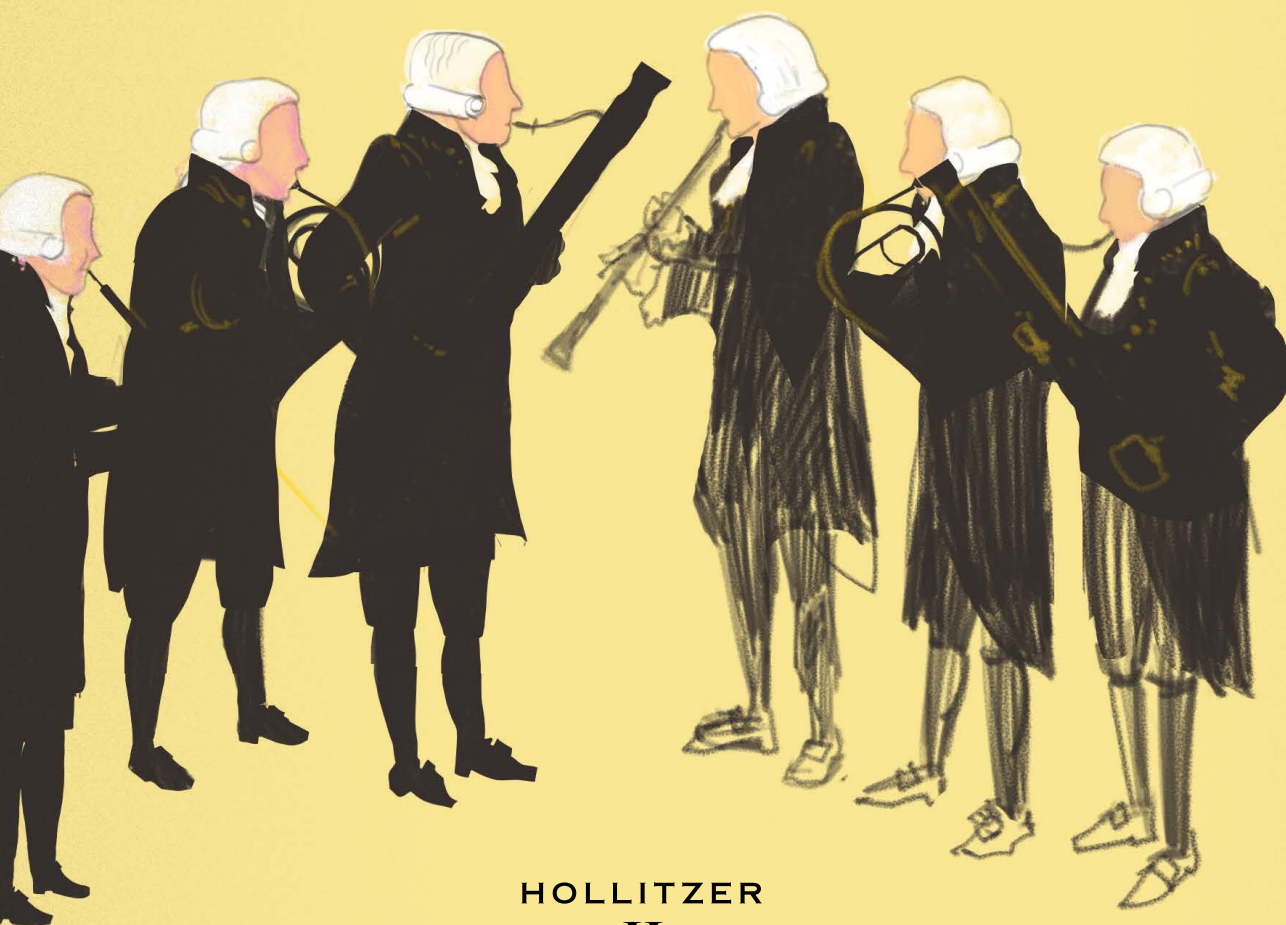


ESTEBAN M. L. CASOLI

*HARMONIE WIND BANDS
AND BAROQUE MUSIC
AT THE
ORIGINS OF JAZZ*



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Harmonie Wind Bands and Baroque Music
At the origins of Jazz

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Esteban M. L. Casoli:
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*To my parents and sister
To Maia, you had always been by my side while writing, may your soul rest in peace.
To my former history teacher, Luis Jorge Giménez*

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Introduction

The music created during the reign of the Habsburg Monarchy could be considered one of the most glorious and richest periods in music history, if not one of the finest musical achievements in the history of Western civilization. Some examples of this outstanding production are the songs of minnesingers such as Montfort, the symphonies by Mozart, Pleyel, and Bruckner, or Schubert's piano pieces. The operettas by Lehár and Suppé, the string quartets by Haydn, or Liszt's piano concertos, the waltzes by the Strauss family and Lanner, the popular *Wienerlied*, and traditional Christmas carols are also worth mentioning. However, one of the Habsburg Empire's most exquisite musical forms, in addition to the string quartet, was the music for wind ensembles known as *Harmonien*—a late 18th-century musical genre known in Central Europe as *Harmoniemusik*. Rather than being a technical treatise on *Harmoniemusik*, this book is intended as a historical guide for music lovers interested in wind music who are not familiar with the term, its history, its most famous composers, or its instruments. It brings forward a genre of classical music that has long been considered a 'lesser form.' This guide also aims to rediscover lesser-known composers and arrangers of *Harmoniemusik*, such as Pleyel, Triebensee, and Went. These composers' exquisite wind music is often overshadowed by the music of major Austrian composers, such as Mozart or Haydn. The guide will also mention composers who, although not born on Austrian territory, worked or studied for a period of time in Vienna, as well as other less known composers of the 18th-century Habsburg Empire. Their charming wind compositions deserve recognition in the history of music.

This work was originally intended to discuss only the history of *Harmoniemusik*. However, as the research progressed, something seemed to be evident to the author. The synthesis of the practices of Western and Central European wind bands with those of French Baroque music in the Americas had a greater influence on the origins of jazz than was previously acknowledged. Additionally, the author discusses the significant coincidences between European and Argentinian music, revising the broad opinion held by many on the origins of tango. Therefore, the final chapter challenges the traditional view of the origins of two iconic American musical styles, proposing a new perspective based on evidence and on forgotten, ignored and/or still unacknowledged information.

The *Harmonie*

The term ‘harmony,’ as well as *Harmonía*, the name of the Greek goddess of balance and concordance, originated in the Greek term *harmonía*, a concept deriving from the Greek *harmós*, meaning ‘combination’ or ‘joint.’ In strictly musical terms, harmony is the result of a chord, which is a blend or combination of two or more notes sounding simultaneously. The consequence of this simultaneity is a sound that we perceive as pleasant, or ‘consonant’. Harmony is also related to counterpoint, a technique that allows the balance of consonant and dissonant chords of independent melodic lines that sound simultaneously. In turn, chords are also related through a composition to a variety of instruments whose different pitches blend in a standard concert pitch, usually in a frequency of 440 Hz, for a balanced sound. Therefore, while the German term *Harmoniemusik* designates a genre of 18th-century classical wind music, the German term *Harmonie* (plural *Harmonien*) designates a type of wind band that employed a special combination of wind instruments. This last was done in order to perform music with a richer and enhanced sound.¹

The late Baroque (approximately between the 1680s and 1750s) saw the birth and/or further development of earlier forms of music, instruments and ensembles, among them wind ensemble music for four, five, and six parts. The latter were frequently composed for a *Harmonie*. The music for *Harmonie* was typically performed without percussive instruments and was intended to be performed at diverse venues and occasions, such as indoor or outdoor concerts, evening and late-night music, or academic celebrations. Additionally, as *Tafelmusik* (banquet music) and tavern entertainment. It was Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) who composed some of the earliest works for *Harmonie* of the early Classical period, between 1759 and 1761, for the Counts Morzin. Worth mentioning are the *Divertimento (Parthia)* in D major, Hob. II: D18, for a pair of oboes, horns, bassoons and double-bass, or the *Divertimento* in G major, Hob. II:3, also for the same type of formation. Wind sextets remained one of the significant models of wind ensemble until the appearance of the *Kaiserlich-königliche Harmonie* (Imperial Royal harmony) at the Viennese court of Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II in 1782. The *Kaiserlich-königliche Harmonie* was a wind octet, consisting of a pair of oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns, a form created to find the closest counterpart to the string quartet in music for winds.² The *Harmonie* eventually added a contra-instrument, which, as the lowest voice, enforced the bass line, thus providing depth to the ensemble sound. Depending on the region of Europe, this instrument could be the contrabassoon, the *violone* (ancestor of the

double-bass), the serpent, or the trombone.³ The latter were often optional or *ad libitum*,⁴ which may account for the fact that contra-instruments are usually not counted among the principal instruments of a *Harmonie*. In this sense, we may observe that, in the liner notes of some classical music albums, the works for six instruments may be called ‘quintets,’ while works for seven instruments may be called ‘sextets.’ For example, Haydn’s Sextet in E-flat major, which can be performed with a seventh contra-instrument (e.g., pairs of clarinets, horns, bassoons, and double bass *ad libitum*).

Compositions for *Harmonie* were usually denominated depending on the situation the work was intended for. While the *divertimento* was usually intended as light entertainment, other compositions were intended as *Abendmusik* (evening music), or as *Nachtmusik* (night music), usually performed between the evening and midnight hours. Similar in concept to the *Nachtmusik* and *Abendmusik* were the serenade and the ‘cassation.’ We may also find works for *Harmonie* in the form of a *partita* or *Parthia* (also known as *Feldparthie* or ‘field partita,’ when performed outdoors). The term *partita* began to be used in the Classical Period as a synonym for ‘symphony.’ This last is the reason we may find some albums which announce partitas and octets for winds with four and/or three tempo markings (e.g. *allegro–andante–allegro*) as ‘wind symphonies.’⁵ Lastly, *Tafelmusik* referred to compositions whose purpose was to serve as background or functional music during banquets, gatherings and/or after meals. Even though the compositions for *Harmonie* are not considered to have served essentially as *Tafelmusik*, they did serve this purpose in some situations, which is attested by the way Mozart employed wind music in some of his operas. For example, in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*, an arrangement for *Harmonie* of the aria ‘O quanto un sì bel giubilo’ from Martín y Soler’s opera *Una cosa rara* is performed as *Tafelmusik* during a banquet. According to Sehnal (1931), *Harmoniemusik* was employed as *Tafelmusik* after noon meals in the Augustinian Monastery at Staré Brno.⁶

Notable musicologists have argued that, before the 1780s, *Harmoniemusik* was primarily ‘the music of the tavern and the military.’ However, surviving wind music for French, German, and Austrian courts from this period demonstrates that works for winds were intended for other venues and cultural purposes as well.⁷ Some of Haydn’s earliest wind quintets and sextets for Count Morzin and Prince Esterhazy, named *divertimentos*, were employed at private concerts and banquets.⁸ Additionally, to Joseph II and the Counts Morzin, we could mention several significant personalities who maintained *Harmoniemusik* ensembles and military bands: Elector Maximilian Franz, the Princes Schwarzenberg and Aloys von Liechtenstein, the Princes Harrach, Zinzendorf, Kinsky and Lobkowitz, the Counts Hartig, Mansfeld and Gallizin, the Princely Houses of Esterhazy and Grassalkovich, and the Counts Festetics.