

## “TYPOGRAPHICUM ROBUR FRACTUM” JACOB HANDL’S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRINTING PRESS

MARC DESMET

Université de Saint-Etienne\*

**Izveček:** V članku je razvita nova hipoteza o povezavi med skladateljem Jacobusom Handlom in tedanjim tiskarskim svetom, predvsem prek vpliva in dejavnosti tiskarja Georga Handla, skladateljevega brata. Pregledani tiskarjev opus postavlja v novo luč ugled in okoliščine glasbenih tiskov Jacobusa Handla – Gallusa.

**Ključne besede:** Jacobus Handl – Gallus, Georg Handl, Olomouc, glasbena tipografija.

**Abstract:** This article develops a new hypothesis concerning the link between the composer Jacob Handl and the sphere of typography, notably through the influence and activity as a printer of Georg Handl, Jacob’s brother. The production of Georg Handl the printer is examined; this can shed light on the reputation and make-up of Jacob’s own printed output.

**Keywords:** Jacob Handl – Gallus, Georg Handl, Olomouc, musical typography.

In 1596 the Nuremberg printer Alexander Philipp Dietrich put on to the market a collection of polyphonic Latin secular pieces composed by Jacob Handl: the *Moralia*.<sup>1</sup> The composer, deceased in 1591, had already published three books of similar compositions in the *Harmoniae morales* printed in Prague by Georg Nigrin in 1589 and in 1590.<sup>2</sup> The *Moralia* thus comprised all secular compositions by Jacob Handl that had not previously been presented to the public. On this occasion, Jacob’s brother Georg wrote a foreword explaining that he was in this way fulfilling the wish of his beloved brother. Jacob could hardly cope with the high number of texts proposed to him for musical elaboration, and thus many compositions remained unpublished. In musicological studies, this text is the only document of any length to suggest that Georg Handl was a person of importance in the biography of Jacob.<sup>3</sup> Nothing of him seems to be known, nor mentioned, after this date.

\* Institut Claude Longeon – UMR 5037.

<sup>1</sup> RISM A/I: H 1988 and HH 1988. The latest modern edition is by Edo Škulj in the series *Monumenta artis musicae Sloveniae XXVII*, Ljubljana, ZRC SAZU, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> RISM A/I: H 1983 and HH 1983 (book I), H 1986 (book II), and H 1987 (book III). The most recent modern edition is by Edo Škulj in the series *Monumenta artis musicae Sloveniae XXVI*, Ljubljana, ZRC SAZU, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> This foreword has been translated and commented upon by Allen E. Skei in his edition of the *Moralia* in the series *Recent Researches in the Music of the Renaissance VII*, Madison, A-R

In 1596 a printer also called Georg Handl<sup>4</sup> bought from Valentin Kheil in Olomouc a printing workshop, and settled in the city to become the most important printer known up to that date in the former capital of Moravia, with a sustained production that began in 1597 and lasted until the printer's death in 1616.<sup>5</sup> After that date the printing house was taken over first by Georg's widow Barbora, and then by their son Matthias until 1623. In studies of typography the year 1596 is always given as the first known reference to this Georg Handl, of whom nothing seems to be known from previous years.

The main point of this article is to argue that Georg Handl, the Carniolan born brother of Jacob Handl – Gallus,<sup>6</sup> and the Olomouc printer Georg Handl might well be one and the same person. This assumption may rightly seem risky at first. And the very large number of Handl families documented in Olomouc in the 1580s does not conspire to make it an easy task, either.<sup>7</sup> The Handl family name is present in all strata of Olomouc society of the time, from modest cloth traders<sup>8</sup> to one “purkmeister” of the city.<sup>9</sup> The number of “hits” increases dramatically if we include the spelling “Handel” in the enquiry, even extending to a poet, Andreas Handel, who composed a Latin *panegyricum* for emperor Rudolf II during the latter's visit to the city in 1577.<sup>10</sup> However, none of these Handls or Handels seems to correspond so well as Georg Handl the printer does to what we know of Jacob the musician, who was active in the same Moravian city between 1579 and 1585. Despite the lack of interaction between musicological and typographical studies,<sup>11</sup> a surprising continuity between the two persons can be observed. Moreover, the printed production of Georg Handl offers many a late echo to Jacob Handl's musical output.

### The printed production of Georg Handl in Olomouc

When Georg Handl settled in Olomouc the city was already a printing centre of some importance, the first of its kind in the duchy of Moravia.<sup>12</sup> Although the first printing

---

Editions, 1970, pp. 9–14. It has also been edited and translated into Slovenian by Edo Škulj in *Gallusovi predgovori in drugi dokumenti*, Ljubljana, Družina, 1991, pp. 102–107.

<sup>4</sup> Spellings of the name found on title-pages or colophons depend on the language used in the publication: *Georgius Handelius* or *Typis Handelianis* (Latin), *Giřík Handl* (Czech), *Georg Handl* (German).

<sup>5</sup> General information and bibliography about Georg Handl can be found in Petr Voit, *Encyklopedie knihy, starší knihtisk a příbuzné obory mezi polovinou 15. a 19. století*, Praha, Nakladatelství Libri ve spolupráci s královskou kanonií premonstratů na Strahově, 2006, p. 341.

<sup>6</sup> Georg Handl signs his foreword as “Georgius Handelius, Carniolus”.

<sup>7</sup> On the numerous Handl families in Olomouc, see the useful indices in Wilhelm Nather, *Die Olmützer Häuserchronik*, Olomouc, Univerzita Palackého, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Including the two brothers Jakob and Georg Handl (!), weavers, mentioned in 1607–1608 as active in the vicinity of the present-day Sokolská street.

<sup>9</sup> Sebastian Handl.

<sup>10</sup> See Peter Wörster, *Olmütz in der Zeit Rudolfs II. Zu Fragen des Späthumanismus in Mähren, Humanismus in der Krone Böhmen*, ed. Hand-Bernd Harder and Hans Rothe, Dresden, Dresden University Press, 1998 (*Studien zum Humanismus in den böhmischen Ländern IV*), pp. 279–305.

<sup>11</sup> With the notable exception of the Mantuani articles; see also note 30, below.

<sup>12</sup> For details on the beginnings of printing in Olomouc, see Josef Volf, *Geschichte des Buchdrucks in Böhmen und Mähren bis 1848*, Weimar, Straubing & Müller, 1928, pp. 174–176.

workshop is documented already in the early 1500s, it was not until 1538 that a printing house was functioning in Olomouc. Printers identified in the city worked in two different printing workshops, often in parallel:

- the one belonging to the founders, the Olivetský family, active from 1538 onwards,
- the one belonging to the Günther family, founded in 1551 and later (in 1571) purchased by the Milchtaler family.

The importance of the Handl press in Olomouc was first of all commercial: in that Handl managed to buy in succession the two printing presses of the city in order to unite them with his own printing workshop: first, the Olivetský press, after Valentin Kheil failed to take possession of it in 1596; then, in 1612, the Milchtaler press, which Handl purchased from the heirs.

Moreover, Handl’s production is important in that it reflects in the variety of its contents the situation of the city itself. Olomouc became at the end of the 16th century the stage for an opposition between the municipality, which was mostly controlled by Protestant citizens, and the Church, represented by the powerful bishop of Olomouc, whose deep involvement in the Counter-Reformation made of the city one of the leading Catholic centres in the Czech lands.<sup>13</sup>

Although no complete source list of Handl prints has ever been made, it is easy to observe that these publications were aimed at both Catholic and Protestant readers. A preliminary idea of this catalogue can be gained by collating information gleaned from a variety of bibliographical sources and archival materials.<sup>14</sup> All prints to which reference is made accessible bear *millesima* datable between 1597 and 1616, to which may be added a few prints bearing the name of Handl’s heirs, or of Matthias Handl, Georg Handl’s son, up to the year 1623.<sup>15</sup> The total number of references hardly reaches a hundred, a number probably representing only a small percentage of the total quantity of books printed by Handl.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Of primary importance in this context is the foundation in 1566 of a Jesuit College, granted university rights in 1573, and of a literary circle or *sodalitas* attached to it, the Sodalitas Partheniae Visitantis. On the political importance of re-Catholicization in Olomouc, see Ondřej Jakubec, “Sebekonfesionalizace” a manifestace katolicismu jako projev utváření konfesní uniformity na předbělohorské Moravě, *Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis, Facultas Philosophico-Historica* 31 (2002), pp. 101–119.

<sup>14</sup> In addition to the library catalogues consulted on the spot or through the internet, and the general tools of research currently available online, the sources used for this study are P. Voit, op. cit.; Christian d’Elvert, *Geschichte des Bücher- und Steindruckes [...] in Mähren und Österreichisch-Schlesien*, Brno, R. Rohrer’s Erben, 1854; the online database Knihopis digital – <http://db.knihopis.org>; the scanned catalogue of bibliography of Bohemical documents in foreign languages, including an index of printers available on CD-Rom at the National Library of the Czech Republic; and the City Archive of Olomouc today held on the premises of the Zemský Archiv v Opavě, pobočka Olomouc.

<sup>15</sup> Matthias Handl emigrated from Moravia in 1623, and all subsequent traces of him are thereafter lost. Some scholars believe, but without quoting any sources, that although he had converted to Catholicism, he fled with Czech emigrants and died during the Thirty Years War. See Richard Martinčík, *Olomouc v dějinách Moravského Knihťisku 1440–1940*, Olomouc, Josef Špaček, 1940, p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> One thousand prints (!), if we give credit to the assertions of Martinčík. R. Martinčík, op. cit.

Five different categories can be observed in the known production according to the present state of research.

1. We find first a Latin poetic Catholic repertory, reflecting for the most part the needs of the Jesuit University. Though most often consisting of short booklets of a celebratory nature, this part of the production is the most numerous both in the number of prints and in that of preserved copies. At least 30 prints were produced in this context, among which are numerous poetic compositions by the students of the Jesuit University – tributes paid to ecclesiastical patrons, celebrations of successful *disputationes*, homage to colleagues from the same graduation, greetings to newcomers to the university or to the *sodalitas* ...<sup>17</sup>
2. In the second category, we find works associated with the Counter-Reformation, and emanating from the Catholic authorities of Olomouc. In this group we find at least ten prints of importance such as the monumental Catholic *kancionál* by Rozenplut z Schwarzenbachu, published in 1601,<sup>18</sup> which contains strophic compositions for the whole year according to the liturgical calendar, entirely printed in elaborate music notation and with magnificent illustrated engravings. This print is an important one, since the idea of a Catholic *kancionál* was at that time completely new.<sup>19</sup> In this category of prints come also Czech translations of Flemish or English Jesuits such as Frans Coster, Petrus Canisius and Johannes Pistorius. Figure 1, below, showing the title-page of a prayer book for the rosary of the Virgin Mary, clearly belongs to this category.
3. The third category consists of Czech prints of a political or secular nature. The informative records of municipal meetings held in Brno, Olomouc, Vyškov and Ivančice belong to this category. But we find additionally publications obviously aimed at the ordinary burgher, such as a life of Aesop,<sup>20</sup> a German Czech primer,<sup>21</sup> forecasts or descriptions of natural disasters, and a voluminous description of the Duchy of Moravia published in 1604, which is the most complete of its kind published at the time.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup> These prints are of special interest for the reconstruction of rolls of students at the Olomouc college, notably during the years 1597 and 1598.

<sup>18</sup> “Kancyonál To gest: Sebránij Spěwůw Pobožných kterých k Duchownijmu potěšenij každý wefegný Křestian na Weyročnij Swátky a giných Swatých Památky y časy, vžijwati může [...] W Holomaucy wytlačeniim Girijka Handle wůbec wydané. Léta M. DCI [=1601].” Knihopis no. 14907. The copy held by the National Library of the Czech Republic (shelf-mark: 54 C 36) has been entirely digitalized and can be seen online (payment access) via Manuscriptorium, the website of the Czech National Library devoted to digitalized items: [www.manuscriptorium.cz](http://www.manuscriptorium.cz).

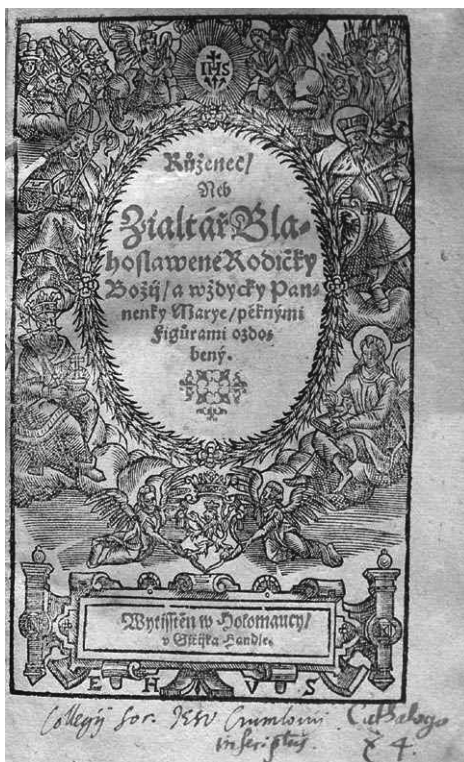
<sup>19</sup> This was the first large-scale Catholic *kancionál* ever published. The idea of a *kancionál*, a book of canticles, previously confined to the Union of Brethren and Utraquist confessions in the Czech lands was adopted for Catholic use in the publications of Simon Lomnický z Budče (1580, 1595). See Jiří Sehnal, *Cantional 1. The Czech Kancionál*, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 5, 2nd edition, London, Macmillan Publishers, 2001, p. 61.

<sup>20</sup> *Žiwot Ezopa*, Olomouc, Georg Handl, 1613. See <http://db.knihopis.org/1.dll?c11~44>.

<sup>21</sup> Ondřej Klatovský z Dalmanhorstu, *Knijžka w Českém a Německém Yazyku složená*, Olomouc, Georg Handl, 1614. See <http://db.knihopis.org/1.dll?c11~3991>.

<sup>22</sup> *Zřijzenij Zemské Margkrabstwj Morawského*, Olomouc, Georg Handl, 1604. See <http://db.knihopis.org/1.dll?c11~17920>.

4. Paralleling the first category are some volumes of Latin poetic compositions of a Humanistic nature, such as *epithalamia* or deplorations, but this time addressed to the wealthy Protestant patricians of the Olomouc town Council or of the surrounding cities.<sup>23</sup>
5. Finally, Georg Handl also published spiritual texts for the devout meditations of non-Catholic Christians: one for the Union of Brethren, one for the Lutherans and three for the Utraquists have survived up to the present day, which does not mean that such publications were not more numerous at the time.



**Figure 1**

The title-page of *Růženec Neb Zialtář Blahoslavené Rodičky Božij a wždycky Panneny Marye [...]*, Olomouc, Georg Handl, 1604 (Národní knihovna Český republiky, shelfmark 54 E 131 [the original size of the book is 18.3 × 10.9 cm]; with permission).

Varied as it is, Georg Handl’s production can be seen as unique in many ways. The Handl press innovates in technical matters, such as the use of copper engravings, which it is the first to exhibit in Moravia.<sup>24</sup> In terms of content, it comes second only to the production of the great Prague printers of the time. Indeed, with texts published in Latin, German, Czech and Hebrew, with music and engravings, with a catalogue devoted to the different confessions of the city, Handl is revealed as a master printer of his time in Moravia, and one whose production seems to offer us, on a reduced scale, the scope of production achieved only by Nigrin during the same period.

<sup>23</sup> Most important in this category are six funeral orations by the Lutheran priest Martin Svornicius Rychnovský, published by Handl between 1612 and 1615.

<sup>24</sup> See P. Voit, op. cit., p. 341.

More important for our purpose is the fact that Georg Handl was himself a Protestant. Evidence of this is provided by two facts:

1. his son Matthias had to convert to Catholicism in 1618 in order to take over his father's printing workshop;<sup>25</sup> and
2. Handl received, together with the printer Milchtaler, a reprimand from the bishop of Olomouc, Franz von Dietrichstein, in 1610 on the grounds of having printed Protestant texts.<sup>26</sup>

It is easy to link this dispute to the evolution of Handl's prints: 1610 coincides exactly with the first year in which Handl printed a book for the Union of Brethren.<sup>27</sup> The fact that in 1616, which is Georg Handl's last year of activity, the prints had resumed the exclusively Catholic nature that they had exhibited at the beginning seems to coincide, on the other hand, with the growing re-Catholicization of the province, prior to the prohibition of all printing activity in Moravia in 1623.<sup>28</sup>

### Georg Handl's prints in relation to the biography of the composer Jacob Handl

A possible link for this Georg Handl to Jacob Handl's brother is not difficult to establish. First of all, there is a perfect coincidence of dates. 1596 is the year both of the *Moralia* and of the purchase of the printing workshop in Olomouc by Handl. Although the *Moralia* were printed in Nuremberg, their foreword is signed at Prague. If the two men named Georg Handl are indeed one and the same person, we can imagine that, starting out from Nuremberg, Georg was in Prague for the dedication of the *Moralia* to the Prague Senators, but already then *en route* for Olomouc.<sup>29</sup>

The second point may be even more decisive. We know that Jacob's brother was himself a printer. In musicological studies he is referred to as an assistant to Nigrin in Prague. Evidence for this claim is, however, scant. Josef Mantuani was the first to mention the fact in 1895,<sup>30</sup> but neither he nor Dragotin Cvetko<sup>31</sup> quoted the source of information;

<sup>25</sup> See P. Voit, op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> See the City Archive in Olomouc *Knihy*, inv. n° 3, f. 123 r. For a transcription of the text and a detailed account of this incident, see Beda Dudík osb, *Geschichtliche Entwicklung des Buchdruckes in Mähren vom Jahre 1486 bis 1621*, Brno, Rudolf Rohrer, 1879, pp. 41–42; and Čeněk Zibrť, *Z dějin českého knihtiskařství k novému vydání upravil Dr. Ant. Dolenský*, Mladá Boleslav, Hejda & Zbroj, 1939, pp. 120–124.

<sup>27</sup> The *Zrcadlo poctivé a sšlechetné ženy a Hospodyně* by Jiřík Strejc Zábřežský. See *knihopis* digital <http://db.knihopis.org/l.dll?cll~16091>.

<sup>28</sup> See Josef Jíreček, *Rukověť k dějinám literatury české do konce XVIII. věku*, Praha, I. B. Tempský, 1875–1876, p. 109.

<sup>29</sup> The fact that Georg declares in the foreword that his brother died “four years ago” confirms the fact he had already left Nuremberg by the time of the publication, since he could have written this text from Prague already in 1595.

<sup>30</sup> Josip Mantuani, Biblijografičen “unicum” Gallusovih del, *Cerkveni glasbenik* 18 (1895), p. 65. For a modern edition, see Edo Škulj, *Gallusov zbornik*, Ljubljana, Družina, 1991, p. 87.

<sup>31</sup> Dragotin Cvetko, *Iacobus Händl Gallus vocatus Carniolanus*, Ljubljana, SAZU, 1991, p. 100.

nor did Waltraud Strnad in the entry for Nigrin in the penultimate edition of MGG.<sup>32</sup> If we nevertheless decide to follow these scholars’ assertions and take it as fact that Jacob’s brother worked first at the printing workshop of Nigrin (the most important printer in Prague at the end of the 16th century), and subsequently at that of Dietrich (whose printing workshop specialized in the edition of some of the most beautiful polyglot Bibles and New Testaments of the time, the so called “Nuremberg Bibles”) in Nuremberg, we cannot but conclude that Georg Handl must have acquired an outstanding capability for printing books of the most varied kind in a technically impeccable manner. And in fact, this is exactly what distinguishes the Handl prints produced in Olomouc: variety of content, polylingualism and technical mastery, while including – perhaps the most decisive argument – at least one music print.<sup>33</sup>

The fact that Georg Handl was involved in music printing is evidenced also by materials preserved in Olomouc archives. In an inventory established in 1619 we find a detailed list of typographical material of the Handl printing workshop that was sold by Matthias Handl to settle debts.<sup>34</sup> Among this material, a global figure of 179 pounds weight of “Nurnberger Noten” is mentioned; this could well refer to what Georg had brought to his Olomouc printing workshop from his previous site of activity and constitutes therefore a decisive pointer towards identifying the printer Georg Handl with Jacob Handl’s brother.

Proceeding with the enquiry, we have next to note that this relocation of a printer from Nuremberg to Olomouc provides in itself another clue towards identifying Gallus’s brother with the Moravian printer. We have here to take into account that other leading printers active in Olomouc in the 16th century, such as Johannes Günther and Friedrich Milchtaler, had likewise been active in Nuremberg prior to their settlement in the Moravian city.<sup>35</sup> The assumption that the Georg Handl mentioned in the *Moralia* is the same as the Olomouc printer is therefore made easier by the fact that this route Nuremberg-Olomouc constituted nothing surprising or unusual. It had already been travelled by two other Olomouc printers before Georg Handl.

Of course, the place Olomouc itself is rather significant in connection with a possible link to the composer Jacob Handl. It is perhaps of limited relevance to recall the fact that Gallus spent five years in Olomouc and Kroměříž as organist and Kapellmeister in the service of bishop Stanislav Pavlovský. But it seems at least interesting to observe that the Georg Handl prints mention Pavlovský as well as some other people known to Jacob Handl, such as the bishop of Prague Martin Medek and the poet Gregorius Tarco.<sup>36</sup> Even if further research proved that the Olomouc printer was in fact not Gallus’s brother,

<sup>32</sup> Waltraud Strnad, Nigrin, *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* IX, Kassel [...], Bärenreiter, 1961, col. 1531.

<sup>33</sup> The already mentioned Rozenplut *kancionál*; see note 18, above.

<sup>34</sup> See City Archives in Olomouc, *Knihy*, inv. no. 122, f. 604r–608r.

<sup>35</sup> See R. Martinčík, op. cit., p. 13; and Č. Zíbrt, op. cit., p. 125.

<sup>36</sup> Gregorius Tarco was probably related to Georgius Tarco, organist at the school of Saint Mauritius in Olomouc in 1581 and mentioned by Jiřina Holinková in *Čtyři kapitoly z dějin městské školy u Sv. Mořice v Olomouci, Dvě studie z dějin městské školy na Moravě v předbělohorském období*, Olomouc, Univerzita Palackého, 2005, p. 188.

the production of this Georg Handl would nevertheless remain useful for a study of the Olomouc environment of the composer during his sojourn in the city. As a matter of fact, the contents of Georg Handl printed books do evidence some relevant connections to the Gallus environment. We find in them:

- a) the only known portrait of bishop Pavlovský made during his lifetime;<sup>37</sup>



**Figure 2**

The portrait of Stanislas Pavlovský, bishop of Olomouc, reproduced in: Laurentius Bruyckherius, *Theses ex universa philosophia*, Olomouc, Georg Handl, 1597, f. [A1]v (detail) (Národní Knihovna Český Republiky, shelf-mark 49 C 96 (n. 2) [the original size of the illustration (portrait with frame) is 14.8 × 12.3 cm]; with permission).

- b) the musical source for a number of motets in the *Opus Musicum*, namely the *Rozenplut Catholic kancionál*;<sup>38</sup>
- c) and, finally, numerous texts whose contents unmistakably evoke the world of the *Harmoniae Morales* or the *Moralia*, such as Latin description of the gardens of the Muses and evocative animal noises.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Published in at least two prints in 1597 originating from Philippus Auerbacher and Laurentius Bruyckherius.

<sup>38</sup> See the source lists included in the *Revisionsbericht* sections at the end of each volume of the *Opus musicum* edition published in the *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich* by Josef Mantuani and Emil Bezecny, Wien, Artaria, 1899–1919.

<sup>39</sup> Of particular relevance in this context are three works composed by Jan Cautus, the *sacelli custos* of Bishop Pavlovský, all published by Handl in 1597 and 1598. In *Orpheus* (1597) Dryads appear to the poet in a wonderful garden; in *Novem heroïdes* (1597) the rivers of Moravia sing; meanwhile, the *Strenae Natalitiae* (1598) – specially offered by Cautus to Pavlovský – contain a picturesque depiction of the Christmas crib in which the ox, the goat, the donkey [...] and the cock (*gallus*) speak.



## Jacob Handl’s relationship with the printing press: the decisive years 1589–1591

What could have been the nature of the relationship of Jacob Handl himself to such an important printer, supposing that this man was the composer’s brother? If we regard our first assumption as valid, then the Georg Handl who signed the foreword to the *Moralia* was no mere modest assistant of Nigrin or Dietrich: he was a businessman of great ability, on his way to becoming one of the leading printers of the age. It is doubtful that his merit remained unnoticed prior to his settlement in Olomouc; therefore, he was most likely sought after among printers.

But we have now to consider Jacob’s point of view. Jacob mentions the printing process at least twice in some detail in his texts. First in the foreword of book II of *Opus musicum* (1587),<sup>40</sup> and subsequently in the foreword to book I of the *Harmoniae morales* (1589). This second text contains a strange sentence indeed:

I produced a few compositions that are sung and which one can hear almost every day. There would be more, if this task were not at present beyond my strength. Art is not deficient, but the strength of the printing press and the robustness of the type are broken.<sup>41</sup>

In musicological studies, this sentence has generally been interpreted as a statement that the composer experienced problems with the printing process.<sup>42</sup> This interpretation is not completely convincing, however, since the expression used by Gallus is obviously too forceful and too definite for such a vague meaning. But in association with a masterful Georg Handl as regards the printing process, and in the knowledge that the *Moralia* were indeed printed not in Prague but in Nuremberg, the sentence suddenly acquires another meaning. Could it be that this “broken” strength of the printing press is a way of alluding to Georg’s departure from Prague, thereby depriving Jacob of one of his main supports at Nigrin’s printing workshop?

This point, new as it might seem, is indeed worth considering. Gallus often refers, in his forewords, to the “Zoil!” or jealous critics who assail his reputation.<sup>43</sup> Even if this reference is an absolute *topos* of forewords, this statement becomes all the more understandable when we consider the context surrounding Handl at the Nigrin printing workshop, and especially the demand for print emanating from other composers in the late 1580s. At the time when Gallus wrote the sentence, 1589, his musical compositions were still far from being printed in their entirety. Not only the end of the *Moralia* was still unpublished, but also that of the *Opus musicum*, of which book IV had not yet appeared. Referring, significantly, at the end of this foreword to the “impatiently jealous”, Gallus was probably

<sup>40</sup> The author declares his will “not to make the typographer wait” for his compositions; see E. Škulj, *Gallusovi predgovori*, op. cit., 1991, pp. 66–67.

<sup>41</sup> “[...] dedi nonnulla, quae cantantur et audiuntur prop̄ quotidie: adderem plura, ni viribus essent hoc tempore imparia meis. Ars integra est, sed nervus praeli et typographicum robur fractum.” Text ed. in E. Škulj, *Gallusovi predgovori*, op. cit., 1991, p. 94.

<sup>42</sup> This interpretation is given notably in D. Cvetko, op. cit., 1991, p. 34.

<sup>43</sup> At the end of the foreword to *Harmoniae Morales*, the last sentence clearly states: “There is no lack of these, whose raucous voice is heard while the cock (*gallus*) crows”.

expressing the mere fact that Nigrin was under pressure from requests coming from other composers. Were these requests delayed because of the still uncompleted printing of the vast *Opus musicum* collection? This question appears worthy of mention if we consider that immediately after the completion of the *Opus musicum* Nigrin devoted his musical presses to ambitious publications, often concerned with a cyclic aspect according to the calendar.<sup>44</sup> In the list of titles given below the mentions referring to a cyclic aspect, or to the fact that the work was being printed for the first time, are indicated with expanded character spacing:

1590

Gallus [*Opus musicum* IV]Gallus [*Harmoniae morales* II–III]

1591

Crinitus z Hlávačová, *Psalmi regii vatis in odas a Davide Crinito redacti*Nucius, *Modulationes sacrae, modis musicis, quinque, et sex vocum compositae*

1592

Knöfel, *Novae melodiae, octo septem, sec et quinque harmonicis vocum numeris distinctae nec vocali solum, sed instrumentali pariter musicae accommodatae*Massaino, *Liber primus cantionum ecclesiasticorum ut vulgo motecta vocant, quatuor vocum*

1593

Sale, *Sacrarum cantionum, omnis generis instrumentis musicis, et vivae voci accommodatarum, hactenusque non editarum, I*

1594

Sale, *Officiorum missalium, quibus introitus, alleluia et communiones de omnibus omnium sanctorum, et per totum anni circulum diebus festis et solennibus quinque, et sex vocum continentur, II*

1595

Lomnický Z Budče, *Kancionál, a neb: Písň nové historické na dni obzvláštní sváteční přes celý rok*

1596

Sale, *Tripertiti operis officiorum missalium, quibus introitus [...] II*Sale, *Officiorum missalium, quibus Introitus [...] III et ultimus*

Now we have to establish a link between this situation and what happened in Nuremberg, which apparently was Georg Handl's next site of activity after Prague. In 1596 and 1597 two volumes of Handl's music were issued by Alexander Dietrich: the

<sup>44</sup> On Nigrin's musical prints, see Petr Daněk, Nototiskařská činnost Jiřího Nigrina, *Hudební věda* 24 (1987), pp. 121–136.

posthumous *Moralia* and Nigrin’s edition of *Opus musicum* book IV under a new title,<sup>45</sup> that is, precisely the two volumes left unpublished when Jacob complained of his recent typographical weakness. It is thus easy to imagine that the departure of Georg from Prague to Nuremberg had been carefully engineered between the two brothers. It seems that Georg took constant care of his brother’s work,<sup>46</sup> bringing with him to Nuremberg both the still unpublished secular compositions that would form the *Moralia* and a large portion of the unsold copies of *Opus musicum*, book IV<sup>47</sup>.

If the anxiety expressed by Jacob Handl concerning the printing process in his forewords thus becomes fully explainable, this does not necessarily help us to understand why Georg Handl left Prague for Nuremberg. An element of an answer is probably to be found in the reasons why someone like Dietrich would have needed a printer who was a former colleague of Nigrin. We have just mentioned above that Dietrich specialized in the publication of polyglot Bibles and New Testaments known as “Nuremberg Polyglot Bibles” and elaborated by Elias Hutter. These large-scale volumes were issued for the most part in 1599,<sup>48</sup> but were, of course, prepared during the previous decade. Among the several Bibles of Hutter and New Testaments published by Dietrich at the very end of the 16th century, one is a sexilingual work<sup>49</sup> that announces on its title-page that it is published [...] *Ebraice, Chaldaice, Graece, Latine, Germanice, Sclavonice*.<sup>50</sup> This *sclavonice* version of the Bible is nothing but a reprint from the Slovenian translation elaborated by Jurij Dalmatin that was published in Wittenberg in 1584<sup>51</sup> as the first

<sup>45</sup> That is, with a new title-page, bearing Dietrich’s own address in Nuremberg. On the complicated history of this Dietrich/Nigrin edition, see the article by Paweł Gancarczyk in this volume, pp. 25–33. I express my warmest thanks to Paweł Gancarczyk for having shared his research results with me.

<sup>46</sup> Either just after Jacob died or even during his last year.

<sup>47</sup> And for which Jacob was responsible, as shown by the inventory drawn up after his death. For a detailed transcription and Slovenian translation of this document, see E. Škulj, *Gallusovi predgovori*, op. cit., 1991, pp. 140–145. It would be interesting to know if the *Nürnberger Noten* material mentioned in the Olomouc Handl printing workshop in 1619 was still referring to examples of the Gallus compositions.

<sup>48</sup> These Bibles were the work of the professor of Hebrew in Leipzig, Elias Hutter (1553–1602?). On Hutter’s expensive but commercially unsuccessful contract with Dietrich for the printing of the Bibles in Nuremberg, see Stephen G. Burnett, Christian Hebrew printing in the 16th century, *Helmantica: Revista de Filología Clásica y Hebrea* 154 (2000), p. 29.

<sup>49</sup> *BIBLIA SACRA, Ebraice, Chaldaice. Graece, Latine, Germanice, Sclavonice. Studio & Labore Eliae Hutteri Germani*. Nürnberg, [Dietrich], 1599. Examples of the original print can be found in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, under the shelf-mark 2<sup>o</sup>BF 1824, and in Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, shelf-mark 41/50033. A microfiche version of the print (München, Saur, 1994) is widely available in public libraries.

<sup>50</sup> This polyglot Bible, with its imperial privilege, was a failure: it is incomplete and does not proceed further than the book of Ruth. It exists in four variants distinguished by the choice of the last of the six languages, the *sclavonice* text being replaced in the other versions by an *italice*, *saxonice* and *gallice* text, respectively. See T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, *Historical catalogue of the printed editions of the Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, London, Bible House, 1903; and a facsimile edition printed in New York (Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1963), vol. II.1, pp. 14–15 (n. 1426).

<sup>51</sup> *Biblia, tu je, vse Svetu Pismu, Stariga inu Noviga Testamenta, Slovenski tolmažena, skusi Iuria*

complete “Slovenian Bible” ever printed. Who else but a gifted *Carniolus*, i. e. Carniolan printer, could have done the proofreading necessary for the correction of this version of the Bible? Might this person have been Georg Handl Carniolus, as he signs himself in the foreword of his brother’s *Moralia*? Even if no precise document proving this has been found,<sup>52</sup> we have to admit that the coincidence is at least striking.

Attractive as Georg’s new situation might have been, it did not prevent the Protestant printer and the Catholic composer from keeping in touch, as is documented on both sides: we already mentioned that Georg gave to Dietrich in Nuremberg copies of the *Moralia*: that is, the volume that was still unpublished when he left Prague. He was probably also responsible for the transfer to the Dietrich printing workshop of a number of unsold copies of *Opus musicum* book IV as mentioned in the inventory. Conversely, Jacob received from his brother a large quantity of music prints from Nuremberg. Scholars have already noticed that all the printed music listed in the inventory of Jacob’s belongings bore a Nuremberg address.<sup>53</sup> This fact seems to coincide exactly with the presence of Georg in the Franconian city at a time when Jacob was still alive. Georg having left Prague before the printing of the Gallus’ *œuvre* was completed, his musician brother could not but bewail his “broken” typographical strength.

## Conclusion

A Protestant printer named Georg Handl achieved in Olomouc great fame and craftsmanship by developing the largest-scale printing business the city had ever known and would know for a long time. In quality, quantity, and variety Handl’s production is surpassed in the Czech lands only by that of the foremost Prague printers of the time.

We have to consider the hypothesis according to which this important printer was the brother of the composer Jacob Handl a very fruitful one. At the time when Jacob was living in Prague, his brother Georg was still an assistant to Nigrin. In the light of how important the role of such a gifted assistant would have been, this helps to explain how greatly Jacob Handl depended on Georg to publish his own work at the Nigrin printing workshop. Jacob was facing a shortage of money and his possessions were in a very poor state.<sup>54</sup> Confronted around 1588–1589 by the departure of this more than helpful brother from Prague to another, probably more rewarding site of activity, Nuremberg, he alluded to the event with a frank expression, “typographicum robur fractum”, that expressed his bitter anxiety or worse about his immediate future.

---

*Dalmatina* [...], Wittemberg, Hans Kraffts Erben, 1584. See T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, op. cit., vol. II. 3, p. 1419 (n. 8429).

<sup>52</sup> Archival documents relating to Nuremberg printers have been published in the extended study by Manfred H. Grieb, *Das Nürnberger Buchgewerbe: Buch- und Zeitungsdrucker, Verleger und Druckhändler vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Michael Diefenbacher, Nürnberg, Stadt Nürnberg, 2003. But the section concerning Alexander Dietrich (p. 74) does not mention the presence of a Georg Handl in the printing workshop, nor do the indexes of the same study.

<sup>53</sup> See E. Škulj, *Gallusovi predgovori*, op. cit., 1991, p. 149.

<sup>54</sup> As revealed by the inventory; see E. Škulj, *Gallusovi predgovori*, op. cit., 1991, pp. 140–145.

Supported financially by a powerful Catholic bishop, but at the same time having close relations with the Protestant milieu which at that time dominated the printing trade and included his own brother, Jacob Handl seems to have lived between the two worlds that were facing each other in Prague before their direct confrontation. Through his anxious allusions to the printing press, the composer expresses with lucidity his consciousness of how fragile his situation actually was. If his harmonious musical creation manifested so transparent a capacity to respond to the musical demands of both Catholic liturgy and the Protestant rite, it is probably because those different aspects of Christian spirituality were deeply and simultaneously active in the very context in which this music was conceived.

»TYPOGRAPHICUM ROBUR FRACTUM«  
ODNOS JACOBUSA HANDLA DO TISKARSTVA

Povzetek

Protestantski tiskar Georg Handl se je naselil v Olomucu leta 1597. Do leta 1616 je postal vodilni tiskar na Moravskem. V dosedanjih muzikoloških razpravah je njegovo delo ostajalo neopaženo, čeprav vrsta stvarnih podatkov pritrjuje dejstvu, da je bil tiskar dejansko brat še slavnjšege skladatelja Jacobusa Handla, imenovanega Gallus s Kranjskega. Knjige, ki jih je Georg (Jurij) Handl natisnil, so visokokakovostne, po vsebini pa so ustrezale tako potrebam jezuitske univerze in mogočnih olomuških škofov kot tudi nekatoliških bralcev (luteranov, utrakvistov in članov bratovščin) v mestu in okoliških središčih. Med Handlovimi tiski so tudi posvetni teksti za razvedrilne potrebe takratne izobražene družbe. Predpostavka, da je brat Jacobusa Handla – Gallusa istoveten z olomuškim tiskarjem, temelji tako na popolnem ujemanju datumov kot tudi na nekaterih sledih, ki jih razkrivajo najrazličnejši arhivski dokumenti v Olomucu. Zadnji povsem jasno dokazujejo to, na kar je doslej muzikološka literatura le namigovala, namreč da je bil skladateljev brat tiskar. V luči spoznanja, da je bil skladateljev brat tako pomemben tiskarski poslovnež, se lahko povsem spremeni pogled na Jacobusov odnos do tiska. Povsem jasno postane skladateljevo tarnanje o »zlomljeni« moči tiska, ki ga zasledimo v uvodu v zbirko posvetnih latinskih pesmi *Harmoniae morales*. Namig zelo verjetno govori o odhodu brata tiskarja iz Prage v Nürnberg v času, ko sta četrta knjiga motetov zbirke *Opus musicum* in posvetne *Moralia* še vedno čakali na natis. Predpostavko morda potrjuje tudi razmeroma visoko število nürnberških tiskov, ki jih je skladatelj posedoval in so bili skupaj z njegovo drugo lastnino popisani po njegovi smrti. Na neposredno povezavo z imenovanim mestom pa kažejo ne nazadnje tudi posmrtno izdaje skladateljevih del, ki jih je natisnil nürnberški tiskar Alexander Philip Dietrich.