

G.B. LAMPUGNANI, THE LIBRETTIST
OF THE SOBIESKI FAMILY

Italian operas were staged at the court of John III toward the end of his reign. These were two dramas by G. B. Lampugnani, auditor of the Warsaw nunciature: "Per goder in amor ci vuol costanza" (1691) and "Amor vuol il giusto" (1694). Both were written for special occasions: the former for the wedding of Prince Jakub and Hedvig Elizabeth of Neuburg, and the latter for the wedding of Teresa Kunegunda Sobieska and Maximilian II, Elector of Bavaria. The music to both the first and presumably the second was composed by Viviano Agostini from the royal Italian orchestra.

It is interesting to note that opera appeared so late at the Sobieski's court. Following the development of this art at the court of Ladislaus IV, the successive two rulers had turned their attention to the theatre, though in the second half of the 17th century some interest in the Venice opera can be discernible (accounts by Wojciech Radoliński and Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł). Thus the royal court had been acquainted with the art of Italian opera, although it was rather more inclined towards ceremonies of the French type - comédie ballet or drama.

In the case of the wedding of John III's children, two factors played a certain role: the persons of their newly-wed spouses and the circle of guests. Jakub married a sister of the empress while Teresa Kunegunda was betrothed to the Elector of Bavaria. For this reason, and because of the ceremonial character of the Italian opera in Vienna, any reference to a French-style ceremonial was out of the question.

"Per goder in amor" is known from the printed original, a Polish programme of the performance which takes into consideration the form of the production in the Castle, and from a Polish translation of the play. As regards "Amor vuol il giusto", only a Polish prose translation has survived.

"Per goder in amor ci vuol costanza" (Those in Love Need Constancy) is a comedy based on Spanish models, prevailing in the Italian opera, with the main motifs being love, honour and death. The vicissitudes of three couples of lovers, which lead to various typical misunderstandings, end happily with the lovers reunited. Lampugnani finely combined Baroque movement and fluency with the principle of three unities in drama. His work represents the type of Venetian opera, however apart from the aria - where hexachord prevails - a much more important function is performed by recitative.

Lampugnani coped magnificently with the problem of adapting his musical drama to suit the occasion. In the case of Prince Jakub, who though a king's son was not his successor to the throne, mythological or historical motifs could be treated as an allusion to this situation. Therefore the author resorted to the subject of love, which was fashionable at the time and which moreover could make the drama seem more intimate. Constancy and perseverance in love of the main character of the opera could serve as an example to the newly-weds.

Lampugnani's second musical drama, "Amor vuol il giusto" (Love Needs Its Fairness) is an idyll based on Guarini's "Faithful Shepherd" the translation of which, dedicated to the princess, had appeared shortly before. The main characters are the ruler Libero and Princess Rosmina. Prudent love taking account of *raison d'état* and ending in marriage is for them the only reasonable choice. Wisdom, nobleness, the ability to make the right choice of values, magnanimity and sensitivity, these should be the characteristics of the future wife. The author considerably restricted comic aspects in favour of intermediate motifs.

The enthusiasm with which Lampugnani's *début* was received, and also his later musical dramas and oratorios inspired by the Polish courts, all go to prove that he found conditions in Poland favourable. His operas must have been well received since both dramas were translated into Polish.