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# Introduction

The song anthologies of Giovanni Stefani survive as the most abundantly printed seventeenth-century songbooks with the chordal tablature for the guitar known in Italy as *alfabeto*. Printed in multiple editions and reprints from 1618 to 1626, Stefani's books anthologize nearly one hundred songs, most of which are concordant with other settings found across a diverse body of print and manuscript sources. Stefani's three existing anthologies, the *Affetti amorosi*, *Scherzi amorosi*, and *Concerti amorosi* (hereafter *AA*, *SA*, and *CA*) offer a representative sampling of the *alfabeto* songs that proliferated in great numbers in Italy from the end of the sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth. With their tuneful melodies, catchy refrains, lively dance rhythms, and stylistic nods to Spanish traditions, the *amorosi* songs document, perhaps better than any other printed source, the new fashion in Italy of singing with the five-course Spanish guitar, or *chitarra spagnola*. As shown by the extensive network of concordant music manuscripts and prints, this repertory circulated widely and with considerable demand: concordances include Neapolitan *villanelle* from earlier in the century, the monodies of Jacopo Peri, popular contrafact melodies published in *laude* collections, and elaborate settings of the *romanesca* in *ottave rime*. This fascinating body of songs not only documents a repertory with ties to both unwritten and written traditions but also appeals to musical tastes associated with both professional and amateur music making.

## Giovanni Stefani

The three *amorosi* songbooks are Giovanni Stefani's only known publications. For full bibliographical information on the prints, see "Sources" in the critical report, including table 1, which charts the printing history of Stefani's anthologies. All but one of the existing editions of the *amorosi* books were printed by the Vincenti in Venice. The *Ariette amoroze*, mentioned by Fétis and presumably the title of Stefani's fourth book as reported in Alessandro Vincenti's sale inventories, is lost.<sup>1</sup> The nature of Stefani's

1. See François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens et bibliographie générale de la musique*, 8 vols. (Brussels, 1835–44), s.v. "Stefani, Giovanni," 8:115. Since in the dedication and title of the *CA* Stefani writes that the book is his "terza raccolta di canzonette" (third collection of canzonettas), the fourth

role in assembling his anthologies has eluded scholars since the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> We learn from the preface to his *SA* that his work comprises "varie compositioni de Virtuosi della prima classe" (various compositions of first-class virtuosos), yet none of the settings from the anthologies are printed with attributions. Although Stefani's songs concord with many printed books and manuscripts—some with known authorship—it is not easy to determine which might have been copied from Stefani's anthologies and which (if any) Stefani might have used to compile his work, which complicates attempts to place the *amorosi* anthologies into a precise geographical or cultural context.

Numerous reprints of the *amorosi* series attest to their popularity, which may have lasted nearly forty years: as late as 1662 Vincenti was still advertising the *AA*, *CA*, and the *Ariette amorosi* in his sale catalogs.<sup>3</sup> Stefani's books were well known and much desired outside of Venice, as noted in the Milanese publisher Filippo Lomazzo's advertisement to the readers of his 1621 edition of the *SA*. Here Lomazzo explains how and why he acquired a copy of the *SA* to sell at his shop in Milan:

It is because many times the present canzonettas of Sig. Gio. Steffani have been asked of me, printed in Venice, which are played and sung with the Spanish guitar as often as they are with other instruments. They are very beautiful. For these reasons they have had a great distribution in the world, as many times the Venetian printer has sold them—he wasn't

book referred to by Vincenti is probably the lost *Ariette amoroze*. An entry on line 704 of the 1649 inventory reads: "Gio: Steffani, 1. 3. e 4. con la Chitarra Spagnola." The same entry is found in the 1658 and 1662 inventories, all transcribed in Oscar Mischiati, *Indici, cataloghi e avvisi degli editori e librai musicali italiani dal 1591 al 1798* (Florence: Olschki, 1983), 185, 211, 240.

2. The eighteenth-century music historian Giovanni Ottavio Pitoni, for example, assumed that Stefani composed the songs of his anthologies simply because they were listed in Vincenti's catalog inventories under his name. See Giovanni Ottavio Pitoni, *Notitia de' contrapuntisti e compositori di musica*, ed. Cesarino Ruini (Florence: Olschki, 1988; orig. MS ca. 1725), 259. As late as 1988 scholars have suggested that Stefani authored his songs and the texts. See, for example, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980), s.v. "Stefani, Giovanni," (p. 91), by Nigel Fortune; and Piero Mioli, *A voce sola: Studi sulla cantata italiana del XVII secolo*, vol. 1, *Firenze, Venezia, Roma* (Florence: Studio per Edizioni Scelte, 1988), 163.

3. The catalog entry is transcribed in Mischiati, *Indici, cataloghi e avvisi*, 240.

# Texts and Translations

These texts are taken from the primary sources of the music for the edition, as listed in “Sources” in the critical report. The original Italian orthography has generally been unaltered in the edition, except for differentiating between *u/v* and *s/f*, spelling out words with vowels marked with macrons (“*sēte*” becomes “*sente*”), spelling out abbreviations and ampersands, and expanding contractions to clarify pronunciation (e.g., “*dolc’ardor*” to “*dolce ardor*”). Other corrections, readings taken from secondary sources, alternate readings from different exemplars, and text attributions are noted as necessary for each piece; for abbreviations, see “Sources” in the critical report. For clarity, most of the punctuation and diacritics have been modernized, except in places where they reflect the metrical character of the poetry. These practices also apply to the two Spanish texts in the *Affetti amorosi*. Modern Italian verses have been supplied to clarify texts in dialect. Where possible, the translations seek to provide a literal, line-by-line representation of the words, for reference when performing in the original Italian, rather than being a poetic reworking or an alternative for performance.

## *Affetti amorosi*

### 1. *O leggiadri occhi belli, occhi miei cari*

#### *Occhi crudeli*

O leggiadri occhi belli, occhi miei cari  
Vivi raggi del ciel sereni e chiari  
Poiché tanto bramate di vedermi languire  
Di vedermi morire  
Occhi belli ch’adoro  
Mirate che moro.

O serene mie luce, o luci amate  
Tanto crudel al mio cor quanto bramate  
Poiché tanto gioite  
Che nel foco ci si mora  
Un che v’ama, e v’adora  
Rivolgete lo sguardo  
Mirate com’ardo.

O celesti facelle, o ardor de cori  
Veri alberghi d’amor, d’amor tesori  
Se vi piace mirate  
Un’amante ferito  
Un’amante tradito  
Deh mirate il mio core  
Piagato d’amore.

Lusinghiere pupille, occhi fatali  
De miei pianti ministri, e de miei mali  
Deh mostratevi homai  
Al mio lungo penare  
Al mio gran lacrimare  
Che son fiumi correnti  
Questi occhi dolenti.

#### *Cruel Eyes*

Oh beautiful eyes, my dear eyes,  
lovely rays of the sun, serene and clear,  
because you yearn so much to see me languish,  
to see me die  
—beautiful eyes that I adore—  
look how I am dying.

Oh my serene lights, oh beloved lights;  
you yearn for such cruelty to my heart.  
You are so joyful because  
there in the fire he dies,  
the one who loves and adores you.  
Redirect your glance,  
look how I burn.

Oh heavenly lights, oh burning of hearts,  
true hosts of love, treasures of love;  
if it pleases you, look at  
a wounded lover,  
a betrayed lover,  
ah, look at my heart,  
pained by love.

Pleasant pupils, fatal eyes,  
ministers of my cries and evils;  
ah, now reveal yourselves  
to my long suffering,  
to my great crying,  
since flowing rivers are  
these sad eyes.

## 1. O leggiadri occhi belli, occhi miei cari

## Occhi crudeli

Voice: O leg- gia- dri oc- chi bel- li, oc- chi miei ca- ri  
 Chords: C M C O

Guitar: Gm D Eb D Gm

Basso continuo

Voice: Vi- vi rag- gi del ciel se- re- ni e chia- ri Poi- ché  
 Chords: H M G H

Guitar: Bb Eb F Bb

Basso continuo

Voice: tan- to bra- ma, Poi- ché tan- to bra- ma- te di ve- der- mi lan- gui- re Di ve-  
 Chords: G a.5. K a.5. K F Cm Cm

Guitar: F Cm Cm

Basso continuo

### 3. Laretta mia

#### Bellezze di Laura

Queste parole si possono cantar sopra l'aria della Folia

Voice

O C O B C O

Lau- ret- ta mi- a quan- do m'ac- ce- se

Guitar

Gm D Gm C D Gm

Basso continuo

5

C O G H M G H

Quel vi- vo rag- gio di tua bel- tà

Guitar

D Gm F B $\flat$  B $\flat$  E $\flat$  F B $\flat$

Basso continuo

10

G B G O O I

Quan- d'un tuo sguar- do al cor mi sce-

Guitar

F C F Gm Gm A

Basso continuo



# Critical Report

## Sources

### Primary Sources

Table 1 gives the printing history of the three anthologies that provided the material for this edition. The primary sources for the edition are the printings listed below; other exemplars, as listed in table 1, have been referenced for comparison, with discrepancies listed in the critical notes. The library sigla used to identify holding libraries in the table and throughout the critical report are taken from Répertoire International des Sources Musicales (RISM); see <http://www.rism.info/en/home.html>.

AA. Earliest extant edition of the *Affetti amorosi*, scored for voice and basso continuo, with alfabeto for the Spanish guitar, collected by Giovanni Stefani, with three Sicilian arias and two Spanish villanellas. Exemplar consulted: I-Bc, 1618, shelfmark V.133. The title page reads:

Affetti Amorosi | Canzonette | Ad una voce sola | Poste in musica da diversi con la parte del Basso, & le lettere dell'alfabeto per la Chitarra alla Spagnola | raccolta da | Giovanni Stefani | Con tre Arie Siciliane, & due Villanelle Spagnole. | In Venetia, Appresso Giacomo Vincenti, 1618.

SA. Reprinted third edition of the *Scherzi amorosi*, scored for voice and continuo with alfabeto for the Spanish guitar, collected by Giovanni Stefani. Exemplar consulted: I-Bc, 1622, shelfmark V.137. The title page reads:

Scherzi Amorosi | Canzonette | Ad una voce | Sola | Poste in musica da diversi, e raccolte da | Giovanni Stefani | Con le lettere dell'Alfabeto per la Chitarra | alla Spagnuola. | Dedicati All'Illustrissimo Sig. Filippo Musotti mio Signore | e Patron osservandissimo. | Libro Secondo. | Novamente in questa terza impressione corretti, & ristampati. | In Venetia, | Appresso Alessandro Vincenti. MDCXXII.

CA. Reprinted edition of the *Concerti amorosi*, scored for voice and continuo with alfabeto for the Spanish guitar, collected by Giovanni Stefani. Exemplar consulted: I-Bc, 1623, shelfmark V.138. The title page reads:

Concerti | Amorosi | Terza parte | Delle canzonette | In musica | Raccolte da | Giovanni Stefani | Novamente ristampate, & corrette. | All'Illustrissimo Sig. Ludovico Magnani Conte di | Massa, e Casalecchio, & Cavaliere del | l'Abito di S. Iago. | In Venetia, | Appresso Alessandro Vincenti. MDCXXIII.

### Secondary Sources

The following abbreviations represent prints and manuscripts containing concordant versions of the songs in Stefani's anthologies. They feature a variety of notation, including music in staff notation, texts lacking musical notation but indications that the words can be sung to a preexisting aria, texts with alfabeto symbols (for these, musical concordance is based solely on the alfabeto harmonies), and/or music in tablature notation (for instrumental pieces); the type of notation is specified within each listing below. See the critical notes for the piece(s) contained within each source.

#### PRINTS

- Barbarino 1616 Bartolomeo Barbarino, *Canzonette a una e due voci* (Venice: Amadino, 1616); concordant pieces are in staff notation.
- Borboni 1618 Nicolo Borboni, *Musicali concerti . . . libro primo* (Rome: [n.p.], 1618); concordant pieces are in staff notation.
- Caccini 1618 Francesca Caccini, *Il libro primo delle musiche* (Florence: Pignoni, 1618); concordant pieces are in staff notation.
- Carbonchi 1640 Antonio Carbonchi, *Sonate di chitarra spagnola* (Florence: Massi & Landi, 1640); concordances are in tablature notation.
- Carbonchi 1643 Antonio Carbonchi, *Le dodici chitarre spostate* (Florence: Sabatini, 1643); concordances are in tablature notation.
- Catalani 1648 *Il primo libro d'intavolatura della chitarra spagnola* (Rome: Catalani, 1648); concordances are in tablature notation.
- Coferati 1675 *Corona di sacre canzoni, o laudi spirituali . . . di nuovo date in luce, corrette & accresciute da Matteo Coferati . . . con l'aggiunta delle loro arie in musica, per rendere più facile il canto* (Florence: All'insegna della Stella, 1675); contains texts with indications that they can be sung to a preexisting melody.