

L'Armonia

L'Armonia is the continuation of the *Gazzetta musicale di Firenze*. The first number of the new periodical was published on 1 January 1856; its complete title was *L'Armonia / Organ of musical reform in Italy / Journal of science, letters, arts, theaters, concerts and variety*. On 14 August 1856 the subtitle changed to *Non-political journal*. *L'Armonia* was issued every Wednesday by the "Stamperia sulle Logge del Grano" in four-page installments as had been the *Gazzetta musicale di Firenze*; from 14 August 1856 the journal appeared bimonthly and from 31 May 1859 monthly.¹ In all, 99 numbers were published. At the beginning of publication the journal was sent to subscribers of the old *Gazzetta* to complete their annual subscription.

Furnishing a picture of the publication run of this journal is complex because an autonomous numbering system was employed for its initial year with 1856 being cited as year I. In the second year of publication, however, a numbering system continuing that of the *Gazzetta musicale di Firenze*'s was adopted, with year two, 1857, being cited as year IV. Moreover, the old *Gazzetta* began publication in the month of June, with the resulting inconsistency between the calendar year and the year of publication (the calendar year ending December 31 and the year of publication ending the following June). *L'Armonia* begins year I in January, with consistency between the calendar and publication years. Therefore, when *L'Armonia* in 1857 adopts the annual numbering system of the older journal, it is constrained—in order to even the numbers—to close the so-called year IV of publication after six months, in June, to begin year V in July.

The publication run coincides with the descending curve of the *Firenze granducale* and ends in 1859 nine months before the annexation of Tuscany by the Kingdom of Piedmont. The diffusion of the journal outside of Florence, suggested in some ways by the list of locations of sale,² attests to a sales network in Tuscany and in Northern and Central Italy (with one or more sales locations in all of the pre-unification States) and a total absence of outlets in Southern and Insular Italy.

¹ The journal was sold at the price of one *paolo*; the subscription rates for Florence were fixed at 4 Lire for three months, 8 for six months, 15 for a year. The rates were 5, 10, and 18 Lire respectively for orders in Tuscany "posted to destination" and those from abroad "posted to the border"; 6, 12, and 24 Lire were the rates for foreign subscriptions mailed by "conventional postage." When the journal began bimonthly publication the only subscriptions available were for six months; these were offered at the earlier three-month subscription rates. Analogously, when the frequency became monthly, the subscription rates remained unchanged, but served for the entire year.

² This was updated on 30 October 1856, date of the last publication of such a list.

The publisher and proprietor was Giovan Gualberto Guidi. An instrumentalist at the Teatro della Pergola, Guidi's publishing career extended from 1844 to 1882; among other things, he originated the idea of a series of pocket scores and was publisher of the periodicals *Gazzetta musicale di Firenze* (1853-55), *L'Armonia* (1856-59), and *Boccherini* (1862-82); he also promoted concert activities. In 1887 the publishing house he founded was absorbed by Casa Ricordi. The direction, inasmuch as it was ever explicitly declared, was entrusted to Abramo Basevi, medical doctor, cultivator of philosophical and literary studies, critic, and composer. The principle collaborators or correspondents of *L'Armonia* included Luigi Ferdinando Casamorata, Luigi Delatre, Enrico Epugeo (probably a pseudonym), Carlo Andrea Gambini, Augusto Mariscotti, Pietro Raffealli, R. Segre, Pietro Torrigiani.

The administration of Basevi ended suddenly—without explanation—a few months after the emergence of the journal. His signature reappeared on 15 June 1857 with the first part of his "Study of the Operas of Giuseppe Verdi"; but perhaps other anonymous contributions in preceding numbers are also attributable to his pen.

The structure of the periodical duplicates that of the *Gazzetta musicale di Firenze*. Within its four pages, the first was reserved for brief editorial statements or communications, for leading articles on a variety of topics (historical or theoretical essays, current events, polemics), for reviews of particularly noteworthy musical events, and for detailed analyses of music and opera librettos. The internal pages were reserved for reviews of musical events and publications, for historical or theoretical essays, and for critical examination of other periodicals. The same type of articles printed in the internal pages were also assigned to the fourth page, which, however, was distinguished by one or more rubrics for miscellaneous news and for advertisements.

In contrast to the *Gazzetta*, the focus of *L'Armonia* was wider with more space devoted to literature and to the plastic and figurative arts. Instrumental music was given prominent consideration (the journal itself organized concerts of "classical music"); but the attention of the journal was centered on opera and, above all, on the relationship between literary and musical texts: a special rubric was entrusted to analysis of music and libretto of new operatic productions; two series of articles signed by Pietro Raffaelli were dedicated to the history of the libretto in Italy and to the reform of the opera libretto; the number of essays on literary criticism grew; ample space was dedicated to the "Uffizio di commissione melodrammatica" which Guidi created for the diffusion of poetic texts for music. In view of the commitment of the journal's stated goals ("organ of musical reform in Italy"), the part reserved for chronicles—local, national and foreign—is of secondary importance.

In no. 9 of 31 May 1859 the editor states:

The serious events that summon all the attention of Italians [the second war of independence], necessarily render musical discussions a superfluous act for now. Not wishing to suspend this journal, I have provisionally decided to have it appear at the end of each month.

But the publication ends with the next number of 6 July. Themes and protagonists of the journal will live again after a few years—in the newborn Kingdom of Italy—in the pages of the periodical *Boccherini*, organ of the Società del Quartetto.

Notes on cataloguing

Numerous articles are signed with initials. In particular the initials *C. M.*—as in the *Gazzetta musicale di Firenze*—have been attributed to Luigi Ferdinando Casamorata on the basis of bibliographic information found in the periodical *Boccherini* (no. 9, 30 September 1881, p. 37) on the occasion of Casamorata's death. Other initials positively identified are: *A. B.* (Abramo Basevi), *C. A. G.* and *G.* (Carlo Andrea Gambini), *P. R.* (Pietro Raffaelli), *R.* (Felice Romani), *S...* (R. Segre).