

AN UNKNOWN TRIBUTE BY FARINELLI TO KING PHILIP V OF SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

*Carlo Broschi, better known as Farinelli, arrived in Madrid on 7 August 1737. King Philip V and his wife Elisabeth Farnese were deeply impressed by his vocal qualities and invited him to remain in their service, on extremely rewarding terms. Although few sources concerning his first months in Spain are available, a newly discovered libretto, *L'ombra di Luigi XIV il Grande*, sheds light on his position at the Spanish court and his response to the privileged situation he enjoyed. The work is a short solo cantata commissioned by Farinelli and offered to Philip V for his name day in 1738. The title-page indicates Francesco Feo as the composer, but no sources for the musical setting have yet been located, nor any information about a performance of the work. This article examines the content of the cantata's text and situates it within what is known about the life of Farinelli. It also reconstructs in detail the literary career of the author of the text, Giuseppe di Rosa, who was also a magistrate and historian. Additionally, it links the genesis of this encomiastic piece with the activity of Giovanni Battista Filomarino, Neapolitan ambassador at the court of Madrid.*

The Bibliothèque nationale de France owns the only extant copy of a libretto printed in Naples in 1738, characterized by a curious contrast between the small number of pages (just eight) and the pompous length of the title: *L'ombra di Luigi XIV il Grande che parla al re cattolico suo nipote nel glorioso festivo giorno del suo nome*.¹ It contains the text of a solo cantata consisting of a long recitative followed by an aria. The work, not included in Claudio Sartori's catalogue,² has so far remained almost unknown.³ The title-page (Figure 1) clearly indicates the poet and the composer, respectively Giuseppe di Rosa and Francesco Feo, as well as the dedicatee, King Philip V of Spain.⁴ The most interesting elements, however, are the dedicatory letter (dated 15 March 1738) and the signature at the end of it, as the person who offers the musical homage to the sovereign is none other than Carlo Broschi – Farinelli.⁵ The Neapolitan print (the content of which is transcribed and translated in its entirety in the Appendix) therefore constitutes an object of interest for specialists in Farinelli: a close reading helps explain its place within the life and career of the famous singer.

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- 1 Bibliothèque nationale de France (F-Pn), 8 RA5 609; this libretto was part of the collection of Auguste Rondel (1858–1934), which was donated to the French state in 1920.
- 2 Claudio Sartori, *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800*, seven volumes (Cuneo: Bertola & Locatelli, 1990–1994).
- 3 As far as I know, the libretto has been roughly described only by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Anne Simon, *Festivals and Ceremonies: A Bibliography of Works Relating to Court, Civic and Religious Festivals in Europe 1500–1800* (London: Mansell, 2000), 111; in 2011 the contents of this volume were fully transferred to the website *Early Modern Festivals Books Database*, <https://festivals.mml.ox.ac.uk> (31 January 2021).
- 4 Individuals whose names appeared in different forms throughout their lives, such as Philip (Philippe, Felipe or Filippo) and Charles (Carlos, Carlo) are given in the English form.
- 5 This circumstance is reported by Watanabe-O'Kelly and Simon, *Festivals and Ceremonies*, 111: 'The dedication is signed by Carlo Broschi, known as Farinelli, the famous castrato.'

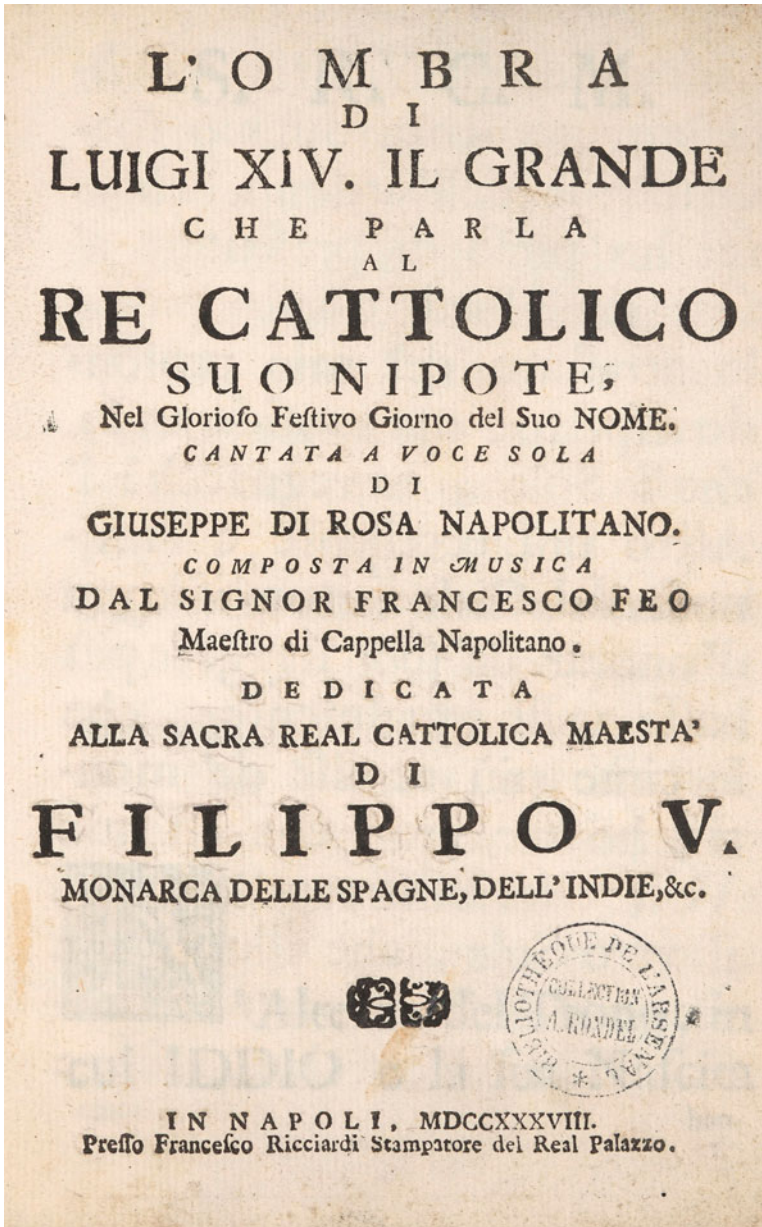


Figure 1 *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*, title-page. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, 8 RA5 609. Reproduced from gallica.bnf.fr

AT THE COURT OF MADRID

At the time the cantata was published, Farinelli had already been in Spain for a considerable time, having moved there from England in the summer of 1737. It had been known since March of that year that he would take advantage of the closing period of the London theatres to travel to the continent and reach the Iberian Peninsula via



France,⁶ where he had been applauded in 1736. In May, while the project was taking a more definite shape, it was rumoured that the trip had been expressly requested and prearranged in secret by the court of Madrid through diplomatic channels.⁷ Broschi stayed in Paris from 7 to 15 July and performed at Versailles, apparently not reaching the same levels of success as he had the previous year. Meanwhile, in London it was taken for granted that he would return for the reopening of the opera season,⁸ and this was almost certainly his intention.

Farinelli arrived in Madrid on 7 August 1737.⁹ A few days later he sang in the presence of Philip V and his second wife, Italian-born Elisabeth Farnese. His first performance, narrated countless times, has taken on almost legendary proportions. I prefer to leave out the myths that have blossomed around the king's psychological disorders, the queen's worries about these and the healing power of the castrato's voice, which have been effectively deconstructed in recent times.¹⁰ Whatever the truth is, the Spanish sovereigns were deeply impressed by the skill – and perhaps the amiability – of the singer, as can be seen from the letters written by two of their children with whom they shared their appreciation. In Lisbon, Princess Mariana Victoria – wife of the Prince of Brazil Joseph of Braganza (the future King Joseph I of Portugal) – awaited detailed reports from her mother. On 20 August she asked in her uncertain French: 'J'ai entendu dire que le meilleur musicien qu'il ia est a present la, je vous prie de m'envoyer dire coment il vous a pari et s'il est ausi bon qu'on le dit' (I have heard that the best musician that exists is now there; I beg you to tell me how he seemed to you and if he is really as good as they say).¹¹ On 24 August she was pleased with the excellent impression made by Broschi on her parents:

Je suis tres aise que vous vous divertissiez a entendre Farinello et qu'il vous ait parut si bien. Tout le monde dit qu'il nia aucun qui chante ausi bien que lui et on voit bien par les arias (car j'en ai chanté quelques unes et entendu ausi d'autres) la grande agilité qu'il a. La reyne me dit hier que la princesse lui avoit escrit qu'il n'arrivoit deja pas trop aut, mais je ne sois pas coment cela puisse etre car j'avais entendu dire qu'il arrivoit jusqu'a la fin du clavecin.¹²

I am very glad that you were entertained to hear Farinello and that he seemed so good to you. Everybody says that there is no one who sings as well as he does, and one can see well from the arias (for I have sung some and heard others) the great agility he has. Yesterday the queen told me that the princess had written to her that he was already not reaching too high, but I do not know how this could be, as I have heard that he used to reach to the end of the harpsichord.

On 27 August her brother Charles, King of Naples since 1734, wrote more laconically: 'Je me rejouyroy que vos M.M. se divertisoient bien, et que Farinello eut este du goust de vos M.M.' (I rejoice that Your Majesties are well entertained, and that Farinello has been to the liking of Your Majesties).¹³

6 See the letter by Prince Antioch Cantemir dated 17 March 1737 in Thomas McGeary, 'Farinelli in Madrid: Opera, Politics, and the War of Jenkins' Ear', *The Musical Quarterly* 82/2 (1998), 385 and 415, note 6.

7 See the letter by Cantemir dated 23 May 1737 in McGeary, 'Farinelli in Madrid', 386 and 415, note 17.

8 See McGeary, 'Farinelli in Madrid', 387–388.

9 See McGeary, 'Farinelli in Madrid', 388; Nicolás Morales, *L'artiste de cour dans l'Espagne du XVIII^e siècle: étude de la communauté des musiciens au service de Philippe V (1700–1746)* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2007), 239.

10 See Daniel Martín Sáez, 'La leyenda de Farinelli en España: historiografía, mitología y política', *Revista de musicología* 41/1 (2018), 41–77.

11 Alfonso Danvila, *Fernando VI y doña Bárbara de Braganza (1713–1748)* (Madrid: Jaime Rátes Martín, 1905), 182; a slightly different transcription is to be found in Morales, *L'artiste de cour*, 239, note 189. All translations appearing in this article are mine unless otherwise indicated. My transcriptions or quotations of eighteenth-century texts preserve the original orthography and punctuation of the sources, though with some updating undertaken in the Appendix.

12 Danvila, *Fernando VI y doña Bárbara de Braganza*, 182–183; see also Morales, *L'artiste de cour*, 240. 'La reyne' and 'la princesse' are, respectively, the Queen of Portugal and her daughter Maria Barbara of Braganza, who had married Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias (the future Ferdinand VI of Spain).

13 Carlo di Borbone, *Lettere ai sovrani di Spagna*, ed. Imma Ascione, three volumes (Rome: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali – Direzione generale per gli archivi, 2001–2002), volume 2, 233.



Philip and Elisabeth made their proposal soon after. As early as 15 August the British ambassador to Madrid, Benjamin Keene, had written to the Duke of Newcastle: 'they divert themselves with their musical entertainments, and have obliged Farinelli to engage himself in their service, and not return to England, as he had promised'.¹⁴ Broschi later told his Bolognese patron Count Sicinio Pepoli: 'Nel termine della mia partenza [per] Londra per compire colà i dritti del mio contratto con quella direzione, le maestà loro doppio cantata un'aria mi chiamarono ai loro piedi, con dirmi che volevano ch'io restassi al loro real servizio' (Before the prescribed time for my departure to London in order to fulfil the terms of my contract under the management there, Their Majesties, after I sang an aria, summoned me to their presence, telling me they wanted me to remain in their royal service).¹⁵ The singer accepted the very generous conditions offered by the sovereigns, and on 30 August the king appointed him *familiar criado* (personal servant) and *músico de cámara* (chamber musician).¹⁶ The news spread quickly. On 17 September Charles wrote from Naples: 'Je me rejouy infiniment que vos M.M. se divertissent bien avoique Farinello, et que le roy l'aiye retenu à son service' (I am exceedingly glad that Your Majesties have entertained themselves with Farinello, and that the king has kept him in his service).¹⁷ On 22 September Mariana Victoria also congratulated Elisabeth:

Je vous remercie infiniment de ce que vous avez voulu avor la peine de me donner de nouvelles de Farinello, par ce que vous me dites je crois que ce doit etre une merveille, je sui tres aise que vous et mon cher pere aiez le plaisir de l'entendre . . . je suis tres aise qu'il soit a vostre service pour pouvoir l'entendre toujours.¹⁸

I thank you very much for taking the trouble to give me news about Farinello, for from what you tell me I think it must be a marvel. I am very happy that you and my dear father have the pleasure to hear him . . . I am very happy that he is at your service so that you can always hear him.

Farinelli, too, was satisfied. In his letter to Pepoli dated 16 February 1738, he gave a very positive account of the first six months spent at the Spanish court:

dal primo giorno che qui arrivai seguito quella medesima vita di cantare tutte le sere ai piedi sovrani, e sono ascoltato come se fosse sempre il primo giorno. Mi conviene pregare Iddio che mi conservi in salute per continuare la vita presente: mi bevo tutte le sante sere 8 in 9 arie in corpo, non v'è mai riposo.¹⁹

From the first day I arrived here, I have continued that same life of singing every night at the sovereign's feet, and I am listened to as if it were always the first day. I have to pray to God to keep me healthy to continue the present life: every night I drink into my body eight to nine arias, there is never rest.

Broschi also attached a copy of the certificate of *familiar criado*, pointing out that it 'ha sorpreso ognuno in questo cielo, perché da che è Spagna non è uscito mai l'eguale' (has surprised everyone under this sky, because nothing like this has come out of Spain in all its history).²⁰ After listing the sumptuous gifts in jewels and money received from various members of the court, he declared: 'l'ultimo regalo è quello che, lasciando la

14 McGeary, 'Farinelli in Madrid', 389.

15 Letter dated 16 February 1738, in Carlo Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica: lettere al conte Sicinio Pepoli*, ed. Carlo Vitali (Palermo: Sellerio, 2000), 142. On this exchange of correspondence see Edward Corp, 'Farinelli and the Circle of Sicinio Pepoli: A Link with the Stuart Court in Exile', *Eighteenth-Century Music* 2/2 (2005), 311–319.

16 The two appointments are transcribed in McGeary, 'Farinelli in Madrid', 410–411 and 412 respectively.

17 Carlo di Borbone, *Lettere ai sovrani di Spagna*, volume 2, 238.

18 Danvila, *Fernando VI y doña Bárbara de Braganza*, 183.

19 Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 143–144; the (almost) daily frequency of Farinelli's performances is confirmed by the accounts quoted in Morales, *L'artiste de cour*, 241, note 199.

20 Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 143.



sovranità da parte, sono guardato come un figlio tanto dai primi quanto dalla real famiglia' (the last gift is that, leaving matters of status aside, I am looked upon as a son by both the most prominent subjects and the royal family).²¹

On 23 August 1738 he confirmed to Pepoli:

Seguito (grazie al cielo) sul medesimo piede dal primo momento ch'ebbi l'onore d'essere ai sovrani piedi di questi gloriosi monarchi e famiglia reale . . . La mia maggior gloria è quella che tutte le sere mai ho mancato di cantare; e, per Dio, è un gran durare e un gran soffrire in ascoltarmi tutte le sante sere. Sono entrato nel secondo anno colla medesima forza e col medesimo benigno aggradiamento. Dunque va bene.²²

I am continuing (thank heaven) on the same footing since I first had the honour of being at the sovereign feet of these glorious monarchs and royal family . . . My greatest glory is that I have never failed to sing every night; and, by God, listening to myself every single night requires a great deal of endurance and patience. I have entered the second year with the same strength and with the same benevolent appreciation. So everything is all right.

At the end of the letter he did not fail to highlight once again the exceptional level that he had reached: 'per me non vi è guardia che mi arresta, son patrone d'entrare ed uscire nei appartamenti reali senza render conto a nessuno, e, quel ch'è meglio, a tutte le ore che a me piace, e sono accettato e riguardato come un loro figlio' (there is no guard who stops me, I am free to go in and out of the royal apartments without being accountable to anyone, and, what is better, at any hour that I like, and I am accepted and looked upon as their son).²³

Farinelli, in short, could count on lavish remuneration and even greater honours. He was proud and almost incredulous to see what an extraordinary position he was in. The gratitude to Philip and Elisabeth he proclaimed in the letters addressed to Bologna was profound and sincere. This privileged and gratifying position and the resulting sense of self are the background to the birth of *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*. The dedicatory letter is very clear in this regard: Farinelli presents the cantata as the only means at his disposal to show the king his thankfulness, and he boasts of having been raised to the honour of serving such a great prince, compared – according to an ancient topos – to a splendid sun that radiates its beneficial warmth over all its subjects.

But if Farinelli's desire to pay homage to the sovereign who so graciously welcomed and so munificently rewarded him is understandable, the piece remains a unique object. Giuseppe di Rosa and Francesco Feo were not the promoters of the initiative, but only the poet and the composer chosen by the singer to set up the musical tribute destined to be placed at the foot of the throne. It was Farinelli who conceived the idea of the laudatory cantata, who promoted its realization and who presumably rewarded its authors. Thus he played an unusual role. In ancien-régime Europe, the act of dedicating a musical work was normally performed by two types of subjects. The first was the composer of a work, who – after having requested and obtained the appropriate authorization – placed his creation under the influential protection of the dedicatee. This was the case with innumerable works of instrumental or vocal music. The second was a nobleman – often holding an official and/or public position – who commissioned an encomiastic work and had it performed in honour of a sovereign or another high-ranking figure on a specific occasion. This is the case with many cantatas, serenatas and *feste teatrali*. Farinelli does not fit into the first category, as he produced neither the text nor the music of *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*. He acted, rather, according to the norms of the second category, but without occupying the social position usually connected with such behaviour. This case of dedication presents an unusual set of circumstances. Farinelli came from humble origins, and at this stage had no noble title (it was not until 1750 that he was appointed knight of the Order of Calatrava); none the less, he commissioned (and paid for) a poetic text and its musical setting, had the libretto printed at

21 Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 144.

22 Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 151.

23 Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 151–152.



his own expense, signed the dedicatory letter, and in doing so contrived a musical tribute to offer to a king whose domains reached across both the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.

In my view, this unusual initiative taken by Farinelli can only be explained in terms of the status he held at the Spanish court. Its exceptional nature stands out more clearly in comparison with a slightly earlier episode. On 11 June 1737, on the occasion of his farewell appearance on the stage, Broschi offered to the London audience music of his own composition, the *Ossequioso ringraziamento per le cortesissime grazie ricevute nella britannica gloriosa nazione dall'umilissimo et obbligatissimo servo Carlo Broschi Farinello*. This piece consists of a recitative and an aria; in addition to the vocal line and the basso continuo, the printed score includes a high-pitched instrumental accompaniment, presumably for violin.²⁴ Although they share the same musical structure, the *Ossequioso ringraziamento* and *L'ombra di Luigi XIV* are very different. In the first case Farinelli plays the role of an artist. He shows himself capable of writing music as well as performing it, but he is still a professional musician who handles the tools of his trade. In the second case, instead, he turns into a client who entrusts to others the realization of the musical artefact. Moreover, the *Ossequioso ringraziamento* is a public and even blatant gesture, and the printed score is a commercial product that can be purchased by anyone who wants to preserve the memory of the famous singer. *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*, on the other hand, is a private gesture: it is linked to a specific recurrence (the king's name day), as befits the courtly tradition, and the printed libretto is a tangible and lasting trace of deference destined only for the dedicatee and, at most, the royal family.

THE COMPOSER AND THE LIBRETTIST

To prepare his homage, Farinelli sought support in Naples. As I shall explain below, during this period Neapolitan poets and composers often provided Madrid with musical compositions for specific occasions. Meanwhile it is appropriate to focus on the authors of *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*, beginning with the composer, Francesco Feo (1691–1761). Giuseppe Sigismondo describes him as a good disciple of Alessandro Scarlatti but admits at the same time that he was not particularly well known.²⁵ Feo's career as an opera composer is not comparable to that of his most famous contemporaries. He was the first to set *Siface*, the adapted libretto with which Pietro Metastasio made his debut as a *poeta di teatro* in 1723, one year before writing his first original *dramma per musica*, *Didone abbandonata*. After 1740 Feo stopped composing for the stage and devoted himself mainly to sacred music.²⁶ A highly esteemed teacher, he also wrote many secular and spiritual cantatas.²⁷ As far as we know, Farinelli never performed in any of Feo's operas, nor are any professional contacts documented between the two; it is conceivable, however, that they had the opportunity to meet personally when Broschi was in Naples. Among the scores that the castrato brought with him from Spain upon his retirement and kept in his residence in Bologna were works by Feo – *Andromaca*, *Arsace* and a serenata for six voices²⁸ – though given the origin, size and variety of that collection, the presence of the three items should not be overestimated.

24 See Daniel Heartz, 'Farinelli Revisited', *Early Music* 18/3 (1990), 435–436; a transcription for voice and piano is offered by Franz Haböck, *Die Gesangskunst der Kastraten: Eine Stimmbiographie in Beispielen*, volume 1 (Vienna: Universal, 1923), 126–131.

25 See Giuseppe Sigismondo, *Apotheosis of Music in the Kingdom of Naples*, ed. Claudio Bacciagaluppi, Giulia Giovani and Raffaele Mellace, Introduction by Rosa Cafiero (Rome: Società editrice di musicologia, 2016), 174, 304.

26 See Magda Marx-Weber, 'Neapolitanische und venezianische Miserere-Vertonungen des 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 43/2 (1986), 23–25; Hanns-Bertold Dietz, 'Durante, Feo, and Pergolesi: Concerning Misattributions among their Sacred Music', *Studi pergolesiani / Pergolesi Studies* 2 (1988), 128–143; and Magda Marx-Weber, 'Lamentationskompositionen des 18. Jahrhunderts: Leonardo Leo and Francesco Feo', in *'Critica musica': Studien zum 17. und 18. Jahrhundert. Festschrift Hans Joachim Marx zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Nicole Ristow, Wolfgang Sandberger and Dorothea Schröder (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2001), 185–200.

27 See Beatrice Barazzoni, 'Die geistlichen Kantaten von Francesco Feo', *Kirchenmusikalisches Jahrbuch* 81 (1997), 67–81.

28 The three scores are listed in the legal inventory published by Sandro Cappelletto, *La voce perduta: vita di Farinelli e virato cantore* (Turin: EdT, 1995), 212, 213, 216.



Giuseppe di Rosa is a more elusive figure.²⁹ His biographical data are scarce and uncertain. A good starting-point is his literary portrait contained in Nunziante Pagano's *Le bbinte rotola de lo valanzone*, an explanation in dialect verses of the laws that regulated the Neapolitan Accademia del Portico della Stadera.³⁰ In the tenth chapter the author names the most prominent members of the academy and briefly describes the position and activities of each of them. After the eulogy of Giuseppe Aurelio di Gennaro, he introduces di Rosa in twelve lines:

No de Rosa cod isso 'n compagnia
tanto le bbelle lettere 'stauraie,
e ntra li primme 'n toska poesia
belle e ddigne poemme nce cacciaie;
sto saputo togato 'Mmecaria
Soia Maiestà porzi lo destenaie,
ddo' co ssapienza, che a ghiostizia è scorta,
l'annore de la toga 'n cielo porta.
La soia *Storia*, da chi Taceto 'mmezza,
de politica sta chiena comm'uovo
e addo' pe ttessetura e ppe cchiarezza
no Livio co no Giovio nce lo trovo.³¹

A certain di Rosa together with him [di Gennaro]
restored good literature to a great extent
and, among the first in Tuscan poetry,
produced beautiful and worthy poems;
this wise magistrate was also destined
by His Majesty to the Vicaria,
where with wisdom – which is the guard of justice –
he raises to heaven the honour of the toga.
His *History*, whose model is Tacitus,
is as full of politics as an egg,
and in it, whether for structure or for clarity,
I find him as a Livius with a Giovio.

Pagano presents the three faces of di Rosa, who – with a versatility not unusual at the time – was a poet, magistrate and historian. This passage, incidentally, supports the idea that the rather disparate works I am about to list came from the same pen. The *Storia* cited in the first verse of the second octave is undoubtedly di Rosa's monumental *Istoria d'Europa*, in twelve volumes.³² In the *imprimatur* of the second volume (1741), the author is defined 'peritissimus jurisconsultus' (highly experienced man of law).³³ From the title-page of the ninth volume (1745), his name is accompanied by the titles of 'giudice della Gran Corte della Vicaria, ed istoriografo della maestà del re delle due Sicilie' (judge of the Grand Court of the Vicaria and historian of His Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies), thus confirming Pagano's description of him.

There is no doubt that literature was a minor activity in di Rosa's life. However, he was quite clever in using his poetic skills to promote and consolidate his position. His debut as a man of letters dates back to the period of Austrian rule in Naples (1707–1734). His first work, to my knowledge, is *L'Andromeda*, a long serenata in two parts, set to music by Domenico Sarro in 1721 for the wedding of Giovanni Battista Filomarino, Eighth Prince of Rocca d'Aspro, to Vittoria Caracciolo.³⁴ In the dedicatory letter di Rosa declares himself eternally

29 Despite variation in the sources, I consistently use the preposition 'di' for the family name.

30 *Le bbinte rotola de lo valanzone* was published in Naples for the first time in 1746 and again in 1787 (the title, which can be translated as 'the twenty weights of the big scale', alludes to the name of the institution, literally 'Academy of the arcade of the steelyard'); here I quote from the critical edition contained in *Poeti e prosatori del Settecento*, ed. Rosa Troiano, two volumes (Rome: Gabriele e Mariateresa Benincasa, 1994), volume 1. For the original rules see Giovanni Giuseppe Carulli, *Notizia della origine del Portico della Stadera e delle leggi colle quali si governa* (Naples: Stamperia muziana, 1743).

31 Pagano, *Le bbinte rotola de lo valanzone*, 144; in a footnote the author adds that di Rosa was 'giudice della Gran Corte della Vicaria e regio istoriografo' (judge of the Grand Court of the Vicaria and royal historian). 'Livio' is the Roman historian Titus Livius and 'Giovio' is the Italian Paolo Giovio (1483–1552); the Vicaria was the appeal tribunal, both criminal and civil, of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

32 Giuseppe di Rosa, *Istoria d'Europa che incomincia da' negoziati della pace di Riswich del 1697 fino a' due trattati di Belgrado del 1739 conchiusi fra l'imperadore, la Moscovia e la Porta*, twelve volumes (Naples: Gennajo e Vincenzo Muzio (volume 1), then Angelo Vocola (volumes 2–12), 1740–1755). The work should have covered the period from 1697 to 1739, but the last published volume stops at 1718.

33 Di Rosa, *Istoria d'Europa*, volume 2, xx.

34 *L'Andromeda. Drama per musica da cantarsi in occasione delle felicissime nozze degli illustrissimi ed eccellentissimi signori li signori D. Gio. Battista Filamarini e D. Vittoria Caracciolo principi della Rocca, duchi di Perdifumo, conti*



obliged to the benevolence of the bridegroom, to whom he expresses his deepest gratitude.³⁵ While taking into account the typical rhetoric of such writings, in these statements one can catch the reflection of a close relationship between the author and the aristocrat; we will see later how this tie was a determining factor in the genesis of *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*. The performance of *L'Andromeda* is recorded by the *Gazzetta di Napoli*, which on 28 January 1721, after giving notice of the marriage celebrated the day before, announces: 'questa sera si canterà una famosa serenata allusiva alle dette nozze, posta in note dal celebre Domenico Sarro, maestro di cappella napoletano, e sarà cantata da sei personaggi delli primi virtuosi e virtuose che si ritrovano in questa capitale' (a famous serenata alluding to the said wedding will be sung this evening, set to music by the renowned Neapolitan chapel master Domenico Sarro, and it will be sung by six people, among the first *virtuosi* and *virtuose* who are in this capital).³⁶ Sarro's score is lost.³⁷ The list of the characters³⁸ includes prestigious singers: Antonio Manna (Feronte), Margherita Zani (Andromeda), Marianna Benti Bulgarelli (Perseo), Santa Marchesini (Amesside) and Francesco Vitale (Fineo). The most interesting name, however, is the one in the last role, the messenger Clisauero: it was Carlo Brosco, a very young Farinelli at the beginning of his career. The Brosco form of the surname is to be found not only in the baptismal record,³⁹ but also in the (probably autograph) score of *Angelica e Medoro* (1720) by Nicola Porpora, preserved at the British Library,⁴⁰ as well as in the libretto of the oratorio *Il glorioso San Giuseppe sposo della Beata Vergine*, performed with music by Francesco Corradini in a private house of Naples in 1721.⁴¹ Farinelli played a small part in *L'Andromeda*; while the other characters have three or four musical numbers each, Clisauero sings only two arias, one in each part of the serenata ('Nemico cielo al regno' and 'Spesso il ciel ci sembra irato' respectively).⁴²

Giuseppe di Rosa's later works tell us about his life and contacts in a period of rapid evolution in the political scene. In 1733 he edited a collection of poems for the wedding of Vinciguerra Rambaldo di Collalto and Antonia de Silva di Montesanto.⁴³ The marriage, which was celebrated in Vienna on 26 January of that

del castello dell'Abate, signori dello stato della città di Policastro, delle terre di Cutro e suo stato, di Rocca Bernarda &c., dedicato alla medesima eccellentiss. signora. Musica del signor Domenico Sarri (Naples: Francesco Ricciardi, 1721). The only extant copy is in the Biblioteca del Conservatorio Statale di Musica Giuseppe Verdi, Milan (I-Mc), Racc. Dramm. 6606.

35 See *L'Andromeda*, iii–v.

36 Ausilia Magaudda and Danilo Costantini, *Musica e spettacolo nel Regno di Napoli attraverso lo spoglio della 'Gazzetta' (1675–1768)* (Rome: ISMEZ, 2009), Appendix (on CD-ROM), 347.

37 See Teresa M. Gialdroni, 'Le serenate di Domenico Sarro: alcune precisazioni e integrazioni', in *La serenata tra Seicento e Settecento: musica, poesia, scenotecnica*, ed. Niccolò Maccavino, two volumes (Reggio Calabria: Laruffa, 2007), volume 1, 276.

38 See *L'Andromeda*, viii.

39 See Cappelletto, *La voce perduta*, 171, note 6. The Brosco form of the surname is also used in the Spanish documents related to the granting of the knighthood of the Order of Calatrava: see Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, *Orígenes y establecimiento de la ópera en España hasta 1800* (Madrid: Tip. de la Revista de Arch., Bibl. y Museos, 1917), 102–105, and Nicolás A. Solar Quintes, 'Nuevas aportaciones a la biografía de Carlos Broschi (Farinelli)', *Anuario musical* 3 (1948), 194–198.

40 See Anne Desler, "'Il novello Orfeo' Farinelli: Vocal Profile, Aesthetics, Rhetoric', two volumes (PhD dissertation, University of Glasgow, 2014), volume 1, 36, note 12. The text of *Angelica* was by Pietro Metastasio; on the encomiastic librettos he wrote for Naples in this period see Rosy Candiani, *Pietro Metastasio da poeta di teatro a 'virtuoso di poesia'* (Rome: Aracne, 1998), 32–74.

41 See Sartori, *I libretti italiani*, record 12428a; Farinelli sang the role of the Angel.

42 See *L'Andromeda*, 7–8, 22.

43 *Varj componimenti per le nozze degl'illustriss. ed eccellentiss. signori D. Vinciguerra Rambaldo conte di Collalto e D. Antonia de Silva de' conti di Montesanto dedicati all'illustriss. ed eccellentiss. signore D. Giuseppe de Silva y Meneses marchese di Villasor, conte di Montesanto, consigliere di Stato di S. M. C. C., cavaliere del Toson d'oro e presidente del supremo Consiglio di Spagna a Vienna* (Naples: Francesco Ricciardi, 1733).



year,⁴⁴ sanctioned the union between two important families with leading roles at the court of the Habsburgs: Antonio Rambaldo, father of Vinciguerra, was privy councillor of state, while Giuseppe de Silva y Meneses, father of Antonia, was president of the Council of Spain and Italy. The dedication, which is signed by di Rosa, bears the date 20 March 1733.⁴⁵ That means that the collection was published after the wedding. The connection with Naples remains unspecified, as no member of the two families resided or held public positions there. In addition to being the editor, di Rosa contributed to the volume with the poem *L'adunanza de' dei*, consisting of seventy-four stanzas, and the sonnet that follows it.⁴⁶ In the same year, he was among the Arcadian shepherds of the Colonia Sebezia who solemnized the arrival in Naples of the Viceroy Giulio Visconti, the last imperial emissary;⁴⁷ under the pastoral name of Tisamarco, he wrote two sonnets.⁴⁸

Southern Italy soon experienced a radical change. On 10 May 1734 Charles of Bourbon, the son of Philip V and Elisabeth Farnese, entered Naples triumphantly and took the crown of the Two Sicilies. Both aristocrats and intellectuals had to face the new political situation, and tried to ingratiate themselves with the young king. Giuseppe di Rosa hastened to pay him homage by publishing the poem *Il vaticinio d'Apollo*.⁴⁹ In the dedication, dated 12 August 1734, he emphasizes the 'legame inviolabile di volontà, e di dovere' (inviolable bond of will and duty) that unites him with the new sovereign and the 'onore . . . d'essere più particolarmente obbligato al suo real servizio' (honour . . . of being more particularly obliged to his royal service).⁵⁰ The latter statement alludes to an official role played by the author in the Bourbon government, probably already within the administration of justice. In 1738 di Rosa also wrote a sonnet for the collection of poems published on the occasion of Charles's marriage to Maria Amalia of Saxony, celebrated by proxy in Dresden on 9 May.⁵¹

L'ombra di Luigi XIV, which appeared in that same year, is therefore perfectly consistent with the new (and obligatory) course of the poet's muse and can be viewed as a part of his active commitment to Bourbon propaganda. But before examining the cantata written for Farinelli, another libretto by di Rosa has to be taken into consideration: the serenata in two parts *Il Polinice*, also printed in 1738.⁵² It was commissioned by Giovanni Battista Filomarino, the same prince for whom di Rosa had written *L'Andromeda* in 1721. Filomarino, who had meanwhile become Neapolitan ambassador to the court of Spain, requested *Il Polinice* in order to celebrate in Madrid the wedding of his king. In the long dedicatory letter di Rosa extols

44 See *Copia di lettera colla quale un personaggio che si trovava in Vienna risponde ad un suo amico d'Italia sopra tre quesiti che gli fece* (Trivigi: Gasparo Pianta, 1733), 3–5.

45 See *Varj componimenti per le nozze*, 10.

46 See *Varj componimenti per le nozze*, 11–33.

47 *Apertura della Colonia Sebezia fatta in occasione del glorioso arrivo dell'eccellentissimo signore D. Giulio Visconti Borromeo Arese cavaliere del Tesoro d'oro, consigliere intimo di Stato, maresciallo &c., viceré, luogotenente e capitano generale del regno di Napoli* (Florence, 1733).

48 See *Apertura della Colonia Sebezia*, 41–42.

49 Giuseppe di Rosa, *Il vaticinio d'Apollo alludente alla felicissima conquista del Regno di Napoli fatta dall'invittissime armi spagnole . . . dedicato alla regal maestà di Carlo di Borbone re di Napoli, Infante di Spagna, duca di Parma, Piacenza, Castro &c., gran principe di Toscana* (Naples: Francesco Ricciardo, 1734); the poem, in two books, is followed by a sonnet.

50 Di Rosa, *Il vaticinio d'Apollo*, vi.

51 See *Componimenti de' pastori arcadi della Colonia Sebezia in lode delle reali nozze di Carlo di Borbone re di Napoli e di Sicilia &c. colla serenissima principessa Maria Amalia Walburga di Sassonia* (Naples, 1738), 211.

52 *Il Polinice. Dramma per musica da cantarsi in occasione delle reali festive nozze della sacra real maestà di Carlo Borbone Infante delle Spagne, re delle due Sicilie e di Gerusalemme, duca di Parma, Piacenza e Castro e gran duca di Toscana, e della sacra real maestà di Maria Amalia Valburga nata principessa elettorale di Sassonia e reale di Polonia, che si solennizzano nel palagio di Don Gio: Battista Filomarino principe della Rocca &c., gentil-uomo di camera ed ambasciadore straordinario della maestà sua nella corte cattolica. Dedicato alla sacra real cattolica maestà di Elisabetta Farnese regina delle Spagne, dell'Indie &c.* (Madrid, 1738), Biblioteca de Menéndez Pelayo, Santander, 31.285; see Germán Vega García-Luengos, Rosa Fernández Lera and Andrés del Rey Sayagués, *Ediciones de teatro español en la Biblioteca de Menéndez Pelayo (hasta 1833)*, four volumes (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2001), volume 3, 1060–1061.



Elisabeth Farnese and praises the shrewd strategy with which she had destined her son to marry a princess of very noble lineage.⁵³ In the ‘Argomento del drama’ he claims to have modified the mythological plot in order to adapt it to the bridal event.⁵⁴ In fact, he brings the contest between Eteocles and Polynices to a happy end and adopts the usual expedient of pseudo-prophecy to announce the future glories of the King of Naples. The text has six characters: Adrasto (sung by Annibale Pio Fabbri), Polinice (Lorenzo Saletti), Argia (Rosa Mancini), Eteocle (Elisabetta Ottini or Uttini), Tideo (Giacinta Forcellini) and Amfiarao (singer unidentified);⁵⁵ these were the same artists who had recently arrived in Madrid to perform Italian operas.⁵⁶ When *Il Polinice* was presented is unknown; it is likely, however, that it was sung at the beginning of July, when other official festivities for the Neapolitan royal wedding took place in Madrid.⁵⁷ The libretto also declares the (double) authorship of the score: ‘La musica è per la prima parte del signor Lorenzo Fago, per la seconda del signor Francesco Feo, amendue maestri di cappella napolitani’ (The music for the first part is by signor Lorenzo Fago, for the second by signor Francesco Feo, both Neapolitan chapel masters).⁵⁸ No source of Fago’s setting is known, but a copy of Feo’s is preserved in the musical archive of the Girolamini in Naples.⁵⁹

MUSIC FROM NAPLES

With *Il Polinice*, Filomarino repeated the same formula he had previously used on 20 January of the same year, when, for the birthday of the King of Naples, he had offered ‘un sumptuoso festin con una gran serenata, compuesta de los mejores instrumentos, y de las mejores voces, concurriendo à ella los musicos italianos, que han venido ultimamente para la opera’ (a sumptuous banquet with a great serenata made up of the best instruments and the best voices, those of the Italian singers who have recently come for the opera).⁶⁰ The work mentioned in this news item has been identified as Feo’s *L’Oreste*.⁶¹ The indication ‘part one’ that appears in the musical source⁶² suggests that this text too was set to music by two different composers. However, in the absence of a printed libretto, I am unable to indicate either the name of the second composer or that of the poet.

53 See *Il Polinice*, iii–viii.

54 See *Il Polinice*, ix–xi.

55 See *Il Polinice*, x.

56 See Juan José Carreras, ‘“Terminare a schiaffoni”: la primera compañía de ópera italiana en Madrid (1738/39)’, *Artígrama: Revista del Departamento de Historia del Arte de la Universidad de Zaragoza* 12 (1996–1997), 99–121, and Juan José Carreras, ‘En torno a la introducción de la ópera de corte en España: *Alessandro nell’Indie* (1738)’, in *España festejante: el siglo XVIII*, ed. Margarita Torrión (Málaga: Centro de ediciones de la Diputación de Málaga, 2000), 323–347.

57 See *Gaceta de Madrid* (8 July 1738), 115–116, quoted also in *Crónica festiva de dos reinados en la ‘Gaceta de Madrid’ (1700–1759)*, ed. Margarita Torrión (Toulouse-Paris: CRIC-Ophrys, 1998), 200.

58 *Il Polinice*, x.

59 Biblioteca statale Oratoriana dei Girolamini di Napoli (I-Nf), AMCO MS 230.4. The collection is currently inaccessible; the record of the online public-access catalogue of the Italian National Library Service offers a transcription of the title: ‘Il Polinice / Parte Seconda della Serenata a Cinque Voci / Che in occasione delle Reali nozze della Maestà del Re / delle due Sicilie, e la Maestà di Maria Amalia Valpurga / Principessa Reale di Polonia, dovrà Cantarsi in Casa di S. E. / il Sig.^f Principe della Rocca Ambasciadore della Maestà sua / alla Corte di Madrid / del Sig.^f Feo’. This source has been identified by Juan José Carreras in ‘La serenata en la corte española (1700–1746)’, in *La serenata tra Seicento e Settecento*, ed. Maccavino, volume 2, 612, 621.

60 *Gaceta de Madrid* (28 January 1738), 16 (quoted also in *Crónica festiva*, 199). The involvement of the Italian singers caused a controversy: see Carreras, ‘La serenata en la corte española’, 625–626.

61 See Carreras, ‘La serenata en la corte española’, 611, 621.

62 The manuscript score is preserved in I-Nf, AMCO MS 230.1: ‘L’Oreste / Parte Prima / Serenata a cinque Voci da Cantarsi alla Real / corte di Madrid per l’anni che compie La Maestà / del Rè delle due Sicilie a 20 Gennaio / del 1738.’



L'Oreste and *Il Polinice* are the first examples of a practice that sees King Charles's ambassadors personally engaged in supplying refined music from Italy. The diplomats in Madrid repeatedly asked librettists and musicians working in Naples to write large dramatic compositions to be performed in the Spanish capital on relevant political and dynastic occasions.⁶³ For *Il Polinice*, Filomarino contacted di Rosa, a poet he had known – and most likely been a patron of – since the early 1720s. Moreover, he had Feo set half of both *L'Oreste* and *Il Polinice* to music. It cannot be by chance that Farinelli, in the same year, chose the same two individuals to write *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*.

Filomarino knew Farinelli too, thanks to *L'Andromeda*, as the singer participated in the performance of the wedding serenata in 1721. Were the names of Giuseppe di Rosa and Francesco Feo suggested to Filomarino by Farinelli? Or did the castrato take advantage of the diplomat's example and use the contacts already established by him? The latter hypothesis seems to be more persuasive. Broschi had left Naples several years earlier. It is not improbable that, once in Spain, he exploited the support of the ambassador, who certainly maintained close relations with his homeland. In any case, the simultaneous presence of Farinelli and Filomarino in Madrid and the similarity of their artistic initiatives calls for further investigation.

The dedicatory letter of *L'ombra di Luigi XIV* bears the date 15 March 1738. That means that all the collaborators (client, librettist, composer, typographer) worked well in advance to make sure the composition reached Madrid by the first of May, the day of Saints Philip and James. The *Gaceta de Madrid* does not mention any musical piece offered to Philip V for his name day in 1738.⁶⁴ The absence of news describing a performance, however, does not prove that it did not take place. Similar recurring events were usually celebrated in semi-private form and left no trace in the accounts of the *Gaceta*. For the king's name day in 1737, for example, the Infantes of Castile – Felipe, Luis Antonio, María Teresa and María Antonia Ferdinanda, aged between eight and seventeen – performed the 'dialogo comico y armonico' entitled *Los triunfos que alcanza el zelo solo juzgar puede el cielo* in honour of their father.⁶⁵ On 19 December of the same year, the princes celebrated the king's forty-fourth birthday with the serenata *Ceder honor por honor nunca delustra el valor*; Farinelli himself designed the costumes of the four royal singers by order of the queen.⁶⁶ These works were probably hosted in the inner rooms of the royal palace, and destined for a select audience. The *Gaceta* described neither of the performances. The newspapers of the ancien régime were not interested in music for its own sake, and mentioned it only for its social, political or symbolic meaning when it was part of a public event. So it is not surprising that the *Gaceta* did not register the performances of *Los triunfos*, *Ceder honor* or (if it took place) *L'ombra di Luigi XIV*.

As a matter of fact, the only extant source of the cantata commissioned by Farinelli is the printed libretto. There is no evidence that the text was actually set to music, or that the libretto and the score arrived in Madrid, or that the piece was performed before the king. However, assuming that *L'ombra di Luigi XIV* was offered to Philip V for his name day, I like to think that it was Farinelli himself who sang it. The type

63 See Lucio Tufano, 'Madrid 1744: Calzabigi, Leo e i festeggiamenti per le nozze dell'Infanta di Spagna con il Delfino di Francia', *Studi musicali* 10/1 (2019), 257–260.

64 See *Gaceta de Madrid* (6 May 1738), 72: 'Sus magestades, y altezas se mantienen con perfecta salud en su palacio del sitio de Aranjuez. El día primero de este mes, en que se celebrò la fiesta de San Phelipe, cuyo nombre tiene el rey nuestro señor, se vistió toda la corte de gala en aquel real sitio, y concurrió con la grandeza y ministros estrangeros al besamanos, que con aquel motivo huvo en palacio' (Their Majesties and highnesses remain in perfect health in their palace at Aranjuez. On the first day of this month, on which was celebrated the feast of Saint Philip (the name-day of our lord the king), the entire court dressed up in festive clothing at that royal place, and together with the nobles and the foreign ministers attended the hand-kissing that took place in the palace for that reason).

65 See Margarita Torrión, 'Felipe V y Farinelli: 'Cadmo' y 'Anfión'. Alegoría de una fiesta de cumpleaños (1737)', in *El Conde de Aranda y su tiempo*, ed. José A. Ferrer Benimeli, Esteban Sarasa and Eliseo Serrano, two volumes (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2000), volume 1, 233–234.

66 See Torrión, 'Felipe V y Farinelli', 236–242; the author hypothesizes that the music of the serenata was by Francesco Corselli, the Infantes' music teacher. The participation and role of Farinelli can be deduced from his letter to Pepoli dated 16 February 1738, in Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 144.



of the composition is compatible with his position and duties at the Spanish court, where he was exempted from singing on the stage and was required to perform exclusively in private contexts for the enjoyment of the monarchs. The specification that accompanies his appointment as *músico de cámara* is explicit in this sense: ‘dejando de cantar en los teatros públicos’ (stopping singing in public theatres).⁶⁷ As a solo cantata, *L’ombra di Luigi XIV* finds its ideal place in the *cámara*. Its natural habitat is the protected space of the royal apartments, which Farinelli freely entered on a daily basis as a long-awaited herald of enchanting sounds. In his performances, Farinelli was usually accompanied by the chapel master Francesco Corselli at the keyboard, the cellist Domenico Porretti and two or three violinists.⁶⁸ If Feo composed his score according to the particular purpose hypothesized here, he probably wrote the only aria of the cantata for (soprano) voice, (two) violins and continuo.

The content of di Rosa’s text also deserves some comment. In librettos belonging to the encomiastic genre, the subject is usually taken from mythology and classical literature;⁶⁹ di Rosa himself conforms to this tradition in his other occasional works, *L’Andromeda* and *Il Polinice*. *L’ombra di Luigi XIV*, instead, evokes a famous figure from the recent past, which is a more original choice.⁷⁰ In the opening recitative of the cantata, the sound of weapons recalls the ghost of the King of France Louis XIV (1638–1715) – who speaks in the first person – on the banks of the river Tagus (verses 1–3). After noticing public signs of joy, the deceased sovereign observes a host of warriors and recognizes among them his descendant, who makes the lily, symbol of the Bourbon dynasty, bloom on Spanish soil (verses 4–13). This passage clearly alludes to the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714), triggered in 1700 by the death of the childless Charles II, the last Habsburg on the Spanish throne. Charles had named Philip, grandson of Louis XIV, as his heir. Philip, who was strongly supported by his grandfather, accepted the crown and was proclaimed the first Bourbon king of Spain (reigning as Felipe V) on 16 November 1700 (verse 14). Great Britain, the Holy Roman Empire and the United Provinces opposed his succession, thus initiating a great European conflict (verse 15). Philip in turn, following the example of Louis (verse 16), extended Bourbon power to southern Italy (verses 23–26) when in 1734 he obtained for his son Charles the sceptre of the Two Sicilies during the

67 McGear, ‘Farinelli in Madrid’, 412. Farinelli was very happy not to tread the boards any more. He had already expressed this desire to Pepoli on 23 May 1735: ‘sempre più mi metto in testa la massima di lasciare la professione prima che lei lascia me’ (more and more I conceive the purpose of leaving the profession before it leaves me). Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 136. On 16 February 1738 he announced to the same: ‘Dio ha esaudito le mie preghiere più tosto di quello ch’io speravo: l’anno prossimo avevo di già fissato il non cantar più in teatri, non potendo ne più soffrire né le fatiche né il teatro, né il costume della turba’ (God answered my prayers sooner than I hoped: I had already decided not to sing in the theatres next year, as I could no longer suffer the hardships, nor the theatre, nor the behaviour of the crowd). Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 143.

68 See Margarita Torrión, ‘Fiesta y teatro musical en el reinado de Felipe V e Isabel de Farnesio: Farinelli, artífice de una resurrección’, in *El Real Sitio de La Granja de San Ildefonso: retrato y escena del rey* (Madrid: Patrimonio Nacional, 2000), 222, and Morales, *L’artiste de cour*, 242–243. An ensemble of three chamber musicians accompanied Broschi in the serenata he performed in October 1739 to welcome to Alcalá Louise Élisabeth of France, wife of the Infante Felipe; see *Gaceta de Madrid* (27 October 1739), 315–316 (quoted also in *Crónica festiva*, 204), as well as the singer’s letter to Pepoli dated 14 November 1739 (Broschi Farinelli, *La solitudine amica*, 157).

69 See at least Jacques Joly, *Les fêtes théâtrales de Métastase à la cour de Vienne (1731–1767)* (Clermont-Ferrand: Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines, 1979).

70 I know very few examples of encomiastic pieces partially or totally based on historical subjects. The untitled cantata by an unknown poet and an unknown composer performed in Leghorn in 1756 to solemnize the birth of Archduke Maximilian Francis of Austria is based on a dialogue between the shade of Emperor Charles VI (1685–1740), grandfather of the child, and Fame; see *In occasione delle pubbliche feste in Livorno per la nascita del serenissimo arciduca Massimiliano Francesco Saverio Giuseppe Antonio Giovanni Venceslao. Componimento per musica* (Leghorn: Antonio Santini[, 1756]). The characters of *Gli Elisi o sia L’ombre degli Eroi* by Ranieri Calzabigi and Vito Giuseppe Millico, offered to the King of Sweden Gustav III during his stay in Naples in 1784, are two famous Swedish sovereigns, Gustav I (1496–1560) and Christina (1626–1689); see Lucio Tufano, *I viaggi di Orfeo: musiche e musicisti intorno a Ranieri Calzabigi* (Rome: Edicampus, 2012), 139–181.



War of the Polish Succession (1733–1738). The recitative goes on to state that while he is feared on the battlefields, the King of Spain is a merciful ruler in peacetime (verses 27–36). Louis, therefore, returns happily to his grave, as he considers himself reborn in his grandson (verses 37–40). The concluding aria (verses 41–49) reaffirms that the Spanish monarch is both loved and feared and is equal in greatness to the *Roi Soleil*.

The notion that Farinelli himself suggested the theme of the cantata, with the idea of doing something to please the dedicatee, cannot be discounted. Philip V was born in 1683 to the Grand Dauphin Louis (son of Louis XIV) and Maria Anna Victoria of Bavaria. He was raised at the court of Versailles with the title of Duc d'Anjou, and remained attached to his French roots. He was also very fond of his paternal grandfather, with whom he had lived in close contact until assuming the crown of Spain at the age of seventeen.⁷¹

The strong emotional bond between the two and the fundamental role played by Louis in Philip's royal destiny were well known to their contemporaries. A precious document in this regard is a calendar for the year 1703 published in Paris by Pierre Gallays (Figure 2). These large-format prints, which are typical products of the age of Louis XIV, conveyed specific political and ideological messages by means of their textual and, above all, visual content.⁷² The title of the 1703 calendar is very meaningful: *Le roi Louis le Grand formant son petit fils Philippe V. Roi d'Espagne en l'art de regner* (King Louis the Great Training His Grandson Philip V, King of Spain, in the Art of Ruling). The beautiful engraving is clearly divided into two parts. In the lower one, the Earth (left) and the sea gods Neptune and Amphitrite (right) are surrounded by standards and framed boxes depicting the most important military achievements of the Bourbon armies in the previous year, 1702.⁷³ The upper section, on the other hand, is full of historical and allegorical figures. At the top, a rooster, symbol of the French people, poses on a globe with lilies between two lions, which represent royal power. The centre of the scene is occupied by Louis XIV. Four verses appear at his feet: 'C]'est ce roy genereux qui donne azile aux roys / qui s'oppose aux tyrans, qui destruis l'heresie / et qui c'est attiré par tous ses grands exploits / tant d'admiration et tant de jalousie' (It is this generous king who gives refuge to kings, / who opposes tyrants, who destroys heresy, / and who has attracted, with all his great exploits, / so much admiration and so much jealousy).

The king, behind whom one can recognize his son Louis, the Grand Dauphin, is accompanied by two of his three grandsons: Louis, Duke of Burgundy (right), who was destined to succeed him on the throne of France (but who died prematurely) and Philip (left), who was already King of Spain. The latter is crowned by a female figure (probably Justice); another female figure (probably Might), holding a sword and a shield with the coats of arms of France and Spain, strikes down an eagle (symbol of Empire) as well as two snake-haired monsters representing Heresy (Anglicanism and Calvinism, professed respectively in Great Britain and the United Provinces) and Fraud (distinguished by the heart in the hand and the double mask),⁷⁴ which partially covers the English emblem. The

71 See Margarita Torrión, 'El espacio afectivo del príncipe: Felipe V, Duque de Anjou, en los palacios de Luis XIV (1683–1700)', *Reales Sitios: Revista del Patrimonio Nacional* 177 (2008), 4–27.

72 See Audrey Adamczak, 'Les almanachs gravés sous Louis XIV: une mise en images des actions remarquables du roi', *Littératures classiques* 76 (2011), 63–70, and Sophie Tonolo, 'L'allégorie, en image et en texte, dans les almanachs d'époque Louis XIV conservés à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France (1645–1690)', in *S'exprimer autrement: poétique et enjeux de l'allégorie à l'âge classique*, ed. Marie-Christine Pioffet and Anne-Élisabeth Spica (Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 2016), 49–63. See also the catalogues of two important exhibitions: Maxime Préaud, *Les effets du soleil: almanachs du règne de Louis XIV* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1995) and Brigitte de Montclos, *Almanachs parisiens, 1661–1716* (Paris: Paris-Musées, 1997).

73 Clockwise from top left: the battles of Luzzara (15 August) and Cremona (30 January), the triumphal entry of Philip V into Naples (20 May), Marschal Villars's victory over the Imperial army near Huningue (battle of Friedlingen, 14 October), Marquis of Villadarias's defence of Cádiz (August–September), the bombardment of Trieste (August), the conquest of the city of Guastalla (11 September) and the passage through Milan of the King of Spain (18 June).

74 The identification of Heresy and Fraud is based on Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, the famous and internationally widespread iconographic repertory published for the first time in Rome in 1593. I consulted a later edition: Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia overo Descrittione di diverse imagini cavate dall'antichità & di propria inventionione* (Rome: Lepido Facii, 1603), 173–175, 216–217.



Figure 2 *Almanach pour l'an de grace MDCCIII*. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, RESERVE QB-201 (171, 15)-FT 5. Reproduced from gallica.bnf.fr

idea expressed by this representation is clear: Philip's sceptre descends from the authority and power of Louis XIV, who helps him defeat his enemies and teaches him to defend the values of the Catholic faith.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ The French king proudly shows Philip's success to a young man on the far-right side of the scene, who is probably James Francis Edward Stuart (1688–1766), nicknamed The Old Pretender. His father, the Catholic James II, had



In making the bond between Louis XIV and Philip V the subject of his libretto, Giuseppe di Rosa therefore conformed to a common belief. In addition, it should be noted that he had a personal reverence for the *Roi Soleil*. In his *Vaticinio d'Apollo* (1734) he not only dedicated an entire octave to him, but closely linked his commemoration with the enumeration of Philip V's great deeds.⁷⁶ Moreover, in the notice to the reader in the first volume of his *Istoria d'Europa*, he dwells at length on the figure of Louis XIV,⁷⁷ for whom he declares his boundless admiration: 'Io non voglio dissimulare', he wrote, 'che ho avuto, e che avrò sempre della somma venerazione per la memoria di un principe, ch'è stato il più gran re che abbia riempito il trono di Francia almeno da molti secoli in qua' (I do not want to conceal that I have had and always will have the greatest veneration for the memory of a prince who was the greatest king to fill the throne of France for at least many centuries to the present).⁷⁸ In this light, the choice of the shadow of Louis XIV as the protagonist of the cantata appears even more significant, as di Rosa points to him as an excellent political figure and a model for all European monarchs.

L'ombra di Luigi XIV is therefore a work that reflects complex political values. The subtle allusions to the dedicatee's life and historical role made the text perfectly suited to extol the figure of the Spanish king. Moreover, the cantata had been specially commissioned by Farinelli from Naples, which at the time was considered the European capital of music. With such a refined work of homage, the singer went beyond the usual role (and limits) of a court musician in order to show his gratitude to a monarch who not only had placed him in a privileged position, but treated him almost like a member of the royal family (as seen in the letters to Pepoli of 16 February and 23 August 1738, in which Farinelli states that he was treated as a son by the king and the queen). Further research may establish whether, when and by whom the cantata was sung; in itself, however, the libretto remains a rare and precious piece of evidence that demonstrates Farinelli's special relationship with Philip V.

APPENDIX

L'OMBRA / DI / LUIGI XIV. IL GRANDE / CHE PARLA /
AL / RE CATTOLICO / SUO NIPOTE, / Nel
Glorioso Festivo Giorno del Suo NOME. /
CANTATA A VOCE SOLA / DI / GIUSEPPE DI ROSA
NAPOLITANO. / COMPOSTA IN MUSICA / DAL
SIGNOR FRANCESCO FEO / Maestro di Cappella
Napolitano. / DEDICATA / ALLA SACRA REAL
CATTOLICA MAESTA' / DI / FILIPPO V. /
MONARCA DELLE SPAGNE, DELL'INDIE, &c. /
[frieze] / IN NAPOLI, MDCCXXXVIII. / Presso
Francesco Ricciardi Stampatore del Real Palazzo.

The shade / of / Louis XIV the Great / who speaks /
to / the Catholic King / his grandson, / on the
glorious feast day of his name. / A solo cantata / by /
Giuseppe di Rosa, Neapolitan. / Set to music / by
Signor Francesco Feo, / Neapolitan chapel master. /
Dedicated to the Sacred Royal Catholic Majesty / of
/ Philip V / Monarch of the Spains, the Indies, etc. /
[frieze] / Naples, 1738. / By Francesco Ricciardi,
printer of the Royal Palace.

been deposed in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and went into exile with his family to France, where he found protection with his cousin Louis XIV (the first of the above-mentioned verses clearly alludes to this circumstance). On James II's death in 1701, James Francis Edward was recognized by Louis as the rightful heir to the thrones of England, Ireland and Scotland. Therefore the gesture depicted in the 1703 calendar means that the *Roi Soleil* supports the young prince's claims to the British crown and is willing to offer him help as he has already done with Philip.

⁷⁶ See di Rosa, *Il vaticinio d'Apollo*, 20–21.

⁷⁷ See di Rosa, *Istoria d'Europa*, volume 1, xiii–xviii.

⁷⁸ Di Rosa, *Istoria d'Europa*, volume 1, xiv.



S. R. C. M.

L'altezza del trono in cui Iddio e la sua nascita han collocata V. M. avrebbe dovuto senza dubbio spaventarmi dell'ardire ch'io mi ho preso di presentare a' suoi reali piedi questo piccolo attestato del mio profondo rispetto; ma considerando che 'l sole, avvegnacché l'astro più eccellente e luminoso del cielo, non isdegnava d'onorar de' suoi raggi le più basse valli egualmente che le cime più eccelse de' monti, ho creduto che essendo voi, gloriosissimo principe, il vero sole che illumina e regge il vasto corpo di questa gran monarchia, userete meco gl'istessi effetti della vostra clementissima bontà con i quali vi traete le benedizioni e gl'applausi di due mondi. Riceva dunque V. M. con l'usato suo benigno gradimento questo tenue segno del mio umilissimo ossequio, supplicandola a persuadersi che, non avendo altro modo di questo per manifestarli il molto, anzi il tutto che li devo, corrisponderà all'infinito sue obbligazioni col porgere sempre voti al cielo per la lunga e prosperosa vita di V. M. colui che dalla vostra clemenza è stato inalzato all'onore di potersi gloriare d'essere
Di V. M.

Napoli, 15 di marzo 1738

Umiliss., divotiss. e ubidientiss. servo
Carlo Broschi

Sacred Royal Catholic Majesty

The height of the throne on which God and your birth have placed Your Majesty should undoubtedly have frightened me in regard to the daring that I have taken upon myself to present at your royal feet this small token of my profound respect; but considering that the sun, though the most excellent and brightest star in the sky, does not disdain to honour with its rays the lowest valleys as well as the highest peaks of the mountains, I have assumed that you, being, O most glorious prince, the true sun that illuminates and supports the vast body of this great monarchy, will grant me the same effects of your most merciful benevolence with which you attract the blessings and applause of two worlds. May Your Majesty therefore receive, with your usual benevolent approval, this feeble sign of my humblest respect, and I beg you to persuade yourself that – having no other way of showing that I owe you much, indeed everything – I will correspond to my infinite obligations by always making vows to heaven for the long and prosperous life of Your Majesty, as one who has been raised by your clemency to the honour to boast of being the most humble, most devoted and most obedient servant of Your Majesty

Carlo Broschi

Naples, 15 March 1738

*L'ombra di Luigi XIV
che parla
al
re cattolico
suo nipote
nel giorno festivo del suo nome*

*The shade of Louis XIV
who speaks
to the
Catholic King
his grandson
on the feast day of his name*

Qual di bronzi fumanti alto rimbombo
qui su i prati del Tago
dalla tomba ove giaccio or mi richiama?
Qual di campioni eroi
nobil corona in questa reggia io miro? 5
Qual immenso splendor nell'orizzonte?
Qual brio su i volti e qual letizia in fronte?
Ah ben lo scorgo; infra la turba illustre
de' guerrieri dell'Ebro
te miro, o gran FILIPPO, eccelso germe 10
dell'augusto mio sangue
che allignar fai col tuo valor sovrano
i gigli d'oro in su 'l terreno ispano.

What loud rumble of smoking weaponry
here on the meadows of the Tagus
now recalls me from the grave where I lie?
What noble crown of champion heroes
do I see in this royal palace?
What immense splendour in the horizon?
What cheerful faces and joyful expressions?
Ah I see it well; in the illustrious host
of the warriors of the Ebro,
I see you, o great Philip, excellent descendant
of my august blood,
who with your royal value
make the golden lilies take root on Spanish soil.

Io re ti feci e, con l'eroico esempio

I made you king, and with the heroic example



<p>per cui tutta l'Europa in guerra armai, 15 a crear nuovi regi io t'insegnai. Regnante insieme e duce, di marziali allori col senno e con la man tu 'l crin cingesti e trionfante avesti, 20 tratti in trofeo della verace fede, il moro e l'african chini al tuo piede. Quindi all'onda tirrena mostrando alfin la trionfal insegna, piantasti (o gloria sempre eterna e viva) 25 l'antico serto al bel Sebeto in riva.</p> <p>Tra queste trasandate auguste imprese, qualora in campo armato ti vide l'Adda e 'l Po, l'Ebro ed il Tago,</p> <p>fralle straggi de' vinti 30 sembianza dasti al mondo di terribil, feroce e furibondo. E pure allor che 'n pace regoli il corso alla gran mole ispana,</p> <p>per chiunque al tuo piè corre e s'appressa 35 sei la bontà, sei la clemenza istessa. Lieto dunque io ritorno al freddo asilo se, te calcar veggendo degl'eroi più temuti i bei vestigi, in te risorto io lascio il gran Luigi. 40</p> <p>Mentre tu vinci e regni, del tuo gran nome al suono v'è chi t'adora in trono, v'è chi paventa ancor.</p> <p>Al par di me sei grande, 45 e ovunque il sol risplende la fama tua si spande e di FILIPPO rende il mondo ammirator.</p>	<p>by which I armed all of Europe for war, I taught you to create new kings. Being both sovereign and commander, of martial laurels you crowned your head with your wisdom and deeds, and in triumph you had as a trophy of the true faith the Moor and African bow at your feet. Then, finally showing the triumphal banner to the Tyrrhenian wave, you planted (O everlasting and living glory) the ancient crown on the bank of the beautiful Sebeto. Through these past august enterprises, when the Adda and the Po, the Ebro and the Tagus saw you on the battlefield, among the massacres of the defeated enemies you appeared to the world terrible, fierce and furious. None the less, when in peacetime you guide the course of the great Spanish edifice, you are goodness, you are clemency personified for anyone who runs to and approaches your feet. Therefore I happily return to my cold grave if, seeing you follow in the beautiful footsteps of the most feared heroes, I leave the great Louis risen in you.</p> <p>While you win and rule, at the sound of your great name there are those who adore you on the throne, there are those who are still afraid.</p> <p>You are as great as I, and wherever the sun shines your fame spreads and makes the world admire Philip.</p>
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Fine

The End