The Recorder and its Music at the Jacobite Courts in England and France, 1685–1712

In 1649, Charles I, king of England, Scotland and Ireland, was convicted of high treason and executed. The monarchy was abolished and a period of republican rule called the Commonwealth ensued—with first Oliver Cromwell, then his son Richard, as Lord Protector of the Commonwealth. At the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Charles I's eldest son was crowned under the title Charles II. When he died in 1685, Charles II had no legitimate children to succeed him on the throne. The next-in-line was his younger brother James (b. 1633).

James had converted to Roman Catholicism somewhere between 1669 and 1672, as the ultimate result of his exposure to Catholic beliefs while in exile in France during the Commonwealth. Despite reservations among the nobility and clergy about his religion, he ascended to the throne as James II and was hastily crowned only two months after Charles’s death.

James inherited a large musical establishment and reorganized it, at standardized low salaries of £40 per year, to comprise 33 musicians in the Private Music. Instead of the separate consorts that had lasted, at least on paper, since the beginning of the 16th century, James created an up-to-date Baroque orchestra of strings, woodwinds and basso continuo, following the model of Jean-Baptiste Lully in France.

Eleven of the musicians had previously been members of the Violins; seven, both Violins and Winds; two, the “French flutes” (i.e., recorder players); four, the Lutes, Viols and Voices; as well as four singers, harpsichord (Henry Purcell) and composer (John Blow). Three musicians were new, listed as “basses,” but apparently bass instrumentalists rather than singers, including François La Riche, later a famous oboist at the Dresden Court.

Little is known about the repertoir of this orchestra—it would have rehearsed and performed in private, and the royal archives were destroyed by fire in 1698. Andrew Pinnock and Bruce Wood (see Resources at the end of this article) suggest that the musicians “honed their orchestral skills in the court ode repertory above all.”

No fewer than five of these musicians were capable of playing the recorder: La Riche; two violinists, John Banister II (the author of a recorder tutor, The Most Pleasant Companion, published in 1681) and Robert King; and of course the two “French flutes.” The Frenchmen in question were Francis (François) Mariens and James (Jacques) Paisible (c.1656–1721), the latter being among the most celebrated recorder players of the Baroque era as well as an oboist, bass violinist, and accomplished composer.

Paisible had emigrated to England in 1673 with the opera composer Robert Cambert and three other French woodwind players, Jean Boutet, Maxent de Bresmes and Pierre Guiton. Paisible was also associated with the circle of Hortense Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin (niece of the cardinal), who was in England from 1675 and became a mistress of Charles II. Paisible provided music for several entertainments devised by the French philosophe Margueltel de St. Denis, Seigneur de Saint-Evremond, resident in England after 1670, who referred to Paisible in a letter as “this great and slothful musician … with manners that savoured of a well-bred man and expressions which he must have learned in his little library.”

By David Lasocki


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Since he retired from his position as Head of Reference Services in the Cook Music Library at Indiana University in January 2011, he has been devoting himself to many unfinished writings and editions, to his own publishing company Instant Harmony, and to the practice of energy medicine. See his web site, www.instantharmony.net.

In the course of editing some recorder music by Innocenzo Fede and James Paisible (see Music Reviews in this issue), the author found the context for the music to be so interesting that he expanded the prefaces for those editions into this article, which has also been published in German in TIBIA.
In 1676, Mariens and Paisible were put secretly on Charles II’s payroll, “at the King’s direction.” As Roman Catholics, the French musicians could not have been appointed to the Court openly: the Test Act of 1673, strengthened by another of 1678, prohibited Catholics from holding office.

On June 29, 1676, Mariens and Paisible were presumably among the performers mentioned by the French ambassador, Honoré Courtin, in a letter to Louis XIV about a performance by Cambert and his associates of the Sommeil (sleep scene) from Lully’s opera Atys for Charles II and his young French mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth: “il veut encore leur faire repéter demain pour la quatrième fois, le récit du sommeil; Cambert accompagnoit avec son clavessin; il y avoit cinq ou six hommes qui jouent fort bien de la fluste” [Monsieur Cambert accompanied them on his harpsichord; there were five or six men who played the recorder very well]. The three other French woodwind players who had come over with Cambert three years earlier could have been the extra recorder players mentioned here. Example 1 shows the second vocal section of the Sommeil.

The quality of Paisible’s playing is confirmed by three other sources. Christiaan Huygens remarked in his diary during a trip to England in 1689 that he was “At the meetingh of musick” (a public concert) “ou l’on chantoit des pieces des Opera Francoises” [where excerpts from French operas were sung] and “Le Paisible y jouoit de la Flute admirablement bien” [Paisible played the recorder admirably].

The anonymous English translator of Raguenet’s Paralèle des Italiens et des Français en ce qui regarde la musique et les opéras (1709) wrote: “As for the flute [recorder] and haut-bois, we have Masters at the Opera in London that need not give place to any at Paris, to prove which assertion I will only mention the famous Mr Paisible ... for the first.” In 1710, a visiting German, Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, heard Paisible play a trio sonata for recorder, viola da gamba and basso continuo with Pietro Chaboud (gamba) and Johann Christoph Pepusch (harpsichord). Uffenbach wrote of “ein Franzose, Namens Paisible, der seines gleichen noch nie gehabt” [a Frenchman called Paisible, whose equal is not to be found].

Mariens and Paisible continued to be paid secretly for the rest of Charles II’s reign and at the end were said to have been “of his late Majesty’s private musick.” In 1682 Paisible was among the six musicians present on the Gloucester, the ship that ran aground while transporting James, then still Duke of York, to Scotland. James had just paid his first brief visit to England since his Scottish exile in 1679, and was going to collect his second wife Mary of Modena and take her back to London.

Paisible may have been assigned by Charles to James only temporarily, but at least we can be sure that they were well acquainted. Incidentally, when James arrived in London for the first time in 1682, Purcell wrote a welcome ode for him, What, What Shall be Done in Behalf of the Man?, Z.341, which includes two recorder parts as well as four-part strings and basso continuo.
Ex. 1. “Sommeil” from *Atys*

Jeannot Baptiste Lully

Alto Rec. I

Alto Rec. II

Phoebecor

Basso Continuo

Ne vous faites point violence, Coulez mur-murez, clairs Ruisseaux,

Coulez mur-murez, clairs Ruisseaux, Il n'est permis qu'au bruit des Eaux De troubler la douceur d'un si charmant silence.

Il n'est permis qu'au bruit des Eaux De troubler la douceur d'un si charmant silence.
Music at the Court of
James II in England

Two of the odes written for James II’s Court orchestra and singers have recorder parts. Purcell’s welcome ode, Ye Tuneful Muses (1686), Z.681, perhaps for James’s birthday, includes a trio for two altos and bass, two alto recorders and basso continuo, “To Music’s Softer but yet Kind and Pleasing Melody” (see Example 2). Blow’s New Year ode, Ye Sons of Phoebus (1688), also includes a pair of recorder parts.

Besides reorganizing the Court musicians, James II built an ornate Roman Catholic Chapel at Whitehall Palace, Westminster, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and staffed it with both existing and newly-hired musicians—French, Italian, German and English—who were experienced in the performance of Catholic liturgical music: a Master (Innocenzo Fede), seven adult male singers, seven boy singers, an organist (Giovanni Battista Draghi), eight “Gregorians” or singers of Gregorian chant along with another organist, and 12 instrumentalists including Paisible and Gottfried Finger.

The “Popish” chapel opened on Christmas Day 1686, to some adverse reactions. The diarist John Evelyn was scandalized by this public display of

Ex. 2. To Music’s Softer But Yet Kind and Pleasing Melody

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The diarist John Evelyn was scandalized by this public display of Roman Catholicism on the part of the official Defender of the Faith: “I was to hear the music of the Italians [sic] in the new Chapel... a world of mysterious Ceremony, the Musique playing and singing; & so I came away: not believing I should ever have lived to see such things in the K[ing] of England’s palace, after it had pleased God to enlighten this nation” (i.e., change the state religion to Anglican).

Keyboard music and English songs by Draghi (c.1640–1708) have survived, but little of his large-scale and chamber music, so it is difficult to assess his merits as a composer, although he clearly had a strong influence on his colleagues in England. Draghi’s ode for St. Cecilia’s Day, From Harmony, from Heavenly Harmony (1687), includes a setting of “The Soft Complaining Flute” with two recorder parts (see Example 3).

Peter Holman has observed that this air of Draghi’s was the starting point for Purcell’s air “Her Charming Strains Expel Tormenting Care” in the ode Celestial Music Did the Gods Inspire, Z.322, written in 1689 for a school in Westminster and probably performed with the aid of some of Purcell’s Court colleagues. “Both movements are in the same key, C minor, both are modulating ground basses, and both are scored for countertenor with two recorders and continuo. In particular, Purcell followed Draghi in using the recorders in a new way: as well as providing the customary final ritornello, they clothe the voice in rich harmony and provide interludes between the vocal phrases. This beautiful movement shows that Purcell had finally come to terms with
the sophisticated and varied ways Italian composers had devised for combining voices and obbligato instruments.” (See Example 4.)

Holman also considers Draghi’s ode the model for Purcell’s famous St. Cecilia’s Day ode *Hail, Bright Cecilia* (1692), which includes two airs with recorder parts, “Hark! Hark! Each Tree!” and “In Vain the Am’rous Flute.”

Gottfried Finger (c.1660–1730) was a Moravian viol player and composer, probably born in Olomouc, where he entered the service of Prince-Bishop Karl Liechtenstein-Kastelcorn. Not only did he perform in James’s Chapel, he wrote music for it. His 12 sonatas Op. 1, consisting of chamber music for strings, were dedicated to James and said to be intended for use in the Chapel (“ut haec Musica CAPELLAE REGIAE inserviat”).

Finger began to publish recorder music in 1690 with *VI Sonatas or Solo’s: Three for a Violin & Three for a Flute with a Thorough Bass for ye Harpsichord*, the first collection published in England of sonatas for solo instrument and basso continuo; perhaps some of it was written a little earlier for the Court. In the dedication, he wrote of the sonatas: “The humour of them is principally Italian: a sort of music which though the best in the world, yet is but lately naturalized in England.” (See Example 5.)

Innocenzo Fede (?1660–1732) is barely known to the recorder world of today, but he wrote some attractive music for the instrument that emerged from his unusual career. He was born in Rome of a musical family. His father Antonio Maria was a singer, in the service of Cardinal Antonio Barberini and later the Pamphilj family. His uncles Giuseppe and Francesco Maria, both castrati, were members of the papal choir.

In 1682 Innocenzo assisted Giuseppe, who was acting *maestro di cappella* at the church of San Giacomo
degli Spagnuoli, the Spanish church in Rome. A year later, Innocenzo unsuccessfully applied for a position as tenor in the papal choir. In July 1684 he was appointed maestro di cappella at San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli, but a year later the church closed down its permanent musical establishment and he lost his post there.

Presumably through John Caryll, English Ambassador to the Holy See, 1685–86, or through the newly-appointed ambassador, the Earl of Castlemaine, whose residence in the Palazzo Pamphilij was close to San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli, James II recruited Fede for the post of master of music for the newly-established Roman Catholic Chapel in 1686. Fede was appointed at the high annual salary of £200 from Lady Day (March 25) the following year, presumably having already served for three months.

In June 1688, Fede also provided the music for a concert celebrating the birth of the Prince of Wales, James Francis Edward, that reportedly included no fewer than 130 vocal and instrumental performers.

**Flight and Exile**

The birth of a Catholic heir to the throne was one of the factors in James II attracting such political opposition that the Protestant William, Prince of Orange, invaded from The Netherlands in the so-called Glorious Revolution in November 1688. James fled England and was held to have abdicated the throne.

The Dutch prince was given the title William III and ruled jointly with his wife, Queen Mary II, James’s elder daughter by his first marriage. James spent about 18 months in Ireland, fighting William unsuccessfully to regain his throne, including at the
James’s flight from England was commemorated in a composition by Nicolas Desrosiers. He celebrated the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. Then he left permanently for France, where Louis XIV had given him a pension and a residence, the Château-Vieux de Saint-Germain-en-Laye about 12 miles west of Paris, and where his wife was already installed. This château (along with the adjoining Château-Neuf) had been Louis's own principal residence from 1666 to 1682, before he moved to Versailles.

Remarkably, James’s flight from England was commemorated in a composition by Nicolas Desrosiers (b. c.1645; d. after 1702), a Dutch guitarist of French birth, called La fuite du roi d’Angleterre for two alto recorders and basso continuo, published by his business partner, Antoine Pontell, in Amsterdam in 1689. The movements are entitled La fuite du Roy d’Angle terre (The flight of the king of England), La navigation du Roi (The king’s voyage), L’arrivée du Roi (The king’s arrival), Reception du Roi (The king’s reception), Le voyage de Versaille (The journey to Versailles), Ritornelle de l’entreveu (Ritornello of the audience, presumably with Louis XIV), Plaînte, and Air de consolation (Air of consolation). (These movements are followed by six more that have more general titles and are all in a different key, C major.)

The music is completely in the French style beloved of James, alternating passages in thirds and sixths with occasional suspensions. Example 6 depicts James’s voyage as a painful affair in the dolorous key of F minor.

James’s Roman Catholic musicians were not reappointed under William and Mary, so they had to seek other employment. Draghi still held a post as organist to Catherine of Braganza, Charles II’s widow. He and Finger also promoted a concert series in London, perhaps as early as 1689, and Finger wrote music for the theater. La Riche was used as an “extra” by the Court, wrote music for the theater, then left for Dresden in 1699.

Fede was granted a pass to go to France in February 1689 and at first was employed at Saint-Germain by Mary of Modena, receiving a pension of 936 livres a year. This was on the middle of income at the Court, about the same level as the Court’s Scottish under-secretary of state David Nairne (1655–1740). The Italian-born Mary appreciated Italian music, and the exiled Court played a vital role in popularizing that style of music in France in the last decade of the 17th century and the first decade of the 18th.

In 1695, Fede also began instructing the royal children, James and his younger sister Louisa Maria (1692–1712), in Italian and also in music jointly with Abraham Baumeister, a Bavarian singer in the Chapel and perhaps also a violinist.

On October 18, 1699, a warrant was issued swearing and admitting Fede formally as Master of His Majesty’s Private Musick as well as master of the Chapel at the exiled Court. Edward Corp suggests that this appointment was now being made hurriedly because Fede perceived a threat.
to his power in the great harpsichordist, organist and composer François Couperin.

Couperin seems to have participated in the composing and music-making at Saint-Germain during the 1690s, being paid out of Privy Purse of Louis XIV or by the queen and never officially becoming a member of the exiled Court. Fede’s appointment did come during the absence of the man in charge of official warrants, under-secretary David Nairne, who had been a friend of Couperin’s for 20 years and owned copies of his early compositions.

After James II died in 1701, Fede continued at the exiled Court, under Mary as regent before the majority in 1706 of the young James. (The young man was known formerly as the Pretender or the Old Pretender but in modern Jacobite scholarship as James III, a title recognized de jure by Louis XIV.) In 1713, under the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, James was forced to leave France, settling in Lorraine, Avignon, Pesaro, Rome, Urbino, and finally in Rome (1718), where the pope gave him the Palazzo Muti as a residence. The Italian lessons from Fede would have paid off....

Meanwhile Fede continued to serve at Saint-Germain. After Mary’s death in May 1718, he appears on a list of the queen’s officers who “par suite de son décès, demeurent sans emploi” [since her death, live without employment]. He returned to Rome at the end of the following year, receiving some “charity” payments from young James in 1720, then a regular pension until his death in December 1732.

Music-making at the Court may have died down in James I’s last years. But after his death in 1701, the musical life of the exiled Court flourished: music for the chapel, including oratorios and organ masses, ceremonial music, table music, opera scenes and ballets, balls almost weekly, and concerts at least weekly, sometimes employing local French musicians, probably including ones from the French Court. Regular concerts were also organized by James’s secretary of state, John Caryll, himself a viol player, and the master of the queen’s robes, Francesco Riva.

Presumably reflecting this increased activity, Fede’s salary was increased around 1703 to 1224 livres; at a time when other Court salaries and pensions were reduced. The Court repertoire was largely Italian or in the Italian style, although the theatrical and dance music was in the French style.

As well as the professional musicians employed by or in the sphere of the Court, Couperin’s friend at court Nairne was an enthusiastic amateur capable of performing in public on the bass viol, violin and recorder. Nairne noted in his diary for February 16, 1703, “I played on ye flute at ye consort”—a concert in his own home or at that of one of the wealthier Court servants such as Caryll.

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Fede’s music from Saint-Germain-en-Laye survives mostly among a collection of seven volumes now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Rés. H.659, copied under the direction of the royal copyist, André Danican-Philidor. It consists of no fewer than 204 pieces of music, only 65 of them attributed to a composer: 23 Italians (including Fede himself and Alessandro Scarlatti), Finger and Paisible. The pieces were not intended for the Court Chapel, but rather Italian arias, cantatas and sonatas for the Court Chamber.

These volumes were apparently copied from a collection compiled by Fede around 1703-05. They contain two recorder sonatas in D minor and G minor by him, as well as a trio for three recorders. At least one recorder sonata by Fede had been composed by 1703, when Estienne Roger in Amsterdam published a joint collection of six with at least one by Jacob Greber: Six sonates à une flute, & une basse continue de Mrs Greber & Fede (not extant).

The Fede manuscript collection also includes: a cantata with recorder obbligato by one Benati; Finger’s three recorder sonatas from his 1690 collection; two recorder duets and a recorder sonata by Paisible (Paris ms., IV); and an anonymous suite marked Lamento. Per il flauto, in which the recorder part goes down to d¹ and may well have been intended for the voice flute.

Another manuscript that clearly came from Saint-Germain is Bibliothèque Municipale, Versailles, Manuscrit musical 161. It contains another copy of Fede’s trio for three recorders and a Sonata di Camera in D minor by him in the range e¹–b², which suggests the oboe or voice flute rather than the alto recorder. The manuscript also includes: two simple recorder suites by Finger; seven anonymous recorder duets; two recorder sonatas by Paisible (Paris ms., IV and XII); a sinfonia for three recorders and basso continuo by the obscure Ignacio Pulici; a suite by Pierre Gautier de Marseilles; and the Lamento from the Paris manuscript, now called a Plainte and identified as the work of “Sig: Clerke,” presumably Jeremiah Clarke (of Trumpet Voluntary fame).

Neither Clarke nor Gautier ever seem to have been at Saint-Germain. The only surviving evidence that Finger might possibly have worked there briefly is that the collection of manuscripts he sold after he left England in 1701 includes French music as well as English and Italian, and there is a gap in his known activities between April 1697 and February 1699 when he might have been in France or Italy. Jean Lionnet surmises that the Versailles manuscript “donne très probablement une idée du genre de répertoire que Fede utilisait pour enseigner la musique aux deux jeunes princes [sic]” [very probably gives an idea of the genres of music that Fede employed in teaching music to the young prince and princess]. It would be gratifying if Fede had taught his royal pupils the recorder, but we have no corroborating evidence—and the technical level of the pieces in the manuscript is sometimes lower, but not consistently lower, than that of the recorder pieces in the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript.

Fede’s two recorder sonatas are examples of the chamber sonata in the Italian style from around 1700. This style is less familiar than most Italian-style sonatas from the late Baroque, which date from at least 10 or 20 years later. The closest in date and style to Fede’s would in fact be those by Finger and Paisible.

Fede’s sonatas include little pieces of ornamentation (D minor, first movement) and examples of the double, or variation, in a style a little like that of Nicola Matteis (both sonatas, third movement; see Examples 7 and 8). His recorder trio is a suite of simple move-
ments in a slightly Frenchified Italian style—Ouverture, Sarabande, Gavotte—enlivened by contrapuntal exchanges among the parts, which take turns to play the leading role.

**Paisible’s Music**

Among the musicians who left England for Saint-Germain in the wake of James II was Paisible, a Roman Catholic who clearly had some loyalty to the exiled king. One Colonel Fielding reported in 1690 that Mary of Modena’s chamber musicians performed almost every day.

Nevertheless, Paisible returned to England as early as 1693, becoming the official composer to Princess (later Queen) Anne, James’s daughter from his first marriage, and her consort Prince George of Denmark. But Paisible would surely have made some impact on the exiled Court at Saint-Germain, and Fede’s recorder sonatas may have been written for him.

Most of Paisible’s own recorder music, including 13 sonatas and four suites for alto recorder and basso continuo, remained in manuscript. It has been published gradually only over the last 30 years. The principal source for the sonatas and suites is Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Rés. Vma. Ms. 700, which bears the title (in English) “Solo’s By Mr. Paisible.”

Despite the language of the title, the recorder part is almost always notated in the French violin clef, not the treble clef used in England—and of course the manuscript has survived in France, suggesting that it was used there.
As we have already noted, two of Paisible's recorder sonatas also survive in the manuscripts from Saint-Germain. Moreover, these sonatas and three more—Paris ms., II, IV–VI, and XII—are found in a manuscript dated 1698 in the hand of the French-born woodwind player and copyist Charles Babel (father of English harpsichordist and composer William Babell) now in the Sibley Music Library at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY.

It therefore seems likely that all of Paisible's sonatas and suites date from the 1690s, when they were performed at Saint-Germain and also on the composer's return to England in his appearances at the public concerts sponsored by Draghi and Finger.

Paisible was trained as a composer in France, but later would have been
introduced to Italian music in England through such colleagues as Draghi, Fede and Finger as well as at Saint-Germain. The styles of Paisible's sonatas and suites are clearly differentiated.

The sonatas are quite virtuosic, although the passagework tends to be stepwise, rather than mixed with leaps as in the later Italian style, and the phrase lengths tend to be irregular. Paisible had a fine sense of counterpoint, and his employment as a bass violinist no doubt inspired his interesting bass lines. Some of his movements have the appearance of “two-part inventions,” although of course the bass continuo part would have been realized. Note the contrapuntal entries in Example 9, the beginning of a fast movement.
Ex. 10. Suite in A minor (Paris Hs., XVI), I

Prelude

James Paisible

Alto Recorder

Violoncello/
Viola da gamba
Paisible's suites, in contrast, are fairly simple technically, within the capability of amateurs, but always tuneful and tasteful. The style, and the movement headings, are a mixture of French and Italian, still with the preference for stepwise melodic movement. The presence of a couple of hornpipes, one labeled as such, shows that Paisible picked up something local from his long-term residence in England. Example 10 is a beautiful overture in the French style, with some chromatic movement to add melodic and harmonic interest.

Conclusions

The Court of James II in England, and the exiled Courts of James and his son James III in France, supported some fine composers and performers who contributed works to the recorder repertoire that deserve wider recognition.

I have endeavored to sketch the music-making at these Courts, providing some context for odes by John Blow, Giovanni Battista Draghi and Henry Purcell, and chamber music by Nicolas Desrosiers, Innocenzo Fede, Gottfried Finger and James Paisible. Lists of information sources and modern editions of most of the music follow.

Resources

Writings


———. “Innocenzo Fede et la musique à la cour des Jacobites de Saint-Germain-en-Laye.” In La cour des Stuarts à Saint-Germain-en-Laye au temps de Louis XIV (exhibition...


