The Twentieth-Century Renaissance of the Recorder in Germany

Hermann Moeck

This article, which appeared in two parts in Tibia *(I and II/78), was translated by Friedrich and Ingeborg von Huene and edited by Jean Seiler and Prof. William Hettrick. The original article's opening section on the history of the recorder has been condensed.*

As an orchestral and chamber-music instrument, the recorder did not survive the Baroque period. The basic type of instrument developed by the Hotteterres and their circle and refined by such makers as Denner, Rippert, Rottenburgh, Bressan, the two Stanesbys, and Oberlender was almost forgotten. The skills needed to build it were virtually lost as well, as was a working knowledge of the measurements of the irregular conical bore.[1]

Nevertheless, several forms of the recorder continued in use, especially for *Hausmusik*. Among them were the French flageolet, with four fingerholes and two thumbholes; the English flageolet, provided with keys and often made in double and triple models; and the czakan, derived from the walking-stick flutes of Hungarian shepherds. These were interesting residents of the nineteenth-century musical community, even though they never attained proper "citizenship" in the art music of the time.[2]

Although the classical recorder did not disappear completely in the nineteenth century, it is mentioned most often as a curiosity, and was not used in serious music except for specific antiquarian purposes. In 1801, for example, fifteen-year-old Carl Maria von Weber called for two alto *flauti dolci* in the Trio no. 14 of his opera *Peter Schmoll and his Neighbors,* explaining, "An article in a music journal inspired me to write in a completely different way and to bring old forgotten instruments back into use."[3] In 1853 Hector Berlioz specified *flûtes douces* for *The Flight into Egypt,* although he did not seriously consider such instruments for a performance: he was trying to pass the overture off as the work of the imaginary seventeenth-century composer Pierre Ducré.

Lithograph by Frédéric Bouchet from the series Les Bonnes Têtes Musicales, *Paris, 1847. The instruments are French flageolets.*

But the enthusiastic revival of old music, which was started by Thibaut, Mendelssohn, and Fétis in the 1820s—and which we are still experiencing—eventually led to the use of old instruments themselves. These instruments, after all, are not something underdeveloped for which we have to pity our forefathers; they partake of the special flavor of their time. Technical developments play an ambiguous role in the arts. As Fétis, a contemporary of Boehm, noted, "L'art ne progresse pas, il se transforme."

When do we hear of the recorder being taken up seriously again? The essential impetus for its renaissance came from England, where Arnold Dolmetsch, the builder and restorer of keyboards and a collector of old instruments, started making recorders in the early 1920s. (He had acquired a Bressan alto in 1903; its temporary loss in 1918 provided the impetus for his production.)

As to Germany, the recorder revival began, to my knowledge, with the Bogenhausener Künstlerkapelle (Bogenhausen Artists' Ensemble), founded in 1890, whose last leader, Josef Wagener (a member of the Munich State Opera Orchestra until 1938), wrote to me in 1949 after my inquiry:

It was an amateur matter; the gentlemen

were great music lovers, but each had another occupation. For instance, Professors Düll and Petzold (first and second recorder) were sculptors (creators of the Munich Angel of Peace, fountains, etc.); Sedlmair (alto recorder) was an architect; Dr. Aichinger played bass recorder; postal superintendent Horbelt played tromba marina; Dr. Rentsch, a physician, played a small guitar; and finally, yours truly, the only musician in the group, on the timpani. It was a circle of friends *à la bohème*. Sad to say, Professor Petzold died during the war at the age of seventy-eight, and also Mr. Horbelt. Because of the war there was no question of successors, and everything fell apart....The ensemble must have existed for fifty to sixty years, because during this time Professors Düll and Petzold also played recorder at the Art Academy. Later my colleague Hermann Scherrer joined up as leader and arranged appropriate pieces of music — such as old dances, marches, minuets, and so forth—for the aforementioned group. After Scherrer's retirement the leadership was abandoned until I was asked by Dr. Rentsch to assist the "Bogenhauseners," which I did until the group disbanded.

These were unforgettable, beautiful hours in the *atelier* of Prof. Düll, admittedly often somewhat long, but also merry. Scherrer and I selected pieces by old masters such as Handel, Scarlatti, Telemann, Gluck, Mozart, etc. There was not a party in Munich at which the "Secret 7" (as we were called by the writer Hermann Roth, who functioned as our comic announcer) did not appear. The group was even enlisted for the Bach Festival [Munich, 1925] and had to perform in costumes of 1600. On one occasion even Cathedral choirmaster Besterich joined us with his choir and orchestra, all in costume. Evening festivities honoring visiting dignitaries in the old town hall (unfortunately now gone), the Deutsches Museum, the court theater, etc., were almost impossible without the "Bogenhauseners." Often we also had to play our old stuff on the radio. I should like to note further that our recorders were actually old and original instruments [by Denner, among others]. Düll's recorder was even made of ivory and sounded marvelous....Once during a festival we played for my colleagues at the Munich State Opera Orchestra. They were astonished at the beautiful, full tone of the recorders; for me, that was the most telling critique.

Karl Nef must have had these "Bogenhauseners" in mind when, in 1926, he wrote the following about recorders: "The sound effect is so charming that there is nothing at all in modern wind music that could compare in delicacy and refinement."[4] Moreover, Gustav Scheck became interested in playing original recorders about 1924 (along with Gurlitt; see below); and then, in the thirties, he established the high standard possible for these instruments. He can perhaps be considered the father of artistic recorder playing [in the twentieth century]. With his numerous students (Conrad, Fehr, Frau Höffer, Linde, Niggemann, Frau von Sparr, Delius, and others)[5] he paved the way for the gratifying development of the instrument in the 1960s.

The thing seemed to be in the air, for Wilibald Gurlitt (1889–1963) also started to work with recorders in the Musicological Seminar in Freiburg in 1921, although he knew neither the "Bogenhauseners" nor Dolmetsch. It is to his credit that he carried on the ideas of Hugo Riemann, who had introduced original instruments in the Leipzig Collegium Musicum. Let us hear what he had to say about recorders (in a letter to me dated April 2, 1949):

With reference to your inquiry, I want to tell you that interest in the recorder started here in Freiburg im Breisgau with my two-hour lecture about "Instruments and Instru-

Arnold Dolmetsch in 1933.

mental Music in the Baroque Period," which I gave for the first time during the winter semester of 1920/21, Tuesday and Friday from 3 to 4 p.m. at the local university. Included were seminars on Michael Praetorius' *Syntagma musicum,* held on Wednesdays from 4:30 to 6 p.m. This was the time when I was occupied with the idea of reconstructing a "Praetorius organ," which was inaugurated in the same institution on December 12, 1921. For the reconstruction of recorders, and at the same time as a model for the equivalent organ register, I borrowed and studied the quite unique and complete set of recorders in a case (ten pieces) [actually only eight Kynsekers, from the seventeenth century] from the Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg. The organ-builder firm of Walcker & Co. in Ludwigsburg (Württemberg) made five instruments, copied exactly from the originals, according to my suggestions. With this set of recorders we played five-part sonatas and suites of the seventeenth century in my collegium musicum. This may well have been the starting point for the newly awakened interest in the recorder at that time. My former students, who had participated in such great numbers in my lectures and seminars and in my collegium musicum, continued this work fruitfully. In those days we had not yet heard about Arnold Dolmetsch.... As for me, I have always placed great importance on the fact that our music making on recorders served musicology and the understanding of the principles of sound of the seventeenth century. Only in the framework of such a search for knowledge was the recorder introduced into my collegium.[6]

The intentions of Werner Danckert (1900–1970) were similarly "musicological." Let us hear his own words (in a letter to me of June 24, 1949):

The first set of recorders I had built, as far as I remember, by the instrument maker C. Graessel [Georg Grässel, woodwind maker] in Nuremberg. The originals were in the Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg. They were of an early Baroque type [they were the same Kynseker instruments, in C, g, d', g', and d'' at old chamber pitch, that Gurlitt also had copied]. Somewhat later — it must have been 1924 — I had the copies built by Graessel copied again by Hüller-Erfurt [he means Kruspe, branch of the firm of Hüller in Schöneck, Vogtland]. In addition, Hüller built another kind of recorder in $a^{b'}$ and $b^{b'}$, based on the second-highest instrument in $g^{b'}$ [Danckert seems to have regarded the pitch as absolute and not as old pitch] — thus, respectively, a whole tone and a major third higher. These two variants were especially suited to our performances of medieval and early Renaissance music. They were played in at least three performances: "Gothic Music" in Jena, on April 11, 1926 (the Jena Music Education Week); in Erfurt on April 13, 1926 (for the Society for Arts and Crafts); and finally in a performance entitled "Chamber Music of the Middle Ages" on January 5, 1927, in Dessau. These three performances were underwritten by the Erlangen Society for the Preservation of Medieval Music, directed by Prof. Oskar Dischner. In Jena and Erfurt, Max Hüller himself played the recorder. I myself gave the introductory lectures at all three performances.

The very first performance of medieval music presented by Prof. Dischner's ensemble, together with Prof. Becking of Erlangen, was given on October 1, 1925 in Erlangen on the occasion of the fifty-fifth Meeting of German Philologists and School Teachers. The introductory lecture on "The Music of the Middle Ages and Its Influence on Intellectual Life" was given by Prof. Rudolf von Ficker of Innsbruck. In this performance I myself participated as a recorder player; I played the recorder in $g^{b'}$ built by Graessel. The second recorder was played by the musicologist Karl Dèzes from Bremen, to whom I had introduced the playing technique a few months before. We played, among other things, ballades by Guillaume de Machaut and chansons

by Dufay.

In the next years, 1925 and 1926, Hüller built a few other copies of late Baroque recorders, for example a three-part Denner alto recorder from the Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg, and, if I remember correctly, also an alto recorder from the Bach Museum in Eisenach.... Immediately after my habilitation during the 1926 summer semester, I founded a recorder quartet at the University of Jena. The players were all students of musicology.

Concerning the difficulties of copying museum instruments, Luise Rummel reports from a conversation with Max Hüller's son.[7] The German copies were not to be compared in quality with the instruments of Dolmetsch.

We come now to Peter Harlan (1898–1966), who started what is called the German recorder movement. His quest, in the spirit of the German youth movement, was for an uncomplicated folk instrument suitable for advancing the cause of society and for promoting intimacy.[8] In his naive—or would-be naive—philosophy for the reform of life, he considered historical accuracy and professional musical training suspect. For his purposes, he leaned from the very outset more toward the Renaissance type of recorder, but also freely expressed the need to realize his fantasies as an instrument maker, a need that is evident in much that he also said and wrote. Harlan wanted an instrument "whose sound could not be enhanced, no matter how great the art; whose essence could not be altered by any virtuosity." Not until thirty years later did Theodor W. Adorno find an adequate antithesis to this: "One needs only to hear the sound of the recorder—at once insipid and childish—and then the sound of the real flute: the recorder is the most frightful death of the revived, continuously dying Pan. It seems that one wants... to change whatever color there is into the meager practice of town pipers from the time of the guilds."[9] Unintentionally, through this sharp criticism, Adorno only contributed to the gratifying development of recorder playing in the sixties.

In that period before 1930, Harlan was only expressing and putting into motion what for many people was "in." By 1931 he was already lamenting the fact that he had no power over the spirits he had summoned,[10] which evidently pulled others (who surely knew better from the professional standpoint) with them into the euphoria that was later called "Musische Bildung" [musical development], and which in a certain way fostered an inexcusable dilettantism. Naturally, it is easy for us today to condemn[11] or ridicule these life-reforming, pedagogical ideas. One should try to understand them in their historical context, and they do express a legitimate social concern in view of the rigidity of our industrial age, a concern that can rarely be realized through an organized formula. In addition, such tendencies were not only German, as many claim.[12] Finally, one should also consider Dolmetsch in England in the context of a cult, on a somewhat higher level.

By comparison, with the same amount of naivete as in Germany, Ravizé tried to introduce into the Paris schools the pipeau (a six-holed metal recorder marked "IMT": instrument de musique pour tous), with a screwed-on, adjustable rubber mouthpiece, whose lowest tone was *c″*; and similarly van de Velde in Tours.[13] And really, how different was the so-

Peter Harlan, 1933.

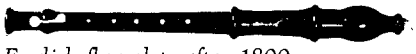
called Bamboo Pipers Guild? Hilda King, director of a school in London, began making instruments along with her students in 1926. In 1932 the president of the Guild was none other than the composer Vaughan Williams. Luise Dyer brought this idea to France and was able to move such composers as Ibert, Milhaud, Roussel, and Poulenc to work with her. Her program was published in English, French, Italian, German, and Japanese. The "pipe movement" also had followers in Holland, Switzerland, Australia, and Germany (Schumann), and a few remain even today.[14]

In Germany, in addition to the more or less historical recorder, people had been trying since 1928 to introduce the czakan,[15] a soprano recorder with six fingerholes, into the schools. The protagonists of this movement were, among others, the Magdeburg public school teacher Otto Schneider and the Nuremberg music teacher Eduard Günther. The former called it the "Schneider school recorder" and the latter the "youth, shepherd, and school recorder." However, W. Berndt called it the "czakan," according to the practice in Markneukirchen, and added: "The guidelines [meaning the Prussian laws for musical instruction initiated by Leo Kestenberg] require that musical instruction awaken the desire and love for music.... The possibilities attainable in instrumental instruction should be used according to the situation.... Unfortunately, today's economic situation prevents many a father from purchasing a piano, and so it is the violin and the school recorder that are affordable for everyone."[16]

After this description of the general background we return to Peter Harlan.[17] In his school days he was a member of the "Wandervogel" in Berlin-Steglitz, and after World War I he returned to Markneukirchen to study violin making and became independent there in 1921, primarily as a mail-order merchant. He never made recorders himself, but had them made to order, at first by the woodwind maker Kurt Jacob, who is said to have copied a recorder for him as early as 1923.[18] However, conversations with Rudolf Eras and Hans Jordan[19] (who were connected through work with Harlan) in 1949 have led me to believe that this is incorrect. Harlan had probably already become acquainted with recorders in Gurlitt's seminar in 1921, but the most motivating experience appears to have been his visit to Dolmetsch's first Haslemere Festival in 1925. He went there on a grant from the Prussian government along with the musicologist Max Seiffert. Dolmetsch's copies of outstanding workmanship, played in Bach's Brandenburg Concerto no. 4, made a great impression on him. Contrary to some statements,[20] he did not buy any instruments there in order to have them copied at home, but instead borrowed an instrument from the Berlin collection for this purpose. He himself said that it was a Denner; by comparing instruments, Luise Rummel gained the impression that only the Berlin collection's Rottenburgh alto in $e^{b\prime}$ (at today's pitch) could have been involved.[21] At any rate, the first "successful" experiment, an alto recorder in *e′*, is still in the possession of the Harlan family today, along with another less successful one. The development in cooperation with Jacob took one year. The instrument museum in Markneukirchen owns a technical drawing that probably belongs to this instrument. Could it be related to the Rottenburgh recorder, whose probable

copy was raised to *e'*? We shall return to this point later.

It is difficult to find one's way through the contradictory statements of the time. In any case, the first available Harlan recorder was offered for sale at Pentecost, 1926 (there were already about a hundred orders from Jöde's circle). It was a recorder in *e'*, furnished with a copy of Ganassi's fingering chart of 1535.[22] It is probably not correct that Harlan already had a quartet of recorders in 1926, anticipating Dolmetsch. Eras and Jordan said that the quartet came a year later, and that the keys were E and A. According to Harlan's own statements, these instruments had large bores but lacked exact historical models. He wrote, "The need to experiment wildly in instrument making became an obsession that was contagious for all the musicians who asked me to make instruments for them. Fritz Jöde, Waldemar Woehl, [Alfred] Zastrau, [Walter] Kurka, [Georg] Goetsch, [Walter] Pudelko, and many others, were there at



English flageolet, after 1800.

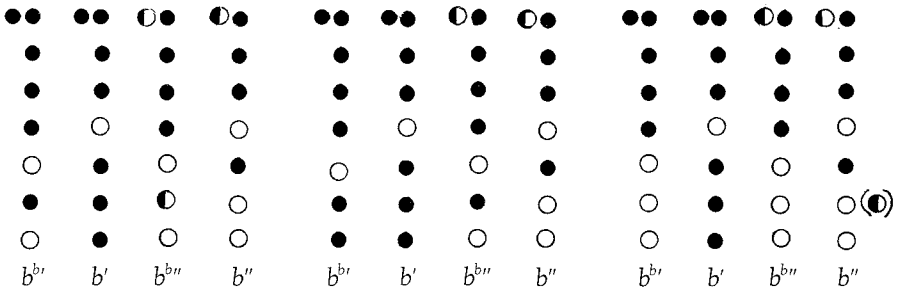
School czakan of 1930 (here with D-sharp key).

Typical German recorder of 1930.

the very beginning and helped through their suggestions for perfecting the various models."

Along with these "fellow fighters of the first hour," as Harlan called them, were additional names: Walter Blankenburg, Emil Brauer, Ferdinand Enke, Wilhelm Friedrich, F. J. Giesbert, Karl Gofferje, Robert Götz, Theodor Krüger, Edgar Rabsch, Manfred Ruëtz, Joachim Stave, Wilhelm Twittenhoff, Franz Grünkorn, and others.

The demand for recorders was a boon to the Vogtland music-instrument industry, coming at a time when business was slow; and so Jacob and Kehr, with whom Harlan had started, were soon no longer alone. Hüller in Schöneck and his branch, Kruspe in Erfurt, had already been active for some time. The last-mentioned firm later manufactured Bärenreiter recorders under the direction of Manfred Ruëtz and others. König in Wohlhausen also joined in; among others, he worked for Herwig (thus Herwiga-Rex). Johannes and Oskar Adler



Fingerings for B flat and B natural.

in Markneukirchen both sold under their own name, as did Mollenhauer in Fulda, Mollenhauer in Kassel, and Kurt Nowinski in Frankfurt. Other producers were Oskar Schlosser in Zwota and Rudolf Otto in Markneukirchen, both of whom were among those who worked for Moeck. Some other smaller workshops could most likely also be mentioned.

Firms that sold instruments under their own name but were not producers, in addition to those listed above, were those of Wilhelm Herwig, Alexander Heinrich, Walter Merzdorf, Gustav Hernsdorf in Markneukirchen, Adolf Nagel (Alfred Grensser) in Hannover, and Hermann Moeck, Sr., in Celle. The latter ordered some of the instruments not yet voiced or tuned and did the work himself; this was the basis for him to begin making his own recorders in 1949. In addition, recorders could be found in almost all the catalogues of music dealers of the Vogtland.

Of the music publishers who first concerned themselves with recorder literature, both method books and music, we must especially mention Bärenreiter (music for recorder; the periodical *Collegium musicum;* the Kassel "Musiktage"; school publications by Waldemar Woehl and Manfred Ruëtz), Kallmeyer (the magazine *Musikantengilde,* a source of information for recorder playing), Moeck (the magazine *Der Blockflötenspiegel* 1931–1937, founded to clarify questions of tuning and fingering—which will be discussed later—and from time to time issued jointly with Nagel in Hannover; *Zeitschrift für Spielmusik;* Moeck's Kammermusik; Moeck's Gelbe Hefte), Nagel (Blätter der Sackpfeife; Nagel's Musikarchiv; etc.), Schott, and Tonger.

Two things, which would later cause many problems, must be ascribed to the carefree or (if you wish) self-willed procedures of Peter Harlan. These acted together with a development that was too fast and was a result of large demand. One was the unintentional "discovery" and dissemination of so-called German fingering; the other was the fact that Harlan knew nothing about old chamber pitch and thereby caused a confusion over pitch that lasted several years.

First, the matter of fingering: this concerns above all the half-tone from the third to the fourth step (A to B flat on the F recorder), as well as the raised fourth step (B natural). Through logic and compromise, when one plays the half-tone from A up to B flat and the half-tone from C down to B natural, both tones, B flat as well as B natural, must be cross-fingered. This has been documented since Virdung *(Musica getutscht,* Basel, 1511) for B flat, but not uniformly for B natural until much later (to some extent, the modern German fingering for B flat was used for B natural). If we compare the fingerings for the corresponding notes (F and F sharp) on historical transverse flutes and oboes, we notice that these, fingered in the same way, often sound "sick," and it is the same with Renaissance recorders. Yet the creators of the Baroque type of recorder (Hotteterre and his followers, as mentioned above)—through a cleverly worked-out system of an irregular and strongly conical interior bore, partially undercut fingerholes drilled at an angle, and a very special voicing—succeeded in producing an instrument capable of playing all chromatics exactly through more than two octaves without keys.[23] The physics of the recorder helped make this possible. A sharply tapering conical bore allows for enough volume for playing the lowest tones while permitting cross-fingerings to have a sufficiently lowering effect. To be sure, if one compares Baroque recorders in museums in this regard, one finds that many fall short of this ideal either in the typical Baroque fingerings or in good intonation, especially in the overblown notes.

Every recorder maker working today knows that the above-mentioned Baroque "ideal" system, with this irregular conical bore, the slanted and undercut toneholes,

the peculiarities of the windway, etc., is like a puzzle in which all parts have to fit together exactly. Any modification of single parts is, then, very limited. To put it more clearly: the voicing, fingering, and sound of a Baroque recorder can be combined in one way and no other. This may also explain why, when such requirements are transferred to a material such as wood (which produces its own characteristics of sound, similar to ivory), where it is necessary to adhere to tolerances of a hundredth of a millimeter at critical points, it is so difficult to build good recorders, especially in quantity. If the Baroque fingerings and all the other tones are compatible, then the ideal situation has been achieved. If these fingerings are correct only at the expense of the other tones, then one must make compromises for the sake of the sound.

Incidentally, these problems were certainly evident to Arnold Dolmetsch from the very beginning, and he attempted to diminish them somewhat by changing the Hotteterre fingerings[24] slightly, as shown below. This is English fingering[25]— which differs from the authentic Baroque — a modification that could still be considered historical if one takes into account the body of instruments surviving in museums. I assume that Dolmetsch did it in order to make the lower tones fuller, so that he could then make the conical bore somewhat shallower.

German fingering does indeed simplify more; but at the same time, one must make allowances for intonation problems or technical difficulties with the note B natural, especially in the upper register. I don't know who coined the term "German fingering." I have not been able to find it mentioned in print before 1934, but in 1932 the difference was noted for the first time in Germany, with reference to the correct, historical fingering.[26] Harlan also distributed recorders with historical fingerings from 1933 on, followed by Herwig (Herwiga-Rex), who offered simpler recorders with this fingering beginning in 1938. Until then, one was dependent for old fingerings on the more expensive Dolmetsch recorders, which were available from 1932 through Günter Hellwig in Lübeck, who had studied with Dolmetsch and was his German representative.

Up to that time, at least beginning with Harlan, recorders made by German manufacturers all had the fingering for the fourth note that would later be called German fingering. How did Harlan arrive at this fingering? He told me himself in 1949 that when he was copying the instrument borrowed from Berlin in 1926, he did not know the correct fingerings and took the initiative of boring the pertinent tone holes differently,[27] which is entirely in keeping with his way of not giving much weight to such details. It is certain, however, that Harlan included with his recorders of 1926 a "copy of the fingering chart from the recorder method of Silvestro di Ganassi dal Fontego of 1535," in which the fingering for the fourth degree is definitely forked, but the one for the raised fourth degree is not given. Harlan wrote about this: "The individual search for halftone fingerings is the surest method of acquainting oneself with the nature of recorders." Probably closest to the truth is what Harlan wrote in 1951 in answer to some attacks: "Strictly historically, [the omission of the forked fingering for the fourth degree] happened at first through the mistake of a beginning recorder tuner, a mistake with which we can easily sympathize. The forked fingering was not desired, even though from the start I continually pointed out its correctness. It began with school recorders with simple fingering."[28]

Recorder playing session, c. 1930.

It now seems that German fingering was the inevitable result of Harlan's compulsion to invent instruments. He wanted wide-bore instruments without considering historical examples very much, and the simple music in question had a range of 1 1/2 octaves. Under these circumstances, historical fingering had a value of nil.

Moreover, the fingering thus discovered by accident or—if you will—through necessity, permitted greater freedom in the choice of conical-bore dimensions. They did not have to be so complicated, and the recorders were therefore easier to produce. Recorders with German fingering usually have a softer tone, especially in the lower register.

Today one tries to reestablish a balance by offering to players copies closest to originals: on the one hand, Baroque copies, and, on the other, Renaissance copies. The popularity of German fingering will assure its fairly long life primarily in continental Europe, but in English-speaking countries it never had much importance. In any case, on a higher level the question has been decided everywhere in favor of Baroque fingering, especially since the 1960s: the soloistic quality of the Baroque recorder cannot be disputed.

It has often been said that the complications of the different fingering systems damaged the development of recorder playing. Certainly German fingering gave assistance to dilettantism. On the other hand, whether one likes it or not, it produced a new type of recorder sound. One also has to differentiate between wide-bore recorders of the period before and around 1930, and later ones with narrower bores. When pressed for a statement that he did not want to make, Harlan said he later felt embarrassed at being called the instigator of German fingering.

Another complication was the matter of pitch. In 1930 Karl Gofferje jokingly wrote that it would be appropriate for a recorder player to go to an ensemble session "equipped like a golfer, with a bag full of the various 'necessary' recorders."[29] An invitation to a recorder meeting at the Hassitz Youth Center in Silesia (from March 28 to April 3, 1932)[30] sounds somewhat sadder: "Full of resignation, [recorder owners] say that they have not even touched their recorders since Christmas. And along with them a dozen other players have abandoned the beautiful instrument. They can no longer find their way in the chaos of many contrary directions, and prefer to give up." What had happened?

Dolmetsch had declared his first alto recorder copy (at low pitch, today's e') a historical F recorder, and he had the F–C quartet practically from the beginning. In 1932 he brought the quartet up to modern pitch. Not so Harlan. The first recorder he offered was called an E recorder. If it is correct that his original model was the alto recorder by Rottenburgh in Berlin, in today's $e^{b'}$, then why did Harlan make the reproduction a half-tone higher? He gave as an explanation, among other things, the closeness to guitar tuning, but later he could not remember for certain what the reason was.[31] Or did he perhaps copy his first recorder from an entirely different original in Berlin, one whose pitch was today's e (like those by Oberlender, Rippert, Heytz, and others)? The Rottenburgh recorder in today's $e^{b'}$ mentioned by Luise Rummel[32] (no. 2799) is described in the catalogue as "unplayable."[33] We will not be able to get to the bottom of it; perhaps it is not so important anyway. In any

case, along with the first Harlan recorders from 1926 in *e'* came in a prospectus for a quartet in E and A, which would be available beginning in 1927. That Harlan arrived at A lay in the relationship of the pitches (later there were even recorders in B).[34] In the same prospectus he also offered a "recorder in D with six keys, fingerings as on the Meyer-system flute, historical form," a type that would be widely available well into the 1930s.[35] Around 1930 we find a Harlan prospectus containing soprano recorders in *a'* and *b'*, altos in *d'*, *e'*, and *f'*, tenors in *a*, and basses in *d* and *e;* and in addition, six-keyed recorders in *d'* and *a'*, with improved models mentioned as being in preparation.[36] In 1931 he wrote: "Sets of recorders can be put together in many different ways. I am building bass recorders now in *d*, *e*, and *f*, tenor recorders in *a* and *c'*, alto recorders in *d'*, *e'*, and *f'*, and soprano recorders in *a'*, *c''*, and *d''*. Will everybody now select the right one for himself...? I consider my recorders the most suitable ones for our times."[37]

In 1933 he wrote in a new catalogue:[38]

I make recorders in various pitches:

1. A low choir—soprano in *a'*, alto *e'* (or *d'*), tenor *a*, bass *d* (or *e*); *d, a, e', a'* is the ensemble that Waldemar Woehl uses as the basis for his method book and his published recorder literature.

Gofferje uses the same ensemble, but with the alto in *d'* instead of *e'*. Finally, many play the bass in *e* when the alto in *e'* is used, for recorders in octave relationship are always easy to play together. In a correct ensemble one voice must lie between the octave-related instruments; since an octave has no tone midway, we must choose the fourth or fifth. The literature contains no serious difficulties for either possibility.

2. Many prefer, instead of the low pitch described above, a higher choir in *f, c', f',c''*, since most of the old literature is notated in C. The set is less expensive because the instruments are smaller. The *d (e), a, e', d', a'* set sounds more sonorous, just as a viola sounds more sonorous than a violin; the *f, c', f', c''* set sounds brighter. One's preference is a matter of personal taste.

3. Finally I make yet another set of recorders, in the old lower chamber pitch. I call these Baroque recorders and turn them in Baroque chair-leg style in contrast to regular Harlan style, which is used everywhere by most imitators of my recorders and is thus the most common today. These recorders are notated in *f, c', f', c''* but are a half-tone lower than today's pitch; thus their actual pitches are *e, b, e', b'*. Many people think that I have thereby introduced a new confusion into the pitch question, but these recorders are necessary for ensembles that wish to play most advantageously with gambas, violins, and lutes. The old gambas simply cannot sustain modern high pitch, and new gambas of comparable quality can do so only if they are built correspondingly smaller. In making bowed instruments and lutes, stability is easy to achieve, beautiful tone more difficult. Improved quality of sound for gambas, lutes, and recorders is connected with the adoption of old pitch for these instruments.

Recorders in all these pitches can be found in Harlan's catalogues until the beginning of the war, when the F–C tuning took on a certain pre-eminence. On the other hand, the Moeck catalogue of 1937 offers only the F–C quartet, a small recorder in *g''*, a soprano in *d''*, and an alto in *g'*; while in a Herwig catalogue of 1937 (no. 102) we find the following position on pitches: "The Youth Ministry permits the pitches of D and A only for the purposes of chamber music; for folk music, for the sake of uniformity throughout the German Reich, it considers only the pitches C and F."

Recorder quartet, 1930.

Let us trace the development of the last two pitches once again carefully. The earliest German advocate of the F–C pitches I have found was Heinrich Husmann (later Ordinarius of the University of Göttingen), and the evidence is an advertisement of Walter Merzdorf of Markneukirchen dated January 8, 1930. Karl Gofferje invited people to a recorder meeting at the "Musikheim" in Frankfurt on the Oder, from April 17 to 20, 1931. Here the preference was still for instruments in D and A because their sound was considered more favorable than that of the quartet in F and C. There was general agreement on the necessity of limiting the number of pitches and of returning all tunings to the normal *a'*, which was then 435. In any case, this meeting in Frankfurt laid the cornerstone for further developments. From then on, primarily only the tunings D–A and F–C were considered.[39]

In the meantime, the first volume of the newsletter *Der Blockflötenspiegel* (Recorder Mirror) appeared (March, 1931). Its first editors-in-chief, Robert Götz and F. J. Giesbert, as well as their regular collaborators Edgar Rabsch, Wilhelm Friedrich, and Theodor Krüger, and the publisher, Hermann Moeck, Sr., for various reasons had not participated in the Frankfurt meetings. This newsletter became the champion of the advancement of F–C fingerings—together with the less specialized *Collegium musicum,* published by Bärenreiter — at first with contributions by Krüger and Giesbert.

The main champion of the D–A tuning was Karl Gofferje. His recorders, which included both the D–A quintet (*d, a, d', a', d''*) and the F–C quartet, were sold through Merzdorf in Markneukirchen.[40] They were almost cylindrical and very even in sound.[41] Merzdorf wrote about them in his prospectus of 1934:

The quartet and quintet are clearly distinguishable from each other by their particular sounds. The quintet in the D–A tuning is similar in tone to the flute sound. The instruments are relatively wide in the bore and produce a mellow, round, and therefore flute-like tone. The choice of bore measurement allows easy and gentle overblowing, without causing the lower register to suffer thereby. Instruments with very narrow bores have proven to be failures; overblowing is easier, to be sure, but at the same time the low notes are not always perfect in sound.

The F–C quartet, on the other hand, is built to have the sound of Baroque recorders, with a tone more like that of gambas or other bowed stringed instruments.

The instruments within each family are very similar to each other in tone, giving the quartet or quintet a homogeneous sound.

Erwin Schade, a participant at the Frankfurt meeting, had already expressed similar thoughts in 1931 in the August volume of the *Zeitschrift für Schulmusik:*

Thus, recorders are tuned in *f, c', f', c''* or in *d, a, d', a'*. It would be pointless, even absurd, to deprive ourselves of the abundance of types of recorder choirs for the purpose of standardization. We must take care not to consider the purely intellectual activity of music-making as a matter of technology. One can standardize technologies, but not intellectual activity. The F–C tuning is often preferable when playing with other instruments or with a choir. The D–A tuning, on the other hand, has the advantage of the extended low range. Another aspect of the multiplicity of tunings is the variety in the character of the sound.

In the very same spirit, Walter Kurka in 1932 criticized the "standardizing of the

recorder in C and F," which had been advocated in *Der Blockflötenspiegel*.[42]

In retrospect one can view the development of the simplification to F–C tuning only historically: from the many different tunings arose the movement toward order—the historical and practical F–C tuning. Under normal conditions, perhaps the beautiful-sounding D–A instruments might also have had a chance.

The trend toward the historical Baroque prevailed. In 1934 the recorder appeared in Germany for the first time as a demanding instrument at the Bach Festival in Bremen in Bach's F-major concerto and in the soprano aria "Sheep May Safely Graze." The soloists were Joachim Stave and Hans Brückmann. In 1938 Gustav Scheck's *Der Weg zu den Holzblasinstrumenten* set proper standards for the first time for education at the conservatory level.

The problem of notation within this confusion of pitches must still be mentioned. With seven different tunings it was almost impossible for players to read at absolute pitch, especially when these players were not very advanced laymen. With slow movements one could eventually solve the extemporary mathematical computations, but in other instances notation would lead to a dead end. As early as 1928, Waldemar Woehl[43] advocated "transposing notation," in which "the absolute sound is dependent on the instrument used" (which meant, for practical purposes, many extra printed parts for the different recorders in the ensemble, as with clarinets). For this he advocated in his method (Bärenreiter, 1930) a numerical system of 1 to 8, with additional sharps and natural signs, and horizontal lines over the numbers indicating the octave.[44] Next came the important pedagogical authors Robert Götz (Tonger, Köln, 1930), Alfred Zastrau (Zimmermann, Leipzig, 1930), Heinrich Scherrer (Hofmeister, Leipzig, 1931), Karl Gofferje (Kallmeyer and Bärenreiter, 1932), and Ferdinand Enke (Köster, Berlin, 1932).[45] They were later superseded by the F–C pedagogical writers Mönkemeyer, Ruëtz, and others. Woehl (born in 1902) remained steadfast to his idea until the end.[46] Time has passed him by.

Also to be mentioned from the 1930s is the "management disaster" with cocobolo wood. This South American wood had been used since the nineteenth century in the making of woodwind instruments and, along with maple, was also used for the first recorders made in the Vogtland. But because of the direct contact between the mouth and the instrument in playing the recorder, the poisonous nature of this wood soon became evident: it contained cinochine, which caused in some players an allergic reaction in the form of a rash on the lips and chin.[47] Soon after 1930 the first complaints of players were heard.[48] The increased use of this material brought about difficulties in production as well, since the sawdust caused considerably more allergies than did simple touching. On February 28, 1933, the Chamber of Commerce in Plauen expressly pointed out the difficulties, although it did not advocate a ban on this material. The Saxon Ministry for Public Instruction and Education also conducted a special inquiry, whose result is not known to me. In spite of all this, cocobolo recorders were still found in catalogues through the time of the war.

If we consider in retrospect the development of the recorder's renaissance in Germany, we find a variety of exciting or, if you wish, unusual events—in contrast to the more "thoughtful" development in England: a mirror of different emotional concerns as well as ideologies.

I want to end this article (which will not go into postwar events) with a few comments taken from my introductory article in *Tibia*,[49] which I will summarize in a modified form: by the end of the 1920s, the recorder had undergone a stormy period, during which this historical instrument was considered in respect to the life-reforming intentions of the youth movements and the related pedagogy. Despite very good motives, this afflicted the recorder with a certain faddish character and dilettantish air, even though at the beginning of the 1930s the possible high standard was already in view.

Now, at the end of the almost fifty-year-old history of the "new" recorder, I am impressed by the developments of the 1960s in connection with a new generation of performers (among others, Frans Brüggen and Hans-Martin Linde), instrument makers (von Huene, Coolsma, Fehr and his disciples, Skowronek, and others), and teachers (many already advanced in years), who gained a circle of particularly receptive students. At the same time the recorder became, without much ado, in a broad sense fully accepted at the conservatory level, while gaining wide use in music schools as an almost universal beginning instrument for instrumental instruction. Rudolf Schoch's idea was that the whole instrumentarium, from the piano to the trombone, would profit from the use of the recorder as a beginning instrument. We will have to wait to see how much this will prove true. But I feel certain that in the future wind players will generally come from the reservoir of young and older recorder players. What is especially encouraging in all of this is the crystallization of a tendency to adhere to a reality unencumbered by ideologies.

To this perspective "in large brush strokes" I have nothing important to add. I would be happy if this theme in its different aspects would become the subject of numerous individual monographs.[50]

Photographs from the Moeck Archiv.

NOTES

Notes 1–7 have been rearranged to fit the edited material, with several of Dr. Moeck's original notes omitted. An editorial note is in parentheses.

[1] For the recorder's history see, among others, Degen, *Zur Geschichte der Blockflöte* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1939); Hunt, *The Recorder and Its Music* (London, 1962).

[2] See Moeck, "Czakane, Englische und Wiener Flageolette" in *Studia instrumentorum musicae popularis* III (Stockholm: Nordiska Musikförlaget, 1976); and Meierott, *Die kleinen Flötentypen* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1974).

[3] Kaiser, *Sämtliche Schriften von C.M.v. Weber* (Berlin, 1908).

[4] Karl Nef, *Geschichte unserer Musikinstrumente* (Leipzig, 1926).

[5] See *Tibia* I/76, p. 27.

[6] See also Walcker, *Erinnerungen eines Orgelbauers* (Kassel, 1948).

[7] *Zur Wiederbelebung der Blockflöte im 20. Jahrhundert—Die Anfänge des Blockflötenbaus in Markneukirchen und Umgebung* (thesis for Leipzig University, 1977).

[8] Concepts we will not pursue here.

[9] *Dissonanzen* (Göttingen, 1963).

[10] "Wie kam die Blockflöte wieder in unser Leben?", *Der Blockflötenspiegel* I (Celle, 1931).

[11] See Johannes Hodek, *Musikalisch-pädagogische Bewegung zwischen Demokratie und Faschismus* (Weinheim, 1977).

[12] See Moeck, *Studia instrumentorum* III.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Which shares only the name with the nineteenth-century czakan.

[16] Moeck, *Studia instrumentorum* III.

[17] I refer extensively to notes of a conversation of March 10, 1949, on the occasion of several days' visit to Harlan at Burg Sternberg.

[18] See Rummel, *Zur Wiederbelebung der Blockflöte im 20. Jahrhundert*. Later, Kehr in Zwota worked for Harlan, who was said to have twenty flute makers engaged by about 1930. The home industry in musical instruments in the Vogtland, going all the way back to the eighteenth century, had been the supplier for so-called publishing firms, under whose trade name the instruments were then sold.

[19] Dr. Rudolf Eras from Kandern in Baden; Hans Jordan, gamba and lute maker, Markneukirchen.

[20] Hunt, *The Recorder and Its Music*.

[21] Rummel, *Zur Wiederbelebung* etc.

[22] In my possession.

[23] With the exception of the note *f#'''*, which is not attainable without tricky fingering in this system because of the too-strongly conical bore, although it occurs in Bach's Brandenburg Concerto no. 4, among others.

[24] *Principes de la flûte* (Amsterdam, 1707, reprinted by Bärenreiter).