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978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

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OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

How did revolutionary America appear to European audiences through their opera glasses? The operas studied in this volume are populated by gun-toting and slave-holding Quakers, handsome Native Americans, female middle-class political leaders, rebellious British soldiers, and generous businessmen. Most of them display an unprecedented configuration of social and gender roles, which led leading composers of the time, including Mozart, Haydn, Anfossi, Piccinni, and Paisiello, to introduce far-reaching innovations in the musical and dramatic fabric of Italian opera. Polzonetti presents a fresh perspective on the European cultural reception of American social and political identity. Through detailed but accessible analysis of music examples, including previously unpublished musical sources, the book documents and explains important transformations of opera at the time of Mozart's masterpieces, and their long-term consequences. Shedding new light on both familiar and less-familiar operatic works, from Piccinni to Puccini, the study represents groundbreaking research in music, cultural, and political history.

Pierpaolo Polzonetti is Assistant Professor at the University of Notre Dame. His first book, on Giuseppe Tartini, was awarded the International Prize for Musical Studies by the Petrassi Institute of Latina. His article on Mozart's *Così fan tutte* received the Einstein Award conferred by the American Musicological Society. Several of his scholarly articles on opera have appeared in *Opera Quarterly*, *Eighteenth-Century Music*, *Studi Verdiani*, and *Cambridge Opera Journal*. He is the co-editor, with Anthony R. DelDonna, of *The Cambridge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Opera*.

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Frontmatter

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Frontmatter

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CONTENTS

*List of figures* | page viii  
*List of tables* | ix  
*List of music examples* | x  
*Acknowledgments* | xiii  
*List of abbreviations* | xix

Introduction | i

1 The changing world of the moon | 29  
2 Worlds up and upside-down | 77  
3 Montezuma and the exotic Europeans | 107  
4 Cecchina goes to America | 133  
5 A Californian goes to Europe | 170  
6 Americans in the storm | 202  
7 The good Quaker and his slaves | 228  
8 Quakers with guns | 269

Epilogue: Figaro’s transatlantic crossings | 308

*References* | 331  
*Index* | 361

FIGURES

- Figure 1.1 Map of relationships among dramatis personae in Goldoni’s *Il mondo della luna* | page 45
- Figure 1.2 Reconfiguration of relationships among dramatis personae in the world of the moon | 47
- Figure 2.1 “To the genius of Franklin,” etching after a drawing by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. | 80
- Figure 2.2 “Harlequin dressed as the emperor of the moon,” etching in Nolant de Fatouville’s *Arlequin dans la lune*, in *Le théâtre italien de Gherardi* (Paris: Briasson, 1741), vol. 1, 122, copy in US-Cn | 94
- Figure 6.1 “Gl’Americani: bissona fatta costruire dalla Serenissima Signoria di Venezia per la regatta alla Maestà di Gustavo III Re di Svezia,” Museo Correr, Stampe Cicogna 710 | 204

TABLES

Table 1.1	The core repertory: eighteenth-century Italian operas based on American subjects	page 5
Table 1.1	Eighteenth-century settings and productions of <i>Il mondo della luna</i>	30
Table 1.2	Comparison of stock roles and dramatis personae in Fatouville’s, Behn’s, and Goldoni’s version of the emperor-of-the-moon comic plot	43
Table 5.1	Performances and genre designations of Piccinni’s <i>L’americano</i>	171
Table 5.2	Text and form of “Per pietà” from Piccinni’s <i>L’americano</i>	194
Table 6.1	Roles and actors in Giovanni Bertati and Pasquale Anfossi’s <i>L’orfanella americana</i>	206
Table 7.1	Dramatis personae in <i>Amiti e Ontario</i> and <i>Le gare generose</i>	248
Table 8.1	Roles and actors in Nunziato Porta and Pasquale Anfossi’s <i>L’americana in Olanda</i>	272



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## MUSIC EXAMPLES

- Example 1.1 Baldassarre Galuppi, *Il mondo della luna*, US-Wc M 1500. G 2 M 55, Act I, scene 7, “Affetti non turbate,” mm. 10–24, fragment of the A section | page 60
- Example 1.2 Galuppi, *Il mondo della luna*, US-Wc M 1500. G 2 M 55, Act I, scene 7, “Affetti non turbate,” mm. 38–44, B section | 61
- Example 1.3 Joseph Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, critical edition, Act I, scene 7, “Ragion nell’alma siede,” mm. 28–34 | 66
- Example 1.4 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I, scene 7, “Ragion nell’alma siede,” mm. 39–45 | 67
- Example 1.5 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I, scene 7, “Ragion nell’alma siede,” mm. 46–65, voice and bass reduction | 68
- Example 1.6 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I, scene 7, “Ragion nell’alma siede,” mm. 77–82 | 69
- Example 1.7 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I, scene 7, “Ragion nell’alma siede,” new version of the aria, mm. 76–80 | 71
- Example 1.8 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I, scene 7, “Ragion nell’alma siede,” mm. 121–126, voice and bass reduction | 73
- Example 2.1 Baldassarre Galuppi, *Il mondo della luna*, US-Wc M 1500. G 2 M 55, Act I, scene 1, “Oh luna lucente,” mm. 9–16 | 85
- Example 2.2 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I, scene 1, chorus “Oh luna lucente,” mm. 1–18 | 85
- Example 2.3 Galuppi, *Il mondo della luna*, US-Wc M 1500. G 2 M 55, Act I finale, “vado volo” | 87
- Example 2.4 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, Act I finale, “vado, volo,” mm. 1–4 | 88
- Example 2.5 Galuppi, *Il mondo della luna*, US-Wc M 1500. G 2 M 55, last finale, “questo è quello che succede” | 102
- Example 2.6 Haydn, *Il mondo della luna*, chorus from the last finale, “Dal mondo della luna” mm. 1–14 | 103
- Example 3.1 Carl Heinrich Graun, *Montezuma*, critical edition, Act I, scene 1, “Somiglia il buon Monarca,” mm. 9–19 | 119
- Example 3.2 Graun, *Montezuma*, Act III, ballo, mm. 1–27 | 123
- Example 4.1 Niccolò Piccinni, *I napoletani in America*, B-Bc 3772, Act I, “Quell’anima innocente,” mm. 1–10 | 152

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- Example 4.2 Piccinni, *I napoletani in America*, B-Bc 3772, Act I, “Quell’anima innocente,” mm. 11–28 | 153
- Example 4.3 Piccinni, *I napoletani in America*, B-Bc 3772, Act I, “Quell’anima innocente,” mm. 54–81 | 155
- Example 4.4 Piccinni, *I napoletani in America*, B-Bc 3772, Act I, “Quell’anima innocente,” mm. 128–135 | 158
- Example 4.5 Piccinni, *I napoletani in America*, B-Bc 3772, Act I, “Non temete,” mm. 38–58 | 164
- Example 4.6 Piccinni, *I napoletani in America*, B-Bc 3772, Act II, “Resta se vuoi,” mm. 19–47, voice and bass reduction | 167
- Example 5.1 Piccinni, *L’americano*, A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 17.825, first intermezzo, “Per pietà,” mm. 17–20 | 195
- Example 5.2 Piccinni, *L’americano*, A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 17.825, first intermezzo, “Per pietà,” mm. 71–90, bass and voice reduction | 196
- Example 5.3 Piccinni, *L’americano*, A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 17.825, first intermezzo, “Per pietà,” mm. 136–144 | 197
- Example 6.1 Pasquale Anfossi, *L’orfanella americana*, I-Gl 13.7.13 (L 8.2.), Act I, Bentley-Zeda duet, mm. 1–5 | 211
- Example 6.2 Anfossi, *L’orfanella americana*, I-Gl 13.7.13 (L 8.2.), Act I, Bentley-Zeda duet, mm. 34–36 | 211
- Example 6.3 Anfossi, *L’orfanella americana*, I-Gl 13.7.13 (L 8.2.), Act I, Bentley-Zeda duet, mm. 57–64 | 212
- Example 6.4 Anfossi, *L’orfanella americana*, I-Gl 13.7.13 (L 8.2.), Act I, Bentley-Zeda duet, mm. 106–121 | 214
- Example 6.5 Anfossi, *L’orfanella americana*, I-Gl 13.7.13 (L 8.2.), *introduzione*, mm. 23–26, bass and voice reduction | 219
- Example 6.6 Anfossi, *L’orfanella americana*, I-Gl 13.7.13 (L 8.2.), *introduzione*, mm. 33–55, bass and voice reduction | 219
- Example 7.1 Giovanni Paisiello, *Le gare generose* (Naples, 1786), I-Gl, 5b. 29/30 -L8 3/4 (same as in A-Wn, 17807), Act II, “Deh Padron,” mm. 1–12 | 255
- Example 7.2 “Perché volgi altrove il guardo?,” aria probably by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf in the Viennese version of *Le gare generose*, US-Wc, M1500 P23 G3, Act II, mm. 11–34 | 259
- Example 8.1 Pietro Guglielmi, *La quakera spiritosa*, I-Tf I VII 17–18, Act I, “Kerchenbeuten Tons Rosbif,” mm. 12–15 | 284
- Example 8.2 Guglielmi, *La quakera spiritosa*, I-Tf I VII 17–18, Act I, “Kerchenbeuten Tons Rosbif,” mm. 23–30 | 285

xii | Music examples

- Example 8.3 Guglielmi, *La quakera spiritosa*, D-Dl, Mus.3258-F-508, Act I, orchestral introduction with main theme of Tognino's aria, "Mio visin pinguetto e tondo," mm. 1–8 | 289
- Example 8.4 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, recitative preceding Cimarosa's aria in the *pasticcio* version of *La quakera spiritosa*, A-Wn, KT 370, Act II, "No caro," mm. 1–2 | 303
- Example 8.5 Mozart, recitative in the *pasticcio* version of *La quakera spiritosa*, A-Wn, KT 370, Act II, "No caro," mm. 9–10 | 303
- Example 8.6 Domenico Cimarosa, aria in the *pasticcio* version of *La quakera spiritosa*, A-Wn, KT 370, Act II, "Quanto è grave," mm. 5–8 | 304
- Example 8.7 Cimarosa, aria in the *pasticcio* version of *La quakera spiritosa*, A-Wn, KT 370, Act II, "Quanto è grave," mm. 9–10 | 305
- Example 8.8 Cimarosa, aria in the *pasticcio* version of *La quakera spiritosa*, A-Wn, KT 370, Act II, "Quanto è grave," mm. 49–58, bass and voice reduction | 305
- Example 8.9 Cimarosa, aria in the *pasticcio* version of *La quakera spiritosa*, A-Wn, KT 370, Act II, "Quanto è grave," mm. 114–120 | 306

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## xiv | Acknowledgments

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)xvi | *Acknowledgments*

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-89708-2 - Italian Opera in the Age of the American Revolution

Pierpaolo Polzonetti

Frontmatter

[More information](#)xviii | *Acknowledgments*

about Quakers and other singing American characters to prove her love to be great. During the most intense last weeks of work on this project, my mother came to stay with us, keeping me well fed, my wife happy and my two-year-old daughter busy. While I type these last words I can hear them joking and laughing in an odd mixture of Italian and English, which reminds me that transatlantic encounters can be rewarding and funny too. Here is a fragment of their conversation that I find relevant to the subject of this book:

LENA: facciamo il bagno o un tea party?

NANDA: cos'è tea party?

LENA: facciamo un tè.

STELLA: amo tè party.

NANDA: Ah! Tè party! Bellissimo: con i biscotti. . .

To these three women I dedicate this book.

ABBREVIATIONS

A-Wn	Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung
B-Bc	Brussels, Conservatoire Royal, Bibliothèque
D-B	Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz
D-Bsa	Berlin, Sing-Akademie
D-Dl	Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitäts-Bibliothek, Musikabteilung
D-Wa	Wolfenbüttel, Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv
E-Mp	Madrid, Biblioteca del Palacio Real
F-Pc	France, Paris, Conservatoire, in Bibliothèque Nationale de France
H-Bn	Budapest, Országos Széchényi Könyvtár (National Library)
I-BRc	Brescia, Biblioteca del Conservatorio
I-Gl	Genova, Biblioteca del Conservatorio, former Liceo Musicale
I-Nc	Naples, biblioteca del Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella
I-Tf	Turin, Accademia Filarmonica Archivio
US-Cn	Chicago, Newberry Library
US-Wc	Washington, District of Columbia, Library of Congress