

DIOMEDES CATO

(*b* ?Serravalle, nr Treviso, 1560-65; *d* after 1607 or 1618)

Fantasia ex d for four viols

(treble/ alto, tenor, tenor, bass)

Ed. and typeset by Jens Egeberg

after:

Muzyka w dawnym Krakowie.
Wybór utworów XV – XVIII w.
pod redakcją Zygmunta M. Szwejkowskiego
(PWM : Kraków, 1964)

Score

Fantasia ex d

(Cambridge : Fitzwilliam Museum)

Diomedes Cato
(?1560-65 - ?1607/1618)

Canto (c1)

Alto (c3)

Tenore (c4)

Basso (F4)

5

9

13

17

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Cato, Diomedes

(b ?Serravalle, nr Treviso, 1560–65; d after 1607 or 1618). Italian composer and lutenist, active in Poland. He was often referred to simply as ‘Diomedes’. His father Costantino, who was a Protestant, was a teacher in Serravalle in about 1562; he left in about 1565 to escape the Inquisition, and settled in Kraków. His wife followed soon afterwards with their three children, of whom Diomedes was the youngest. His employment as a lutenist at the court of King Sigismund III of Poland is documented from 20 March 1588 until August 1593 and again in about 1602. In 1593–4 he probably accompanied the king on a journey to Sweden, where, according to Norlind, he was among the best-known foreign composers by 1600. A manuscript chronicle of 1623 reports that, together with Antonio Fulvio, he wrote music for the wedding celebrations of Jan Kostka, which took place at the castle of Swiecie (nr Torun) in 1591. The same document states that Stanislaw Kostka, a patron of Cato, left him a substantial legacy (1602). Radke cited a note stating that Cato was heard playing on 21 March 1619; however, the note has not been found.

Cato's output includes music for voices, viol consort and keyboard, but it is for his lute pieces that he is best known. These comprise preludes and fantasias, dances and intabulations of vocal pieces. In the preludes homophony predominates, though there are occasional imitative entries and some florid, quasi-improvisatory passage-work. One is in the form of a miniature set of variations. The fantasias, Cato's most interesting compositions, are mostly of the imitative *ricercare* type. The melodic material is notably homogeneous, and some of the pieces are clearly monothematic. Those in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, are stylistically firmly rooted in the Renaissance, imitative throughout and with melodic lines of vocal character; one of them is based on the melody of Janequin's chanson *Le chant des oiseaux*. The fantasias in RISM 1603¹⁵, however, contain certain traits characteristic of Baroque polyphony, especially in the use of short motifs to shape melodic lines and in the episodic structure of certain sections; episodes often appear within and between the expositions of thematic material. Sometimes there are sharp contrasts between successive short sections. Among the dances, several merit special attention, particularly two unusual Italian dances: the *barriera*, a court dance, and the *favorito*, which can perhaps be regarded as an elaboration of a ‘favourite’ galliard. Eight Polish dances are probably based on folk melodies. The madrigal *Tirsi morir volea* is extant in two sources with only the top part texted, indicating that it was performed as a solo song with instrumental accompaniment, but in fact it was conceived as a five-part vocal work.

WORKS

lute:

8 choreae polonicae, 7 fantasias (1 doubtful), favorito, 6 galliards, 2 madrigal transcrs., 2 passamezzos, 5 preludes, 1600⁶, 1603¹⁵, 1610²³, 1612¹⁸, 1615²⁴, *CH-Bu, PL-Kj*; ed. in WDMP, xxiv (1953, rev. 2/1970)
Barriera, 12 fantasias (2 doubtful), 5 galliards (1 doubtful), passamezzo, 3 preludes (incl. 2 reworkings), *D-LEm, W, GB-Cfm, Lbl*, O. Chilesotti's private collection; ed. in WDMP, lxvii (1973)
2 balletti, 3 fugae, 7 galliards, 2 preludes (1 doubtful), *CZ-Pnm, D-Hs*, private collection, Hamburg, *GB-HAdolmetsch, I-Gu, PL-LZu* (anon. in A. Francisque: *Le Trésor d'Orphée*, Paris, 1600, and 1615²⁴)

other instrumental:

8 fantasias, a 4, 5, dance, a 3, *GB-Cfm, Ob, S-Skma*; 2 fantasias ed. Z.M. Szweykowski, *Muzyka w dawnym Krakowie* (Kraków, 1964), 3 fantasias, dance ed. in MAP, ii/6–7 (1994)
2 fantasias, fugue, org, *A-Wm*; Provincial Archives, Torun, 1 fantasia, fugue ed. Z.M. Szweykowski, *Muzyka w dawnym Krakowie* (Kraków, 1964) and in MAP, ii/4 (1994)

vocal:

6 Polish sacred songs, in *Rytmy łacinskie dziwnie sztuczne ... przekładania X. Stanisława Grochowskiego*, 4vv, lute (Kraków, 1606) (inc.) and *Pieśń o świętym Stanisławie*, 4vv (Kraków, 1607); 3 ed. in MAP, ii/3 (1994), and all ed. P. Pozniak, *Spiwnnik Staropolski*, i (Kraków, 1995)
Tirsi morir volea (G.B. Guarini), madrigal, a 5, *GB-Cfm (inc.)*; *Ob*, ed. Z.M. Szweykowski, *Muzyka w dawnym Krakowie* (Kraków, 1964)
Grates Deo canamus, Provincial archives, Torun, Kat.XIV.13a (in org transcr., attrib. Cato) [contrafactum of I. Baccusi's madrigal *Ancor che col partire*]

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- J. Possel: *Historia Poloniae* (c1623, PL-Kc)
T. Norlind: ‘Zur Geschichte der polnischen Tänze’, *SIMG*, xii (1910–11), 501–8
P. Pozniak: Introductions to Diomedes Cato: *Preludia, fantazje, tance i madrygaly, na lutnie*, WDMP, xxiv (2/1970) and lxvii (1973)
M.E. Welti: *Giovanni Bernardino Bonifacio, Marchese d'Oria, im Exil, 1557–1597* (Geneva, 1976)
W. Urban: ‘Notatki źródłowe o muzykach polskich w XVI wieku’ [Source notes on Polish musicians in the 16th century], *Muzyka*, xxxii/1 (1987), 57–63
P. Pozniak: ‘Nie znany motetu Diomedesa Catona’ [There is no known motet by Diomedes Cato], *Affetti musicologici: A Book of Essays in Honour of Professor Zygmunt Marian Szweykowski on his 70th Birthday*, ed. P. Pozniak (Kraków, 1999), 125–8