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"Ecco il loco destinato": Cenobio Paniagua, the New Composer and Original Opera as an Expression of National Pride in 1863 Mexico

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Abstract
Defined by a civil war and political tumult, the year 1863 is well known in the history of Mexico as one of singular import, but less so as a milestone of national musical and cultural achievement. Nevertheless, from January through the departure of Benito Juárez and his cabinet from the capital in May, to the installation of Archduke Maximilian as Emperor in November, an unprecedented number of newly composed operas by Mexican composers were staged. All set to preexisting Italian libretti (including titles by Felice Romani and Gaetano Rossi for Carlo Coccia and Vincenzo Bellini, respectively), these works were nevertheless the unique manifestation of a school of Mexican composers expressing themselves en masse for the first time. With the impending conflict, an exodus of resident Italian opera companies by 1861 left the field wide-open to enterprising Mexicans, with Cenobio Paniagua (1821-1882) and Octaviano Valle (1826-1869) in the forefront. A fleeting moment in operatic history, this fascinating year now lends itself to deeper scrutiny, thanks to the resurfacing of long-unavailable musical and archival sources. While these works had remained lost until only recently, several scores have begun reemerging. Of these, limited availability of fragments from *Romeo e Giulietta* by Melesio Morales (his first effort) and Valle's ill-fated *Clotilde di Cosenza* provide crucial insight, while permitting these rarities to be sampled for the first time. Paniagua's autographs—though recently rediscovered—proved far less available, while materials for *I due Foscari* by Mateo Torres Serrato remain lost. Limited documentation has long presented further challenges to demystifying what might be considered a legendary period. However, reviewing the underlying politico-historic, artistic, and economic reasons for its impetus, this article will explore and contextualize the circumstances leading to this unprecedented explosion of operatic expression, making a sort of *anno mirabilis* of one of the hardest years in Mexico's history.

Keywords: Cenobio Paniagua, Gabino F. Bustamante, Melesio Morales, Mateo Torres Serrato, Octaviano Valle, Italian opera, nineteenth century, music education, Mexico

Resumen
El año 1863, marcado por una guerra civil y un tumulto político, es bien conocido en la historia de México como un año de singular importancia, pero no tanto como un hito en el logro musical y cultural nacional. Sin embargo, desde enero, y pasando la salida de Benito Juárez y su gabinete de la capital en mayo, hasta la instalación del Archiduque Maximiliano como Emperador en noviembre, se escenificaron una cantidad sin precedentes de óperas de nueva composición de compositores mexicanos. Todas ellas con libretos italianos preexistentes (incluidos títulos de Felice Romani y Gaetano Rossi para Carlo Coccia y Vincenzo Bellini, respectivamente), estas obras fueron, sin embargo, la manifestación única de una escuela de compositores mexicanos que se expresaban en masa por primera vez. Con el conflicto inminente, un éxodo de compañías de ópera italianas residentes en 1861 dejó el campo abierto a los mexicanos emprendedores, con Cenobio Paniagua (1821-1882) y Octaviano Valle (1826-1869) a la vanguardia. Este año fascinante, un momento fugaz en la historia de la ópera, se presta ahora a un escrutinio más profundo, gracias al resurgimiento de fuentes musicales y de archivo que habían estado desaparecidas durante mucho tiempo. Si bien estas obras habían permanecido perdidas hasta hace poco, varias partituras han comenzado a resurgir. De ellas, la disponibilidad limitada de fragmentos de *Romeo e Giulietta* de Melesio Morales (su primer trabajo) y la desafortunada *Clotilde di Cosenza* de Valle

brindan una perspectiva crucial, al tiempo que permiten que estas rarezas se conozcan por primera vez. Los autógrafos de Paniagua, aunque recientemente redescubiertos, siguen estar menos disponibles, mientras que los materiales para *I due Foscari* de Mateo Torres Serrato siguen perdidos. La documentación limitada ha presentado durante mucho tiempo más desafíos para desmitificar lo que podría considerarse un período "legendario". Sin embargo, al revisar las razones político-históricas, artísticas y económicas subyacentes de su ímpetu, este artículo explorará y contextualizará las circunstancias que llevaron a esta explosión sin precedentes de expresión operística, que hace una especie de *anno mirabilis* de uno de los años más difíciles de la historia de México.

Palabras clave: Cenobio Paniagua, Gabino F. Bustamante, Melesio Morales, Mateo Torres Serrato, Octaviano Valle, ópera italiana, siglo XIX, educación musical, México

In opening the first of several chapters dedicated to it, Mexican historian José Galindo Galindo (1857-1915) asserted that "The year 1863 began under rather inauspicious circumstances for the cause of the Republic."[1] For Galindo (writing circa 1904), "the unforgettable year of 1863 [el inolvidable año

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Editor's note: Dr. Riccardo La Spina was in residence from 2020 to 2024 as a Visiting Scholar at the University of California, Riverside, working on his doctoral thesis under the aegis of the Center for Iberian and Latin American Music. He completed his thesis and received his doctorate from La Universidad de La Rioja in 2024. This article was substantially complete already in 2020, but it has since benefitted from further investigations. Please note that though musical examples are cited in the text, the examples themselves appear in numerical order at the end of the article.

Author's note: This study was developed from a paper originally entitled: *"Ecco il loco destinato"–The Significance of 1863 to Mexican Opera: Sesquicentennial Observations*, presented at the Fourth UFRJ International Symposium of Musicology "Verdi, Wagner and contemporaries," Rio de Janeiro (12-15 August 2013), and at the Third Biennial North American Conference on Nineteenth-Century Music, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth (July 11-13, 2013). Subsequent versions were presented under the present title at the Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Northern California Chapter, University of California, Santa Cruz (1 February 2014), and the Twelfth Annual Conference of the Society for Musicology in Ireland, University College, Dublin (6-8 June 2014). The resultant article owes its existence in large part to the encouragement of the editor the of the first event's proceedings (still in press), Maria Alice Volpe, and to Thomas Grey, John G. Lazos, Benjamin Walton, and Stephen Hinton, each of whom the author thanks for providing valuable suggestions on early versions, alongside Wolfgang Marx and Luis Hameken for reading an early version of the final draft. For their kind support and guidance during investigations in Mexico City (2001-2004), our further gratitude is due the direction and staff of the CENIDIM, Biblioteca de las Artes, AREGENA, and ENM. Particular recognition goes to the late Karl Bellinghausen for facilitating access to and reproduction of autograph materials of Valle's *Clotilde*, Morales's *Romeo*, and Ortega Villar's *Guatemotzin* in the special collections of the Biblioteca del Conservatorio Nacional Superior de Música, and for permission for their use.

In Memoriam

I was saddened to learn of the death of Karl Bellinghausen in 2017, to whose personal insights, support and selfless scholarly attention and encouragement this project and its related branches (yet in progress) owe their inspiration. Indeed, the research on which it is based is, in substance, grounded on directions in which he pointed me during my first trips to Mexico when starting to research the subject in the early 2000s. His enthusiasm for this largely uncharted period of Mexico's fledgling school of autochthonous composition fueled mine. His insightful mentorship allowed me to see the subject's deeper significance, which I hope this article might somehow reflect. I am indebted to him exclusively for finding, accessing and obtaining reproductions of the works from which I draw the musical examples. He was particularly interested in scoping out the all too obscure figure of Mateo Torres Serrato, and excitedly divulged learning of a second and yet unfound opera—*Fidelio*—at our last meeting in 2004. Reconnecting briefly (and sadly, for the last time) by telephone in 2013, he agreed with me when I revealed discovering that that accreditation was based on a false source reading and that the 'Fidelio' ascription constitutes an error. Nevertheless, Karl was excited to hear that I had completed a study engaging everything we had discussed, and I was looking forward to sharing newly discovered sources mentioning that figure with him upon publication. As is therefore only fitting in return for so much generous and thoughtful guidance, it is to his memory that this article, in its present and final version, is dedicated.

de 1863]" was instrumental in cementing a new, fervently patriotic national self-identity at a critical moment in Mexico's history that had solidified by his own time, and perseveres into our own.[2] Not coincidentally—though most intriguingly—this is also reflected in the attitudes of several native figures, notably composers marking the year with an operatic debut, and their supporters, determined to use culture to bridge the negative socio-political connotations of this shift in national consciousness. This surprising insistence on the continuance of opera, so demanding of budget and resources amid civil strife and political turmoil, advocated not mere 'diversion,' but an antidote to the moral corrosion of national crisis. Moreover, if this adopted European genre had maintained a continuous presence in Mexico from the 1830s-50s, dependent solely upon imported repertory (through a resident *Ópera Italiana*), on the eve of events described, a new era dawned with the first staging of an autochthonous work, in 1859: *Caterina di Guisa*, by Cenobio Paniagua (1821-1882).[3] Encouraged by his success, this orchestral musician began teaching other Mexicans composition and counterpoint. This, in turn, heralded not only the advent of original productions by native composers but, arguably, of a new Mexican national school: if destiny selected 1863 for its emergence through founder Paniagua and three of his disciples, Melesio Morales (1838-1908), Octaviano Valle (c.1824-1869) and José Mateo Torres Serrato (dates unknown), their own awareness of tumultuous events made it no accident. They resolved to achieve this in a year fraught with foreign invasion and the consequential stripping of national sovereignty, which our title infers with the opening line of *Clotilde*, as kidnappers arrive at "the designated place" (and time) with the heroine in tow, stealing her clothes, jewels and identity, then leaving her at the mercy of an assassin. This bespeaks the ensuing humiliation and atrocities Mexico suffered, resonating with the contemporaneous political tempest and hence Galindo's foreboding.[4]

The year 1863 also marks the turning point in Mexico's Civil War and French Intervention period (1857-67), begun when President José Comonfort abolished the new constitution and dissolved congress, plunging the country into the *Guerra de Trés Años*, or *Guerra de la Reforma* (the "Three Years" or "Reform" War). This stemmed from Liberal Party successes in instituting still-enduring constitutional reform spearheaded by Benito Juárez (1806-1872), and the opposing

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[1] "Empezaba el año 1863 bajo auspicios muy poco halagadores para la causa de la República." Miguel Galindo Galindo, *La gran década nacional, ó relacion histórica de la guerra de reforma, intervención extrajera y gobierno del Archiduque Maximiliano. 1857-1867*, vol. II, chapter XXVI (Mexico City: Secretaria de Fomento, 1905), 441. All translations are the author's, unless otherwise noted; the originals have been transcribed without effort to modernize, leaving the original source orthography and spellings intact.

[2] ibid., Galindo, *La gran década nacional*, 535.

[3] Also considering 'Catalina' the first opera by a Mexican-born composer, Manuel Gustavo Revilla, *Obras*, vol. 1, "Biografías (Artistas);" (Mexico City, 1908), 83, affirms: "For the first time since there has been opera in Mexico the public was offered a score by a Mexican composer/(Por vez primera, desde que hay teatro en México… se ofrece al público la partición de un maestro mexicano)." Though persistently cited in Spanish as 'Catalina de Guisa' (it was customary to translate all foreign names or titles into Spanish), it was sung in Italian, and therefore, presumably as 'Caterina.' Revilla (himself, born 7 January 1863) first published this biography in the periodical *El Tiempo ilustrado*, 17 June 1901.

[4] Gaetano Rossi, *Clotilde*, Melodramma semiserio... (Firenze: Stamperia Fantosino, 1819). Valle adapted this libretto as his contribution, *Clotilde di Cosenza*. Our title in fact derives from the opening lines of the opera, "Ecco il loco destinato/(here is the designated place)."

'conservative' reaction.[5] Of the mandates constituting an early root of the conflict, the 1856 "Ley Lerdo," restricting the church's immense power through property divestiture, had considerable backlash. This was exacerbated in 1861, when newly elected president Juárez's unilateral two-year suspension of foreign debt payment provoked France, Great Britain and Spain (and later, Austria-Hungary) to retaliate by forming the Tripartite Convention (*Convención de Londres*), seeking repayment through armed intervention.[6]

But as Mexico's politics thus grew more volatile, so too did her theaters', the former influencing the latter, encroaching upon it at an alarming rate. And while the profitable 1856-1857 theatrical season (Easter Sunday to the following Ash Wednesday) saw operatic triumphs by a good Italian company, the looming conflict menaced its overspill onto theatrical life and politics. Ultimately, this drove off foreign personnel, from impresario Amilcare Roncari (and singer Manuela Francesconi), at the season's onset,[7] through to conductor Antonio Barili, in 1861. Artists fled to interior cities seeking subsistence; Roncari, granted a customs exemption by one administration only to be jailed by another for breach of contract, would, nevertheless, return.[8] Meanwhile, an Italian opera company remained on hand through 1861, when local efforts organized by Paniagua were enlisted to sustain the Teatro Nacional's *Ópera Italiana*. Whereas little full-scale opera could be mounted during the 1862 theatrical year in the wake of the Liberals' 5 May routing of French interventionist forces at Puebla (*Cinco de Mayo*), benefit concerts were organized for the blood-banks, veterans, widows and orphans. While now-forgotten theatrical events given around it are of great musico-historical import, this victory is itself significant in steeling Mexican national identity and its anniversary of key relevance to 1863's events. Against this backdrop—Napoleon III irrevocably cast as imperialist fiend—Mexico's Liberals withal took cues from the French revolution, adopting the title *ciudadano* ("citizen"), and the slogan *"libertad y reforma"* (liberty and reform), their own political reality soon to be framed in an ironic reversal of history.

Because this civil war did not provide the arguable buffer of geographic separation of the impending US conflict, an 'operatic' dialectic prevailed as the theater's tensions—and *pomp*—spilled over into daily life, dividing families and friendships along party lines. Theater historian Enrique Olavarría Ferrari evokes these partisan rifts reflected in women's fashion, *reformistas* donning green

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[5] "Periodismo. *La reforma.*" *Enciclopedia de México*, José Rogelio Alvarez (Mexico City: E de M, 2003), Vol. XI, 6332 [Reform War]. See: Rafael Zayas Enríquez, *Benito Juárez – Su vida, Su obra* (Mexico City, 1906), 260 [*Juárez*]. For Zayas, Juárez –who loved literature and theater– was a shrewd politician who enjoyed knowing his opposition by reading their daily press, regularly. Note: using the preceding model to reduce the number of footnotes to the present and necessary minimum, we have conflated several citations occurring in either the same sentence or paragraph into a single note, indicating key words from the relevant passage in brackets after its respective citation.

[6] "Periodismo. La reforma." Enciclopedia de México, ibid. [root of the conflict... Ley Lerdo]; Brian Hamnett "Juárez, Benito (1806-72)," Encyclopedia of Mexico – History, society and Culture, Michael S. Werner, ed., vol. 1 (A-L) (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1997), 718-721 [reform]; ibid. [armed intervention].

[7] Enrique Olavarría Ferrari (1844-1919), *Reseña Histórica del Teatro en México (1538-1911), 3rd* ed. Updated to 1961, vol. 1, (Mexico City: Porrua, 1961), 653 [Francesconi]; Antonio Barili (1825-1876), who had resided in Mexico since 1850 directing the opera for several years, felt obliged to leave there early in 1861 by dint of his then obvious, now forgotten (and only now documented) French nationality, but only after a final attempt to have his music academy made a national institution under Juárez, in 1861.

[8] Ibid. Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica del Teatro en México*, 649. The one being liberal, the other conservative, Roncari managed to escape after eight months.

shoes with red corsets, *antireformistas* vice versa (profiling one party's colors while suppressing the opposition's), observing that "it all might have seemed grandiose and daring, if not happening during a civil war wherein brother and brother, and even father and son disavowed and wounded each other."[9] Significantly, the operas represented here were composed during this time, and this is betrayed in libretto choices: as a central premise, each story has, in turn, the conflict of a house divided and innocence persecuted. Morales's *Romeo,* Paniagua's *Pietro d'Abano*, Valle's *Clotilde di Cosenza*, and Torres Serrato's *I due Foscari*—beyond mere love-stories—bespeak righteous struggles against antagonism and betrayal, to restore peace to the family circle or among friends-turned-rivals.

See Table. Chronology of operas presented in Mexico City in 1863.

1863 – Sources in Context

Though music-historians have repeated the essential idea of this period in a cursory manner, this article will reexamine the phenomenon of native Mexican opera in the context of the crisis encompassing it (January-November) and expand upon the composers in relation to the patriotism it engendered, drawing chiefly on recently rediscovered or hitherto unreferenced sources.

While historically documented, it is scarcely known that Benito Juárez was himself an admirer of theater who insisted on paying for his own regular subscription, which invariably included the Teatro Nacional's *Ópera Italiana.*[10] This can no longer pass for mere coincidence, thanks to the Juárez government's long-unknown but at once decidedly prominent impulse of cultural policy that we have identified in the spate of subventions under title of "protección de las artes" (support for the arts). Named "protecciones" by the press, these grants were dispensed through treasurer Juan A. de la Fuente in response to petitions from at least two composers for defraying production costs. Contrasting with Maximilian's historically recognized subsidies, these similar gestures by the early Juárez administration constitute a rallying cry for the imperiled Republic's cultural excellence. Even amid the necessity of sustaining a war against invading French and national interventionist forces (euphemistically called *franco-trahidores*, or 'franco-traitors'), the first-time *native*-composer phenomenon moved that government to recognize an opportunity for improving the country's cultural image by providing the arts movement with a forward thrust. These newly rediscovered initiatives show that the liberal authorities not only noticed the home-grown operatic projects but embraced them with ideological zeal and equally symbolic financial backing, while bringing the significance of Paniagua's difficult-to-document operatic atelier into relief.

This realization lends a sense of urgency to our query into this period through these long-overlooked documents. Highly synthesized and incomplete, secondary sources on theater and opera in Mexico often mislead, compounding the year's virtual dearth of review literature. This was suppressed, given the volatile state of Mexico's press, which—as Luis Reyes de la Maza observed—relinquished space reserved for theatrical and cultural commentary in order to cover the war. Reyes's preliminary study documenting the theater in periodicals contains three paragraphs on 1863, assuring that little of interest or novelty was offered that year excepting "three" *operas* by national

[9] "Todo ello pudiera haber parecido grandioso y espartano, si no se hubiese hecho en una Guerra civil en que llegaron a desconocerse y herirse el hermano y el hermano, y aun el padre y el hijo." Olavarría, 645.

[10] Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica del Teatro en México*, vol. 2, 875, illustrating Juárez' love of theater, relates instances of the *Presidente* at the opera in Vera Cruz and Mexico City; Zayas Enríquez, mentions his enjoyment of theater, plays and *comedias de costsumbre*, 260.

composers, while omitting any mention of Torres and his "Foscari." Blaming the suspension of the dailies from June onward, Reyes contends that a curious lack of sources limited him to reporting events only to that point. Retrospectively, this alludes only to the liberal press: despite enjoying the greatest proliferation of titles in the provinces, most loyal capital-based republican papers disappeared after the fall of Puebla in May, under intense pressure from interventionist authorities (*El Monitor Republicano*'s director Florencio M. del Castillo died in jail that year), leaving the satirical *La Orquesta* to become the main voice opposing the newly installed imperialist régime. Of those serving as sources here, only the conservative *La Sociedad*, *El Cronista de México*, and *El Pájaro Verde* remained thenceforward.[11] Heightened preoccupation with political coverage notwithstanding, these sources prove to be neither bereft of interestingly vital information on the operas and their respective creators nor of significantly revealing reports, editorials and tellingly wordy announcements by the composers themselves, but of rather unexpected residual benefit. We propose to treat this material in detail in two ways, namely, (1) as pertinent to documenting the composers, and (2) by next revisiting it where relevant to the operas.

Moreover, with no less than four original titles, we now explore in several ways 1863's unprecedented explosion of autochthonic operatic expression as constituting a sort of *annus mirabilis* amid the *horribilis* of one of the most traumatic years in Mexico's history, namely as: (1) being wrought as much of patriotism as of a love for Italian opera; (2) their respective composers' political "protectors" and the public's considering these efforts a product of national industry and ingenuity, notwithstanding Italian language and style associations; (3) seeing opera supported by a government consisting, importantly, not of European Imperial-interventionists, but of native constitutionalists who would later prevail with overwhelming popular support; (4) bolstering the movement to institutionalize musical training with a national conservatory; (5) serving as a touchstone for composers, launching or stabilizing their careers in its wake, and; ergo, establishing a norm for staging operas by nationals.

The Composers

Melesio Morales (1838-1908)

While Morales's difficulties leading to his debut as an operatic composer are well documented, the following statement dating from that time precedes any account by several decades, clearly stating his patriotic intent in persevering:

[11] The secondary literature is engaged and discussed in: Ricardo Miranda, "Un siglo de ópera en México," *La Ópera en España e Hispanoamerica*, vol. II, E. Casares Rodicio, Álvaro Torrente, eds., (Madrid: Ediciones del ICCMU, 2000), 143-185 [secondary sources]; Luis Reyes de la Maza, *El Teatro en Mexico durante el segundo imperio (1862-1867)*, (Mexico City: Imprenta Universitaria, 1959), 16-17; and *Cien años del Teatro en Mexico (1810-1810)*, (Mexico City: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 1972), 59 [review literature suppressed]. Reyes, *El Teatro* (1959), 16-17 [Torres and *Foscari*]. Var. authors, *Historia General de México –Versión 2000*. José Luis Martínez, "México busca su expresión (Empresas culturales)" (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2000), 729 [disappearance of liberal papers]: this tells how Mexico's two most influential newspapers that century, 'El Siglo' and 'El Monitor' each suffered numerous (forced) interruptions, including 1858, 1861, 1863 and 1867 for the first and oldest, and including 1855, 1863 and 1867 for the second, and "perhaps more radical." *Enciclopedia de México*, 6334-6335 [*La orquesta*]. Ibid. [remained, thenceforward]. Among the dailies most-often cited, the following and their respective editors were liberal: *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* (F.M. Arredondo), *El Monitor Republicano* (Isidoro Guerrero), *El Constitucionalista* (Gregorio Pérez Jardón), *El Heraldo* (José Godoy), and satirical weekly *La orquesta* (?).

> At last, in spite of my destiny, I have completed my first opera: "Romeo."/I hope to heaven that my compatriots will appreciate my composition, not for its merits for which it may be wanting, but for my efforts *amid the adversity of my fate*, to achieve a laurel of glory which I never wished for myself, but rather for my country, and of which I have dreamt since childhood. /29 April 1860/Melesio Morales.[12]

Morales's words from the autograph score of *Romeo* are, in effect, a testament to his formative years living and working on the opera in time of war. Morales, whose mother died soon after his birth, dedicated the first version of the score to his father, Trinidad, who had raised Melesio from infancy, to wit, the following inscription:

> April of 1860. Dear Father, This will be neither a perfected work, the consequence of vast knowledge, the result of long experience, nor, in sum, does that written in the following pages whose total forms the first lyrico-dramatic essay titled "Romeo," constitute the thoughts of a genius. No, it will be, my Father, only the efforts of my saddest youth./ I am proud to dedicate them to you!/ In so doing, it is my wish or intention to show you proof of my affection and gratitude, because during my twenty-one years upon the Earth, you have guarded my existence like a good father. Receive and cherish them, [for] afterward [. . .] they will wander through the world to become a blank-page for the public's disparagement, and thereby part of the wretched fortune with which destiny has distinguished me./ Your son Melesio.[13]

Somewhat beyond the requisite self-deprecation of the time, this highly personal inscription bespeaks the innate fear of failure to which the composer had alluded in his biography.[14] Three years elapsed before Morales could announce his opera in January 1863, with a personal statement to garner the public's support through a show of humility and sincerity of purpose, while explaining the rationale for staging the work (as had Paniagua when announcing his motives behind "Catalina" in 1859):

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[12] "Por fin, á pesar de mi destino he concluido mi primera ópera: 'Romeo.'/Quiera el cielo que mis conpatriotas sepan apreciar no el mérito de la composición del cual acaso carece, sino mis esfuerzos por conquistar *en medio de la adversidad de mi suerte*, un lauro de Gloria soñado desde mi niñez y que nunca he aunado para mí, sino para mi Patria./Abril 29 de 1860/Melesio Morales." Morales, *Romeo*, Conservatorio Nacional de Música, Mexico City (*M-MCcm*); special collections. Transcribed directly from the autograph score. The original bears no specific cataloging marks, other than "Clasificaión: 28, Melesio Morales," etc. but indicates that it was donated by the Morales family in 1956. Also published in Karl Bellinghausen, *Melesio Morales – Catálogo de música* (Mexico City: IMBA/CENIDIM, 2000), 39.

[13] "Abril de 1860. Querido Padre: No será obra perfecta, no el consiguiente de bastos [sic] conocimientos; no el resultado de larga experiencia; no, por fin, los pensamientos de un genio, es lo que va escrito en las siguientes paginas cuyo total forman un primer ensayo lírico-dramatico titulado: *Romeo.* No, será, padre mío, únicamente los esfuerzos de mi tristísima juventud. /¡Yo tengo orgullo en dedicártelos! /Al hacerlo, es mi voluntad ó intención darte una prueba de mi cariño y agradecimiento, pues durante veintiún años que llevo sobre la tierra, has celado mi existencia como buen padre./Recíbelos y aprécielos, después… vaguen por el mundo á ser el blanco de la maledicencia pública, participando así, de la mezquina suerte con que me distinguió el destino./Tu hijo Melesio." Morales, *Romeo*, ibid. Transcribed from autograph. Also reproduced in: Bellinghausen, *Melesio Morales*, 38.

[14] Ignacio M. Altamirano, "Don Melesio Morales" repub. in: "Biografías de Músicos Mexicanos," *Revista Musical Mexicana*, vol. 3, num. 1 (January 1943), 12. This predates, and is paraphrased in, the sources already cited: as the series' editor Jesus Romero cites no dates for the original publication, we must assume that it originally ran in one published by Morales's early biographer himself. Altamirano (1834-1893), journalist witer and pedagogue, was also active for the liberal cause, and of singular importance in later establishing public education in Mexico, after Juárez's vision.

> Although at the worst time but trusting in the good will of my countrymen and of the public in general, and since Mexican works have been received with applause for some time, I announce my first opera on the familiar libretto of *Romeo and Juliet*. […][15]

This had not come easily. Having begun the score in 1856, after early study with Agustín Caballero (1815-1886), Felipe Larios (1817-1875), and "seven lessons" of orchestration with Antonio Valle (1825-1876; brother of Octaviano), Morales entered Paniagua's "Academy," completing his opera in 1860, as the score attests. After nearly three years and revising the orchestration piece by piece several times each, Morales managed to produce *Romeo* under municipal sponsorship, from late November 1862. The city reneged, causing the Teatro Nacional's management to push rehearsal to late December, thrice rescheduling the early January premiere. Once begun, the rehearsal process exasperated Morales. A distracted copyist—whose wife lay dying—inserted several dissonances, producing a barrage of derision from the orchestra, at which the composer sat staring in a solitary direction for hours, ruing his "folly." Then, funding retracted, the singers made unreasonable demands, compelling Morales to offer the performance in benefit of the blood-banks, with Roncari's intervention. Far from rudimentary, the music demands something of its singers, though, as Olavarría indicts, the singers of Paniagua's troupe "were capable of singing only Paniagua's 'Catalina,' and that after excessive rehearsing" (which, he contended, was the maestro's way).[16] Contradicting him, the only known item remotely resembling a review or shedding any light on the premiere summarily confirms that

> Mrs. Tomasi [sic] and Miss Paniagua sang very well, and the same can be said of Messrs. Morales, Pineda and Solares. The chorus was very well rehearsed, as well as [was] the whole opera which was directed by its composer. He was repeatedly called to the stage to be extolled, as he deserved. Mr. Morales is a composer and a composer of merit, and as we have said at the beginning, we would like him to meet with support, that he may continue. We hope his opera will be staged again as soon as possible, certain that it will draw more patrons than night-before-last. After all, those who heard it will return, and those less fortunate will go to hear it.[17]

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[15] "Aunque en malísima época, pero fiando en la bondad de mis compatriotas y del público en general, que hace ya algún tiempo recibe las obras mexicanas con aplauso y agrado, anuncio mi primera ópera hecha de mi corazón sobre el conocido libreto de Julieta y Romeo. [. . .]" Morales, *El Monitor Republicano*, 22 Jan. 1863, 4. Full text also published in: Reyes, *El Teatro* (1959), 83., and Aurea Maya, *Melesio Morales (1838-1908) – Labor Perioodística* (Mexico City: CENIDIM, 1994), 1.

[16] Ignacio M. Altamirano, "Don Melesio Morales" repub. In "Biografías de Músicos Mexicanos," *Revista Musical Mexicana*, vol. 3, num. 1 (January 1943), 13 [begun the score in 1856]. Taken up by Olavarría, Altamirano quotes Morales throughout, which asussmes the composer was interviewed, asserting that he *began* the work at age 18. Karl Bellinghausen: Morales 1838-1908, *Diccionário de la Música Española y Hispanoamericana* (Madrid: ICCMU, 2002), vol. 7, 756-8, postulates that Morales finished *Romeo* in 1857 and laid it by, demoralized, only resuming work in 1859, after approaching Paniagua for advice, completing it in 1860; Altamirano, *Revista Musical Mexicana*, ibid., 12 [Antonio Valle]; Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica*, 670 [several times each]. Olavarría, ibid., 671 [rescheduling the premiere]. Ignacio M. Altamirano, *Don Melesio* Morales in "Biografías de Músicos Mexicanos," *Revista Musical Mexicana*, 3 Mar. vol. 1943, nr. 3, 63-64 [derision from the orchestra]; Bellinghausen: "Morales 1838-1908," *Diccionário de la Música*, 7, 756-8 [Roncari's intervention]. Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica del Teatro en México*, vol. 1, 672 [excessive rehearsing].

[17] "[L]a Sra. Tomasi [sic] y la Srita. Paniagua cantaron muy bien, y lo mismo podemos decir de los Sres. Morales, Pineda y Solares. Los coros estaban muy bien ensayados, así como toda la ópera, que dirigió su mismo autor. Este fue llamado repetidas veces al palco escénico, siendo victoriado como merecía. El Sr. Morales es un compositor, y compositor de mérito, y según decimos al principio, desearíamos que encontrara apoyo, para que siga adelante. Esperamos que tan

The author (Reyes credits editor José Godoy), despite looking forward to a full review for which he regrets lacking time, apparently never undertook it,[18] making this the most extensive commentary on this or any of the 1863 works thus far extant. Nevertheless, his timely words likely facilitated the following announcement by Morales:

> Encouraged by the benevolent reception of my first production, and desirous to please various persons who have requested its repetition, I have arranged for a second performance which will take place this evening, thanks to the artists' generous cooperation.[19]

Following *Romeo*'s third performance, on 11 February, the press launched a campaign to promote Morales's study abroad by issuing a subscription call for donations in his behalf:

> Bearing in mind the sparse receipts from the three performances of the opera *Romeo*, composed by Mr. Morales, the *Heraldo* is promoting a subscription in behalf of this young composer today. This idea deserves good reception on the public's part, if they wish to stimulate this talented youth, gifted with genius and a love of study, in cultivating the fine arts. The *Heraldo* proposes that all donations be delivered to Mr. Roncari, who has committed himself so much to seeing the opera performed.[20]

To help bolster this initiative, *El Monitor Republicano* followed suit, reaffirming the

> Subscription: Our colleague, *El Heraldo* proposes one in behalf of the young author of *Romeo.* We think it a good idea, and hope that the sum of the subscription be sufficient to make an offering worthy of the Mexican operatic composer.[21]

But if the press was enthusiastic to the point of raising funds for Morales's study, insufficient receipts showed the public to be otherwise. An article entitled "Diferencias" exemplifies the irony of that year-to-date's fiscal disappointment juxtaposed with its artistic one, what some historians

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pronto como le sea posible ponga otra vez en escena su ópera, seguro de que tendrá quizá mas concurrencia que antenoche. Pues los que la oyeron volverán, y los que no tuvieron esa suerte, irán á oirla." *El Heraldo*, 29 Jan. 1863, 2.

[18] Reyes (1959), 16-17. Throughout his works, Reyes habitually ascribes the name of the paper's respective editor to many similar commentaries, whereas it seldom appears in the original.

[19] "Animado por la benévola acogida que ha tenido mi ópera en la primera representación, y deseoso de complacer á las varias personas que han solicitado su repetición, he dispuesto, mediante la generosa cooperación de los artistas, dar una segunda representación que tendrá lugar en la noche de este dia. Melesio Morales." Morales, "Gran teatro nacional. Ópera Italiana. Funcion extraordinario para la noche del lúnes 2 de febrero de 1863. Segunda representación de la ópera nuevamente escrita por el joven mexicano Melesio Morales, titulada: *Romeo*." *El Constitucional*, 2 February 1863.

[20] "Teniendo en cuenta *El Heraldo* los escasos productos de las tres representaciones que ha tenido la ópera *romeo*, compuesta por el Sr. Morales, promueve hoy una suscricion a favor de este joven compositor. Buena acogida merece esta idea de parte del público, si quiere estimular á los jóvenes, que dotados de génio y de amor al estudio, cultivan las bellas artes. *El Heraldo* propone que las [sic] donativos se entreguen al Sr. Roncari, que tanto empeño tomó en la representación de la ópera. "*Romeo.* El Sr. Melesio Morales." *El Monitor Republicano*, 13 February 1863.

[21] "Suscricion. Nuestro colega *El Heraldo* propone una a favor del joven autor de la ópera *Romeo*./La idea nos parece muy buena, y desearíamos que el producto de la sucscricion fuera suficiente para hacer un obsequio digno al filarmónico mexicano." *El Monitor Republicano*, 14 February 1863.

alluded to as the public's indifference. *El Monitor Republicano* republished the *Heraldo*'s 5 March observation, admonishing that

> The opera *La forza del destino*, which Verdi has just finished, and which has been presented in Paris earned the Italian composer 60,000 francs which he was given the same night it was staged, and 200,000 francs which he also received from various commissions from the rights to performing said opera abroad. The Mexican composer Melesio Morales, an industrious youth who has shown great talent in his opera *Romeo*, earned nothing from this composition, in spite of having performed it three times. We have proposed that a subscription be opened in Morales's behalf that he may dedicate himself to other musical works, and this thought was coldly received. We are sorry for this, because Morales is worthy and must be encouraged. And let it not be said that it is symptomatic of the situation through which we are passing, because even in this situation, the Teatro Nacional was full for the Carnival Tuesday Ball, and for that of the old women's piñata.[22]

For all the public's indifference, Morales's fame was now secured, a plaster bust cast and placed in the Nacional's foyer alongside those of Mexico's "other" musical and literary luminaries.[23] That gesture proved prophetic: Morales would eventually become one of Mexico's most influential composers, critics and pedagogues.

Meanwhile, President Juárez issued the 29 January edict requiring that any property not occupied by the enemy and belonging to "those whose conduct rendered them guilty of sedition or treason," be confiscated and sold to the highest bidder. Intense disquiet reigned in the capital over events in Puebla (now extensively fortified), besieged for sixty-one days from 16 March by the French under General Élie-Frédéric Forey (1804-1872); by May, congress re-ratified extraordinary presidential powers, enabling Juárez to defend national sovereignty against foreign intervention, unencumbered.[24]

Cenobio Paniagua (1821-1882)

Paniagua's *Caterina di Guisa*, written in 1845 but not staged until 1859 by the resident Italian company, is still considered the first such by a Mexican composer;[25] its success—according to biographer

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[22] "La ópera *La forza del destino*, que acaba de escribir Verdi, y que se ha prepresentado en Paris, produjo al maestro italiano 60,000 francos que le entregaron la misma noche que se puso en escena y 200,000 francos que también recibió de varios comisionados por el derecho de representar dicha ópera en el estranjejro. Al maestro mexicano D. Melesio Morales, joven aplicado, que ha revelado gran talento en su ópera *Romeo*, nada le ha producido esta composición, á pesar de haberse representado tres veces. Nosotros propusimos que se abriese una suscricion a favor de Morales para que pudiera dedicarse á otros trabajos musicales, y ese pensamiento fue acogido con frialdad. Lo sentimos, porque Morales tiene mérito y debe ser estimulado. Y no se diga que es efecto de la situación que atravesamos, porque en esa situación ha estado lleno el teatro Nacional en el baile de martes de Carnaval, en el de Piñata y en el de la Vieja." "Diferencias," *El Monitor Republicano*, 7 March.

[23] *El Monitor Republicano*, 20 March 1863.

[24] Ibid.; Galindo, *La gran década nacional*, 435 [29 January edict]; Zayas, *Benito Juárez*, 150: this puts it at 25 January; ibid. Galindo, *La gran década nacional*, 537 [Fortified...]; *Enciclopedia de México*, vol. VIII, 4539-4542 [seige of Puebla... Forey]; Brian Hamnett, *Encyclopedia of Mexico*, vol. 1, 718-721 [presidential powers].

[25] *Reynaldo y Alina* by Manuel Covarubias (1838) is still considered the first opera *written*—albeit presumed *not staged*—in Mexico by a native Mexican (Robert Stevenson, *Grove Opera*, New York). In 2020, an internet weblog teased that Covarubias' 1838 opera had indeed been discovered, performed and edited as part of the author's dissertation, without

Manuel Revilla—was phenomenal.[26] By 1861, it had become necessary for Paniagua to form a company of his own pupils to sustain the *Ópera Italiana* at the Teatro Nacional. Constituting one of the first such successful experiments to populate Mexico's operatic stage with native talent, it prevailed as the de facto mainstay of the *Ópera Italiana* during the period of invasion and civil war. Some sources dismissively contend that the troupe, headlined by daughter Mariana, ruined Paniagua. This is probably a malicious distortion of announcements like the following, cancelling a performance with loss of receipts due to her infirmity, wherein Paniagua forewarned against "the resulting substandard effect, were she made to sing under such circumstances."[27] Indeed, the theater denied Paniagua dispensation, forcing him to suffer damages incurred (a hazard of commanding a skeleton contingent with no one to cover, unlike stronger foreign company rosters). Nonetheless, Revilla reassures us that

> Along with the other singers mentioned, among whom the tenor Morales stood out for his vibrant, sweet high-notes, and the baritone Loza possessing a most extensive voice, **she** managed to keep the Teatro Nacional open, with *brief interruptions* [our italics], for two consecutive years.[28]

After years of dedicating himself to the success of his pupils, and inspired by Melesio Morales's most recent such, Paniagua could publish the following:

> Profoundly grateful for the good reception with which my compatriots and the general public have showered my first composition, *Catalina de Guisa*, I was moved to write the second; I have the fortune of staging it today in celebration of such a glorious and auspicious day, thanks to the assistance of the supreme government, which despite its present circumstances, has given me support exceeding its means. Though being necessary on my part to battle the immense obstacles which have beset me, I have overcome them all, and finally have the pleasure of announcing my new 'melodramma serio' *Pietro D'Abano…*.[29]

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any examples produced, nor further information on how to see or hear them, given. This has since been corrected: the respective work constitutes nothing less than a revelation of well-researched information and sources. See: Morales Cariño, Elías: *Reynaldo y Elina, o la sacerdotisa peruana (1838), ópera en tres actos de Manuel Covarrubias: transcripción, edición crítica y estudio preliminar* (Thesis; Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2018).

[26] Manuel Gustavo Revilla, *Obras*, vol. 1, "Biografías (Artistas)," (Mexico City, 1908), 89.

[27] *La Sociedad*, 18 Sept. 1863. This misunderstanding is consistently represented, notably by Stevenson (*Music in Mexico* [New York], 1952 and *Grove Opera*), and J. Orrego-Salazar (*New Grove II*, 2001).

[28] "Junto con los demás cantantes mencionados, entre quienes decollaban el tenor Morales por sus vibrantes y dulces notas altas, y el barítono Loza, que poseía una extensísima voz, logró ella mantener ella abierto el Teatro Nacional, con breves intervalos, durante dos años consecutivos." Revila, *Obras*, 90.

[29] "[…] Profundamente reconocido por la buena acogida en que recubrieron mis conciudadanos y el público en general, mi primera composición *Catalina de Guisa*, me animé para escribir la segunda, que hoy, merced á la protección del supremo gobierno, que á pesar de las circunstancias en que se encuentra, me ha dado un apoyo superior á sus fuerzas; tengo la fortuna de ponerla en escena en celebridad de tan glorioso y fausto dia./Cuantos esfuerzos han sido necesarios de mi parte para vencer los inmensos obstáculos que se me han presentado, todo está ya superado, y por fin tengo el gusto de anunciar mi nuevo melodrama sério Pietro D'Abano…" Paniagua, "Diversiones Públicas. Gran Teatro Nacional. Ópera Italiana." *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 3 May 1863. Full text also published in: Miranda, "Un siglo de ópera en México,"169.

Premiering 5 May, the immediate reception was apparently more favorable than is generally known: "Last night the opera *Pietro d'Abano*, original composition full of beauties, was performed in the Teatro Nacional. The opera was much applauded. …" The writer advised that "After hearing the last opera of Mr. Citizen Paniagua, the public should acknowledge Mr. Fuente for having aided the composer."[30] While an important (second known) affirmation of Fuente's significance, this positive early reflection may—ironically—conceal reasons for the opera's fate and impending impact on Paniagua, of which little else emerges other than Revilla's observation that *Pietro* was

> Expressly written for the baritone Pineda. [. . .]… In it, the composer demonstrated the greatest discipline and experience notwithstanding which the opera was received with marked reserve for *political reasons*. [. . .] … His opera only obtained one performance, which, consequently, did not allow a critical opinion to be formed about the work.[31]

Revilla's remark about "political reasons" connotes Paniagua's consecrating the expressly composed *Pietro d'Abano* to the legitimate (liberal) government's commemoration of the defeat of French invasion forces at Puebla. On 14 April 1863, *El Monitor Republicano* published all the pertinent petitions and responses, which, while still virtually unknown, testify not only to the mercurial fame referenced in Revilla but also to the acts by which Paniagua's enemies eventually sought to censure it:

> Cenobio Paniagua, with all respect due your Excellency, expresses that: desiring to contribute to the first anniversary of the glorious fifth of May, would like to stage his new opera entitled *Pietro d'Abano*, for which he supplicates that you deign to grant him a fiscal guarantee of three-hundred (300) pesos for indispensable preliminary expenditures which must be made in mounting it. [. . .] … God, liberty and reform. Mexico City, 10 April 1863. Cenobio Paniagua.[32]

This preceded the secretary's note, dated 10 April, showing that the funds were to be charged to the account of "ancillary governmental expenses/(gastos estraordinarios de gobernación)," and included a signed receipt, stating: "Received from the Ministry of Government and Relations, the amount of three-hundred pesos to stage my opera *Pietro d'Abano* next May 5th/(Recibí de ministerio de relaciones y gobernación la cantidad de trecientos pesos para montar mi ópera *Pietro d'Abano* el

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[30] "La noche se representó en el Teatro Nacional la ópera *Pietro d'Abano*, producción original, llena de grandes bellezas. La ópera fue muy aplaudida, [. . .] Despues de haber oído la última obra del Ciudadano Sr. Paniagua el público celebrará que el Sr. Fuente haya protegido al maestro." "Las Fiestas del 5 de Mayo," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6 May 1863. Miranda (183) and José Octavio Sosa and Monica Escobedo, *Dos Siglos de Ópera en México*, vol. 1 (Mexico City: Secretaria de la Educación Pública, 1988), http://www.operacalli.com/estrenos_1853_1880.html), erronously give 25 May as the premiere date.

[31] "… expresamente escrita para el barítono Pineda,... Dió muestras el autor en ella, de mayor ciencia y experiencia, no obstante lo cual acogióse la obra con marcada reserva por *motivos políticos* [italics mine]… Su ópera sólo obtuvo una representación, sin que, por lo tanto, se hubiese podido formar cabal concepto de la misma." Revilla, ibid., 91.

[32] "… Exmo. Sr. –Cenobio Paniagua, ante V.E., con el debido respeto, manifiesta que: deseando contribuir al primer aniversario del glorioso *5 de Mayo*, desea poner en escena su ópera nueva titulada: *Pietro d'Abano*, para lo cual suplica se digne V.E. concederle una proteccion pecuniaria de ($300) [sic] trescientos pesos para los primeros gastos indispensables que hay que hacer para montarla. [. . .] Dios, libertad y reforma. México, Abril 10 de 1863. Cenobio Paniagua." Paniagua, "Opera Nueva." *El Monitor Republicano*, 14 April 1863, 2.

próximo 5 de Mayo)."[33] Alongside a 300 pesos grant, the composer garnered prestigious recognition for dedicating *Pietro* to the liberal cause:

> Citizen President [Juárez], just admirer of the artistic talent you have manifested in your musical compositions opening a new path to Mexican youth, by nature so liberally gifted in the fine arts, has seen with particular satisfaction that you have dedicated your latest opera entitled *Pietro d'Abano* to the celebration of the glorious anniversary of 5 May. With great pleasure, the first magistrate would like to compensate the patriotic sentiment which you have manifested through this action, by efficiently helping you in your efforts to mount the aforementioned opera. But since the scarcity of funds in the critical situation we are traversing does not permit aiding you with more ngthan the three-hundred pesos you have received, he commands me to thank you for dedicating your composition, and to assure you that the government will do whatever it can next time, circumstances permitting, to stimulate your fervor towards the country's musical advancement. / Liberty and reform, Mexico City, 10 April 1863. – [to] Citizen Cenobio Paniagua; copies: México, 10 April 1863. – *Ignacio Mariscal.*[34]

This significant source goes beyond merely adulating the composer, and even acknowledging Juárez's tastes, sympathies and concern for the arts. It shows that the President identifies Paniagua's work as being in line with his famously incisive educational agenda. Nevertheless, still counting French partisans among his supporters, whose defeat he now effectively flaunted by association, Paniagua had publicly aligned himself with the opposition by accepting money from the Juárez government and endorsing their cause. Documentary proof was furnished for publication by the recipient as much to show the treasurer's note of thanks as the official receipt which, in this case, impelled a particularly pointed response. An unknown commentary by Gabino F. Bustamante (1816-1871), prominent surgeon and writer,[35] epitomizes the *Republicano* cause's humanistic bent, extolling Paniagua and his counterparts for planting hope for future civility and culture by dedicating their

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[33] "Opera Nueva." *El Monitor Republicano*.

[34] "El ciudadano presidente, justo apreciador del talento artístico que vd. ha manifestado en sus composiciones musicales, abriendo una nueva senda á la juventud mexicana, tan liberalmente dotada por la naturaleza para las bellas artes, ha visto con particular satisfacción que haya ud. dedicado su última ópera intitulada: *Pietro d'Abano* á la celebracion del glorioso aniversario del 5 de Mayo. De buena gana quería el primer magistrado recompensar el sentimiento patriótico de que da Ud. una prueba con ese hecho, ayudándolo eficazmente en sus esfuerzos para montar la ópera mencionada; pero ya que la escasez del erario, en la crítica situación que atravesamos, no le permite auxiliar á vd. mas que con los trescientos pesos que tiene recibidos, me manda darle las gracias por la dedicatoria de su composición, y manifestarle que el gobierno hará en lo sucesivo cuanto estuviere de su parte, según las circunstancias, para estimular los afanes de vd. a favor de los adelantos musicales del país. Libertad y reforma. México, Abril 10 de 1863. – Ciudadano Cenobio Paniagua. Son copias: México, Abril 10 de 1863. – *Ignacio Mariscal.*" Ignacio Mariscal, *El Monitor Republicano*, ibid.

[35] *XELA*, Jesus C. Romero, "*Galería de Músicos Mexicanos – Bustamante, Gabino F.*" (Mexico City: June, 1951), 127-128. Romero credits Bustamante with the texts of various Mexican operas and *zarzuelas*, including Covarubias' *Reinaldo y Elina ó la Sacerdotiza Peruana* (1838), which Stevenson spuriously reported as two separate titles (R. Stevenson, "Covarubias, Manuel," *Grove Opera*, 2002), and Paniagua's *Una riña de aguadores* (1859). While neither mentioning this essay nor Dr. Bustamante's early call to institutionalize musical education, Romero does credit him as a founding member of the *sociedad filarmonica* (1866), itself responsable for establishing the first national conservatory, and with the textbook on vocal and aural hygene *Elementos de Anatomía, e Fisiología de los Aparatos de la Voz y del Oído, para el uso de los alumnos del Conservatorio de la Sociedad Filarmónica Mexicana* (Mexico City: Tipografía de Comercio J. Moreno, 1866).

talents notwithstanding war. Compelled by the Paniagua school's achievements, Bustamante loftily rallies readers to the country's ideal betterment through the arts, celebrating how

> Amid the bloody battle which the Mexican Republic has sustained for more than a year and a half against one of the most powerful nations of Europe, and when everywhere attention is set solely on nobly maintaining the national independence of which they so infamously seek to rob us, it truly causes us pleasure to contemplate how genius unfolds all around, the century's reformist spirit accomplishes its mission, and progress spreads in spite of the difficulties and inconveniences with which we have to struggle amid such a hazardous situation. While, to one side, a multitude of convents—citadels where three centuries of stupid superstition and implausible fanaticism were obstinately entrenched—are being demolished with a firm hand, theaters, being the new pulpits demanded by this century to supplant the old and from which the doctrines of the true virtues of a civilized nation can be disseminated to the people, as in Aguascalientes, are being erected on the other.[36]

Thus, by April, despite a glaring dearth of cultural coverage, what Juárez's government recognized as the "fervor towards the country's musical advancement" following these events was evidenced in, shared among, and reprinted by the liberal papers (here *El Siglo* borrowing from *El monitor*). Furthermore, those particular tracts' crucial inclusion in the now politically oriented press indicates that its editors did not share an oft-alluded-to complacency towards the arts. Sizing up the political situation from the viewpoint of both patron-of-the-arts and poet, Bustamante further reasons that

> Among the artistic advances that have most called our attention is the musical talent now being developed in our midst, in a truly astonishing manner, to the extent that we can now form our own national opera, if we care to promote and support this sublime art, as is necessary.[37] [. . .] Our objective in tracing these lines was only to call the public's and in particular, the supreme government's attention to the new direction being taken by certain talents, so that they might lend them all the aid and support they deserve.[38]

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[36] "En medio de la sangrienta lucha que la República mexicana sostiene há mas de un año contra una de las naciones mas poderosas de la Europa, y cuando por todas partes no se atiende mas que á sostener dignamente la independencia nacional que con tanta infamia se nos trata de arrebatar, causa verdaderamente placer contemplar como el genio se desenvuelve por todas partes, el espíritu reformista del siglo cumple su misión, y el progreso se estiende á pesar de las dificultades é inconvenientes con que se tiene que luchar en medio de una situación tan azarosa. Mientras que por un lado se derriban con mano firmo multitud de conventos, ciudadelas donde se había encastillado tres siglos hace la estúpida supersiticion y implausible fanatismo; por otro, como en Aguascalientes, se levantan teatros que son los púlpitos nuevos llamados por el siglo á susistuir á los antiguos, desde los cuales deben difundirse á los pueblos las doctrinas que les ensueñen las verdaderas virtudes en una nación civilizada." Bustamante, "Conservatorio de Musica," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 17 April 1863, 3.

[37] "Entre aldelantos del genio que mas nos llama la atención, es el talento musical que se va desarrollando entre nosotros de una manera verdaderamente asombrosa, hasta el estremo de que podemos ya formar una ópera nacional, si queremos impulsar y proteger como es debido, este arte sublime." Bustamante, ibid.

[38] "Nuestro objeto al trazar estas líneas, ha sido únicamente el de llamar la atencion [sic] del público, y en particular del supremo gobierno sobre este nuevo rumbo que van tomando algunos talentos, á fin de que se les preste todo el apoyo y proteccion á que son acreedores." Ibid.

Yet, Bustamante's purpose in writing transcends the mere spouting of patriotic dogma, by offering practical suggestions for stimulating progress in the arts on the national level, and recognizing how

> The ministry's note in which it accepts Mr. Paniagua's dedication indicates that Mr. Fuente has understood very well that with the efforts of this composer, *a new path is being opened to Mexican youth,*[. . .] and his offer that *the government will do whatever it can* guarantees us the good will of the highest authorities to cooperate with its full support of a very important discipline. [. . .]/ For now, we will limit ourselves to indicating that the creation of a national conservatory be the most practical way for the supreme government to fulfill its promise, being that this institution is a necessity in Mexico.[39]

Unfortunately, beyond Paniagua's show of liberal loyalty, partisan displays in *El siglo* like Bustamante's fervid essay (too long to cite in its entirety) probably touched a *final chord* with the opposition: the seat of soon-to-be besieged liberal support became unable to protect Paniagua against his own interventionist enemies. These eventually drove him—as once his benefactor, Juárez—out of the capital by 1865, to live out his life in the provinces.[40] Therefore, if 1863 had launched Morales's career, it also all but wrecked that of his teacher, whose meteoric rise to fame was almost as abrupt as his downfall, begun by the same year's events. Yet, throughout, Paniagua indefatigably continued presenting one composition after another, including an anthem *in memoriam* of actor Antonio Castro with protégés Morales, Solares, and Montes de Oca in the principal voice parts; variations for soprano (Mariana), in August,[41] and several performances of *Caterina*, that October. Ultimately, the composer's (newly rediscovered) 10 May 1868 advertisement from Veracruz offering the autograph score, parts and rights to 'Catalina' and 'Pietro' for sale, show how he perceived his contribution as "These two operas, in Italian, founders of the Mexican national repertory/[Estas dos operas en italiano, fundadoras del repertório nacional mexicano]."[42]

As the national crisis worsened, Juárez governed under intense threat of invasion until 31 May, leaving the defenseless capital for San Luis Potosí with the official archives and account

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[39] "La nota del ministerio en que acepta la dedicatoria del Sr. Paniagua, nos indica que el Sr. Fuente ha comprendido muy bien que con los esfuerzos de este maestro se está *abriendo una nueva senda á la juventud mexicana,* [. . .] *y su ofrecimiento de que el gobierno hará en lo sucesivo cuanto estuviere de su parte*, [. . .] nos garantiza la buena disposición de las primeras autoridades, para cooperar con su eficaz protección al adelantamiento de un ramo tan importante. [. . .]/ Por ahora nos limitaremos á indicar que la creación de un conservatorio, es el medio mas conveniente que para cumplir su promesa podrá adoptar el supremo gobierno, que este establecimiento es ya una necesidad en México." Ibid.

[40] Revilla, *Obras*, 94. He moved his family to Veracruz that June; it is thither that he made the final move to nearby Córdoba in November 1868 (Revila, *Obras*, 94-95), and not from Mexico City, as in R. Stevenson, "Paniagua y Vasques, Cenobio", *Grove Opera*, 2002.

[41] Olavarría, 680. Castro died 25 August.

[42] "Catalina de Guisa, Pietro d'Abano. Veracruz, Mayo 10 de 1868." This ad ran in the following three issues: *El Constitucional*, 23 May 1868; *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 25 May and 13 June 1868. As is obvious from Revilla, no sale was made; the material remained in the family for generations and was not subsequently produced. The archive was eventually located and rediscovered. For an account of the contents, see: Eugenio Delgado, and Aurea Maya, *Catálogo de manuscritos musicales del archivo Zevallos Paniagua: obras de Cenobio y Manuel M. Paniagua* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2001).

registers, once receiving a congressional vote of confidence. The next day, French forces under Forey occupied Mexico City, installing a Mexican assembly destined to govern under a "Catholic Emperor."[43]

José Mateo Torres Serrato[44] (dates unknown, *fl*. 1854-68)
Until now, the press record has concealed all that we know of the work and identity of Torres Serrato, a politically involved *reformista*, in extraordinary examples recording key elements of the period, its politics and impact on random lives. Precisely such entries, spanning significantly 1856-1868, reveal the most about Torres, who as an appointee of the Puebla State government in various capacities, is first named in 1856 to carry out the decrees of 31 March (most likely connected to the "Ley Lerdo" demanding the seizure of Catholic lands). He reappears on lists of local government deputies throughout 1861 and 1862.[45] Another of these, from Puebla, 26 December 1862—the earliest sign of Torres in 1863—has him petitioning on behalf of a relative, revealing an even deeper correlation between the composer and the historic events he helped shape:

> I, Mateo Torres Serrato, respectfully express that I have a sister, a nun of the ex-convent Santa Inez, whom, in consequence of the laws published today removing all nuns from the convents, I went, as was necessary, to retrieve. And with much surprise and pain on my part, the Mother Superior of that community let me know that the governor of the miter had directed that all the nuns be dispersed in threes. Resulting from this disposition, my sister had been delivered to a strange man, who is her confessor. Counting on your characteristic rectitude and that you will not permit them to elude the orders intended for the perfect progress of the reform laws, I supplicate you, if you deem it worthy, to order those concerned to release my aforementioned sister from the power of her priest, and that she be returned to the bosom of her family. I beseech you, being just, to grant my request.[46]

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[43] *Enciclopedia de México*, Vol. VIII, 4539-4542 [vote of onfidence]; ibid. [Forey, French forces].

[44] Not 'Serratos' as misspelled by Olavarría, and subsequently perpetuated by historians, notably Riccardo Miranda, "Un siglo de ópera en México," 159, 183, 548, and others, eventually corrected by Bellingausen in: Molina Álvarez, K. Bellinghausen, *"Mas si osaré un extraño enemígo [. . .]": CL aniversario del Himno nacional mexicano—Antología conmemorativa* (1854-2004), (Mexico City: Oceano, 2004), 186, 189. Never coining 'Serratos,' and with few exceptions (mainly 'Senato,' in two subsequent newspaper entries: see footnote 49), the contemporaneous press record is quite clear on this.

[45] *El Siglo XIX*, early Apr. 1856, 4. A memorandum dated 31 Mar., signed Gen. Francisco Zarco, names *Don* Mateo Torres Serrato "intervener/(*interventor*)" assigned to the parish of La Soledad [31 March]. *Enciclopedia de México*, vol. XI, 6331 [seizure, catholic lands]; *La Independencia*, 20 March1861. An official announcement of popular election results names Torres a *Regidor* [1861]. *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 19 August 1862, lists "J. Mateo Torres" among Puebla's State chamber of deputies [1862].

[46] "[. . .] Mateo Torres Serrato, ante. Vd. Respetuosamente espongo: que tengo una hermana religiosa del ex–convento de Santa Inés, que en consecuencia de la ley publicada hoy para la exclaustración definitiva de todas religiosas, ocurrí como era debido á reclamar á mi mencionada hermana; y con bastante sorpresa y dolor por mi parte, se me hizo saber por la superiora de aquella comunidad, que el gobernador de la mitra había dispuesto repartir de tres en tres, todas las religiosas en general; resultando de esta disposición, que mi referida hermana ha sido entregada á un hombre estraño, cual lo es su confesor. Descansando en la rectitud que es á vd. característica, y en que no permitirá se eludan las disposiciones que tienden al perfecto desarrollo de las leyes de reforma, vengo en suplicar á vd., si lo tiene á bien, ordene á qien corresponda, que mi repetida hermana salga del poder del confesor, y vuelva al seno de su familia. A vd. Suplico provea como pido, por ser justo. Puebla, Diciembre 26 de 1862.—J. Mateo Torres." Torres, *El Monitor Republicano*, 2 January 1863.

Same-day responses deploring the nuns' remand into the custody of men (despite their being priests) immediately follow from both General Jesús G. Ortega and the Puebla State governor general ordering, among other things, the women's expedited release to their families.[47] If Torres's deference to the laws to which his own sister was directly subject practically ascertained his *republicano* allegiance, this subsequent press appearance (three weeks later) allays any doubt of it: "Mr. Mateo Torres Senato [sic], having availed a house in Puebla valued at three thousand pesos, has ceded its rent proceeds, amounting to some thirty pesos, towards the costs of the war against the foreigners."[48] This illustrates Galindo's point on sacrifices by ordinary citizens through examples of what he determined was under-valued documentation: random letters from property owners to the general constabulary offering rent-revenues for the war effort, buildings and land for military use.[49] Often ending with a pledge of enlistment, the dailies published these along with their respective replies extolling their writers' valor and sacrifice (and, of course, accepting their generosity). Similarly, news of Torres's operatic contribution, *I due Foscari*, was also treated as such. Though the last of the four works performed, it was largely documented through May 1863, presumably just after Torres was contracted to stage it. Praising the government (now struggling to remain in power), *El Siglo* related how

> Through the ministry of relations, 300 pesos has been administered to Mr. Mateo Torres, to aid him in his staging of the opera which he has composed with the title *I due Foscari*. This act by the government is laudable, when in the midst of the most critical circumstances for the country, it sees within its power to stimulate and protect the arts for *the first time*.[50]

This followed the first powerful evidence of the *protecciones* since Paniagua's, showing that Torres's reputation had certainly preceded him in bringing the praise and support of the government, which he would have been justifiably eager to publicize:

> Having informed Citizen President [Juárez] of yours dated 22 of the present [April], in which you solicit an aid of 400 pesos with the condition of repayment to stage the opera which you have composed, entitled *I due Foscari*, the first magistrate has ordered that you be awarded 300 pesos without the obligation of restitution, rather by way of a grant, being that the sum cannot be any greater, as you request, impeded by the treasury's difficult circumstances./ The government acquiesces, and I for my part feel great satisfaction that diligent and talented citizens like you honor the country, enriching it with national productions that, beyond being a positive advancement for the fine arts, vindicate and ennoble the name of Mexican precisely at a time like the present in which its culture needs to be accredited before other cultured

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[47] *El Monitor Republicano*, ibid [nuns' release]; see also: *Galindo, La gran década nacional*, 529-530.

[48] "El Señor D. Mateo Torres Senato [sic].— habiéndose adjudicado en Puebla una casa por valor de trés mil pesos, ha cedido para los gastos de la guerra estrangera, la renta que produce, que es de treinta y tantos pesos." *El Siglo*, 21 January 1863.

[49] Galindo, *La gran década nacional*, 441 [property for military use].

[50] "Por el ministerio de relaciones se han ministrado $300 al Sr. D. Mateo Torres, como auxilio, para que pueda poner en escena la ópera que ha compuesto con el titulo *I due Foscari*. Laudable es este acto de gobierno, cuando en medio de las circunstancias mas críticas para el país, se ver por primera vez que las artes encuentren en el poder estímulo y protección." Italics ours. "Distrito Federal, Ciudad de Mexico, Proteccion a las artes," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 1 May 1863.

> nations, more than ever./ In so telling you, for your own satisfaction, and recommending you continue your valuable work, it is my pleasure to offer my appreciation and consideration. /Liberty and reform. Mexico City, 28 April 1863.–*Source.* – Mateo Torres. Copy, Mexico City, 29 April 1863. – *Ignacio Mariscal.* [51]

These mentions in the newspapers constitute the bulk of what is now known about Torres. It is therefore strikingly fortuitous that his forthcoming opera should be announced in his own voice, culminating in this letter, which—given its late-August date—may indicate the approximate time of approval to begin production and rehearsals:

> Without any claim to the honorable title of Professor, and even less to that of composer, I have resolved to stage the opera *I due Foscari* hoping that my long and intensive work on its composition will be favorably received by the illustrious and sensible public as an expression of the sincere desire that motivates me to contribute to the progress and advancement in this beautiful City, of one of the loveliest of the fine arts to grace the human race. Having entrusted the performance of said opera to an outstanding cadre of actors assembled by my worthy associate Mr. Paniagua, nothing will be left to be desired in its execution, to which end it is now being scrupulously and meticulously rehearsed for its upcoming performance./ If the public finds something of merit in my first efforts, so will have been satisfied the aspirations of, [signed] J. Mateo Torres Serrato.[52]

Paniagua staged Torres's opera on 11 November with his own company. Breaking with the norm, it was announced with uncharacteristic brevity: "Next Wednesday the 11th, the company which Mr. Paniagua has formed will sing a new opera composed by Mr. Serrato, entitled: *I due Foscari.* It is the author's first effort, and he asks the public's benevolence."[53]

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[51] "Dada cuenta al ciudadano presidente del ocurso de vd. Fecha 22 del actual [April] l, en que solicita un auxilio de 400 pesos con calidad de reintegro para poner en escena la ópera que ha compuesto, titulada *I due Foscari*, el primer magistrado se ha servido se le ministren á vd. 300 pesos sin la obligacion de reintregarlos, sino por vía de donativo, siendo que la cantidad no pueda ser mayor, como deseara, por impedirlo las circunstancias penosas del erario. El gobierno se complace, y yo de mi parte siento gran satisfaccion en que ciudadanos laboriosos y hábiles como vd. honren al país, enriquesiendolo con producciones nacionales, que, sobre ser un adelanto positivo para las bellas artes, vindican y noblecen el nombre mexicano, precisamente en una época como la presente, en que mas que nunca ncesita acreditar su ilustracion ante las naciones cultas. Al dercirle a vd. para su satisfaccion, recomendándole continúe sus preciosos trabajos, me es grato ofrecerle mi aprecio y consideracion. Libertad y reforma. México, Abril 28 de 1863.–*Fuente.* – Mateo Torres. Es copia, México, Abril 29 de 1863. Distrito Federal, Ciudad de Mexico." Author unknown (Fuente or Mariscal), *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 3-4; 2 May 1863.

[52] "Sin pretensión al honroso título de profesor, ni mucho menos al de compositor, he resuelto poner en escena la ópera *I due Foscari*, esperando del ilustrado y sensato público, que el largo trabajo impendido en esta composición, sea recibido como la esprecion sincera del deseo que me anima por el progreso y adelantamiento en esta hermosa capital, de una de las mas bellas artes que adornan la historia del género humano. Confiada la representación de dicha ópera al sobresaliente cuadro de actores formado por mi digno compañero el Sr. Paniagua, nada dejará que desear en su ejecución, y al efecto se está ensayando con toda escrupulosidad y esmero para su próxima representación. Si el público estimara en algo mis primeros trabajos, quedarán satisfechas las aspiraciones de J. Mateo Torres Serrato." Torres, "Opera Nueva," *La Sociedad*, 20 August 1863.

[53] "El próximo miércoles 11, la compañía mexicana que ha formado el maestro Paniagua, cantará una ópera nueva, composicion del Sr. Serrato, titulada: *I due Foscari.* Es el primer ensayo del autor, que pide al público benevolencia." "Opera nueva." *El Pajaro Verde*, 7 November 1863. Alongside this date, Sosa and Escobedo give 4 November as the premiere, itself reflected in Miranda (183), and for which we have found no corroboration.

The account of Torres Serrato's further musical activities is still incomplete. In early 1864, he conducted a benefit concert for the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Puebla, the city where he presumably resided and exercised his now well-recognized penchant for directing and composing. Few other works by him are known. He presumably submitted an entry to the State sponsored National anthem competition, in 1854. Most prominently, "Foscari" was staged again five years later at the Teatro Principal in Puebla, in 1868.[54] However, recent sources crediting him with another opera (a *Fidelio*, no less) given at Mexico City in 1864, are quite spurious.[55]

By 16 June 1863, as Juárez' government grappled to maintain a hold on national affairs from the provinces bereft of a liberal press for propaganda, General Forey ordered Saligny to form a *Junta superior de Gobierno* of thirty-five Mexicans to elect a triumvirate and an assembly of 215 (*Junta de notables*). This effectively put Mexico under an imperial regency, in unwilling search of an emperor.

Octaviano Valle (c.1824-1869)

Valle, the composer for whom we have found the most music (after Morales) is, contrasted with the other three, also the 'least political,' for want of any similarly documented pronouncements. The dearth of coverage about him also makes Valle the last to cast off biographical obscurity; the few modern attempts to document him all contain errors which we have been able to correct through the few recorded events obtained. An apparently well-regarded pianist and teacher with several songs published over the preceding decade, Valle nevertheless saw fit to seek guidance from Paniagua, whom (though his coeval), Valle's solitary (?) operatic project may owe its stimulus. And while Valle completed and signed the score to *Clotilde di Cosenza* 21 January 1861,[56] the record is silent about its interim progress. Nevertheless, news of its preparation exactly two years later was significant enough for the editor of *El Constitucional* to break personally and reprint several times that month, declaring:

> We have the pleasure of announcing to the public the forthcoming staging of the opera with whose title we head this paragraph, which was composed by the industrious Mexican musician, Mr. Octaviano Valle, whom we wish the happiest success.[57]

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[54] *La Sociedad*, 5 November 1864, 3 [1864 benefit concert]; See: Molina, Bellinghausen, "*Mas si osaré un extraño enemígo* [. . .]", 186 and 189 [1854]. Beyond this entry, Bellinghausen notes "very few other works" extant, none of which have surfaced. *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 20 March 1868 [1868].

[55] It is therefore incumbent upon us to assert that no *Fidelio* by Torres exists, for the sake of curtailing the scholarly community's further false hopes of encountering the title's mention let alone of finding such a work. The spurious credit results from a misreading of the listing directly below that of Torres' 'Foscari' in the respective volume of Charles Parsons, *The Mellen Opera Reference Index* (Lewiston, NY; Edwin Mellen Press 1987), wherein a layout error runs the subsequent entry for an 1864 Budapest performance of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, up against the previous one for Torres' *I due Foscari*. Unfortunately, the error has been and is still being repeated in several international writings, and only recently included in a DMA performance chronology of Ibero-American operas and a webpage.

[56] Octaviano Valle, *Clotilde di Cosenza* (autograph), *M-MCc*: M.782.6/Val./R.8851, acts II & III, only.

[57] "Tenemos el gusto de anunciar al público que se va á poner en escena próximamente la ópera que con el título que encabezamos este párrafo, a compuesto el hábil profesor mexicano, D. Octaviano Valle, á quien lo deseamos el éxito mas felíz." Gregorio Jardón, "*Clotilde de Cosenza*," *El Constitucional*, 7 Jan. 1863. This was run again on 12, 13 and 16 January.

El Monitor followed suit, "Announcing that an opera entitled Clotilde de Coscenza [sic], composed by our compatriot, Mr. Octaviano Valle will soon be staged."[58] For reasons yet unknown, these January announcements leaked word of an imminent Clotilde, prematurely. Instead, the management presumably stalled by staging a similarly titled French play, "Clotilde de Valeri," by Frédéric Soulié to appease a curious and now teased public, whilst ingeniously avoiding the very piece on which the opera itself was based.[59] Therefore, Valle must have surprised readers six months thence, i.e., in July, when announcing the long-impending premiere with a

> Four-performance subscription. To the Public/The undersigned has proposed to stage his first lyric composition entitled *Clotilde di Cosenza*; but the many requests from various friends who are lovers of the divine art, have encouraged and decided him on opening *a four-performance subscription*./ The operas to be given will be:/ *Traviata*, *Hernani* [sic] or *Trovatore* and *Clotilde di Cosenza*./*Octaviano Valle*.[60]

Contradicting the (spurious?) 12 July 1863 premiere date annotated in the autograph, Valle further announced the 16 July opening of the series with "Maestro Verdi's appealing opera/(la simpática ópera del maestro Verdi)" *La Traviata*, under his own direction, and "Clotilde", the second night of the subscription, the 19th.[61] Unfortunately, Valle, who presumably received none of the *protección* grants enjoyed by Torres and Paniagua (and later, Morales), was instead obliged to stop production and refund receipts. As for *Clotilde*, no news exists of the outcome, beyond what Olavarría reads into a solitary default announcement dated 26 July 1863, from an unknown source:

> Having suffered a considerable loss in the two operatic performances which were given at my expense, and not finding myself with sufficient funds necessary to cover the inevitable losses, the management has granted me dispensation from my obligations to give the other two that I announced, the price of which subscribers may come by and collect.[62]

Olavarría, not citing the aforementioned announcement, led many to subsequently assume that these two ill-fated nights instead constituted a run of *Clotilde*, crediting Paniagua as having both produced and having been "more fortunate" with them (along with his 'Catalina' and Torres's

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[58] "Se anuncia que pronto se pondrá en escena una ópera titulada *Clotilde de Coscenza* [sic], compuesta por nuestro compatriota el Sr. D. Octaviano Valle." "Opera nueva." *El Monitor Republicano*, 8 January 1863, 3.

[59] Announced in *El Constitucional* and *El Siglo Diez y Nueve* 14 March 1863, and in *El Constitucional* 15 March 1863. We have encountered ample precedent for this practice in Spain's theaters, as well.

[60] "Abono de cuatro funciones. Al Público/ El que suscribe se había propuesto poner en escena su primera composición lírica *Clotilde di Cosenza*; mas las muchas instancias de varios amigos afectos al arte divino, lo han animado y decidido á abrir *un abono de cuatro funciones.*/Las óperas que se darán en las cuatro funciones, serán:/Traviata, Hernani ó Trovatore y Clotilde di Cosenza./*Octaviano Valle*." Valle, "Diversiones Públicas. Gran Teatro Nacional. Ópera Italiana," *La Sociedad*, 15 July 1863.

[61] Octaviano Valle, ibid. [date of 12 July]. Ibid., *La Sociedad*, 15 July [*La* Traviata]; *La Sociedad*, 19 July 1863, 4 [*Clotilde*].

[62] "Habiendo sufrido una pérdida considerable en las dos representaciones de ópera que se han dado por mi cuenta, y no encontrándome con los fondos necesarios para continuar cubriendo las faltas que en lo sucesivo debe haber, he sido dispensado por la autoridad del compromiso de dar las otras dos que anuncié, cuyo importe pueden pasar a recoger los abonados." Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica*, 673. We have been unable to locate the original source.

Foscari). However, the announcement gives but one of these as the original work, preceded by *Traviata*; indeed, *Clotilde* enjoyed a solitary performance. Citing *El Constitucional*[*ista*]'s 19 July *Clotilde* announcement, John Koegel allows that reasons for this failure remain unclear, whether stemming form "lack of merit or the hazards of war."[63] Yet, Valle's reputation and the quality of the work's music compel us to deduce that politics after *Pietro*'s indifferent reception, rather than 'lack of merit', may have played a part, given the composer's close association with Paniagua. Looking ahead, Valle was next announced directing *La Traviata* again months later, albeit in a production generally ascribed to Paniagua. Conversely, Olavarría credits Valle with his own Mexican company, though he conceivably worked with Paniagua to produce these and subsequent operas credited exclusively to Paniagua, including the aforementioned *Ernani*, *Trovatore* and other titles rounding out the 1863 series.[64] Regardless, Valle's reputation must have survived intact: the following spring, a subscriber mentioned pieces by "Octaviano Valle" alongside others in a Good Friday service, probably confusing him with brother Antonio (noted for works in that repertory).[65]

And while not our intention to chronicle each composer's career needlessly beyond the year in question, it bears mentioning that Valle's continued to months before his death on 21 May 1869. This date is ascertainable here for the first time since the following obituary first appeared, heralding "The celebrated Mexican composer Mr. Octaviano Valle died last night in this city. His musical compositions will make his name famous and survive history as one of our national glories."[66] Because his creations presumably thrived during the period, those now-ironic words are subject to imbalances in Mexican musical historiography, which this and our projected work intend to redress. What can be said presently is that, after Morales, more published compositions have surfaced by Octaviano Valle than by his brother Antonio, Paniagua (before the rich but incomplete Paniagua-Zevallos archive's rediscovery), and especially Torres Serrato, of whom no compositions survive.[67]

The Paniagua School – the 1863 Operas

In the wake of the 1859 *Caterina di Guisa* success, Paniagua instituted classes in harmony and composition at his home, modeling the approach on his interpretation of Anton Reicha's treatises on each. Despite early training, this former child prodigy's fruitless adulthood quest for a teacher eventually compelled their independent study, after receiving them in Italian translation, in the 1840s. Additionally, he may have been among aspiring Mexican composers who—since Joaquín Beristáin (1817-1839)—drew encouragement from resident European counterparts whose example impacted

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[63] John Koegel, *Diccionário de la Música Española y Hispanoamericana* (Madrid: ICCMU, 2002), vol. 10, 692.

[64] Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica*, 673 ["more fortunate"]; John Koegel, *Diccionário de la Música Española y Hispanoamericana* (692), [reasons for failure]; *La Sociedad*, 28 November 1863, 4 [Valle directing *Traviata*]. Olavarría, ibid., 673 [ascribing 1863 series, Mexican company to Paniagua]; also see table.

[65] *La Sociedad*, 12 April 1864.

[66] "Anoche [21 May] ha fallecido en esta capital el célebre maestro mexicano D. Octaviano Valle. Sus composiciones musicales harán célebre su nombre y subsistirá en la historia como uno de nuestras ilustraciones nacionales." "Defuncion." *La Revista Universal*, 22 May 1869. John Koegel, *Diccionário*, gives no birth date and is uncertain of the death date.

[67] Works by A. Valle and Paniagua, many apparently unpublished, exist in the Mexico City Cathedral archives. Since being acquired by the CENIDIM after 2008, the Paniagua family archive has remained inaccessible throughout our research through the present; for an account of its contents, see: Delgado and Maya, *Catálogo*, 2001.

compositional style by means not otherwise forthcoming from merely studying imported scores. Revilla also speculated about similar probable exchanges between the two contrabassist-composers, Paniagua and Giovanni Botessini (1821-1889), during the latter's 1850-54 sojourn. Consequentially, establishing what the latter and later historians designated Mexico's national operatic school, Paniagua's works are often flatly characterized as representing the Italian manner, without compunction.[68] Italian musical inspiration and literary sources, perhaps, but filtered through the uniquely Mexican experience, developed out of available resources, which Paniagua himself imported, assimilated and ingeniously reinvented to perfect his didactic vision. While not our task to broach that vision's nature or methodologies with the ideal profundity, a few observations on their results, through basic comparative deductions of style, should suffice to lend perspective to the first-fruits of this composer's *academy*.

By all appearances, Paniagua respected and nurtured individuality in his students, each reflecting both a sense of grounding and manner, encompassing influences of not only their mid-century Italian counterparts, but also of the French and Spanish. Beginning with the master, a sole attempt to analyze Paniagua's operas by examination of their scores is still due Revilla, who—the touchstone *Caterina* as his model—pinpoints characteristics of "such a celebrated work/una obra tan celebrada," observing that

> it was his easy and spontaneous melodies that, apart from their originality, descended directly from Donizetti; [. . .] the sentimental in his music was in perfect accord with the then-abiding tastes and sensitive temperament; … [. . .] the precision with which the voices he knew so well were treated ; [. . .] the exactness of an instrumentation by one who had studied it year after year; [. . .] the perfect choice of libretto, dramatic and interesting; [. . .] the instinctive knowledge of theatrical convention which presided throughout the work's fabric; [. . .] The score boasts the structure and style of those by Donizetti, Paniagua's favorite composer, whom he almost always took as a model.[69]

This summation was previously substantiated by Francisco Elorriaga, when reviewing the 1861 production of "Caterina," and for whom certain pieces are indeed rife with sentimentality and "written entirely in the style of Bellini and Donizetti, the most sentimental authors of the Italian school."/ ("[. . .] escrita enteramente en el estilo de Bellini y Donizetti, los autores más sentimentales de la escuela italiana."). Yet, while Elorriaga declares Paniagua's style to be highly imitative of decades-old models, he recognizes that some sources of inspiration are by contemporary composers, including Errico Petrella (1813-1877). Thus, the critic notes that "Although that of the Mexican master is reminiscent of several operas in the Italian repertoire, especially Petrella's *Marco Visconti*, it does

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[68] Revilla, 90 [Reicha's treatises]. Francísco Sosa, *Biografías de Mexicanos Distinguídos* (Mexico City: Porrúa, 1884; rpt. 1998), 3rd ed., 88-89 [Beristáin]. A gifted young orchestrator and composer, Beristáin became a protégé of the 1830s *Ópera Italiana*'s resident *Maestro Compositor*, Lauro Rossi (1810-1885).

[69] "Eran sus fáciles y espontáneas melodías qué á salvo su originalidad, provenían en línea directa de Donizetti; [. . .] lo sentimental de su música en consonancia con el gusto reinante y el temperamento sensible, sensible y delicado; [. . .] la conveniencia con que estaban tratadas las voces por quien las conocía á maravilla; [. . .] la bien trabajada instrumentación por quien la había estudiado año tras año; [. . .] la acertada elección del libreto, dramático é interesante; [. . .] el instintivo conocimiento de las conveniencias teatrales que había presidido en la factura de toda la obra. [. . .] La partitura ofrece el corte y estilo de las de Donizetti, el autor predilecto de Paniagua y al que tomó siempre por modelo…" Revilla, 89. We should note that these references are to Paniagua's Italian operas, in exclusion of his vernacular works, of which several songs (in Spanish)—diverging considerably in style—have since resurfaced.

not lack originality in certain pieces."[70] Conversely, the reviewer arrived at his conclusions after attending live performances, whereas not so Revilla, by whose time the opera was no longer performed, and who gained all insight by examining the autograph score.

Musically, Paniagua's style is not easily described, yay, we would argue, it still defies description. Hence, any attempt at surpassing the still unique Elorriaga/Revilla analysis remains fraught with challenges for numerous reasons, chiefly: 1.Works are extremely difficult to access, and not made readily available by their holding institutions (government and religious); 2. available works largely lack dates, and often the contexts of their compositions—where evident or estimable—remain the only apparatus for placing them within the composer's career; 3.The difficulty of ascertaining style periods or changes or shifts to Paniagua's overall technical or aesthetic progress. Regarding the latter (and ergo some that help to inform the former), we have concluded that the body of songs this far extant and now found can be traced to the composer's earliest possible period, in the 1840s, when teaching himself composition from manuals.[71]

Failing opportunities to examine either of Paniagua's operas with one fragmentary exception, a solitary example of his writing (available through the completion of the present study), initially enabled us to illustrate the foregoing, while betraying Revilla's remarks, exceedingly. This early, largely unknown and to now unstudied song appears, at first glance, to be a virtual *homage* to Donizetti. It boldly borrows a famous incipit as its opening phrase (ex. 1, mm. 5-6 and 9-10), from which Paniagua spins his own melody, a method equally current among Italian composers of the 1830s:[72]

See Example 1. Paniagua, Preghiera –Vergine Santa e Pura, mm. 5-12.

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[70] Francisco Elorriaga, "Catalina de Guisa, ópera del Sr. Paniagua", *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 12 July 1861, 4 [Indeed, . . .]. Ibid [Yet, while . . .]. Ibid, "La del maestro mexicano, si bien tiene reminiscencias de varias óperas del repertorio italiano, sobre todo, del Marco Visconti de Petrella, no carece de originalidad en ciertos trozos, [como el dúo den bajo y tenor, el de soprano y bajo, y la cavatina de éste.]".

[71] This article was completed on the assumption that Paniagua's rare uncatalogued *Preghiera* indeed be the only extant piece readily available outside of the Cathedral archives in Mexico. Then, an extensive Master's thesis containing a collection of hitherto unknown songs by Paniagua, appeared online some ten years after its 2007 completion, namely: Alma Delia Guerola Landa, *Canciones y música de salón: Partituras inéditas halladas en el Archivo General del gobierno del Estado de Veracruz* (Thesis, Universidad Veracruzana; Xalapa, Veracruz, 2007).This invaluable work consists of a critical edition of an archived collection of unknown songs by mid-century Mexican composers. The grouping seems to originate mostly in the 1840s, some with dates, making them the earliest such examples so far extant, and by several authors, including: one anonymous, a certain Blanco (unknown), Jesus Valadés, and just as we had written and presented that none were yet known, several by both Manuel Covarrubias (1842 and 1843) and Cenobio Paniagua (the two bearing dates are from 1849). This also contains one more in Italian, in addition to another ascribed to Paniagua, which has also since resurfaced on the web in modern typeset, albeit from an unknown source, accounting for three such, thus far known).

[72] Cenobio Paniagua, *Preghiera –Vergine Santa e Pura*, Mexico City, Publisher, date unknown. The text is credited with the inscription "Parole dal Sac[cerdote]. Italiano Sarzi Nicola." This song, absent from Delgado and Maya, *Catálogo de manuscritos* (see nn. 42 and 66), cites Ernesto's beginning melodic line "Sogno soave e casto," in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* as its incipit. Prolific writers of opera, including Donizetti and Saverio Mercadante (1795-1870), frequently availed themselves of this device.

In direct reference to "Caterina," Elorriaga coincidentally corroborates this same method as being patent to Paniagua, attributing this very technique to his working of "the concerted scene where Arturo reads a poem to his cousin", and ascertaining that

> the first notes of the theme are the same as in the *romdinella* from *Marco Visconti*; but only the first ones, since afterwards, the melody, although being in the same style, is entirely different.[73]

This short piece constitutes a concentrated example of mid-century style —or so-called "Bel canto"—progression characterized by vocal ornamentation. Within it, Paniagua varies vocal line, rhythm, harmonies and accompaniment figures towards the climax of the melodic structure (also betraying the further and then still current influence of Saverio Mercadante), as in ex. 2, mm. 21-26 and 27-32 [beat 2]).[74]

See Example 2. Paniagua, Preghiera –Vergine Santa e Pura, mm. 21-32 (beat 2).

This glimpse corroborates Revilla's essential framing of Paniagua's overall musical language, which view—interestingly current in the composer's day, as corroborated by Elorriaga—is still of moment in our own, when passing from master, Paniagua, to pupil, Morales. For its part, this brief but rare description coined by G. Bustamante, sums up the style of each in these terms:

> Following the sweet and sentimental *Catalina de Guiza* [sic], Mr. Paniagua's first work whose pieces have been heard with pleasure in various salons of some of Europe's principal cities, comes the energetic and expressive *Julieta* [sic] by Mr. Morales, about whose indisputable merit experts are in perfect agreement…[75]

The fundamentals of the craft secured, the challenge in applying them lay in setting preexisting libretti (being doubtful that many Italian librettists plied the cafés of Mexico City). Each composer was thereby wont to embrace the ungrateful task of composing around text likely shaped by his predecessor, while steering clear of imitation, ensuring that the end-product be as much *his own* as possible. Apparently, the process imposed only minimal alteration on the original text. Paniagua successfully demonstrated this method when adapting "Caterina," confirming it as necessary an evil as completing the work in piano-vocal score before orchestrating it (presumably

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[73] "…las primeras notas del tema, son las mismas que en la *romdinella* de Marco Visconti; pero únicamente las primeras, pues después la melodía aunque del mismo estilo, es enteramente diversa." Elorriaga, *El Siglo*, ibid.

[74] The piece obviously also draws inspiration from Mercadante, most notably the iconic *Salve Maria*. While only Donizetti and Bellini are thus far named as models, that does not preclude the influence of such other prominent *ottocento* exponents whose Music Mexicans certainly understood as much as enjoyed. Far from obscure references, Mercadante's works—secular and sacred, including those cited here—were widely known in Mexico, and a recognizable influence on local works throughout the Mexican 'ottocento,' particularly those by emergent Paniagua student, Miguel Meneses (dates unknown).

[75] "A la dulce y sentimental *Catalina de Guiza*, primera producción del Sr. Paniagua, cuyas piezas han sido ya escuchadas con placer en algunos salones de las primeras ciudades de Europa, ha sucedido la enérgica y espresiva *Julieta* del Sr. Morales, sobre cuyo mérito indisputable están perfectamente de acuerdo todas la personas inteligentes." Bustamante, "Conservatorio de Musica," *El Siglo*.

accounting for the extended periods elapsed between completion dates recorded in the autographs and known production runs).[76]

Romeo

The first such opera to emerge from this studio was *Romeo* by Morales. Following a disclaimer acknowledging the importunity of lamenting having suffered through musical training and the difficulties of mounting his work amid a national crisis, he confides:

> I read the libretto of *Romeo and Juliet* as a child, and the subject touched my heart; for this reason, when beginning to pursue my interests in theatrical music, considering only my tastes and not finding unpublished [original] libretti nor someone who could write me one, I chose it, my constancy resulting in the work's completion. During the two and a half years since its completion, my friends encouraged me to bring it to fruition, and I now have the honor of announcing it. // I hope that the illustrious and intelligent public of Mexico, distancing themselves from any comparison with the works of Belini and Vacay [sic] (something that would be highly disadvantageous for me) receive my *Romeo* with benevolence, always considering it not as a perfected work, but as the first effort of, [signed] *Melesio Morales*.[77]

Referring to Romani's libretto *Giulietta e Romeo*, for Nicola Vaccai and revised for Bellini as *i Capuletti e i Montecchi*, Morales's testimony made his concern palpable, particularly since, from the young composer's viewpoint, hefty precedent had been set in at least one score (*Capuletti*) with which he was familiar.[78] Corroborating this, the aforementioned *Heraldo* piece keenly observed that: "In writing the opera *Romeo*, the author had to battle the memory of another work with the same title by Bellini and Vaccai, and nevertheless, Mr. Morales's opera is entirely original."[79] If the composer's geographical detachment from the European mainstream naturally assumes that some eclecticism was forthcoming, the *Heraldo*'s immediate segue implies astounding extremes:

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[76] *Felice Romani*, Andrea Sommariva, ed; John N. Black, "The Libretti of F. Romani: A Bibliographical Survey" (Florence: Olschki, 1996), 242-243. This asserts that the only extant copy of the libretto (University of Texas) shows no apparent changes beyond additional lines for an undisclosed scene "and new scena ultima." Black also lists two more versions of the opera between Coccia and Paniagua, including Giuseppe Mazza (1836), and (?) Campana (1838). See also: Mario Rinaldi, *Felice Romani* (Rome: De Santis, 1965), 522.

[77] "El libreto de Julieta y Romeo lo leí cuando era niño, y su asunto impresionó mi corazon; por eso no fué, que cuando comencé á ensayar mi fantasía en música teatral sin ponerme en otra consideracion que mi gusto, y no encontrando libretos inéditos ni persona que me hiciera uno, lo escogí, dando por resultado mi constancia la conclusión de la obra. Durante dos años y medio que lleva de hecha, mis amigos me han animado á darla á la luz, y ya tengo el honor de anunciarla./Espero que el ilustrado é inteligente publico de México, alejándose de toda idea de paralelo con las obras de Bellini y Vacay [sic] (cosa que me seria altamente desventajosa) reciba mi ROMEO con benevolencia, considerándolo sempre no como una obra perfecta, sino como un ensayo de—*Melesio Morales.*" Morales, ibid. *El Monitor.*

[78] *Bellini – Le Prime: Libretti della prime rappresentazione* (Milan: Ricordi, 2002). Both works were heard during the 1855-56 *Ópera Italiana* season. See Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica*, 628-29 ["memory … Bellini and Vaccai"]; see also table.

[79] "Al escribir la ópera Romeo, tuvo el autor mencionado que luchar con el recuerdo de otra obra que con el mismo título que escribieron Bellini y Vacay [sic], y sin embargo, la opera de Sr. Morales es enteramente original." *El Heraldo*, 29 January 1863.

> Perhaps in the avoidance of any similarity, some of its vocal melodies lack tenderness (and these were scarce); but what are these blemishes which originate from the idea of not resembling the work that served as a model, alongside the many beauties found in the score of this young Mexican?/Anyone hearing *Romeo* might say that Mr. Morales had never heard music of any kind, so new as such, so original is that which he has written.[80]

At the very least, the reviewer's astute discernment of Morales's "lack of tenderness" suggests what—according to Revilla and Bustamante—distinguishes him from Paniagua. Furthermore, the composer's incumbency to create imaginatively upon a decades-old libretto was undoubtedly compounded by its inherent custom-fashioned devices, which accounts for an occasionally awkward inventiveness. The fact that Romani 'retrofitted' the libretto to accommodate adapting Bellini's preexisting music[81] makes the proposition of composing anew over words already defined by another composer's style all the more daunting. Morales, therefore, intentionally avoids traits endemic to Bellinian melodic line. For instance, Bellini's emblematic period-elongation (a peculiar syllabic stretching) is one of several obstacles Morales circumvents, even reverses, with syllable-oriented melodies cutting very close to their oft-changing harmonies, despite an obvious grasp of voice and requisite vocalities.[82] The review continues, citing,

> some of the outstanding pieces that reveal talent, inspiration and taste in this young composer: Romeo's entrance aria, the duet between him and Juliet, while wanting for sweetness, [still] abounding in delicacy and entirely original; the second-act quintet, a polished piece, well-instrumented and of magnificent effect; the duet between Lorenzo and Juliet; her desperate lover's melody at the tomb of his beloved, and the final duet.... [83]

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[80] "Quizá por el empeño de huir de cualquier semejanza, falta alguna ternura en sus cantos, y estos escasean; pero, ¿qué son esos lunares que tienen por origen la idea de no parecerse á la obra que le servía de modelo, al lado de tantas bellezas como se encuentran en la partitura del joven mexicano? Cualquiera diría al oir á *Romeo*, que el Sr. Morales no había oído música ninguna; tan nueva así, tan original es la que ha escrito." *El Heraldo*, ibid. Also cited partially in: Reyes (1959), 84-85.

[81] Alessandro Roccatagliati, *Felice Romani, Librettista* (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 1996), 110 [custom-fashioned devices]. Romani's revisions for Bellini were required when salvaging music Bellini already wrote for their recently censored project, *Ernani*; therefore, not all the new verses were designed to fit the music exactly. See also: *Felice Romani*, Andrea Sommariva, ed; Friedrich Lippmann, "Romani e Bellini" (Florence: Olschki, 1996), 92. Lippmann (90) suggests that probably more of the music from *Zaira* found its way into *I Capuletti*, than from *Ernani* into *La Sonnambula* [preexisting music]. This is more evident in other parts of the score, particularly Tebaldo's act I aria [obstacles ... reverses].

[82] However, we would argue that, at this early stage, not quite to the extent of faithfully following Bellinian precepts, as Bellinghausen asserts in: "Morales 1838-1908," *Diccionário de la Música*, 756-58.

[83] "[Señalaremos, sin embargo,] algunas de las piezas de las que mas sobresalen en la opera de Sr. Morales, y que revelen en este joven maestro, talento, inspiración y gusto: la ária de salida de Romeo; el duo entre éste y Julieta, aunque falto de ternura, abundante en gracia y enteramente original; el quinteto del segundo acto, pieza acabada, de instrumentación y de magnifico efecto; el duo entre Julieta y Lorenzo; el canto del amante desesperado al lado de la tumba de su amada, y el duo final de la ópera..." *El Heraldo*, 29 January 1863, 2.

Of these, the last mentioned refers to the fragment shown in the following examples,[84] representing a compendium of Morales's dramatic writing for its insistence on verisimilitude of vocal expression via virtuosity and form against a backdrop of striking urgency. Less intent on extending dramatic tension, Morales's shorter treatment instead brims with agitation, plunging into a cabaletta of merely thirty measures starting at "Giulietta, al seno stringimi," with voices juxtaposed contrapuntally (ex. 3). An evenly paced two-measure theme in F major (mm. 1-2, later repeated as mm. 11-12), ending in C major, establishes the four-measure opening statement, voices in tandem; short-duration notes and rests, Romeo's being half of Giulietta's, intensify the effect of his shortness of breath.

See Example 3. Morales, Romeo,"Duetino final (b)," mm. 1-10.

Contrastingly, mood and moment suddenly gain impetus midway, as Giulietta's bounding dotted ascents on an F-minor chord firmly establish her distress at Romeo's failing, itself manifested in gasps of descending note-pairs (Ex. 3, mm. 3-5). Reestablishing F major via a C-major chord, each enter a "B" section in imitation as fermatas broaden the sweeping triplets of a more lyrical melody (Ex. 3, mm. 6-10), over a heavily layered accompaniment superimposed with sustained LH trills and RH pedal (mm. 9-10).

As seen in Example 4a, Morales's vacillating modality, progressing from the statement in minor into a tonics-major resolution (reprise of mm. 13-18), gives each period a modular quality, moving to and fro to mirror the awakened Juliet's hovering over the dying Romeo (ex. 4, mm. 19-24). The specter of Vaccai's and Bellini's comparatively static, steady melodic lyricism cedes to a portrayal of havoc at the distraught lovers' momentary confusion, stylistically more involved, employing fuller-textured writing with *fioritura* and repeated chords betraying both Paniagua's and possibly elder colleague O. Valle's possible influence, in Ex. 4a, mm. 23-24.[85]

See Example 4a. Morales, Romeo, "Duetino final (b)," mm. 19-24.

Somewhat counteracting this while adding to the drama musically, the search for vocal effect intensifies as Romeo is overworked by the repeated rapid-fire *grupetti* and acciaccatura-laden sixteenth notes in mm. 19-23. Forsaking the famous settings' through-composed cantilena, Morales's novel cabaletta-like formal structure also poses challenges to ending a key moment with dramaturgical cogency. Intriguingly, Morales approaches this (somewhat less succinctly than his predecessors), by "winding down" the now frenetic spiral towards Romeo's last breath, via a long *cadenza* with expiration on "ad-di..." (ex. 4b, mm. 25).[86]

See Example 4b. Morales, Romeo, "Duetino final (b)," mm. 25-30.

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[84] See also: Nicola Vaccai, *Giulietta e Romeo*, Italian opera 1810-1840, vol. 45, Philip Gossett, ed. (Garland, 1989), 194-196. Without delving into the well-known subject and characters, a brief comparison of corresponding passages was made to identify where and how Morales, working from the same libretto, differs in treatment from Bellini and Vaccai.

[85] Reprised from mm. 17-18, the melody and harmonic placement of thirds and sixths is also reminiscent of Valle's "Romanza," *Ideal*.

[86] The libretto specifies an interruption on "Giu-liet -[ta]," on which both composers make Romeo expire on an ascending leap, Bellini of a fifth, Vaccai an octave.

Pietro d'Abano

Paniagua chose his second subject carefully, being at once the most modern and most obscure.[87] Originally set in three acts by Giuseppe Apolloni in Venice in 1855, its libretto by Antonio Boni may have conceivably drawn its inspiration from a similarly-entitled German opera, by Ludwig Spohr collaborating with librettist Karl Pfeiffer (*Pietro von Abano*, 1827).[88] Titled after the early-fourteenth-century astronomer, physician and philosopher and set between Padua and Bologna, *Pietro d'Abano*'s plot distorts the 'star-crossed lovers' dynamic. In simplest terms, the fate of two lovers—Luisa (soprano) and Arnoldo (tenor) —is doomed from the outset by their respective families' selfish interests. Representing these are Pietro da Reggio, Arnoldo's uncle (basso) and Pietro d'Abano, Luisa's father (baritone), whom the former is bent on apprehending, having proclaimed him a sorcerer and heretic. However, tragic elements of destruction prevail throughout: Luisa (destined by her father for religious life) runs away with Arnoldo, only to plunge from his boat into the water from remorse; he mourns her loss until they both reappear in the final scene, only after Luisa's mother dies brokenhearted; d'Abano dies in agony, da Reggio is distraught by his own malfeasance, and a besotted Arnoldo is rebuked by a Luisa becoming a nun.

In noting (in 1908) that Paniagua's 'soulful' music might be "… antiquated, perhaps, for romanticistic mentalities, narrow-minded and unvarying in their tastes"… /(… anticuada quizás, para entendimientos noveleros, estrechos y de un solo molde en sus gustos…)," Revilla nevertheless indicated that it was not without some dramatic force.[89] Regarding *Pietro*, he further noted that

> The libretto is a bit weak from the literary viewpoint, and inferior —for the same reason— to that of "Catalina de Guisa." However, while the music does not reflect the charm of that opera, it is manipulated with greater awareness, distinguishing among its passages two duets: for soprano and tenor, and for soprano and baritone, as well as a precious serenade written for tenor."[90]

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[87] The original work premiered at the Teatro La Fenice, Venice, 8 March 1856, where it ran for four performances; though Appoloni (1822-1889) was most famous for his far greater success, *L'ebreo*. See: Oscar Mischiati, "Apolloni, Giuseppe," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 3 (1961). The opera's music appears not to have been published in any form, nor has any autograph or other manuscript score surfaced to date.

[88] Spohr's 'Pietro' is the subject of both a critical edition (Routledge, 1989; ed. Clive Brown) and a monograph (Dario Bisso Sabàdin, *Pietro von Abano di Louis Spohr* [Armelin Musica, 2009]) neither of which appear to mention its having served as the source of the later Italian work (Boni/Apolloni). However, Gregorio Piaia: "Il 'mago' Pietro d'Abano nella letteratura del primo Ottocento," *La Polifora*, n. 1 (July 2020),1-5 (www.istitutoveneto.org/lapolifora/010) fully discusses Ludwig Tieck's 1824 novel *Pietro von Abano oder Petrus Apone, eine Zaubergeschichte* (Breslau, 1825) as the basis of the Pfeifer/Spohr opera. The article next passes to the Apolloni/Boni work, assuming (without foundation) its kinship with its *Märchenoper* namesake (and even with a wholly unrelated Nathaniel Hawthorne title). While the stories share only certain similarities (including characters, though differently named), we do not rule out the possibility that Boni's 'Pietro' may draw on either its German predecessor or its literary source but, in fact, would rather proffer that hypothesis, here.

[89] Revilla, 92.

[90] "El libreto es un tanto endeble desde el punto de vista literario, é inferior por lo mismo al de "Catalina de Guisa." La música, en cambio, aunque no ofrece la lozanía de esta obra, está con mas conciencia trabajada, descollando entre sus pasajes dos duos: de soprano y tenor, y de soprano y barítono; así como una preciosa serenata escrita para tenor." Revilla, 92.

The opera's Italian counterpart was never produced in Mexico, and therefore, it is doubtful that Paniagua had any knowledge of Apolloni's music for it. However, pondering how this libretto fell into Paniagua's hands, Adelaide Cortesi (1825-1889), interestingly, role-creator of Luisa for Apoloni in Venice, stands out as the most likely medium through which the work arrived in Mexico: presumably with her, in October 1857.[91] As such, and merely speculating, it seems not unlikely that the artist may have had at least one of her favorite pieces from the opera with her. This is a common and time-honored practice of singers creating or headlining in a particular role, and therefore it is as likely Cortesi would have had some of its music to show—and which Paniagua could have seen—alongside the libretto.

To the point when this article was completed for its first submission, Paniagua's legacy lay dormant: his works, though rediscovered, were neither performed nor subject to the necessary critical editions.[92] Only then, several new sources resurfaced providing a somewhat deeper look at Paniagua's work, most importantly, a fragment from act I of *Pietro d'Abano*.[93] But the music still wants for analysis and placement in aesthetic terms in both historical and contemporaneous senses. Using the severely worm-eaten autograph piano vocal draft, neither it nor the resulting critical edition enables us to study them without difficulty.[94] In creating the following examples, ours was not to attempt a new critical edition, but merely render and reflect the corrections that proved necessary after scrutinizing the one cited against its source, i.e. the included facsimiles of the autograph score and published libretto, with the latter two documents as our sole guide.[95] This was done to the best of our ability in order to provide a snapshot of the work through the clearest possible examples. The fragment in question corresponds with Paniagua's setting of scenes 2 through 5 of the first act, as it appears in the libretto.[96] This selection, though not necessarily indicative of the opera's representative *pezzi chiusi* nevertheless offers a microcosm of the three principal characters' basic vocality and the composer's use of it.

Example 5 is one of three segments in the fragment following the protagonist's entrance, as he surprises his daughter Luisa standing alone in the garden. But even these short examples betray glimpses of the natural dramatic impetus inherent in Paniagua's writing, here producing a similar

[91] Olavarría, *Reseña Histórica*, 650. She remained through the civil war outbreak populating the *Ópera Italiana* with her own troupe under Barili's direction, shortly thereafter; an exodus of Italian singers forced her to join forces with the Mexican vernacular troupe in late 1858 (*ibid*. 667), performing in *zarzuelas*, including Mariano Soriano Fuertes's *El Tío Caniyitas*.

[92] Arguably, since resubmitting this article in 2020, little had this situation changed: it is only since his 'Caterina di Guisa' was staged and a fragment from 'Pietro' edited that a spate of pseudo-scholarship mostly repeating redundant facts (with few notable exceptions) began appearing over the www.

[93] Paniagua, Cenobio, Eugenio Delgado Parra, Áurea Maya Alcántara, Eds. *Vacila il piè.... Número 5 del primer acto de la ópera Pietro D' Abano* (Mexico City; Secretaría de Cultura, INBAL, CENIDIM, 2021).

[94] Ibid. One can only wonder at the manner in which the underlying libretto lyrics were entered in the transcription portion of the critical edition. In all cases, groups of syllable pairs (and even one triplet) with eliding vowels are entered as one word, colliding them together rather than deploying the requisite hard space to separate and align them both with their respective noteheads, according to accepted practice. This, and the relative illegibility of a fairly low-resolution manuscript facsimile, render its study alongside the corresponding libretto text essential.

[95] Measure numbers are taken from those given to the fragment by the editors of the critical edition.

[96] A.Boni, G.Apolloni: *Pietro d'Abano: melodramma serio in 3 atti* (Venezia; Teresa Gattei, 1855).

momentum as that supplied by Verdi for Rigoletto and Gilda in their two major scenes together.[97] Indeed, the father-daughter dialectic of *Pietro d'Abano* represents a similar dichotomy as in *Rigoletto*, where the father's only child is lured into the arms of an undesirable suitor. In example 5, a struck-through measure occurring between mm. 99 and 100 (not included in the edition) completing the initial phrase, lends some insight into the composer's mind at work, because of its obvious ineffectiveness as a transition. Instead, it is replaced with the suspenseful tension of the previous recitative over a tremolo accompaniment, plunging into one where the figures provide greater momentum for a concerned Pietro, as he consolingly recognizes the cause of Luisa's anxiety.[98]

See Example 5. Paniagua, Pietro d'Abano, Nr. 5, sc. 4 (Recit. Pietro), mm. 99-108.

Relaying that the girl's "sweet mother" awaits her inside, Pietro exits, after which she exclaims "Ciel! Che intendo?/(Heavens, what am I hearing?)." If only momentarily, his words have an effect on her inner turmoil, which she expresses in her subsequent cavatina, of which the incipit is included in Example 6. Betraying an effective use of melody (despite Revilla's not mentioning it), this tune probably had the desired effect on its audiences in turn.[99] It shows Paniagua's penchant—as recognized by Revilla—for effectively manifesting the character's emotional state through melodic expression, as Luisa avows fidelity to the "holy love/(santo amore)" her parents bear for her.

See Example 6. Paniagua, Pietro d'Abano, Nr. 5, sc. 4 (Cavatina Luisa), mm. 136-144.

But here, the tide turns, as Luisa's already wavering sentiments are challenged as romance beckons. Fortunately, that very serenade which Revilla dubbed "precious/(precioso)" constitutes one of the fragments to hand, from which we draw the next two examples, beginning here with Example 7. Indicated as "a voice in the distance", Arnoldo's song begins on the final note of the cadenza ending Luisa's cavatina. It represents Arnoldo's first-time arrival, and the beginning of the trouble viciously presaged by Pietro's students for their "tyrannical teacher" in scene one.[100]

See Example 7. Paniagua, Pietro d'Abano, Nr. 5, sc. 5
(Barcarolle/serenade Arnoldo), mm. 167-175.

While not a duet in its own right (that, in fact, constitutes the subsequent number beginning on the final page of the published fragment's autograph facsimile, not included in the edition), the

[97] Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano* … "Edición Facsimilar," 49.

[98] Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano* … "Edición Facsimilar," 49. While measure numbering seems consistent throughout the transcription portion of the edition, the editors (surely, unintentionally) omit one page of manuscript which would have gone after p. 49. (mm.92-107). This corresponds to mm. 108-124, which are otherwise obviously included in the transcription which ends correctly at m. 376. This produces an error of measure enumeration (displayed in the caption beneath the photogram) throughout the remainder of the facsimile portion, with p. 50 now indicating "108-124" instead of the actual 125-143, as it should, thereby coming up short 17 measures, at m. 354 on p. 60.

[99] Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano* … "Edición Facsimilar," 50-51.

[100] Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano* … "Edición Facsimilar," 52.

final example constitutes what is still the only one of Paniagua's ensemble or part writing.[101] Here, Luisa expresses her initial reaction to her new paramour entering with a counter-melody set over a repetition of Arnoldo's final phrase.

See Example 8. Paniagua, Pietro d'Abano, Nr. 5, sc. 5 (Barcarolle/serenade Arnoldo/Luisa), mm. 199-214.

The cabaletta immediately following this, and with which the edited fragment and scence 5 end, has Luisa succumbing to her wooer's lament and serves as an affirmation of her decision to abandon her parents.

To be fair, all of the three manuscript scores examined challenge the scholar and transcriber, not infrequently demanding guesswork about the composer's real intentions behind wrong, repeated or smudged notes, for instance. But here it is evident both in the original as from the edition that the composer's intentions differed from the piano score autograph, and were probably left that way so he could attend to their actual manifestation in the orchestral score and parts: this is where they would have counted most.[102]

Clotilde di Cosenza

Octaviano Valle's only known opera—of which but acts two and three survive—was conceived largely on a libretto for Carlo Coccia by Gaetano Rossi,[103] after Louis-Charles Caigniez' play *La Forêt d'Hermannstadt, ou la Fausse épouse* (1805). Clotilde (daughter of the count of Cosenza), betrothed to count Emerigo (of Monmelliano), is sent for by his squire, Sivaldo, on the eve of the wedding. Knowing Emerigo has never seen Clotilde, despite receiving a medallion concealing her likeness (with a secret latch only she understands), Sivaldo ambitiously colludes with his sister, Isabella, to replace the countess, ordering his valet, Tartuffo, to kill her. Taking pity, he instead helps Clotilde to safety, which she grudgingly finds as Rosa, maid to inn-keeper Iaccopone and his wife, Agata. Meanwnhile, Sivaldo, having passed off Isabella disguised in Clotilde's jewels and clothes, shudders as Emerigo expresses doubt over the unlikable bride-to-be (Aria-Chorus, Emerigo, servants). Finding her way into his palace with Iaccopone and Agata for a prenuptial celebration, Clotilde hands Emerigo a letter exposing Sivaldo's plot, her identity and predicament. Addled when first prevented from passing it to Emerigo (each being instantly smitten when their eyes meet), Clotilde confides all to her employers. They help her find him (trio "deh, proteggi"): after reading, he arrests them at the imposter's behest (trio). They flee, subsequently reentering, Clotilde serendipitously aided by

[101] Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano* … "Edición Facsimilar," 54.

[102] We have referred to this and other opera sources here as 'autograph': in this, we apparently go against the editors. They affirm that the manuscript piano-vocal score (being the only source of the opera extant) constitutes a professionally executed copy made after the score's final version, into which the composer may have entered corrections. Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano* … "Comentarios a la edición crítica," 13. As this statement seems to come without evidence to sustain it, we can only uphold it as the hypothesis of the only scholars to have handled the material since acquiring it nearly three decades ago. Therefore, the manner in which one refers to the nature of the original seems somewhat inconsequential at this point: what matters is that 1. They finally made it available, and 2. We have managed to work with it to advance awareness of it through further scholarship.

[103] Premiered at the Teatro San Benedetto, Venice, in 1815, the likelihood of different versions or revisions over its long popularity is substantial.

Tartuffo as guards bring Iacopone who recounts all to Emerigo, against Isabella's deceptive interjections (*quintetto*). When Clotilde—not Isabella—opens the locket, an enraged Count orders the siblings to await death in the dungeon. However, in typical *genre larmoyante* or Cinderella-story fashion (like Paisiello's Nina, Rossini's Cenerentola and Rosina, or Mercadante's Elisa), Clotilde pleads for mercy on their behalf, and a triumphal finale ensues.

Valle's text is an adaptation by an Italian of uncertain identity, named either Bonetti or Bozzetti. How such an extensively revised version reached Valle remains unknown, though he presumably availed himself of the original's libretto (if not musical materials) from an early local production.[104] Though Valle's Sivaldo is a tenor (not a bass, like Coccia's), the characters mirror the original distribution. Of the pieces obtained for analysis, only Clotilde's cavatina and the quintet are the same as (or bear much resemblance to) the Rossi version; other pieces, including a *preghiera*, letter trio and Emerigo's aria, were probably written later, though it is unknown by whom or if expressly for Valle. In Valle, several apparent cuts and changes lead to scene VIII, omitting several lines by Clotilde and Emerigo, opening instead with the latter, slightly toggling Rossi's original, then plunging into his reading of Clotilde's note (sc. VII in Rossi, wherein a different trio with Emerigo, Tartufo and Isabella—but not Clotilde, as in Valle—ensues). Consequentially, Rossi's scene VIII *quintetto*, where the entire *intreccio* comes to a head, encompasses scene IX in Valle, which he nevertheless sets intact, towards the dénouement. Like our next example, this piece represents a microcosm of Valle's style and sense of musical dramaturgy (though far from complete), in closed form.

Somewhat styled after Donizetti's *sestetto* from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the quintet begins with Clotilde and Emerigo intoning an A-B exposition in similar relief, 'squaring off' in inward reflection of their respective concerns (ex. 9, mm. 1-12). They enter over an accompaniment built on imaginatively applied chord-rhythm figures and tonal placement redolent of the guitar—in the key of E major—interestingly common to Valle's (and Paniagua's) idiom.

See Example 9. Valle, Clotilde di Cosenza, act III, sc. 9 (Quintetto), mm. 1-12.

Leading out in thirds from this "duet" portion in the first of three extensive, partially unmeasured cadenzas (through m. 31, ex. 10), they are joined at once by Isabella, Iacopone and Tartuffo in intricate contrapuntal interweave. When repeated, the melody is redistributed, and each vocal line varied.

See Example 10. Valle, Clotilde di Cosenza, act III, sc. 9 (Quintetto), mm. 31 (beat 3)-40 (beat 1)

Valle then ingeniously stems this panoply of concurrent brainwave traffic and bridges the sections by reintroducing the transitional interjections ("internal" cadenzas) in kind, allowing subsequent character pairs simultaneous expression of their respective concerns. Here, Clotilde supplicates Emerigo to believe that she loves him alone, as Isabella excoriates Tartufo for betraying her (ex.11a, mm. 49 [beat 3]-53).

[104] Further investigation into the unclear, faded writing in the Valle autograph has not yet produced this librettist's identity, though figures of either name appear attached to opera in mid-century Italy [Bonetti or Bozzetti]. See Table: The only local productions, under Galli, date from a time when Valle was still a boy [production].

See Example 11a. Valle, Clotilde di Cosenza, act III, sc. 9 (Quintetto), mm. 49 (beat 3)-54.

By contrast, the other three interrupt midway, at m. 51, then continue, 'speaking' for themselves from m. 53, as the cadenza's dramatic function accrues complexity. Tension mounts as all layers now steadily merge through the *a capella* passage (itself reminiscent of this early device's use by Mozart, Rossini or Mercadante to express apprehension in similar moments),[105] ending structural similitude with the Donizetti model (ex. 11a, m. 53 through 11b, m. 58).

See Example 11b. Valle, Clotilde di Cosenza, act III, sc. 9 (Quintetto), mm. 55-58.

The final, unmeasured cadenza, wherein Clotilde's defenders Iacopone and Tartuffo console the desperate Countess (ex. 11b, mm. 58-60), leads to the closing section, thereby allowing the action to breathe its way towards a (purely musical) resolution (11b, m. 60-11c: m. 67).

See Example 11c. Valle, Clotilde di Cosenza, act III, sc. 9 (Quintetto), mm. 61-67.

Valle's melancholic style may lie somewhere between the extremes of Morales's and Paniagua's (what little we know of it): with the "sweet" present, the "sentimental" is particularly prominent, grounded in rich, opulent, harmonic language with sure, but judicious, reliance on the diminished sixth. Dependent largely upon stock formulas, the accompaniments are often more traditional than Paniagua's and less inventive than Morales's. Regardless, strengths outweigh such trifles: Valle's vocal line, never trite, expressively represents the text, revealing a seasoned melodist, plainly deft at complex ensemble (or choral) writing, employing three to five parts.

Absent the reasons behind *Clotilde*'s not surviving its premiere, it is tempting to postulate that interventionist interests had perhaps been involved, seizing upon Valle's association with Paniagua, on the one hand, if not upon perceived allegorical connotations of the dramatis-personae itself, on the other. Considering the latter possibility, the following instances (among the arias) seem most prominent:

1. Clotilde's persona allegorically identified as a repressed Mexico, whose freedom is usurped by unscrupulous outside interests. After confiding in her benefactors, the Rossi libretto has Clotilde mustering her perseverance (Act II, sc. 1): "Innocent, but persecuted and oppressed by powerful enemies, I'll soon confront their cunning and fury. Heavens, may your favor not abandon me."[106]

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[105] Though perhaps coincidentally, the passage thematically echoes Roberto/Ordomante's aria ("Ella piangea") from Mercadante's *I Normanni a Parigi* (1832), expressing that characters' struggle to comprehend his own feelings in the given situation. That said, the similarity transcends mere musical reminiscence by betraying a functional association. While the opera itself was not in the Mexican repertory, the piece had since found its way into the published recital repertoire and was certainly available as such during Valle's career. Mercadante's influence can also be felt in the harmonic language of Valle and of Paniagua for their similar reliance on the employment of the second inversion triad in a major key, being a seemingly less prevalent device in other major influences, such as Donizetti and Verdi.

[106] Perseguitata, oppressa ma innocente,/Da un nemico posente,/Ad affrontar m'avvio l'arte, il furore,/Cielo; non m'abbandoni il tuo favore." Gaetano Rossi, *Clotilde*, Melodramma semiserio... (Firenze: Stamperia Fantosino, 1819).

2. Vaunting himself a mercenary initially committed to Clotilde's demise, but brought by his conscience to save her, Tartuffo's comically veiled inner-conflict is a possible allegory for 'atoning' Mexican imperialist conservatives coming to the aid of their compromised motherland. Interestingly, the liberal partisans under Juárez noted his policy of clemency via amnesty to any *intervencionista* willing to repent of affiliation with, or allegiance to, the French invasion forces.[107]

I due Foscari

Besides the underlying traits reflecting civil discord and being highly representative of outsider domination of a 'defenseless' albeit sovereign entity, the chosen stories share another interesting commonality (less *Clotilde*): the parent-child dialectic, culminating in arguably the most relevant piece, Torres's *I due Foscari*. Sadly, the announcement of the later Puebla production conveys all we know of its music confirming only that "knowledgeable persons have praised the whole work, particularly the second-act duet and trio."[108] Whatever his reasons, in Francesco Maria Piave's libretto for Giuseppe Verdi's 1844 opera (already played in Mexico to some acclaim), Torres chose conceivably the most challenging of the four to remake. Further allegorical comparisons with impending Old World Imperial dominance over fledgling New World republican liberties aside, the peculiarities of Piave's writing for Verdi doubtless attached some daunt to setting the title afresh. Yet, its success may owe in part to the immediacy of the espoused theme's literary aesthetics and theatrical dynamic in relation to the situation and sentiment Torres sought to express at that moment in history.[109]

Resembling Ollavaría's earlier description of "father wounding son," this powerful statement for the "house-divided" allegory was staged during what must have seemed for Torres, Paniagua and colleagues a catastrophe: the defeat of the republic and declaration of empire, soon to be sealed by Maximilian's accepting the Imperial crown. With the now-ruling opposition persecuting Republican military, leaders and activists, the figures of wrongly accused Jacopo Foscari—condemned by the Counsel of Ten, and betrayed by his father, the Doge—effectively reflect the liberal cause so fervently embraced by Torres and martyred at the hands of a French-backed puppet "regency" under "President" Lares. Therefore, the innocence Clotilde and Iaccopo Foscari share indeed constitutes a plausible metaphor of the overarching Republican struggle, itself.

1863: Year's End, New Beginnings

By October, the *Ópera Iitaliana*'s offerings by the Paniagua and Valle ensembles waned, with yet a *Trovatore* announced. Paniagua, appointed to a commission on military music in the august company of elder musicians, had the added honor of seeing his youngest student, Miguel Meneses, nominated alongside them. Torres's now long-anticipated and perhaps strategically (?) scheduled *Foscari* was finally presented. And, having started his next opera, *Idelgonda*, the end of a year begun hellishly for him saw Morales now looking ahead: 1863 culminated in the now unknown publication of his theoretical *vademecum* as *Cuadro Sinoptico Musical*, by music publisher Enrique Nagel. For his part,

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[107] For further insight, see: Galindo, *La gran década nacional.*

[108] *El Siglo*, 20 Mar. 1868.

[109] See table [Verdi's 1844 opera...in Mexico]. For deeper analysis on family dysfunction as a mainstay of the mid-century Italian libretto, with particular regard to 'the typical' Piave-Verdi formula of *contro il padre*, see: "Padre e figli," in: Luigi Balducci, *La musica in italiano – Libretti d'opera nell'ottocento* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1997), 62-90.

Juárez sought to invigorate his government by strategically repositioning its best human resources; to that end, La Fuente was dispatched to the United States that September, and the selfsame G. F. Bustamante was appointed head of commerce in Zacatecas, by November.[110]

Representatives of Mexico's new Regency offered the Imperial crown to Archduke Maximilian at his *Villa Miramar* in Trieste, in early October. Interestingly, the work chosen to solemnize the occasion back home was Bellini's *Norma*—emblematic of an invader usurping power from the legitimate sovereign—by yet another Mexican troupe under tenor Bruno Flores, at the Teatro Vergara, thenceforward called the *Gran Teatro Imperial*, on 23 November.[111] Subject to conditions—the Archduke's brother, Austrian Emperor Franz-Josef I, stipulated that the offer be confirmed by popular vote—Maximilian himself demanded plebiscites and ample French financial backing. Following the regency's phony elections (held through early 1864), he finally accepted the throne on 10 April.[112] With the coronation coinciding with the traditional Easter Sunday start of the theatrical year, the *Ópera Italiana* would enter a new phase of patronage and government support. The staging of *new* operas by first-time Mexican composers would marginally continue with other young—but skilled and capable—Paniagua protégés, sponsored, in turn, by Maximilian. However, the 1863 experiments by Morales, Paniagua and Torres would not be called before the capital's public again (though Valle's was probably received in concert, posthumously).[113]

Whether by perceiving the allegorical representation of a drawn-out conflict reflected in opera, or for the malaise of the turmoil experienced by all Mexicans for seven years to that point, patrons found ever less reason or enthusiasm for theatrical diversion. Compounding that was the demoralizing 14 November news of heatedly admired *prima donna* contralto Felicità Vestvalli's recent

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[110] *La Sociedad*, 20 October 1863 [*Trovatore* announced]. *La Sociedad*, 25 October 1863 Meneses'opera *Agorrante, rey de Nubia* premièred the following July [commission… youngest student]. Bellinghausen, *Melesio Morales – Catálogo de música*, 36-37 [*Idelgonda*]; completed in 1864, it premiered 27 Jan. 1867 in Mexico City, and 1868, in Florence where Morales went to study under Teodulo Mabellini. *La Sociedad*, 28 Nov.1863 [*vademecum…* Nagel]. The work is missing in Bellinghausen, *Melesio Morales: Catálogo*; Gabriel Saldivar, *Bibliografía Mexicana de Musicología y Musicografía* (Mexico City: CNCA/NBA/CENIDIM, 1991), 212, cites only *ABC Musical. Elementos de solfeo para niños por Panseron anotados por Melesio Morales* (Mexico City: Melchor Álvarez, 1868), crediting Romero, *Revista Musical Mexicana*, vol. 3, num. 1, n. 11 (actually Altamirano; see above: n. 14), as source. Zayas Enríquez, *Benito Juárez*, 186 [Fuente]; Jesus C. Romero, *XELA, 128* [Bustamante].

[111] Galindo, 629 gives their arrival as 1 October; though with no such detail, Charles Allen Smart, *Viva Juárez!* – A Biography (J.B. Lippincott, 1963), 286, has the official act as 3 October [Imperial crown]. Olavarría, 680 [*Norma*], gives the cast: Flores (P), Miguel Loza (O), Soledad Vallejo (N), Manuela Gómez (A), Marietta Pagliari (Clottilde), Juan Zanini (Flavio). Not previously associated with opera, Flores was a cantor at Mexico City's *Colegiata* of the Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe [Flores]. Olavarría (683) mistakenly refers to the occasion as the actual acceptance, though not the case, despite what the Regency would have had the public *believe*. See: Smart, *Viva Juárez!*, 286 [23 November].

[112] Smart, *Viva Juárez!*, ibid., 286 [Franz-Josef]; José Luis Blasio, *Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico* (Yale University Press, 1934), xviii [Maximillian]. Smart, 287 [early 1864]; George Wallace Malloy, *The United States and the French Intervention in Mexico, 1861-1867*, Diss. (UC Berkeley, 1938), 200 [10 Apr.].

[113] Reyes (1972), 62. This includes a citation from the imperial functionary and important historian Manuel Payno on 'who received what' [government support]. Maximilian's sponsorship included these July 1864 debuts: Meneses' *Agorrante* and Leonardo Canales' (dates unknown) *Pirro de Arragon* [Mexican composers]. Also, since 'new' was invariably used in Spanish and Mexican theatrical announcements to denote *any* work performed *for the first time* at a respective location, we have italicized the word, which should be taken literally in this context. *La Iberia*, 21 August 1869 [Valle's . . . posthumously]. Details of a Benefit for Valle's widow mention the performance of "an unpublished opera."

death in New York,[114] atop the earlier demise of the much-beloved actor Castro. But was that really the theater-public's excuse to leave their seats empty? In retrospect, Elorriaga had indeed already chided the public for similar 'unpatriotic' indifference to the opera, as well as for a similar disdain of supporting artists and Mexican composers (then towards Paniagua, and as noted, above, similarly, towards Morales two years later).[115] Having established criteria for this national *operatic* annus mirabilis, we might reconsider the same public indifference echoed in the press relevant to *Romeo*'s reception, be it politically motivated or from the contemporaneous perspective of a jaded Olavarría, who upon recollecting the year's theatrical events, bemoaned how "all this meant little or nothing, and is cited merely as curiosity. [. . .] Mexican society either didn't want—or know how—to amuse itself, settling for soirees in the Palace of the Regency," where, besides dancing and cards, vast quantities of refreshments of all kinds were unabashedly devoured.[116] Nevertheless, questions of popular reception aside, in the final analysis, we have intended and have been keener to show that the works were indeed created and performed, and with what motivation or intent.

Though autochthonous works were mounted in stagings and concerts ever since Paniagua's 1859 *Caterina*, no single subsequent year quite matched the four-opera phenomenon of 1863. Furthermore, that year also set historic precedent in establishing native Mexicans (Paniagua, Valle) in the de facto role of *maestri* of the *Ópera Italiana.* Alongside various composer statements and Bustamante's tract, the Juárez Government incentives also show that this theatrical institution had shifted from a mere foreign commodity to a platform of national unity, with patrons from either side of the political divide. In fact, despite the derivative nature of texts and musical idioms, the very fact of 1863's unprecedented surge in endemically Mexican operatic production is remarkable evidence of how such cultural activity reinforced national identity in a state struggling to maintain independence. Therefore, 1863 opens a new apogee of Mexico's earlier post-independence need of a model on which to build her musical ethos, first met by the influx of European musicians as the country began embracing opera in the 1820s and 30s. Their continual presence in local musical life consolidated Mexico's then well-recognized affinity with Italy, reflected in the epithet "*la Italia de la América*" (coined by the biographer Francísco Sosa and otherwise affirmed by Ignacio Altamirano).[117]

Nevertheless, that foreordained neither an immovable nor unidirectional path to lyrico-theatrical destiny. While Mexico never really got Italian opera out of her system —so great had become the affinity with it—she reached a turning point enabling the same kind of learned

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[114] *El Pajaro Verde*, 14 Nov. 1863. Born 1831, she impressed Mexico City in her 1855-1856 season incarnations of both Vaccai's and Bellini's *Romeo* (Olavarría, ibid. 628-630).

[115] Elorriaga, *El Siglo*, 1861.

[116] "Todo eso, vuelvo a decirlo, poco o nada valía, y sólo a título de curiosidad lo cito. [. . .] La sociedad mexicana no sabía o no quería divertirse, y se contentaba con las tertulias que en Palacio daba la Regencia." Olavarría (673), quoting *La Sociedad* (28 November), graphically describing a grotesque scene of gluttony and over-consumption (674).

[117] Likely paraphrasing Altamirano while referring to Joaquín Beristáin in *Biografías* (88-89; see footnote 67), Francísco Sosa infers that Mexico had already been known by this nickname (of otherwise uncertain origin) during the nineteenth century. Altamirano's statement projecting that successes like Morales's *Idelgonda* would secure Mexico's reputation as "La Italia del nuevo Mundo/the Italy of the New World" originally appeared in Ignacio Altamirano, "Crónica de la Semana," *El Renacimiento* (23 May 1869).

experimentation in the vernacular. As the next two decades saw French and Spanish troupes offering *grand opéra* and *Zarzuela romantica*, respectively, Mexican composers gradually turned to arguably more "nationalistic" inspirations resulting in A. Ortega Villar's *Guatemotzin* (1866), the first such work by a national, after Antonio Barili contributed the first *couleur local* "operatic" conception, *Un paseo a Santa Anita* (1859). Paniagua's stage works after 1863 (*Pietro* being his final opera) consisted mainly of Mexican *zarzuela.* Likewise, Morales later explored more indigenous topics, eventually inspiring his conservatory students Gustavo Campa and Ricardo Castro to create *El Rey poeta* and *Atazimba*, respectively.[118] This prompted an irreversible trend towards a platform of recognizable operatic nationalism (in the accepted sense) that eventually prevailed through the end of the long century.

Considering the use of the word *nacional* during the 1860s in relation to the operas represented *here*, it has been our hope and intent to show what attitudes prevailed at that time, to wit Paniagua's phrase "These two operas, in Italian, founders of the Mexican national repertory" bears repeating.[119] Moreover, with much research on these works still ahead, the little musical evidence at hand would seem to recommend guarding against an indiscriminate lens of "Nationalisms," whence value judgments presuppose that some illusory "national" alternative to emulating a European model existed contemporaneously. This is inherent in much of the twentieth century's opinion-laden historiography, itself rife with oversimplification of the nationalism problem. Sadly, outdated observation by otherwise distinguished researchers like Reyes, for instance, who after showing ignorance of period and documentation denounces "Catalina" as inferior to *Un paseo* for being in Italian and having nothing to do with Mexican music or custom (its native composer notwithstanding), is still afforded disproportionate latitude.[120]

Indeed, some movement towards operatic representation of national cultural elements eventually emerged. But in Paniagua's Mexico, no such consensus demanded *opera* incorporating folk-themes, and their absence rendered the resulting works no less "national"; folkloric elements were to be enjoyed in their own context, which Paniagua supposedly addressed in his pioneering development of Mexican *zarzuela*. Therefore, in reacting against the still prevalent comments by scholars suggesting that the operas had nothing Mexican about them, given their literary, stylistic and technical ties to the Italian school, it behooves us to first establish a clearer historical antecedent before taking on larger questions of identity if we are to dispel any fallacies borne of such thinking. Generalizations indicting 1863's musical choices also elude certain considerations: 1. the concept of opera was embraced and recreated out of abiding admiration; 2. mid-century Italian melodic and harmonic styles had already embedded themselves into Mexican musical culture (just as Spanish

[118] For recent scholarship on Aniceto Otega del Villar (1825-1875) and Mexican opera in the subsequent period, see: Anna Agranoff Ochs, *Opera in Contention: Social Conflict in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico City* (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2011) [*Guatemotzin*]. Our own study resulting from substantial research on Barili and his works is in progress [*Un paseo*]. The influential Mexican composer and pedagogue Gustavo E. Campa was born on 8 September 1863 (d.1934) and is credited with contributing early efforts of folklore-driven Operatic nationalism, including this work (Mexico City, 1901) [*El Rey poeta*].

[119] "Catalina de Guisa, Pietro d'Abano." *El Constitucional*, 23 May 1868; *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 25 May and 13 June 1868.

[120] Reyes (1972), 53-54 [Reyes...period and documentation]. Ibid., 59 [denounces "Catalina"]. Conversely, positing this idea without knowing either work, the author presumes Barili's superior to Paniagua's merely because it incorporated local settings, scenery and Mexican folk-themes. Regarding *Un paseo*, this well received piece constitutes a virtually international collaboration between Spanish and Cuban librettists (Victor Landaluce and Vicente Casanova, respectively), Italian Composer, and Mexican folk orchestra director (Sabas Contla), while being produced entirely in Mexico City.

models and influences long-since permeated folk-music); 3. beyond connoting Mexico's affinity for Italy's music, the contemporaneously coined epithet of "Italy of the Americas" given to nineteenth-century Mexico may have had wider implications, and deeper roots in the country's common sovereignty ideals with the *risorgimento*, and; 4. in writing Italian-style operas, nineteenth-century Mexican composers sought to partake of the established commercialistic practice, common in countries with permanent companies since the first century of opera, whereby non-Italian natives produced and wrote Italian operas for native production and consumption.

Towards this new perspective, we may do well to rethink the period in terms of the present study. The reality of Mexicans' working to sustain what in 1863 was still a national pastime—the *Ópera Italiana*—by virtue of the sacrifices and perseverance expended for the sake of seeing *their own* creations to fruition, occurred *in defiance of* a violent foreign invasion. What began as a transatlantic business had since, by dint of catastrophic political circumstance, temporarily become a truly national effort, substantiating the Juárez government's propaganda to that effect: statistically speaking, of the ten Italian repertory titles presented that year, five were original works by Mexican nationals, making 1863 an unprecedented phenomenon. While indeed reinforced by the undeniable presence of European musicians, the product—of Mexican minds, musicians with as much experience of Mexican music as of Italian—first evolved from native composers' mastery of European precepts as assimilated through experience exclusively available *in Mexico*.

Therefore, it is hoped that the foregoing study be able to offer a glimpse onto a seminal moment in Mexico's Musico-theatrical history, by restoring the historical notion of Cenobio Paniagua as *caposcuola* of Mexican operatic composition. Here it is vital we assert the concept as an important technical innovation rather than as a purely *cultural* one which has done nothing but devalue the idea of pre-nationalist opera in Mexico as culturally viable. This is because Paniagua proposed, essentially, a method of composing a difficult musical form based on the Italian model. Should that even matter? Conversely, it begs the question of why revisionist Mexicanist scholarship has not decried the use of purely Spanish or other foreign models in the composition of everything from its traditional and popular musics to the 'Mexican' zarzuela, for that matter.[121]

Furthermore, our wish to debunk the oft repeated and spurious notion that Paniagua's 'academy' consisted of an 'institution' (conjuring notions of its being own building and premises) neither does nor can detract from an even more important fact. That is, that although constrained to holding evening classes in his living room, Paniagua's contribution to Mexico's cultural progression and entertainment industry as a self-made composer, teacher (of singing and composition, admittedly in the European tradition), and company founder and director is *inestimable*. This is all the more significant when we ponder that he jumped in to fill a void during a period of civil strife and armed conflict. When holding institutions finally allow serious musicological study of this legacy through fair and equitable access to sources, it will undoubtedly show the composer's lasting imprint on Mexico's musical culture through yet unveiled facts and influences in unprecedented ways.

As such, the Paniagua enterprise should be seen not as a mere 'class project' or one man's amateur/student company, as too often depicted, but rather as a "national" singers' and composers' workshop because it alone immediately succeeded in fostering the impetus towards a national conservatory's creation three years later. This, in turn, began forming native composers and developing homegrown talent toward establishing opera as a nationally sustainable art-form and

[121] The short answer is because, as we have observed, the tendency towards anti-Italian sentiments, like nearly everything else related to the early importation of opera in Mexico, is basically adopted from models originating in Spain during the nineteenth century.

theatrical enterprise, according to Bustamante's suggestion. In the final analysis, we should remember that by promoting the continuance of opera as a national art-form in 1863, the government recognized it as a means of stimulating artistic expression and inspiring future generations of indigenous composers. Moreover, these neither presupposed nor advocated that its end-product necessarily be "Italian," beyond the premise that it was then the only commercially viable one demanded by the abiding tastes of the market. Therefore, by way of these four productions, we can consider 1863 a cultural and musico-theatrical watershed for Mexico, an "appointed time and place" at which significant new ideas, careers and institutions took root and irrevocably reshaped the future framework of nationally branded opera and musical education there.

Table. Chronology of operas presented in Mexico City in 1863.

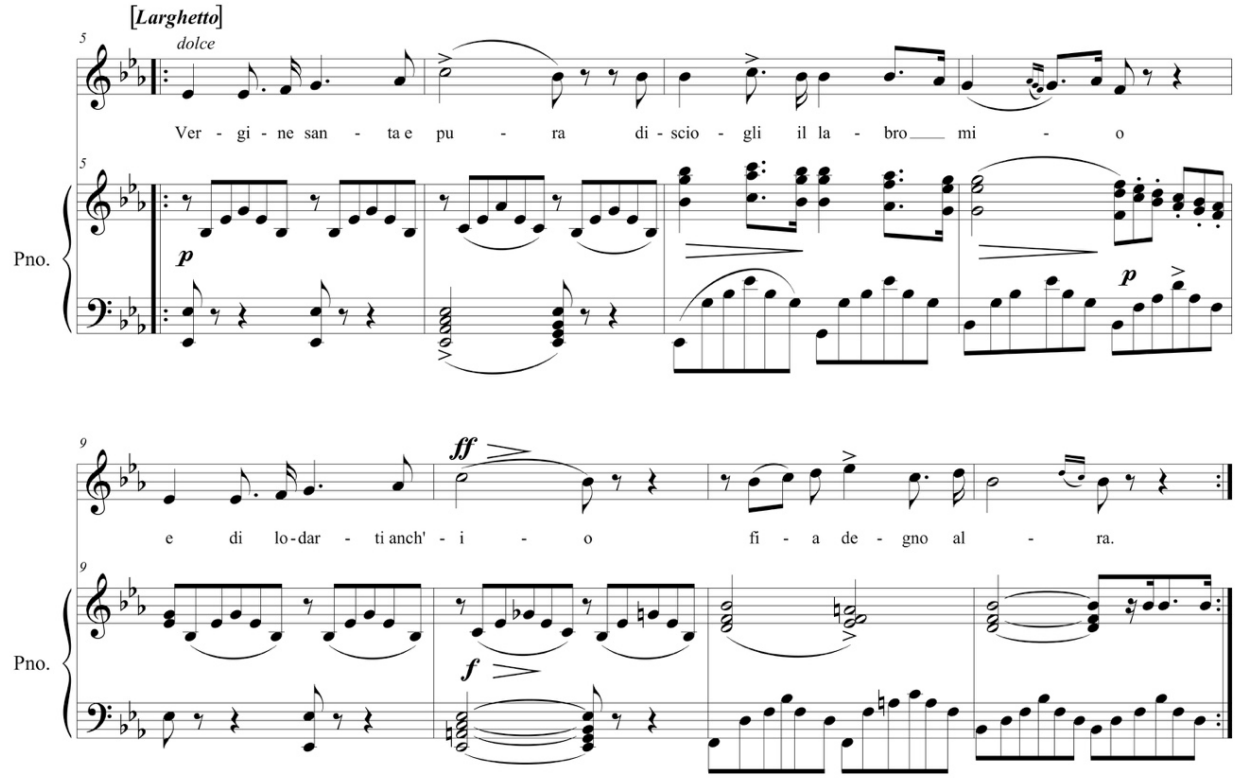
Titles performed in 1863, with première dates (**boldface**), subsequent repetitions (plain), and original versions of rewritten titles (underscored)

Composer	Title	Years performed
Bellini	*I Capuletti* (excerpts)	**1830** (in concert, under Agustín Caballero)
	(full production)	**1839**, 1850, 1855
Coccia	*Clotilde* (excerpts)	**1830** (Caballero?; in concert?)
	(full production)	**1833**, 1834
Bellini	*La Sonnambula*	**1836,** 1839, 1841, 1842, 1845, 1848, 1852, 1854, 1855, 1863,1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1871
Donizetti	*Lucrezia Borgia*	**1837**, 1841, 1845, 1848, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1857, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1869, 1871
Verdi	*Ernani*	**1850,** 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1860, 1861, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1871
Verdi	*I due Foscari* (excerpts)	**1852**
	(full production)	**1852,** 1855, 1864
Verdi	*Il Trovatore*	**1855,** 1858, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1866, 1867, 1871
	La Traviata	**1856,** 1857, 1858, 1859, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1866
Paniagua	***Caterina di Guisa***	**1859**, 1861, 1862, 1863
	Una Riña de Aguadores	**1859**, 1861, 1862, 1863
Morales	***Romeo***	**1863**
Paniagua	***Pietro d'Abano***	
Valle	***Clotilde di Cosenza***	1869 (posthumous concert performance?)
Torres Serrato	***I due Foscari***	1868 (Puebla)

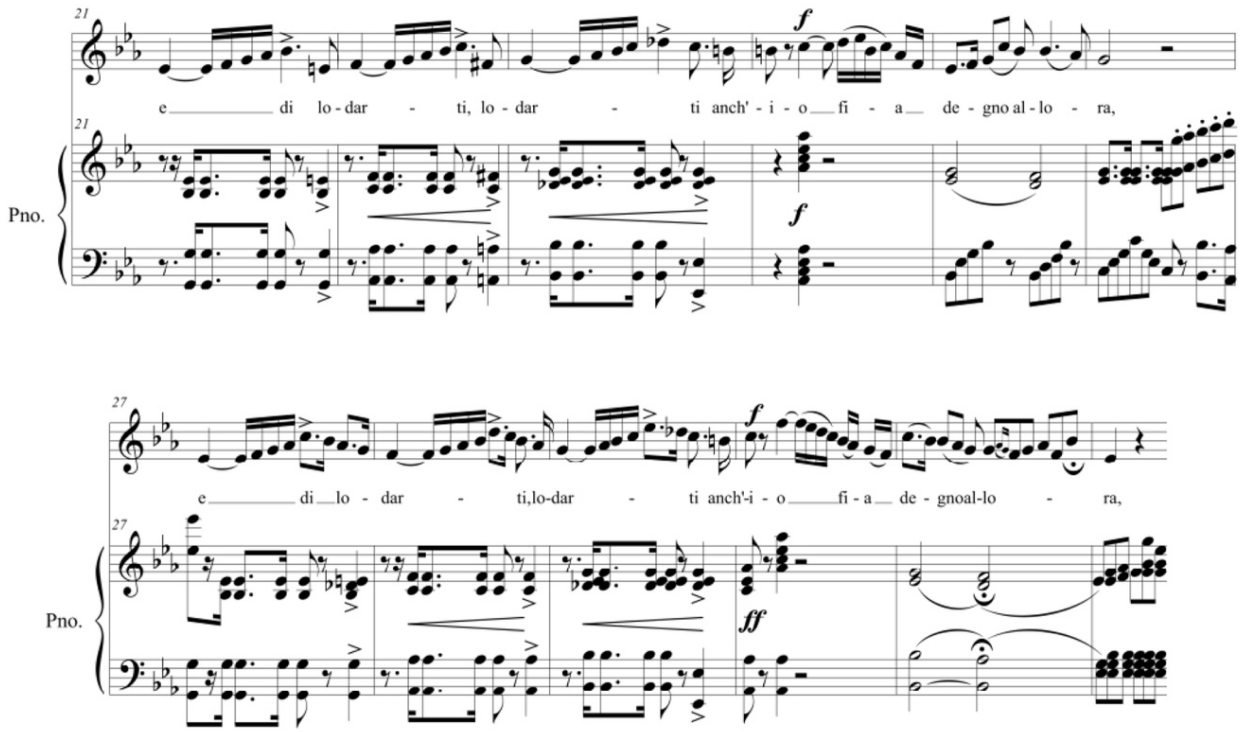
1863 repertory summary:

La Sonnambula, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Ernani*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, ***Romeo***, ***Caterina di Guisa***, ***Pietro d'Abano***, ***Clotilde di Cosenza***, ***I due Foscari***

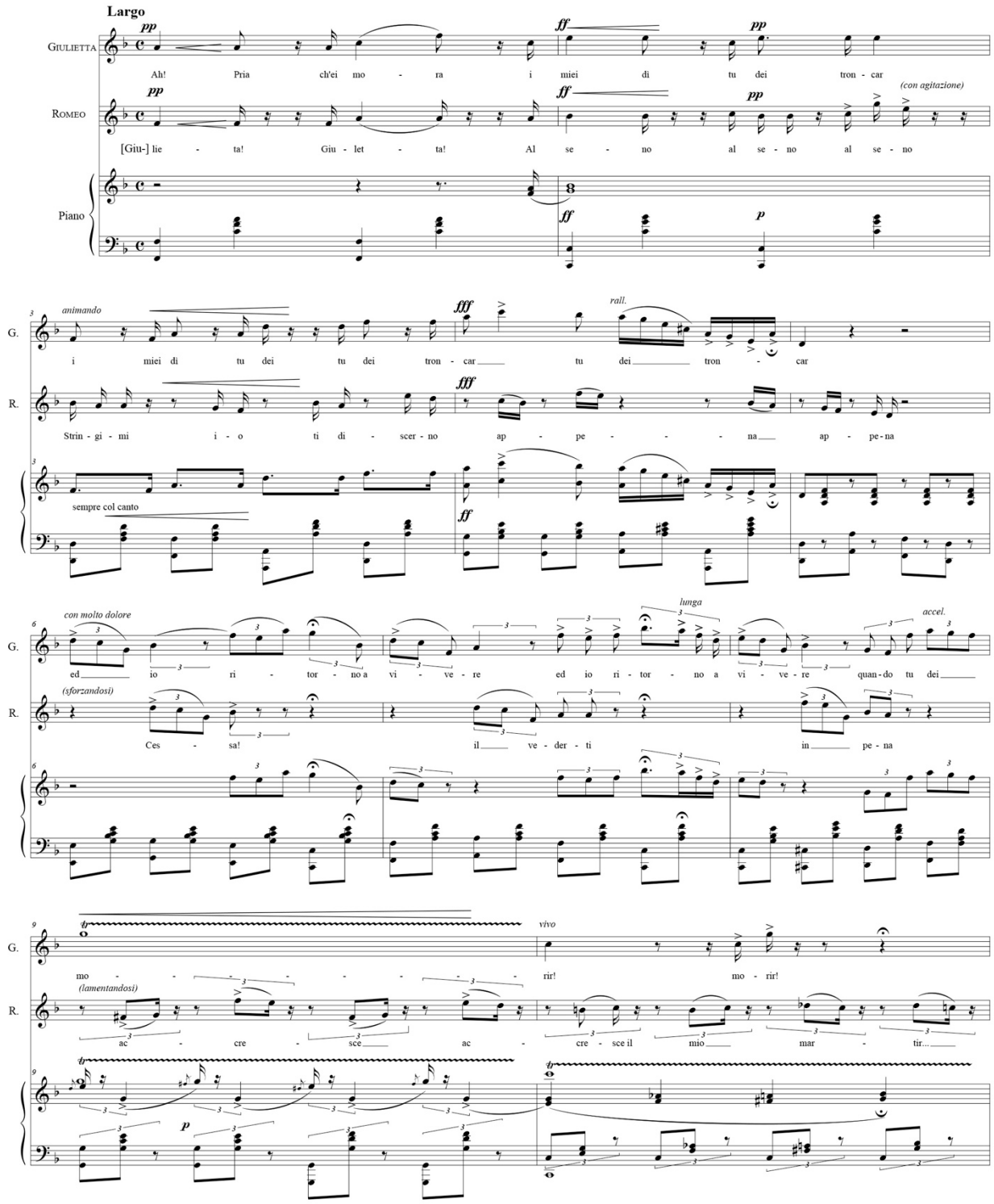
Musical Examples.



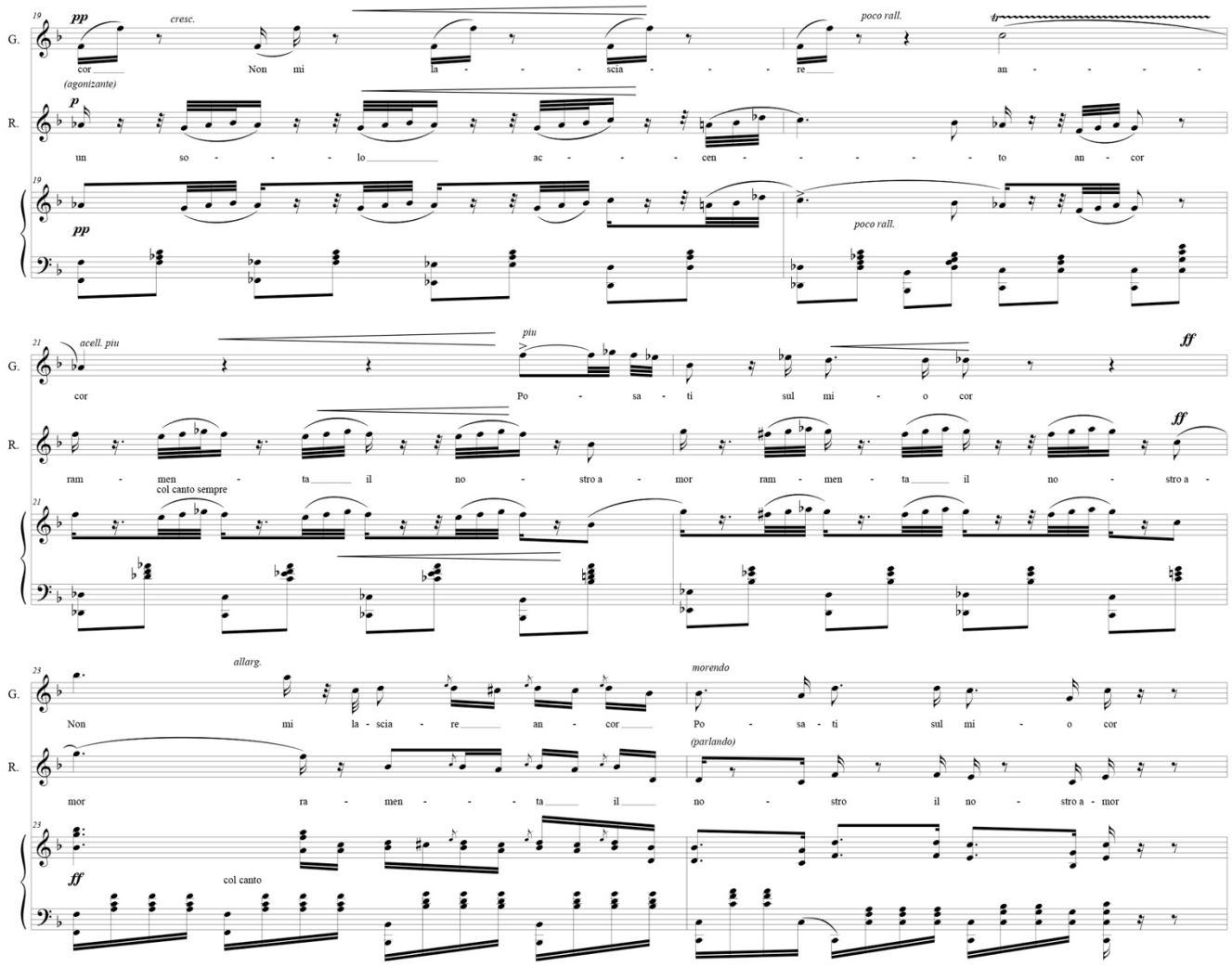
Example 1. Paniagua, *Preghiera –Vergine Santa e Pura*, mm. 5-12.



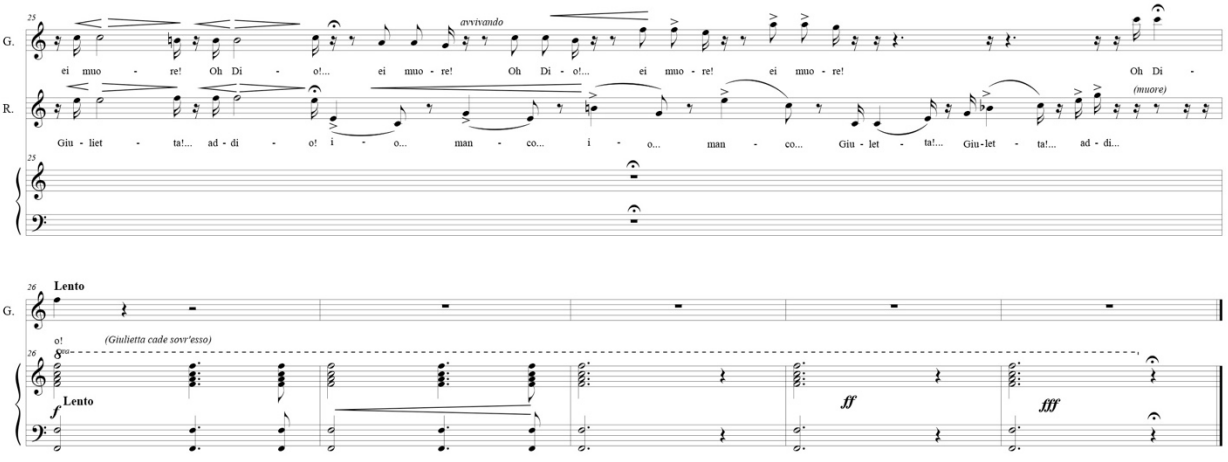
Example 2. Paniagua, *Preghiera –Vergine Santa e Pura*, mm. 21-32 (beat 2).



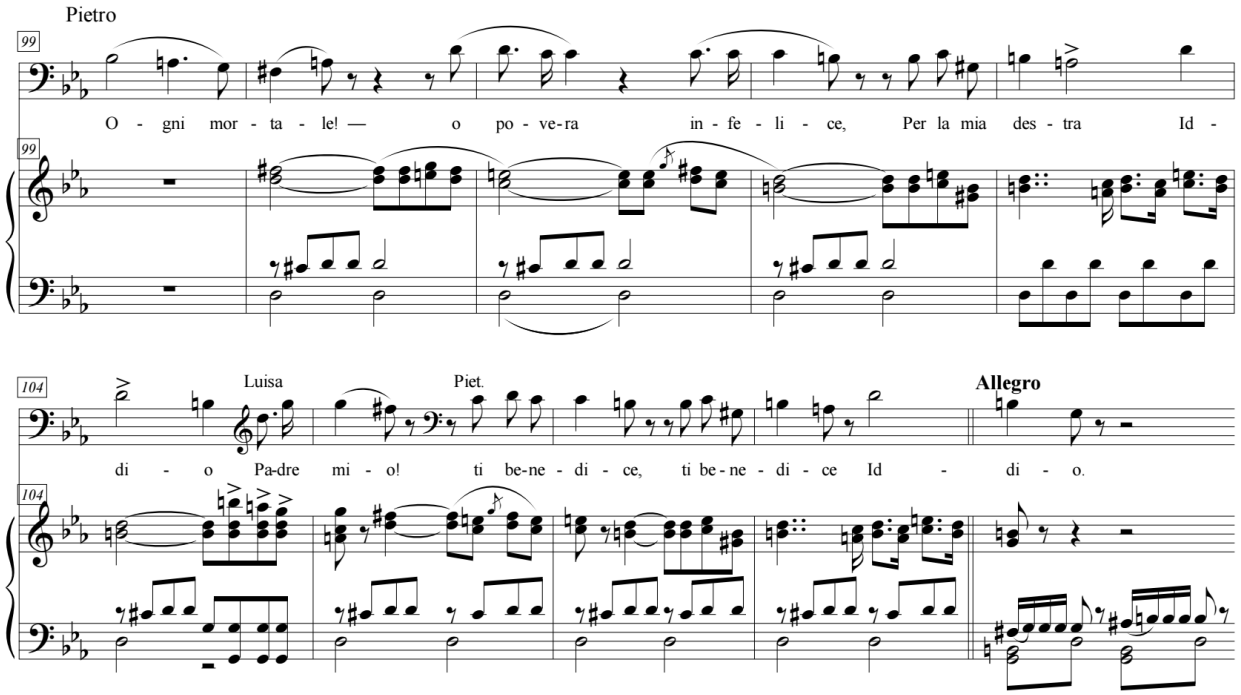
Example 3. Morales, *Romeo*, "Duetino final (b)," mm. 1-10.



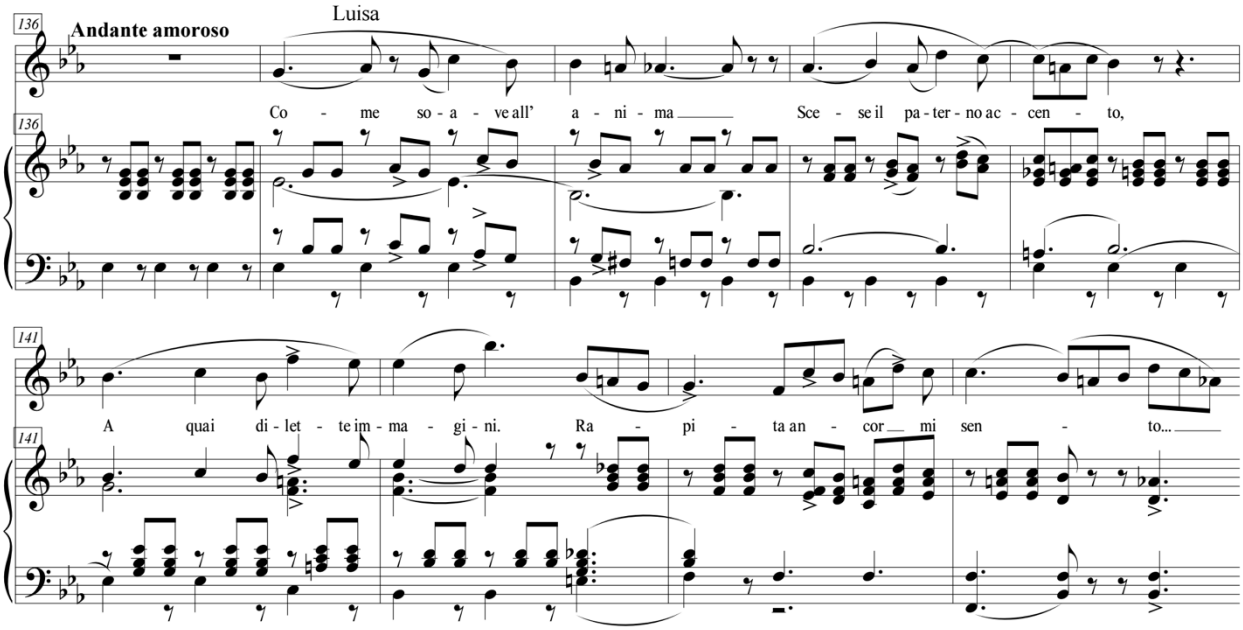
Example 4a. Morales, *Romeo*, "Duetino final (b)," mm. 19-24.



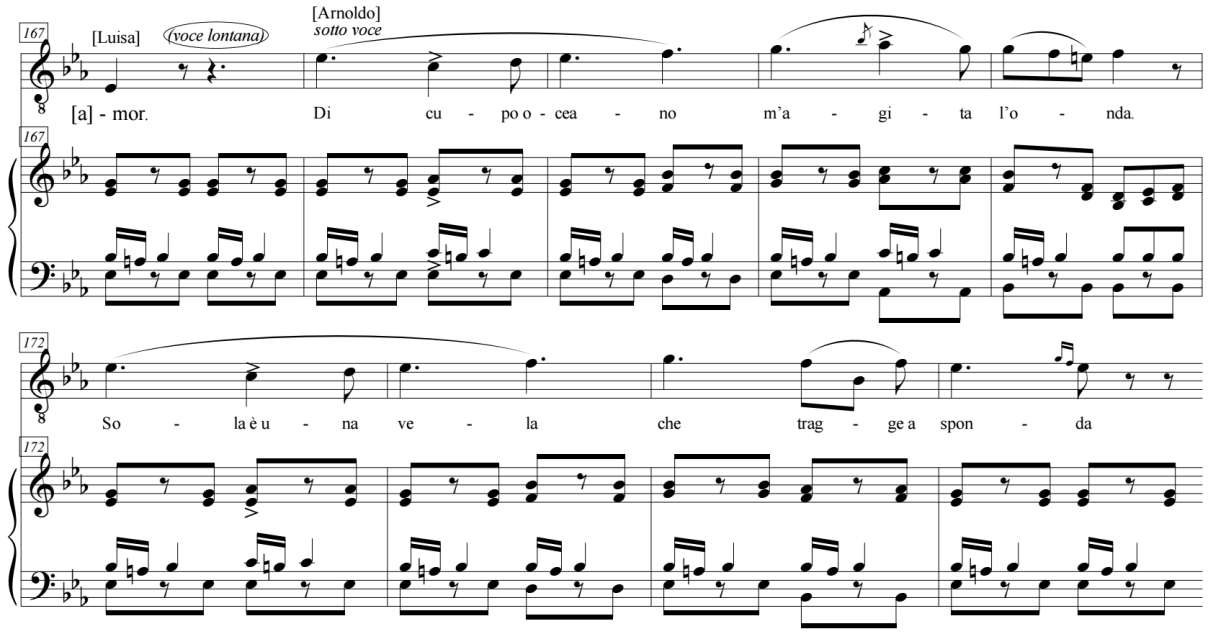
Example 4b. Morales, *Romeo*, "Duetino final (b)," mm. 25-30.



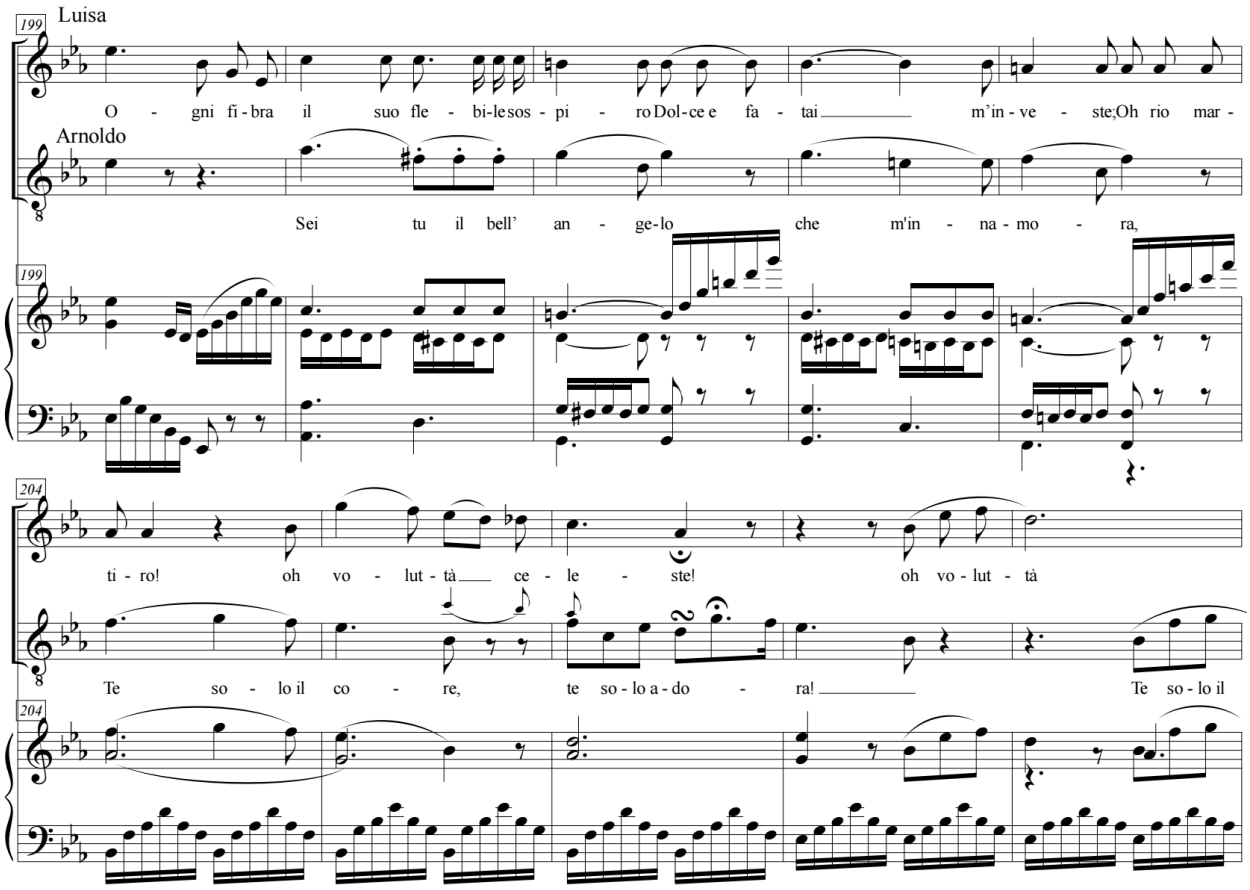
Example 5. Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano*, Nr. 5, sc. 4 (Recit. Pietro), mm. 99-108.

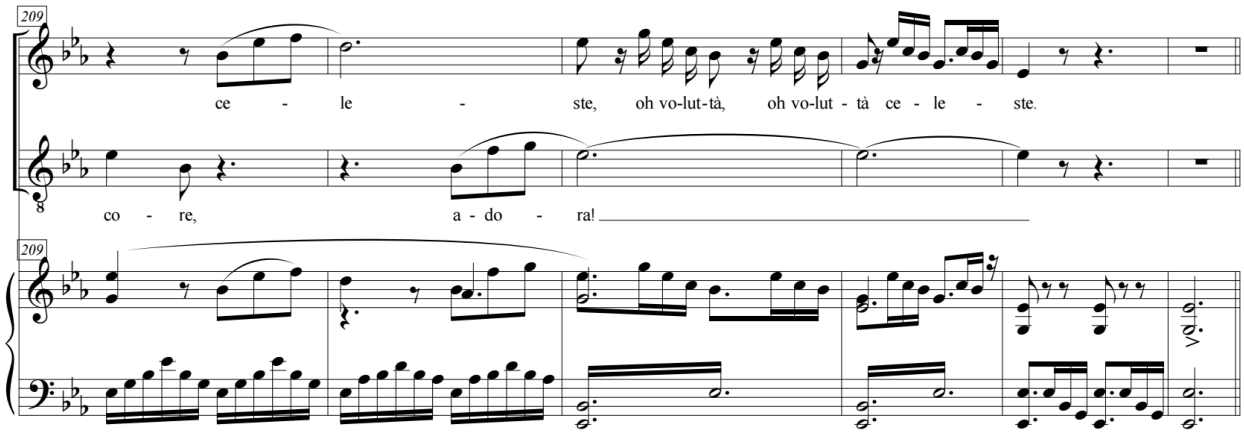


Example 6. Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano*, Nr. 5, sc. 4 (Cavatina Luisa), mm. 136-144.

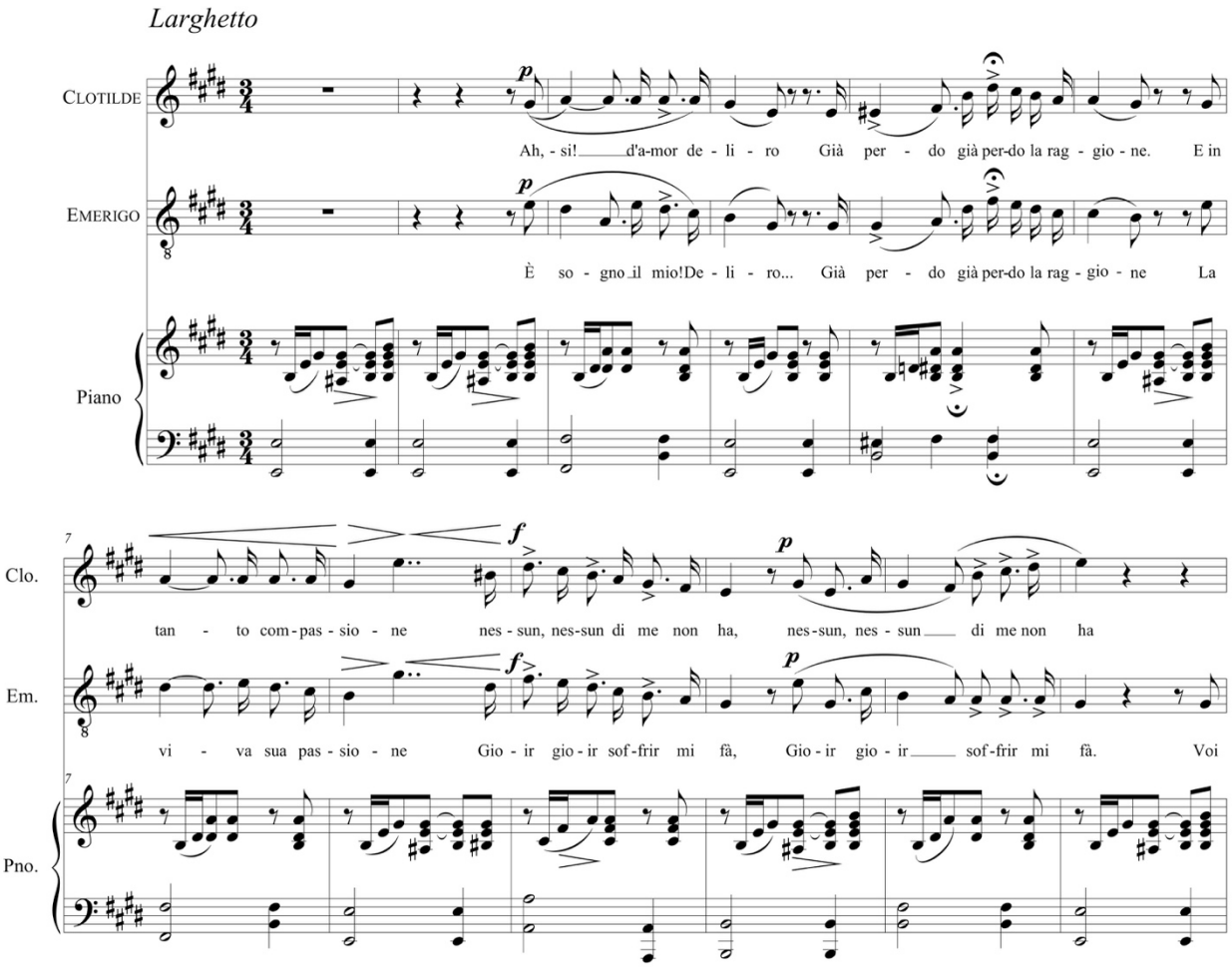


Example 7. Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano*, Nr. 5, sc. 5 (Barcarolle/serenade Arnoldo), mm. 167-175.

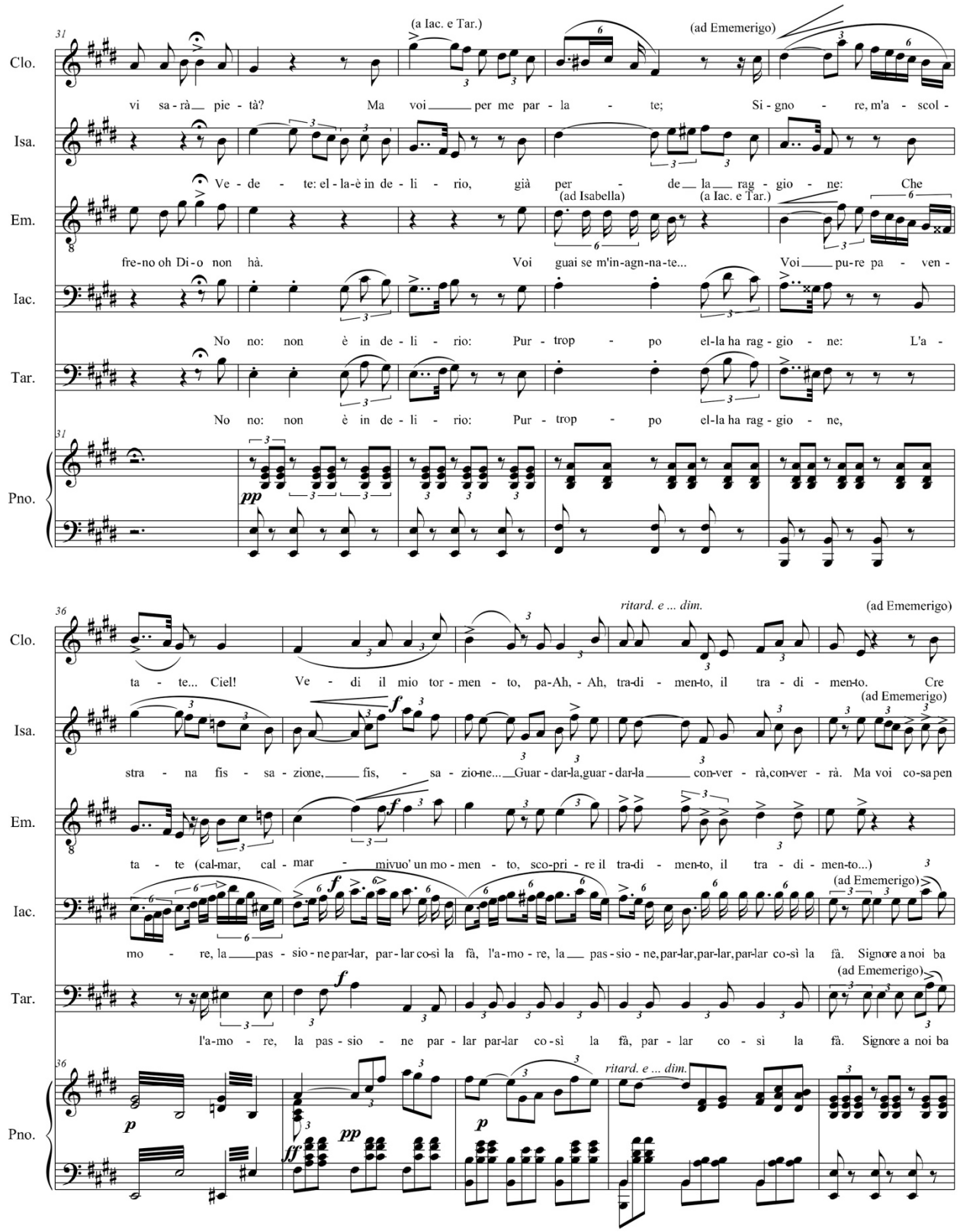




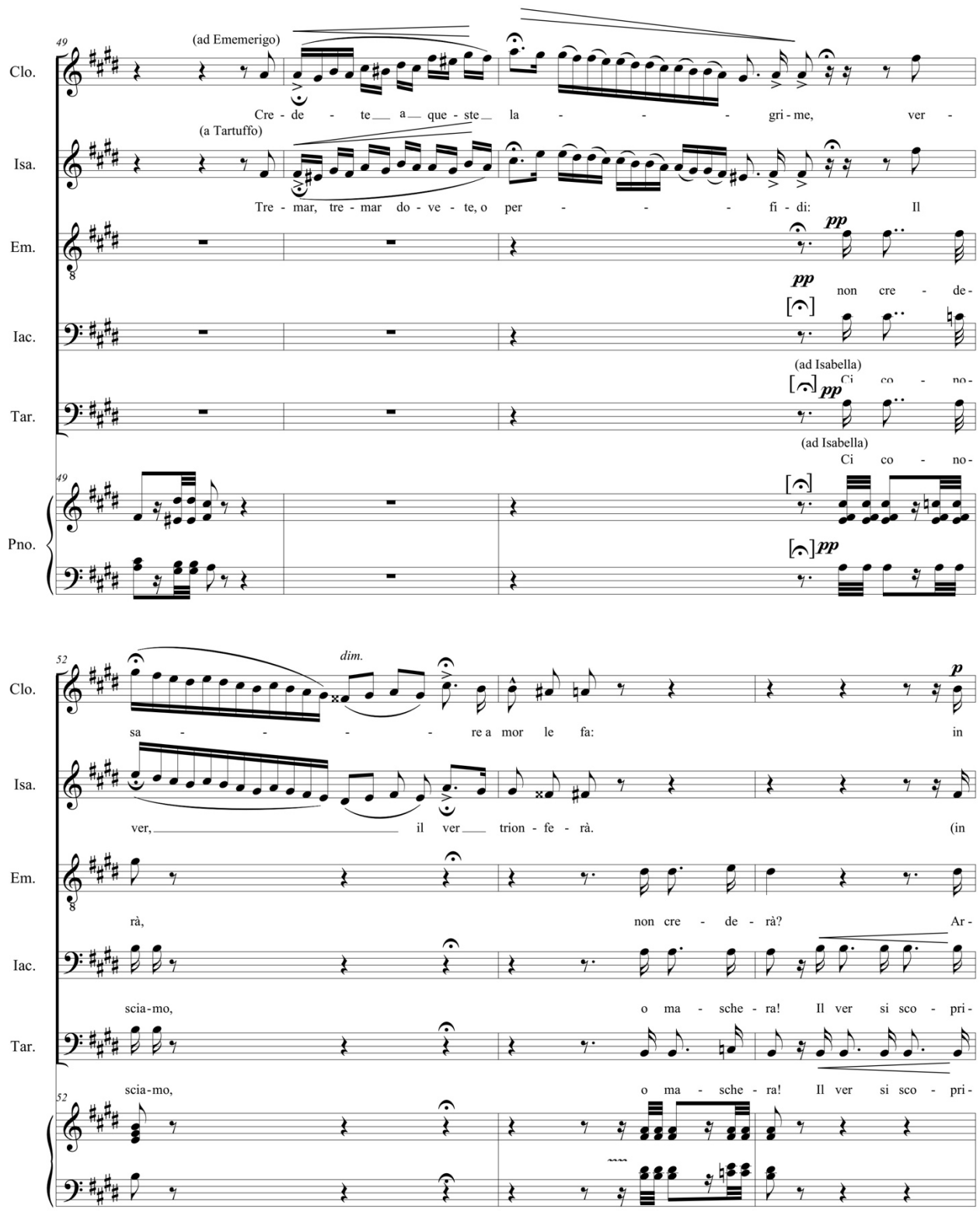
Example 8. Paniagua, *Pietro d'Abano*, Nr. 5, sc. 5 (Barcarolle/serenade Arnoldo/Luisa), mm. 199-214.



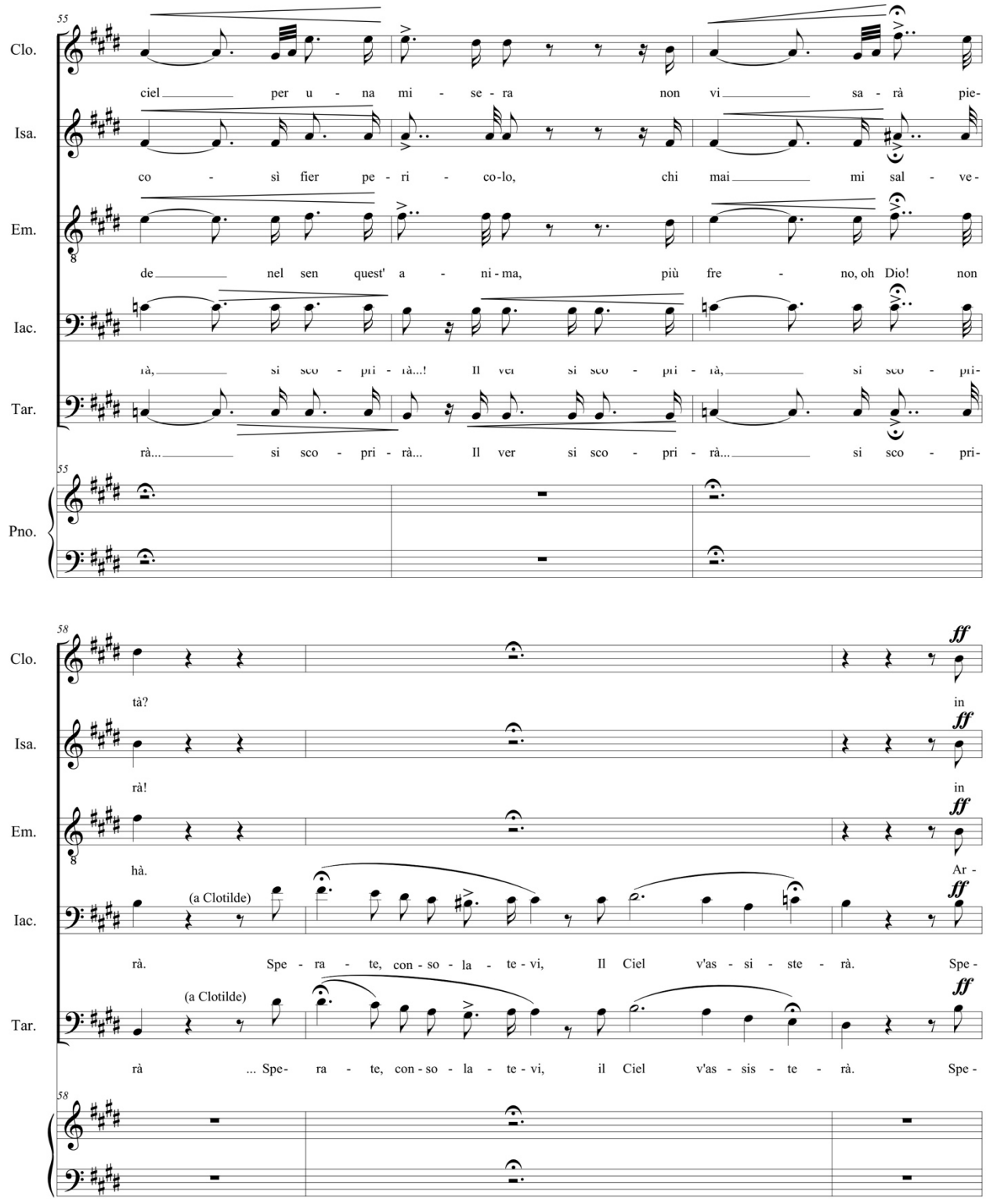
Example 9. Valle, *Clotilde di Cosenza,* act III, sc. 9 (*Quintetto*), mm. 1-12.



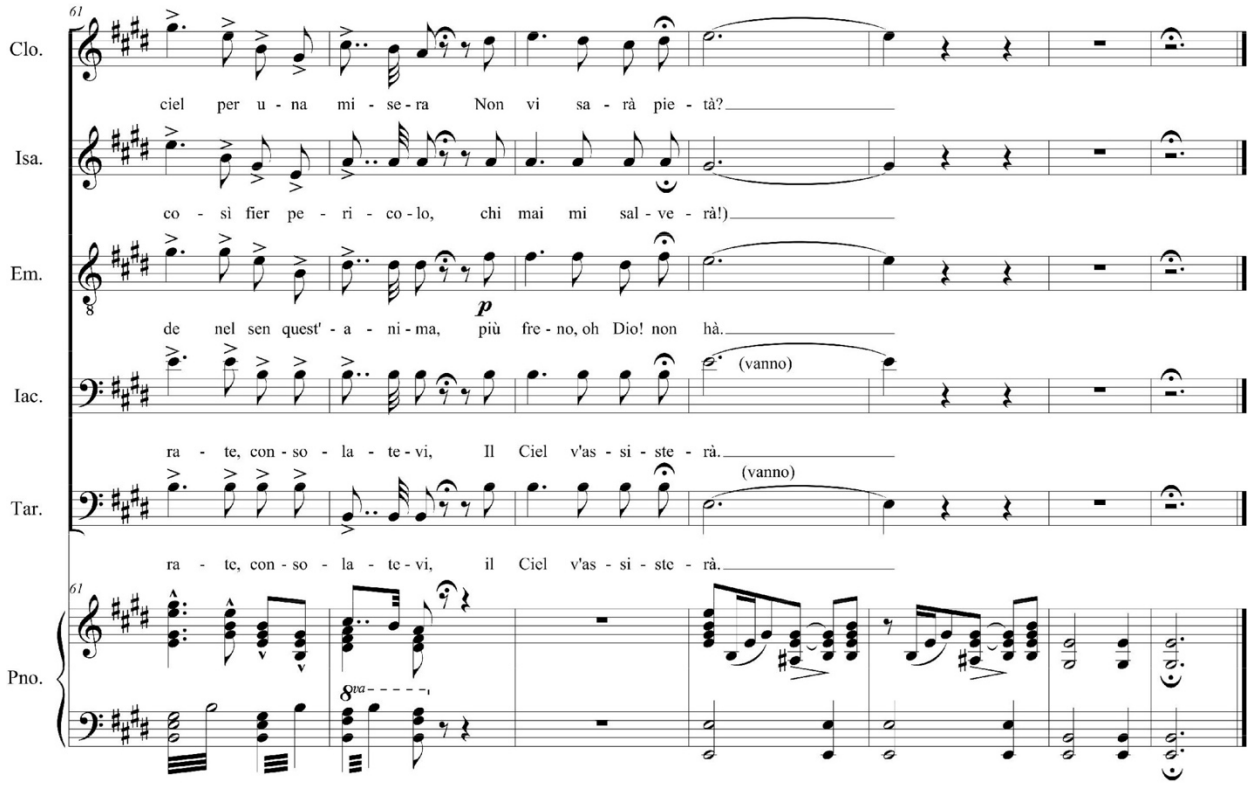
Example 10. Valle, *Clotilde di Cosenza*, act III, sc. 9 (*Quintetto*), mm. 31 (beat 3)-40 (beat 1).



Example 11a. Valle, *Clotilde di Cosenza,* act III, sc. 9 (*Quintetto*), mm. 49 (beat 3)-54.



Example 11b. Valle, *Clotilde di Cosenza*, act III, sc. 9 (*Quintetto*), mm. 55-58.



Example 11c. Valle, *Clotilde di Cosenza,* act III, sc. 9 (*Quintetto*), mm. 61-67.