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*Musicologica Brunensia*. 2014, vol. 49, iss. 1, pp. [175]-187

ISSN 1212-0391 (print); ISSN 2336-436X (online)

Stable URL (DOI): <https://doi.org/10.5817/MB2014-1-11>

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/130211>

Access Date: 16. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

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MICHAELA FREEMANOVÁ

**THREE POINTS OF A TRIANGLE. ITALIAN, LATIN  
AND GERMAN ORATORIOS AND SEPOLCROS  
IN THE EARLY 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CENTRAL EUROPE**

This paper could also bear the alternative title: “Oratorios on the run”. Looking for the oratorio sources in the Bohemian collections can be challenging even today – there are works, which evade the research for a long time – years and even decades. The three points of a triangle apply not only to the languages of the oratorio and sepulcro texts discussed here, but also to the regions from which these libretti stem (Bohemia, Saxony and Silesia). As a rule a clue to a riddle originating in one region lies in another country; in the process of searching, the primary triangular figure can indeed expand into a quadrangular or even pentagonal shape.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For Prague oratorio performances see especially: DLABACŽ, Gottfried Johann. *Allgemeines historisches Künstler-Lexikon*. Prag, 1815; MELIŠ, Emanuel Antonín. O pěstování oratorní hudby v Čechách v XVIII. století [Oratorio performances in 18th Century Bohemia]. *Dalibor* 1863, 6, No. 1, p. 1–2, No. 2, p. 9–10; KAMPER, Otakar. *Hudební Praha v XVIII. věku* [Music in 18th Century Prague]. Praha: Melantrich, 1935; LAUSCHMANN, Josef Jaromír. *Pražské oratorium XVIII. století* [Prague’s 18th Century Oratorio Performances], PhDiss., Praha: Univerzita Karlova, 1938; KNEIDL, Pravoslav. *Libreta italské opery v Praze v 18. století* [18<sup>th</sup> Century Prague Opera Librettos]. In *Strahovská knihovna, Sborník památníku národního písemnictví*, vol. I, Praha: Památník národního písemnictví, 1966, p. 97–131, vol. 2, Praha, 1967, p. 115–188, vol. 3, Praha, 1968, p. 190–201, vol. 4, Praha, 1969, p. 186–215; PORT, Jan: *Divadlo řádových škol a náboženských bratrstev* [The Theatre of the Monastic Schools and Church Brotherhoods]. In *Dějiny českého divadla I*, Praha: Academia, 1968, p. 167–193; BUŽGA, Jaroslav. *Einige Quellen zur Geschichte des Osteratorium in Prag und Brno und der Osterdramen aus Olomouc*. In *De musica disputationes Pragenses I*, Praha: Academia, 1972, p. 151–172; POŠTOLKA, Milan. *Libreta strahovské hudební sbírky* [The Libretti in the Strahov Music Collection]. *Miscellanea musicologica XXXV–XXVI*, Praha, 1973, p. 79–149; BERKOVEC, Jiří. *Musicalia v pražském periodickém tisku 18. století* [Music News in 18th Century Prague Periodicals], Praha: Národní knihovna ČR, 1989; FREEMANOVÁ, Michaela, Pietro Metastasio’s oratorio librettos in the Czech Lands – a document on the changes of taste in the 18th and 19th centuries. In *Händel-Jahrbuch*, Leipzig 1999, p. 270–275; id.: The librettos of the Italian oratorios in the Bohemian Lands in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In *Händel-Jahrbuch*, Leipzig 2000, p. 231–246, id.: Oratorios (and operas) by German composers in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Bohemian Lands. In *Deutschsprachiges Theater in*

In early 18th century Bohemian Lands, oratorios were produced not only in the original Italian language, but also in German and Latin translations. In 1714 and 1715, for example, Prague Jesuits published Latin and German translations of Carlo Francesco Cesarini's oratorios *Il figliuol prodigo* (Rome 1708; in Prague as *Poenitentia filii prodigi*)<sup>2</sup> and *Il Tobia* (Rome 1714; in Prague as *Constantis fiduciae messis uberior*).<sup>3</sup> In 1723 the Jesuits printed a Latin translation of Antonio Caldara's *Cristo condannato* (*Christus condemnatus*),<sup>4</sup> in 1724 they published the libretto of Antonio Lotti's oratorio *Jesus Christus In Cruce pro nobis mortuus*, which could have been originally written for Prague to a Latin text (it would not have been Lotti's first Latin sacred drama; in 1712, he composed his *Triumphus fidei* for the Venetian Ospedale dei incurabili);<sup>5</sup> in 1736 the Jesuits printed the oratorio *Sacrificium Jephthe, figura cruenti sacrificii* by the Neapolitan composer Costantino Roberto (Roberti, Ruberti).<sup>6</sup> In the Prague Kreuzherren church, a Latin version of Giuseppe Porsile's *L' esaltazione di Salomone* (*Exaltatio Salomonis in thronum regium depresso Adonia: figura exaltatii cruce Filii hominis depresso infernali Adonii*) got performed, in 1728. No libretto or score of this oratorio has survived; until now, the production is known only from the Kreuzherren Diarium Domesticum:

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Prag, Praha: Divadelní ústav, 2001, p. 195–204; id.: Italské oratorium v českých zemích na sklonku 17. a v 18. století [Italian Oratorio in Bohemia in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and in the 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries]. In *Barokní Praha – barokní Čechie 1620–1740*. Sborník příspěvků z vědecké konference o fenoménu baroka v Čechách, Praha, 24.-27. září 2001, Praha: Scriptorium, 2004, p. 87–93; id.: Oratorium v Czechach, na Morawach i v Morawskiej czesci Slaska v XVII-XLIX wieku [Oratorio in Bohemia, Moravia and Moravian Silesia in the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries]. In *Wokalistyka i pedagogika wokalna*. Tom IV., Wrocław: Akademia muzyczna im. Karola Lipińskiego we Wrocławiu, 2005, p. 219–228; SPÁČILOVÁ, Jana. Sant' Elena al Calvario: Leo, Miča, Caldara nebo Conti? Příspěvek k historii oratoria v českých zemích doby baroka [Sant' Elena al Calvario: Leo, Miča, Caldara or Conti? A Contribution to the Oratorio History in the Bohemian Lands of the Baroque Era]. *Opus Musicum*, 2009, vol. 41, No. 3, p. 25–29; FREEMANOVÁ, Michaela. Oratorios performed in the Jesuit Colleges in the Bohemian Lands, in: *Bohemia Jesuitica 1556–2006*, vol. 2, Praha: Karolinum, 2010, p. 1011–1018; id.: Johann Adolf Hasse's oratorios in the Bohemian Lands. In *Musiker-Migration und Musik-Transfer zwischen Böhmen und Sachsen im 18. Jahrhundert*, Dresden 2012, p. 28–38 ([http://www.qucosa.de/fileadmin/data/qucosa/documents/8822/Kolloquium\\_Freemanova.pdf](http://www.qucosa.de/fileadmin/data/qucosa/documents/8822/Kolloquium_Freemanova.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Prague, National Library, 52 C 20

<sup>3</sup> *Poenitentia Filii Prodigii in Lucem posita – Der verlohrene Sohn* (two German texts: *Nach dem Welschen Sing-Art in ungebundenen Reim-Saetze* (In the Italian Singing Style in free Verse), and *Andere Uebersetzung in gebundene reim-Saetze* (another in rhymed translation); *Constantis Fiduciae Messis Uberior. Der[...] mit [...] Trost-Ernde beglueckte Tobias*. Cf Prague, National Library, 52 C 45

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Prague, National Library, 52 C 20

<sup>5</sup> For Antonio Lotti's *Jesus Christus* cf. Prague, National Library, 34 C 319, 52 C 20; Gottfried Johann Dlabáč, *ibid.*, vol. II, col. 233–234. Cf. Josef Jaromír Lauschmann, *ibid.*, Příloha I. Soupis oratorií pašijového týdne [Supplement I, List of Passion Week Oratorios], p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Prague, National Library, 52 C 20

“Anno 1728. Martij 26. Oratorium perelegans productum e idiomate Italico praesente magna et copiosa nobilitate, quod Oratorium ante Annum productum erat Viennae Austriae con Sua Maesta in Aula, e autem titulis et contentum Oratorij: Exaltatio Salomonis in thronum regium depresso Adonia: figura exaltatii cruce Filii hominis depresso infernali Adonii. Erant Synopses hujus oratorio Idiomate Italico impressae 400, = 7 fl 15 kr, 10 fl 30 kr compactura, tota summa 17 fl 45 kr.”<sup>7</sup>

Several particularly interesting examples of the (perhaps) ingenious Latin libretto texts and the changes that took place in the process of translation should be named here: the anonymous *Amoris in iudicio Victoria. Oder: Die obsiegende Liebe*, performed in Prague Clementinum Jesuit college in 1717; the equally anonymous *Deus propter scelera*, performed in Prague in the church of the Kreuzherren with the Red Star in 1727; Diogenio Bigaglia’s *Passione d’Abele innocente*, mentioned in the *Diarium domesticum* of the Prague Kreuzherren in 1729; the Latin version of Leonardo Leo’s *Sant’ Elena al Calvario*, performed in the Clementinum Jesuit College in Prague in 1734.

Two libretti are known for the anonymous oratorio *Deus propter scelera populi sui mortuus* produced in 1727 by the Kreuzherren Monastery Church, but no score. According to the Kreuzherren *Diarium Domesticum* of that year,<sup>8</sup> the text of this sepolcro was written by the Order member Carolus Kořínek, at that time ‘actualis confessarius Serenissimi etc. Principis Mauriti de Saxen: Neustadt Dresda etc.’ (i.e. the confessor of the than Duke of Curland Hermann Moritz Graf von Sachsen, 1696–1750). Music was provided by an excellent musician in the services of the King of Saxony - ‘Musicam vero virtuosus quidam apud aulam Serenissimi Regis Poloniorum existens composuit’.<sup>9</sup> This work was intended for productions in Prague and in Dresden – the *Diarium Domesticum* mentions the printing of five hundred and fifty libretti, one hundred of which went to the Dresden Royal court, (‘Exemplaria latino idiomate impressa fuerent 550, centum pro Capella Regia Dresdnensi, 450 pro nostra’; the cost of printing and assembling of the libretti was eighteen gulden and thirty-six kreuzer).

The title page of the libretto of *Deus propter scelera*, published by the Prague Jesuit Clementinum printing office, offers no hint as to the direction which the researcher should take in identifying the composer: *Deus propter scelera populi sui Mortuus. Juxta illud Isaiae 53. V. 8. Propter scelsus populi meipercussi[!] eum. Musicali Dramate parentatus in ecclesia S. Francisci Sacri Militaris ordinis Crucigerorum cum rubea stella Pragae ad pedem pontis Die Parasceves hora undecima antemeridiana. Permissu superiorum. Typis Universitatis Carolo*

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Prague, National Archives, Kreuzherren Papers, book 217, *Diarium Domesticum Militaris Ordinis Crucigerorum cum Rubea Stella, Conventus & Hospitalis Domus Sancti Francisci ad pedem pontis Pragae pro Anno MDCCXXVIII*mo. [Anno 1728, Martij 26.]

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Prague, National Archives, Kreuzherren Papers, book 217, *Diarium Domesticum Militaris Ordinis Crucigerorum cum Rubea Stella, Conventus & Hospitalis Domus Sancti Francisci ad pedem pontis Pragae pro Anno MDCCXXVII*mo. [Anno 1727, Aprilis 11.]

<sup>9</sup> Carolus Kořínek wrote also another oratorio text – *Jesus Christus. Pastor bonus* (anonymous, performed in Prague in 1731; cf. Prague, National Library, 52 C 8)

*Ferdinandae in Collegio S.J. ad S. Clem.*<sup>10</sup> The clue is to be found in Dresden, where an identical copy of the same text, also published by the Prague Jesuits (*Typis Universitatis Carolo-Ferdinandae in Collegio S. J. ad S. Clem.*) is in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek. The wording of the title page of the Dresden libretto differs slightly: along with the Prague Kreuzherren *Diarium Domesticum* it suggests that this sepulcro was written for the Catholic Court Church in Dresden: *Deus propter scelera populi sui mortuus: Juxta illud Isaiae 53. v. 8. Propter scelus populi mei percussi eum. Musicali Dramate parentatus in Regia Ecclesia Dresdensi.*<sup>11</sup> No corresponding scores can be found, either in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek nor, seemingly, anywhere else. Nor is any such composition known to have been written for the Dresden Court by Antonio Lotti, Jan Dismas Zelenka, Johann Adolf Hasse, Giovanni Alberto Ristori or Johann Georg Schürer. Around 1727, Tobias Butz (in 1727) and Johann David Heinichen (1725 and 1726) did write Latin oratorios for the Dresden Court.<sup>12</sup> Generally speaking, foreign oratorios were performed in Prague between one and several more years after they were composed. Therefore, *Deus propter scelera* might have been Johann David Heinichen's work; however, no composition of his, aligning with this text is currently known.

The libretto of Leonardo Leo's *Sant' Elena al Calvario* in the National Library in Prague (1734), is a striking example of a Latin translation of Pietro Metastasio's text.<sup>13</sup> However true to the original, it lacks its poetic elegance – a feature characteristic for most of the Prague Latin and German oratorio translations. There are two additional da capo arias – *Sollicitus fossor* (inserted into the first act of the oratorio) and *Barbara dira effera* (in the second act). Both are sung by the character of the Roman woman Eudossa (alto); none of them is found in any

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Prague, National Library, 34 C 319

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Sächsische Landes Bibliothek, Hist. Sax. G 135; I am indebted for information about this libretto and further help with this research to Karl Wilhelm Geck and Ortrun Landmann.

<sup>12</sup> For the Dresden oratorio repertoire cf. HORN, Wolfgang. *Die Dresdner Hofkirchenmusik, Studien zu ihren Voraussetzungen und ihrem Repertoire*, Stuttgart: Carus Verlag, 1987; REICH, Wolfgang. Exzerpte aus dem *Diarium Missionis S. J. Dresdae*. In *Zelenka-Studien II: Referate und Materialien der 2. Internationalen Fachkonferenz Jan Dismas Zelenka*, Dresden und Prag, 1995, (herausgegeben von W. Reich und G. Gattermann), Deutsche Musik in Osten, 12, Sankt-Augustin, 1997, p. 315–375; STOCKIGT, Janice. *Jan Dismas Zelenka (1679–1745): A Bohemian Musician at the Court of Dresden*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. I am indebted for further information on Dresden oratorio performances and their listing by the Dresden Jesuit Diaries to Janice Stockigt.

<sup>13</sup> S. HELENA, in monte Calvario sollicite Crucem CRISTI quaerens, S. MACARIO EPISCOPO DUCE feliciter reperiens, Atque pignus hoc facerrimum PIETATE EXEMPLARI IN ADORATIONEM ORBI CHRISTIANO proponens, MODULIS MUSICIS adaptata per Virtuosum Dominum LEONARDUM LEO, Regiae Capellae Neapoli Musicum; exhibita AD PATIENTIS CHRISTI SEPULCHRUM SACRO PARASCEVES DIE Vetero-Pragae in Templo Societatis JESU ad Salvatorem Anno 1734. Typis Universitatis Carolo-Ferdin: in Collegio Societatis JESU ad S. Clementem. Prague, National Library, 52 C 20

of the surviving *Sant' Elena* scores, held in Berlin,<sup>14</sup> Brussels,<sup>15</sup> Dresden,<sup>16</sup> Hamburg<sup>17</sup> and Naples.<sup>18</sup> Until now, the texts of these arias were known only from two motets by Jan Dismas Zelenka – *Sollicitus fossor* (ZWV 209) and *Barbara dira effera* (ZVW 164), both currently among the holdings of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek in Dresden; no other settings of these texts by another composer are known at present. In the Dresden version, *Barbara dira effera* is extended by a recitave *Vicit leo* followed by *Alleluia*, which are missing from the Prague version; the second and third movement might have been added later for a performance in the Dresden Court Church. Both texts are related to Saint Helen's invention of the Holy Cross. *Sollicitus fossor* and *Barbara dira effera* might have been originally composed as insertions in Leonardo Leo's oratorio; if this was true, Jan Dismas Zelenka supplied Prague Jesuits with new music as late as the 1730s. There is, however, no source to support this hypothesis; further research is required here.<sup>19</sup>

Translating *Sant' Elena al Calvario* into Latin for the Prague performance in the Kreuzherren church, appears to have been a straightforward process. The Jesuit ways of approaching the same task were quite different. The date of the Prague production of the anonymous oratorio *AMORIS IN IUDICIO VICTORIA. Oder: Die obsiegende Liebe, In dem, wider das Menschliche Beschlecht, Wegen deß grausamen Christi-Mords, Von der Göttlichen Berechtigkeit anstellten Hals-Berichte*, is encoded in its title, which consists of big and small capital letters; the big capital letters form the date 1717. A note on the title page suggests the origin of the oratorio: 'Vormahls in Neapol, Anjetzo aber In der Kirchen S. Nicolai Soc: JEsu, der Koeniglichen Kleinern Statt Prag'.<sup>20</sup> Considering the fact that Italian oratorios were produced in Prague one or two years after their premiere (see

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung, Mus. ms. 12821. For this information, I am indebted to Clemens Brenneis.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België – Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Muziekafdeling – Section de la Musique, Ms II 3934 Mus Fétis 2179. For this information, I am indebted to the Library's Music service.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Musik, Mus 2460–D-4. I am indebted for his help with this research to Karl W. Geck.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Hamburg, Staats und Universitäts Bibliothek Carl von Ossietzky, Musik Abteilung, D-Hs/ND VI 2448. I am indebted for his help with this research to Juergen Neubacher.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. PDF scans of five *Sant' Elena al Calvario* scores surviving in the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di S. Pietro a Majella in Naples, at: IMSLP/Petrucci Music Library – <http://imslp.org>.

<sup>19</sup> For further information on this oratorio see FREEMANOVÁ, Michaela – STOCKIGT, Janice. Jan Dismas Zelenka and a Prague performance of *San't Elena al Calvario* by Leonardo Leo (1734): An hypothesis, in *Hudební věda* LI, 2014, forthcoming.

<sup>20</sup> *AMORIS IN IUDICIO VICTORIA. Oder: Die obsiegende Liebe, In dem, wider das Menschliche Beschlecht, Wegen deß grausamen Christi-Mords, Von der Göttlichen Berechtigkeit anstellten Hals-Berichte, Vormahls in Neapol, Anjetzo aber In der Kirchen S. Nicolai Soc: JEsu, der Koeniglichen Kleinern Statt Prag, Am H. Charfreytag Nachmittag um 12. Uhr. Zu andächtiger Betrachtung In Hoch-Teutscher Sprache Melodisch vorgestellt, Von Einer Edlen Music, Befliessenenen Compagnie.* Cf. Prague, National Library, 52 C 20.

above), the author of this work should have been Nicola Porpora, whose oratorio *IL TRIONFO DELLA DIVINA GIUSTIZIA Ne' tormenti, e morte DI GIESU CRISTO SIGNOR NOSTRO. CON GLI ACERBI DOLORI DI MARIA SEMPRE VERGINE SUA SANTISSIMA MADRE* was composed and first performed in Naples in 1716. The libretti of this work survive in Naples (the 1716 edition, published by Michele-Luigi Muzio),<sup>21</sup> and in Milan (the edition from 1725).<sup>22</sup> The only known, fragmentary score of this work, from around 1720, is in the Universitätsbibliothek Carl von Ossietzky in Hamburg. It contains only the first part of the oratorio, and, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was the property of Friedrich Chrysander.<sup>23</sup>

The opening dedication of the Prague libretto, 'An den Hoch-guenstigen, Andacht-Befliessenen Leser', explains the ways in which the original was treated to suit the requirements of the Jesuit oratorio productions:

*„Weil man sich entschlossen, nicht allein die Kunst-maessige Waelsche Sing-Art in gegenwaertigen Oratorio unveraendert zu behalten; sondern auch den Nachdruck der Waelschen Red-Art in Teutscher Sprache aus moeglichste nachzuaehnen: So hat doch dieses letztere ohne Zwang der Hoch-Teutschen Mund-Art nicht allerseits koennen bewerkstelliget werden: Sintemahl ein Vernuenftiger leicht erachten wird, wie schwer es falle, ein Poesie auß einer Sprache in die andere, mit gleichen Syllaben und Verstande, mit Obachtung zugleich der Sing-Music zu ueberbringen. So dann wird der geneygte Leser desto gutwilliger entschuldigen, wann da und dort etwelche Red-Arten wider die Reinigkeit der Teutschen Sprache, wider der Poesie und Reim-Kunst vorkommen werden. Unser Vorhaben ware allen in der Andacht zu dienen. Zu dem Ende wird diese Music den Ohren, diese wenige Blaettlein den Augen deß Andacht beflissenen Zuhoerer und Lesers dienstwillig wollen gewidmet haben.“*

In theory, the dedication suggests direct translation and usage of all music material, similar to the case of Leonardo Leo's *Sant' Elena al Calvario*. In practice, the rules of translation followed a different work pattern here, one which can also be seen in the re-working of Diogenio Bigaglia's *Passione d'Abele Innocente* (see later). The oratorio was produced 'Am H. Charfreytag Nachmittag um 12.

<sup>21</sup> IL TRIONFO DELLA DIVINA GIUSTIZIA Ne' tormenti, e morte DI GIESU CRISTO SIGNOR NOSTRO. CON GLI ACERBI DOLORI DI MARIA SEMPRE VERGINE SUA SANTISSIMA MADRE DRAMA SACRO, Da rappresentarsi nella Regal Congregazione di N. Signora de' Sette Dolori, eretta nella Real Chiesa di S. Luigi di Palazzo, in quest'anno 1716. DEDICATO All' Illustriss. Ed Eccellentiss. Signora. LA SIGNORA D. AURORA SANSEVERINO, De' Principi di Bisignano, Duchessa di Laurenzano, &c. IN NAP. 1716. Nella Stampa di Michele-Luigi Muzio. *Con Licenza de' Superiori*. Cf. Naples, Biblioteca della Società napoletana di storia patria, VII.a.8. I am indebted for the help with this research to the Società napoletana di storia patria, and Gabriele Gamba, from the Biblioteca del Conservatorio statale di musica Giuseppe Verdi, Milan, which owns a photocopy of the Naples libretto.

<sup>22</sup> *Il trionfo della divina giustizia oratorio da cantarsi nella regia ducale corte di Milano il quarto giovedì di Quaresima. Musica del sig. Nicolò Porpora, maestro di cappella di Napoli. In Milano : nella regia ducale corte, per Giuseppe Richino Malatesta stampatore regio camerale, 1725.*

Cf. Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, A<sup>10</sup>. Impronta: toue e.c. a.a, LaAh (3) 1725 (R). I am indebted for her help with this research to Laura Zumkeller.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Hamburg, Staats und Universitäts Bibliothek Carl von Ossietzky, Musik Abteilung, M A/461 (RISM 450015477). I am indebted for his help with this research to Jürgen Neubacher.

Uhr, zu andächtiger Betrachtung'. The *Interlocutori* (characters) of the original text are 'Maria, sempre vergine', 'Giustizia Divina', 'Giovanni, Apostolo', and 'Maddalena' (no music setting suggested). The Hamburg score, *Il trionfo della divina Giustizia. Oratorio a Quattro voci. Maria, Giustizia, Giovanni, e Maddalena con V.V. di Niccolo Porpora*, gives the characters as Maria [Alto], Giustizia [Canto], Giovanni [Basso] and Maddalena [Canto]. In the Prague German translation, the *Interlocutores* are 'Die Liebe – Canto', 'Das Menschliche Beschlecht, unter dem Nahmen Sünder – Alto', and 'Die Berechtigkeit – Basso'. In the original the following text is given to 'Coro':

*Per placar d'un Dio lo Sdegno,  
Soffra morte un Dio fatt' Uomo,  
E la pena d'aspro Legno,  
Prezzo sia d'infausto Pomo.*

The first verses follow, allocated to Giustizia divina

*Ecco vicina l'ora,  
In cui per ristorar gl'antichi danni  
Ch'Adamo partori; con duol profondo  
Convien, che mora in Creator del Mondo.*

This is followed by her first Aria

*Non piu superbo, no  
L'inferno ridera  
Con arrogante giubilo  
Se un tempo trionfo;  
Con ciglio mesto, e nubilo,  
Suoi danni piagera*

*Nel Rosso Mar d'Immacolato Sangue  
Fia sommerso, e sconfitto  
Il nero faraon del cupo Egitto,  
E de la Croce al gran poter superno  
Cadra , con duol eterno  
Il serpente d'Abbisso oppresso, e domo.  
Si replica: Per placar, &c.*

By contrast, the Prague version of the oratorio opens directly with the first verses of the text of the Berechtigkeit/Gerechtigkeit (the libretto uses both variants of the word):

*Nun ist Jesus am Creuz verschieden!  
Jetzt schaerff ich meine Waffen,  
Ich denck auff Rach und Straffen,  
So grausames Verbrechen  
Der Schaerffe nach zuraechen [...]*



Her first aria follows:

*O! Eisen-harte Sinnen  
Was hat ihr doch gedacht?  
Was habt ihr doch veruebet?  
Ihr stosset Den von hinnen  
In finstre Todes/Nacht,  
Der euch so treu geliebt!  
Da Capo*

The Hamburg score also omits the opening chorus, and, following the overture, introduces the Giustizia Divina directly.

From this point on, the Italian and German version differ considerably. In the German version, the part of Giovanni is omitted, and, therefore, the original quartet setting of the concluding ensembles is changed into terzettos. In the second act (Anderter Theil), the translation omits the opening dialogues between Giustizia and Maria, and Maria and Giovanni, and only introduces Giustizia's first recitative ('Ecco l'opra gia s' appresta'), i.e. Gerechtigkeit ('Und die entbrennte Rache / Kan[!] laenger nicht verweilen') and her first aria,

*Ecco gia l'orrenda tromba,  
Che rimbomba  
Di Giesu l'aspra sentenza,  
De gli Ebrei la crudelta!  
Ma volando,  
a lento volo  
D'Angeletti alato stuolo,  
Va cantando:  
Ecco il giorno di clemenza:  
Mondo afflitto, liberta*

translated as:

*Wie ein Fluß, der vorgeschlossen,  
Wann er endlich sich ergossen,  
Feld, und Auen überschwemmt,  
So wird auch mein Zorn verschoben  
Fangt er einmahl an zu toben,  
Wird er durch kein Bitt gehemmt.*

As no full score is available, it is difficult to fully assess the final shape of the Prague re-working of Nicola Porpora's *sepolcro* score. The Prague libretto suggests changes, possible replacements of original arias and ensembles by different music, relative to the performing forces available. According to its title page, the *sepolcro* was produced by music lovers (i. e. perhaps also the Jesuit College students): 'In Hoch-Teutscher Sprache Melodisch vorgestellt, Von Einer Edlen Music-Befliessenen Compagnie'.

Prague treatment of Nicola Porpora's *Il trionfo della divina giustizia* was cavalier – especially if compared to the translation of the text of Diogenio Bigaglia's

oratorio *Passione d'Abele innocente Prima Figura DI GIESU CHRISTO* (to an anonymous text; Metastasio's *La morte d'Abel* is from 1732), intended for the use of the Silesian Jesuit Colleges (up to 1742, today's Polish Silesia was part of the Bohemian Lands). Three libretti are known for this oratorio, but no score. The seemingly only existing copy of the oratorio's original libretto, produced in the Prague Kreuzherren Monastery Church in 1729,<sup>24</sup> survives in the library of the Kreuzherren monastery in Znojmo-Hradiště (Znaim, South Moravia). In the last decades it has been difficult to access, due to the 1990s restitution of the Order collections back to the Kreuzherren.<sup>25</sup> Its availability has been, however, vital for research on the second libretto, which originated in the Jesuit College in Brzeg/Brieg, Silesia, and was published by the Breslau Jesuits in 1739, and also on the third libretto, from Silesian Klodzko/Glatz. Bigaglia's oratorio was produced there in 1742 in the local parish church, administered by the Jesuits. The Klodzko libretto is in Prague, in the National Museum – Czech Museum of Music,<sup>26</sup> the Brzeg libretto is in Wrocław (Breslau).<sup>27</sup> The two Silesian libretti are not fully

<sup>24</sup> The Prague Clementinum Jesuit College printing office published for the Kreuzherren four hundred pieces of this libretto; the cost of printing and binding was altogether sixteen gulden and twenty-four kreuzer. Cf. Prague, National Archives, Kreuzherren Papers, book 217, *Diarium Domesticum Militaris Ordinis Crucigerorum cum Rubea Stella, Conventus & Hospitalis Domus Sancti Francisci ad pedem pontis Pragae pro Anno MDCCXXIXmo*. [Anno 1729, Aprilis 15.: 'Exemplaria impressa fuerant 400']

<sup>25</sup> *Passione d'Abele Innocente Prima Figura DI GIESU CHRISTO* ch'ha patito ed e morto per noi Second'il testo Heb: cap:12.v.24. Accessistis ad Testamenti novi Mediatorem JESUM, & sanguinis aspersionem melius loquentem quam Abel. Sopra di che dice S. Ireneo Lib. 4. Cap. 67. Passio Justi ab initio praefigurata in Abel, & descripta a Prophetis, perfecta e vero in novissimis temporibus in Filio DEI. ORATORIO: Cantato nella Chiesa di S. Francesco del Sac: Ordine Militare de' Crocigeri colla stella rossa in Praga Presso al ponte il giorno del Venerdi santo alle undeci Ore di Matina 1729, CON licenza de' superiori. Nella Stampria dell' Universita Car: Ferd: nell' Collegio della Compagnia di Giesu a S. Clemente. Cf. Library of the Znojmo-Hradiště Kreuzherren monastery, HY.368. I am indebted to the Hradiště Provost, Father Josef Hudec, O.Cr., for his help with this research.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Prague, National Museum-Czech Museum of Music, B 5056; FREEMANOVÁ, Michaela. Oratorios (and operas) by German composers in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Bohemian Lands, in *Deutschsprachiges Theater in Prag*, Praha: Divadelní ústav, 2001, p. 195–204; id.: Italské oratorium v českých zemích na sklonku 17. a v 18. století [Italian Oratorio in Bohemia in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and in the 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries], in *Barokní Praha – barokní Čechie 1620–1740*. Sborník příspěvků z vědecké konference o fenoménu baroka v Čechách, Praha, 24.–27. září 2001, Praha: Scriptorium, 2004, p. 87–93; id.: Oratorium v Czechach, na Morawach i v Morawskiej czesci Slaska w XVII-XLIX wieku [Oratorio in Bohemia, Moravia and Moravian Silesia in the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries] in *Wokalistyka i pedagogika wokalna. Tom IV.*, Wrocław: Akademia muzyczna im. Karola Lipińskiego we Wrocławiu, 2005, p. 219–228; id.: Oratorios performed in the Jesuit Colleges in the Bohemian Lands, in *Bohemia Jesuitica 1556–2006*, vol. 2, Praha: Karolinum, 2010, p. 1011–1018.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Wrocław, WRu-OSD, 358.181; cf. JEŽ, Tomasz. *The Jesuit Melodrama in Baroque Klodzko/Glatz*, in: *The Musical Culture of Silesia before 1742. New Contexts – New Perspectives*, eds. Paweł Gancarczyk, Lenka Hlávková-Mráčková, Remigiusz Pośpiech (Eastern European Studies in Musicology, ed. Maciej Gołąb, 1), Frankfurt am Main – Bern – Bruxelles – New York – Oxford – Warszawa – Wien: Peter Lang International Academic Publishers, 2013,

identical; their titles, *Unschuldiges Opffer Deß Vom ewigen Vatter Zum Heyl des Menschlichen Geschlechts aufgeopfferten Heylands* (Brzeg) and *Unschuldiges Opffer Deß Am Kreuz sterbenden Heylands* (Klodzko), do not correspond directly with any listed libretto of Diogenio Bigaglia's works; nevertheless, they suggest the *Passione d'Abele* as their possible model. The detailed comparison of the three libretti led to interesting results. Both versions of *Unschuldiges Opffer* are indeed free translations of *Passione d'Abele*, where Adamo (Basso) was turned into the character of Christ (Christus der Erloeser der Welt in Brzeg, Christus der Welt Heyland in Klodzko), Eva (Canto) into Die buessende Seel/e (Penitent Soul), Abelle (Alto) into Die Goettliche Barmherzigkeit (God's Mercy), and Caino (Tenore) into two characters in Brieg (Die Goettliche Lieb – God's Love and Die Gerechtigkeit - Justice), and the single character of Die Himmlische Lieb in Klodzko (Heavenly Love). The German version by the end of the first act, where in the original Abelle is killed by Caino, is shortened in both libretti; Adamo's praise of Abelle's offer, his and Eva's discovery of Caino's crime, and Caino's decision to leave his parents, in the company of Abelle's soul, are omitted. The outlines of the Italian and German version of the second act correspond fully. The Brzeg libretto text is interspersed by additional Anmuethungen (Complaints) and, linked to them, Nachdrueckliche/Nachedenckliche Schrifft-Woerter (texts taken out of the Scriptures), five of these are found in the first part and three in the second part of the oratorio. Whether or not these additions were read or sung during the performance, is difficult to determine. Apart from this feature of the Brzeg libretto, the two libretti are nearly identical; the textual differences are few and marginal.

From the point of their character, the original and the translation differ considerably. Although in terms of their subjects and literary treatment, they are still strongly related. Adamo's original first aria:

*Mi balena ogn'or sul ciglio  
 Quello strale fulminante  
 Che alla Patria m'involo  
 Così piango il reo consiglio,  
 Che d'ingrato, e d'inconstante  
 Nel mio sen l'error porto*

here is changed into Christ's warning words

*Schaut ihr Seelen und betrachtet  
 Meine Liebe nicht verachtet,  
 Schaut die tieffe Naegel-Mahl;  
 Und das Blut aus Adern wallen  
 Nach deß vatters Wohlgefallen,  
 So euch fuehrt zur Himmels-Wahl.*

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p. 187–199. I am indebted to Tomasz Jez for making available to me a copy of the Brzeg libretto.

Eva's first aria:

*Caro sposo, amato prole  
Per me siete in fidi, e rei  
Bagnerete con sudori  
E la messe e i vaghi fiori;  
E'l mio pianto in faccia al sole  
Mostrero ne' parti miei*

was transformed into Die Buessende Seel's words of atonement:

*Bittere Sorgen, vergallte Schmerzen,  
Entweichet vom Hertzen,  
Tieffes Wancken, finstre Gedancken,  
Die mich plagen, Tag und Nacht nagen,  
Seyd ferne von mir.*

By contrast, Abelle's first aria is closer to the original in subject:

*Dalla mandra un puro agnello  
Il piu candido il piu bello  
Per svegliarli scegliero.  
E d'incenso e mirra eletta  
Ardera fiamma perfetta  
Col mio cuor, che gl' offriro*

It is translated for the character of Die Goettliche Barmherzigkeit as follows:

*Wann sich ein zartes Laemmlein  
In gruenen Auen verliehrt,  
Wird es bald satt der Freude  
Verlast mit Lust die Weyde,  
Und eylet nach der Hirt,  
Thaeler und Berge muehsamdurchschreitet,  
Biß er sein irrendes Schaefflein erreicht,  
Und dasselbe den Schultern aufbuerdt.*

As in the case of the translation of Nicola Porpora's *Il trionfo della divina giustizia*, here the changes are structured not only for text's to the broad public (via translating the Italian text into German; in the well educated higher society circles, Italian was, in that time, commonly understood), but also in order to strenghten its mission (stressing the relation between the sin, its punishment, and God's mercy, rather than presenting a common Holy Sepulchre scene, directly or in the form of an allegorical play). This is another very interesting example of Jesuit translation of an Italian text into German; more about this matter (and the ways of repurposing original literary and musical works in general) may be revealed through future research.

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## ABSTRACT

### THREE POINTS OF A TRIANGLE. ITALIAN, LATIN AND GERMAN ORATORIOS AND SEPOLCROS IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY CENTRAL EUROPE

In the 18th century Bohemian Lands, the oratorios were produced not only in Italian (commonly understood, according to the period sources), but also in German and Latin; the most interesting examples here are the anonymous *Deus propter scelera* (Prague 1727), *La passione d'Abele innocente* by Diogenio Bigaglia (Prague 1729) and the Latin version of Leonardo Leo's *Sant'Elena al Calvario* (Prague 1734).

#### Key words

oratorio, 18th century, Bohemian lands

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