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Antonio Bioni and His Compositions Preserved in Kroměříž Archive

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Abstract

This study deals with Italian composer Antonio Bioni (c. 1698–?) and his compositions deposited in the Kroměříž music collection. Along with a summary of current research, it also offers new findings about his life and work. Bioni belongs to important propagators of Italian musical culture to regions beyond the Alps in the first half of the 18th century. In his life and work we can see how music centres in the first half of the 18th century – Prague, Wrocław, Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou and Vienna – were interconnected. One part of the study presents analysis of Bioni's cantata *Innocente è il mio martire*, stored in Kroměříž, which probes Bioni's compositional style.

Keywords

Antonio Bioni, Italian opera, 18th century, Prague, Kuks, Wrocław, Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou, Vienna, Count Johann Adam Questenberg, Count Franz Anton Sporck, Kroměříž music collection, musical analysis, musical-rhetorical figures, galant style

This study, dealing with Italian composer Antonio Bioni (app. 1698–?) and his compositions from the Kroměříž music collection, offers (apart from a summary of existing research about Bioni's life and work) little known information about compositions from this archives and also analysis of one of these compositions.¹

Antonio Bioni belongs to important propagators of Italian musical culture to the regions beyond the Alps in the first half of the 18th century. His journey ran from Italy to the Czech lands, where his stays in Prague, Kuks and especially in Wrocław² are documented. Bioni's name also appears in connection with musical activities in Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou and with Count Johann Adam von Questenberg. So far the last records about Bioni's life are from Vienna.³

Bioni belongs to those authors about whose lives we do not have much information and most of whose works are lost. Among period literature, Mathesson's important tract *Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte* of 1740 contains information from the time of Bioni's activities in Wrocław.⁴ In Czech musicological literature Bioni's name first appears in the writings of Vladimír Helfert.⁵ His work was followed by that of Jana Perutková, who in her new publications about musical life in Jaroměřice in the first half of the 18th century focuses also on Bioni and his operatic works, which are associated with musical activities at the court of Count Questenberg.⁶ Daniel Freeman, Stanislav Bohadlo and Milada Jonášová also turn their attention to Bioni and present new information about his stays in Prague and Kuks (the seat of Count Franz Anton Sporck).⁷ Italian opera in Silesian Wrocław is at present being analysed by Jana Spáčilová, who in her latest study deals among other things with Bioni's opera *Endimione*.⁸ Foreign musicologists who

1 The present text is an extended version of „Antonio Bioni a jeho skladby dochované v kroměřížském archivu“, which was delivered at the international musicological conference *Musica Antiqua et Musica Nova* held at the Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno, 5–7 December 2016. The author also links the text to her diploma thesis – VEVERKOVÁ, Zuzana. *Antonio Bioni a jeho kantáta Innocente v kroměřížské hudební sbírce*. Bachelor thesis (supervisor: Jana Spáčilová), Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, MU Brno 2009. Bioni and especially his opera *Issipile* is the topic of the author's dissertation thesis (the supervisor is Jana Perutková, Department of Musicology, Faculty of Arts, MU Brno).

2 Wrocław in Bioni's times was a part of Lands of the Bohemian Crown.

3 For more details see VEVERKOVÁ, Zuzana. Antonio Bioni – životní osudy a tvorba neznámého skladatele. *Opus musicum*, 2012, vol. 44, Nr. 3, pp. 38–47; and ČERNÁ, Zuzana. Antonio Bioni: „operista“ mezi Prahou, Kuksem, Vratislaví, Jaroměřicemi a Vídní. *Clavibus unitis*, Praha: Nadace pro dějiny kultury ve střední Evropě, vol. 2014, Nr. 3, pp. 151–160.

4 MATTHESON, Johann. *Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte (Hamburg 1740)*, hrsg. von Max Schneider. Graz: Akademische Druckund Verlagsanstalt, 1994, pp. 374–378.

5 HELFERT, Vladimír. *Hudební barok na českých zámcích. Jaroměřice za hraběte Jana Adama z Questenberku († 1752)*. Praha: Česká akademie císaře Františka Josefa pro vědy, slovesnost a umění, 1916.

6 PERUTKOVÁ, Jana. *František Antonín Míča ve službách hraběte Questenberga a italská opera v Jaroměřicích*. Praha: KLP – Koniasch Latin Press, 2011; PERUTKOVÁ, Jana. *Der glorreiche Nahmen Adami. Johann Adam Graf von Questenberg (1678–1752) als Förderer der italienischen Oper in Mähren*. Wien: Hollitzer Verlag, 2015.

7 FREEMAN, E. Daniel. *The Opera Theater of Count Franz Anton von Sporck in Prague*. Studies in Czech Music 2. Stuyvesant – New York: Pendragon Press, 1992. BOHADLO, Stanislav. Questenberg a Sporck – oddělené a nezávislé barokní hudební subkultury na Moravě a v Čechách? *Musicologica Brunensia*, 2011, vol. 46, Nr. 1–2, pp. 15–34. JONÁŠOVÁ, Milada. I Denzio: tre generazioni di musicisti a Venezia e a Praga. *Hudební věda*, 2008, vol. XLV, Nr. 1–2, pp. 57–114.

8 SPÁČILOVÁ, Jana. Počátky opery ve Slezsku – současný stav pramenů. *Musicologica Brunensia*, 2016, vol.

have recently published important works include Michal Bristiger and Reinhard Strohm (a newly discovered opera *Andromaca* from 1730),⁹ Hanna Schodterer (the serenata *La pace fra la virtù e la bellezza* from 1739)¹⁰ and Rashid-Sascha Pegah, who discovered hitherto unknown Bioni cantatas in the State Library of German Ansbach.¹¹

Bioni's life and career

Antonio Bioni was born in Venice probably in 1698.¹² Here he studied composition with Giovanni Porta.¹³ Altogether he had apparently written three operas in Italy before he left for the area beyond the Alps: *Climene* (1721, Chioggia), *Mitridate* (1722, Ferrara) and *Cajo Mario* (1722, Ferrara). It is wrongly assumed that his following opera is *Udine* which was premiered in Venice.¹⁴ In fact it was the opera *Climene* which had its subsequent premiere in 1722 in Udine; in the preserved text Bioni is named with the attribute “di Venezia” which might have caused the mistake.¹⁵ Before starting his career as a composer, he performed in operas as a singer.¹⁶

An important turning point in Bioni's life is the year 1724, when he came to Bohemia. He was given a contract as an opera composer by impresario, librettist and singer

51, Nr. 2, pp. 157–170. Another study which deals with Italian opera in Czech lands and mentions Bioni is SPÁČILOVÁ, Jana. Sarriho opera *Didone v Brně (1734) a její rekonstrukce pro novodobé provedení (2014)*. *Opus musicum*, 2014, vol. 46, Nr. 1, pp. 18–31.

9 BRISTIGER, Michal – STROHM, Reinhard. „Libertà, marito e trono fur miei beni...“: Die wiederentdeckte *Andromaca* von Antonio Bioni (Breslau 1730). In *Opera Subjects and European Relationships* [= Italian Opera in Central Europe, 1618–1780, Bd. 3]. Dubowy, Norbert – Herr, Corinna – Żórawska – Witkowska, Alina (eds.), Berlin: BWV, 2007, pp. 73–109.

10 SCHODTERER, Hanna. *Pietro Antonio Metastasio's Azione teatrale, La pace fra la virtù e la bellezza in Vorstellungen für den Wiener Hof von Luca Antonio Predieri und Antonio Bioni*. Master thesis (supervisor: Reinhard Strohm), Universität Wien, Wien 2011.

11 PEGAH, Rashid-Sascha. Antonio Bioni und seine „Cantate Musicali“ für Markgräfin Friderique Louise von Brandenburg-Ansbach. *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung*, 2012, roč. 72, pp. 185–198. It is an undated collection of six cantatas *Cantate Musicali* devoted to margravine Friderique Louise von Brandenburg-Ansbach.

12 This year is mentioned for the first time in FÉTIS, François Joseph. Bioni Antoine. *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*. Tome premier. Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot, 1883, p. 421.

13 WALTHER, Johann Gottfried. Bioni Antonio. *Musikalisches Lexikon oder musikalische Bibliothek 1732* / J. G. Walther; herausgegeben von Richard Schaal. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1953, pp. 94–95.

14 HANSELL, Sven – FREEMAN, E. Daniel. Bioni, Antonio. *The New Grove dictionary of music and musicians*. Volume 3, Baxter to Borosini / edited by Stanley Sadie; executive editor John Tyrrell. 2nd ed. New York: Grove, 2001, p. 602. Compare also FÉTIS, op. cit.

15 My thanks for bringing my attention to the libretto belong to Ms. Jana Perutková. The libretto is deposited in the Central National Library of Rome (I-Rn, 35. 6.B.2.5.) and is available here: https://books.google.cz/books?id=zLJpDclIX6wC&pg=PA11&lpg=PA11&dq=Antonio+Bioni+Udine&source=bl&ots=Naiepg4eA9&sig=6vsl07JKvj1uKbk-dWDCnSCp3o&hl=cs&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiVnr_pP7VAhWFOsAKHXVMDpgQ6AEIZzAJ#v=onepage&q=Antonio%20Bioni%20Udine&f=false.

16 For more details see ČERNÁ, op. cit., p. 152; Librettos of the operas in which Bioni performed are listed by SARTORI, Claudio. *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800: catalogo analitico con 16 indici*. Cuneo: Bertola & Locatelli, 1990–1994. Compare also BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit., p. 74.

Antonio Denzio, who was supposed to put together an opera company in Venice for impresario Antonio Maria Peruzzi in Prague. In March 1724 Peruzzi was granted permission from the local vice-regency to perform Italian opera in Manhardt's house in the Old Town of Prague.¹⁷ Thus, in 1724, Denzio and Peruzzi made a contract to form an opera company for Prague.¹⁸ However, following Peruzzi's agreement with Count Franz Anton Sporck in June 1724, Denzio brought the opera company first to Kuks and only in autumn 1724 to Prague.¹⁹ In both places the opera *Orlando furioso*, composed to Grazio Braccioli's libretto, was performed. The main role was sung by Antonio Denzio. However, the authorship of the opera is unclear. Besides Antonio Bioni the composer might also have been Antonio Vivaldi, who wrote this opera in 1714 and kept in touch with Denzio.²⁰ The authorship of this opera has been lately analysed by Michal Bristiger and Reinhard Strohm, who attribute the authorship to Bioni who, however, used part of the arias from Vivaldi's and Ristori's version.²¹ Czech musicologist Stanislav Bohadlo, on the other hand, believes that Bioni is the only author. He bases his belief on a remark by household poet Gottfried Benjamin Hancke, who translated the Italian libretto of the opera *Orlando furioso* into German for its performance in Kuks. In his letter to Sporck's Hofmeister, Tobias Antonin Seeman, Hancke criticizes music for the opera and attributes the authorship to Bioni.²² According to Jana Spáčilová, the authorship of at least part of the music is unquestionable and from her point of view the proof is the Brno libretto to *Orlando furioso*, which is – similarly to other librettos from that time – identical with the Prague libretto, and because the authorship of this one is assigned Vivaldi – “apart from several arias“ which were written by Bioni.²³ The opera *Orlando furioso* was perhaps a pasticcio on which both composers collaborated.²⁴ Even despite a not entirely clearly proved authorship it is obvious that this opera was very successful, and after its performance at Kuks and in Prague was also played in Wrocław (1725, 1734), in Carlsbad

17 BOHADLO, Stanislav. Antonio Denzio. *Starší divadlo v českých zemích do konce 18. století. Osobnosti a díla*, ed. A. Jakubcová. Praha: Divadelní ústav – Academia, 2007, pp. 133–137, here p. 134.

18 For more about this contract see BOHADLO, op. cit., s. 134. Original version of the contract see FREEMAN, 1992, op. cit., pp. 281–284.

19 BOHADLO, 2011, op. cit., p. 18.

20 Vivaldi's opera *Orlando furioso* from 1714 is an adaptation of a one-year older work by Giovanni Alberto Ristori. For more see SPÁČILOVÁ, Jana. Antonio Vivaldi a italská opera v Brně: *Orlando furioso* a *Tullo Ostilio* (1735). *Opus musicum*, 2008, vol. 40, Nr. 4, pp. 22–27, here pp. 25–26.

21 BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit., p. 76.

22 BOHADLO, 2011, op. cit., pp. 19–20. Compare also FREEMAN, Daniel E. *Orlando furioso* in the Bohemian Lands: Was Vivaldi's Music really used? *Informazioni e studi vivaldiani*, 14, 1993, pp. 51–73.

23 SPÁČILOVÁ, 2008, op. cit., pp. 25–26.

24 In regard to the opera *Orlando furioso*'s authorship it is necessary to point out that recently a manuscript has been discovered and Michael Talbot assigned it as an overture from opera *Orlando furioso* and as an author he indicated Bioni. The overture will be a subject of further research. The overture is stated by RISM: Bioni, Antonio. *Orlando furioso* (Excerpts). [online]. [cit. 2017-09-10]. Available at: <https://opac.rism.info/search?id=800273643>, <https://opac.rism.info/search?id=703000484>.

(summer 1726)²⁵, in Brussels (1727)²⁶, in Brno (1735)²⁷ and in Graz (1737)²⁸. Bioni's presence at these performances has not been documented so far.²⁹

An Italian opera company under impresario Peruzzi's leadership operated in Prague till 1725. Sporck's theatre opened on 23 October 1724 with the above mentioned opera *Orlando furioso*, which due to its great success was repeated during the Advent.³⁰ At the end of 1724 the Carnival season opened with the opera *L'innocenza giustificata* with music by Bioni and other composers.³¹ However, due to conflicts between Peruzzi and Denzio, in 1725 Peruzzi together with other unsatisfied members of his troupe left for Wrocław and here he founded a new opera company. According to Bohadlo, Count Sporck himself suggested establishing the Italian opera in Wrocław, largely because of Silesian aristocrats' and merchants' frequent visits to opera performances at Kuks.³² The company settled down in the Ballhouse on Breitestrasse and operated there till its end in 1734.³³ Bioni came to Wrocław no later than 1726 and worked there as a music teacher, cembalist, Kapellmeister and composer.³⁴ Before his arrival in Wrocław, his stay in Venice has been documented: there he met Antonio Vivaldi.³⁵ He also probably resided in Prague in November 1725 when his opera *Armida abbandonata* was performed.

In 1731 Bioni was named court composer to the Prince-Bishop of Breslau (Wrocław) and Archbishop-Elector of Mainz Franz Ludwig von Neuburg.³⁶ In the same year he also became an impresario in the Wrocław opera company and he led it till 1734, when it

25 The evidence of the performance is Count Sporck's letter to Karel Joseph de Grossa dated 18 July 1726; see FREEMAN, 1992, op. cit. p. 110.

26 Ibid, p. 111. In 1727 Peruzzi is documented as an impresario (BOHADLO, Stanislav – JONÁŠOVÁ, Milada. Peruzzi, Antonio Maria. *Starší divadlo v českých zemích do konce 18. století. Osobnosti a díla*, ed. A. Jakubcová. Praha: Divadelní ústav – Academia, 2007, pp. 451–452.

27 SPÁČILOVÁ, 2008, op. cit., pp. 25–26.

28 BOHADLO, 2011, op. cit., p. 18.

29 In literature there is also a note about the opera *Orlando furioso* being performed in Baden-Baden. The authors probably base this idea on Fétis (FÉTIS, op. cit., p. 421) who states that Bioni composed *Orlando furioso* already in 1723 and in 1724, before its performance in Prague, it had been played in Baden-Baden. However, in the original version Fétis mentions "Bade" which can mean that he was referring to Kuks, a spa city.

30 BOHADLO, 2007, op. cit., p. 135.

31 It was a pasticcio in which Bioni composed 11 out of 28 music pieces and also some recitatives; the other music was composed by Fioré, Vivaldi, Capelli, Porta and Gasparini (BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit., p. 76).

32 BOHADLO, 2011, op. cit., p. 20.

33 More about Italian opera in Wrocław: MATTHESON, SPÁČILOVÁ 2016 and WĘGRZYN – KLISOWSKA, Walentyna. *Barokowy teatr operowy we Wrocławiu 1725–1734*. Wrocław: Polskie Stowarzyszenie Pedagogów Śpiewu, 2006.

34 According to Borchardt Bioni made his début in Wrocław with opera *Armida abandonata* in May 1726 (BORCHERDT, Hans Heinrich. *Geschichte der italienischen Oper in Breslau. Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte Schlesiens*. 1910, vol. 44. pp. 18–51, here p. 27). Mathesson introduces Bioni only in connection with his own opera *Armida al Campo*'s performance in June 1726 : „[...]„Signore Bioni kam nunmehr selbst nach Breslau, und verfertigte die Composition sehr glücklich dazu, spielte auch selber den ersten Clavicimbel.“ (MATTHESON, op. cit., p. 375).

35 BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit., pp. 74–75.

36 BORCHERDT, op. cit., p. 37.

closed for financial reasons.³⁷ In Wrocław Bioni composed 24 out of his 42 operas; these were performed in Wrocław between 1725 and 1734.³⁸

During his activities in Wrocław Bioni kept up contacts not only with Prague but also with Vienna. In 1727 at the Kärntnertortheater, Bioni's opera *Endimione*, written for Wrocław, was performed.³⁹ In 1729 Bioni might have been present in Vienna as well, namely for the premiere of his opera *I cacciatori feriti d'amore*, which was also performed in the Kärntnertortheater.⁴⁰ Bioni's stays in Prague are then documented in 1727⁴¹, 1730⁴² and in summer or autumn of 1734, when Bioni unsuccessfully tried to obtain permission to perform operas.⁴³ Likely, however not documented, is his presence for the introduction of his operas in Sporck's theatre in Prague – *Il ritorno del figlio con l'abito più approvato* (pasticcio, carnival 1730)⁴⁴ and *Adone* (pastorale per musica, carnival 1731).

After the break-up of the opera company, in the period of 1734–1738, there are no clear records about Bioni. It is only known that by 1738 he kept a flat in Wrocław,⁴⁵ presumably in case he succeeded in re-establishing the opera company. It is possible that he also traveled to Jaroměřice nad Rokytinou, the seat of the Italian opera lover Count Johann Adam Questenberg. In 1737 the opera *Issipile* was performed here and its music was most likely composed by Bioni.⁴⁶ If this was true, then it is possible that Bioni was at the premiere in Jaroměřice in person. However, there is no definite evidence. There are just some notes in the correspondence of Count Questenberg with Jaroměřice administrators about studying *Issipile*, from which we find out that in autumn 1737 this opera was being prepared together with *Merope* by Riccardo Broschi, and that their performances are believed to have been attended by an Abbe from Venice who would probably have been able to grasp the sense of music.⁴⁷ The opera *Issipile* was written by Bioni for Wrocław, where it was first introduced in autumn 1732. It is a dramma per musica to Pietro Metastasio's libretto. Furthermore, *Issipile* is Bioni's only completely preserved opera. The unique score

37 For the reasons for the end of opera in Wrocław see BORCHERDT, op. cit., p. 40.

38 For the list of performed operas in Wrocław in 1725 – 1734 see SPÁČILOVÁ, 2016, op. cit., pp. 165–167. Also compare MATTHESON, op. cit., pp. 374–378.

39 BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit., p. 82.

40 PERUTKOVÁ, 2015, op. cit., p. 208. Both Italian and German librettos have been preserved. The German libretto is in Heinrich Rademin's translation (*Die von der Liebe verwundete Jäger*). Both librettos are deposited in the Harvard University library in the USA (US-CAh): GC7 A100 B750 vol. 114 No. 870, GC7 A100 B750 vol. 123. Thank to Jana Spáčilová for bringing the Italian libretto to my attention.

41 This stay has been documented thanks to calendar entries of Sporck's household steward Tobias Anton Seeman (BOHADLO, 2011, op. cit., p. 21–23.). It arises from these entries that Bioni left Prague for Kuks and then for Wrocław (Ibid., p. 22).

42 Milada Jonášová has found out that Bioni was a godfather at the baptism of Giovanni Antonio Guerra's son. Guerra was a singer and an occasional composer in Denzio's company. This baptism was held on 2 December 1730 in Prague (JONÁŠOVÁ, op. cit., p. 89).

43 FREEMAN, 1992, op. cit., p. 67.

44 Other authors are Mancini and Lucchini.

45 BORCHERDT, op. cit., p. 41.

46 PERUTKOVÁ, 2011, op. cit., p. 51.

47 PERUTKOVÁ, 2015, op. cit., p. 484.

originally from the possession of Count Questenberg is deposited in Vienna.⁴⁸ A libretto was preserved only from the Wrocław performance in 1732 and is deposited in Milan.⁴⁹ Thanks to Helfert we also know that apart from *Issipile* Count Questenberg owned copies of Bioni's operas *Engelberta* and *Griselda*, which according to Mattheson was a pasticcio.⁵⁰

Between 1738 and 1739 Bioni resided in Vienna.⁵¹ In 1738, his opera *Girita* was performed at the Kärntnertheater. Dates of its performances are known due to letters of Georg Adam Hoffmann, Count Questenberg's household steward.⁵² Bioni perhaps might have aspired to a position at the imperial court. This is indicated by the fact that in the Department of Music of the Austrian National Library in Vienna there is a score of Bioni's serenata *La pace fra la virtù e la bellezza* from 1739.⁵³ It is a serenata à 5 voci con stromenti, in which Bioni is reported to be both the composer and also a singer.⁵⁴ In other parts there were amateur women singers from important aristocrat families, as is apparent from the score's dedication.⁵⁵ It is interesting that in October 1738 in Vienna a serenata with the same title by Italian composer Luca Antonio Predieri was performed; Predieri came from Italy to Vienna in 1737 and in 1739 he attained a position of Vice-Kapellmeister at the imperial court. Both compositions were written to the eponymous libretto by Pietro Metastasio, and both were dedicated to archduchess Maria Theresia.⁵⁶ Thus at the same time two composers set the same libretto to music for the same occasion. Maybe it was a sort of competition for the position of Vice-Kapellmeister, which was finally given not to Bioni but to Predieri. Vienna is also the last place of Bioni's activities about which we have some information. Thanks to Rashid-Sasha Pegah we know that in 1741 Bioni was still in Vienna. In his study, which deals with a newly discovered collection of six Bioni cantatas, Pegah cites entries from the diary of Duke Anton Ulrich von Sachsen-Meiningen-Coburg.⁵⁷ The Duke refers to Bioni as a successful organizer of concerts in Vienna; the last reference about him comes from 16 March 1741.⁵⁸ These memoirs provide the last known evidence of Bioni's life so far.⁵⁹

48 A-Wgm, IV 27740 (Q1214); see also PERUTKOVÁ, 2011, op. cit., p. 51 and p. 93.

49 I-Mb, Racc.dram.5675/002; SARTORI, op. cit., III, [E-K], p. 50.

50 HELFERT, op. cit., pp. 204–205. „Zusammengestellt aus Werken von Boniventi, Caldara, Capelli, Gasparini, Giacomelli, Händel, Orlandini, Porpora, Porta, Sarro, Giovanni Verocai (Violinist der Breslauer Oper), Vinci und Vivaldi“ (MATTHESON, op. cit., p. 376).

51 For more details see ČERNÁ, op. cit., p. 156–157.

52 PERUTKOVÁ, 2011, op. cit., p. 51.

53 A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 16516.

54 For more details see ČERNÁ, op. cit., p. 152. Compare also SCHODTERER, op. cit.

55 „...nuova mia composizione musicale, che sarà cantata da persone nobili di detta città...“ For more information about the performance see SCHODTERER, op. cit., pp. 96–101.

56 Settings of Metastasio's text to music by Predieri and Bioni are discussed in a master's thesis by Hanna Schodterer, who deals with the situation around creating both works; she compares and analyses (SCHODTERER, op. cit.).

57 PEGAH, op. cit., pp. 188–189.

58 „Vom 16. März 1741, einem Donnerstag, datiert die letzte Notiz, die Bioni erwähnt: „Auch hat Bioni Mich auf den Morgenenden Abend Zu einer Music eingeladen“ (PEGAH, op. cit., p. 189).

59 The last reference about Bioni in opera bibliography is connected with the pasticcio *Siroe re di Persia*,

Bioni's work

Bioni became famous primarily as an opera composer. It is known from the sources that he is the author of 35 operatic works.⁶⁰ However, only the opera *Issipile*, the serenata *La pace fra la virtù e la bellezza*, 23 arias and 1 duet from the opera *Andromaca*⁶¹ and the overture from the opera *Orlando furioso*⁶² have been preserved. Jana Spáčilová has newly identified four arias deposited in German Schwerin as arias from Bioni's opera *Endimione*.⁶³ Apart from operatic works, Bioni is also the author of other compositional genres (duet, mass, cantata).⁶⁴ From altogether 23 preserved compositions of various genres (RISM at present files 18),⁶⁵ 7 are deposited in Czech archives.⁶⁶ Three compositions are deposited in Prague (2 sacred arias and an overture D major),⁶⁷ and four compositions in Kroměříž.

Bioni's compositions deposited in the music archive of the Archdiocesan Museum in Kroměříž

In the music archive of the Archdiocesan Museum in Kroměříž there are three Bioni cantatas and one aria. The compositions belong to "the original chateau collection" (Původní zámecká sbírka) and in world musicological literature there are no references to them. In Czech musicological literature, they are first mentioned in Pazdírek's music dictionary of 1937, where the entry about Bioni was created by Brno musicologist Gracian Černušák.⁶⁸ Apart from the diploma thesis written by the author of this study⁶⁹, the existence of Bioni's Kroměříž compositions have been noticed by Jana Spáčilová.⁷⁰

introduced in 1767 in the summer exhibition at Brunswick (Braunschweige Sommermesse) with arias by Bioni, Händel, Vinci, Wagenseil, Hasse and Vivaldi (BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit., p. 77).

60 See ČERNÁ, op. cit., pp. 158–159 (Appendix 1: Bioni's opera works). In the table there is opera *Udine*, which is a mistake and opera *I cacciatori feriti d'amore* is missing.

61 PL-KÓ, BK 1669; The opera was discovered by Polish musicologist Michał Bristiger (BRISTIGER, Michał: „Liberta, marito e troni fur miei beni...” – odzyskana „L'Andromaca” Antonio Bioniego (1730). In týž: *Mysł muzyczna: studia wybrane*. Warszawa: Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 2001, pp. 289–296). In 2005 there was a world opera's second run in Kuks (<http://www.pavlafrassova.cz/clanky/101-andromache> or <http://www.bohadlo.cz/stan/kuks/2005.htm>). Other literature: WEGRZYN – KLISOWSKA, op. cit., pp. 100–102, BRISTIGER – STROHM, op. cit.

62 B-Bc, 34108; GB-Ob, Ms. Mus. e. 36.

63 D-SWl, Mus.4721; SPÁČILOVÁ, 2016, op. cit., pp. 161–162.

64 For more details see ČERNÁ, op. cit., p. 160 (Appendix 2b: Bioni's compositions preserved abroad).

65 RISM. *Online Catalogue of Musical Sources*. [online]. Bioni, Antonio [cit. 2017-09-13]. Available from: <http://www.rism.info/en/service/opac-search.html>.

66 See ČERNÁ, op. cit., p. 159 (Appendix 2a: Bioni's compositions preserved in the Czech Republic).

67 Aria *Pulchra Jesu Cordis Stella/Gemma* – CZ-Pu, 59R4501; aria *Exulte coelum plaude jubila* (Aria de Nomine Jesu aut pro omni Tempore) – CZ-Pnm, Hr 372; *Ouverture D dur* – CZ-Pnm, XXXIV C 218.

68 ČERNUŠÁK, Gracian. Bioni, Antonio. *Pazdírkův hudební slovník naučný*. Část osobní. II., Svazek prvý. A–K. / redaktoři Gr. Černušák a Vlad. Helfert. Brno: Nákladem Ol. Pazdířka, 1937, p. 80. However it is stated here that in the collection there are three arias and cantata *Innocente* by Bioni.

69 VEVERKOVÁ, 2009, op. cit.

All three cantatas consist of two da capo arias connected by recitative. They are written for soprano, string instruments and basso continuo.

- 1) **cantata *Se non poss'io*** (with recitative semplice)⁷¹
- 2) **cantata *Innocente è il mio martire*** (with recitative con stromenti)⁷²
- 3) **cantata *Se non ti moro à lato*** (with recitative con stromenti)⁷³

The cantatas show the same hand-writing, they are written on the same paper, and are identical in format, size and ordering of parts. The paper also preserves, apart from one exception,⁷⁴ the same watermarks – the character of Justice, a rectangle with letters W M S, a heart with an anchor and letters I, C, T, and a leaping stag with antlers.⁷⁵ These cantatas are evidently related by these signs and without doubt share the same provenance and the same date. However, the provenance and the copyist's hand have not been ascertained so far as well as the cantatas' dating.⁷⁶ In the case of the cantata *Se non ti moro à lato* must be noted that the text of the first aria from this cantata is taken from the Metastasio's libretto *Adriano in Siria* (1732, Vienna, I/15).⁷⁷

Entirely different from the above mentioned cantatas is the **aria *De tanti fidi amanti***.⁷⁸ It is a da capo aria for tenor, string instruments and basso continuo. This aria has a different hand-writing, as well as watermarks (half-moons and letters A, Z, between which is a shamrock) and colour of the paper. The dating and original provenance are likewise unknown.

In connection with specifying the provenance and dating there appears to be a question as to how the cantatas and the aria came to Kroměříž archive.⁷⁹ One hypothesis arises from Bioni's biographical data. As stated above, between 1734 and 1738 there is no reliable information about Bioni. It is possible that the cantatas might have been written for the Bishop of Olomouc, Wolfgang Hannibal von Schrattenbach (died 1738). Since at that time Bioni did not have a permanent position, the bishop might have asked

70 SPÁČILOVÁ, 2015, op., cit., p. 98.

71 CZ-KRa, A 4101 (former sign. V.B.9.).

72 CZ-KRa, A 4102 (former sign. V.B.10.).

73 CZ-KRa, A 4103 (former sign. V.B.11.).

74 It is a filigree with a stag, which in the cantata *Se non ti moro à lato* also has an ornamented shield with letters P and M.

75 For more details see VEVERKOVÁ, 2009, op. cit., pp. 30–32.

76 In the archive of the Prague Conservatory of music there are modern copies of Bioni's Kroměříž compositions, deposited under book numbers A-I-R 553, A-I-R 554, A-I-R 555, A-I-R 556 (the author's attention to this fact was drawn by Robert Hugo). The author of the copies is Jaroslav Krupka (1893–1929) who worked at Prague Conservatory as a professor of music and archivist since 1919.

77 This opera was performed in 1737 in Vyškov under the name J. A. Hasse. In fact, it was a pasticcio. For more details see SPÁČILOVÁ, Jana. *Hudba na dvoře olomouckého biskupa Schrattenbacha (1711–1738). Příspěvek k libretistice barokní opery a oratoria*. Dissertation thesis. Brno: Faculty of Arts, MU, 2006, pp. 118–120. My thanks for bringing my attention to the opera *Adriano in Siria* belong to Ms. Jana Spáčilová.

78 CZ-Kra, A 4100 (former sign. V.B.8.).

79 Ibid, p. 33.

for a job of a musician in this way. Apart from the deposit of Bioni's compositions in Kroměříž no other relation to this town has been proved, but the possibility of an exceptional status, which Italian artists had at Bishop Schrattenbach's court, is highly likely.⁸⁰ Hopefully this question will be answered in the course of further research.

The cantata *Innocente è il mio martire* – musical analysis

For the analysis through which Bioni's compositional style will be demonstrated, we have chosen the cantata *Innocente è il mio martire*, whose score the author created for her diploma thesis.⁸¹

The cantata is written for soprano, two violins, viola and continuo. It consists of two da capo arias and recitative con stromenti. The aria *Innocente è il mio martire* is 73 bars long, the recitative contains 26 bars, and the aria *Crudo ciel* contains 169 bars. The manuscript of the cantata has 19 sheets altogether and consists of three parts – the cover with the composition's title and composer's name and signature, then a partitello for vocal and basso continuo, and individual instrumental parts.

The anonymous text of the cantata is in its structure and contents typical for the time of its origin; it was the time when secular cantata creation was very similar to operatic creation, so in fact it follows the same rules. For recitative and aria Italian meter is very important. Recitative is created by non-rhymed verses which have 7 or 11 syllables; in arias all the verses are rhymed according to a certain rhyme structure. To be concrete, in the first aria the structure is A A B A A C B (number of syllables – 8 8 7 8 8 8 6 7). In the text of the cantata there are several grammar and semantic mistakes that would not have been made by a native Italian, therefore the possibility that it is Bioni's autograph can be excluded. The copyist obviously came from the regions beyond the Alps, most probably from the Habsburg monarchy.⁸²

The vocal part ranges from d¹ to a², which is a common soprano range. From the technical point of view, coloratura passages are considered especially difficult. Concerning ornaments, in several places there are trills and appoggiaturas. To sum it up, the cantata is for technically advanced singers.

Aria *Innocente è il mio martire*

Innocente è il mio martire

Che con pena di morire

L'alma mia viver non sà.

Tutto pieno di terrore

Spasimato sento il core,

80 SPÁČILOVÁ, 2015, op. cit., p. 98. So far evidence of contact with Bishop Schrattenbach is not known. In Jana Spáčilová's dissertation thesis, which deals with music at his court, Bioni's name is not mentioned. (SPÁČILOVÁ, 2006, op. cit.)

81 VEVERKOVÁ, op. cit.

82 The Wrocław origin of cantatas is discussed in Jana Spáčilová's study – SPÁČILOVÁ 2015, op. cit., p. 98.

*Dà timore, da dolore
Qual pena che sia
Più dir non sò, nò, non sò.*

It is a two-part da capo aria in which parts A and B are in distinctive disproportion in the number of bars (part A = 60 bars, part B = 13 bars). The aria is composed in D major. According to Johann Mattheson,⁸³ the key of D major is rather sharp, stubborn and appropriate for noisy, merry, military and encouraging affairs.⁸⁴ However, the text of the aria expresses pain and suffering, which is not too much in accordance with the key characteristics.

The aria is opened by an instrumental ritornello in D major which introduces basic motives that are repeated during the whole of part A. The most distinctive is a motive of broken descending and ascending five- and six-three chords in sixteenth-note triplets; this is one of the characteristic features of galant style in opera.⁸⁵ The main melody of the introductory ritornello is assigned to the first and second violin parts which proceed in unison. Viola and basso continuo play in the same rhythmic values and have an accompanying function.

A tempo giusto

Example No. 1 - introductory instrumental ritornello⁸⁶

83 MATTHESON, Johann. *Die drei Orchestre-Schriften*. I, Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre. 3. Aufl. Laaber: Laaber, 2007, pp. 242–243.

84 „D. dur. ist von Natur etwas scharff und eigensinnig; zum Lermen / lustigen / kriegerischen / und auffmunternden Sachen wol am allerbequemsten; doch wird zugleich niemand in Abrede seyn / daß nicht auch dieser harte Tohn [...] / gar artige und frembde Anleitung zu delicaten Sachen geben könne.“ Ibid, pp. 242–243.

85 PERUTKOVÁ, Jana. Problematika galantního stylu ve světle dobových pramenů (s bližším zaměřením na hudebně dramatickou tvorbu). *Musicologica Brunensia*, 2011, vol. 46, Nr. 1., pp. 127–139.

86 I would like to thank Pavel Trkan for helping me to create the music examples.

In bar 10 the vocal part begins and is accompanied by the first violin, viola and basso continuo which play repeated pulsating eighth notes (*Trommelbass*) often used by composers showing their first released works in Napoli. The second violin plays the triplet motive from the ritornello. After the first verse (*Innocente è il mio martire*) there comes a short instrumental ritornello – again the introductory triplet theme in D major.

10

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

C.

Bc.

In - - no - - cen - - te

Example No. 2 – beginning of the vocal part

In bars 15–18 two remaining verses are heard (*Che con pena di morire, L'alma mia viver non sà*) with the above mentioned accompaniment. The main melody is assigned to the second violin without basso continuo accompaniment so that the importance of the text can emerge even more (after all my soul cannot live with the deadly pain). The lyrics *pena di morire* (deadly pain) are harmoniously highlighted by minor keys – e minor and b minor (bars 15–16).

15

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

C.

Bc.

che con pe - na di mo - ri - re

Example No. 3 – setting text “*che con pena di morire*” to music

In bars 19–20 the verse *l'alma mia viver non sà* (my soul cannot live) is repeated; from the point of view of affect, this can be considered the key verse of the whole aria. To reflect the meaning of these words, the melody is descending and uses syncopation. The vocal part is in unison with the first violin.

19

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

C.

Bc.

non sà, vi-ver fal - ma mia vi-ver non sà, che con

Example No. 4 - setting text "*l'alma mia viver non sà*" to music

Then a repetition of the two last verses follows, while the verse *l'alma mia viver non sà* is repeated again. In bar 25 there is a great intervallic skip (e^1 - g^2 sharp) – *exclamatio*.

25

fal - ma mi - a vi -

Example No. 5 - *exclamatio* on the word "*mia*"

The word *l'alma* (soul) in bars 28–30 is highlighted by ascending coloratura composed of triplets. The ascending direction of the coloratura undoubtedly expresses the meaning of the word "soul" (meaning "to rise above the body").

28

ver non sà, fal - ma

Example No. 6 - coloratura on the word "*l'alma*"

The first part of piece A is divided from the second part again by the motive from the introductory ritornello in A major. After that the whole text of piece A is sung more or less with the motives from the first part. However, the vocal part is more orna-

mental (ornaments, faster values, inserted tones). In bar 36 there is *exclamatio* on the word *martire*.



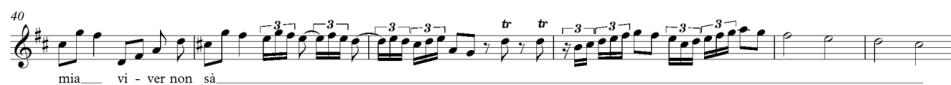
Example No. 7 - exclamatio on the word "martire"

In bar 38 there are appoggiaturas which complete the text *pena di morire* (fatal pain) with elements characteristic for lament, crying, voice trembling etc.



Example No. 8 - appoggiaturas on words "pena di morire"

In the following bars there is a large coloratura passage composed of sixteen triplets and using trills on the word *non sà* (it cannot manage). The coloratura is accompanied only by basso continuo, which makes it even more distinctive.



Example No. 9 - coloratura on word "non sà"

In part B, which is in the relative key of b minor (according to Mattheson, a bizarre, cheerless and melancholic key),⁸⁷ the vocal part starts with the accompaniment of the first violin, viola and basso continuo, which move in eighth notes. The second violin plays a moderately changed triplet motive from the previous part. Starting from the words *di terrore* (bar 63) the accompaniment strikingly changes. This change without doubt relates to the text *di terrore, spasimato sento il core, dà timore, da dolore* (I can feel my heart tormented with horror; it causes fear, it causes pain).

87 „H.moll. ist bizarre, unlustig und melancholisch; deswegen er auch selten zum Vorschein kommt / und mag solches vielleicht die Ursache seyn / warum ihn die Alten aus ihren Clöstern und Zellen so gar verbannet haben / daß sie sich auch seiner nicht einmahl erinnern mögen.“ MATTHESON, 2007, op. cit., pp. 250–251.

Example No. 10 – beginning of part B with the change on the word “*di terrore*”

The viola and second violin play sixteenth-note figures based on broken intervals in very fast tempo (bars 65–67). The tension and tragic nature are escalated by ostinato accompaniment in the basso continuo. The meaning of the text is underlined by modulations (from b minor to F sharp major, then to D major and G major and finally to A major and D major) and by including descending chromaticism in the first violin part (bars 66–67). After the word *dolore* (pain) the first violin plays ascending *tirata* (bar 68).

Example No. 11 – ostinato accompaniment by basso continuo, chromaticism in the part of the first violin, *tirata*

The closing of part B brings a general mollification of the music. The whole of part B is, with regard to the text, highly dramatic and thus it contrasts with part A.

Recitative

*Almen dormendo, oh Dei,
 Concedetemi, sì, per picciol che sia
 Riposo all'alma mia.
 [Che] languido il volto, pallido il labbro,
 E poi confuso il core
 L'alma mia allor così vivendo more.
 Se volgo agl'occhi il sonno,
 Larve, [e] terrori tremo,
 Furie di Lete io veggio, e mi spavento:
 Povero afflitto core,
 Soccorer non ti posso,
 E pur penare io deggio.*

The recitative con stromenti has altogether 26 bars, starting in g minor and staying in minor mode. In bars 1–11 the vocal part is accompanied only by basso continuo and from the 11th bar the orchestra starts playing. Right in the first and second bars there is an *exclamatio* on words *oh Dei*.

C. *Al-men dor-men-do, oh De - i, con-ce-de - te-mi, sì, per pic - ciol che sia ri - po - so*

Bc

Example No. 12 – beginning of the recitative, exclamatio on words “oh Dei”

Then, in the following bars there are sixth, seventh and octave leaps in the vocal part; some of the sevenths are diminished (e. g. bar 4 – diminished seventh). From bar 11 the violins play in unison a broken sequence of descending chords and inversions in B-flat major. The dramatic climax of the whole recitative comes in bars 14–17 during the words *larve, terrori tremo* (I am shuddering when seeing horrors and phantoms). Then, in bars 15–17 there are dissonant skips both up and down (*saltus duriusculus*). In addition, all of this part is intensified by chromatic movement in the first and second violins, putting stress on the word *tremo* (I am shuddering).

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
C.
Bc.

vol-go agf oc-chi il son-no, lar-ve, ter-ro-ri, ter-ro-ri tre-mo, tre-mo, fu rie di

Example No. 13 – dramatic climax on words “*larve, terrori tremo*”, saltus duriusculus, chromatics

Between bars 17 and 18 in the vocal part there is an interval of a diminished fourth downward (*saltus duriusculus*) on the words *di Lete*, which underlines the meaning of this word (Lete – chthonian river Léthé).

17

tre - mo, fu - rie di Le - te io veg - gio,

Example No. 14 – saltus duriusculus on words “*di Lete*”

On the word *spavento* (I dread) there is a descending sixteenth-note coloratura with accompaniment only of basso continuo. In addition, the coloratura ends with a trill indicating trembling, which emphasizes the onomatopoeic potential of the discussed word even more (bars 19–20).

19

e mi spa-ven - - - - - to:

Example No. 15 – coloratura on word “*spavento*”

Then the orchestra starts playing a variation on the above mentioned motive in B-flat major with chromaticism (bars 21–22).

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Bass. The score is for bars 21 and 22. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The time signature is not explicitly shown but appears to be common time. The Cello part has a 'to:' marking below it. The score shows chromaticism in the bass line and other parts.

Example No. 16 - chromaticism in bars 21-22

After that comes a softening, with chords held by individual instruments, and a general sense of conciliation which results from the text – *Soccorer non ti posso, e pur penare io deggio* (I can't help you and yet I have to suffer). The recitative thus ends apologetically in G major, subdominant to the following D major.

Aria Crudo Ciel

*Crudo/giusto Ciel, mà dimmi quando,
Del mio cor che stà penando,
Se tu avrai di lui pietà.*

*Tropo acerbe le mie pene,
Quanto dure le catene,
Se non conforti l'alma
Che fuor di me sen stà.*

This aria, with 169 bars, is the longest part of the whole cantata. Part A is in strong disproportion with part B. The aria is again in D major. The character is moderate and serene. The beginning of the aria is imitative. Its motive is based on an eighth-note ostinato in a chromatically descending sequence. In bar 4 the first violin plays figurations in dotted rhythm which might remind one of sighs (*Seufzer*). The general mood of the introductory ritornello corresponds with the text and meaning of the whole aria.

A tempo giusto

Example No. 17 – beginning of the aria

In bars 9–10 only violins play in unison a broken D-major chord in slow rhythmic values. Starting at bar 11, viola and basso continuo join in. This motive then appears with the entrance of the vocal part. In bar 16 the introductory ostinato motive starts again, and in bars 22–27 it finishes with a broken D-major chord. The vocal part enters without any accompaniment in bar 28 on a broken, ascending D-major five-three chord, with the text *Crudo Ciel* (cruel heaven).

Example No. 18 – entrance of the vocal part

In bars 44–45 on the words *giusto Ciel* (just heaven) all the parts are written in unison and again the ascending broken five-three chord is used (movement upwards, to heaven).

Example No. 19 - unison in all the parts

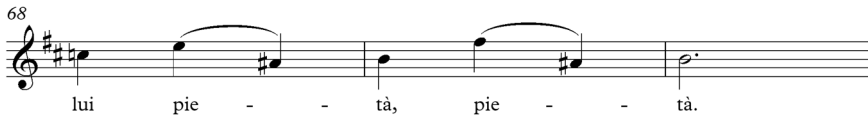
In the following bars (46–55), when the first verse is repeated (however, instead of *crudo Ciel* we hear *giusto Ciel*), the vocal part proceeds in quarter-note values in unison with the second violin. Basso continuo goes up in semitones in minims, in the same way as the viola. In the vocal part and second violin there are syncopes and melodic movement, which is repeated more times and is posed on the next scale degree (*climax*, bars 49–55). On the word *penando* (it suffers) there is a short coloratura (bars 53–55), which is accompanied by a chromatic sequence downwards in the first violin.

Example No. 20 - climax (bars 49 - 55), coloratura on the word "penando"

The text is consequently repeated and on the word *penando* coloratura is used again – this time more extensively (bars 59–63).

Example No. 21 - coloratura on the word "penando"

Then comes the verse *se tu avrai di lui pietà* (I wonder if you feel for him) when the word *pietà* (compassion) is stressed; on this word the first violin and the vocal part are in unison (bars 68–69).



Example No. 22 – setting the word “*pietà*” on music

The first part of part A is closed with a ritornello which introduces a new triplet motive (bars 70–72) that gradually changes in an ostinato the melody of the introductory ritornello. The second part of part A starts at bar 80 and the previous text is repeated. In bars 87–103 there is again coloratura on the word *penando* with ostinato accompaniment by the instruments; this coloratura is very extensive (altogether 17 bars). It is composed of several rhythmic and melodic figures that are repeated. At the end of the coloratura there are “sighs” again (bar 102).



Example No. 23 – coloratura on the word “*penando*”

From bar 107 the coloratura is on the word *pietà* (compassion). In bars 109–111 of the vocal part there is a descending melody (*catabasis*) with triplets, after which there is a crotchet with an appoggiatura.



Example No. 24 – coloratura on the word „*pietà*”, catabasis in bars 109-111

After that the introductory ritornello repeats and part A finishes.

Part B is again composed in the relative key of b minor (from bar 143). The violin brings in a new motive – broken octaves which are taken over from the first violin by the second violin, lower by one third. In this way they hold a dialogue. The viola and basso continuo markedly join the second violin in eighth-note values and thus they underline the importance of the words *acerbe* (bitter), *pene* (torment), *dure* (hard) and *catene* (chains), in bars 144, 146, 148, 150. At the beginning of the vocal part there is again a descending melody (*catabasis*).

143

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

C.

Trop-po a - cer-be le mi - e pe - ne quan - to du - re le ca - te - ne,

Bc.

Example No. 25 – beginning of part B

In part B the text is sung syllabically and only on the last syllable, *stà*, there appears an extensive coloratura in which the vocal part is accompanied by the violin, first in thirds (bars 156–160) and then in unison (bars 161–165). The coloratura starts in bar 156 where there is a dissonant skip. In the violin part, in bars 156–159 mournful chromatic steps appear (*passus duriusculus*).

156

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

C.

stà,

Bc.

Example No. 26 – coloratura on the word „stà“, *passus duriusculus* in the violin part

Part B finishes with a double repetition of the verse *che fuor di me sen stà* (the one who is delirious) which is set to music by a motive that uses dotted rhythms (bars 166–168). The violin sounds again in unison with the vocal part, and the closing key of b minor, together with a moderate tempo and more or less tranquil progression, implies a feeling of suffering and pathetic craving for compassion.

166

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

C.

Bc.

che fuor di me, che fuor di me sen stà.

Da Capo

Example No. 27 – closing of the aria

Summary of the musical analysis

From a formal point of view, this is a cantata composed in the galant style that appears in secular operatic and cantata creations of the 20s and especially the 30s of the 18th century.⁸⁸ The cantata is written in homophonic structure with the emphasis on vocal virtuosity. Bioni's way of treating the text (i.e., his depiction of individual affects and expression of negative emotions – laments, pain and suffering) and the whole arrangement of the cantata are typical for cantata creation in the first half of the 18th century. Within the scope of further research on Bioni we will create scores of two other cantatas from the Kroměříž collection which share common characteristics and origin with the cantata *Innocente è il mio martire*. Last but not least, it will be interesting to compare these with Bioni's cantatas archived in German Ansbach. So far we can at least compare the cantata with Bioni's serenata *La pace fra la virtù e la bellezza* in basic features; the analysis of the serenata can be found in Hanna Schodterer's diploma thesis.⁸⁹ It describes Bioni's compositional style as homophonic and due to clear melodies, pulsating eighth notes (*Trommelbass*) and broken chords it appears almost as early classicist (*Frühklassisch*).⁹⁰ The term early classicism in the context of operatic creation by Leonardo Vinci is also used by e.g. Kurt Markström.⁹¹ We believe that this term acts in secular musical and dramatic art almost as a synonym with the term galant style. As the latter is a period expression, we rather tend to use this term. We identify with Schodterer in her opinion that Bioni's arias are dramatically effective and expressively strong.⁹²

88 PERUTKOVÁ, 2011, op. cit.

89 SCHODTERER, op. cit.

90 Ibid., p. 113.

91 MARKSTROM, Kurt Sven. *The operas of Leonardo Vinci, Napoletano*. Opera series, no. 2. Hillsdale – New York: Pendragon Press, 2007.

92 SCHODTERER, op. cit., p. 164.

Conclusion

This study presents not only a summary of existing research about Antonio Bioni, in whose career and creations we can trace the connectedness of musical centres – Prague, Wrocław, Jaroměřice nad Rokytinou and Vienna – of the first half of the 18th century, but also offers a probe into his compositional technique. Further research will hopefully bring discovery of other Bioni works and additional information about his life – especially about the period between his departure from Wrocław and arrival in Vienna (1734–1738), and about his activities after 1741.

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