

A-R Editions, Inc., Middleton, Wisconsin
© 2022 by A-R Editions, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher. Please apply for permission to perform, record, or otherwise reuse the material in this publication at our website (www.areditions.com).

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-1-9872-0814-6 (print)
ISBN 978-1-9872-0815-3 (online)
DOI <https://doi.org/10.31022/B229>
ISSN 0484-0828 (print)
ISSN 2577-4573 (online)

Ⓢ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1992.

Contents

Abbreviations and Sigla	vi
Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction	ix
Sources and Historical Background	ix
The Librettist, Antonio Abati	x
The Musical Setting and Its Authorship	xi
Social and Cultural Context	xiv
Notes on Performance	xvi
Text and Translation	xvii
Notes	xxxiv
Plates	xxxvii
<i>Lo spedale</i>	
Prologo	3
Lo spedale	5
Licenza	72
Critical Report	73
Sources	73
Editorial Methods	74
Critical Notes	75

Introduction

Sources and Historical Background

Lo spedale is a through-sung comic drama in one act for six singers and basso continuo. Its music survives in a single undated, anonymous manuscript source in the Contarini Collection of the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice (VNM; see plates 1–3; for all abbreviations for sources, see “Abbreviations and Sigla”). However, the reference card attached to the score in that library bears the following note, dated 11 March 1968: “Questa partitura corrisponde alla poesia ‘Lo spedale’ di Antonio Abati . . . pubblicata nelle sue *Poesie Postume*” (this score corresponds to the poem “Lo spedale” by Antonio Abati, published in his *Poesie postume*). Indeed, all six printed editions of Abati’s publication (PP, 1671–76) include the text of *Lo spedale* and confirm Abati’s authorship, and the text is transmitted in two manuscript sources as well (PEO and RN).¹

So far, there seem to have been only three references to *Lo spedale* in the musicological literature. One is the basic description of the musical manuscript to be found in the catalog of the Contarini Collection, compiled by Taddeo Wiel in 1888.² The second occurs in Nicola d’Arienzo’s general history of early Italian comic opera, which briefly discusses this work as a possible representative of that genre.³ Third, *Lo spedale* is mentioned occasionally in Thomas Walker’s article on the Contarini Collection included with the facsimile edition of Francesco Lucio’s opera *Il Medoro* (1658).⁴

No genre specification is given in the piece’s musical source. Wiel calls it a “scherzo,” though apparently more as a descriptor of its lighthearted and sardonic mood than as a generic category. Indeed, “scherzo” seems not to have been used frequently as a generic category by Venetian librettists of this period; among Venetian libretti printed between 1637 and 1769, only two works are explicitly designated “scherzo,” and both are three-act works from

the eighteenth century.⁵ In contrast, all but one (RN) of the text sources of *Lo spedale* categorize the piece as a “dramma burlesco,” with no mention of music. Although this term is rarely encountered in seventeenth-century Italian opera (perhaps the only opera which bears such a designation is Jacopo Melani’s *Il Girello*, which premiered in Rome, in 1668), Abati, who was well known as a satirist, used it often throughout *Poesie postume*.

The word *spedale* had various connotations at this period, not always solely medical. John Florio’s Italian-English dictionary of 1611 defines *spedale* as “spittle-house,” a term used synonymously with “lazar-house” to refer to an institution housing and treating lepers.⁶ The *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (1612), in contrast, defines “spedale” simply as “a charitable place which accommodates travelers and the infirm.”⁷ The famous *ospedali* of Venice, well known both in their time and to modern music scholarship for the musical training their residents received, were charitable institutions that housed and educated orphans.⁸ Abati’s use of the term *spedale* is very specific, suited to the focused narrative of his drama: in this case, the meaning is closer to “hospital” than to “orphanage,” but with the specific connotation of a mental hospital, as the afflictions described are more psychological and social than physical in nature.

Lo spedale centers on four characters, described collectively as “gli infermi” (the patients, the infirm ones), who have come to the hospital to be treated for various

5. Francesco Gasparini and Antonio Lotti, *La ninfa Apollo* (*scherzo scenico pastorale*, 1710); and [Salvatore Apollini?], *Il pastor fido* (*rudicolo scherzo comico in musica*, 1739).

6. John Florio, *Queen Anna’s New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues* (London: Edward Blount and William Barret, 1611), 520; and *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), s.v. “Spittle-House.”

7. “Luogo pio, che raccetta i viandati, e gl’infermi per carità.” *Accademici della Crusca, Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca: Con tre indici delle voci, locuzioni, e proverbi latini, e greci, posti per entro l’opera* (Venice: Giovanni Alberti, 1612), 829.

8. For a general history of the Venetian *ospedali*, see Bernard Aikema and Dulcia Meijers, *Nel regno dei poveri: Arte e storia dei grandi ospedali veneziani in età moderna 1474–1797* (Venice: Arsenale Editrice, 1989). On musical activities at these institutions, see, among many others, Pier Giuseppe Gillio, *L’Attività musicale negli ospedali di Venezia nel settecento: Quadro storico e materiali documentari* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 2006); and Jane L. Baldauf-Berdes, *Women Musicians of Venice: Musical Foundations 1525–1855* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

1. PEO, fols. 61v–68v; and RN, fols. 345r–354r.

2. Taddeo Wiel, *I codici musicali contariniani del secolo XVII nella R. biblioteca di San Marco in Venezia* (Venice: F. Ongania, 1888; facs. ed., Bologna: Forni, 1969), 88.

3. Nicola d’Arienzo, “Origini dell’Opera comica,” *Rivista musicale italiana* 2, no. 4 (1895): 612.

4. Thomas Walker, “‘Ubi Lucius’: Thoughts on Reading *Medoro*,” in Francesco Lucio and Aurelio Aureli, *Il Medoro*, ed. Giovanni Morelli and Thomas Walker (Milan: Ricordi, 1984), cxliii, cxlvi, and clviii n. 58. The reference card included with the score of the opera in I-Vnm, about Abati’s authorship of the text, may have been written by Walker.

Text and Translation

The Italian text reproduced below follows that of VNM (for the main text of *Lo spedale*) and *PP* (for the *prologo* and *licenza*). The libretto text alone is preserved also in two manuscripts and six printed sources (see “Abbreviations and Sigla”). Discrepancies between VNM and these literary sources are recorded in the notes, except for those simply concerning contractions (such as “l’ho” for “lo ho”) or alternative spellings. In particular, PEO, which seems to be the earliest source, is quite different from the others, and the sections found uniquely in PEO are also reproduced in the notes, with original spellings retained.

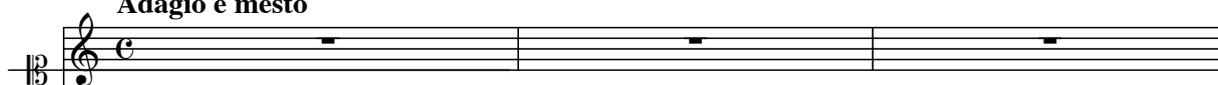
The translation has been made by the editor with invaluable help from Anthony Pryer. In some places (particularly in the *prologo* and *licenza*) the meaning of the original Italian is obscure, so I have added an occasional clarifying clause not found in the original text but suggested by the context. While the labels for the individual characters are those of VNM, those of the ensemble sections (e.g., “Infermi a quattro”) are taken from *PP*. Line numbering has been added for ease of reference, with separate numbering for the *prologo*, the main text, and the *licenza*.

All archaic spellings have been modernized to conform to modern Italian usage. The use of accents and apostrophes has been modernized (e.g., the accent on “hà,” the third-person singular of “avere,” is removed; the relative pronoun “che” and the conjunction “ché” are distinguished). When apostrophes are used in conjunction with truncated endings of words, they have been eliminated in accordance with modern usage (e.g., “dir’” becomes simply “dir,” “fan’” simply “fan”). Consonantal doubling practice has been modernized (e.g., “ippocondria” becomes “ipocondria,” “esercizio” becomes “esercizio,” etc.), as has the handling of combined prepositions and definite articles (e.g., “de la” becomes “della”), and the use of the letters *u* and *v*. Archaic (etymological) *h* has been eliminated (e.g., “honor” becomes “onor”; “hoggi” becomes “oggi”), and abbreviations and contractions (such as “sigr” for “signor”) are expanded. However, I have retained original spellings when they are accepted currently as variants¹ (e.g., “sovrattutto” for “sopratutto,” “scola” for “scuola,” “ciera” for “cera,” “lacrima” for “lagrima,” and “voto” for “vuoto,” among others) or if necessary to maintain the rhyme scheme. Similarly, spelling differences between the exclamations “oh” and “o” are retained except for rare cases where two different spellings occur in the same line, in which case the spelling is regularized to avoid ambiguity. When the same word is spelled differently in a repeated line or phrase in VNM, the spellings have been tacitly made to match. Punctuation, which is sparse in VNM, generally follows *PP* but has been emended occasionally for consistency and to clarify the syntax and semantics of the poetry. Capitalization practice has been regularized according to modern practice, with capitalization reserved for the beginnings of poetic lines and for proper names.

Lo spedale

Adagio e mesto

FORESTIERO



INNAMORATO



Non co- no- sce sa- ni- tà Chi pro- va- to, chi pro- va- to pria non ha Quel che

MATTO



Non co- no- sce sa- ni- tà Chi pro- va- to, chi pro- va- to pria non ha Quel che

CORTIGIANO



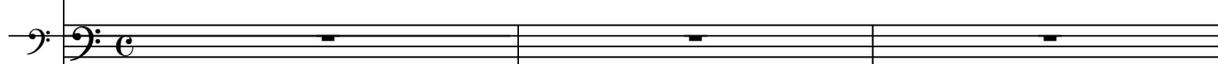
Non co- no- sce sa- ni- tà Chi pro- va- to, chi pro- va- to pria non ha Quel che

POVERO



Non co- no- sce sa- ni- tà Chi pro- va- to, chi pro- va- to pria non ha Quel che

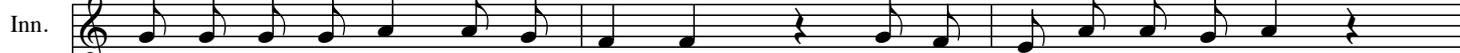
MEDICO



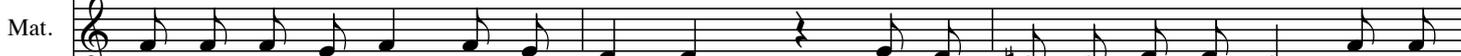
Basso
continuo



4



sia in- fer- mi- tà, Non co- no- sce, non co- no- sce sa- ni- tà



sia in- fer- mi- tà, Non co- no- sce, non co- no- sce sa- ni- tà Chi pro-



sia in- fer- mi- tà, Non co- no- sce,



sia in- fer- mi- tà, Non co- no- sce,



801

-ti sco di re- nel- la, E che s'al- cu- no un gior- no Sa- lu- te non m'im- pe- tra, Te- mo mi

B.c.

805

na- sca sul- la fron- te un cor- no, O sen- tir nel- le tem- pie un mal di pie- tra.

B.c.

809

[Aria]

Un to- po D'E- so- po M'ha

B.c.

815

fat- to un ol- trag- gio, Un den- te m'ha ro- so, Per- ch'e- ra o- do-

B.c.

820

-ro- so Di cer- to for- mag- gio; E

B.c.

826

pur fra le ri- sa- te Del- le bri- ga- te So fa- re la mi- a, So fa- re la

B.c.

828

mi- a. Sol, fa, re, la, mi, sol, fa, re, la, mi,

B.c. [4] [3]

834

ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, chi non ri- de- ri- a?

B.c.

837

Seconda stanza

La mat- ta Mia gat- ta La

B.c. 2 [5]

843

go- la m'ha pun- to, Per- ché que- sta not- te M'ha vo- te, m'ha

B.c. [6] [6] [6]

848

rot- te Le fia- sche del- l'un- to; E

B.c. [6] [4 b] [6]

854

pur fra le ri- sa- te Del- le bri- ga- te So fa- re la mi- a, So fa- re la

B.c. # #

1179

INNAMORATO

Dun- que non v'è mer- cé?

MATTO

Dun- que non v'è mer- cé?

CORTIGIANO

Dun- que non v'è mer- cé?

Basso continuo

[#4]
[2]

1181

POVERO

Dun- que da voi ri- cet- te non a- vrò? Si- gnor, no!

MEDICO

B.c.

7 #6 # #

1184

INNAMORATO

E per- ché?

MATTO

E per- ché?

CORTIGIANO

E per- ché?

POVERO

E per- ché?

Basso continuo

#

1185 MEDICO

Per- ché in- tor- no al- l'a- ve- re L'in- fer- mi- tà del- l'o- ro, Per

B.c.

#

1188

dir- vi il mio pa- re- re, Se voi se- te spe- di- to, an- ch'io mi mo- ro.

B.c.

1192

INNAMORATO
Os-ser- va- te la ma- li- zia, la ma- li- zia Del- la me- di- ca- a- va- ri- zi- a.

MATTO
Os-ser- va- te la ma- li- zia, Os-ser- va- te la ma- li- zia Del- la me- di- ca- a- va- ri- zi- a.

CORTIGIANO
Os-ser- va- te la ma- li- zi- a, Os-ser- va- te la ma- li- zia Del- la me- di- ca- a- va- ri- zi- a.

Basso continuo

1196
POVERO

Pov.
Più o- ro ha gua- da- gna- to, Che non ha vi- sto o- ri- na, E al po- ve- ro am- ma-

B.c.

1200

Pov.
-la- to Non vuol da- re un quat- trin, non vuol da- re un quat- trin di me- di- ci- na. —

B.c.

1204
MEDICO

POVERO

Med.
Io non fab- bri- co im- pia- stri al- la ru- i- na. E quai ri- me- di hai

B.c.

Critical Report

Sources

Music

The music is preserved in a single manuscript source, VNM (see “Abbreviations and Sigla” and plates 1–3), which belongs to the Contarini Collection at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice. The manuscript consists of fifty-six leaves with two sets of foliation markings. The earlier numbering (1–54) contained some errors: the number “15” appeared twice (omitting “16”) and was followed by “17,” and the numbering after folio 32 was “33,” “33bis,” “34,” “35,” an unnumbered folio, and “36.” The later numbering, from 1 to 56, is correct and is followed in this edition (see, for example, the plates). The format is oblong octavo, with each leaf measuring 204 × 280 mm and eight staves per page, though some pages have added staves or extensions of staves into the margins. The copying hand is quite neat, and there are a few scribal corrections (for examples, see plates 2 and 3), but the noncontiguous layout is not always conducive to performers, suggesting that the manuscript is a “reservoir” copy intended primarily for reference purposes. It does, however, also include a few stage directions (such as “di dietro,” “esce”), and tempo and expression markings (such as “Allegro,” “Vivace,” “Mesto,” and “Adagio”). Although the manuscript is undated, the appearance of the music, the style of the basso continuo figuring, and the occasional use of coloration suggest that it was produced during the second half of the seventeenth century.

The provenance of the Contarini Collection offers a few clues as to the origins of VNM. The collection was compiled by Marco Contarini (1631–89), procurator of San Marco, Venice.¹ Operatic works are represented significantly within the collection, among them Claudio Monteverdi’s *L’incoronazione di Poppea* (1642–43) and various works by Francesco Cavalli, as well as several operas performed at Contarini’s own theaters in Piazzola: Carlo Pallavicino’s *Le amazzoni nelle isole fortunate* (1679), Domenico Freschi’s *Berenice vendicativa* (1680), and the anonymous *L’Ermelinda* (1682).² However, the presence of *Lo spedale* in the Contarini Collection does not necessarily

1. Taddeo Wiel, *I codici musicali contariniani del secolo XVII nella R. biblioteca di San Marco in Venezia* (Venice: F. Ongania, 1888; facs. ed., Bologna: Forni, 1969), viii–ix.

2. Paolo Camerini, *Piazzola nella sua storia e nell’arte musicale del secolo xvii* (Milan: Hoepli, 1929), 353–76.

point to a Venetian production or premiere, since the collection also includes the scores of numerous operas that first appeared elsewhere (e.g., Cavalli’s *Ercole amante*, which premiered in Paris in 1662, and Marc’Antonio Ziani’s *Cloridea*, in Vienna in 1665).

It is furthermore unclear when and how Contarini acquired *Lo spedale* or if he had any personal connection to the piece or its genesis. Contarini seems to have started collecting scores in 1681; this is known from an acquisition list in a copy of one of Frescobaldi’s printed toccata publications that used to belong to Contarini’s library.³ This list, written on the inside cover of the Frescobaldi volume, gives acquisition dates for a total of thirty-one scores, though *Lo spedale* is not among them.

Text

The text of the libretto by Antonio Abati is preserved in two manuscript sources—one dated 1658, one very probably completed in or shortly after 1679—and in the poet’s printed *Poesie postume* (*PP*), which appeared in six editions between 1671 and 1676 (B1 and V1–V5; see “Abbreviations and Sigla” for details). Taken together, these sources offer a probable date range for the composition of the music, though this is far from conclusive.

PP. Printed collection of poetry. It went through six editions, attesting to the popularity of Abati’s work, though it is notable that while the first edition (B1) was published in Bologna (with a dedication to Cardinal Flavio Chigi), all the subsequent editions (V1–V5) are from Venetian publishers, and it is not clear if they were in any way authorized by Abati’s heirs. V1 has the same contents as B1 but with slightly different pagination; V3 and V4 are mixed reproductions of V1 and V2; and V5, despite its claim of “con nuova aggiunta” (with new additions), contains no new material.⁴ V5 corrects a few errors

3. Girolamo Frescobaldi, *Toccate e partite d’intavolatura di cimbalo . . . libro primo* (Rome: Borboni, 1615; I-Vnm, Mus. 39). The list includes Cavalli’s *Il Ciro* and *L’Eritrea* and Ziani’s *Le fortune di Rodope e di Damira* for 1681, Cavalli’s *Pompeo magno* and Rovetta’s *L’Apollo* for 1682, and Ziani’s *Attila* for 1683. For further details, including a complete transcription of the list, see Jane Glover, *Cavalli* (London: Batsford, 1978), 66–68.

4. Robert Rau Holzer, “Music and Poetry in Seventeenth-Century Rome: Settings of the Canzonetta and Cantata Texts of Francesco Balducci, Domenico Benigni, Francesco Melosio, and Antonio Abati” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1990), 423–24.