 4 6 4 2 6 4 3 5 6 5 6 5 4 6 4 3 2 6

4

6 6 6 7 6 6 7 6 4 5 6 4

7

2 6 5 6 7 6 7 6 6 7 6 5 3 6 7 7 #

10

6 4 4+ 6 6 4 5 6 # 4+ 6 6 5 6 4 5 4+ 6

13

6 5 9 6 5 4 3 9 6 9 8 # 6 4 # 6 4

16

6 5 6 7 6 7 6 6 6 5 6 6

Verwendete Quellen:

A. Partitur

Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung
Amalien-Bibliothek Mus.ms. 241/3; Trio / a / Flauto Trav: 1^{mo} / Flauto Trav:
2^{do} / e / Basso

B. Stimmen

Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung Mus.ms.
8297/3; Trio / á / Flauto Primo / Flauto Secondo / e / Basso / del Sig Graun
B1 Flauto Primo
B2 Flauto Secondo
B3 Basso (beziffert)

Schreiber: wahrscheinlich Otto C.F. von Voß (gleiche Hand wie in Mus.ms.theor.
348)

C. Generalbaßaussetzung

Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung
Mus.ms.theor. 348; Trio: No: 13: dell Sign: Graun (fol. 32r–35v).

Oben links folgende Bemerkung: „So wie es muß accompagnirt werden und
ich es habe spielen müssen.“

Schreiber: Otto C.F. von Voß (nach 1771)

Weitere Quellen: siehe Wendt, 1983, S. 302

Zur Abhängigkeit der Quellen:

Es existiert kein Autograph. A dürfte die ältere Quelle sein. B (nach 1771
geschrieben) hat wahrscheinlich eine andere unbekannte Quelle als Vorlage. B
diente C als Vorlage.

Spezielle Anmerkungen:

1. Satz: Takt 1–11

Takt	System	Bemerkung
1	alle	Taktvorzeichnung bei Wendt \mathfrak{c}
2		
3	Fl 1	tr auf Zählzeit 1 nach B1 ergänzt
3	Fl 1	In A letzte Note a ²
6	Fl 1	In A Vorschlag d'' statt f''
6ff	Basso	keine dynamischen Angaben in C
9	Fl 1	tr über Viertelnote a' nach B1 ergänzt

2. Satz: Takt 1–18

8	Fl 1	Vorschlagsnote g'' nur in B1
15	Fl 2	Bogen fis''–d'' nach B2 ergänzt
18	Basso	In C fehlt ein Takt (18 wird wiederholt)

Die Reproduktionen erfolgten mit freundlicher Genehmigung der Staatsbi-
bliothek Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Faks. I–III) und der Herzog-August-
Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel.

„WAS DER SPÄTE GENERAL-BAß SEY?“
Einige Annäherungen¹

VON REGULA RAPP

Schon am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, schon vor nunmehr zweihundert Jahren hätte unter der Überschrift „Was der General-Baß sey?“ ein Symposium stattfinden sollen. Folgende Ausführungen von Johann Carl Friedrich Rellstab, dem Berliner Musiker und Musikschriftsteller, Schüler von Johann Friedrich Agricola und Carl Friedrich Fasch, wären bei diesem Anlaß sicherlich von Nutzen gewesen:

„Der Generalbaß wie er von den Alten getrieben wurde, war, der äußerste Unsinn; ein Studium, wozu man mehrere Jahre brauchte, um eine Wissenschaft zu lernen, deren Menge von Regeln, und eine zehnmal größere Anzahl von Ausnahmen, (und, die annoch demjenigen, der sie alle zu behalten und anzuwenden wußte, doch öfters im Stich ließen) den Clavierspieler zu den geschmacklosesten Trommeler machen mußten. Generalbaß muß aus den Regeln der Composition hergeleitet werden, blos nach Grundaccorden und Vorschlägen erklärt. Sein Name selbst ist Unsinn; er ist nichts als eine Begleitung, um die Schritte der Harmonien klar zu machen. Es kann keinen guten Accompagnisten geben, der nicht zugleich einen wahren Begriff vom vierstimmigen wahren Gang der Stimmen hat, und keinen vortreflichen, der nicht die Feinheiten der Composition inne hat ... Sonst war unsre Clavierbegleitung steif, holpricht, überladen, unsicher, und eine Arbeit wobei der Clavierspieler schwitzen mußte, um nur seine hundert tausend Regeln in Ausübung, und ein Ding hervorzubringen, woran weder Gott noch Menschen ein Wohlgefallen haben konten ... wir haben die Flügel mit Recht von unsrer jetzigen Music verwiesen, denn es würde unausstehlich seyn, auf einem monotonischen Instrumente, nun noch monotonische Cacophonie zu hören. Wir brauchen ihn nur noch bei Singmusiken zuweilen, und dabey ist das Accompagnement jetzt nicht mehr Wissenschaft, des Clavierspielers, sondern nur Hülfe des schwachen Sängers und man bedarf dazu weiter nichts als nur die Singstimme fleißig zu begleiten, in der Art wie dem Sänger am meisten geholfen wird ... Es ist nun schon einmal so in den Wissenschaften, man kommt immer von einer Extremität zur andern; ich kann auch wirklich nicht sagen, welche Art ich für die bessere halte, nur glaube ich gewiß daß die Art melodiös zu accompagnieren, für unsre jetzige Music die bessere sey; denn es würde unausstehlich seyn, wenn man nach der alten Manier verfahren, und

¹ Um der Lebendigkeit willen habe ich den Vortragscharakter meines Beitrags beibehalten, der den Abschluß des Symposiums „Was der General-Baß sey?“ an der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis (22.–26. März 1993) bildete.

einen Accord vierstimmig nach einander, so oft sollte anschlagen hören, da durch das Melodie mitspielen die Sache gut gemacht wird.“²

Soweit der Beitrag von Friedrich Rellstab, der auf einem imaginären Generalbaß-Symposium am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts gezeigt hätte, daß sein Autor dem Flügel der Fortschrittlichen zuzurechnen ist.

Uns helfen diese Aussagen weiter, indem sie einige wichtige Punkte nennen, die eine Gruppe von Komponisten und Musikschriftstellern damals als „die neue Art der Begleitung“ propagierte. Bevor die Merkmale und Vorschriften dieser Richtung erläutert werden, sind jedoch einige Probleme zu benennen, die das Thema „Was der späte General-Baß sey?“ so kompliziert gestalten.

– Was ist eigentlich unter dem Begriff „der späte General-Baß“ zu verstehen? Von welchem Zeitraum ist die Rede, und welche Art von Musik betrifft das Phänomen?

Der Generalbaß war in der Aufführungspraxis der gesamten zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte mehr oder weniger wirksam, je nach Gattung und Kompositionsbeziehungswise Aufführungsort. (Darüber hinaus gilt es zu unterscheiden zwischen Kirche und Kammer sowie zwischen lokalen und nationalen Gepflogenheiten.)

– Ist es richtig, daß es zwar ein Ende des Generalbaßzeitalters gab, das Ende der Generalbaßpraxis und -lehre jedoch nicht festgelegt werden kann, wie in Carl Dahlhaus' *Geschichte der Musiktheorie* zu lesen ist?³

Das heißt, daß es parallel zur „offiziellen“ Epoche, der sogenannten Wiener Klassik, eine „inoffizielle“ Epoche der Generalbaßpflege gab, die bisher noch kaum beachtet und untersucht worden ist.

– Was bedeutet das starke Ansteigen der Veröffentlichungen von Generalbaßschulen am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts, wie ist die Fülle von Publikationen in allen Sprachen zu bewerten, die nur mit der Fülle von Anweisungen zu Beginn der Generalbaßzeit, kurz nach 1600 also, zu vergleichen ist?

Zwischen 1750 und 1790 und damit fast genau zu Wolfgang Amadeus Mozarts Lebzeiten waren über 30 verschiedene deutschsprachige Abhandlungen und Schulen zu diesem Thema auf dem Markt. Obwohl viele dieser Schriften wenig Eigenständiges enthielten und oft über lange Passagen schlicht voneinander abgeschrieben waren, zeugen die hohen Auflagen und die Verkaufszahlen von der Beliebtheit dieser Werke. Eine Hauptbedeutung liegt wohl in ihrer Funktion als Kompositionslehren und Reflexionen zur Ästhetik (im

² Ueber die Bemerkungen eines Reisenden die Berlinische Kammermusiken, Concert, Oper, und Königliche Kammermusik betreffend von Joh. Carl Friedrich Rellstab, Berlin, in Verlage der Musikhandlung des Verfassers. 1789. 35ff.

³ Siehe Frieder Zamminer (Hrsg.), *Die Geschichte der Musiktheorie*, Band 11: Carl Dahlhaus, *Die Musiktheorie im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, Darmstadt 1989, 6: „Das Problem verschwand nicht, sondern wurde lediglich satztechnisch gleichgültig, und es gilt als historiographisch verlässlicher, zu zeigen, daß ein Sachverhalt nicht mehr existiert, als plausibel zu machen, daß er nicht länger relevant ist.“

19. Jahrhundert hießen diese Elaborate dann Harmonielehren). Alle die unterschiedlichen Schulen müssten dringend gesondert betrachtet werden, obwohl oder gerade weil sie bis weit über die Wiener Klassik hinaus – salopp gesagt – „neben“ der Musikgeschichte „herzulaufen“ scheinen und nun vermutlich neuen, vorwiegend pädagogischen Zwecken gedient haben.⁴ Natürlich gab es dazu schon im Jahr 1789 die Stimme Rellstabs, der feststellte, Johann Philipp Kirnberger mache sich durch seine *Grundsätze des General Basses* (Berlin 1781) „lächerlich“. Auf der anderen Seite ist aber auch die *Anweisung zum Generalbaßspielen* von Daniel Gottlob Türk überliefert, die erst in ihrer fünften Auflage (Halle 1841) „zeitgemäße Verbesserungen und Zusätze“ von Herrn „Dr. Naue“ erfährt, der in seiner Vorrede zugeben muß: „Es ist ... in neuerer Zeit das Generalbaßspielen (das Generalbaßbegleiten der Tonstücke) weniger üblich ...“ Diesem Tribut Naues an die neuere Zeit ist im Text auch der folgende sogenannte „Zusatz“ zu verdanken: „Es ist zwar in diesem Lehrbuche in allen Beispielen der Gebrauch beobachtet ... bei den mit *piano* bezeichneten Stellen sich der dreistimmigen Begleitung zu bedienen, und wir können dies auch bei der gegenwärtigen neuen Auflage dieses Werks nicht füglich abändern, ohne der wesentlichen Gestaltung des Ganzen Eintrag zu tun; jedoch wollen wir hier ausdrücklich bevorworten, daß uns das Mittel, ein vorgeschriebenes *piano* durch Verringerung der Stimmenzahl zu erreichen, keineswegs jetzt noch angemessen erscheint, da uns hierzu anderweitige Mittel genug geboten sind, namentlich bei den besaiteten Tasteninstrumenten ...“⁵

– Wie ist bei einer Untersuchung des späten Generalbasses die zeitgenössische Theorie jenseits der Generalbaßschulen angemessen zu berücksichtigen? Was würde man überhaupt als zeitgenössische Theorie bezeichnen können angesichts der historischen Diskrepanz, die (immer) besteht zwischen der Praxis und ihrer theoretischen Aufarbeitung, und der möglichen „qualitativen“ Diskrepanz zwischen normativen und deskriptiven Aussagen?

Peter Benary hat in seiner umfangreichen Abhandlung über *Die deutsche Kompositionslehre des 18. Jahrhunderts* für das späte 18. Jahrhundert zwar den Vorrang der Melodie vor der Harmonie als das Hauptanliegen der Theoretiker festgestellt⁶, gleichzeitig jedoch herausgearbeitet, daß der basso continuo bis um 1800 als bestimmende Größe und als „vollkommenes Fundament“ angesehen wurde und demzufolge der Zusammenhang zwischen Generalbaßlehre und Kompositionslehre besonders eng war.

⁴ Fritz Oberdörffer stellt hierzu gar fest: „Den einschneidenden Stilwandel, der zuletzt in der Wiener Klassik gipfelt und der nicht ohne Einfluß auf die Praxis des Generalbaßspiels gewesen sein kann, lassen, je weiter das Jahrhundert zu Ende geht, die Generalbaßlehren immer weniger spüren.“ (in: *Der Generalbaß in der Instrumentalmusik des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts*, Kassel 1939, 2).

⁵ Daniel Gottlob Türk, *Anweisung zum Generalbaßspielen*, 5. Auflage Halle 1841 (1. Auflage Leipzig und Halle 1791), XV und 109 (kursiv im Original).

⁶ Peter Benary, *Die deutsche Kompositionslehre des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Jenaer Beiträge zur Musikforschung, Band 3), Leipzig 1961, z.B. 81ff.

Betrachtet man ein Phänomen des 18. Jahrhunderts, dieses berühmten „tintenklecksenden saeculum“, dann darf man über die Theoretiker keineswegs die weiteren Musikschriftsteller und Kritiker, die Berichterstatter, Biographen, Geschichts- und Geschichtenschreiber dieser Zeit vergessen. Hier seien aus der Fülle der Stellungnahmen zum Thema Generalbaß in den letzten Jahrzehnten des 18. Jahrhunderts, des zur Rede stehenden Zeitraums, nur zwei kurze Beispiele angeführt: In der *Allgemeinen Musikalischen Zeitung* vom Oktober 1799 argumentiert der Herausgeber Johann Friedrich Rochlitz in einem Brief „Ueber die Abschaffung des Flügels aus den Orchestern“ für die Beibehaltung des basso continuo-Tasteninstrumentes, vorzugsweise des Piano-forte, da dieses das Stimmen der Instrumente erleichtere und darüber hinaus das „vorzüglichste Hülfsmittel“ darstelle, „die Fülle der Harmonie zusammen zu halten“ – ein Argument, das aus der Praxis kommt und auf die Praxis zielt.

Unter den *Wahrheiten, die Musik betreffend* – gerade herausgesagt von einem teutschen Biedermann findet sich im Jahr 1777 dagegen die Behauptung „Kein Stück kann ohne Generalbaß vollkommen ausgeübt werden ... Wer dafür hält, der Flügel sey bey Orchestern gar nicht nöthig, der giebt deutlich zu verstehen, daß er von der ganzen Sache nichts verstehe!“⁷

Nachdem die offenen Fragen und Probleme benannt worden sind, die bei der Bearbeitung des Themas „Der späte Generalbaß“ auftauchen, soll dieser nun konkret, sollen Ziffern und Musik erörtert werden.

Rellstab nennt 1789 in seinem eingangs zitierten „Beitrag“ gegen die alte Art der Generalbaßbegleitung einige wesentlichen Punkte eines veränderten Generalbaßgeschmacks. Er beschreibt die von ihm so genannte „Art melodiös zu accompagnieren“ kurz gefaßt folgendermaßen: Die Begleitung muß aus den „Regeln der Composition hergeleitet“ sein. Sie muß den „vierstimmigen wahren Gang der Stimmen beachten“, sie ist „nicht mehr Wissenschaft“ und das Gegenteil von „steif, holpricht, überladen“. Das „Melodie mitspielen“ ist wichtiger als „einen Accord vierstimmig nacheinander anschlagen“.⁸

Die theoretischen Regeln, die zu diesen Merkmalen gehören, finden sich in einer der bedeutenden Abhandlungen über den Generalbaß aus jenen Jahren: Sie ist in Johann Joachim Quantz' *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* aus dem Jahr 1752 eingebaut. Quantz' Regeln wurden nicht nur rezipiert und neu aufgelegt und abgeschrieben und verbreitet, sie sind auch dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß sie den Generalbaß auf der Höhe der Zeit beschreiben – die „Art melodiös zu accompagnieren“.

Was Quantz „Von dem Clavieristen insbesondere“ (so der Titel des Abschnitts) zu sagen hat, macht gleich der erste Satz deutlich: „Nicht alle, die

⁷ *Wahrheiten, die Musik betreffend* – gerade herausgesagt von einem teutschen Biedermann. Frankfurt am Main 1777, 28f.

⁸ Siehe oben.

den Generalbaß verstehen, sind auch deswegen zugleich gute Accompagnisten.“⁹ Als erste „allgemeine Regel“ greift Quantz diejenige vom „allzeit vierstimmigen“ Spiel an: „... wenn man aber recht gut accompagniren will, thut es oft bessere Wirkung, wenn man sich nicht so genau hieran bindet; wenn man vielmehr einige Stimmen wegläßt, oder wohl gar den Baß mit der rechten Hand, durch eine Octave höher, verdoppelt.“¹⁰ (Diese Meinung teilt Quantz durchaus mit anderen „modernen“ Autoren wie Abbé Vogler oder Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, der für diese und ähnliche Forderungen den schönen Begriff von den „Feinigkeiten“ der Begleitung geprägt hat.¹¹)

Ein weiterer von Quantz besonders betonter Punkt ist die dynamische Gestaltung der Begleitung: Tadelnswert ist der Clavierist, „... wenn er das Piano und Forte mit dem Solospieler nicht zu gleicher Zeit ausdrückt; sondern alles ohne Affect, in einerley Stärke spielet.“¹² Demnach versteht sich fast von selbst, daß der Autor gleich im Anschluß an diese Stelle das Pianoforte als basso continuo-Instrument dem Flügel, d.h. dem Cembalo vorzieht.¹³

Daß es sich hier um neue, ungewohnte Forderungen an den Clavieristen, um eine neue Ästhetik der Begleitung handelt, dessen ist sich Quantz durchaus bewußt. Er gesteht im folgenden zu, daß man sich „... nur erst ein wenig, ohne Vorurteil, an diese Art zu accompagniren gewöhne[n]“ muß. Daraufhin fächert der Autor die dynamischen Unterschiede von pianissimo bis fortissimo auf und beschreibt ihre praktische Umsetzung auf dem Instrument; diese dynamischen Schattierungen sind für die Gestaltung einzelner Dissonanzklänge in der Begleitung heranzuziehen – fein säuberlich gesteigert.¹⁴

Die Regel, daß die rechte Hand des Begleiters nicht zu hoch liegen und möglichst unter der Melodiestimme bleiben sollte, ist in anderen Generalbaßschulen eher selten zu finden. Diese Regel dient bei Quantz der „Helligkeit“ der Hauptstimme (um einmal ein Postulat, das seit Quantz und dann bis zum Ende des Jahrhunderts immer wieder auftaucht, positiv auszudrücken, das Postulat, niemals die Hauptstimme zu „verdunkeln“¹⁵).

Von der gängigen Generalbaßpraxis in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, soweit sie uns bekannt ist, unterscheidet sich auch das nächste Verbot: Demnach „klingt es nicht so gut, wenn er zu einer jeden Note mit der rechten Hand anschlägt“.¹⁶ In diesem Paragraphen ist zwar stets von einem Adagio-

⁹ Johann Joachim Quantz, *Versuch über die wahre Art die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*, Berlin 1752 (Reprint Kassel usw. 1983), 223. Der gesamte Abschnitt (VI des XVII. Hauptstücks) umfaßt die Seiten 223 bis 238.

¹⁰ A.a.O., 224.

¹¹ Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, *Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen*, Berlin 1753 (Reprint Leipzig 1981), z.B. Teil 2, 2; siehe auch Teil 2, 268 „Von den gewissen Zierlichkeiten des Accompagnements“.

¹² A.a.O., 225.

¹³ A.a.O.

¹⁴ A.a.O., 228f.

¹⁵ A.a.O., 233f.

¹⁶ A.a.O., 235.

Satz die Rede; dies ist darin begründet, daß Quantz als Beispiel für die neue Art zu accompagnieren ein Adagio für seine Beispielsammlung im Anhang des *Versuchs* komponiert hat. Er bemerkt ausdrücklich: „Ob nun wohl, in geschwinden Stücken, nicht alles nach der Strenge, die bey dem Adagio erfordert wird, beobachtet werden kann: so kann doch das meiste von dem, was zu der Discretion und dem Ausdrucke gehöret, auch bey dem Allegro angewendet werden.“¹⁷ Und noch einmal wird eine wesentliche Forderung wiederholt: „...nach Maaßgebung der Hauptstimme, Note vor Note“ soll sich der Clavierist an der Melodiestimme ausrichten, soll er begleiten. Diese Art der Begleitung soll keine Ergänzung, kein Komplement, keine Vervollständigung zu einem gedachten Ganzen sein; dies und alles andere ist der zentralen Forderung, „bey allen Fällen sich der Hauptstimme [zu] bequemen“ untergeordnet.¹⁸ Betrachtet man die von Quantz eigens niedergeschriebene Komposition, so kommt man unweigerlich zu dem Schluß, daß sich ein derart rasches und ausgefeiltes Nacheinander extremer dynamischer Unterschiede, ein Hauptanliegen des Autors, in der Tat nur auf einem Pianoforte ausführen läßt.¹⁹

Von dieser kurzen Komposition aus Quantz' Feder einmal abgesehen: Worauf sollten Quantz' Regeln, die hier nur skizziert sind, bezogen werden? Auf alle Musik nach 1752, die Ziffern aufweist?

Damit ist ein weiteres Problem angeschnitten: Von wem stammen die Ziffern in den Noten, speziell in den Drucken aus der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts, und was haben sie – über die konkrete aufführungspraktische Vorschrift hinaus – zu bedeuten?

Zu diesem einen Punkt liegen einige wenige musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten vor. Diese Untersuchungen sind jedoch nicht in erster Linie darum bemüht, die „Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen“ zu zeigen, die parallelen Erscheinungen zu benennen; sie dienen vielmehr der Untermauerung gegensätzlicher Thesen und können danach zwei Richtungen zugeordnet werden, für die jeweils ein Beispiel genannt sei.

Die Anhänger der einen Richtung postulieren, daß der Generalbaß sich schon viel früher aus der Musik des 18. Jahrhunderts verabschiedet habe, als dies bisher angenommen wurde. Zu diesen Autoren gehört Ludwig Finscher mit seinen *Studien zur Geschichte des Streichquartetts*.²⁰ Dagegen vertritt Fritz

¹⁷ A.a.O., 237.

¹⁸ A.a.O.

¹⁹ A.a.O., 231: „Auf einem Pianoforte aber, kann alles erforderliche am allerbequemsten bewerkstelliget werden: denn dieses Instrument hat vor allem, was man Clavier nennet, die zum guten Accompagnement nöthigen Eigenschaften am meisten in sich: und kommt dabey blos auf den Spieler und seine Beurtheilung an. Auf einem guten Clavichord hat es zwar eben dieselbe Beschaffenheit im Spielen, nicht aber in Ansehung der Wirkung; weil das Fortissimo mangelt.“

²⁰ Ludwig Finscher, *Studien zur Geschichte des Streichquartetts*, Kassel usw. 1974, darin: „Stilgeschichtliche Wandlungen. Die Lösung vom Generalbaß“, 106–125.

Oberdörffer in seiner Arbeit *Der Generalbaß in der Instrumentalmusik des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts*²¹ die Auffassung, daß sich der Generalbaß noch sehr viel länger gehalten hat, als allgemein angenommen wird.

Beide genannten Autoren sind sich darin einig, daß erstens zwischen dem Generalbaß als kompositionstechnischer Notwendigkeit und dem Generalbaß als Aufführungspraxis zu unterscheiden ist und daß zweitens die Rolle der Verleger nicht hoch genug eingeschätzt werden kann: Die meisten Ziffern in Drucken aus der zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte stammen mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit von den Verlegern, die sich dadurch einen größeren Kundenkreis erhofften, auch wenn diese Ziffern in manchen Werken – kompositionstechnisch betrachtet – nicht mehr erforderlich oder sinnvoll waren.

Oberdörffer hat in Berlin gewirkt und geforscht. Leider sind die meisten bezifferten Kammermusikwerke, die er in seiner Arbeit von 1939 anführt, im Zweiten Weltkrieg verloren gegangen. Darunter befanden sich so interessante Ausgaben wie Pietro Locatellis Trios Opus 3 „6 Sonatas for two German flutes or two Violins with a Thorough Baß for the Harpsichord or Violoncell, London, Walsh, ca. 1730–35“: Im Schlußsatz einer der Sonaten trägt die Baßstimme – laut Oberdörffer – den Zusatz „Un Basso senza Cimbalo“ und ist gleichwohl beziffert.²² Ebenfalls nicht mehr einzusehen sind Luigi Boccherinis Trios für zwei Violinen und Violoncello, als Opus 10 bei Hummel in Berlin 1776 erschienen und durchweg beziffert – nach Oberdörffer selbst in den Passagen, in denen die Cello-Stimme sehr hoch geführt ist oder die Stimme der zweiten Violine gar übersteigt.²³

Ludwig Finscher hat in seinen *Studien zur Geschichte des Streichquartetts* eine „Liste der Quellen mit beziffertem Baß“,²⁴ eine Liste mit bezifferten Streichquartetts-Ausgaben von 14 Komponisten von Abel bis Vanhal, veröffentlicht, um zu zeigen, daß es sich hierbei um ein quantitativ sowie historisch eingrenzbare Phänomen handelt. Dennoch erhebt sich die Frage, ob diese Aufstellungen – die von Finscher und auch die von Oberdörffer – erstens vollständig und zweitens angemessen bewertet worden sind. – Hier wäre eine gründliche Überprüfung dringend notwendig. Ich habe circa einhundert frühe Drucke von Sinfonien und Kammermusik (Divertimenti, Trios etc.) aus der Feder Boccherinis, Dittersdorfs, Schoberts, Michael und Joseph Haydns (alle in den beiden Häusern der Berliner Staatsbibliothek) durchgesehen und nicht eine einzige Ziffer gefunden. Als ich mich darüber hinaus jedoch speziell um Drucke von Streichquartetten bemühte, jener hehren Gattung, die für uns nach Goethe die Unterhaltung zwischen vier vernünftigen Leuten darstellt, bin ich bald fündig geworden:²⁵

²¹ Siehe oben, S. 117.

²² Oberdörffer, a.a.O., 15.

²³ A.a.O., 15f.

²⁴ Finscher, a.a.O., 113f.

²⁵ Mein herzlicher Dank gilt Herrn Bernhard Päuler und Frau Yvonne Mörgeli, Winterthur, die mir Einblick gewährten in ihre reiche Sammlung von frühen Streichquartetts-Drucken.

Pierre Vachons *Six Quartettos for two Violins, a Tenor and Bass Opera VI*, 1776 bei Napier in London herausgekommen,²⁶ sind durchweg aufs sorgfältigste beziffert. Der französische Geiger und Komponist Vachon (1731–1803) zählt neben Francois-Joseph Gossec (1734–1829) und Joseph Boulogne Saint-Georges (1739–1799) zu den ersten französischen Streichquartett-Komponisten und zu den profiliertesten dieser Gattung in seiner Heimat.

B A S S O

QUARTETTO I

Maestoso

Tempo di Minuetto mezzo voce

fine

56

Notenbeispiel 2 aus: P. Vachon, *Six Quartettos for two Violins, a Tenor and Bass, Opera VI*, London 1776.

Die Analyse des Quartetts Op. 6 Nr. 1 zeigt, daß die Stimmen durchaus selbständig und gleichberechtigt geführt sind (von einigen Viola-Partien im ersten Satz abgesehen). Das gilt auch für die Baßlinie, die nicht mehr baß- oder generalbaßtypische Elemente, kurz „fundamentale“ Züge aufweist, als das für Baßlinien in den Kammermusikwerken dieser Zeit üblich ist.²⁷ Daß einige Passagen an Musik aus der ersten Hälfte des Jahrhunderts erinnern und vertraut wirken, hat auch etwas mit den Notenwerten im Verhältnis zur Satzbezeichnung sowie mit baßtypischen Intervall-Verbindungen und Baßgängen zu tun. Hier könnte man zum Beispiel die Achtelketten in der zweiten Akkolade des ersten Satzes nennen oder die schrittweise verlaufenden Viertel in der ersten Zeile des „Tempo di Minuetto“, über die (unter anderem) mehrmals die 6 notiert ist.

Finschers Liste der Quellen ist aber auch abgesehen von den Quartetten Opus 6 von Pierre Vachon zu ergänzen:

Weitere sechs Quartette Vachons wurden ca. 1775 als Opus 5 in London gedruckt; sie sind seit 1990 im Band 10 („Chamber Music IV: Classical String Duos and Quartets (1769–c.1859)“, herausgegeben von Kenneth Cooper) der Garland Series „Three Centuries of Music in Score“, New York und London, zugänglich.

Die sechs überlieferten Streichquartette des Schweizer Komponisten Franz Xaver Dominik Stalder wurden ebenfalls mit Ziffern in der Baßstimme veröffentlicht: Welcker in London brachte sie ca. 1770 als *Six Quartettos for two Violins, a Tenor and Baß. Composed by Sig.r Stalder* heraus. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt war Stalder schon einige Jahre tot. Der gebürtige Luzerner, Schüler von Sammartini und Galimberti, später Komponist und Dirigent in Paris, ist 1765 im Alter von 40 Jahren in Luzern gestorben.

Die bei Finscher angeführten drei „Quartetti“ von Giulio Pugnani (ohne Opuszahl) liegen zusätzlich in einer bezifferten Ausgabe bei Welcker (London, um 1763) vor. Und die angegebenen 6 *Quatuors opus 3* von Johann Baptist Vanhal (Hummel Amsterdam um 1774) sind nicht identisch mit den *Six Quatuors Opus 4* (Hummel, Berlin und Amsterdam 1779), einer ebenfalls bezifferten Ausgabe.

In der Königlichen Bibliothek Kopenhagen liegt ein handschriftliches, ebenfalls beziffertes Streichquartett von Johann Gottlieb Janitsch (1708–1763).²⁸

Diese „Funde“ lassen den Schluß zu, daß noch nicht alle bezifferten Streichquartett-Drucke (und vermutlich auch nicht alle bezifferten Musikdrucke sonstiger Gattungen) bekannt sind. Wie groß diese Menge ist im Verhältnis zu der riesigen (wahrscheinlich unüberschaubaren) Gesamtmenge von Kammermusik-Drucken aus den letzten Jahrzehnten des 18. Jahrhunderts, ist im

²⁶ Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz Sign. DMS 215341.

²⁷ Siehe zum Stichwort Generalbaß / Fundament auch Wolfram Steinbeck, *Das Menuett in der Instrumentalmusik Joseph Haydns*, München 1973, Einleitung 7ff und Kapitel I, 30ff.

²⁸ Diesen Hinweis verdanke ich Herrn Dominik Sackmann, Basel.

Moment nicht zu sagen. Erst wenn klar ist, ob diese Anzahl von bezifferten Drucken quantitativ ins Gewicht fällt, kann entschieden werden, wie der Generalbaß als aufführungspraktisch wirksames Phänomen in dieser Phase zu bewerten ist.

Eine weitere dringende Frage, auf die hier nicht eingegangen werden kann, ist die nach den Unterschieden in der Entwicklung der Gattungen; nicht aus jeder Gattung ist der Generalbaß gleich schnell „verschwunden“.²⁹

Abschließend soll hier die Musik, die im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert *mit* Generalbaß aufzuführen war, behandelt werden. Bei der Beantwortung dieser Frage treffen wir auf Dilemmata verschiedenster Art, die gleichwohl miteinander zusammenhängen:

Der Generalbaß wurde noch lange nach Ende des Generalbaßzeitalters praktiziert. Diese aufführungspraktische Bedeutung hatte er jedoch nicht in allen Gattungen und allen Regionen Europas gleichermaßen. Der Generalbaß war aus kompositionstechnischer Sicht teilweise schon im frühen 18. Jahrhundert überflüssig, da sich der Schwerpunkt des Satzes auf die Melodie verlagerte – wiederum nicht in allen Gattungen und in allen Regionen zur gleichen Zeit. Die Dominanz der Melodie hatte eine veränderte Generalbaßpraxis, eine neue „Art melodios zu accompagnieren“ zur Folge: Die satztechnische Änderung verlängerte sozusagen „künstlich“ die alte Praxis oder – anders formuliert – sie schuf eine Art der Begleitung.

Auch im Schrifttum herrschte für lange Zeit ein Nebeneinander von alten Ausführungsvorschriften und neuen Theorien. Kritiken und Konzertberichte dokumentieren die unterschiedlichsten Praktiken – ob mit oder ohne Flügel, mit oder ohne Generalbaß – und verdeutlichen, daß allgemeine Regeln, was damals wie musiziert worden ist, wohl nicht aufgestellt werden können. Die Emphase, mit der manche Schriftsteller den Flügel im Orchester ablehnen oder verteidigen, zeigt jedoch, daß der Ablösungsprozeß zu seiner Zeit problematisiert worden ist. Schließlich scheint die für die Generalbaßfrage relevante überlieferte Musik (hier wurde nur das Problem der Drucke angesprochen) noch gar nicht vollständig untersucht zu sein. Andere Drucke ohne Ziffern müßten je nach der Menge der in Zukunft entdeckten bezifferten Abschriften oder Ausgaben unter diesem neuen Aspekt betrachtet werden.

Eine allgemeingültige Lösung, wie mit diesen offenen Fragen umzugehen ist, gibt es zumindest beim jetzigen Stand der Forschung nicht. Jeder einzelne Fall müßte geprüft und entschieden werden: Die Frage, mit einer wie auch immer besetzten und ausgeführten basso continuo-Begleitung ein Stück angemessen aufgeführt werden sollte, kann nur höchst individuell beantwortet werden.

²⁹ Siehe dazu einige Bemerkungen in: Oberdörffer, a.a.O., Einleitung, 1ff, und Kapitel 1 „Allgemeine Besetzungsfragen in der Instrumentalmusik des 18. Jahrhunderts“, 7ff.

Folgende Kriterien sind dabei zu bedenken:

1. Die überlieferten Quellen, Abschriften und Drucke: Ist das Werk in einer bezifferten Version erhalten? Wo ist diese Abschrift entstanden, der Druck erschienen, und von wem stammen die Ziffern: vom Komponisten oder vom Verleger oder von einer dritten Person?

2. Die Vollstimmigkeit des Satzes: Das ganze 18. Jahrhundert hindurch gilt in der Theorie allein der vierstimmige Satz als vollständig. In allen Generalbaßschulen wird immer wieder darauf hingewiesen, daß der Generalbaß der harmonischen Komplettierung dient.

3. Die Gattung: Gehört die Komposition zu einer Gattung, in der sich der Generalbaß lange gehalten hat³⁰ oder gar zur Oper, zu weltlicher oder geistlicher Vokalmusik, die bis weit über die Jahrhundertgrenze hinaus mit basso continuo aufgeführt und vom Tasteninstrument aus geleitet wurden?

4. Die aufführungspraktischen Gepflogenheiten im Umkreis der Entstehung eines Werks ebenso wie die Gepflogenheiten am Ort der Aufführung:³¹ Diese Gebräuche sind sowohl wichtig für die Entscheidung Generalbaß ja oder nein, als auch für die Entscheidung: Wenn Generalbaßbegleitung, welches Tasteninstrument, Cembalo oder Pianoforte?

Daß bei der Berücksichtigung aller genannten Punkte eine vertretbare und sinnvolle Entscheidung gefällt werden kann, dafür möchte ich zum Schluß kurz ein Beispiel anführen. Der amerikanische Musikwissenschaftler James Webster ist mitverantwortlich für eine Gesamt-Neueinspielung aller Haydn-Symphonien mit der Academy of Ancient Music unter der Leitung von Christopher Hogwood. Webster begründete seine Entscheidung, die Symphonien – ganz gegen ältere Regeln der Aufführungspraxis – ohne basso continuo-Tasteninstrument einzuspielen, folgendermaßen:³²

a) Im Raum Wien-Ungarn-Böhmen war es bereits um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts üblich, daß der erste Geiger die Kammermusik leitete, während Theater- und Kirchaufführungen vom Tasteninstrument aus dirigiert wurden wie fast überall in Europa. Die (frühen) Haydn'schen Symphonien gehören zum Genre Kammermusik. Ihr „Geburtsort“ ist Esterhaza, und die originale Streicherbesetzung weist drei erste Geigen, drei zweite Geigen, je eine Viola, ein Violoncello und einen Kontrabaß auf.

b) In den Personalakten der Esterhazy-Kapelle ist keine Anstellung eines Cembalisten belegt, das heißt, der Continuo wurde, wenn er denn erklang, von Haydn selbst gespielt. Man weiß aber auch, daß Haydn die erste Geige spielte und in dieser Position seine Aufgabe als Kapellmeister wahrnahm.

³⁰ Siehe hierzu Finscher, a.a.O., 108f.

³¹ Siehe hierzu a.a.O., 111.

³² James Webster, „On the absence of keyboard continuo in Haydn's symphonies“, in: *Early music*, hrsg. von N. Kenyon, Vol. XVIII, London 1990, 599–608.

c) Schließlich lassen verschiedene Quellen den Schluß zu, daß das Cembalo in England damals eine besondere Rolle gespielt hat – und von den berühmten Londoner Symphonie-Aufführungen unter Haydns Leitung wurde bisher immer auf die Notwendigkeit eines Generalbasses geschlossen: Doch gibt es – um nur ein Argument Websters zu nennen – von der prominenten Symphonie Nr. 98 mit dem ebenso berühmten kleinen Cembalo-Solo keine einzige „kontinentale“ Quelle, die einen Cembalopart enthielte, einschließlich des von Haydn autorisierten Aufführungsmaterials für Österreich. Die Generalbaß-Variante war demnach allein auf die Aufführungspraktiken und -bedingungen in England zugeschnitten.

Bei all dem räumt Webster ein, daß seine „negative These“, wie er sie nennt, nicht bewiesen werden kann, sie beruht vielmehr darauf, daß einfach zu viele Hinweise auf eine notwendige Tasteninstrument-Begleitung fehlen. Seine positive „Beweisführung“ beschränkt sich auf die „Vor-Londoner“ Symphonien und auf Aufführungen außerhalb Londons.

Das Gebiet des Generalbasses im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert ist nach wie vor unüberschaubar; es gibt noch viel zu entdecken und zu erforschen. Wie auch immer die Forschungsergebnisse aussehen werden, sie müssen individuell, am einzelnen Werk geprüft und hinterfragt werden. Alle diese Ergebnisse in die historisch orientierte Aufführungspraxis einfließen zu lassen, das scheint mir eine lohnenswerte Aufgabe zu sein.

ABSTRACTS

GRAHAM SADLER and SHIRLEY THOMPSON

Marc-Antoine Charpentier and the Basse Continue

The twenty-eight volumes of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's autograph manuscripts contain numerous clues to performance. The present article focuses on those which have a bearing on the realisation of the *basse continue*. It examines the various kinds and combinations of continuo instruments specified by Charpentier, together with aspects of the composer's notation that provide clues as to how the continuo was realised. Evidence is provided to support the claim that in a significant number of places, particularly in the theatre music, the continuo was silent.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier und der Basse continue

Die 28 im Autograph erhaltenen Manuskript-Bände mit Werken von Marc-Antoine Charpentier enthalten zahlreiche Hinweise zur Aufführungspraxis. Der Artikel befaßt sich mit solchen Hinweisen, die sich auf die Generalbaß-Praxis beziehen. Er untersucht die unterschiedlichen Generalbaß-Instrumente und deren Kombinationen, die von Charpentier spezifiziert werden sowie Aspekte der Notierung, die Aufschluß geben über die Ausführung des Continuo. Außerdem wird die These unterstützt, daß an einer beträchtlichen Anzahl von Orten – vor allem im Theater – das Continuo schwieg.

ARNALDO MORELLI

Basso continuo on the organ in seventeenth-century Italian music

Although the organ was involved in the continuo practice in a much larger measure than the harpsichord or other instruments, there is a noticeable scarcity of studies on this subject. This article intends to present a series of documents concerning organ continuo practice and dating back mostly to seventeenth-century Italy. These sources consist chiefly of *avvertimenti* to the reader published in the organ part-books of *concertata* sacred music of the early seventeenth century, mostly unknown up to now. After giving a cursory view of the different kinds of organ which were used in Italy at the time, this article deals with three fundamental aspects of the subject: 1. registration of the organ continuo; 2. number of the different parts harmonizing the basso continuo; 3. range of the accompaniment on the keyboard.

Basso continuo auf der Orgel im Italien des 17. Jahrhunderts

Ogleich die Orgel als Generalbaß-Instrument weit umfänglicher als das Cembalo oder andere Instrumente benutzt wurde, ist bislang bemerkenswert wenig darüber geschrieben worden. Mit diesem Artikel wird beabsichtigt, eine Reihe von Dokumenten zu präsentieren, die die Continuo-Praxis auf der Orgel in Italien hauptsächlich des 17. Jahrhunderts betreffen. Diese Quellen bestehen größtenteils aus an den Leser gerichteten *avvertimenti*, die in Orgel-Stimmbüchern von konzertierender geistlicher Musik des frühen 17. Jahrhunderts enthalten und bislang mehrheitlich unbekannt sind. Nach einem kursorischen Überblick über die Orgeltypen, die zu dieser Zeit in Italien üblich waren, befaßt sich der Artikel mit drei Hauptaspekten: 1. die Registrierung des Orgel-Continuo; 2. die Zahl der Stimmen, die zur Harmonisierung des Generalbaß beitragen; 3. der Raum, den die Begleitung auf der Tastatur einnimmt.

GEORGE J. BUELOW

The Italian Influence in Heinichen's *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (Dresden, 1728)

Heinichen's thorough-bass treatise is the most important resource for the thoroughbass written during the Baroque, and the most practical and inclusive tool for reconstructing the style and form of thoroughbass accompaniments for music written after 1700 in the German-Italian theatrical styles. It is particularly Heinichen's explanations of Italian continuo practice that makes *Der General-Bass* a unique document for reinventing Baroque thoroughbass practices. By comparing his earlier treatise, written in Leipzig, *Neu erfundene und gründliche Anweisung ... zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Bass* (1711) with *Der General-Bass*, written after he spent seven years in Italy, I demonstrate in their differences the intellectual and musical impact on Heinichen of his Italian years, which enabled him to document and codify Italian, particularly operatic thoroughbass practices in his second treatise.

Der italienische Einfluß in Heinichens *Der Generalbaß in der Composition* (Dresden 1728)

Heinichens Generalbaß-Schule ist sowohl die wichtigste einschlägige Quelle des Barock als auch die am meisten praxisorientierte und vollständige, wenn es darum geht, Stil und Form der Generalbaß-Begleitung von Musik zu rekonstruieren, die nach 1700 im deutschen und italienischen Stilus theatralis geschrieben worden ist. Vor allem Heinichens Darstellung der italienischen Continuo-Praxis machen den *General-Bass* zu einem einzigartigen Dokument beim „Wieder-Erfinden“ barocker Generalbaß-Praxis. Durch einen Vergleich seines früheren, in Leipzig entstandenen Traktates *Neu erfundene gründliche Anweisung ... zu vollkommener Erlernung des General-Bass* (1711) mit *Der*

General-Bass, der nach seinem siebenjährigen Italienaufenthalt entstand, zeige ich an Hand der Unterschiede den intellektuellen und musikalischen Eindruck, den diese italienischen Jahre bei Heinichen hinterlassen haben und die es ihm ermöglichten, in seinem zweiten Lehrbuch die für das Spiel besonders relevanten italienischen Generalbaß-Praktiken zu dokumentieren und zu kodifizieren.

PETER WILLIAMS

Johann Sebastian Bach and the Basso continuo

After some general remarks on the discretion required in continuo-playing, and a glance at terms employed by J.S. Bach, the essay looks at what was said about Bach's playing by later writers and – more importantly – why they might have said it, what their *agenda* was. Mitzler, C.P.E. Bach, Kittel, Daube, Forkel, Penzel, even Tovey, are looked at in a spirit of deconstruction, and some speculation is made about a crucial element: chronology. Were Bach's assumptions at Weimar in 1715 and Leipzig in 1745 the same? How can we know? What purport to be the composer's own hints – in the Anna Magdalena Book, the 1738 *Vorschriften*, Gerber's realization of Albinoni, the autograph B minor Flute Sonata (Largo) and Kirnberger's unbelievably pedantic extract from the *Musical Offering* – are then commented on briefly, with a view to recommending a closely-read contextualization of the music, in which the continuo player bears in mind the music's genre, period and style-specific allusions. Reference is made to Treiber, Heinichen, *Amore traditore* and the *Fifth Brandenburg* to raise particular questions necessary for a player to consider.

Johann Sebastian Bach und der Basso continuo

Neben einige allgemeine Bemerkungen über die Umsicht, die das Basso continuo-Spiel erfordert, und einem Blick auf Bachs Terminologie befaßt sich der Aufsatz mit den Äußerungen späterer Autoren über Bachs Spiel und stellt – was noch wichtiger ist –, die Frage, warum sie diese Äußerungen gemacht haben mögen, was sie damit bezweckten. Quellen wie Mitzler, C.Ph.E. Bach, Kittel, Daube, Forkel, Penzel, auch Tovey werden kritisch beleuchtet und es werden Vermutungen über einen schwierigen Punkt angestellt – über die Chronologie. Waren Bachs Postulate 1715 in Weimar dieselben wie 1745 in Leipzig? Was scheinbar die eigenen Hinweise des Komponisten sind – im Notenbuch der Anna Magdalena, in den *Vorschriften* von 1738, in Gerbers Albinoni-Realisierung, im Autograph der h-moll-Sonate (Largo) und in Kirnbergers extrem pedantischen Auszug aus dem *Musikalischen Opfer* – wird kurz im Sinne einer Empfehlung zu genauem Lesen des musikalischen Satzes kommentiert, eines Satzes, bei dem der Continuo-Spieler die Art der Musik, die Epoche und die stil-spezifischen Eigenheiten im Kopf hat. Ferner wird auf Treiber, Heinichen, *Amore traditore* und das 5. Brandenburgische Konzert im Hinblick auf besondere, für den Spieler relevante Fragestellungen hingewiesen.

„Regeln des Generalbasses“: Eine Berliner Handschrift des späten 18. Jahrhunderts

Das Manuskript *Regeln des Generalbasses von dem Herrn Musico Heering*“ (Staatsbibl. Berlin, Mus.ms.theor. 348) enthält neben Generalbaß-Grundregeln auch 400 Seiten mit ausgeschriebenen Aussetzungen zu Werken von J. S. Bach, C. P. E. Bach, W. F. Bach, A. Corelli, J. G. Graun, G. F. Händel und G. B. Pergolesi. Geschrieben wurden sie vom Berliner Politiker Otto C. F. von Voß (1755–1823), teilweise auch in Zusammenarbeit mit seinem Lehrer J. F. Heering. Der Stil der Aussetzungen ist meist streng vierstimmig und beleuchtet die eher retrospektive Musizierpraxis eines Berliner Adelhauses im ausgehenden 18. Jahrhundert.

„Regeln des Generalbasses“: a Berlin Manuscript of the late 18th century

In addition to ground rules of thoroughbass, the manuscript *Regeln des Generalbasses von dem Herrn Musico Heering* (Berlin State Library, Mus.Ms.theor. 348) contains 400 pages of written out continuo realizations to works by J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, W.F. Bach, A. Corelli, J.G. Graun, G.F. Handel and G.B. Pergolesi. They were written by the Berlin politician Otto C.F. von Voss (1755–1823), partly in collaboration with his teacher J.F. Heering. For the most part, the realizations are in strict four-voice style and illuminate the rather retrospective musical practice of a noble house in late 18th century Berlin.

REGULA RAPP

„Was der späte General-Baß sey?“ Einige Annäherungen

Im Zentrum der Erforschung des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts steht bis heute die Musik der Wiener Klassik. Über die Generalbaß-Praxis, die noch lange weiter wirkte, als der Generalbaß satztechnisch gar nicht mehr notwendig war, liegt bisher fast keine Sekundärliteratur vor. In dem Beitrag werden anhand von Streichquartetten, die mit Generalbaßziffern versehen sind, folgende Fragen diskutiert: Von wem stammen die Ziffern, von den Komponisten oder den Verlegern? Wie ist die Menge der bezifferten Instrumentalmusik dieser Zeit zu beurteilen? Wie wirkte sich die veränderte Ästhetik der zweiten Jahrhunderthälfte auf die Vorstellungen von einer geschmackvollen Generalbaßausführung aus? Wie sollen bezifferte Kompositionen aus jenen Jahren und solche, in denen keine Ziffern vorhanden sind, heute musiziert werden?

„Was der späte General-Baß sey?“ Several Approaches

Viennese Classicism remains until today its central position in research on the late 18th century. Concerning, on the other hand, thoroughbass practice, influ-

ential long after thoroughbass was no longer necessary as composition technique, there is virtually no secondary literature. Point of departure for the present study are string quartets with bass figures. They pose the following questions: who wrote the figures, composer or publisher? How much such music exists from that time period? How did the changed aesthetic of the second half of the century affect concepts of tasteful thoroughbass realization? How should late 18th century compositions with figured bass be played today? How should late 18th century compositions without figured bass be played today?

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