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Author(s): Alan Curtis
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La Poppea Impasticciata or, Who Wrote the Music to L’Incoronazione (1643)?*

BY ALAN CURTIS

LIKE SO MUCH TRADITIONALLY ACCEPTED information—both right and wrong—on mid-seventeenth-century Venetian opera, the attribution to Monteverdi of the musical setting of Busenello’s L’in coronazione di Poppea stems largely from a source originating long after the composer’s—and librettist’s—demise. Thomas Walker (1976) has shown that this source, Cristoforo Ivanovich’s Minerva al tavolino (Venice, 1681), is often inaccurate. In addition to the errors Walker cites, there is the oft-repeated notion of a revival of Poppea in 1646, which in fact never took place, and which probably comes from Ivanovich’s having read the handwritten date “1646” on the cover of a Poppea libretto now in the library of the Rome Conservatory (Santa Cecilia). If one looks beyond the cover, this printed libretto turns out to be the same as all the others: L’/Incoronatione /Di /Poppea /Di Gio: Francesco /Busenello /Opera Musicale /Rappresentata /Nel Teatro Grimano /l’Anno 1642 (Venice: Giuliani, 1656). Note that the print is dated 1656 (which perhaps gave rise to the mistaken date 1646), that the opera itself is dated 1642 (i.e., 1643 season, see note 3) and that there is no mention either of a revival, or indeed, of Monteverdi at all.

This last detail is in itself an anomaly. Giacomo Badoaro, in his preface to L’Ulisse errante (Venice, 1644), mentions proudly that his Ritorno d’Ulisse in patria was “... decorated by the Music of Signor Claudio Monteverdi, subject of all fame and perpetual renown,” and Busenello himself, for instance in the preface to La Statira (Venice, 1655), praises Cavalli, and says that he, having “... converted the mute sense of my verse into many harmonic numbers, and clothed its failings in [musical] ideas, imitated the miracles of Creation, making

*This article is a revision and expansion, with particular reference to Sacrati’s La finta pazza, of parts of the preface to my edition of L’in coronazione di Poppea, to be published by Novello in 1989.

1 “... decorata dalla Musica del Signor Claudio Monteverde soggetto di tutta fama, e perpetuità di nome” (p. 16).
all from nothing.” But concerning the music of *Poppea* there seems to be a conspiracy of silence. Neither the scenario (Venice, 1643) nor the 1651 Naples libretto contains any reference to Monteverdi. True, libretti for other operas were also published without mentioning a composer, but common sense, human nature, and such documentary evidence as Benedetto Ferrari’s protest in his letter of 3 April 1650 (Whenham 1980a, 491) shows us that such a slight would not necessarily be taken casually. Moreover, the “Laconismo delle alte qualità di Claudio Monteverde” (Caberloti 1644) by Matteo Caberloti Piovan di S. Thomà, someone who knew Monteverdi well during the decade prior to his death in 1643 and who provides the principal—nearly the sole—source for our present-day knowledge of the composer’s very last years, also contains no reference to *Poppea*. Although Caberloti Piovan speaks of works “performed in Venetian theatres” and refers specifically to *Arianna* (Caberloti 1644, 7), performed in Venice in the 1640–41 season, as well as to the muse Thalia having taught Claudio’s “ingegno” to sing of “i lascivi Amori,” there is no mention of Monteverdi’s having been involved with *L’incoronazione di Poppea* at the Teatro Grimano in 1643, certainly a major musical event that should still have been fresh in his mind. Could this mean that Monteverdi was not involved? Or that Caberloti Piovan found involvement with such a plot (and/or such a librettist) unbecoming of a priest? Or that Monteverdi himself had preferred to keep

2 “... convertiti in tanti numeri armonici i muti sensi de’ versi miei, & vestiti da Idee i diffetti, ha imitati i miracoli della Creatione, di niente, far tutto.”

3 Modern edition by P. Nardi (Venice, 1949); the original scenario was presumably issued concurrently with the first performances in Giovanni Grimani’s SS. Giovanni e Paolo theatre, 1642–43 season. Sartori (*Primo tentativo di catalogo unico dei libretti italiani a stampa fino all’anno 1800* [card file available at the Ufficio Ricerca Fondi Musicali, Milan and distributed internationally in photocopy]) lists copies at the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris (which I have been unable to trace) and at the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice (two copies: Dramm. 910.8 and 1450.11). The date “1642” on the 1656 title page, and Busenello’s reference to “mia Popea” as having taken place “già tredici anni sono” in his preface to *La Statira* dated 18 January 1655, must be interpreted with the knowledge that the Venetian opera season ran from S. Stefano (i.e. Boxing Day, 26 December) until Lent, while the Venetian calendar (more veneto), followed by most (though not all) Venetian printers, began the new year on 1 March. Thus “18 January 1655” should be read as 1656, and “thirteen years ago” as January 1643, etc.

4 II / Nerone / Overo / *L’Incoronazione / Di Poppea, / Drama Musicale* (Naples: Mollo, 1651). There is no mention of either composer or librettist, though the preface does imply an imported Venetian production by saying that the unhappy empress Octavia, driven from the banks of the Adriatic to Tyrrhenian shores, comes to kneel at the feet of Parthenope (the legendary siren who founded Naples).
such involvement anonymous? Or that the authorship of Poppea was too complicated a collaboration to bother to explain?

Deferring the answers to these questions for a moment, one must also recognize that the quality of the piece in general, the stylistic connections of much of it to Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria and, for 1643 in Venice, the conservative nature of certain of its particulars (the monodic laments of Ottavia, for example), as well as the dramatic force and economy of such dialogues as act 1, scene 9 (Nerone / Seneca), all point to the “Oracolo della Musica, Questo bel Monte sempre Verde,” as he was styled by his admiring colleague, Benedetto Ferrari. But this need not mean that Monteverdi wrote the whole. In an era when the collaboration of several composers on such large projects was normal, and particularly at a time when we know that Monteverdi was an ailing septuagenarian, it seems unreasonably

5 In the Sonetto, p. 9, which precedes Rinuccini’s Arianna, “posta in musica dal Sig. Claudio Monteverdi” (Venice: Barletti, 1640).

6 For example, Giulio Strozzi tells us about his La finta savia, which was performed in the same theatre during the same season as Poppea, (Libretto, [Venice, 1642], 184) “la musica di questo drama è per la maggior parte composizione esquisita del signor Fliberto Laurenzi da Bertinoro . . . Il signor [Giovanni Battista] Crivelli ha maestrevolmente favorito alcune delle mie scene, ed alcune altre sono state onorate dal signor [Tarquino] Merula, ed altre finalmente nobilitate dal signor Benedetto Ferrari.”

7 Musicologists and biographers know even less about Monteverdi’s last years than about the rest of his life. Cabrero Piovan’s poetic language does not have factual clarity as its highest aim. Nevertheless it does inform us that Monteverdi, towards the end of his life and with permission from the Procurators of St. Mark’s, traveled for six months to the cities of Lombardy which had earlier been favored with his presence. He was much acclaimed there, but, fatigued by these welcomes and foreseeing the end of his days, like a dying swan he returned to the waters of Venice. “Arrived at the desired shores, the swan in human shape entertained his refound homeland with his usual delicacy of harmonious compositions; however, aggravated from his seventy-fifth year with brief infirmity . . . wishing to go yonder to the Seraphim, he left his mortal shell, and became joined with God.” (Giuomo alle desiate acque, l’umanato cigno ricrecò colla delicatezza solita d’armoniosi componimenti la riveduta patria, aggravò però dal settuagesimo quinto anno con breve infermità. . . deleroso d’andar collà tra serafíni lasciò la spoglia mortale, ed unissi con Dio.” Cabrero, 10; see also Fabbrì 1985, 385.) Since birthdays celebrate the completion, not the beginning, of a year, his “settuagesimo quinto anno” should technically begin 15 May 1641. Guessing, however, that Cabrero Piovan means “the year in which he was 75,” we arrive at the following hypothesis: Having finished Il Ritorno d’Ulisse, Monteverdi took a six-month leave to travel to Lombardy which left him “soprafatto da una stravagante debolezza di Forze” (overwhelmed by an extraordinary weakness of his forces). Returned to Venice, he nevertheless composed “d’armoniosi componimenti” including, I would propose (with great difficulty and with the help of others), L’Incoronazione di Poppea.

The notion that Monteverdi returned to Cremona, Mantua, etc., during the last six months of his life (see Schrade 1950, 367–68; Redlich 1952, 38) is based, I feel, on
credulous to assume that he was necessarily the composer of every note of an opera that has come down to us anonymously. Let us now consider in detail what clues regarding attribution can be derived from the surviving mid-seventeenth-century manuscripts.

In addition to the scenario (see note 3) and the surviving libretti,8 none of which mentions a composer, two mid-seventeenth-century scores of the music survive: one (hereafter called Ven) from the magnificent private collection of the Contarini family in Piazzola, generously given to the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice in 1843,9 and one (hereafter called Nap) “abandoned among the refuse” (M, p. iii) of the Naples Conservatory library and salvaged by Guido Gasperini at some point in the late 1920s (I:NC, Rari 6.4.1). Neither score gives unequivocal external evidence as to the composer, though the spine of Ven was originally stamped MO NT EV ER DE (later covered over with IL NE RO NE)10, and the name “Monteverde” was added on f. a misinterpretation of Caberloti Piovan: the “spatio di mesi sei” of this journey (see above) was certainly toward the end of his life, but not necessarily in 1643. His leave to visit Lombardy should also not be confused with his request for letters of recommendation to the reigning Gonzaga princess (to try again to obtain his due donation from Vincenzo), dated, according to Stevens (1980, 422), “120 August 1643.” His illness culminated in nine days (Prunières [1924, 168] gives twenty days) of “feb. maligna” (malignant fever), see De’Paoli 1945, 326. Fabbri (1985, 345) gives only “feb.,” not “maligna” and refers to Picenardi 1895, 160.

Incidentally, it seems to have been generally overlooked that Caberloti Piovan’s discussion (1644, 10; see Fabbri 1985, 62) of Monteverdi’s celebrated non-existent book on music (designed, as Caberloti says, to facilitate the acquisition of perfection in the art of music—“per facilitarsi l’acquisto della perfezione dell’arte Musica”) implies that it did exist, and that it had occupied much of his final ten years (when Caberloti Piovan knew him), but “cruel death, hastened by brief infirmity, has caused that it remain imperfect, deprived of the light of publication.” (“. . . l’empia morte, affrettata da breve infermità, ha cagionato che come imperfetta resti priva della luce della stampa.”) The same, for more than two centuries, could have been said of L’Incoronazione di Poppea.

8 In addition to the surviving printed libretti and the two manuscript scores, there are five seventeenth-century manuscript sources for the text, all dating most likely from the lifetime of Busenello. A complete bibliographical listing is in Chiarelli 1974, 119–21.
9 I:Vnm, It. IV 439 (=9063). Facsimile editions, G. Benvenuti, ed. (Milan, 1938), and Sergio Martinotti, ed. (Bologna, [1969]).
10 So far as I am aware, this has not previously been observed. The original letters, MO NT EV ER DE, with their gilt removed, are very difficult to read under the later gilt letters, IL NE RO NE—except for the former O under the present L and, of course, the final “extra” two, DE. Nevertheless, a careful scrutiny leaves no doubts. To whom and why was the labor and expense involved in such a seemingly trivial alteration justified? Since the Contarini collection does not, as it has come down to us, contain any other works by Monteverdi (which might have accounted for the removal of his name in order to prevent confusion with another volume similarly
2r, not by either of the two principal copyists, but probably by a seventeenth-century hand.\textsuperscript{11}

Louis Schneider (1921, 272), by calling attention to the differing scribes in *Ven* and suggesting that act 2 was copied “later” (“vers 1720 ou 1725”\textsuperscript{11}) seems almost inadvertently to have launched the notion that acts 1 and 3 were autograph. The subsequent widespread and incogitant acceptance of this notion has probably helped to prevent serious consideration of the problems of attribution, as well as to give an undue weight of authority to the exquisitely-bound, twice-reproduced “Venetian” manuscript, in preference to its poor “Neapolitan” cousin.\textsuperscript{12} In fact, both manuscripts were prepared some years after Monteverdi’s death, perhaps in conjunction with the 1651 Naples revival. Wolfgang Osthoff (1958) showed that the copyist of acts 1 and 3 in *Ven* had also copied Cavalli operas from the early 1650s. Peter Jeffery (1980) has since shown that scribe to be Cavalli’s wife Maria, which provides a terminus ante quem, since she died in the middle of September 1652. Osthoff also identified the opening sinfonia in *Ven* as closely related to and likely derived from that which opens Cavalli’s *Doriclea* (1645), and correctly suggested that added indications for transposition, cuts, etc., were in Cavalli’s own hand. These observations had far-reaching implications. Although they did not, for instance, prevent Winternitz (1965, plate 1) from continuing to present proudly a so-called “Monteverdi autograph” of a sinfonia composed after his death, they did stimulate many younger scholars to study the problems surrounding this masterpiece and its related repertory.

Shortly after Osthoff’s article appeared, I acquired a photocopy of *Nap* and began to compare it with the facsimile of *Ven*, as part of my preparation for a performance at the University of California at Berkeley. This performance led to a recording, for which my friend and, at that time, student, Thomas Walker played the *cembalo*

\textsuperscript{11} Jeffery (1980, 1:172 and 248) identifies this hand—rather unconvincingly, it seems to me—as the one (“P3”) that copied the end of Cavalli’s *Artemisia* (1657, revived 1662) and made various corrections and attributions elsewhere in the Contarini collection. He draws a parallel with the hand of Marco Contarini himself, but does not suggest they are the same.

\textsuperscript{12} There are, finally, plans to publish an annotated facsimile edition of *Nap* in *Drammaturgia musicale veneta*, ed. G. Morelli, R. Strohm, and T. Walker.
secondo. As we compared the two scores, our discussions began to focus on such problems as the discrepancy in act I, scene I (Ottone solo, see Example 1), between instrumental ritornelli pitched in C and with the time signature $\frac{3}{4}$ (or $\frac{3}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ or $C_3$), with the semibreve as unit (hereafter called semibreve-triple) and vocal strophes in D, marked 3, with the minim as unit (hereafter called minim-triple).

Example 1

*L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act I, scene I

(a) Nap

(b) Ven

We were satisfied neither with Osthoff's theory of muted trumpets (Osthoff 1956) nor with Anna Amalie Abert's notion of alternating tonal shifts as symbolizing "the malevolent silence of [Poppea's]"

house, where havoc lies in ambush . . .”14 We felt on musical grounds that either the ritornello should have its note values halved and be transposed up a major second or, vice versa, the vocal strophes should have their values doubled and be transposed down a second.

Comparison with other seventeenth-century operatic manuscripts can also make clear that such notational discrepancies are the commonplace result of changes in cast, when a role was not only transposed but rewritten, often by another, younger composer. As pointed out by Harold Powers,15 there are similar examples later in the century where a ritornello, whether or not in a different key, may remain in 3/2 while a revised vocal line is put in 3/4, as the currency of triple-time notation continues its inflationary course (inflationary in the sense that units once accepted as normal or even fast become ever slower).16

In my opinion, the role of Ottone had at some point to be rewritten for a singer with a slightly higher voice. Monteverdi, presumably because of illness or death, was unable or unwilling to make these changes, and the task was given to a younger composer, who used a more modern notation for triple meter. Thus the same notational discrepancies found in act 1, scene 1 (Malipiero ed. [hereafter M], 11–21; Curtis ed. [hereafter C], 14–23) return in act 1, scene 11 (M, 95–104; C, 90–99), Ottone’s confrontation with Poppea, except that here, with alternating strophes, those sung by Poppea still match the $\varphi$ 3 of the ritornelli, while those of Ottone have been


15 See Muraro 1976, 194–96. This transcription of an unprepared and rather awkward debate conducted in Italian between four Americans, one German, and one Italian, is unfortunately the only printed discussion of these problems prior to this article.

16 Naturally the shift of preference from semibreve-triple to minim-triple did not occur overnight. A publication such as R. Scarselli’s Cantate a voce sola (Venice: Magni, 1642; unique copy in I:Bc) uses both. However, semibreve-triple (neatly distinguished with the sign C₁) occurs only once, whereas minim-triple (with the seemingly indiscriminate signs C₂, C₃ and 3) occurs often. There is also, already, an instance of semiminim triple (also marked 3). Although Scarselli’s birthdate remains undiscovered, his stylistic traits as well as notational usage would seem to place him as younger than Monteverdi, but somewhat older, or at least more conservative, than the new generation born in the seventeenth century, represented by Sacrati, Ferrari, et al.
“modernized” to minim-triple.\textsuperscript{17} Similarly, in act 1, scene 13 (M, 107–14; C, 102–8) and act 2, scene 9 (scene 11 in M, 172–79; C, 167–74; both Ottone/Drusilla), though there are no ritornelli, Ottone sings always in minim-triple while Drusilla, even when singing the same motive, has doubled values (semibreve-triple). One could argue that Ottone, in both scenes, is more urgent and excited, Drusilla more calm and self-assured, and that the difference in notation is therefore intentional—meant to show a faster (even if not double) tempo for Ottone. As tempting as this may be from a purely musico-dramatic standpoint (and nothing prevents such an interpretation regardless of notation), I feel the historical evidence is to the contrary.

In fact, it is again within the role of Ottone, this time his solo scene in act 2 (scene 8 in M, 151–56; scene 6 in C, 147–52), where we can see most clearly that notation in semibreve- or minim-triple does not of itself have any significance for tempo. The same ritornello bass for “Sprezzami” is notated in semibreve-triple in \textit{Nap} and minim-triple in \textit{Ven}, while both sources give the following vocal strophes in minim-triple. The discrepancy, which here cannot possibly mean a difference of tempo, is best explained by the assumption that, just as in act 1, scenes 1 and 11, an original ritornello bass was retained in \textit{Nap} and its source, while an altered vocal part, given a higher tessitura, was copied in minim-triple. A later scribe,\textsuperscript{18} perhaps indeed the unknown copyist of act 2 in \textit{Ven}, halved the values of the ritornello as well, rather than retaining them incongruously as had Maria Cavalli in act 1.

In act 3, probably because Ottone’s tessitura was already fairly high, but perhaps also because he has here relatively little to sing, Signora Cavalli seems to have copied his part unaltered: it is in alto clef and semibreve-triple throughout. The \textit{Nap} copyist (or the sources on which he depended) recopied the part in mezzo-soprano clef but still left the semibreve-triple notation. Another trace of the original alto-clef notation is found at the beginning of act 1, scene 2 (M, 22; C, 23). In both sources the two interjections that Ottone mutters after the soldiers have been roused are left in alto clef even though all through act 1, scene 1 Ottone has sung in the mezzo-soprano clef. Either these brief utterances, though low in range for the role of Ottone as it was

\textsuperscript{17} Cavalli has marked Poppea’s ritornelli “come sta” (as is), but Ottone’s “un tuono più alto” (a major second higher). I believe that this is what he also intended, but neglected to make explicit, for Ottone’s ritornelli in act 1, scene 1.

\textsuperscript{18} Thus act 2, but not necessarily acts 1 and 3, of \textit{Ven} could have been copied somewhat later than \textit{Nap} (but hardly “vers 1720 ou 1725”! See page 27 above). Then again the scribe may simply have been younger, or more assiduously modern.
rewritten, were left as they were in order not to necessitate alteration of the soldiers' parts, or else they were simply overlooked, in haste, by the transposer-rewriter (a younger composer brought in to finish and/or revise the work of an old man whose health was failing?).

To return to Ottone's opening scene (act 1, scene 1), the one with the ritornello in C and voice part in D: in the facsimile of this scene in Ven, one sees only smudged clefs on ff. 7v-8r, but in the original it is clear that Signora Cavalli first wrote alto clefs and then corrected them to mezzo-soprano clefs. Even such a casual oversight is probably not unrelated to the use of alto clef in act 1, scene 2 and act 3. Since she copied the first strophe correctly, could this mean that her husband (or another composer) completely rewrote that first strophe, and then simply gave directions for adapting the second, third, and fourth? Such a theory gains some credence from the unusually high range (high d'!) and tessitura of the first strophe—as though the reviser, given the task of slightly raising Ottone's tessitura, at first went overboard; alterations for the rest of the role seem to have raised the tessitura consistently less. One can suppose that the reviser had been chastised for having extended the range excessively, was more cautious in subsequent strophes, but never took the trouble to go back and correct the first strophe (perhaps because the tessitura in the first strophe is not impossibly, but rather unnecessarily high). Also, since the bass of strophes 3–5 ("Apri," "Sorgi," and "Sogni": M, 15–18; C, 17–20) preserves a relationship to the bass of the second (minor) ritornello, in spite of the difference of notation, one could presume that something of the original (Monteverdian?) melodic line might also have been preserved, even though the succeeding recitative shows evidence of having been completely rewritten.

19 In any case, there are practical reasons, in addition to historical-aesthetic ones, for hypothetically restoring the original composer's tonal scheme by lowering Ottone's opening five-strophe aria by a major second (as we have done in our forthcoming edition for Novello), rather than raising the key of the ritornello by the same interval. Of course, Ottone is depicted as much happier here than in the rest of the opera, but lowering this opening section only a second does not destroy that impression. It also makes the shock of "Ma, che veggio, infelice?" (M, 18; C, 20, m. 109), with a larger leap and a melodic, cross-relation (d', m. 108 and e', m. 109 of my edition) less predictable and therefore in some ways stronger. Of course one can only guess what the original version might have been.

A decision for act 1, scene 11 (Ottone/Poppea) is even more difficult, but there too I would choose to lower Ottone's role rather than raise the orchestra, since this results in a preferable (original?) tonal scheme. I should emphasize that I believe Ottone's music was largely rewritten, not merely transposed, and that therefore by transposing back we may hope to restore the original tonal scheme, but should be under no illusion that we are magically recreating the original music.
Other parts of the opera also show evidence of rewriting or revision. Continuing to regard the use of minim-triple as an important clue to later revision, we find that, in addition to the revised role of Ottone, virtually every passage in *Nap* which does not appear in *Ven* also uses minim-triple exclusively. The one exception, which proves the rule by following the path of inflation and using semiminim-triple, is act 2, "scena sesta" (Ottavia sola) (M, 266–67; C, 278–84), added for Anna Renzi, and closely modelled after her solo lament, also in F minor, in Sacrati's *La finta pazza* (also act 2, scene 6). But for the sake of convenience and brevity, let us for now pass over these passages found only in *Nap* simply because most Monteverdi scholars will already agree with our belief that some or all of these were composed by a later hand (even though many may agree out of an erroneous assumption that *Ven* is more "authentic" than *Nap*).

Apart from the passages unique to *Nap* and from the role of Ottone, then, there are only six places where minim-triple occurs. Significantly, in each of these six, minim-triple coincides with other anomalies:

1. The *sinfonia* in *Ven* (M, 1–2; C, 3–4) but not the one in *Nap* (M, 252; C, 1–3). Under the circumstances, there seems no reason to doubt that the *sinfonia* is by—or at least a version of one by—Cavalli, since it is so similar to that which opens his *Doriclea* (1645) and is stylistically close to other of his *sinfonie*.

2. The Prologue: Cavalli’s wife left blank space but did not copy the duet "Uman non è" for Fortuna and Virtù just before Amore closes the prologue (M, 9–10; C, 11–13). Cavalli himself then wrote clefs, while an otherwise unknown hand later copied the music. These delays in copying may indicate delayed composition because of

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20 This opera, a version of the famous legend of Achilles in female disguise on the isle of Scyros, was crucial in the history of Venetian theatre and was the first opera ever performed in France. It has survived with the most complete visual and literary documentation of any early opera (some ten different editions of the libretto between 1641 and 1662, some with engravings, and especially *Il cannochiale*, an elaborate description of the sensationally successful first production in Venice, Teatro Novissimo, 1641–42 season). However, not a note of this or any other music by Sacrati was known to survive until Lorenzo Bianconi discovered a complete score of *La finta pazza* in a private collection in 1984. I was kindly given access to a photocopy of the manuscript in 1986. Subsequently I had the pleasure of conducting the first modern performances of this work (edited by Professor Bianconi), in an outdoor production—in Campo Pisani, Venice—by Teatro alla Fenice in July 1987; the production was based on Giacomo Torelli’s original engraved designs. There are plans for this production to be repeated. Professor Bianconi is preparing a facsimile edition of *La finta pazza* for the series *Drammaturgia musicale veneta* (Milan: Ricordi, forthcoming).

21 Relegated to the appendices of my forthcoming Novello edition.
Monteverdi's illness, or perhaps composition by another hand. Moreover, Fortuna's air "Chi professa virtù" (M, 4–5; C, 6–7) has a particular type of "running-bass" (perpetual motion eighth-notes, faster than and independent of the voice part) not found elsewhere in the opera (or in works known to be by Monteverdi) but found often in works by younger composers, such as Laurenzi, whose La finita sauvia played the same year, in the same theatre as Poppea (see notes 6 and 28).

(3) The Seneca/Mercurio scene which opens act 2 (M, 115–20; C, 109–14): Of all the scenes in which minim-triple occurs, act 2, scene 1 has perhaps the fewest anomalies. However, Seneca's final five bars before the entrance of Mercurio are without text in Ven, as are the final seven bars of the scene, while the bass line in the penultimate bar before Mercurio's entrance differs in Nap and Ven. In Ven, Mercurio's part itself is given the rubric "alla quinta alta" by Cavalli for the first two entrances, alternating with "come sta" for Seneca's; the latter's second entrance was not marked by the original scribe, so Cavalli added "Seneca." For the third and final entrance of Mercurio, he wrote "Và scritta questa su la carta" (the last three words are not visible in the published facsimile). All of this could be related merely to the carelessness of Ven's act 2 copyist and the transposition of the role of Mercurio from bass-baritone to high-tenor ("alla quinta alta"), with the use of minim-triple explained as relating to the fast-flowing, "flying" (and, in my opinion, quite un-Monteverdian) coloratura of Mercurio. In any case, there are more than the usual number of discrepancies between Nap and Ven in this scene, and Cavalli curiously felt obliged to write out the coloratura passage elsewhere ("su la carta"). Not only Mercurio, but also Seneca—consistently in this scene and nowhere else in the opera—sings in minim-triple.

(4) The Valletto/Damigella scene (M, 135–40; C, 130–36): The ending of act 2, scene 4 differs radically in Nap and Ven, and in Ven the duet (marked 3 though the unit is a minim, i.e. minim-triple) is left unfinished. It has no vocal parts for 36 minims before the last note, and text only at the beginning ("O caro," and "O cara," respectively) and just before the parts stop ("godiamo"). Tempo markings ("presto" and "adagio") are found only here and in the final duet. In style, this duet is close to the final duet and the duet in the prologue (as others have pointed out), but not to anything else in the opera or to any works known definitely to be by Monteverdi.

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22 To develop this point would require a larger detour in my argument than is appropriate here. At its basis would lie a comparison of Monteverdi's Eumete/Ulisse duet (M, vol. 12, 93–94) with (Sacrati's?) "Pur ti miro" (M, vol. 13, 246–50).
(5) The *sinfonia* (called “Ritornello” in *Nap*) that ends act 2 (M, 198/271; C, 195): This comes immediately after Amore’s aria “Ho difesa Poppea” (in semibreve-triple) in both sources, but both are evidently based on an earlier corrupt source, and although Cavalli in *Ven* (see facsimile in M, 271) suggested a partial correction, the piece remains defective. Here a performer’s interpretation of minim-triple in the *sinfonia* as possibly intended to imply a faster tempo than the semibreve-triple of the vocal sections does, even more than in the Ottone/Drusilla scenes cited above (p. 30), make some sense musically. A faster tempo for the *sinfonia*, which is in any case not thematically linked to the aria, allows the act to finish with élan. A new tempo might also be implied by the fact that Cavalli took the trouble to cross out Amore’s last note (a longa) and recopy it into the *sinfonia* (as a semibreve), providing a specific example of overlap and final-note duration which occurs nowhere else in either *Nap* or *Ven*. Nevertheless, this interpretation should not obscure the likelihood that this little instrumental piece, quite unlike any other in the opera, was added later. Incidentally, its alto part (the line above the bass) is unique in its activity, its high range, and its use of soprano clef. Is it meant for a high (small) viola or a third violin?

(6) The final scene of the opera (M, 232–50; C, 230–60) presents the most extensive (and notorious) problems. To begin with, there is more than the usual amount of disagreement among the sources, both scores and libretti. All sources concur, more or less, only as far as the end of the Chorus of Consuls and Tribunes. Then only *Nap*, but not *Ven*, continues by following Busenello’s 1656 text, at least in a general way (see Table 1).

*Nap* contains, in fact, only two major departures from the 1656 print—a duet for Nerone and Poppea on the text “Su, Venere ed Amor”, etc. (a dramatically unnecessary and musically not very interesting addition), and their final and famous duet “Pur ti miro,” with which the opera ends, as it does also in *Ven*. In the latter source, however, although Maria Cavalli lists at the beginning of the scene, along with the other characters, “Amor, Choro d’Amori, Venere, Gratie”, the score nevertheless omits all “cori d’amori,” and skips, after a *sinfonia* succeeding the Consul/Tribune Chorus, to the recitative “Madre, sia con tua pace” (M, 243–44; C, 250) for Amore.

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23 Since here, and elsewhere, *Nap* and *Ven* have their own versions of the same mistake—one characteristic not of a carelessly copying composer but of a mechanical, unmusical amanuensis—we may posit the existence of at least one intervening copy between an autograph original and the two surviving scores.
(mislabeled “Venere” by Signora Cavalli), and then skips again after the aria of Venere directly to “Pur ti miro.” This results in an extremely awkward lack of transition from aria in F major to duet in G major which is hardly improved by Cavalli’s having crossed out the sinfonie both before and after the Consul/Tribune Chorus, and all of the music for Amore and Venere. The resultant gap between the exit of the two Consuls and two Tribunes (in Bb) and the final duet (in G) makes for, at best, an abrupt transition, both tonally and dramatically. This is, nevertheless, the way the opera has always, until very recently, been performed in our century, though with the sinfonie restored, the upper parts usually given anachronistically to trumpets.

The style of the entire finale, whether in Nap or Ven, contrasts sharply with that of the main body of the opera—so sharply and consistently, in fact, that I fail to see a single reason to attribute any of it to Monteverdi. The scene abounds with traits of the younger generation, traits which one also finds occasionally in acts 1 and 2 in the role of Ottone, but nowhere else in the opera, or in works known to be by Monteverdi. Written-out ornaments such as the appoggiatura both from above (Example 2a) and from below (Example 2b), lombard snaps (Example 2c), the slide or Schleifer (Example 2d), and various “free” sequential ornaments (such as in Example 2e) are characteristic of Benedetto Ferrari and his contemporaries, but rare or unknown among the works of Monteverdi and his generation.

Further hallmarks of the younger generation include the continuo “postlude” (Examples 3a-d) and the unresolved fourth above the dominant which simply becomes the tonic without ever resolving to the leading tone, with or without a resultant clash (see Examples 3a-b and the very end of 2e). This unresolved fourth might be dubbed the “Clorinda cadence” since the best-known and most striking, though not the earliest, example of its use occurs at Clorinda’s death, the very ending of Monteverdi’s Combattimento. It was, however, the younger generation, not Monteverdi himself, who took up this pattern, first as an emblem for any and all kinds of “special” moments, and finally as

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24 For a production staged by Jussi Tapola at the Finnish National Opera in Helsinki, Oct.-Nov. 1986, with revivals in 1987–88, I was luxuriously provided with an abundance of fine boy sopranos and thus given the opportunity to conduct the Nap finale nearly complete.

25 In discussing music by Ferrari, John Whenham significantly remarks that “the only other examples of this type of written-out appoggiaturas that I have found in music of this period occur in act 3, scene 8 of . . . L’Incoronazione di Poppea.” (Whenham 1982, 268, n. 61)

26 See also, in my edition, p. 235, mm. 84–87 and p. 236, mm. 102–4 and cf. act 1, scene 1, p. 21, mm. 128–29 and p. 22, m. 162).
### Table 1

**L'incoronazione di Poppea, final scene**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scena Ultima</th>
<th>Nap (manuscript score)</th>
<th>Venice (manuscript score)</th>
<th>Treviso (manuscript libretto)</th>
<th>Vee (manuscript score)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In all sources, the scene begins with a dialogue between Nerone and Poppea (nine lines for Nerone, eleven for Poppea, seven for Nerone, five for Poppea, and five for Nerone) followed by eight lines for Consoli e Tribuni. These eight are preceded in Ven by a *sinfonia* in B♭ (the latter half of the overture to Sacrati's *La finta pazza*), and followed by a *sinfonia* in d (the first half of the overture to *La finta pazza*). In Nap the eight lines for Consoli and Tribuni are preceded by the rubric "Ritornello si piace" and followed by "Ritornello," though in neither case is there music or space for it to be copied.

Venere: Io mi compiaccio
Di quanto aggrada a te;
Dissi pur a Poppea
Il titolo di dea.

Amo: Io mi [etc.]

Ven: O figlio, io mi [etc.]

Ven: Io mi [etc.]

Venere: Io mi [etc.]

[Poppea e]
Nerone: Su, su, Venere ed Amor
Lodi l'alma, esaldi il cor,
Nessun fugga l'aurora face
Ben che strugga, sempre
[i.e. Ven:]
[piace.
Su, su [...etc.] esaldi
[i cor.

[A4:] Or cantiamo giocondi,
In terra e in Cielo
Il gaur sovraffondi,
E in ogni clima, in ogni
[regione
Si senta rimombor
[Nerone e Poppea

Ritornello
[A3, minim-triple, 6mm., C major]

Poppea e Nerone: Pur ti miro, pur ti godo [etc.]

A Quattro Voci
Felicissimo di,
Hoggi stretto s'uni,
Con laccio indissolubile,
[e soave
Nerone, Poppea sol
fortunati amanti
Onde ciascuno i lor
[trionfi hor canti.

Ner. e Pop.
Pur ti miro [etc.]

A2 Poppea
e Nerone: Pur ti miro [etc.]

1 The text in this column is edited as it will appear in my forthcoming edition (London: Novello, 1989).
2 [ etc.] indicates that the text continues as given in the left-hand (Nap MS) column.
3 These two pieces are crossed out in Ven.
Example 2

(a) L'incoronazione di Poppea, act 3, scene 8 (M, 232) Ferrari 1637, p. 10
NERONE:

(b) L'incoronazione di Poppea, act 3, scene 8 (M, 233) Ferrari 1633, p. 8
NERONE:

(c) L'incoronazione di Poppea, act 3, scene 8 (M, 233) Ferrari 1637, p. 9
NERONE:

(d) L'incoronazione di Poppea, act 3, scene 8 (M, 233) Ferrari 1633, p. 26
NERONE:

L'incoronazione di Poppea, act 3, scene 8 (M, 236) Ferrari 1633, p. 36

(e) L'incoronazione di Poppea, act 3, scene 8 (M, 234)
POPPEA:
an almost habitual cadential cliché. Such cadences occur not only in the finale, but in the role of Ottone, and nowhere else in the opera.
Example 4

(a) *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 3, scene 8 (M, 238)

NERONE:

\[\text{Nel solo rimar-ti}\]

(b) *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 2, scene 9 \(\{.1, 174\}\) (M, 174)

OTTONE:

\[\text{Non esser più ge-lo-sa}\]

(c) *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 1, scene 12 \(\{M, 105\}\)

OTTONE:

\[\text{Ott-on. Ott-ton} \quad \text{[Mio cor, mio cor]}\]

(d) *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 2, scene 4 \(\{5\}\) (M, 139)

DAMIGELLA:

\[\text{O ca-ro}\]

VALLETTO:

\[\text{O ca-ra}\]

The same pattern can be observed at the superficial level of the notation of ornaments. The trill symbol ‘t’, found also in the rediscovered manuscript of Sacrati’s *La finta pazza* (see note 20 above), is rare in *Nap*, but fairly abundant in *Ven*—only, however, in the minim-triple sections of the finale and the role of Ottone in acts 1 and 2.

I have saved for last the most striking and original stylistic detail,
the truly curious mark—one could even say “fingerprint”—of a personal style: the opening of a triple-meter section (minim-triple, of course) with a rest on the downbeat, bass entrance on the second beat, and vocal entry on the third (Example 4).

Performers will be quick to observe this “fingerprint” with exasperation, since efforts to perform it as written may give listeners the impression that the entrance was mistakenly not together. It occurs at least ten times in the opera, half of them in the finale (“Per capirti”; M, 235; C, 233. “Nel solo rimirarti;” M, 238; C, 236. “Scendiam;” M, 272; C, 243. “Se i consoli;” M, 274; C, 248. “Su, su;” M, 275; C, 287.), four in the role of Ottone in acts 1 and 2 (“Otton [mio cor] torna;” M, 105 and 106; C, 100, mm. 9 and 18. “Ti bramo;” M, 112; C, 106. “Non esser più gelosa;” M, 174; C, 170.) and once at the beginning of the Valletto-Damigella duet (“O caro;” M, 139; C, 135).

All of this evidence suggests that the entire final scene and most of the role of Ottone was written by another composer than was the main body of the opera, and that the other passages singled out (the Prologue; act 2, scenes 1 and 4; and the final sinfonia) were also written and/or revised by a composer or composers of a generation younger than Monteverdi’s.

This is the conclusion I reluctantly arrived at roughly two decades ago—reluctantly, because it was a shock particularly to imagine “Pur ti miro,” the “noble ending to his noble efforts” which “sets the pattern for operatic compositions of the whole baroque era” (Schrade 1950, 366), “the most beautiful of all Monteverdi’s duets,” with which the eminent scholar Denis Stevens poignantly closes his brief Monteverdi biography (Stevens 1978, 138), as the work of some other composer. If not by Monteverdi, then by whom? Cavalli was of course the first to come to mind, but further study (under which term I include conducting some sixty performances of Cavalli’s L’Erismena), ruled this out on stylistic grounds. Lesser-known composers of the same circle were next in line: the poet-composer-lutenist Benedetto Ferrari, Francesco Manelli,27 Filiberto Laurenzi,28 and Francesco

27 Very few of Manelli’s works have survived (see Whenham 1980b, 613): a few leaves of his 1629 Ciaccona in the Vatican Library, Winterfeld’s copy (D:Bds, MS Winterfeld, 119–24) of portions of a 1636 book claimed to have been destroyed in the Second World War and, if he is indeed identical with “Il Fasolo,” the Lamento di Madama Lucia discussed briefly by Bianconi (1987, 104). I am most grateful to Professor Whenham for sending me not only this information, but also copies of the music.

28 Laurenzi’s Arie a una voce (Venice, 1643; unique copy in PL:WRu) consists entirely of arias from, and provides the only surviving music for, Strozzi’s La finta savia, Poppea’s “sister” opera, performed the same season at the same theatre, and
Sacrati (though at that time no music of the latter was known to be preserved; see note 20). I had already settled on Ferrari as the most likely candidate when I heard that Lorenzo Bianconi had discovered him to be in fact the author of the text of “Pur ti miro” and so possibly, though not inevitably, also of the music. Subsequently, Bianconi also

probably with much the same cast. In addition to Anna Renzi, who was Laurenzi's pupil and is known to have created the role of Ottavia, three others mentioned in the Arie—the Roman soprano Anna di Valerio, soprano castrati Stefano Costa and “il famoso Rabocchio” (called Corbacchio in Strozzi's libretto)—may also have sung in Poppea (the title role, Nerone, and Valletto respectively?). For further information on Laurenzi and his Roman singers see Magini 1986 and Osthoff 1976.

An important recent discovery by Prof. Margaret Murata strengthens the possibility of a connexion between Monteverdi, L'incoronazione di Poppea, and Anna di Valerio, and implies that she took the title role of Poppea. An anonymous letter to Cardinal Mazarin, dated Piacenza, 25 March 1643 recommends bringing a Venetian opera troupe to Paris and praises especially “Anna Valeria” and “un altra Sig. Annucia [Anna Renzi?] che di poco lì cede.” The anonymous writer continues, “Io le ho visto recitare e tutt'e due divinamente a Venetia. Et quando anche senza occasione di comedia si potesse havere in Francia quella Sig. Ann Valeria sola sarebbe cosa da non tralasciarne l'occasione per farla servire a S.M. Certo è che tutti i francesi, Il Sig. Amb. il Conte di Brion et altri anche che non intendevano la lingua et chi erano in Venezia restarono d'accordo che non era cosa al mondo più regia ne più degna d'esser veduta e che quella Comp. cavrebbe da Parigi più di centomila scudi in un anno, et che quando ogni'opra venisse tassata a dieci doble per persona, vi si andrebbe a folla, almanco sul principio. Bisognerebbe però accertare che la musica fosse tutta del Mondevergo et che se menasse il miglior Architetto per le machine. (‘I have seen both these ladies recite [i.e., perform] divinely in Venice. And even if there were no occasion for a comedy [i.e., opera] and one could still have this Sig. Ann Valeria alone come to France, it would be something not to be missed to have her serve your Holiness. It is certain that all the French, His Lord Ambassador the Count of Brion, and others who were in Venice but did not understand the language, agreed that there was nothing more noble in the world, nor more worthy of being seen, and that that company would derive more than one hundred thousand scudi per year in Paris, and that even if each work [opera?] were taxed [i.e., given the price of admission] at ten doble per person, there would still be crowds of people, at least at the beginning. One should, however, make sure that all the music be by “Mondevergo” [Monteverdi] and that the best architect should be imported for the stage machinery.’)

There is a clear implication that, for this anonymous writer at least, not Anna Renzi but Anna di Valerio had been the star of the 1642–43 season and that the star composer had been not Francesco Sacrati, whose La finta pazza of that Venetian season was to have its first revival the following year in (nota bene) Piacenza, but rather Monteverdi.

I am much indebted to Prof. Murata for allowing me to quote from this document (France, Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Archives, Correspondance politique, Parme, tome 2, f. 41v), the discovery of which she announced in Murata 1986.
discovered that the text “Pur ti miro” recurs in 1647 in a Roman carnival “opera-on-wheels” called *Il trionfo della fatica*, with music (now lost) by Laurenzi.29

Unfortunately, no operas by Ferrari have survived, and his oratorio *Sansone* (Modena, 1680) was written at the very end of his life, consciously in a style completely different from that of his operas. However, three books of *Musiche*, all published by Magni in Venice, are preserved in unique copies at Oxford (1633), Wroclaw (1637), and Bologna (1641), and they can give us some idea of his earlier style and abilities. The *Musiche* include settings of Busenello texts, and there is evidence that Busenello and Ferrari were friends. The transcription, editing, and stylistic study of these three books in connection with *Poppea* formed one of the topics of a seminar I conducted at Berkeley in 1978. Shortly thereafter, independently, Alessandro Magini began a more thorough study of the same topic, which has culminated in his excellent thesis (Magini 1983–84), a facsimile of all three books of *Musiche* (Ferrari 1985), and a recent article (Magini 1986).

Although the preserved works of Ferrari are close in style to the “suspect” portions of *Poppea*, a tentative attribution of them to him, *faute de mieux*, left me with many misgivings, particularly since only one single (and not very typical30) example of the most salient “fingerprint” (see above, Example 4) could be found in his *Musiche*. The discovery of Sacrati’s *La finta pazza*, if it has not entirely solved

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29 The duet occurs as the finale of *Il Pastor reggio* (not in the first edition [Venice 1640] but the second [Bologna 1641]) and was even published in a modern edition (*Drammi per musica dal Rinuccini allo Zeno*, ed. A. della Corte, Turin, 1958, 1:331) though no one seems to have noticed it there—myself, alas, included. My having passed on this information to my friend René Jacobs resulted in the paradox that “Pur ti miro” appeared as a work of Ferrari on a recording (Harmonia Mundi, 1979, with equivocal notes by Silke Leopold) long before the attribution was generally known to “Monteverdi scholarship.”

Since Ferrari is not known to have been in Naples, it is probable that “Pur ti miro” was added to Busenello’s finale already in 1643, which would also explain how Laurenzi, too, “acquired” it for his *Trionfo della fatica* prior to 1647. The 1643 scenario does not mention it, but that does not preclude its presence. The scenario does, however, mention the descent of Venere and Amore, which proves that *Ven* (especially as revised by Cavalli!) does not transmit the original finale. I feel that, although “Su, Venere ed Amor” (*Appendix II, No. 10 of my edition*) may have been part of the original 1643 finale, it can nevertheless best be omitted, respecting Busenello’s wishes in all but the addition of the irresistibly seductive “Pur ti miro.” This is the form in which I conducted the finale for the Finnish National Opera in 1986.

30 Ferrari 1641, 12 where, although it occurs at the introduction of minim-triple, it is not really the beginning of a section (as generally in *Poppea*—and *La finta pazza*) since the text is merely interrupted by a rest, and both voice and bass continue the same pitches.
Example 5

(a) Sacratì, *La finta pazza*, act 3, scene 5

DIOMEDE:

[Musical notation]

> A-mi pure chi vuol ch'ama*ni* io non vuò piú, non vuò, non
>

[Musical notation]

> vuò, io non vuò piú. Viver lieto non suol chi vive in servitú. A-mi

(b) *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 3, scene 8 (M, 235)

NERONE:

[Musical notation]

> per capiri negli occhi il sol, il
>

[Musical notation]

> sol s'im-piccio-li, s'im-piccio-li

all the attendant problems, has at least cast a bold new light on the matter. With my first random glance at a photocopy of this long-lost score, my eyes happened to fall on the first of the passages given
below (Example 5a), so closely related to Nerone's "Per capirti"(Example 5b). Within minutes, I was able to locate a dozen more examples of what I was quickly coming to think of as the "Sacrati fingerprint."

I had already been informed that in the manuscript of La finta pazza the two sinfonie (with the two upper parts left mostly blank) of the Consuls/Tribunes coronation scene in Poppea served, in reverse order, as an overture. It is difficult to be objective about music already so familiar, but I tend to feel that the two pieces are here "artificially"
joined, in other words, that their function in *Poppea* seems more natural, more authentic. From the libretto, we know that the manuscript of *La finta pazza* found by Professor Bianconi represents a “road-show” version,\(^3\) not the original 1641 score. Thus the *sinfonie* could have been composed for *Poppea* in 1643 and then linked to serve as (substitute?) overture for *La finta pazza*. From this one could, of course, argue that they were composed by someone else (even Monteverdi!) and borrowed for the tour. However, assuming for the moment that Sacrati composed the surviving prologue to his *La finta pazza* (by no means an absolute certainty), one could also assume he composed these two *sinfonie*, especially if one compares the “running” bass-line (second *sinfonia* of the Consuls/Tribunes, the opening of *La finta pazza*) with certain passages in the prologue (Example 6).

Since I had sensed Sacrati’s hand in *Poppea* mainly through aspects of his treatment of triple meter, the recovery of *La finta pazza* now opens, of course, the possibility of further study and comparison, especially of duple meter and free recitative. For instance, a passage in the first entrance of Tetide resembles Arnalta’s “E pur vedete”; both are tenor travesties with a similar comic purpose (Example 7). Moreover, the triple meter “fingerprint” can also occur in duple meter, as indeed it does in Drusilla’s “Il tribunal d’Amor” (M, 108; C, 103, m. 12). However, as already mentioned, Drusilla’s role elsewhere shows evidence of remaining in an earlier notation even when Ottone’s similar passages in their dialogue have been modernized.

On the whole, I think, we need not rush to attribute fragments of *Poppea* here and there to Sacrati. We should, however, recognize that he seems to have finished, possibly with some help from Ferrari, the parts of *Poppea* that we may presume Monteverdi had left incomplete. And he seems to have rewritten, probably only as much as needed to raise the tessitura, the role of Ottone to conform to a cast change with which, assuming it did take place during Monteverdi’s lifetime, the aged master felt unable to cope. Whether all this was with or without Monteverdi’s consent, before or after his death, we shall probably never know.

\(^3\) The abundance of libretti (see note 20) allows a fairly clear picture of what was added (very little) and what was cut (a considerable amount, including entire scenes). This being the case, it seems fairly safe to assume that most of the score that has come down to us was composed by Sacrati. A notable exception is the lovely air added for Deidamia in act 2, “No, no, amar vogli io,” which, in its lyrical suavity, even suggests Sartorio (1630–1680). It is in any case quite noticeably unlike the rest of the opera and probably represents the intervention of another (younger?) composer.
Example 6

(a) Sinfonia: *La finta pazza*, opening; *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 3, scene 8 (M, 243)

(b) *La finta pazza*, Prologue

L'AURORA:

Example 7

(a) *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, act 2, scene 11 (M, 187)

ARNALTA:

(b) *La finta pazza*, act 1, scene 5

TETIDE:

As for “Pur ti miro,” one now must judge not the case of Ferrari vs. Monteverdi but rather of Ferrari vs. Sacrati. Was Ferrari, whose first *Pastor reggio* (Venice, 1640–41 carnival) does not include “Pur ti miro,” inspired by the erotic languor of the Deidamia-Achille-Eunuco trio (Example 8 and Figure i [Venice 1641–42 carnival]), also in G major and built on the descending tetrachord, to compose his “Pur ti miro” (Bologna, 1641)? And did Sacrati (and/or Monteverdi?) then find it so beautiful that it deserved to be heard in Venice (at the end
Example 8

_La finta pazza_, act 1, scene 5*

**DEIDAMIA:**

1. Il suon mi di-
2. [Gli cre - do, mi

**ACHILLE:**

1. La gio - ia m’ab - bon - da,
2. [A - mor non m’of - fen - de,

**FUNUCO:**

1. Il can - to m’al - let - ta,
2. [Qui scher - zo, qui ri - do.

---

let - ta, mi di - let - ta,
fi - do, mi fi - do

il ti -

il ben mi cir-con - da,
fi - do non mi pren - de;

il ben mi cir-con - da, il
fi - do non mi pren - de, ti

---

ben mi cir-con - da, mi cir-con - da,
mor non mi pren - de, non mi pren - de.]

[Se non ho

mi cir - con - da.
non mi pren - de.]
Example 8 (continued)

Gio-co, gio-co, a-mo-reg-gio,
sen-no, ho sor-te,
Gio-co, gio-co, a-mo-reg-gio,
Se non ho sen-no, se non ho sen-
Gio-co, gio-co a-mo-

e'l mal ch'ho da pro-var non sia,
el sol del mio gio-ir, gio-ir,
gio-a-mo-reg-gio,
non sia, gio-ir,
reg-gio-a-mo-reg-gio,
sen-no ho sor-te,
non sia gio-

non sia mai peg-gio,
l'o-re son cor-te,
mai, non sia mai peg-gio.
ma, cor-te, l'o-re son cor-te.

sia, mai, cor-te,
non sia mai peg-gio.
l'o-re son cor-te.

sia, mai, cor-te,
non sia mai peg-gio.
l'o-re son cor-te.

non sia mai peg-gio,
l'o-re son cor-te.
mai, cor-te, l'o-re son cor-te.

non sia mai peg-gio,
l'o-re son cor-te.
Example 8 (continued)

*The score unfortunately gives only one strophe of text. The Venice 1641 edition of the libretto gives the text not only for a second strophe but also for a brief, interposed recitative by Diomede urging the trio not to stop. In order to preserve this charming theatrical conceit (reminiscent of Caesar's recitative before the da capo of Cleopatra's "V'adoro pupille" in Handel's Giulio Cesare), I have set Diomede's lines to music and suggested necessary musical adjustments to accommodate the text of the second strophe (all in brackets).

of Poppea, Venice 1642–43 carnival? Or did Sacrati simply re-set afresh the slightly revised text by Ferrari?32

32 One can find Ferrari writing earlier solo airs with a descending tetrachord (see his Cantata spirituale, Ferrari 1637, 42) and G-major airs using the ciacona (Ferrari 1641, 22 "Amanti io vi so dire" and 1637, 24 "Voglio di vita uscir"—cf. the ciacona on the same text attributed to Monteverdi by Osthoff and recorded by Carole Bogard and myself on Cambridge Records, CRM 708[1966]). However, nothing in Ferrari's three books of Musiche is nearly so close to the style or the erotic spirit of "Pur ti miro" as is "Il canto m'alletta." The G-major descending tetrachord duet in Il ritorno (act 2, scene 2, "Dolce speme il cor lusinga") between Ulisse and the old shepherd Eumete is of superb quality and very touching, but could hardly be expected to match the sensuality of Sacrati's trio. Moreover, unlike Ferrari's and Sacrati's triple-meter pieces, it is notated in semibreve-triple.
In any case, the widely-believed legend of "Pur ti miro" as the climax, the glowing sunset of Monteverdi's long career, if not yet perhaps conclusively disproved, has at least been shown to be most
unlikely. One legend, however, can quickly be replaced by another—and I hasten to supply one that could appear to both seventeenth- and twentieth-century sensibilities as more “realistic.” If we accept that the entire last scene was not set by Monteverdi, then Arnalta’s solo, which immediately precedes it (M, 226–29) could have been his final composition. Is it not more fitting that we should imagine the last words set by the 76-year-old master as being, not the baby-talk *quaternari* of Poppea and Nerone (or rather of Ferrari’s Laurina and Clizio33), but the wisely ironical adage of the aged Arnalta: “Chi lascia le grandezze/Piangendo a morte va,/Ma chi servendo sta,/Con più felice sorte,/Come fin degli stenti, ama la morte”? (“They who have grandeur to leave behind, weep as death approaches, but they who serve have a happier fate, welcoming death as the end of their labours.”) Here, perhaps, is one happy instance where the cynical libertine Busenello’s text could wholeheartedly be espoused by the devout humanist-priest Monteverdi.34 We may hope that Monteverdi left this mortal scene as does Arnalta—and as we all hope to—with an abrupt, unexpected cadence in untroubled C major.

University of California, Berkeley

**LIST OF WORKS CITED**


33 The characters in *Il pastor reggio* who first sang “Pur ti miro” to each other, in Bologna, 1641.

This essay re-examines both the complex source-material for L’incoronazione di Poppea and the reasons for attributing the music to Monteverdi. On the basis of stylistic and notational peculiarities it concludes that the role of

ABSTRACT
Ottone was rewritten by a younger composer or composers, who also either altered or completed certain other parts of the opera, including the entire final scene. A study of Francesco Sacratì's *La finta pazza* leads to the conclusion that he is the most likely composer of these non-Monteverdean parts of *Poppea*. 