

ADAM JARZĘBSKI, CONCERTI E CANZONI I INNE KOMPOZYCJE / AND OTHER WORKS, ED. MARCIN SZELEST

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When a musical edition causes discussion, it is a good sign: it means that it reflects new ideas, but also that it gives rise to new ideas. And such is the case with the new edition of Adam Jarzębski's works published in 2021, in the series *Monumenta Musicae in Polonia*, by the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Thanks to his international profile and the stylistic richness of his compositions, Adam Jarzębski of Warka (d. 1648/49) is today considered one of the most prominent figures in the Polish cultural milieu of the first half of the seventeenth century, as well as an interesting figure on the European musical scene of his time. A composer, violinist, writer (he wrote a very interesting description of Warsaw), 'royal builder' and manager, he was active as a musician to the Elector of Brandenburg Johann Sigismund and spent part of his life in Italy – although we do not know where (perhaps Milan?) or exactly when (between 1615 and 1621?) – before entering the service of the Polish court as a violinist in the ensemble of Sigismund III Vasa and, later, Ladislaus IV.

We have 27 instrumental compositions by Jarzębski (one of which is divided into two parts) for two, three and four voices, preserved in a manuscript now held at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin (from this collection, three four-voice canzonas were also copied into the sixth volume of the Pelpin Tablature, PL-PE Ms. 308a), as well as an incomplete mass (with the still puzzling title 'Sub Concerto') for four voices and basso continuo, also handwritten, of which only the vocal bass has been preserved (D-B Mus. ms. 40073), and a canon (with two different resolutions – provided here) that was printed in the collection *Xenia Apollinea*, added to Marco Scacchi's treatise *Cribrum musicum* (Venice 1643). This canon is described as 'the only composition by Adam Jarzębski to have appeared in print during his lifetime' (p. 46) – actually, the only printed composition by this composer that has come down to us.

Jarzębski's most important works, also in view of their number, are of course his 27 instrumental compositions, now rightfully considered 'a phenomenon not only

in Polish music, but in central European music as a whole.¹ Despite their dissimilarity in terms of technique, style and scoring, these compositions have come down to us through a single source (possibly derived from different collections or reflecting different phases or compositional projects): a manuscript written by the violinist Johann Georg Beck dated to 1627 (the *terminus ante quem* for the dating of this music, since Beck was active in Frankfurt am Main from 1627 to 1638), bearing numerous corrections by Daniel Sartorius (c.1612–71), a celebrated professor at Wrocław's St Elisabeth Gymnasium who was responsible for a collection of musicalia of paramount importance to the study of the dissemination of Italian music in Europe.²

Before the Second World War, an accurate copy of Jarzębski's music included in this manuscript was made by Maria Szczepańska in the form of a score, but only a few editions of individual compositions were based on a direct examination of this manuscript. As highlighted in the 'Editorial introduction' of the present edition, all post-war editions up to 1989 – when a critical edition of the entire collection was published by Wanda Rutkowska – relied on Szczepańska's copy.³ If we consider that Alessandro Bares's 2006 edition does not include the basso continuo part of the five instrumental canzonas for four voices,⁴ and

Joëlle Morton's edition available online of all the compositions for viola bastarda lacks a critical apparatus,⁵ then this is the first complete critical edition of all of Jarzębski's surviving works since the manuscript of *Concerti e canzoni* held at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin became available for direct examination. However, as stated by the editor, 'what provided the direct impulse to create this edition was the identification', within the Berlin manuscript, 'of the handwriting of two scribes' (p. 49) – two distinct 'layers', each showing a different stage in the history of transmission, the first of which can be attributed to Johann Georg Beck, and the other to Daniel Sartorius.

Beck's manuscript was compiled in four fascicles, plus one that contains only the basso continuo of the five four-voice canzonas (a part which could also be the result of a subsequent elaboration by an author other than Jarzębski). The fascicles of the *Prima vox* and the *Seconda* (in Italian and not Latin) *vox* bear the title *Canzoni e concerti*, adopted by the main modern editions, while the fascicles of the *Bassus sive vox tertia* (*sic*) bear the title *Concerti e canzoni*. This latter title has been appropriately adopted in this new edition as being more in keeping with the actual content of the original manuscript, where the compositions called *canzoni* appear last.

The compositions included in the manuscript can be divided into three groups, each with distinct technical and stylistic traits (an aspect addressed in the musicological literature and in the introduction to this edition): 12 (five called concertos) for two voices and basso continuo (eight of them derived from vocal works), sharing some stylistic traits with *mottetti* or *madri-*

1 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, *The Baroque, Part I: 1595–1696*, transl. John Comber, Warsaw 2002 (= The History of Music in Poland 3), p. 452.

2 Tomasz Jeż, *Danielis Sartorii musicalia Wratislaviensia*, Warsaw 2017 (= Fontes Musicae in Polonia, A/1).

3 Cf. Adam Jarzębski, *Canzoni e concerti*, ed. Wanda Rutkowska, Kraków 1989 (= Monumenta Musicae in Polonia).

4 Adam Jarzębski, *Concerti e canzoni a due, tre, quattro voci cum basso continuo: Manoscritto, 1627*, ed. Alessandro Bares, Albese con Cassano–Stuttgart 2006 (gedruckt in Lizenz von Muse-dita).

5 Adam Jarzębski, *Concerti e canzoni*, ed. Joëlle Morton (13 compositions accessible on IMSLP–Petrucci Music Library), https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Jarz%C4%99bski%2C_Adam, accessed 28 May 2023.

gali passeggiati; ten (seven called concertos) for three voices and basso continuo with Italian titles derived from the names of German cities or referring to the character of the works (as in Italian instrumental canzonas from the early seventeenth century, but without the initial article); five canzonas for four voices, plus a basso continuo part serving as a *basso seguente* copied in a separate partbook of a different size and paper type (with different watermark) from the other parts (NB even the copy in the Pelpin Tablature only contains four parts). It is worth noting that the four-voice canzonas do not have female title-dedications referring to fellow musicians or to the families of illustrious patrons, as in the instrumental canzonas published in Italy during the first decades of the seventeenth century.

At the beginning of the edition there is a list of abbreviations, divided into 'General abbreviations', 'Siglas of libraries and archives' and 'Bibliographical abbreviations', presented in both Polish and English. Following this is a comprehensive introduction (the English title of which, 'Monographic introduction', sounds like a transliteration of the Polish original) divided into two parts. The first part focusses on the author's life, while the second part discusses his works and their sources, and is further divided into three parts dealing with 'The *Concerti e canzoni* collection', 'The canon' and 'Missa a 4 sub concerto', with an additional 'Editorial introduction'.

The first part of the introduction provides a detailed account of the different stages in the composer's life, drawing on past studies by renowned scholars such as Korotyński, Sachs, Simon, Feicht, Dunicz, Tomkiewicz, Szweykowski and Przybyszewska-Jarumińska. Following this is a section that focusses on Jarzębski's works and their sources, meticulously tracing the intricate history of the sources that have allowed us to learn about the composer's instrumental compositions – the main subject of this edi-

tion. This section also provides an updated summary of the research conducted so far.

The editor of the present edition argues that, 'as the copy of Jarzębski's collection does contain' some errors, 'we may suppose that it was not based on the autograph' (although 'the relatively small number of text defects indicates that there were not many intermediate copies between that used by Beck and the autograph') (p. 39); elsewhere, however, he claims that Beck's copy was 'based on the missing autograph' (p. 49). While we agree that Beck's copy was carefully written, we cannot say how faithful it was to its antigraph or what position it occupied in the history of transmission of this musical text. In another part of the introduction, the editor recalls that 'the care with which Johann Georg Beck copied Jarzębski's collection has led researchers to speculate that it may have been produced as a basis for preparing a printed edition' (p. 45) and points out that there is no trace of such a print in any catalogue: yet the accuracy of this manuscript could also lead one to believe that it was copied *from* a print.

On the other hand, with regard to Sartorius' interventions, the editor claims that they 'provide valuable evidence of seventeenth-century reception of the works of the Polish composer' (p. 40), which is entirely plausible, but also that they 'are totally without value when trying to establish the composer's original text' (p. 40), which is not equally acceptable, and that Sartorius' addition 'intrudes deeply into the composer's text and has no connection to it' (p. 49), which is also only partially tenable. As the editor acknowledges, Sartorius generally clarifies and makes explicit what is implied by the text copied by Beck ('Many of the accidentals added by Sartorius merely make Beck's notation more precise, for example in the cadence formulas or in written out ornaments', p. 39).

In addition to motivating the need to publish a new edition (see above), the

‘Editorial introduction’ explains the criteria used for this edition. Among the commendable criteria is the decision to normalise paratextual elements (titles of compositions, names of parts, etc.) in the musical text (which makes the edition more coherent and orderly) and to report all slightly differing individual titles and names of parts in the critical notes. Indeed, even a slight fluctuation in spelling could be significant for locating a source or helping to understand aspects of the history of the transmission, dissemination, and reception of these compositions. For instance, the fact that the basso partbook is entitled ‘Bassus Sive Vox Tertzia’, with ‘tz’, instead of ‘tertia’, or that the basso continuo part indicates the third instrumental canzona as ‘canzon tertza’, again with ‘tz’, instead of ‘terza’, suggests that the scribe responsible for copying this manuscript (or its antigraph) was not a native Italian speaker, but probably German-speaking (if not German), as we actually know in the case of the present copy.

This criterion, together with the decision to present the incipit in its original notation and display the key (modernised where necessary) and duration values (not reduced in this edition) at the beginning of each composition, is wholly appropriate. The critical notes specify the sources examined for each composition; in addition, each note of the apparatus provides information about the bar number, the part in question, the specific element within the bar and the reading offered by the source at that particular point.

With regard to the *Concerti e canzoni*, the edition is based on a manuscript consisting of five separate partbooks, whereas in the present edition the compositions are published in score, in their original sequence and (with some additions) with the original titles. Standardised terminology has been used for references to genres, number of parts and forces, while all the title inscriptions present in the source are aptly noted

in the critical commentary. This is very important, because it reveals that among the 12 two-voice compositions (one of which is in two parts), only five are explicitly defined as ‘concerto’; among the ten three-voice compositions, meanwhile, the indication ‘concerto’ is found in only seven cases.

Equally appropriate is the normalisation of bar lines, added in the scores when deemed necessary. However, it is not as advisable to retain in the modern edition all the time signatures that appear in the source, and it is even less opportune to adopt the ‘dominant version’ (p. 49) where there is a divergence between the parts. It would have been better to choose the time signature deemed appropriate on each occasion and, if different, indicate the original one above the top staff (or above each staff, if the original time signatures vary). Modern clefs are appropriately adopted in place of the original ones (visible in the incipit or recorded in the critical notes in the case of changes of clef in specific parts within the composition). However, it would have been advisable to copy the tenor voice in the octave violin clef and to change the clef in the highest viola bastarda passages to avoid the excessive use of ledger lines.

As regards dynamic signs, there are a few added by Sartorius above the staff of the upper voice. In the edition, these are given in the same position and without any integration, whereas they could have been more conveniently indicated below the staff, as usually happens in modern editions, and integrated into the other voices in italics.

Other adequate editorial procedures include tacitly changing ‘rhythmic values of notes that end compositions in the cases where they do not appear in all the parts at the same time’, changing tied notes of the same pitch into one note of correspondingly longer rhythmic value (noting the situation in the source in the commentary) and removing erroneous basso continuo markings and moving the misplaced figuring to

the correct position (also noting the situation in the source in the commentary).

All of these devices contribute significantly to ensuring that the edition is transparent – an indispensable prerogative of any critical edition. In terms of marking accidentals, the policy adopted (not entirely shared by volume reviewer Piotr Wilk and in fact quite problematic in some respects) is also geared towards maximising transparency, at least programmatically: all the accidentals written by the principal copyist (Johann Georg Beck) are given in the text before the corresponding notes, and they apply until the end of the bar. It is a pity, however, that ‘the flats that repeat the key signatures and sharps that warn against lowering pitch according to the rule *fa sopra la*’ (p. 50) have not been marked as well: even though they do not lead to any actual change in pitch, they attest to writing practices that help us grasp how the use of alterations was understood. Furthermore, all the accidentals added by Daniel Sartorius, including those repeated within the same bar, are shown outside the staff, above the corresponding note, and apply to the entire bar (in contrast to Sartorius’ ‘system’, in which each accidental referred to a single note). Finally, the few editorial accidentals, i.e. those added by the modern editor, are given in square brackets before the note to which they refer (the only space available, since Sartorius’ accidentals are given above the staff...) and in turn apply to the whole bar.

What happens then, in this edition, when Johann Georg Beck does not mark an accidental (perhaps deeming it obvious), while the first ‘historical’ editor, Daniel Sartorius, who was apparently more precise (but sometimes had his own ideas), does so, and the modern editor, Marcin Szelest, agrees with him? In such cases, we encounter an accidental (say a sharp) above the note and outside the staff, and the same accidental (a sharp) before the same note in

square brackets. Considering that, in most cases, these are accidentals that any violinist with common sense would introduce without needing to find them indicated in the edition, the overall effect is likely to be at least misleading. Additionally, the criterion that ‘where the editor decided that accidentals added in the secondary layer [i.e. by Daniel Sartorius] were necessary, they are given in square brackets above the notes’ (p. 51) is particularly cumbersome. In other words: the editor has taken care to homogenise Sartorius’ version by adding to the accidentals suggested by him other alterations that Sartorius himself, according to the editor, should have added if he had consistently followed the chosen criteria. Is this not a little excessive?

In addition to the many added accidentals, there are some passages in Daniel Sartorius’ revision (the first known revision to this musical text) to which extra attention was rightly paid. In some passages, in fact, Sartorius added notes or made changes to the musical text. In the edition, these (tradition) variants have been placed above the musical text in an added staff fragment (‘in the form of alternative notation’, p. 51) to allow the performer to choose (whereas the editor should always choose, albeit by enabling the reader to make different choices). Yet, in my opinion, these doublings are not justified, first of all because in most cases these variants are minor and inappropriate, and secondly because, assuming this edition is used to play Jarzębski’s music, as would be desirable, they would distract the performer. Moreover, such ‘alternative versions’ are present in only seven compositions (a dozen cases in all). In five cases, they are just minor gaps in the musical text copied by Beck (often only one note is missing), suitably supplemented by Sartorius (most of the additions are, however, taken up by the editor); in other cases, Sartorius adds (or merely makes explicit) individual accidentals not indicated by Beck. In four cases, there are

slight variants affecting just a few notes (or even only one). In all these situations, the presence of an additional stave fragment above the musical text gives the variants a weight disproportionate to their significance and also distracts the performer, who will take care to compare the two versions each time, most often to conclude that they are substantially (if not literally) corresponding. Yet the real issue is not choosing between Beck's and Sartorius' version, but being able to distinguish them (which is finally guaranteed in this edition, whereas it did not happen in Szczepańska's copy and in the editions derived from it) and, above all, to access, thanks to Beck, Sartorius and in this case Marcin Szelest, Jarzębski's musical thinking (which, on the contrary, is not always so simple here): once this goal has been achieved, any further information on Sartorius' corrective behaviour can be provided in a dedicated study.

Overall, this edition poses a considerable challenge for readers, particularly if they plan to use it for performance purposes. In some passages, the musical text gives indications that need to be pieced together, sometimes to add an accidental in a cadence where any musician of the time (and any historically informed violinist today) would have added it without written instruction. I hope that there are performers who, in addition to carefully reading the entire introductory section (as every performer should do), do not get too impatient at seeing pages of music often full of information that is not always essential or that could have been inserted elsewhere: we cannot criticise performers who do not use critical editions if we have not first done everything to make them usable.

The edition's difficulty stems from the decision to show *all* of Daniel Sartorius' additions, corrections, and integrations to Beck's copy (a facsimile edition with an extensive introductory commentary would have been better for this purpose). That

is a questionable choice not so much because Sartorius' interventions are devoid of interest (on the contrary, they are of great interest to the musicologist), but because it is not advisable to place them at the forefront of the reader/performer's attention at the expense of the edition's readability. To make all of Sartorius' interventions visible, the editor had to adopt complicated criteria that even academic users (let alone musicians) may find unfamiliar. As the editor well explains, 'in order to reconstruct on the basis of this edition the original layer of the text entered by Johann Georg Beck [...] one needs to take into account only the musical text entered on the staves, the dynamic signs under the staves and basso continuo figures introduced in italics above the staff of the basso continuo part [...]. All the other elements of the notation, in particular accidentals above the staves, should be ignored. On the other hand, to reconstruct the version modified by Daniel Sartorius, one needs to combine the original and secondary layers of the text: to add to the musical text notated on the staves the accidentals introduced above them, and in cases of changes of pitch and/or rhythm adopt the alternative versions of the respective bars given above the staves. One should also take into account the dynamic markings above the staves and the basso continuo figures placed under the staff of the basso continuo part [...]' (p. 51).

Thanks to these criteria, the transparency of the edition is guaranteed; but the same cannot be said of its readability (and usability). A better approach would have been to clean up Sartorius' more or less appropriate interpolations (as has been done in this edition) and add to the musical text the necessary indications that the editor deems appropriate, while leaving it to the critical notes to specify Sartorius' interventions precisely. For instance, if the editor believed that an *F* natural in the text copied by Beck should be played as an *F* sharp, it

would be enough to mark an editorial accidental above the note outside the staff and write in the apparatus that Sartorius also introduced a sharp at that point. This approach would allow the text to accurately reflect what is read in Beck's copy (excluding obvious errors) and to introduce any necessary editorial accidentals, corrections, or additions. The critical notes could then provide a clear understanding of the nature of Sartorius' editorial interventions (which can be further illustrated through additional reproductions and explanations within the introduction or in academic articles on the topic).

Ultimately, Szelest is rightly very careful to distinguish between the two layers of what is now the only copy that has come down to us of these compositions (apart from the canzonas copied in the Pelplin Tablature), but sometimes he seems to overlook the fact that they are not 'ontologically' opposed to one another (Beck = the truth *versus* Sartorius = the corruption), but both record as many stages in the history of the transmission of this musical text and help to convey the composer's musical thinking. If it is true that the reconstruction of the intentions of the author (in this case Jarzębski) is not the only objective pursued by the critical edition, it is also true that, at least tendentially, this remains one of its goals (if not the main one). Making fully visible a specific phase in the transmission's history (such as Sartorius' corrections) results in a difficult-to-read musical page that ultimately does not help us to understand the musical thinking of the composer (in whose service Johann Georg Beck, Daniel Sartorius, Maria Szczepańska, Wanda Rutkowska, Alessandro Bares, Joëlle Morton, and Marcin Szelest have worked towards a better understanding of these musical texts, as others will in the future).

In conclusion, this edition deserves credit for rekindling the attention of musicology to this composer's output, taking

stock of the existing scholarship and publishing his complete works for the first time (including the incomplete mass and the two different realisations of the canon). Additionally, the careful examination of the manuscript of Jarzębski's instrumental compositions, taking into account the contribution of its two copyists, is particularly relevant. If, therefore, the intention of making this stratification transparent is fully acceptable, the paper format has imposed drastic choices on the editor: either create a scholarly edition which allows the reader to visualise different editorial strata or, as in this case, different stages in the history of the transmission, with pages of music overloaded with information, articulated in different layers and with alternative versions (such as the present one), or create an edition that is just as correct from the point of view of the reconstruction of the text, but is more clearly legible, easier to use and supplemented by a more articulated apparatus (a solution that is considered preferable). In our digital age, Jarzębski's music could represent an ideal training ground for experimenting with new types of edition that preserve the scientific rigour of the philological procedure while also offering different editorial solutions – possibly on demand and/or accessible (only) online – that give various options for the presentation of the musical text, calibrated to the needs of different types of users.

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