

Interpreting the Style and Context of Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber's *Harmonia Artificioso-  
Ariosa*

by

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## ABSTRACT

The *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa* is the final published instrumental work of Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber. This collection was printed in 1696 in private copy and dedicated to Biber's employer, Archbishop Johann Ernst von Thun. It does not appear, according to the historical circumstances surrounding this copy, that the collection was intended for publication, yet a second posthumous copy was produced in 1712, for reasons unknown. The prevalence of organ genres and styles observed in the collection, the influence of prominent organists working in Biber's circle, and the placement of the work in the last decade of Biber's career, in which he composed mostly sacred music, suggests that the *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa* was structured for use in both sacred and secular performance settings. However, this music has, until now, only been considered as part of his secular instrumental oeuvre, even though there is much evidence to contradict this belief. This thesis examines the historical, theoretical, and stylistic issues that support the *Harmonia's* use in a sacred performance setting.

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*This Thesis is Dedicated to the Memory of my Grandmother, Ann Sheets (Farcas)  
December 4, 1926-September 30, 2014*

## Introduction

This thesis examines the last instrumental composition of Heinrich Biber, the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*. It is a collection of trio sonatas scored for various stringed instruments, including the violino piccolo and the viola d'amore. All but six of these works use different manifestations of scordatura—tunings other than the standard tuning for the instrument—, which are indicated by the composer. The *Harmonia* was printed in 1696, but no publisher's name or location appears on this copy. Because of this, the copy was probably produced at Biber's own expense—even though his employer's name appears in the dedication.

Biber's *Harmonia* is known to us today because of his widow, who demanded payment for lessons that two counts owed the Biber family since before Heinrich's death. Presumably, the counts paid their debt and also gave additional money to purchase the 1696 copy of the work. From that point, the work was preserved in their collection of music but forgotten until the rediscovery of this same copy in the 1980s. Biber died on May 3, 1704, and a posthumous copy of his last masterpiece appeared in 1712, produced by the Endter publishing house in Nuremberg. It is not known how Endter came to possess the plates, and Reinhard Goebel suggests that by 1712 music such as that contained in the *Harmonia* was very much outdated and would not have sold many—if any—copies at all.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reinhard Goebel, foreword to *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa Diversimode Accordata: VII Partien á tre*, by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (Magdeburg: Edition Walhall, 2007), x-xiv.

Biber's *Harmonia* came to my attention during preparations for a recital, in which I performed three selections from his *Rosary Sonatas*. The music was unlike any I had ever heard before: a spectacle of themes, styles, adventures, and, perhaps, above all, human emotions. I decided immediately to attempt to understand the *Harmonia* to the best of my ability, and that it would be the subject of my Master's thesis. My thesis examines the style and context of the work through the prevalence of elements that are idiomatic to organ music yet present in a collection of trio sonatas intended for strings. This thesis also examines the personal events occurring in Biber's life around the time the *Harmonia* may have been composed and printed.

## **Chapter One:** **State of Research and Literature Review**

The scholarship on Heinrich Biber is a blossoming field of music research. Unlike the music of composers like Bach or Beethoven, which enjoy the benefit of several centuries of performance, intense study, and research, Biber's music was hidden in the subconscious memory of musicians and historians from the time of his death on May 4, 1704, until the beginning of the twentieth century. The few statements that we possess made by Biber himself and by his colleagues are nonetheless valuable in our understanding of Biber as a composer.

Almost every early evaluation of Biber mentions his skill as a musician first and a composer second.<sup>2</sup> One of the first such statements was made by the celebrated, seventeenth-century Tyrolean luthier Jakob Stainer, who, in a letter to Biber's employer Count Karl Liechtenstein-Castelcorn, proclaimed him the "formidable virtuoso, Herr Biber."<sup>3</sup> Stainer's comment had a rippling effect on subsequent observers, and the music lexicographers who included the composer in their writings almost always echoed Stainer's sentiment. Music historian Charles Burney further intensified the strictly performance-oriented reception of Biber with this insight:

"Of all the violin players of the last century, Biber seems to have been the best, and his solos are the most difficult and fanciful of any music I have seen of the same period. One of the pieces is written on three staves, as if scored for two violins and a bass, but is meant to be played in double stops. Others are played in different tunings of fourths and fifths, as for a treble viol. A second work by this musician, entitled *Fidicinum sacro-prophanum* [sic], consists of twelve sonatas in

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<sup>2</sup> James Clements, "Aspects of the *Ars Rhetorica* in the Violin Music of Heinrich Biber (1644-1704)" PhD diss. (Royal Holloway, University of London, 2002), 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.



four and five parts, to be played on three instruments; and a third: *Harmonia Artificioso-ariosa*, published at Nuremberg, consisting of pieces of seven parts, to be played on three instruments. *In this last work he is styled a dapiser.*<sup>4</sup>

For the majority of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, musicians and historians remained focused on Biber's "formidable" virtuosity alone, and most of the research conducted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries drew its inspiration from this single facet of his music. The focus on virtuosity had a detrimental effect on our appreciation and understanding of Biber's sacred compositions, which laid nearly silent and forgotten, even though a few of the works were published during the early part of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> This deficiency in Biber scholarship carried over into the understanding of the instrumental works, a problem that still plagued our knowledge of Biber's music until the first decade of this century.

The early music movement of the mid-twentieth century was the seed from which the Biber revival began to gain serious ground, and while there are many elements of the performance practice heard in early recordings that would be considered outdated or even unacceptable in today's performance practice culture, we do owe much respect to the

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<sup>4</sup> Charles Burney, *A General History of Music from the Earliest Ages to the Present Period*, 4

vols. (London: the author, 1776-1789), 2:580. The word "dapiser" means "master." Burney interpreted the *Harmonia* as Biber's creative and personal high point, but his focus on the scordatura showcases virtuosity in Biber's music in relation to this work. Either way, the statement was detrimental to future understanding and reception of the *Harmonia*, which is unfortunate.

<sup>5</sup> The *Missa Salisburgensis* was published in the 20<sup>th</sup> volume of the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* in 1903, although misattributed to Horacio Benevoli. Biber's *Plaudite Tympana* was also published in the 20<sup>th</sup> volume. Biber's Requiem in F Minor was published in the 59<sup>th</sup> volume in 1923. The majority of Biber's other sacred works were not printed or published until much later in the twentieth century.

early champions of Biber's music.<sup>6</sup> A brief look at recordings dating from the 1960s onward indicates a somewhat limited approach to interpretation, and ensembles chose to perform a small handful of works, even though by this point many of Biber's instrumental compositions were available in modern editions.<sup>7</sup> The *Rosary Sonatas* (c. 1678) enjoyed the greatest popularity and were first recorded by the iconoclastic Austrian violinist Eduard Melkus in 1968.<sup>8</sup> Other performers handpicked selections from Biber's other instrumental collections, but complete recordings of lesser-known works did not materialize until the 1980s. The *Sonatae tam aris, quam Aulis Servientes* (1676) was not recorded in its entirety until 1983, exactly twenty years after a modern publication was made available.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, a full recording of the *Mensa Sonora seu Musica Instrumentalis* (1680) did not arrive until 1988, twenty-eight years after modern publication, when Musica Antiqua Köln released the first modern performance of the work along with a performance of Biber's *Sonata Representativa* (1669), played by

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<sup>6</sup> To clarify, such "outdated" things might include use of Romantic-style vibrato, incorrect ornamentation or total absence of ornaments, incorrect phrasing, lack of dynamic contrast, and so forth.

<sup>7</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Harmonia Artificiosa*, Musicus Concentus Wien, dir. Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Musical Heritage Society, 1964. LP. This is the earliest recording of Biber's *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*. It is incomplete, as all of the early recordings were due to inaccuracies in the *DTÖ* edition of the work.

<sup>8</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Rosenkranz-Sonaten*, Eduard Melkus (violin), Huguette Dreyfus, Lionel Rogg, Karl Scheit (continuo), Archiv Produktion, 1968. 2708 092 (198 422; 198 423), LP.

<sup>9</sup> Heinrich Biber, *Sonatae tam Aris quam Aulis Servientes*, The Parley of Instruments, dir. Roy Goodman, Hyperion Records, 1983. Original issue ID CDA66145, reissued February 2000 on the Helios label. This recording does not, unfortunately, include the twelve trumpet duos that Biber appended to this collection. It is unlikely the duos were performed all at once along with the sonatas, but for the sake of completion it would have been preferable if this ensemble interspersed them on the recording.

director Reinhard Goebel.<sup>10</sup> Recent performances of Biber's music have provided pathways to understanding its historical context that would not have otherwise been made available. While the scholar may lament the absence of academic study of Biber's music during the first half of the twentieth century, we owe nearly everything to the performers who rescued Biber's music from the dusty archive and returned it to its rightful status as valuable music worthy of public performance. We will now take a closer look at some of the modern milestones of Biber scholarship and trace a timeline of some of the key events.

### ***Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich***

The *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* is the tremendous publication project initiated by musicologist Guido Adler.<sup>11</sup> This project provided modern publications of many Baroque and early Classic period works by Austro-German composers that were once confined to academic obscurity, or even forgotten entirely. The selections of Biber's music included in the *DTÖ* (as it will be referred to after this point) were mostly limited to the larger instrumental collections, e.g., the *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa* (1696, 1712), but also included many of his larger sacred vocal compositions: the *Missa Salisburgensis* (c. 1682), *Plaudite Tympana* (c. 1682), *Missa Sancti Henrici* (1696), and the *Requiem in F Minor* (c. 1692).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Mensa Sonora, Sonata Representativa*, Musica Antiqua Köln, dir. Reinhard Goebel, Archiv Produktion, 1988. 423 701-2. CD.

<sup>11</sup> Details of the project's history can be found at <http://www.dtoe.at/index.php> Less detailed but still helpful information (in English) can also be found at [http://imsip.org/wiki/Denkmäler\\_der\\_Tonkunst\\_in\\_Österreich](http://imsip.org/wiki/Denkmäler_der_Tonkunst_in_Österreich)

<sup>12</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa Diversimode Accordata*, Denkmäler Der Tonkunst In Österreich (DTÖ) Band 92. Eds. Paul Nettl and Friedrich

At the time the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* was published in the *DTÖ*, only a posthumously printed copy from 1712—upon which the new edition was based—was known to exist. Sadly, the editors did not realize that the 1712 exemplar had serious defects. A 1696 copy of the *Harmonia* was discovered by musicologist Fritz Zoberley, and only then were the problems in the 1712 copy made evident.<sup>13</sup> The defects stemmed from an inexplicable switching of the plates for the solo parts after the last few measures of the first movement of Partia II through all of Partia III. Somehow Partia IV was printed correctly, but the switch occurs once more for Partias V and VI. Partia VII is correct. In actual performance, few if any issues are noticeable because the mistake simply causes Violin 1 to play Violin 2's part. While it seems puzzling as to why the editors did not spend more time examining their primary sources, especially considering a full transcription of the *Harmonia*'s scordatura notation was undertaken as part of the modern edition—a painfully time consuming and slow process—a unique quality of the parts is to blame for this mistake and *not* a lack of competency on behalf of the editors.<sup>14</sup> All details aside, the inclusion of the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* in the *DTÖ* was still a valuable addition to the collection and several ensembles used the edition for performances.

Along with many other previously unpublished works, the *DTÖ* provided the first semi-complete collection of Biber's instrumental music. The rediscovery of Count

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Leidinger (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1956). The volumes for the other works are 20 (1903), 49 (1918), and 59 (1923) respectively.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Brewer, *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzer, Biber, Muffat, and Their Contemporaries* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 326.

<sup>14</sup> Reinhard Goebel, foreword to *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa Diversimode Accordata: VII Partien á tre*, by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (Magdeburg: Edition Walhall, 2007), x-xiv. Goebel states that the two solo parts are absolutely equal, and because of this the *DTÖ* editors may be forgiven for not noticing the error.

Liechtenstein's music collection coincided with its publications, adding many more works by Biber to our early music repertoire. Antonin Breitenbacher catalogued the Liechtenstein collection, which contains 35 manuscripts of Biber's music, in 1928. It was microfilmed in the 1960s and is housed in the Special Collections Research Center of the Syracuse University Libraries.<sup>15</sup> This was an especially significant occurrence in Biber scholarship because a much larger amount of his music was now available for anyone in North America to explore. By the end of the twentieth century, the *DTÖ* had provided modern editions of all of Biber's major instrumental collections and most of the major sacred vocal works as well. These modern editions remain a valuable resource for both performers and scholars alike.

### **Eric Chafe, *The Church Music of Heinrich Biber***

Eric Chafe's dissertation was completed in 1975 and published as a book in 1987. Chafe was the first to resurrect Biber's impressive oeuvre of sacred music from over two centuries of obscurity. The sacred works are indeed the most prolific and significant part of Biber's compositional output. Until this contribution, Heinrich Biber was mostly known to us as a composer of instrumental music, and the majority of it was dismissed as simple *Tafelmusik*, yet perhaps more picturesque and inventive thanks to Biber's predilection for innovative tunings and extramusical effects. Works like the *Sonata rappresentativa* (c. 1669), with its imitations of bird calls, croaking frogs, and howling tomcats, entertaining programmatic works such as the *Battalia a' 10* (1673), with its drunken soldiers and musket fire, and the depictions of simple peasant life in the

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<sup>15</sup> Clements, "Aspects of the *Ars Rhetorica*," 27.

procession of *Die pauern Kirchfarth-genandt* (1673) made Biber a composer of music that was charming and relatable. Even the *Rosary Sonatas* were written for a devotion known and practiced by people throughout Europe, yet the musical challenges the work presented were dismissed as surface content, a quirk by which many would claim to “know” the music of Heinrich Biber.<sup>16</sup>

Chafe’s estimation of Biber as a composer does not shy away from the human aspects of his music. That so much of the music *is* relatable is an important element of Biber, one that Chafe makes clear from the first pages of his book:

“The influence of forms of popular piety on Austrian church music of this time (and, indeed, of the other arts as well) has often been remarked. When Biber includes sonatas of very rustic character among publications designated for both church and court, when he produces a hybrid type of programmatic suite for solo violin and associates it with the mysteries of the Rosary, or an ensemble sonata entitled *Sonata a’ 6 die pauern-Kirchfarth genandt*, that depicts a peasants’ litany procession, and so on, it is not merely the influence of his background that is significant but perhaps the artist’s conscious effort to broaden the musical language with the incorporation of elements that suggest a cutting across the barriers of class and national style as well as the sacred/secular dichotomy.”<sup>17</sup>

Chafe’s dissertation also provides valuable information about Biber’s personal life. The inclusion of biographical information such as the birth dates of Biber’s eleven children and interactions with employers and colleagues provide valuable insight into Biber’s life. For the purposes of this project, Chafe’s dissertation has continued to be a tremendously helpful resource and is certainly one that will stand the test of time for all current and future studies of Biber and his music.

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<sup>16</sup> Reinhard Goebel describes the problem perfectly: “Mention of the name of Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber today evokes among connoisseurs and aficionados alike a chain of associations, eliciting meaningful glances, knowledgeable nods, and the mention of scordatura and the Rosary Sonatas.” *Harmonia*, foreword, x.

<sup>17</sup>Eric Chafe, *The Church Music of Heinrich Biber* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987), 7.

**James Clements, “Aspects of the *Ars rhetorica* in the Violin Music of Heinrich Biber”**

The third significant addition to our understanding of Biber is James Clements’s dissertation, “Aspects of the *Ars rhetorica* in the Violin Music of Heinrich Biber.”<sup>18</sup> This work constitutes another significant first in Biber scholarship as Clements includes a translation of the dedication pages of every published work. For the very first time, English-speaking readers have Biber in his own words. The florid Latin prose is decoded and dissected for modern readers and allows us to become acquainted with the more intricate and cryptic parts of Biber’s personal credo of music and composition. Clements’s dissertation is also the first significant departure in Biber scholarship from the emphasis on virtuosity, a change that has become a recurring topic in Biber research in the past ten to fifteen years.

Clements’s translations and explanations of the various rhetorical devices used in Biber’s prose are detailed but straightforward, and one gets the sense that not only are they becoming acquainted with Biber but getting a solid education in the art of rhetoric as well. Because Biber’s music is so heavily influenced by rhetoric, this is valuable to anyone seeking to learn more about it. After he concludes the translations, Clements builds and expands upon his interpretations by applying them to the music itself. He devotes a separate chapter to Biber’s *Rosary Sonatas*, which is understandable and necessary given the large scope of the collection, but in another first, Clements includes discussion and analysis of all of Biber’s instrumental music.

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<sup>18</sup>James Clements, “Aspects of the *Ars Rhetorica* in the Violin Music of Heinrich Biber (1644-1704)” (PhD diss. Royal Holloway, University of London, 2002).

Clements's work is not free of controversy. While I took issue with very few things, there were some points that were problematic enough to warrant discussion here. Clements's assignment of Biber's instrumental music apart from his *Rosary Sonatas* to a strictly secular realm is insensitive to the overarching themes of piety in both Biber's vocal and instrumental compositions. Clements quotes the preface to Georg Muffat's *Armonico Tributo* (1682-1701 preface) to support his claims:

“These concertos, since they were composed only for the particular delight of the ear, can be most fittingly performed for (above all) the amusement of great Princes and Lords, and for the entertainment of prominent guests, grand meals, serenades, and gatherings of music-lovers and virtuosi; they are suitable for neither the Church, because of the ballets and other arias which they contain, nor for dancing, because of the alternation of slow and tragic passages with lively and nimble ones.”<sup>19</sup>

Muffat's *Armonico Tributo* is an unquestionably secular collection and, as the title suggests, pays great homage to both Corelli and Lully. In terms of orchestration and style, this collection bears no similarity to Biber's *Harmonia*. The *Armonico Tributo* is a skillful and intentionally crafted blend of the Corellian concerto grosso and Lullian dance styles. Muffat preferred the fashionable French tastes and wrote many large overture suites in a Lullian style. Biber was not necessarily opposed to French styles and used the French scoring of one violin and two violas for his *Mensa Sonora* collection. However, he primarily focused his energies on homespun musical styles and also on elevating popular or folk styles and themes in his larger sacred works. If Muffat's quotation is taken at face value, one wonders what he would have thought of Biber's *Rosary Sonatas*, which from a strictly musical standpoint, does not fit Muffat's description and, therefore, would be unsuitable for a sacred performance setting. It is important to remember that

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 180.



Biber's musical belief system extended beyond the boundaries of how most composers looked upon their profession at this time. To Biber, any and all musical forms held the potential to transmit his musical faith to his listeners (a fact stated many times by Clements). Dance forms in Biber should be approached and analyzed just as they are in J. S. Bach's music--with the mindset of an artist's empty canvas.<sup>20</sup> This is especially visible in his *Rosary Sonatas*. On this point I am also in disagreement with Clements. Comparing the *Sonatae violino solo (1681)* and the *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa* to Muffat's comparatively pedantic musical opinions is in direct opposition to the credo of both Biber and these two highly spiritual collections.

To conclude, James Clements's contribution to Biber scholarship is truly one of the most valuable modern resources for anyone studying Biber's music. The translation and analysis of Biber's written dedications alone is an astonishing achievement, and the application of this analysis to each individual composition written for the violin exceeds expectations. It is a resource that I have returned to many times during the course of my own research, and one that will undoubtedly retain its usefulness for a long time to come.

**John David Edgar, "The Encoding of Faith: Scordatura in Heinrich Biber's *Mystery Sonatas*"**

The fourth significant addition to Biber scholarship in recent years is John David Edgar's dissertation "The Encoding of Faith: Scordatura in Heinrich Biber's *Mystery*

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<sup>20</sup> As always, there are a handful of exceptions. Biber's *Sonata pro Tabula a' 10* (C. 112, ca. 1670) while obviously indicated in its title as table music is based on straightforward dance forms and largely free of complex counterpoint that might make it unsuitable for dancing. The same is true for Biber's *Balletti a' 6* (C. 60, 1690) unquestionably a collection of functional dance music. There are always some exceptions, but we must remember that these two collections represent a mere fraction of Biber's complete career as a composer.

*Sonatas*.”<sup>21</sup> This is the first and, to my present knowledge, only resource that attempts to understand Biber’s music from the perspective of his faith and the climate of Counter Reformation which was intensifying in Austria during Biber’s time. Edgar makes clear from the beginning that Biber did not use scordatura for technical virtuosity but as a means of communicating his faith through his instrument.<sup>22</sup> In Edgar’s own words, scordatura is: “fundamental to Biber’s compositional language within the *Mystery Sonatas*, and his method of deploying it reflects his Catholic and, specifically, Jesuit background.”<sup>23</sup> From there, Edgar explores the premise that Biber received his education at a Jesuit gymnasium, which were increasing in prevalence and influence in Europe during his early years, and the possible influences of such an education on his music. Biber’s unusually powerful grasp of Latin prose and rhetoric are, according to Edgar, indicative of Jesuit influence. Of particular interest to Edgar is St. Ignatius of Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*. Edgar explains the deeply experiential nature of Jesuit belief, and effectively incorporates a discussion of Jesuit architecture and visual arts into this part of the dissertation. Edgar then explains how this method of “sensual” spirituality is manifested by Biber on the violin itself through the various scordatura utilized in the *Rosary Sonatas*. It is this part of the paper that is most compelling, as Edgar provides a detailed explanation of the basic physics at work on the violin and how the different tunings positively or negatively affect the stability of intonation and pressure exerted on

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<sup>21</sup> Daniel John Edgar, “The Encoding of Faith: Scordatura in Heinrich Biber’s *Mystery Sonatas*” (PhD diss., University of York, 2008). The collection has several aliases, of which “*Mystery Sonatas*” is one. The author prefers “*Rosary Sonatas*” and will refer to them with this title for the remainder of the paper.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. A recurring Latin phrase, “*Fidem In Fidebus*” (*Faith In Fiddles*) appears in several of Biber’s written dedications. The personal significance of this phrase to Biber will be discussed in this paper.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

the bridge and body of the instrument. According to Edgar's findings, the scordatura of the *Rosary Sonatas* correspond both to the subject of each Sacred Mystery as well as Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, and this experiential journey is physically undertaken by the violin as a result of the changing tunings.

Much like Clements's project, Edgar provides a dual lesson in the history and practices of the Jesuits as well as lessons in the history of scordatura and its reception among various composers of the time. This is especially important, not only because the music in question is unique to its time and, most specifically, location, but because a work deliberately crafted to accompany religious devotion can never be fully understood unless the related religious affiliations and practices during the time are studied as well. In the case of Biber, faith and music are one and the same, and Edgar appears to accept this more readily than other researchers. He is not going on faith alone, however, and the physical evidence Edgar provides is solid and very convincing.<sup>24</sup>

There are some weak points in Edgar's work, and one particular disappointment was the absence of discussion of other scordatura violin works by Biber, especially Sonata VI of his *Sonatae Violino Solo* (1681). While it is certainly possible that Biber was applying both musical and physical rhetoric to the *Rosary Sonatas* to enhance their affective potency, it is more likely that *any* application of scordatura in Biber is indicative of deeper spiritual meaning.<sup>25</sup> In Edgar's own words:

“By regarding the *Mystery Sonatas* as emblematic compositions which encode their message through the use of a complex metaphorical musical language, we

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<sup>24</sup> See Edgar Chapter 4, “The Encoding of Faith: Scordatura as Narrative” for a discussion of the physical operation of scordatura and its subsequent translations to gestures of faith, 89-129.

<sup>25</sup> See Eric Chafe's discussion of Sonata VI, *The Church Music of Heinrich Biber*, 197-212.

can access the ‘meaning’ of each piece. Furthermore, in his written dedication to Maximilian Gandolph, Biber effectively tells us this is the compositional method he has employed.”<sup>26</sup>

Edgar continues at this point to discuss Biber’s use of “lyre” to describe the violin, and the emblematic significance of this ancient instrument. As Edgar explains, the lyre was used to invoke the god Apollo, whose image was used later to symbolize the crucifixion of Christ. Edgar also describes Byzantine art that shows Christ sitting on a lyre shaped throne. He concludes that Biber engaged in the emblematic history of the lyre to prove his ability as a violinist to his patron.<sup>27</sup> The dedications of the *Rosary Sonatas* and the *Sonatae Violino Solo* are remarkably similar, and the many references in the latter work might suggest that Archbishop Gandolph requested it after being so pleased with the former.

In conclusion, Edgar’s evaluation of Biber and of his unique use of scordatura is a refreshing change from the “encyclopedic” approach too often seen in Biber studies. Most importantly, Edgar proves the importance of including religious and liturgical issues in discussions of Biber’s instrumental music. Undoubtedly, Edgar’s work will inspire future Biber scholars as well.

### **Charles Brewer, *The Instrumental Music of Biber, Muffat, and Their Contemporaries***

The fifth and last major publication in Biber studies consulted for this project is Charles Brewer’s book *The Instrumental Music of Biber, Muffat, and Their*

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<sup>26</sup> Edgar, *Encoding of Faith*, 94.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 94-95.

*Contemporaries*.<sup>28</sup> Brewer takes fragments of research—particularly information on lesser-known composers who worked with these men—and organizes them into a singular and easy-to-use resource. Brewer also provides English translations of all of Biber’s published dedications and also those of Biber’s colleague and teacher Johann Schmelzer. Brewer’s translations are more straightforward at times than Clements’s, but this is surely intentional for ease of reading and also because his reasons for providing them are quite different than Clements. Far more valuable are Brewer’s translations of Athanasius Kircher, a Jesuit philosopher whose teachings were very likely a staple of Biber’s own education and a major influence on his method of composition.<sup>29</sup>

Brewer’s offering to Biber scholarship has some problems, depending on what one is expecting to gain from studying it. It is, to be sure, a well-planned effort, but the conversation does not serve justice to the large number of compositions Brewer includes in what is a relatively brief book. Biber scholar James Clements shared similar criticism in the November 2011 issue of *Early Music*: “Whilst much ground is covered in terms of numbers of compositions mentioned, one cannot help feeling that it is done...in tantalizingly insufficient detail.”<sup>30</sup>

Another reviewer was disappointed by Brewer’s “preoccupation” with genre and the numerous tables and charts Brewer provides that do not contribute to any greater understanding of the music:

“It is Brewer’s preoccupation with definition and genre where things begin to break down—especially his seeming equation between title and genre. A fair

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Brewer, *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzer, Biber, Muffat, and Their Contemporaries* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-32.

<sup>30</sup> James Clements, review of *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzer, Biber, Muffat, and Their Contemporaries*, by Charles Brewer, *Early Music* 39 (November 2011): 611-613.

amount of effort is then expelled looking for consistent definitions of ‘sonata’ in seventeenth and eighteenth-century treatises.”<sup>31</sup>

Brewer’s belief that title equals genre is too narrow, and this is the reason Clements takes exception to it. I agree with Clements on this issue, primarily because of the absence of any truly unique or thought-provoking insights on the genres about which Brewer chose to write. In his defense, however, his organization of the basic structural elements of compositions chosen for study in his book is quite valuable for those who are seeking to devote more time to decoding the titles and genres of these works, as much of this thesis does.

To conclude, Charles Brewer’s contribution to Biber scholarship achieves for the instrumental music of not only Biber, but also his colleagues and many other composers and musicians, what Eric Chafe’s dissertation on Biber’s church music has: a single, comprehensive source on a diverse and complex period of seventeenth-century, Austro-German instrumental music.

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<sup>31</sup>Robert G. Rawson, review of *The Instrumental Music of Schmelzer, Biber, Muffat, and Their Contemporaries*, by Charles Brewer, *Fontes Artis Musicae* 59 (April-June 2012): 211.

## Chapter Two: Genre, Style, Context

The exact circumstances that influenced Biber when he wrote his complex and mysterious *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* have been discussed in previous literature, but our knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the work is very limited. Achieving a confident understanding of influences on Biber's compositional processes is an even greater challenge when we consider that Biber lived at a time when the composition of music was often influenced by extra-musical and intellectual influences that require intense study all their own.<sup>32</sup> Modern Biber scholarship, particularly in the past ten years, rejects the previously held notion that devices like scordatura and certain figurations were utilized solely for superficial displays of virtuosity. More importantly, the new scholarship seeks to account for religious and spiritual forces in Biber's life that had a far greater impact on all of his creative decisions than previously acknowledged—especially his Catholic faith and the Counter Reformation, in which he may have played an active role.<sup>33</sup> This project also rejects the claims of empty virtuosity in respect to Biber's *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*. But if not virtuosity, for what purpose was a work such as this intended?

The central argument presented in this thesis is that Biber composed his *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* for sacred and secular use. The *Harmonia* can trace its origins to the *Rosary Sonatas*, and the most significant tie between the two works is their use of scordatura. It is easy to be distracted by the surface novelty of the *Harmonia*

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<sup>32</sup> When it comes to matters of style and form, however, Eric Chafe makes the compelling case for Monteverdi being a serious influence. See Chafe, *Church Music*, 87.

<sup>33</sup> Edgar, *The Encoding of Faith*, 34.

(primarily, I am speaking of the scordatura), and also by the fact that Biber wrote it after spending fourteen years composing nothing but sacred vocal music, school dramas, and opera, and, therefore, reach a conclusion that it has little or nothing to do with earlier works. We must not exclude earlier sources or make assumptions about their relevance, for there are many elements of the *Harmonia* that are closely tied to the *Rosary Sonatas*, as well as his earlier, mixed-use instrumental collections.<sup>34</sup> Like the *Rosary Sonatas*, the *Harmonia* contains some of the rustic virtuosity more commonly seen in strictly secular music, but, as some scholars have recently argued, these elements are not used for purely aesthetic or virtuosic purposes. To the contrary, they are used to illustrate the greater spiritual context of the music. James Clements explored the topic of Biber's musical spirituality in exhaustive and impressive detail in his dissertation "Aspects of the *Ars Rhetorica* in the Violin Music of Heinrich Biber." As mentioned in the first chapter, Clements's analysis of rhetoric in Biber's dedications is highly valuable in strengthening our understanding of Biber's inner compositional workings. On the subject of musical spirituality, Clements states: "A central place is occupied in Biber's dedications by the senses—particularly sight and sound—The application of the senses to music—*particularly in a devotional context*—was of special importance."<sup>35</sup> Clements then highlights the emphasis Biber places in the dedication of the *Harmonia* on faith in one God "served by many":

"One Consort is played by several string instruments (Unus concentus pluribus luditur fidebus)' This antithesis (on unus and pluribus), not only tells us that the

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<sup>34</sup> Those collections are *Sonatae tam Aris, quam Aulis Servientes*, C. 114-137 (1676), *Fidicinium Sacro-Profanum*, C. 78-89 (1682).

<sup>35</sup> Clements, "*Aspects of the Ars Rhetorica*," 78. Emphasis mine.



music is played by more than one instrument, but also alludes to the notion of one God or faith served by many which he stresses further in the dedication.”<sup>36</sup>

After acknowledging Biber’s faithful intentions, Clements quickly strays from the issue and does not consider the possibility that the *Harmonia* was created with a sacred context in mind—even though the very dedication of the work alludes to this:

**Dedication of the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa***

Most Noble and also Reverend Prince, Lord, Lord Most Clement. *Be open O Most Noble Prince, since I have inscribed this Skillful-Melodic Harmony to Your Sacred Name.* This is Your work, and whatever [is] in this work, One Concord is played by many fiddles. Certainly, this is the ideal of your Virtue: as all things, which will merit eternity, are disposed of concordantly. And why would it not be allowed to call to witness my faith in fiddles?

In what way do I owe all things to You, my Most Clement Prince? *Indeed, when we would behold all the tokens of a most felicitous predestination in You, would you not also be able to love music?* And even for that reason I would be rightly confident that Your Reverend Highness also will deem worthy these my musical labors with most agreeable eyes and ears.

These are arias (as we call them), and indeed skillful, namely that in this way I have combined the beneficial with sweetness. Every note will be brought under Your Most Clement protection. Live long, reign auspiciously, Great Prince! Thus all good things vow with one harmony, and also I myself along with these. Of Your Reverend Highness a most humble servant. Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber.<sup>37</sup>

Conspicuously absent from this dedication is a description of the work’s use or context, especially when compared to the dedications of the secular and dual-function collections such as the *Sonatae tam aris quam aulis servientes* (1676), *Mensa sonora seu musica instrumentalis* (1680) and *Fidicinium sacro profanum* (1683). The conversation in the dedication of the *Harmonia* to Archbishop Ernst von Thun seems to be a private affair between composer and patron.<sup>38</sup> Also conspicuously missing are the flattering, rhetorical phrases aimed at the work’s dedicatee. Biber’s prose seems perfunctory in the *Harmonia*

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>37</sup> Brewer, *The Instrumental Music*, 328-29.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 316-18.

dedication, and he is more concerned about going to lengths to explain and defend his intentions for this music. Clements ponders momentarily on the subject of “usefulness,” and arrives at a vague conclusion:

“The usefulness of the music could lie in the possibility that it might perhaps be used for dancing... although the style of the music would suggest otherwise. The usefulness could lie in the musical techniques used in each work, namely the predominance of imitative techniques (such as canon) throughout the set, something which is not used in Biber’s other dance music. Indeed, that the works are described in the dedication as ‘Ariae’... together with the prominence of the term ‘arioso’ in the title places emphasis on the tunefulness of the works, and perhaps suggests that they were intended to be listened to rather than danced to.”<sup>39</sup>

The qualities of usefulness mentioned by Clements here are certainly valid, but they stop short of making a decisive judgment on the practical use of the *Harmonia*’s music. We will now discuss the issues of performance contexts for a work such as this, and the seventeenth-century musical attitudes that may have affected both its performance context and public reception.

### ***Issues of Performance Context***

In the seventeenth century, music existed in the courts, the church, and in the home; the idea of the concert hall in Biber’s Salzburg was not yet a reality. It is very reasonable to assume that only the most privileged members of society would have been able to hear the music of a work such as the *Harmonia*, and this would be true in both sacred and secular performance contexts. The dedicatee of the collection cannot be considered the primary intended audience, as it is understood that Archbishop Thun had a minimal reverence for music and certainly did not spend his leisure time just sitting and listening. If the *Harmonia* was intended to be performed in a sacred setting, the argument

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<sup>39</sup> Clements, “Aspects of the Ars Rhetorica,” 110.

for simply listening could be made if parts of the collection were used as a supplement to the usual service music, a common practice in the mid-to-late seventeenth century, and a common feature of Biber's sacred vocal music as well:

“In many churches during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, ensemble canzonas and sonatas replaced the organ solos that had regularly been substituted for elements of the Proper at Mass and Vespers...Mid 17<sup>th</sup> century church sonatas ordinarily began with a fast imitative movement, and include triple-metre sections and expressive adagios, although no single formal design dominates. Musicians may well have adapted such sonatas to the requirements of the service by performing isolated sections, a practice that would have encouraged composers to build sonatas from movements better able to stand alone.”<sup>40</sup>

Biber wrote several small instrumental works to supplement the main sections of his Mass and Vespers settings.<sup>41</sup> More importantly, however, Biber's dedication to the affective power of instrumental music infiltrates many movements of his sacred works in addition to the separate instrumental pieces written to supplement them. One such work is his *Nisi Dominus`a 2*, which opens with a sonata-like passage for solo violin, an instrument that features heavily throughout the entire work.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Sandra Mangsen, “Sonata da chiesa” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online.* Oxford University Press, accessed March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/26196>

<sup>41</sup> *Sonata a' 3* (C. 109), *Sonata a' 6* (C. 111).

<sup>42</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 132-139.



twenty percent of scores published between 1650 and 1689 carried the *da chiesa* label.<sup>44</sup>

This leaves us with well over half of instrumental music from that period whose context must be interpreted by other means. Mangsen points out a crucial detail in making the designation between *chiesa* and *camera*:

“The use of organ continuo and the presence of a separate melodic bass partbook were clearly associated with church sonatas... Italian composers from Buonamente (1620s) to Corelli (1680s) conformed to this pattern—evidence of the lingering influence of the contrapuntal canzona on sonatas in which the melodic bass participates fully in contrapuntal dialogue.”<sup>45</sup>

Biber makes no specification for which continuo instrument to use, but many modern recordings of his *Harmonia* use organ and favor it for certain suites, especially Partias I, IV, and VII. Most recordings use both organ and harpsichord, alternating according to the ensemble’s preferences and also, possibly, the unique character of each suite. Examples of exceptions to the choice of “mixed continuo” are the early and incomplete recordings by the Leonhardt Consort, and the recent recording by Musica Antiqua Köln, both of which use the harpsichord exclusively. Eric Chafe excludes the *Harmonia* from his list of instrumental works suitable for church on the basis of “obvious dance functions, titles, reliance on secular programs or effects and *their use of harpsichord continuo*.”<sup>46</sup> This delineation is problematic, especially if the composer does not specify which continuo instrument to use. Furthermore, the *Rosary Sonatas* have titled dance movements, yet Chafe includes them in the list of works suitable for sacred performance contexts. One cannot have it both ways.

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<sup>44</sup> Mangsen, “Sonata da chiesa.”

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 183. Emphasis mine.

On the subject of parts, the *Harmonia* does not have separate part-books for the keyboard and the bass. However, throughout the entire collection the bass part plays a highly active role in the counterpoint of nearly every movement, especially in the dance movements and their variations. The bass/continuo part-book indicates the figured bass, but the notated part is quite active, full of calls and answers to imitative passages and plenty of quick sixteenth notes and rapid scalar runs. In other words, the bass performer has a lot of work to do for something that normally serves an accompanimental function. Most of the *Harmonia*'s movements are contrapuntal and employ fugal textures in which the bass participates. The best example of an active bass part is observed in the second movement of Partia VI, which is an aria with thirteen variations.

### ***Arguments Against Domestic Performance***

When we purchase music, even before we go to the store or, more likely today, log onto the internet to find what we want, we are looking for something very specific. We are seeking something for the instruments we play or something that we can play along with others. Consumers of music in the late seventeenth century also purchased music in this way, and they could get information about their purchase from the work's title page. Paul Whitehead described the situation this way:

“To begin with, the title of the work itself almost invariably makes some mention of the performing forces required. Up until the final quarter of the [seventeenth] century, however, when instrumentation became more definitive, composers often steered clear of specific instrument listings at this point in a publication. Rather, language of a more abstract nature is used: an account of the number of parts required (and, thus, the number of part-books making up the publication) and a reference to the instruments by family.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Paul Whitehead, “Austro-German Printed Sources of Instrumental Ensemble Music, 1630-1700” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1996), 325.

The full title of Biber's collection reads:

*Harmonia Artificioſo-Ariosa, Diversimode accordata et In ſeptem Partes vel Partias diſtributa a 3. Inſtrum[entis]*(Skillful-Melodic Harmony, tuned in diſverſe manners, and diſtributed in ſeven parts or partias for three inſtruments.)<sup>48</sup>

Unlike Biber's earlier chamber collections, which ſometimes included a preface in both Latin and German, or German titles for the work itſelf or movements contained therein (e.g., *Battalia a' 10*, ſecond movement titled "Die Liederliche Geſellſchaft von allerley Humor" and Sonata a' 6 'Die Pauern-Kirchfarth'), the *Harmonia* has a Latin title and a completely Latin dedication.<sup>49</sup> Unless the potential customer (in 1712, that is, ſince the work was not published in 1696) was well verſed in Latin he would not know that the *Harmonia* actually requires ſeveral ſtringed inſtruments, and even then Biber does not make any mention in the dedication that exactly ſeven inſtruments (and as many as ten if Partia II is interpreted as a ſuite for two violino piccolo) are required to perform the entire collection, including the baſs and/or keyboard inſtruments.<sup>50</sup> Indeed the title page is accurate in telling, as Whitehead deſcribed, the number of part books included, but not the inſtrumentation. Was this problematic? It is impoſſible to ſay for ſure, but for a customer who thought they were purchaſing a collection of music they could perform in entirety and to arrive home only to find ſuites that require inſtruments they either do not own or do not know how to play, it may have been a frustrating diſappointment. The

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<sup>48</sup> Brewer, *Instrumental Music*, 328.

<sup>49</sup> Many works had Latin titles in the ſeventeenth century. However, in Biber's caſe the diſtinction between music for the maſſes and music reſerved for more intimate and ſpecial occaſions is made clear by his choice to uſe the vernacular. The works containing German titles or movements with German titles are excluſively ſecular, programmatic works.

<sup>50</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 241. Because the 1696 copy was printed without any publiſher's information, it is preſumed that this was a private copy.

absence of many surviving copies may be indicative of this failure of practicality. On the other hand, the variety of instrumentation may have played a beneficial role for sales of the collection, especially for wealthier customers who could afford many instruments or hire musicians for their own private performances. The fact that the 1696 copy was discovered in the personal music collection of Count Rudolf Franz Erwein von Schönborn supports the latter claim.<sup>51</sup>

### ***The Stylus Phantasticus***

Some scholars, such as Brewer, include Biber's *Harmonia* in the list of works written in the *Stylus Phantasticus*. The term was coined by Athanasius Kircher in his treatise *Musurgia Universalis* (1650) and almost instantly became a point of confusion among music scholars who argued over its meaning and significance. Kircher belonged to an earlier generation in which science and mathematics were still considered by the uninitiated to be magical crafts, reserved for those who had rare and divinely bestowed gifts to perform experiments and work complicated equations.<sup>52</sup> Music certainly fell into this mystical sphere for Kircher. Devices such as canon and fugue, which required mathematical skill, were revered by Kircher in much the same way that people of lesser station may have regarded an individual like himself who was capable of constructing them. Far from being a way to show off for an audience or impress a patron, composers who were highly skilled in counterpoint in the seventeenth century were, in Kircher's opinion, capable of reaching and understanding the divine. Interpretations of the fantastic

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<sup>51</sup> Brewer, *Instrumental Music*, 326, 335.

<sup>52</sup> Joscelyn Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher: A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 6-9.



style (as it will be referred to for the remainder of this thesis) in the eighteenth century reflected that period's increasing concern with music as it served the immediate senses of the performer and the audience. Kircherian forays into mathematical abstraction and esoteric ponderings mostly became a thing of the past. Additional confusion is created by Kircher's other stylistic delineations, which often overlap one another. This is problematic when Kircherian style terminology is applied to seventeenth-century music because we do not know exactly where the line between fantastic, ecclesiastical, and theatrical, begins and ends. The debate on Kircherian styles—especially the fantastic style—extended well into the middle part of the eighteenth century. Because Biber's *Harmonia* has sometimes been included on the list of works written in this nebulous aesthetic, a brief discussion of it, along with why the *Harmonia* is best understood through interpretations of the fantastic style from its own time in the late seventeenth century, and not Kircher's time mid-century, is worthy of its own place in this thesis.

### *Athanasius Kircher's Fantastic Style*

To begin, what exactly is the fantastic style? As previously mentioned, it was described first by Athanasius Kircher and scholars have disagreed as to what kinds of music actually qualify as being in this style, or even if it can be called a style at all.<sup>53</sup>

Kircher explains:

“The Stylus Phantasticus is appropriate to instruments. It is the most free and unfettered method of composition, bound to nothing, neither to words, nor to a harmonious subject. It is organized with regard to manifest invention, the hidden reason of harmony, and an ingenious, skilled connection of harmonic phrases and fugues. And it is divided into those pieces which are commonly called *Phantasias, Ricercatas, Toccatas, and Sonatas.*”

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<sup>53</sup> Brewer, *Instrumental Music*, 25.

This description is imposing and overflows with musical terminology that could be interpreted in too many ways. Canonic and motivic imitation played a major role in the larger affective schemes of the fantastic style as described by Kircher, but in later times, and especially in the eighteenth century, these elements were rarely used for their own sake and were also used as convenient intellectual additives to what was mainly music created to stir the immediate physical senses of the listener and the imaginations and technical prowess of the performers. The choice to employ certain musical devices such as counterpoint and fugue, cantus firmus, and dance movements for the explicit purpose of utilizing their suitability to enhance affect was an art that Biber mastered with unrivalled complexity and skill in his *Rosary Sonatas*, and again in the *Sonatae Violino Solo* of 1681.

Charles Brewer describes how music written in the fantastic style was crafted to satisfy the religious and secular needs of its respective audience:

“The many title pages and prefaces of the printed editions of this period provide evidence that music was thought to have the power to make the most sacred rituals pleasing and to allow even the most secular entertainments to be imbued with piety.”<sup>54</sup>

Unfortunately, Brewer does not go into much detail with regard to the *Harmonia*'s intended use and context. He instead delegates the work to not only a secular category, but a Baroque oddity not worthy of further study. An examination of earlier seventeenth-century and later eighteenth-century music treatises may provide many of the answers or explanations, but this task demands that we study the work from the viewpoint of two distinct time periods and across the bridge of these centuries and their changing values.

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 44.

### *The Fantastic Style in the Eighteenth Century*

Music theorists in the eighteenth century preserved Kircher's strictly intellectual aims when describing the fantastic style in their dictionaries, but as the century progressed they also included expressions of greater emotional and creative freedoms.<sup>55</sup> Paul Collins provides a detailed timeline of these changes in various eighteenth-century music dictionaries, and the end result demonstrates the theorists' impasse at describing the fantastic style. The addition and expansion of the style into more diverse musical performance contexts, including large ensemble and opera, further muddled the definition. Tomas Balthazar Janovka's 1701 treatise *Clavis ad Thesaurum* provides Kircher's definition verbatim and also includes a separate entry for "Phantasia musica":

"Musica phantasia is the image, the idea, the representation, the outlook and the abundance of musical matters that lie within the mind of the musician. And the performer, whether as a result of time for preparation or whether he is unprepared, brings this to the attention of his hearers on any particular instrument and leads a way through it. And that such a phantasia should be effective, there should also be present, as well as skill in artistic execution, great qualities of mind and freedom from worries."<sup>56</sup>

This is a great example of an attempt to explain a shift in what the fantastic style symbolized for both performer and listener just six years after the *Harmonia* was printed. Whether the evolution of the style was reflective of changing tastes or musical values or of a larger societal shift away from burdensome intellectual exercises in general is subject to the opinion of the one examining these issues firsthand. Janovka's appended entry to

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<sup>55</sup> Paul Collins, *The Stylus Phantasticus and Free Keyboard Music of the North German Baroque* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 53.

<sup>56</sup> Collins, *The Stylus Phantasticus*, 53-55. Translation of Janovka, Brossard, and Mattheson by Collins.

the fantastic style is unique for its time and is one of the first such entries to directly address matters concerning the performer. Collins states:

“The entry also serves to highlight the relationship between the strategies of the musical mind and improvised performance. It captures the essence of the *ingenium* or *animus musicus*, that source within the musician’s mind from which all fantasizing springs and to which identifies the essence of musical fantasy, that is imagination, or more concretely, the product of imagination or image. Gregory Butler, exploring the notion of the fantasia as musical image, has also drawn attention to the fact that images are an important aspect of musical improvisation, as well as of the *ars mneumonica* and *memoria* (memory) of classical rhetoric. As composer and performer was often one and the same person, Janovka’s definition may seek to acknowledge formally the importance of the performer in musical fantasy, and by extension, the fantastic style, thus counterbalancing Kircher’s almost exclusive identification of the *stylus phantasticus* with compositional methodology in his 1650 definition of the style.<sup>57</sup>

As the eighteenth century progressed, the theorists’ confusion with larger forces working deep within music written in the fantastic style seemed to intensify. Almost none of them could reach consensus on what that force was or how to adequately explain it. A few years after Janovka’s *Clavis*, Sebastien de Brossard offered his contribution on the matter in his *Dictionnaire de musique* (1703):

“Stilo phantastico: A style proper for instruments *or* a way of composing that is free and without constraint, as is explained under the terms Phantasia, Ricercata, Toccata, Sonata, and so forth.”<sup>58</sup>

Brossard’s corollary highlights another instance in which the fantastic style is not thought of as being limited to the separate spheres of composer and performer, but rather of equal importance for both. This is reasonable. After all, music is meaningless without someone to perform it and bring it to life. This issue, however, was less of a consideration in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when most prominent composers were also

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 56. Emphasis Collins.

proficient and highly skilled instrumentalists capable of performing their own music and did not necessarily need to rely on others to render their works the way they intended. The eighteenth century brought with it that tremendous outpouring of the *Liebhaber* and all of the music written to provide them with all varieties of music styles, from which they could pick and choose their evening diversions. Along with having their own music to enjoy and perform, amateur musicians also wished to learn more about what, to the uninitiated, still seemed like a magical phenomenon, and theorists such as Johann Mattheson provided them with accessible sources for becoming more “learned” musicians. The first part of Mattheson’s 1739 treatise, *Der vollkommene Capellmeister*, includes Mattheson’s first discussion of Kircherian styles.<sup>59</sup> Mattheson’s position in this document takes on more of the sentiment that Janovka offered over three decades prior, as well as some profoundly significant differences. Collins states:

“Mattheson’s fully developed ‘theatrical’ concept of the *stylus phantasticus* in the *Capellmeister* treatise...provided the perfect forum for delight in the auditory experience, unencumbered by the intellectualism associated with the style by Kircher.”

Mattheson’s position on the *stylus phantasticus* in 1739:

“We have stated above that this fanciful style has its place in the operas; though, with the qualification: mainly; since nothing keeps it from also being heard in churches and chambers. *In this respect it is peculiar in that it is one and the same everywhere.*”<sup>60</sup>

Mattheson is making a concession to the permeability of the fantastic style, even though in earlier writings he claims that such fanciful music was frowned upon for sacred performance settings. This problem has been debated regarding Biber’s *Rosary Sonatas*,

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 23-26. Mattheson’s earlier discussions of musical style were inspired by primarily Italian keyboard composers, for reasons seemingly unknown other than an apparent personal preference for their music.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 60. Emphasis mine.

and even some of the virtuosic instrumental solos in many of his sacred vocal music could come under similar contextual scrutiny. In both instances we must remember the creative freedoms of Biber's geographic situation and not overlook it, as what was considered appropriate in one town may have been completely off-limits in another. In this light, Biber was greatly fortunate to live in a time and place that gave him nearly total freedom to compose and perform completely to his own taste and liking.

### ***Skillful and Melodic, but not Fantastic?***

In what ways does the *Harmonia* fit within the fantastic style? The answer depends on whose definition of the style one chooses to accept. If we must consider a work like the *Harmonia* within the context of the fantastic style, I believe it is best to consider interpretations of the style from the work's own time and unique context. In this instance, Janovka's appended definition is the most appropriate.<sup>61</sup> To refresh, Janovka states:

“Musica phantasia is the image, the idea, the representation, the outlook and the abundance of musical matters that lie within the mind of the musician. And the performer, whether as a result of time for preparation or whether he is unprepared, brings this to the attention of his hearers on any particular instrument and leads a way through it. And that such a phantasia should be effective, there should also be present, as well as skill in artistic execution, great qualities of mind and freedom from worries.”<sup>62</sup>

And as mentioned previously, Janovka also includes Kircher's original definition of the fantastic style before adding his *Musica phantasia* definition.<sup>63</sup> Janovka's performance-

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>62</sup> Collins, *The Stylus Phantasticus*, 53-55. Translation of Janovka, Brossard, and Mattheson by Collins.

<sup>63</sup> Kircher's definition via Janovka: “The fourth style is the fantastic style, suitable for musical instruments and it is a very free and very unbridled method of composition, tied

centered definition of the fantastic style is precisely what makes it the most suitable for discussing the context of Biber's *Harmonia*. It would be a great understatement to say that Biber had an "abundance of musical matters" to take care of during the 1690s, and especially in 1696. In addition to thirteen known school dramas (no longer extant), Biber also composed an opera, *Chi la dura la vince* (c.1690), a Vespers setting, *Vesperae longiores ac breviores* that included an elaborate *Litaniae Lauretanae* (1693), two Mass settings, *Missa Alleluia* (1690-98) and *Missa Sancti Henrici* (1696), the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* (1696), and a cantata, *Trattenimento musicale* (1698).<sup>64</sup> In the midst of these musical projects, Biber's personal life was also overflowing. He was overwhelmed by his professional responsibilities as *Kapellmeister*, struggling with Archbishop Thun's unreasonable requests and nonsensical decision-making regarding music at the cathedral, petitioning for his nobility, preparing the futures of his nearly-grown children, and arguing for the construction of a summer cottage and a place to rest from all of these activities. Biber could not have had much time—if any—for leisure before 1696.<sup>65</sup> Why is this significant for understanding the context of Biber's *Harmonia*?

The circumstances of Biber's life in the late 1690s are not conducive to the composition of music intended for mere "refreshment of the ear." Aside from having an employer who did not cultivate a love for music and had little personal use for it, Biber's position as *Kapellmeister* demanded of him to write mostly sacred music—much of that

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neither by any words nor by any harmonic subject. IT was instituted to display genius and the deeper art of music and to impart the skill of harmonic phrases and the working out of fugues. It is divided into the categories that are commonly called Phantasias, Ricercaras [sic], Toccatas, & Sonatas." Ibid., 54.

<sup>64</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 227.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 20-24. Chafe also includes a more detailed list of Biber's compositions from the 1690s on p. 26.

music intended for large festive occasions—and he met these responsibilities with unmatched skill and dedication. Even his musical activities outside of the cathedral were linked to the local convents, and he spent a great deal of time cultivating a strong relationship with those institutions, presumably to secure the futures of his two musically gifted daughters. Every musical project Biber undertook in the 1690s was dictated to him, either by his employer or by a sense of duty to his family. Janovka’s “abundance of musical matters” is apparent in Biber’s *Harmonia*. It is unique that Biber “leads the way” through it, not alone but with another violinist. It is believed that the *Harmonia* may have been privately dedicated to or at least intended for Anna Magdalena, Biber’s eldest daughter.<sup>66</sup> An account of a performance at Stift Nonnberg in 1692, where she would eventually take holy orders, details a work for two viola d’amore played by Biber and two unnamed colleagues.<sup>67</sup> The work may have been the same suite that Biber included as Partia VII in the *Harmonia*. It is also possible that one of the other musicians performing on that day was Anna Magdalena, who was as accomplished a musician as her father.<sup>68</sup> To be fair, the account of the Nonnberg performance describes the music as “schöne Tafelmusik,” but the music would have to show reverence and respect for the sacred space in which it was played.

To conclude, Biber’s *Harmonia* embraces certain aspects of the fantastic style, but it does not embody the strictly secular spirit that the style assumed later in the

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<sup>66</sup> Goebel, facsimile foreword, xii.

<sup>67</sup> Brewer, *Instrumental Music*, 325.

<sup>68</sup> Barbara Lawatsch Melton, “Loss and Gain in a Salzburg Convent: Tridentine Reform, Princely Absolutism, and the Nuns of Nonnberg (1620-1696) in *Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden), 259-280. Anna Magdalena’s musical accomplishments are discussed in detail in this chapter.



eighteenth century. Nor does the *Harmonia* fully embody the original Kircherian definition, as it does not strictly adhere to Kircher's emphasis on counterpoint (although this is certainly more present in the *Harmonia* than in Biber's other instrumental works). In some ways the work possesses its own style, because it was conceived in a time and place that is difficult—if not impossible—to compare to any other. To consider the *Harmonia* as only belonging in the fantastic style, and thus only performance contexts that were appropriate for music in that style, does a great injustice to the spiritual underpinnings of the work, as well as the personal and professional contexts in which the work was created.

### Chapter Three: A Musical Transformation

Scordatura, or a mistuning of stringed instruments—usually a violin—was thought of in Biber’s time as something a composer performed for the sake of virtuosity or novelty. Johann Jacob Walther, a contemporary of Biber, had this to say about the practice:

“Advice to Devoted Lovers of the Violin...As long as they are influenced by the precept of a more sound application, they might maintain that a violin is always equipped with four rather faultless strings. Keeping their regular tuning of a fifth over a fifth, they might be especially eager for the accurate intonation of simple, well-sounding notes. And they might, as a matter of habit, use the bow in such a way that with firm and pleasing strokes, distinct purity, and pleasant melody, they delight the audience nearby, rather than offending an audience at some distance with the confusing speed of a screeching bow and of fingers leaping up and down and running over the violin, twisting variously in straight and oblique chords—as they say—or by squeaking now on two or more strings falsely tuned ad nauseum.”<sup>69</sup>

It is unfortunate that not much is known about how composers wrote using scordatura, neither do we truly know when or why they chose to use it in the seventeenth century, and some modern performers have lamented the total absence of literature from the period that provides any practical information, such as the best ways to apply the tunings or the right kinds of string gauge to use.<sup>70</sup> It is believed that Biber composed much of his major scordatura works with the fiddle in his hand. The tunings indicated for the partias of the *Harmonia* that call for violin are not as difficult or unstable as many tunings found in the *Rosary* Sonatas and appear to serve the performer’s hands more than the listener’s

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<sup>69</sup> Johann Jacob Walther, *Hortulus Chelicus* (Moguntiae: Ludovici Bourgeat, 1688), [preface]; quoted in Brewer, *Instrumental Music*, 313.

<sup>70</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Rosenkranz Sonaten*, Musica Antiqua Köln, dir. Reinhard Goebel, Archiv Produktion, 1990. 431 656-2, CD. Program notes, 12.

ears, making it possible to execute more chords and challenging passagework without the fuss and struggle such passages might create in standard tuning. Scordatura can also play an important role in providing technical freedom for the performer—something Biber was unquestionably aware of, and he knew how to best exploit and manipulate his stringed servants to serve his musical will.

Biber does not use scordatura for displays of virtuosity. Instead, Biber uses scordatura as a means of transformation, whether that transformation is instrumental, spiritual, or physical, or even all of those at once. As Edgar explains, scordatura functions in the *Rosary Sonatas* as a musical embodiment of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* and also as a way to physically reflect on the violin the events of each sacred mystery.

“Indeed, the way in which the 15 tunings cause the physical structure of the violin to react in different ways in each sonata is strikingly redolent of the physicality of the experiential approach to meditation advocated by Loyola in the *Spiritual Exercises*; the violin does, in fact, seem to experience the joy, sorrow, and glory of the Rosary narrative.”<sup>71</sup>

The affective quality of the *Rosary Sonatas* lies within the scordatura, not for its novelty, but because of the way Biber uses it to assist in the storytelling of each sacred mystery. We will now look at some more examples of scordatura as a transformative device, and in doing so create a better understanding of how it is used in the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*.

### ***Biber's Transformative Scordatura***

The first examples of transformative scordatura we will examine are those that allow the violin to assume the role of another instrument. The two instrumental

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<sup>71</sup> Edgar, *The Encoding of Faith*, 38.

transformations that figure heavily into Biber's violin music—especially the *Harmonia*—are the violin-as-trumpet, and the violin-as-organ.<sup>72</sup> The latter transformation is especially prevalent in the *Harmonia*, and the reasons for its presence will be discussed below.

### *The Trumpet Call or Intrada*

The first example of the violin-as-trumpet appears in Sonata XII 'The Ascension' of Biber's *Rosary Sonatas*. The *Ascension* Sonata is the most extreme example of transformative scordatura because Biber forces the violin into a C major tuning (c-e'-g'-c'), a typical key for trumpet but a particularly difficult and un-resonant key for the violin.

#### Ex. 2: Heinrich Biber, Sonata XII *The Ascension* (Rosary Sonatas), mm. 14-22.<sup>73</sup>



Another example appears in Sonata IV of Biber's 1681 solo violin sonatas. This sonata features a lot of quick passagework and string crossing, as well as a trumpet-like primary theme for the gigue section of the sonata. In this passage, the scordatura allows for the near-continuous use of open strings in the top line. This tuning allows the

<sup>72</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 13-14. Included in these pages is a more detailed discussion of Biber's other instrumental transformations, primarily those found in his programmatic compositions.

<sup>73</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 25, ed. Erwin Luntz, 1959, 58.

performer to create a clear “piercing” tone quality. Now that Biber has created the sound he needs from the violin to convey the trumpet, he sets the melody in a stately quarter-note-eighth-note pattern that solidifies the transformation. Modern performers will sometimes take Biber’s lead with this transformation and embellish the passage with more elaborate dotted rhythms.<sup>74</sup>

**Ex. 3: Heinrich Biber, Sonata IV in D Major (1681 solo sonatas), mm. 34-37.<sup>75</sup>**



Trumpet calls are also an important topic in the *Harmonia*. Intradas are associated with grand introductions and festive public music and most of them are in a major key. The term “intrada” was also used as a substitute for organ preludes.<sup>76</sup> In the *Harmonia*, Biber removes the intrada from its festive associations and casts the topic in a serious or somber light by placing it in minor keys.<sup>77</sup> The intrada is one of the first musical topics we encounter in the collection, in the B section of the opening movement of Partia I.

<sup>74</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Violin Sonatas*, Romanesca, Andrew Manze, violin, Nigel North, lute and theorbo, John Toll, harpsichord and organ. (Harmonia Mundi: 90713435, 1994), CD.

<sup>75</sup> *DTÖ*, Vol. 2, Bd. 11, ed. Guido Adler, 1959, 36. The passage provided is the original scordatura notation and is not transcribed.

<sup>76</sup> David Ledbetter and Howard Ferguson. “Prelude.” *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

<sup>77</sup> This is not the only instance of Biber using minor keys for trumpet. Two of the twelve trumpet duos included in his *Sonatae tam Aris, quam Aulis Servientes* (1676), C. 136 and 137, are in G minor. See *DTÖ* Bd. 106-7, 155.

**Ex. 3: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia I in D Minor, mvt. 1  
*Sonata*, mm. 18-24.**

The image shows a musical score for two violins, Violin I and Violin II. The music is in D minor and 3/4 time. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The Violin I part has a melodic line with many slurs and accents, while the Violin II part provides a harmonic accompaniment with similar rhythmic motifs.

The next example is the first movement of Partia V, which is titled *Intrada*. The tuning of g-d<sup>7</sup>-a-d<sup>7</sup> in this suite allows the violins to play sonorous triple-stops that use one or two open strings. By using an open tuning, Biber allows the violin to reproduce the sound of many trumpets with just two stringed instruments.

**Ex. 4: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia V, *Intrada*, mm. 1-12.<sup>78</sup>**

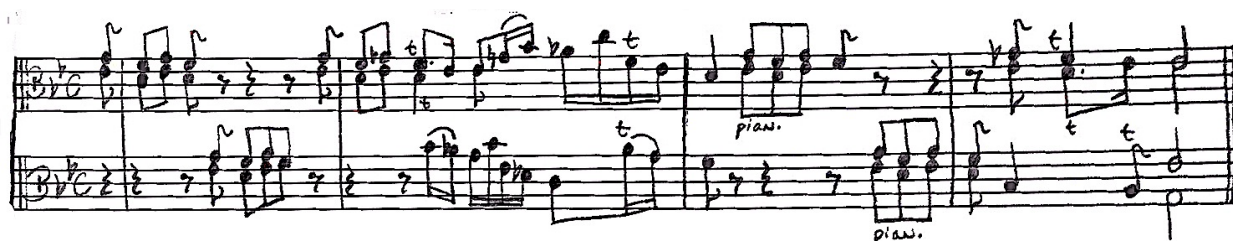
The image shows a musical score for two violins, Violin I and Violin II. The music is in D minor and 3/4 time. It features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The Violin I part has a melodic line with many slurs and accents, while the Violin II part provides a harmonic accompaniment with similar rhythmic motifs. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The score is divided into two systems, with the second system starting at measure 10.

The last example of the trumpet call is found in the fifth movement of Partia VII. In this movement, the trumpet motive is treated antiphonally with dynamic indications of *piano* for its final statement. This excerpt is marginally trumpet-like and could also be interpreted as a horn call.

<sup>78</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 53.

**Ex. 5: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII, mvt. 5, *Aria*, mm. 7-**

**10.**<sup>79</sup>



***Dominance of Organ Genres in the Harmonia***

The influence of organ music on the *Harmonia* is significant, and it is present in most of the opening movements of each Partia and also the *Ciaccona* and passacaglia of Partias III, V, and VII. The scordatura allows Biber to transform the violin into an organ, and this is especially true of the full chordal passages. This particular instrumental transformation extends beyond scordatura and into a more literal imitation of the organ, with explorations of voicing and registration. For the purposes of this project, however, we will focus our attention only on organ genres and styles. All examples are given in the order in which they occur.

***Toccatas and Preludes***

The first movement of the *Harmonia* includes all of the topics mentioned above and is one of the most affectively powerful movements in the collection. It is titled *Sonata*, and begins with open, tonic chords and widely spaced figurations. The opening measures of Partia I suggest introductory material one might hear in organ preludes.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 95.

**Ex. 6: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia I, Movement 1, *Sonata*, mm. 1-11.<sup>80</sup>**

The image shows a musical score for two violins, Violin I and Violin II, covering measures 1 through 11. The music is written in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The score is characterized by intricate passagework and antiphonal calls between the two violins. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as 't' for trills. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The score is presented in three systems, with the first system showing the initial measures and the subsequent systems continuing the intricate musical texture.

A canonic B section with intricate passagework in the violins follows this passage. One especially striking feature in the B section is the passage of trumpet-like antiphonal calls between both violins, already observed in Example 1. The trumpet calls are then embedded in the sixteenth-note figures of the B section, amplifying the antiphonal effect. The prelude-like A section returns to close the movement.

Biber interprets the organ prelude most literally in the first movements of Partias II, IV, VI, and VII. The choice of terminology also functions as a signal to the performers to adjust to the new tunings. A chart of all tunings and correlated ensemble changes is provided here:

<sup>80</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 3.



**Table 1: First Movements of Biber's *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa***

Partia I, <i>Sonata</i>	D minor	Two violins tuned a-e-a'-d''	Chordal, full textured A section, canonic B section, return to chordal A material
Partia II, <i>Praeludium</i>	B minor	Two violins or violino piccolo tuned b-f#-b'-d''	Antiphonal thirds interspersed with free-form motives
Partia III, <i>Praeludium</i>	A major	Two violins tuned a-e-a'-e''	Toccata-like movement, canon at the unison w/tonic pedal
Partia IV, <i>Sonata</i>	E flat major	Violin tuned Bb-Eb-Bb-Eb Viola tuned Eb-Bb-Eb-Bb	Four voice hymnlike A section, followed by canonic B section, return to four voice A section.
Partia V, <i>Intrada</i>	G minor	Two violins tuned g-d-a'-d''	Stately, dotted rhythm, open strings to create trumpet-like sound
Partia VI, <i>Praeludium</i>	D major	Two violins tuned g-d-a'-e''	Chordal A section, virtuosic B section with arpeggios traded between both violins.
Partia VII, <i>Praeludium</i>	C minor	Two viola d'amore tuned c-g-c'-Eb'-g'-c''	A hybrid genre movement that uses many idiomatic organ styles

Partia II in B Minor feels somewhat out of place. In fact Clements remarks that it is one of the least interesting parts of the collection.<sup>81</sup> To the contrary, Partia II is one of the suites in the *Harmonia* that uses techniques seen in Biber's sacred vocal music and is

<sup>81</sup> Clements, *Aspects of the Ars Rhetorica*, 229.

a point of interest because of this.<sup>82</sup> Just as we observed in the first movement of Partia I, the opening movement of Partia II features antiphonal writing. The rapidly shifting dynamics and call-and-response figures between the violins are features of the antiphonal techniques Biber uses in his sacred works.

**Ex. 7: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa*, Partia II, mvt. 2 *Praeludium*, mm. 1-3.<sup>83</sup>**

The opening movement of Partia III is a toccata-like passage of fifty solid measures of brilliant A major chords and scales poured over a tonic pedal. The resulting effect is a sharp contrast in mood and affect to the previous two suites.

<sup>82</sup> For a discussion of Biber's fusion of *stile antico* elements in his sacred vocal works, see Chafe, *Church Music*, 14-15.

<sup>83</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 21.

**Ex. 8: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa*, Partia III, mvt. 1, *Praeludium*, mm. 1-10.<sup>84</sup>**

The image shows a handwritten musical score for two violins, labeled VI. I and VI. II. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first measure has a 7-measure rest for the first violin and a 3-measure rest for the second violin. The subsequent measures feature intricate rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and various articulation marks such as slurs and accents. The notation is dense and characteristic of Baroque manuscript notation.

Further intensifying the affective shift are the chosen key areas of Partias II and III. B minor is a dead key, which does not resonate well on stringed instruments, while A major is an extremely bright key. Tuning the violins to the tonic chords of these keys intensifies these qualities—something Biber was likely quite aware of. More so than his contemporaries, Biber often experimented with sound, and the juxtaposition here of a dead key with a very live key should be considered intentional.

The following movements of Partia III return to a standard chamber music program, with colorful dances such as the Amener and Canario included along with the usual Allamande [*sic*] and Gigue. Biber returns to the organ influence, however, in the concluding *Ciacona* of Partia III. It is not a showy or heavily ornamented chaconne like those found in his colleague Muffat's *Armonico Tributo* and *Apparatus musico-organisticus*. However, there is a strong connection here between the latter work and the *Harmonia*. Variation movements were a hallmark of keyboard music in the seventeenth

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 30.

century, and Biber uses all of the standard variation forms in the *Harmonia*, including the ciacona (Partia III), aria and variation (Partia VI), and passacaglia (Partia V and VII)<sup>85</sup>. Muffat's collection of organ music is also free-spirited and strict at once, and while the styles of Biber and Muffat differ in terms of emphasis on national styles (Muffat favored the French), they shared a common struggle with their employer, Archbishop Johann Ernst von Thun. We do not have any recorded correspondence between Biber and Muffat, but the affective and structural similarities between these two compositions may suggest a deeper connection than previously realized.<sup>86</sup>

The *Ciacona* in Partia III is also a canon at the unison, although this learned detail is obscured by the improvisatory style of the violin parts. This is a great example of the Kircherian style influence discussed earlier: musically free but still submissive to reason. The movement explores the full register of the violin and also various textures within the music: antiphonal motives, suspensions, thirds, scalar passages, and a shift to a bouncy, gigue-like 9/8 meter at m.109. With the variety of sounds and colors in this movement, and also the variations in rhythm and counterpoint, it is more in the realm of the toccata.

The opening *Sonata* of Partia IV is a varied movement that borrows from chorale textures, toccata, and fugue. This movement begins with a chordal, hymn-like passage:

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<sup>85</sup> The last movement of Partia VII is titled "Arietta Variata" but is functionally a passacaglia. Lesser variations are also included in Partias I and II, the former containing a Gigue and Sarabande, each with two variations and finale, and the latter containing an Allemande with one variation.

<sup>86</sup> Muffat was very outspoken and aired his complaints about Thun in the dedication of his first *Florilegium* collection, but he never directly addressed the archbishop himself. See David K. Wilson, trans., *Georg Muffat on Performance Practice: The Texts from Florilegium Primum, Florilegium Secundum, and Auserlesene Instrumentalmusik* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 12. Biber, on the other hand, did directly address Thun in the dedication of the *Harmonia*, the translation of which is provided in this paper on p. 17.

Ex. 9: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa*, Partia IV, mvt. 1, *Sonata*, mm.

1-10.<sup>87</sup>

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Violin, Viola, and B.C. (Bass Continuo). The score is written in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system has three staves (Violin, Viola, B.C.). The second system has three staves. The third system has three staves. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and fingerings. There are also some performance markings like 'p' (piano) and 't' (trill). The B.C. part includes figured bass notation with numbers and accidentals. The piece ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

The next part of the movement is canonic:

<sup>87</sup> DTÖ, Bd. 92, 44.

**Ex. 10: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia IV, mvt. 1, *Sonata*, mm. 11-17.<sup>88</sup>**

Following the canon, Biber shifts to a free-spirited improvisatory/toccat-like passage.

Notice how this passage incorporates the canonic subject from the previous section:

**Ex. 11: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia IV, mvt. 1, *Sonata*, mm. 23-31.<sup>89</sup>**

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 44-45

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 45-46.

The canonic subject returns in the viola at measure 30, while the violin continues on with the toccata motives. The hymn-like theme returns after the canon/toccatina passage to close this movement.

Continuing in our discussion of organ-inspired music in the *Harmonia* is the last movement of Partia V, *Passacaglia*. This movement is somewhat reminiscent of the unaccompanied “Guardian Angel” Passacaglia that appends Biber’s *Rosary Sonatas*, Sonata VI of his *Sonatae Violino Solo* (1681), and possibly Georg Muffat’s *Apparatus musico-organisticus*.<sup>90</sup> Biber’s *Passacaglia* in Partia V is significantly less virtuosic than the latter work by Muffat. At the same time the introductory measures of both works are similar in texture, and perhaps Biber was influenced by Muffat’s passacaglia:

**Ex. 12: Georg Muffat, *Passacaglia* from *Apparatus musico-organisticus* (1690), chordal texture, mm. 1-4.<sup>91</sup>**

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of a piece. It is written on two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The music is characterized by a chordal texture. The bass line features a ground bass pattern of quarter notes: G2, B-flat2, D3, G2. The treble line consists of chords and moving lines. There are dynamic markings 'p' (piano) at the beginning of measures 1 and 2, and 't' (toccata) above measures 2, 3, and 4. The notation includes various note values such as quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes, along with rests and accidentals.

<sup>90</sup> Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa: Diversimode Accordata*, Rebel, dir. Jörg-Michael Schwarz, Bridge Records, 2006. Bridge 9213. This recording gives an extended statement of the ground bass in the beginning of the passacaglia in Partia V. Biber does not indicate for this in the parts but it is interesting that the ensemble took this creative liberty, and one wonders if they made this decision because they recognized the “Guardian Angel” passacaglia in this work as well.

<sup>91</sup> Georg Muffat, *Apparatus musico-organisticus*, Revised and edited from the Original Edition of the year 1690 with preface and hints concerning the use of the Pedal and the art of registration by S.D. Lange. Peters Edition 6020 (New York: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1900). The author has omitted Lange’s addition of the pedal in this excerpt.

**Ex. 13: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia V, mvt. 5 *Passacaglia*, Chordal Motive/Main Theme, mm. 1-8.<sup>92</sup>**

After the introduction or “primary theme,” Biber does not follow Muffat’s lead in strict detail. Significant differences between the two works are Biber’s lack of multiple recurrences of the primary theme, as Muffat’s passacaglia has, and Muffat’s work does not use a triple-rhythm variation anywhere, as Biber’s passacaglia does. The various textures used throughout Muffat’s passacaglia, however, are similar to the ones Biber uses in his *Passacaglia* in Partia V. These textures or motives are idiomatic to organ music of the time, but their appearance in a trio sonata for stringed instruments is certainly unusual. Variations that most closely resemble the organ are included here for examples.

<sup>92</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 56.



Ex. 13: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia V, mvt. 5 *Passacaglia*,  
 Chordal Motive/Main Theme, mm. 1-8.<sup>93</sup>

Violin I  
Violin II  
B.C.

7 #6 6 6 #

Ex. 14: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia V mvt. 5, *Passacaglia*,  
 Arioso/melodic variation, mm.9-16.<sup>94</sup>

Violin I  
Violin II

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 56-57.

**Ex. 15: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia V mvt. 5 *Passacaglia*, Free figures/quasi-toccatà variation, mm. 41-48.<sup>95</sup>**

The image shows a musical score for two violins, labeled 'Vin. I' and 'Vin. II'. The score is written in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. The top system shows measures 41-48 for Violin I, which has a scordatura tuning indicated by a '1' above the staff. The bottom system shows measures 41-48 for Violin II. The music is a 'Passacaglia' and features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

After this point in the *Harmonia*, Biber almost breaks the common thread of the first five suites and offers Partia VI as a sort of musical gift to the violinists. This suite does not use scordatura tuning. The organ influence is still present, but this time the violins dominate for two virtuosic movements before assuming the organ role again in the *Finale*, which is a brief and brilliant toccata-like passage:

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 58.

**Ex. 16: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VI, mvt. 3 *Finale*, mm. 1-6.<sup>96</sup>**

The image shows a musical score for two violins, labeled VI. I and VI. II. The score is divided into two sections: 'adagio' and 'allegro'. The 'adagio' section features a melodic line in the first violin and a more active line in the second violin. The 'allegro' section features a dense, rhythmic texture with sixteenth-note patterns in both violins.

We finally reach Partia VII, a suite for two violas d'amore and continuo. Biber must have been thrilled by the sonorous possibilities of this instrument, as it was a completely new invention during his time. The heavy chordal influence that is so pervasive throughout the *Harmonia* assumes even more intensity with two of these six-stringed fiddles and their resonant, metal sympathetic strings. Of every movement in the entire collection, the *Praeludium* of Partia VII is the most varied and inclusive of idiomatic organ genres and styles. Because many passages are simply variations of the same genre and style, I am only including a handful of score excerpts as examples. For clarity I am also including a table of each topic as it occurs in this movement.

<sup>96</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 79.

**Table 2: Topical Analysis of Partia VII, *Praeludium*.**

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Key Area</u>	<u>Measures</u>
Chordal/antiphonal Toccata	c	1-7
Modulation to E flat Major, echo of previous topic	c-Eb	8-24
Toccata motive	Eb	25-29
Antiphonal motive	Eb	30-44
Dotted antiphonal topic	Eb	45-50
Arioso topic/modulation back to C minor	Eb	51-55
Trumpet topic	c-Eb	56-66
Toccata topic/dominant pedal	V/c	67-68
	V/c-c	69-80

**Ex. 17: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII, mvt. 1, *Praeludium*, chordal motive, mm. 1-7.<sup>97</sup>**
**Ex. 18: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII mvt. 1 *Praeludium*, Toccata Motive w/Tonic Pedal mm. 9-12.<sup>98</sup>**
<sup>97</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 81.<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

The toccata motive here continues until m. 25, at which point the tonic pedal stops to allow for a modulation to E flat major.

**Ex. 19: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII, mvt. 1 *Praeludium*, Toccata Motive w/Tonic Pedal in E Flat Major mm. 30-37.<sup>99</sup>**

The musical score for Ex. 19 consists of three staves. The top staff is for Violin I (Vla. I), the middle for Violin II (Vla. II), and the bottom for Bassoon/Clarinet (B.C.). The key signature is E-flat major (three flats). The time signature is 3/4. The score shows a continuous melodic line in the upper staves and a sustained tonic pedal point in the lower staff. The melodic line features a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some slurs and accents.

The E flat toccata motive continues until measure 44. A new motive follows, still in E flat, but this time with slurred sixteenth note thirds. This motive is similar to the antiphonal motive in the *Praeludium* of Partia II.

**Ex. 20: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII, mvt. 1, Antiphonal motive, mm. 45-48.<sup>100</sup>**

The musical score for Ex. 20 consists of two staves, Violin I (Vla. I) and Violin II (Vla. II). The key signature is E-flat major (three flats). The time signature is 3/4. The score shows a complex antiphonal texture with slurred sixteenth-note thirds in both hands. The melodic lines are highly rhythmic and feature many slurs and accents.

<sup>99</sup> *DTÖ*, Bd. 92, 83-84.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

**Ex. 21: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII, mvt. 1 *Praeludium*, Arioso motive, mm. 56-60.<sup>101</sup>**

**Ex. 22: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia VII, mvt. 1, *Praeludium*, trumpet motive, mm. 67-68.<sup>102</sup>**

### *Chorales*

There are two chorale topics in the *Harmonia*, and both of those are found in Partia IV in E Flat Major. The first example is the introduction to Partia IV:

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

**Ex. 23: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia IV, mvt. 1, *Sonata*, mm. 1-10.<sup>103</sup>**

The next chorale topic is found in the fourth movement of Partia IV. It is not a chorale in the strict technical sense of the word but rather a rustic variation, or a hymnlike treatment of a folk melody. The latter explanation is a likely case, even if the tune has not been identified. Recall Chafe's description of popular piety in Biber's music:

“When Biber includes sonatas of very rustic character among publications designated for both church and court, when he produces a hybrid type of programmatic suite for solo violin and associates it with the mysteries of the rosary, or an ensemble sonata entitled *Sonata a' 6 die pauern-Kirchfarth genandt*, that depicts a peasants' litany procession, and so on, it is not merely the influence of his background that is significant but the perhaps the artist's conscious effort to broaden the musical language with

<sup>103</sup> DTÖ Bd. 92, 44.

the incorporation of elements that suggest a cutting across the barriers of class and national style as well as the sacred/secular dichotomy.”<sup>104</sup>

**Ex. 24: Heinrich Biber, *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa*, Partia IV, mvt. 4, *Aria*, mm. 1-8.**<sup>105</sup>

As you can see from these examples, there is an unquestionable influence from organ music present in the *Harmonia*. Even the dance movements, which were not addressed in the other examples, are more harmonic rather than melodic in nature, and this quality can also be attributed to organ music. We will now explore some possibilities for why and how this influence became such a significant part of Biber’s final published composition.

<sup>104</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 7.

<sup>105</sup> *DTÖ* Bd. 92, 50.



## Chapter Four The Organists in Biber's Life

One of Biber's first music teachers was the organist in his hometown of Wartenburg, Bohemia, a colorful individual named Wiegand Knöffel.<sup>106</sup> Chafe explains that Biber in all likelihood did not spend much time as Knöffel's student and was there just long enough to learn the basics of music. Through this early experience, however, it is also possible that Biber's earliest memories of music came by way of the organ, either from hearing his teacher play during church services or music lessons. Musical experiences are just as influential in the formation of a child's memories as any other encounters they have through the course of childhood, and the possibility of the influence of Biber's first music teacher should be a worthy consideration.

### ***Biber and Muffat***

The influence of Biber's Salzburg colleague and cathedral organist Georg Muffat is largely speculative but still an important potential source of information. Muffat's *Apparatus Musico-Organisticus* (1690) is a collection of organ music that is, much like Biber's *Harmonia*, a work that is instructional and also suitable for performance. The *Apparatus* contains twelve toccatas, a charming Lullian chaconne, a stately passacaglia, and concludes with the *Nova Cyclopedias Harmonica*, a theme and variation piece. Within the span of Muffat's oeuvre, it is his *Apparatus* that bears the closest resemblance to Biber's *Harmonia*. Muffat dedicated the *Apparatus* to Emperor Leopold I. He presented the work to the Emperor in performance, and through this engagement was able

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<sup>106</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 1. Knöffel is also described here as a "drunkard and rabble-rouser" who also was charged with regular teaching and cantor duties.

to lift himself out of his dead-end position in Salzburg and become *Hofkapellmeister* in Passau. The *Apparatus* is unique for Muffat, and the French styles that pervade the rest of his music are significantly subdued in most of the works in the collection. Archbishop Thun detested all things French, which certainly would not have helped Muffat's musical causes, and this could explain the subdued "Frenchness" of the *Apparatus*. One wonders if the work was originally intended for performance in Salzburg, or if some of the pieces were performed there to little or no acknowledgement. Record keeping was notoriously poor at the Salzburg Cathedral, and there is no record of any of Muffat's compositions from that time—not even his name has been found in any church documents.<sup>107</sup>

When it comes to musical styles, Biber and Muffat were very different in their tastes and habits, but similar in their beliefs of what music could accomplish. The comparison of Biber and Muffat is a helpful addition to our understanding of Biber's personal approach to composition and especially his intentions for a work such as his *Harmonia*. Biber and Muffat worked together from 1678 to 1690 at the Salzburg Cathedral, but no direct correspondence between them is known. Their employer and patron Archbishop Maximilian Gandolph passed away in 1687 and took with him a devotion to music that was not to be seen again in Salzburg until the time of Leopold Mozart. In Gandolph's place came Archbishop Johann Ernst, a man indifferent to music and especially displeased by French culture.<sup>108</sup> Muffat was passionate about French music and the installation of Ernst did not bode well for his future in Salzburg.

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<sup>107</sup> David Wilson, trans., *Georg Muffat*, 4-5.

<sup>108</sup> Wilson, *Georg Muffat*, 3-4.

Georg Muffat's musical and personal ambitions were written out at great lengths and published, and his writings show a man very much troubled by violence and war, who felt deeply that music was the answer to worldly problems:

“The weapons of war and the reasons for them are far from me; notes, strings, and lovely musical tones dictate my course, and as I mix the French manner with the German and Italian, I do not begin a war, but perhaps rather a prelude to the unity, the dear peace, desired by all the peoples.”<sup>109</sup>

Muffat's second musical passion was pedagogy, and he wrote extensively about performance practice, particularly that of French music but also how such music could be easily adapted to local German or Italian practices. The “mixed taste” style of music that would so soon become ubiquitous with Telemann was not simply a matter of what was fashionable and marketable. To Muffat, mixed music was a personal credo that he believed held the power to improve the world. To what extent Muffat was a religious man is not known. One mass setting, *Missa In labore requies* (date unknown), is extant, but only a few other lost sacred works are known at this time. Composing sacred music does not appear to have been a priority for Muffat. Before entering a career in music, Muffat studied rhetoric and secular humanism.<sup>110</sup> Given his family history and war, which seemed to follow him everywhere he went, it is just as likely to assume that while he believed in the inherent good of people, Muffat may not have looked favorably upon organized religion.

Biber had a very different approach to musical and spiritual issues than his counterpart. A few of his writings are extant apart from the formal dedications of

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 4.

his major instrumental collections and one sacred composition, the *Vesperae Brevis a Longiores* (1693). The very few pieces of prose we have of Biber in the vernacular are simple and only address some small matter of the moment. He reserved his true expression for the dedications, which are all in Latin. Biber's search for meaning in life was introspective, whether in his cryptic Latin prose or the scordatura tuning of his violin music, and if one seeks to know Biber, they must travel many other paths along the way. There appear to be similarities between Biber and Muffat at times, however, and the intercourse appears less antagonistic and more a nod of respect and acknowledgement. One especially notable similarity is the grand Passacaglia from Muffat's *Apparatus musico-organisticus* (1690) and Biber's passacaglia from Sonata VI of his *Sonatae Violino Solo* (1681).<sup>111</sup>

While Muffat had good cause to flee Salzburg and its unmusical archbishop, Biber had no compelling reasons to leave. Chafe suggests that Biber's professional situation was not as dire as Muffat's, although the tension between Biber and Archbishop Thun as observed in the *Harmonia* dedication surely indicates that it was not ideal, either. Biber was also older and established by this time, and his ties to Salzburg and, most importantly, the *Stift Nonnberg* were too valuable to leave for the prospect of a little more money, although Chafe points out that his salary as *Kapellmeister* was well below that of the same position in Vienna.<sup>112</sup>

Chafe has noted the similarities between Biber's *Sonatae Violino Solo* and Muffat's *Apparatus musico-organisticus*, the two works being composed in 1681 and

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<sup>111</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 16.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

1690, respectively.<sup>113</sup> Muffat held violinists in the highest esteem and wrote extensively for stringed instruments. His chosen style was not strictly German, but the reasons for this appear to be personal as opposed to political. Muffat identified with his French heritage and studied in Paris at a young age.

On the other hand, Biber also took his cue from Muffat, even if his subject matter was quite different from that of his colleague. The best comparison here is between the *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa* and Muffat's *Armonico Tributo*. Goebel remarks that Biber's decision to exclude French dance movements in the *Harmonia* was possibly intentional.<sup>114</sup> Given that Archbishop Thun was disgusted by anything to do with French culture, this is very plausible. Muffat's passion for French music extended far beyond Thun's preferences, and he was in a better position to take artistic risks. Such was not the case for Biber, whose ties to Salzburg were too ingrained. Biber was also an established and accomplished musician by this point and also on the verge of retirement, so he had less reason than Muffat to ruffle the Archbishop's feathers. However, to say that Biber excluded French dance movements in his *Harmonia* because he was making a deliberate statement against Muffat or even against French music in general would not be accurate. Biber's *Mensa Sonora* uses both a French scoring of one violin and two violas as well as courantes, gavottes, and ballettos interspersed between other movements in a typical French fashion. Even the title of the *Harmonia* is indicative of Biber's interest in a "mixed style," as Clements points out:

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 16-18. It is interesting to note that both works were performed for Emperor Leopold I.

<sup>114</sup> Goebel, foreword to *Harmonia* facsimile, xiv. He does, however, make a parenthetical statement of "ex negativo," since indeed there is no way to know for sure whether this absence is intentional.

“The most common and literal translation of the words *Harmonia artificioso ariosa* is “skillful-melodic harmony”; the word *harmonia* refers generally to the music. *Artificiosus* signifies something done “according to the rules of art” in broad terms or something “on which much art has been bestowed, made with art, artificial, ingenious.” The Italian term *arioso*, likewise, means more than just melodic. It can also mean “graceful, light, attractive, pleasing...tuneful,” and could also refer to the naturalness of music springing from nature.”<sup>115</sup>

Clements continues:

“The mixture of Italian and Latin not only demonstrates Biber’s linguistic skill, but also pays homage to the Italians for the trio sonata genre.”<sup>116</sup>

The similarities between the *Harmonia* and *Armonico Tributo* lie in their blending of style, affect, and the use of variation to achieve both. Biber and Muffat’s works both conclude with a lengthy and grand passacaglia, a similarity which may not be merely coincidental.

Another of Biber’s potential influences was Muffat’s student, Johann Baptiste Samber, who became organist in Salzburg after Muffat departed. Biber assisted Samber with his music theory and organ performance treatise *Manuductio ad Organicam*. This publication includes a discussion of proper registration for all kinds of music styles on the organ, and Biber would have been well acquainted with it. Given Biber’s established interest in experimenting with sound, the subject of registration may have been fertile ground for Biber to explore the same concept on the violin.<sup>117</sup> Nearly all of the *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* suites include organ-like textures, especially their introductory movements and the concluding passacaglia of Sonata VII.

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<sup>115</sup> Clements, “Aspects of the *Ars Rhetorica*,” 105-106.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Chafe, *Church Music*, 34.

### *Biber and the Violin as a Sacred Instrument*

Biber's output during the last decade of his life is exclusively sacred, with the *Harmonia* being considered, historically, as the only exception. Now that the circumstances of the work are made clear here, I state once more that Biber's *Harmonia Artificio-Ariosa* served a dual purpose, much like the two other dual purpose instrumental collections Biber wrote early in his career. The circumstances support this, and our understanding of Biber's personal credo and his unending quest to elevate the violin to a higher liturgical standard—one that is equal to the organ—are proof. It is important to note here that Biber was continuing a tradition that had begun over a hundred years before his *Harmonia*, as many others before him had made their own musical statements in favor of the violin as worthy of use in sacred performance settings:

“It was not until 1595 that the ensemble canzona was being used in the Roman Rite. But since the majority of Italian composers who published collections of ensemble canzonas throughout its known period of cultivation, that is, from the 1580s to 1660, were primarily church musicians, it is probable that right from the outset the ensemble canzona was intended primarily for use in the church. Supporting such a supposition is the fact that two of the earliest known composers of ensemble canzonas were Marc'Antonio Ingegneri and Florentio Maschera. Each is known to have been a violinist in the Duomo in an early centre of violin-making, Cremona and Brescia, respectively.”<sup>118</sup>

Much closer to Biber's own time were the *sonate da chiesa* of Arcangelo Corelli, and while we do not have definitive proof that Biber knew his music either in print or performance, the circumstances are highly favorable for such an

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<sup>118</sup> Stephen Bonta, “The Use of Instruments in Sacred Music in Italy 1560-1700,” *Early Music* 18 (November 1990): 521.

encounter. Muffat traveled to Rome and studied with Corelli, and composed his *Armonico Tributo* (1682) in a Corellian concerto grosso style.

If Biber's *Harmonia* was used in sacred performance settings, how and when would it be used? Bonta explains the use of instruments providing supplemental music for some parts of the Mass, and these were the Gradual, Credo, Offertory, Elevation, Communion, and Deo Gratias. Elaborate instrumental music such as canzonas and sinfonias were considered suitable for the Gradual and Communion, followed with a motet or ricercar for Offertory. Slow and chromatic works were preferred for Elevation.<sup>119</sup> Most of the opening movements of the *Harmonia*'s seven suites are stylistically suitable for such performance, and the variation movements are also entirely suitable—especially the passacaglias of Partias V and VII.

While Bonta's article discussed instrumental music in an inclusive and non-specific way, it is useful here to note that the violin itself was becoming more important in sacred music written in Italy during the seventeenth century. Large festive masses made extensive use of the violin, and the stylistic influence of its inclusion changed the way composers wrote mass settings.<sup>120</sup> Anne Schnoebelen's article on the use of the violin in seventeenth-century mass settings addresses only the concerted mass settings that proliferated in Italy, but it is known that these traditions were also vibrant in Austria and other points northward. Composers such as Heinrich Schütz imported Italian styles of music in

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<sup>119</sup> Stephen Bonta, "The Uses of the *Sonata da Chiesa*," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 22 (Spring 1969): 75.

<sup>120</sup> Anne Schnoebelen, "The Role of the Violin in the Resurgence of the Mass in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century," *Early Music* 18 (November 1990): 538.



the early decades of the seventeenth century, and support for the use of stringed instruments in the liturgy increased through most of the century, as evidenced by the moderate number of “sacro-profanum” instrumental collections by Austro-German composers. Large ceremonial mass settings and instrumental music for church were also genres in which Biber excelled as a composer. It can also be argued that the majority of his oeuvre is dedicated to these genres.

### ***Conclusion***

For Biber, faith in fiddles was a way of life, a God-given gift that he never took for granted. This gift carried Biber from a life of simple obscurity to celebrated nobility, but he was never boastful of this fact. The only substantial words we possess from Biber pertain to his music and to its importance and influence in all matters of his life, and even here he did not abuse the opportunity to set his personal frustrations into print, as his colleague Muffat did. Faith in fiddles was an outward expression of his own personal faith, a musical and spiritual piety to which he remained dedicated until the last days of his life. The *Harmonia Artificioso-Ariosa* is Biber’s final affirmation of this faith.

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