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The English guitar and the forgotten guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century

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Abstract

The time leading up to one of the most important periods in the history of guitar music – "the golden age of the guitar" in the first half of the 19th century – was the heyday of European cities such as London, Paris, Vienna or Dresden. Music was the main source of entertainment for royalty and high society, and numerous music publications, sheet music editions and instrument handbooks were being created. Manufactures tried to outdo each other in structural innovations, refining and patenting increasingly interesting instruments. One such instrument was the immensely popular English guitar (guittar), which differed in design and tuning from the instrument we know today.

At present, it would be futile to look for the guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century on concert stages or in academic curricula (with a few exceptions, such as Luigi Boccherini's quintets or Giuseppe Antonio Brescianello's partitas), and English music is almost nowhere to be found. It is, to a large extent, undiscovered and nearly forgotten. Bringing it back to life will not only provide insight into the design and performing capabilities of the now unknown guittar (as well as its distinctive playing technique, fingering and articulation) and allow us to learn more about the works composed for the instrument (and their characteristic features), but – above all –

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give a full picture of the evolving aesthetics of the 18th century. These compositions will also fill the existing gap in the guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century, offering broad prospects for their performance in the future. The most important consequence of that is the preservation of the continuity of guitar literature from the Renaissance to the present day, and the resulting possibility to make the world described in Leopold Mozart's or Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's treatises tangible.

Keywords: English guitar, guittar, guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century, English guitar design, guitar makers

Introduction

The aim of the present study is to present the guitar literature of the second half of the 18th century, which is to a large extent undiscovered, nearly forgotten and unknown in the present day. Currently, very few compositions from that period which were originally written for the above-mentioned instrument appear on concert stages and in academic curricula. The most important of them include Luigi Boccherini's (1743–1805) guitar quintets, Giuseppe Antonio Brescianello's (1690–1758) partitas and the works of Giacomo Merchi (1730–1789). In addition, a small number of minor works by less popular composers, such as Jan Křtitel Vaňhal (1739–1813), is occasionally performed. There are only a few disc publications of compositions for the English guitar on the market; they feature the works by Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782), Francesco Geminiani (1687–1762), Rudolf Straube (1717–1785), Tommaso Giordani (ca. 1730–1806) or James Oswald (1710–1769).

The gap in the guitar repertoire of the second half of the 18th century was being filled by classical guitarists with literature for other instruments, usually string or keyboard, which is exemplified by the harpsichord sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) or sonatas for the harpsichord or *pianoforte* by Domenico Cimarosa (1749–1801). Making use of such compositions presents each guitarist-performer with the problem of translating the idiomatic language of those instruments into the language of the guitar. On the one hand, the resulting transcriptions are extremely valuable as they make it possible to perform early music and get acquainted with its architecture, harmonic relationships or aesthetic; on the other hand, such compositions do not satisfy the need of experiencing the old guitar fingering technique, articulation, ornamentation or timbre.

The guitar works of the period in question are not in circulation today. Perhaps this stems from a lack of awareness of their existence since the instrument was not known in its current form at that time – the Spanish variant appeared only at the end of the 18th century, and the lute was already going out of fashion. It should be remembered that the second half of the 18th century was a time of constant experimentation in string-instrument making – manufactures tried to outdo each other in structural innovations, refining and patenting increasingly

interesting instruments, and many types of necked, plucked chordophones differing in design or tuning existed on the market at the same time. What is more, this was the heyday of European cities such as London, Paris, Vienna or Dresden, where music was the main source of entertainment for royalty and high society. Numerous music publications, sheet music editions and instrument handbooks were being created in response to the needs of the market. There is no doubt that music literature, including guitar literature, must have been abundant.

In the 1850s, it was increasingly common for the British press, literature and painting to abound in mentions and portrayals of a newly created instrument – the **English guitar** (guittar), which quickly won recognition in all social classes, especially among ladies from aristocratic families. By the end of the century, it had become the most popular instrument not only in Great Britain and its colonies in North America and India, but also in most European countries, i.e. German-speaking states, the Czech Republic, Russia, Scandinavia, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and even Poland. This type of guitar continued to function in various forms until circa 1850.

It was a relatively small instrument with an average scale length of 42 cm, similar in appearance to the cittern and resembling the mandolin. It existed in many varieties – the most popular one had ten metal strings in six courses with tuning to open C^1 and, less frequently, A or G (which was more common in Poland). The range of the instrument was usually 2,5 octaves. Its neck was fitted with 12 to 19 brass frets, and the flat or convex body could be shaped like a pear, tear, fig, egg, cloud or bell. Holes for attaching the capo were often drilled in the neck of a guitar so that performers could easily change the key of pieces, for instance while accompanying a vocalist. More expensive instruments had numerous decorative elements in the form of veneers and inlays, and they were adorned with lavish materials such as ebony, mother-of-pearl or ivory. They also came with more precise tuning mechanisms and a range of additional accessories as well as labels or engraved trademarks of prominent workshops and luthiers.

Fig. 1. An English guitar from the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Photo: M. Żegleń-Włodarczyk (author's personal archive).

[1] The successive notes of the open strings formed a C major chord: c e gg c^1c^1 e^1e^1 g^1g^1.

1. The English guitar – history and function in society

1.1. London in the second half of the 18th century

London was the birthplace of the English guitar. It is worth noting that by the end of the 18th century – that is just before one of the most important periods in the history of guitar music, the so-called "golden age of the guitar" – it had become the largest city in Europe and a multicultural metropolis. It was home to the royal court, the Church and a major port. Tourists and emigrants from all over the continent flocked there, as well as scientists attracted by higher education facilities such as The Royal Society of London for the Promotion of Natural Knowledge or The Royal Academy of Arts. The industrial revolution was also not without significance as it led to great technological, economic and social changes.

The rapidly expanding city quickly became the centre of high society – primarily the aristocracy and the emerging affluent middle class, which was mainly oriented towards consumerism. Members of the royal family and the nobility attended theatrical performances, concerts and visited beautifully arranged gardens. Many musical societies were also being established. Music accompanied the population both in the public sphere and in private settings. Due to the steady increase in the number of amateur performers, entrepreneurs, trying to keep up with the needs of the market, would sell cheap instruments and sheet music editions. Moreover, the craze for the English guitar presented an opportunity for making easy profits. Producing and trading in these instruments and the music written for them was no longer the domain of luthiers, but also numerous non-specialised manufacturers – craftsmen, inventors, publishers, merchants, teachers, composers or performers. Shops offered guitar and composition lessons, and even the opportunity to publish one's own music. The local press constantly featured advertisements of teachers promising quick improvement:

> MUSIC. The Guittar, Harpsichord, and Singing taught in a most easy and elegant manner, by an eminent master of undoubted character and abilities, who engages to teach any person unacquainted with music to play ten tunes the first month, and in three months to be so far accomplished on the guittar as to be able to play any common piece of music at sight[2].

1.2. Longman & Broderip, Frederick Hintz and other guitar manufacturers

For nearly 30 years, one of the leading companies in London's musical life was Longman & Broderip. It had two "royal" music shops, as they were called, and a publishing house printing sheet music, instrument handbooks, books and music periodicals. In addition, it was involved in selling concert tickets, organising the free time of visiting musicians or manufacturing, restoring and distributing

[2] "Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser", 9 December 1768.

instruments (such as harpsichord, flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, Scottish bagpipes, violin, English guitar, mandolin, harp, cittern or cello) and accessories (e.g. strings or bows).

At the end of the 18th century, at least 52 musical instrument makers were engaged in the manufacture and trade of guitars in the British Isles. They included leading guitar-makers, largely of German origin, such as the "Guittar-maker to her Majesty and the Royal Family"[3] – Frederick Hintz (1711–1772), Remerus Liessem (born before 1730–1760), Michael Rauche (before 1757–1784) or Christian Claus (born before 1783–1799) and John Preston (1727–1798), who were famous for refining guitars and introducing innovative solutions.

1.3. English guitar craze and the evolution of the instrument

The fierce competition on the market and the constant need to satisfy the consumerism-oriented society meant that the design of the guittar was undergoing rapid changes. Many improvements and innovations were introduced, for instance complex tuning mechanisms and even … keys! The latter solution generated widespread enthusiasm among noble ladies, as the keys not only protected nails from being damaged by the metal strings, but also produced a slightly stronger sound, similar in timbre to the more and more popular *pianoforte*.

Fig. 2. An English guitar with a key box from the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Photo: M. Żegleń-Włodarczyk (author's personal archive).

The popularity of the English guitar – advertised as an inexpensive and elegant instrument which offered the possibility to quickly master simple pieces of music – was so great around 1765 that it began to endanger the livelihood of harpsichord-makers. One of them – Jacob Kirckmann (1710–1792) – is said to

[3] J. Kloss, *Frederick Hintz – Guittar-maker to her Majesty and the Royal Family*, [in:] *The "Guittar" In Britain 1753–1800*, http://www.justanothertune.com [access: 25 June 2018].

have remedied that by giving away cheap guitars to simple craftsmen and street singers in order to embarrass rich ladies and encourage them to return to playing the harpsichord[4].

1.4. Musical education as an essential element of social interactions – amateur music-making

The prevailing craze and passion for music made owning instruments and receiving music education necessary to social interactions. The harpsichord or guitar, which often served as fashionable decorative accessories, impressed guests and made it possible to make music with others. For lower and middle-class families, they constituted a good way of improving social status and, more importantly, gave young ladies the opportunity to present their musical talents to wealthy husbands-to-be. Girls had excellent manners and a well-rounded education including playing instruments, singing and dancing, which was mentioned in many etiquette textbooks for young women. *The polite lady* (1779) contains the following excerpt from a mother's letter to her studying daughter:

> As most young ladies are taught to play on the harpsichord and guitar, I expect you will learn to perform on both these instruments […]. But still I would have you to apply your chief attention to vocal music […][5].

or:

> I had the pleasure of hearing of […] great improvement you make in dancing. This is one of the most genteel and polite accomplishments which a young lady can possess[6].

1.5. The English guitar – a professional concert instrument

It should be remembered that, apart from the amateur movement and home music-making, the English guitar was also popular among renowned professional and active performers such as Ann Ford (1737–1824), Giovanni Battista Marella (ca. 1745–ca. 1778) or R. Straube.

1.6. The English guitar in Poland

The English guitar was also immensely popular in Poland. This was predominantly the case in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Its presence made its mark on historical sources, art and literature. For example, the instrument was mentioned in *Zemsta* [*Vengeance*] (written in the early 1830s) by Aleksander Fredro (1793–1876):

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4 R. Spencer, I. Harwood, entry: *English guitar*, [in:] *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, [https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.08823], [access: 13 June 2018].

5 Ch. Allen, *The polite lady, or, A course of female education: in a series of letters, from a mother to her daughter*, 4th edition, J. Exshaw, Dublin 1779, p. 18.

6 Ibidem, p. 12.

> To […] Clara Raptusiewicz, heiress of Zakroczym, I bequeath my English guitar, and my collection of rare butterflies […][7].

At that time, *gitarra* or *gittarra,* as it is called by Polish sources, competed with the harpsichord, clavichord and even the piano[8] for the title of the most important instrument, and it found the recognition of all social groups. Around 1808, the larger Spanish guitar (which was initially only used for accompaniment) appeared in Poland, yet it was mostly played by men due to its size. Women, on the other hand, continued playing the more elegant, smaller and lighter *gittarra*.

In Poland, the guitar in both of its variants was regarded as one of the "reformed" and "most useful" instruments that could "*emphasise* the melody alongside its own accompaniment, or accompany singing"[9].

2. The repertoire and English guitar handbooks

The music of the second half of the 18th century was dominated by transitional styles between Baroque and Classical, including *galant*. Guittar literature was composed in this very aesthetic. Furthermore, social factors necessitated, as it were, the cultivation of mainly secular genres of music, which readily established themselves among the elite, while simultaneously being the staple entertainment of the urban middle-class public.

The enormous popularity and success of the English guitar in the entire British society and the resulting prospect of easy earnings became a "sufficient recommendation"[10] for writing musical pieces not only to amateur composers but also renowned artists. It was valued by, among others, F. Geminiani, who wrote the following on the first page of *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra* (1760):

> the Guitar […] is […] deserving of regard, even from good Judges of Music […], For the disposition and number of its Strings, render it capable of a very full and compleat Harmony […][11].

2.1. English guitar repertoire

The extensive guittar repertoire comprised instrumental and vocal-instrumental pieces **at virtually every skill level**. It was suitable both for those who were new to the instrument and those who already had experience with performing.

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[7] A. Fredro, *Zemsta. Komedya w czterech aktach, wierszem*, Złoczów 1893, p. 87.

[8] H. Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw*, Oxford University Press, New York 2008, p. 30.

[9] K.W. Wójcicki, *Warszawa, jej życie umysłowe i ruch literacki w ciągu lat trzydziestu* (*od 1800–1830 r.*), Gebethner i Wolff, Warszawa 1880, p. 236.

[10] G.B. Marella, *Sixty-six Lessons for the Cetra or Guittar, in every key, both flat and sharp*, G.B. Marella, London 1758.

[11] F. Geminiani, *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra*, Harp & Hautboy, Edinburgh 1760, p. 1.

By 1800, the works of more than 60 composers had been published in London, Dublin, Edinburgh and York; they included J.Ch. Bach, J. Oswald – the court composer of king George III – as well as the excellent lutenist R. Straube, violinist Felice Giardini (1716–1796), the female guitarist A. Ford, G.B. Marella, F. Geminiani or Robert Bremner (ca. 1713–1789).

2.1.1.SOLO WORKS

2.1.1.1. ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS FOR THE GUITTAR

Solo works for the English guitar spanned multiple genres: sonatas (including those still written in the "old" style – with *basso continuo* accompaniment), variations, rondos, serenades, *divertimenti*, various dances, marches and many others. Examples include: *Sonata in two movements* by J.Ch. Bach, *Three Sonatas for the Guittar* (1768) by R. Straube, *Six solos for a Guitar with a thorough Bass for the Harpsicord* by Tommaso Giordani (ca. 1730–1806) and *Twelve Divertimentis* (1758–1760) by J. Oswald. Of the remaining genres, one might mention: *XII Serenatas* (ca. 1760) by António Pereira da Costa (?–ca. 1770) and *A Collection of Songs, Rondeaus, Waltzes, Marches and Dances, for the guitar, pianoforte guitar, or the new invented Spanish guitar* (ca. 1800) by Thomas Bolton (?–?).

Significantly, the pianoforte guittar did not have a separate repertoire. However, the performer had to take into account the possibility of not being able to play some of the more complex compositions on the slower keyboard instruments.

2.1.1.2. ARRANGEMENTS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS

Arrangements of popular pieces of music were of great interest to British high society. Due to the tuning of the guittar, they were typically transposed to the key of C major. The works that stand out in this respect are songs and dances, including those from the works of Baroque or Classical composers such as Georg Friedrich Händel (1685–1759), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) or Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), as well as arias and overtures from operas which were, at that time, performed in theatres. According to Robert Bruce Armstrong, "scarcely a song or a ballad was printed without its being transposed or set for the instrument"[12]. This type of literature includes the following collections: *Collection of the most celebrated Songs set to Music by Several Eminent Authors, adapted for the Guittar* (1774) by David Rutherford (born before 1750–ca. 1820), *The Songs in the Gentle Shepherd, Adapted for the Guitar* (1760) by R. Bremner, *A Book of Airs and Songs, principally adapted for the Guittar* (1756) by Thomas Call (?), *Six Favourite Songs and Six Rondos by Sigr. Pleyel, And a Select Collection of Lessons, Airs, Minuets, Allemandes &c. To which are added Some French*

[12] R.B. Armstrong, *Musical instruments. English and Irish instruments*, vol. 2, T.A. Constable, Edinburgh 1908, p. 5.

& Italian Songs Adapted for the Piano Forte Guittar (ca. 1795) by Felix Chabran (1756–1829), *A Choice Collection of Airs, Minuets, Marches, Songs and Country Dances &c., By several eminent authors, Adapted for the guittar* (ca. 1765) by Frederick Hintz (1711–1772), *Compositions for the Cetra or Guittar, with an Accompanyment, consisting of a Variety of Pieces in every Stile of Music* (1762) by G.B. Marella; and opera arrangements: *All the Tunes in the Beggar's Opera, transposed into easy and proper Keys for the Guittar* (1759) and *Love In A Village* (1763)[13].

2.1.2. CHAMBER MUSIC

2.1.2.1. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

The English guitar was also excellent in **chamber music**. Guitar duets (written for guittars with the same as well as different tuning, e.g. to C or G), trios or pieces for larger, more diverse ensembles – for instance with string, wind or keyboard instruments – were common. They include: *Eighteen Divertimentis or Duetts, properly adapted for the Guittar, or Mandolin* (1757), *Forty Airs for two Violins, German Flutes, or Guittars, Twelve Divertimentis* (1758–1760) by J. Oswald, *Sonata for the Guittar with an accompaniment for the violin* (1775) by J.Ch. Bach, *Six Trios for the Guittar, Violin and Pianoforte* (ca. 1775) by F. Giardini or *Twenty-four Duets for two French Horns, two Guittars, or two German Flutes* (?) by Joseph Real (?–?).

2.1.2.2. VOCAL-INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Composers used the guitar in their vocal-instrumental works, e.g. in secular songs, arias, cantatas as well as in solemn religious compositions such as psalms and hymns: *Twelve Italian Airs for the Voice, accompanied by the Guitar or Harpsichord* (1757) by Santo Lapis (?–?), *Twelve of the most Celebrated English Songs which are now in Vogue Neatly adapted for the Guittar and Voice* (ok. 1770) by D. Rutherford, *A Collection of Moral Songs or Hymns for a Voice, Harpsichord and Guittar* (1762) by the organist and harpsichordist William Yates (?–?) or *A fifth sett of Psalms and hymns, used at the Magdalen chapel: Adapted for the organ, harpsichord, voice, violin, German flute & guittar* (?).

2.2. ENGLISH GUITAR HANDBOOKS

English guitar handbooks appeared along with the emergence and growing popularity of the instrument. And so, 1756 saw the publication of the first manuals written – largely with ladies in mind – by T. Call, a self-proclaimed teacher of the "new instrument", and D. Rutherford (*The Ladies' Pocket Guide or The Compleat Tutor for the Guittar*). Gradually, until the end of the 18th century, more

[13] M. Włodarczyk, *Bach i co dalej? Rzecz o zapomnianej literaturze gitarowej II połowy XVIII wieku i o gitarze angielskiej*, "MusiQs" 2018, no. 6, p. 3.

handbooks were produced by R. Bremner (1758), G.B. Marella (*Sixty-six Lessons for the Cetra or Guittar, in every key, both flat and Sharp*, 1758), F. Geminiani (*The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra*, 1760), J. Oswald (*Compleat Tutor for the Guittar: With two Scales Shewing the Method of Playing in the Keys of C & G*, ca. 1760), A. Ford (ca. 1761), R. Straube (*Lessons for two Guittars, with a thorough Bass*, 1763) and many other composers, performers and even guitar-makers, such as Ch. Clagget (1760). *New and Compleat Instructions for the GUITTAR* by Henry Thompson (?–?), written around 1799, was one of the last handbooks for the instrument.

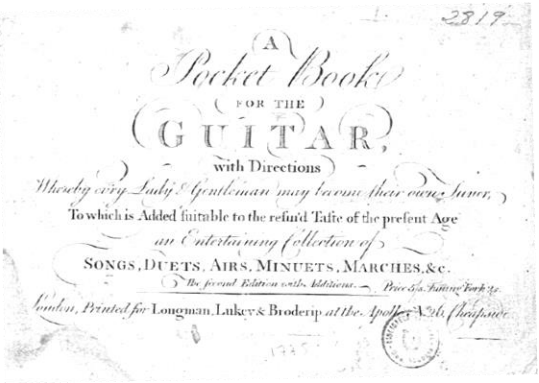

A
Pocket Book
FOR THE
GUITAR,
with Directions
Whereby every Lady & Gentleman may become their own Tuner,
To which is Added suitable to the refin'd Taste of the present Age
an Entertaining Collection of
SONGS, DUETS, AIRS, MINUETS, MARCHES, &c.
The second Edition with Additions. — Price 5/s. Sewing Fourpence
London, Printed for Longman, Lukey & Broderip at the Apollo, No 26, Cheapside.

Fig. 3. A Pocket Book for the Guitar With Directions Whereby ev'ry Lady & Gentleman may become their own Tuner…, Longman, Lukey & Broderip ca. 1775 – title page

Guitar manuals usually contained a description of the instrument and an explanation of how to properly tune it. R. Bremner suggested that it should only be done by those with experience:

> Tuning […] is to be done only by an adjusted Ear, and therefore is not to be attempted by those who are unaquainted with Music[14].

The handbooks also included information concerning basic theoretical knowledge such as the rhythmic values of notes, metre, chromatic signs, musical and guitar markings, instructions on how to hold the instrument as well as right- and left-hand playing techniques. Their authors did not shy away from giving advice – both to professional performers and amateurs – on the choice of an instrument, playing fluency, singing accompaniment, patience or making progress in mastering the playing technique and repertoire:

> […] if the Learner would have a Little Patience, and first endeavour to have a good Notion of the first Principles, together with a tolerable command of the Fingers, his Progress would be sure and speedy. Which, if otherwise, seldom fails of being slow and uncertain, attended with Aukwardness[15].

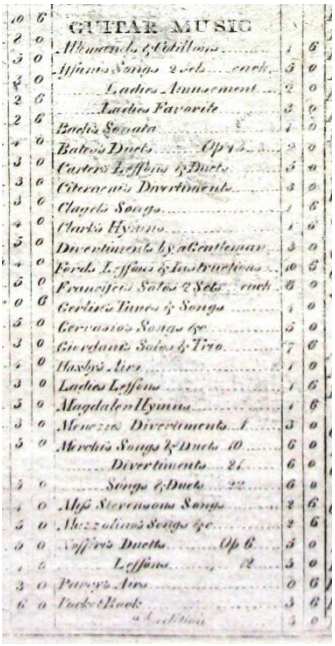
[14] R. Bremner, *Instructions For The Guitar*, R. Bremner, Edinburgh 1758.
[15] Ibidem.

Nearly all handbooks provided opportunities for applying new knowledge in practice by including technical exercises or solo and chamber repertoire, also with *basso continuo* accompaniment. The pieces were mainly recorded using musical notation, except for F. Geminiani's *The Art of Playing…*, in which the composer employed tablature.

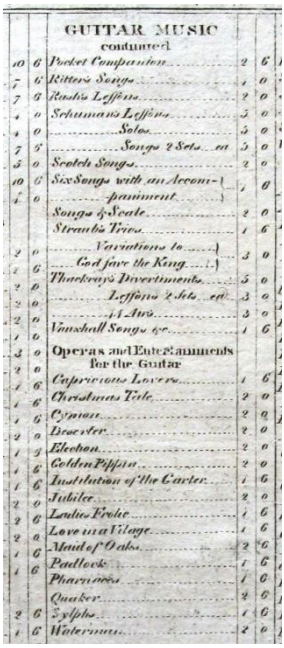
2.3. English guitar repertoire in Great Britain – a summary

After 1799, the English guitar began to be supplanted by the six-string Spanish guitar, which was gradually gaining popularity in the British Isles. As a consequence, fewer artists were interested in composing for an instrument that was slowly becoming obsolete.

The surviving catalogues of publishers, manufacturers and English guitar dealers may provide an insight into the amount and diversity of literature for the instrument. For instance, only the list on the first page of one of the collections published by Longman & Broderip in 1780 contains close to 60 items: guittar handbooks as well as solo and chamber pieces, including vocal-instrumental music representing different genres. Interestingly, individual titles denote, in general, not one but six songs or sonatas, several selections from an opera or many compositions included in a given handbook.


GUITAR MUSIC

10	6	Whewell's Cotillions		1	6
2	0	Affanis Songs 2 Sets ... each		3	0
3	0	Ladies Amusement		2	0
2	6	Ladies Favorite		3	0
2	6	Bach's Sonata		1	0
4	0	Bates's Duets ... Opus		2	0
3	0	Carter's Lessons & Duets		3	0
3	6	Citerna's Divertiments		3	0
3	6	Clagett's Songs		1	6
4	0	Clark's Hymns		1	6
5	0	Divertiments by a Gentleman		3	0
4	0	Ferdi's Lessons & Instructions		10	6
3	0	Francisco's Solos 2 Sets ... each		3	0
0	6	Gerlin's Times & Songs		1	0
3	0	Cervasio's Songs &c		3	0
3	0	Giordani's Solos & Trio		7	6
4	0	Hasbin's Airs		1	0
3	0	Ladies Lessons		1	6
3	0	Magdalen Hymns		1	6
3	0	Menezes Divertiments 1		3	0
3	0	Mercer's Songs & Duets 10		6	0
		Divertiments 24		6	0
3	0	Songs & Duets 22		6	0
4	0	Miss Stevenson's Songs		2	6
3	0	Mozzolini's Songs &c		2	6
3	0	Neffer's Duetts ... Op 6		3	0
4	6	Lessons ... 12		3	0
3	0	Parry's Airs		0	6
6	0	Pocket Book		3	6
		2d Edition		3	0


GUITAR MUSIC
continued

10	6	Pocket Companion		2	6
5	6	Ritter's Songs		1	0
7	6	Rauh's Lessons		2	0
4	0	Schumann's Lessons		3	0
4	0	Solos		3	0
7	6	Songs 2 Sets ea		3	0
3	0	Scotch Songs		2	0
10	6	Six Songs with an Accompaniment		1	0
4	0	Songs & Scale		2	0
		Straubs Trios		1	6
2	0	Variations to God save the King		3	0
2	6	Thackeray's Divertiments		5	0
2	0	Lessons 2 Sets ea		3	0
2	0	11 Airs		3	0
2	0	Vauxhall Songs &c		1	6
1	0				
3	0	**Operas and Entertainments Per the Guitar**			
2	0				
1	6	Capricious Lovers		1	6
1	6	Christmas Tale		2	0
1	6	Cynion		2	0
2	0	Dreerter		2	0
1	3	Election		2	0
1	6	Golden Pippin		2	0
1	6	Institution of the Carter		1	6
2	0	Jubiler		2	0
2	6	Ladies Frolic		1	6
2	0	Love in a Village		1	6
1	6	Maid of Oaks		2	6
1	6	Padlock		1	6
		Pharnaces		1	6
		Quaker		2	0
2	6	Sylphs		1	6
1	6	Waterman		2	0

Fig. 4. A list of guitar pieces published on the first page of one of Longman & Broderip's collections, London 1780[16]

[16] T. Giordani, *Six solos for a Guitar with a thorough Bass for the Harpsicord and one Trio for a Guitar, Violin and Bass*, Longman & Broderip, London 1780, p. 1.

2.4. Guittar works in Poland

In Poland, works for the English guitar were published by, among others, Józef Elsner (1769–1854) in 1803–1805. He printed them in *Dodatki na gitarę angielską* [*Supplements for the English Guitar*], a supplement to the famous monthly "Wybór Pięknych Dzieł Muzycznych i Pieśni Polskich" ["A Selection of Beautiful Works of Music and Polish Songs"].

Elsner's first print of 1803 – *5 arij z opery "Przerwana offiara" z muzyką pana Winter*[a]*, przekładane na gittarę angielską przez P.F.W.* – contains five fragments of the opera *Das unterbrochene Opferfest* [*The Interrupted Sacrificial Feast*] by Peter von Winter (1754–1825) in an arrangement for the English guitar and voice. The subsequent prints, published in 1805 in *Dodatki…*, appeared in issues no. 1, 3, 5 and 11 of the previously mentioned monthly. They include arrangements for solo guittar or guittar with vocals: *Duetto*, *Quartetto* and *March*, *Polonez z Opery Lodoiska*, *Allegretto z Komedio-Opery Siedem razy ieden* as well as *Andantino z Komedio-Opery Stary Trzpiot.*

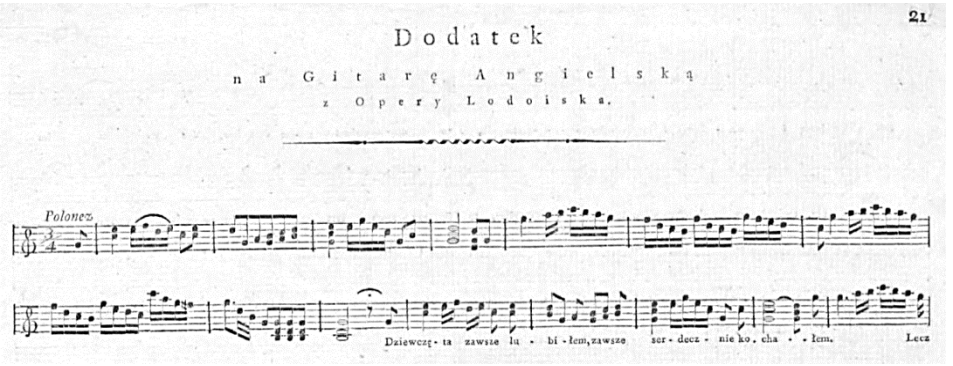


Fig. 5. An excerpt from the vocal-instrumental piece *Polonez z Opery Lodoïska* published by J. Elsner in *Dodatek na gitarę angielską*, a supplement to the third issue of the monthly "Wybory Pięknych Dzieł Muzycznych i Pieśni Polskich", in 1805

The compositions are recorded either in the key of C major or G major, which may suggest that they were intended for instruments with such tuning.

A number of manuscripts, as well as mentions of works that have not been preserved, mainly by anonymous authors, can be found in the catalogues of Polish libraries – the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków or the Library of the Seminary in Sandomierz. According to Wojciech Gurgul's article entitled *The English Guitar in Polish Musical Culture*, they include 83 guittar compositions or arrangements from the eighteen currently existing sources. The most common compositions are small pieces originally written for solo guittar such as *andante* or *presto*, fashionable social dances (quadrille, the country dance, Cossack dance, mazurka, the krakowiak, *allemande*, waltz), marches and classical forms –

variations and rondos. As in Great Britain, arrangements of excerpts from well-known operas enjoyed great popularity, and so did songs with English guitar accompaniment and chamber pieces including, interestingly, duets with the Spanish guitar, which were to a large extent intended for music-making at home.

The guittar was also used in theatrical works, for instance by accompanying songs performed during the plays staged at the National Theatre. A part for the English guitar was included by J. Elsner in his comic opera entitled *Leszek Biały, czyli Czarownica z Łysej Góry* [*Leszek Biały or the Witch from the Łysa Mountain*] (1809), which was composed to a libretto by Ludwik Adam Dmuszewski[17].

Another noteworthy work is a Polish handbook for the English guitar entitled *Początki na gitarze angielskiej* [*The Basics of Playing the English Guitar*]. It contains the fundamentals of music theory and sixteen lessons for a guitar with the open G tuning, which was typical for instruments in Poland.

2.5. Compositions for the English guitar – dominant features, aesthetics, idiomatic techniques

Despite its diversity, music for the English guitar is characterised by certain common, dominant features. First of all, compositions were written or arranged in keys that were suitable for each type of the guittar – usually C major, but also G major or A major – in order to ensure that they were easy to perform. In this way, composers made use of the natural resonance of the instruments, which allowed them to fully emphasize their tonal qualities. However, different keys – A minor or C minor – were also used in more complex pieces, requiring advanced performing technique from the guitarist. While the rhetorical importance of the key in the 18th century should be remembered, there is little doubt that the use of keys which directly corresponded to the tuning of the English guitar was a very common practice among composers of the time.

Textural similarities are another element that is shared by compositions for the instrument. Many of them feature parallel thirds that are easy to perform (often conducted inconsistently by transitioning double-stops into a single voice in more technically demanding fragments) or tone clusters in distinctive configurations of chords.

Compositions were written in a way that ensured performing them would not pose any major difficulties. The English guitar fingering is generally intuitive, "implicit" and uncomplicated. There is only one correct left-hand fingering technique, and it assumes the use of the easiest possible arrangement of fingers, mainly open strings and initial positions, usually I and II.

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[17] W. Gurgul, *Gitara angielska w polskiej kulturze muzycznej*, "Muzyka" 2022/I, pp. 65-95, [https://doi.org/10.36744/m.1147].

This kind of repertoire exhibits various techniques that are specific to the guittar, such as *arpeggio* performed with one finger of the right hand or idiomatic double ornamentation, which have no equivalents in classical guitar music.

Sheet music is annotated with ornaments that are suggested by the composers as well as agogic, dynamic and articulation markings. They are fairly important as they allow contemporary performers to better familiarise themselves with the aesthetics of that period.

Conclusion

Repertoire for the guittar – the English guitar – constitutes a valuable and interesting research material both for musicologists, music theorists and performers.

The English guitar was popular with numerous composers for nearly 100 years. Their vast and varied creative output filled up the musical void in the lives of people of all social classes in many different areas – from music-making at home to theatrical and opera performances, ceremonies and concerts of professional guitarists.

The repertoire in question is of great value and importance, as it gives contemporary guitarists an opportunity to come into contact with **original guitar pieces written in the second half of the 18th century**[18]. This, in turn, allows them to deepen their knowledge of its natural articulation and the playing technique contained in its fingering, both of which can to a large extent be reproduced on the classical guitar. Nonetheless, it should not be expected that pieces written for a historical instrument will sound the same when played on a modern one. Due to the differences in design, tone, tuning and playing technique, and thus in the performing capabilities of the instruments, compositions need to be transcribed for the classical guitar (mostly in terms of texture, fingering and ornamentation). A skilful transcription – one that takes into account the features shared by both types of the instrument and preserving, where possible, the idiom of the English guitar and the aesthetics of the period while making use of the rich performing capabilities and unique characteristics of the classical guitar – will make it possible to fully capture the nature, expressiveness and intention of the compositions and, above all, make this music relevant today.

[18] The present study is concerned with the forgotten guitar music of the second half of the 18th century. It should be remembered, however, that compositions for the English guitar were also written at the beginning of the 19th century, yet this period, which is known as "the golden age of the guitar", was already abundant in literature composed for the most popular guitar type of the time – the Spanish guitar.

The six solo sonatas[19] by Tommaso Giordani from the collection *Six Solos for a Guitar with a thorough Bass for the Harpsicord and one Trio for a Guitar, Violin and Bass*, published in London in 1780 by Longman & Broderip, were transcribed in such way by the author of the present article in collaboration with harpsichordist dr Paulina Tkaczyk-Cichoń[20]. The process of transcribing the pieces was discussed in detail in a doctoral dissertation entitled "*Six Solos for a Guitar with a thorough Bass for the Harpsicord" by Tommaso Giordani in the perspective of historically informed and contemporary performance* (2020)[21], and it was recorded (in full – for the first time in the history of phonography) on a CD attached to the dissertation. The sonatas have been performed by the author at festivals, concerts as well as many national and international conferences. Video recordings of those performances are also available on the Internet.

English guitar literature is worth reaching for due to the fact that bringing it back to life – by generating interest in the works in question, circulating, studying and, finally, including them in the current concert repertoire as well as academic and school curricula – will not only help to explore the design and performing capabilities of the now unknown guittar (and its unique playing technique, fingering and articulation) and learn more about the works written for the instrument (and their characteristics) but, most importantly, **give a full picture of the evolving aesthetics of the entire 18th century**. These compositions **fill** the existing **gap in the guitar repertoire of the second half** of the 18th century, offering broad prospects for their performance in the future, as a consequence of which it will be possible to **preserve the continuity of guitar literature from the Renaissance to the present day**.

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[19] Sonatas are understood here as their Baroque *da camera* form, i.e. written for a solo instrument – in this case the English guitar – and *basso continuo*.

[20] Since the sonatas were written for the guitar with *basso continuo* accompaniment performed on the harpsichord, dr Paulina Tkaczyk-Cichoń, a harpsichordist, participated in recording and arranging the relevant parts.

[21] M. Żegleń-Włodarczyk, *"Sześć sonat solowych na gitarę angielską" Tommaso Giordaniego w perspektywie wykonawstwa historycznego i współczesnego*, computer printout of a doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of Professor R. Orzechowska, The Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music, Kraków 2020.

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Gitara angielska i zapomniany repertuar gitarowy II połowy XVIII wieku

Streszczenie

Przeddzień jednego z najważniejszych okresów w historii gitarystyki – „złotego wieku gitary" przypadającego na I połowę XIX wieku – to czas największego rozkwitu miast europejskich, jak Londyn, Paryż, Wiedeń czy Drezno. Wtedy to muzyka była główną rozrywką na dworach i salonach, powstawały liczne wydawnictwa, publikacje nutowe i szkoły gry, a manufaktury prześcigały się w innowacjach konstrukcyjnych, udoskonalały i patentowały coraz to ciekawsze instrumenty. Jednym z nich była niezwykle popularna w całej Europie gitara angielska (*guittar*), odbiegająca budową i strojem od instrumentu dzisiejszego.

Obecnie próżno szukać na estradach koncertowych i w programach akademickich literatury gitarowej II połowy XVIII wieku (poza nielicznymi wyjątkami, jak kwintety Luigiego Boccheriniego czy partity Giuseppe Antonia Brescianella), a muzyka angielska nie pojawia się prawie wcale. Jest ona w dużym stopniu nieodkryta i właściwie zapomniana. Przywrócenie jej do życia nie tylko pomoże zgłębić budowę i możliwości wykonawcze nieznanej dziś *guittar* (i charakterystycznej dla niej techniki gry, aplikatury i artykulacji) oraz poznać twórczość (i jej cechy), ale przede wszystkim uzupełni niekompletny obraz zmieniającej się estetyki całego XVIII stulecia. Kompozycje te doskonale wypełnią także istniejącą lukę repertuarową w twórczości gitarowej II połowy XVIII wieku, otwierając szeroką perspektywę ich wykonywania, czego najważniejszą konsekwencją jest zachowanie ciągłości literatury gitarowej od czasów renesansu aż do dziś, a co za tym idzie – możliwość dotknięcia świata opisanego w traktatach Leopolda Mozarta czy Carla Philippa Emanuela Bacha.

Słowa kluczowe: gitara angielska, *guittar*, repertuar gitarowy II połowy XVIII wieku, budowa gitary angielskiej, lutnicy gitarowi.