A Biography of Giovanni Pacini

Alexander Weatherson

His flood of operas link Rossini to the Risorgimento meanwhile bringing into play such unexpected protagonists as the marble-breasted Paolina Bonaparte, her nephew Louis-Napoléon and the sympathetically exiled Empress Teresa Cristina of Brazil as well great artists like Rubini, Pasta, Giovanni David, Marianna Barbieri-Nini and the Marchisio sisters. Copious endnotes offer the real mechanics behind the obscure death of Bellini in a Parisian suburb, uncover intrigues with vindictive poets, his fraught relations with his birthplace, rivals, geriatric predecessors and publishers, wives, mistresses, ending less peaceably with critics and scholars. The tenth download - a detailed catalogue of his works both sacred and profane - aims to be definitive

			Page
Preface		*A Prelude*	1
Chapter One	1796-1817	*Trionfi e fiaschi*	5
Chapter Two	1818-1825	*L'alacrità prodigiosa*	26
Chapter Three	1826-1830	*Una indiscrizione da alcova*	60
Chapter Four	1830-1835	*Une miserable euneque*	94
Chapter Five	1836-1845	*Sorpassato*	120
Chapter Six	1846-1851	*Tanti guai*	156
Chapter Seven	1851-1858	*Il convulse anelito di un ingegno già esaurito?*	172
Chapter Eight	1859-1867	*Nuovi tormenti e nuovi tormenta*	197
A Catalogue of the Works of Giovanni Pacini in all genres			229

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A Prelude

Rossini's response surprised none of their friends

"Sei un gran diavolo. Tu hai sempre la vena giovanile; che Iddio te la conservi per lunghi anni..."

With this affectionate rebuke the *pesarese* took his fellow maestro to task at the end of both their lives. He had a familiar target, born almost on the stage Giovanni Pacini's impact on Italian opera singled him out from all the rest. Relentless, inexhaustible, admired and feared equally as the most prolific the most tenacious operista of the day, always ready with music under his arm at any length in any style and at the drop of a hat, beloved of impresarios with a deadline to keep he might have been a great favourite had these disconcerting characteristics not put an end to the hopes of so many rivals Omni-present on the *locandine* the length and breadth of the Italian peninsula, mischievous and provocative, the very epitome of unimaginable invention, even his friends quailed at Pacini's rejection of every kind of obstacle to operatic favour treating the musical world like an oyster to be swallowed whole and trembling at a time when the art they loved was at its most singular and vulnerable.

It was fame, and fame alone, that would fail him.

The reputation of this composer has long been sacrificed on the altar of one facile quip in his memoirs:

> *"...tutti seguirono la stessa scuola, le stesse maniere, per conseguenza erano imitatori, al par di me, dell'Astro maggiore. Ma, Dio buono! Come si faceva se non vi era altro mezzo per sostenersi?"* [i]

Not one of the scholars eager to quote this aside has taken note of the rejoinder of the "*Astro*" in question. Rossini took umbrage at this unwelcome resurrection of a futile exaggeration of their youth knowing all too well he was a target for mockery on the part of his friend.[ii]

Abramo Basevi, in part responsible for commissioning these memoirs, complained bitterly to their author:

"Io non la consiglierei di tentare altro verso Rossini. Basta leggere la lettera che ultimamente le scrisse, per convincersi dell'enorme distanza che corre in lui fra il cuore e l'ingenuo. Non basta

chiarmarsi Rossini per scriverci con tanto cinismo."[iii]

Adding that Alessandro Biaggi [iv] to whom he had shown the jibe was dismayed at a repeat of a foolish denigration to which they had all been heirs. He should not bait Rossini - even for passing entertainment.

Giovanni Pacini - as he knew well - was among the very first to contest these Rossinian expectations.

His musical reminiscences: *Le mie memorie artistiche* - a five-decade-long parabola of the stage replete with truths, half-truths and fantasies has led many into believing it to be a measured account of his life and times. Printed under the ægis of the Florentine musical press in regular instalments of the Journal of the *Società del Quartetto di Firenze*: "*Il Boccherini*" between 1861 to 1865, subsequently issued by his friend Guidi in the form of a brochure followed by a posthumous compilation "*continuate dall'avvocato Filippo Cicconetti* " in 1872[v] and finally crowned by a hardback edition "*Le mie memorie artistiche* (*edite ed inedite*). A*utografia del maestro cav. Giovanni Pacini, riscontrata sugli autografi e pubblicata da Ferdinando Magnani"* - considerably revamped that is by his son-in-law in 1875 with unauthorised additions[vi] it had now become a substantial tome with some of the hints of a testament. An eager absolving of a long and troublesome career but a mine of misinformation, a harvest of wrong dates, imperfect historical sequences and wilful errors - a leisurely saunter up a socio/historical path of the composer's own choosing intended to divert and mislead, fascinating, irresistible even, replete with overlooked occurrences, events dimly recalled, forgotten people, names and places mis-spelled and mis-directed but whose motivation has to be respected.

It was when the 1864 printing of *Il Boccherini* with his infamous quip fell on his desk in his Parisian exile at Neuilly that Rossini responded with the heartfelt reproof at the head of this Prelude.

Pacini's valedictory saga is a bittersweet resumé of the resentments and regrets of a composer with a career in ruins at the onset of the Risorgimento. His lifework relegated to the archives, his astonishing torrent of stage-works together with the honorary distinctions of the princely states he had once adorned so brilliantly coldly dismissed in a purge of everything deemed antipathic to national advance.

Opera houses threatened with a loss of access to the music of Verdi if they staged his works, his musical persona denied continued existence the composer felt obliged to take steps to confront a brash

new Italian establishment determined to collect the tangible rewards of its internationally exploited hero. Deprived of his former status, indignant at a political decision to deny him his years of fame, these reflections ill-conceal the well of resentment beneath the *désinvolture* that was his public face "*Sauve qui peut"* he set out to secure as much as he could of his former musical status with a literary cabaletta of his own devising and more than a hint of the pace and colour of his once famous trademark.

*

Maria Malibran's violinist husband, a dispassionate observer, pointed out that two operas were *never* booed or hissed in Naples despite years of revivals; they were Donizetti's *L'esule di Roma* and Pacini's *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei*[vii] thus throwing a revealing light upon the contemporary reception of music by rivals whose names now are so fêted. As *maestro delle cabalette* Pacini's career should have ended brilliantly - with an increase of pace and tempo worthy of his flamboyant lifestyle and unbelievable flood of compositions: he had added immeasurably to the urgent musical impulses of his day.

But this has not been the case. To omit a key composer is one of the more extravagant feats of the Italian genius. Rossini and Donizetti would have been astonished to find that Giovanni Pacini was not among those listed as a leading maestro. Alongside themselves.

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[i] Giovanni Pacini *Le mie memorie artistiche* (Guidi, Florence 1865), 54

[ii] Letter of 8 April 1864 from Gioacchino Rossini *"Al Cavalier Giovanni Pacini, celebre Compositore di musica"* upon receipt of the current installment of his memoirs [in the] *Appendice alle Memorie Artistiche* (1875 Edition) 254-5

[iii] Letter in the Fondo Pacini of the Biblioteca Comunale Carlo Magnani di Pescia. Abramo Basevi (1818-1885) had abandoned medicine to found both the musical journal *Armonie* and the Florentine *Società del Quartetto*. He would become a noted Verdian scholar. The letter was written in response to the instalment of *Il Boccherini* as described above and is dated 15 April 1864 [Cat. 2 – 22]

[iv] Girolamo Alessandro Biaggi (1819-1897) studied in Milan under Nicola Vaccai. A composer and conductor he was the passionate critic who founded and directed *L'Italia musicale*, a notable patriot he was one of the most exacting advocates of music theory of his day with an academic post at the *R. Istituto musicale di Firenze.* His contributions to the journal *Nazione* were a major feature of Italian musical life between1866-1895. His early life was very curiously entangled with that of Pacini: when appointed *maestro concertatore* as a very young man at the opera house in

Messina his initial operatic incarico consisted of being required to fabricate a cut-price version of Pacini's *Saffo* in order to save the expense of hiring the score. This fake was so successful and so much applauded that the truth came out and he was sacked. [*Cfr* Leonardo Pinzauti *Un critico dell'Ottocento: G..Alessandro Biaggi* (in) Nuova Rivista Musicale Italiana 3/4 (Turin, Luglio/Dicembre 1973) 388-401]

[v] The avvocato Filippo Cicconetti (1820-1887) was a biographer both of Bellini and Donizetti

[vi] Olympe Rossini had stipulated that her husband's letters to Pacini should *not* be included in this revised edition!

[vii] *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* was revived in virtually every theatre of Naples – even on the very smallest stage in the city – quite how this was achieved in view of its utterly traumatic *scena finale* is a mystery

Chapter One

Trionfi e fiaschi

His torrent of music supplied a backdrop to every major event between *Restaurazione* and *Risorgimento*. No other major Italian composer could say the same. His name was familiar to every operagoer and cherished by every diva in the land, his impact upon the stage and altar was as integral to the *Ottocento musicale* as that of Donizetti (who kept him under close observation), and Bellini (who did the same without the same motivation), Rossini held him in great esteem and affection while Verdi's silence spoke volumes.[i] As much as any of these familiar names Giovanni Pacini represented the Italian operatic universe at its most buoyant and impregnable.

The son of Luigi Pacini, at Giovanni's birth a tenor but soon to become one of the most sought-after *buffi* of the day, Giovanni Vincenzo Benedetto Pacini was born in Catania on 11 February 1796.[ii] His mother, Isabella Paulillo [iii] came from the fortress city of Gaeta while Luigi – *discendente da famiglia dell'Appennino pistoiese* according to local legend - was born in Rome according to his son.[iv] Their joint presence on Sicilian soil was entirely fortuitous: Papa was there to sing. [v] Though such a volcanic cradle never quite succeeded in making a *catanese* out of the maestro he took great pride in adding its proud accreditation to his signature whenever he found it expedient to do so.

Misrepresentation no doubt, he was more *Sicilian* than his fellow citizens could ever agree to acknowledge, he was among the tiniest of new born babies destined for a foot on the theatrical carousel - so small and fragile that he was left behind when his father and mother went on their way. Two years passed before he was reclaimed by which time he seems to have ingested the singleness of purpose and rock-solid endurance of that resilient birthplace - a flair and resolution that stood him in good stead throughout a long and trying presence in the public eye.

Not much is recorded of his earliest peripatetic existence. Decades of trailing after his increasingly famous father it consisted of an endless succession of lodgings in the shadow of great opera houses. He had no formal education. It was a life cramped by domestic ingenuity, by insubstantial friendships rapidly won and lost and a talent for self-sufficiency. If he sought refuge in excess in later life it was a form of compensation. There were summer holidays with siblings on his mother's fortified rock. If he was early drawn towards music this enthusiasm appears not to have been encouraged by his father, Luigi's high-spirits and love of farce (his father's genius for comedy never failed his son) did not disguise the wearisome grind he had embraced. Like

many a responsible parent he would have chosen a dull professional career for his offspring - architect, lawyer, doctor or chemist even would have been better than subservience to his elusive art…



LUIGI PACINI

For such an imaginative offspring, however, in the wake of rootless parents with footlights before his eyes from birth, the stage proved far too dazzling; in 1808, as Pacini recounts in his *memorie* it was agreed to make him a *ballerino*. Overfull of energy, light on his feet (qualities he retained to the end of his life) he would seem to have all the necessary qualities had not the brutalities of the bar proved quite so unendurable. One day, finding himself clamped between two heavy boards intended to straighten his knees he escaped his captors and ran home wearing nothing but his rehearsal slip and dancing pumps. As it was mid-winter he narrowly avoided pneumonia.[vi] After a beating, his father agreed to allow him to take a less perilous path. Or at least to let him have singing lessons until his voice broke.

At the start he had all sorts of tutors, doting family cronies and retired artists for the most part with affectionate memories of virtuosi and a shared longing for forgotten musical mentors like Caldara, Vinci, Leo, Jommelli, Pergolesi et al in the pursuit of which the compositional template of the infant maestro became fixed on a legacy of exit arias and

sustained fioriture. Pacini forever cherished these superannuated idols and despised the attempts of nineteenth-century claimants to borrow their fame. After some tentative singing lessons he made his stage-début at Bologna where the family was then resident as an angel in an opera *Gedeone* by Stefano Pavesi.[vii] His divine apparition before the public was not the message of hope that was intended: the cords by which the near-naked apostolic visitor was to be lowered from the centre of the proscenium arch became so entangled that the stage-hands shouted for them to be cut, at which the terrified Nino let out a yell that interested the house though the spectators could not (as yet) see its actual source. The music stopped and the half-strangled putto was lowered sideways into view so scared that he got the words of his heavenly communication mixed-up and everyone roared with laughter. Whenever Pavesi encountered Pacini in later life he said: "*Do you remember when you ruined my opera*?"

Following this essay in suspended animation Pacini (though it was much less well-paid and far less prestigious a métier) decided to become a composer. The archaic coterie among whom Luigi Pacini permanently sought refuge immediately intensified their tutorial efforts as a result of which a backlog of theatrical *convenienze,* modes and methods, traditional scoring, workmanlike counterpoint and so on became part and parcel of his musical makeup, tempered by snatches of up-to-date harmony introduced in the first place by Luigi Marchesi [viii] - at least according to repute, and then later, if very briefly, by the redoubtable Padre Mattei [ix] at the Liceo Filarmonico of Bologna. On an even later occasion in the paternal circuit he may have taken some lessons – or so at least he claimed - in composition from Bonaventura Furlanetto[x] former Director of the Cappella di S. Marco in the musical Mecca of Venice. All these amounting to a capricious preparation for the stage.

Such lyrical stints lasted for just as long as his father had an engagement in the city concerned. His induction as a maestro was fragmentary and subject to unavoidable interruption but was real, intensive, and undoubtedly expert thanks to a background of practical knowledge from retired professionals aided by a lively curiosity and a surprising scholarly bent within an unassailably mischievous personality. These factors led to a comprehensive if idiosyncratic career.

It seems that Luigi pressed him to become a church composer, the only secure vocation music then offered, but Nino spurned the organ loft and abetted by his elderly entourage at sixteen years of age composed his first opera based upon a Goldoni play with a text supplied by a family friend. This was *Don Pomponio* and seems not to have been performed[xi] but opened a tap never to stop running. Scores began to flow. At the end of 1813, thanks to paternal intervention his début as a putative maestro

occurred with an opera called *Annetta e Lucindo* and a prima at the newly-refurbished Teatro Santa Radegonda of Milan. A lifelong musical automaton had begun. In this particular instance, the printed libretto for *Annettta e Lucindo* took the trouble to include an apology for the youth of its author as a result of which the adolescent Pacini's operatic exordium was greeted with the kind of generous admiration Italian audiences reserved for children held up to be admired. No one expected the work to be momentous and it was not. *Annetta e Lucindo* was a string of solos with modestly linking recitative, a perfectly sensible recipe for a beginner.

Whatever its effect upon its listeners, however, it was clear that it was a first offering by a young man who had no youth. The opera was applauded - not as juvenile revelation - but for its air of maturity thanks to the near-geriatric coterie surrounding him. In no way was it a harbinger of the teenage misfit about to appear. It was a dutiful essay whose academic virtues *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* reported in its solemn columns[xii] quoting the breathless insistence of its progenitor that he was "*studying Haydn and Mozart*" a statement intended exclusively for Germanic ears and not even hinting at his trust in a gamut of unmodish composers once the staple of his famous father and friends.

Even these serious *altromontani,* however, cannot have been unaware that he was born on and for the stage. His apparent modesty drawing a protective cloak of aged maestri around his small frame. This unusual adolescent egging them on to adventures that brought them little credit but much diversion. For them (*pace* Pavesi's *Gedeone*) the ingenious youngster was an angelic messenger to warm their old age. In the next two years with their antique encouragement he wrote a handful of small operas, all slight, all mischievous and dated, full of old-fashioned pranks no less barbed than amusing.

It was this elderly coro too that laid the ground for his *real* inauguration. One that would put a cap on the earlier pubescent series with the most extravert operatic collusion imaginable - a bizarre pairing with an eminent operatic versifier three times his age and a trio of impudent spoofs that set all Milan laughing. Venerable antagonism and a beginner's effrontery back-to-back before a convulsed audience with a mixture of cynicism and cheek quite unlike anything that particular stage would ever be willing to have to endure again. Such was the impact of Giovanni Pacini in his very first years.

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But before this could happen Milan became untenable. War and insurrection emptied the city. Everyone unconnected with fighting and politics fled. Giovanni followed his father to Firenze where they joined a band of enforced exiles and in tandem with such unemployed talent took over the Teatro Pergola. An *ad hoc* opera/ballet company was formed with make-do costumes and tattered sets. The season began with an expert *L'italiana in Algeri* of the *pesarese* which escapist dream triumphed as was to be expected; then came a ballet *L'incendio di Troia* by Lorenzo Panzieri - far too topical at that fiery moment in the political meltdown but well received too, if less so. After this came two offerings by the juvenile maestro; first a flimsy *farsa*, *La Rosina* with a text by Giuseppe Palomba which was memorable only for one delicious duet 'Se voi non mi diverte' whose title in retrospect seems to have been rather like a challenge followed by an *opera buffa* of more substantial facture: *L'ambizione delusa,* a complicated dramma buffo in due atti staged in May 1814 which true to its title suffered a noisy and monumental fiasco. Inconsequential witticisms in a score without novelty fell on unfriendly ears at this political watershed and was dismissed in a gale of hissing and booing.

Its composer - not mincing his words - does not conceal its unhappy reception despite the efforts of its heroine, the celebrated Maria Marcolini, and careful rehearsal. He says too that as a result of its removal he was compelled to give singing lessons to survive. Another augury, together with the failure itself - his very first - of lean times to come in his theatrical destiny.

It seems probable that some sort of reckoning was under way. That there was resentment among the cast of *L'ambizione delusa*. Luigi was pushing his offspring as he always did but this time with negative results. A series of dominating roles expressly tailored for his voice provoking a hostile backlash backstage. But there could in fact have been a more validly professional explanation: the plot of *L'ambizione delusa* was pure routine and Palomba's text even less inspiring than that of *La Rosina* - a *mezzo* heroine of Rossinian facture courted by a *tenorino* lover in a crowd of hovering *buffi* in which Luigi was far too prominent did not impress a ragbag company of experienced artists. The music was not without merit but its conception far too trite for a company of vocal experts eager to endorse their professional standards in a sophisticated house and a rejection redoubled by cynical summer audience and an exhausted and hard-pressed cast. All this notwithstanding it was Luigi's *ambizione* for his son that was called into question by rebellious delusion. Not that of the son.[xiii]

This first fiasco changed little however. The audience hissed in vain. It would be some years before Giovanni Pacini could truly be called a master of his own operatic soul.

Another Tuscan engagement followed, this time in a less challenging Pisa. Here, at the Teatro Costanti, the young Nino staged a *piccola farsa* on 18 December of that same year which was received with enthusiasm, even with amused equanimity. Pisa was not Firenze and *L'escavazione del tesoro* may well have benefitted from the charity of its spectators - Pacini himself says that its good reception was more out of kindness to his smooth cheeks than to any fundamental merit either of music or plot. A minor success merely in an un-memorable Christmas season it should be noted that music from this passingly insignificant opera would reappear almost at once with a new title, plot and cast of singers.[xiv] And it filled empty seats and pockets. The composer had a benefit performance on the third evening that brought him all of fifty francs, ensuring penurious survival after months of exile.

And too, such an excavated treasure heralded a welcome closure to foreign threats. Return to the *status quo* in much of the Italian peninsula being now in the air, together with father and family Giovanni set off eagerly to retrace his steps to Milan.

Some kind of intellectual re-evaluation had taken place in the interim. The composer insists that at this time he had been employed by a homesick Frenchman to play Gluck's scores to him - including *Alceste,* both the *Ifigénie,* and *Armida.* But any re-evaluation - or revelation - if such was the case - being merely pianistic and in a Pisa drawing-room, would be in utter contrast with his next musical offering, the opera that marked his reappearance in Milan, *Gli sponsali de'silfi,* was more than appropriate to the carnival season at the Teatro de'Fildrammatici and not on the surface evidence of any serious musical realignment. To all intents and purposes the opera was a light-hearted sport that aroused gales of irreverent laughter despite some carping about the quality of the cast. [xv] With a libretto by Francesco Marconi, in fact, this *Gli sponsali de'silfi* had a neat and engaging score and sparse instrumentation of the kind that Pacini tended to deprecate in his later career. Slight, skittish, witty and perfectly-timed, it was a covert commentary upon the mood of the Lombardian capital in 1815 where one detestable occupying power had departed and the city was blissfully engaged in welcoming home its occupying predecessor! An opera whose irony may indeed have owed something to Gluck. Even if his music has not changed in structure or content on his return, the composer has evolved on closer examination.

In its wake and now with a claim to be a "name" in the capital Pacini settled down to divide his career between Venice and Milan. The vivacity of the first and the social standing of the second from now on a would supply the canvas upon which he could depict his burgeoning status.

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Melodramatic life in Italy was quickening though Giovanni Pacini could not have been aware of it. Giuseppe Verdi had drawn his first breath; Michele Carafa had returned from icy débâcle in Russia; Gioacchino Rossini now reigned in place of his vanquished idol, Napoléon; Mayr was a great star; Carlo Coccia and Nicola Vaccai - both basically under Neapolitan influence had come on stream in their different ways; while Gaetano Donizetti and Vincenzo Bellini at disparate ends of the peninsula were on the brink of arrival.

It is at this pregnant moment in operatic history that Pacini began his fruitful partnership with Angelo Anelli. A pairing that would bring his juvenile high-jinks to a head. This unusual youngster's taste for antique collaborators was to reach an apotheosis. Anelli [xvi] though fêted as a clever librettist with a handful of important texts to his credit, a literary malcontent and a freemason who wore his apron on his sleeve, a professional outsider who courted confrontation and camp subversion whenever he could - to the astonishment of all had found a kindred spirit in this feckless youngster.



Angelo Anelli 1761-1820

Their first collaboration fell far short of expectation, he and the teenage stripling concocted a sequel to his *Ser Marcantonio,* a cruel comedy of 1810 set to music memorably by Stefano Pavesi and due to achieve permanent fame worldwide very many years later as the source for Donizetti's *Don Pasquale.*

But the *Il seguito di Ser Marcantonio* of this strange coupling at the Teatro San Moïse in Venezia did not encroach on the future Donizettian masterpiece in any way whatsoever. Whereas the Bergomasc maestro offered an unforgettable re-run of the original Anelli plot the Anelli/Pacini's recreation of 1815 was devised merely as a *sequel* to *Ser Marcantonio* and proposing nothing to modify its prototype argument. Nor did its reception even begin to threaten *Don Pasquale* in spite of a witty presentation. The fact is, ill-timed and unimaginatively sung before rows of wooden faces their joint re-creation was conspicuous only for some scatological intentions and a monumental boredom on the part of the audience. Pacini himself recorded its passing with a scathing "*come corpo morte cadde.*" (At Ferrara some five years later and Lazarus-like, *Il seguito di Ser Marcantonio* arose to have another lease of life)

But the young composer's taste for veteran poets remained undimmed. And then its successor opera, *L'ingenua,* with its libretto by Francesco Marconi had an even worse reception. It was not his fault nor that of his librettist. Though at the height of his career he might enjoy unlimited adoration from *primedonn*e it was not at all the case at the start. Commissioned by the neighbouring Teatro San Benedetto in that same city on 4 May 1816 *L'ingenua* foundered in one of those acrimonious wars of attrition that were such a feature of life backstage in the days when famous singers had all the musical reins in their hands.

The mezzo-soprano Rosa Morandi, primadonna of the summer *stagione* at the Teatro San Benedetto was fighting a running battle with the rest of the cast. New operas by Coccia, Vaccai and Pacini fell like hay before her.[xvii] *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* did not let the occasion pass without drawing its own smug conclusion that Pacini's *L'ingenua* was simply too feeble to follow Rossini's *Il turco in Italia* [xviii] (starring his famous father) despite the puff in the printed libretto stating untruthfully that he was an "*allievo dell'Istituto Filarmonico di Venezia.*" And indeed, apart from an amusing drunken scene written for paternal exposition, there was very little of interest in *L'ingenua.*

But the horrified Germans did not care to print the whole story: Morandi's absolute determination to sing only the pieces she chose and in the way she chose in every opera of the stagione, tampering with *all* the scores she was contracted to sing, confronting everyone and everything - composers and fellow artists however important or unimportant with her demands - had led to a stalemate of sufficient violence to banish the

entire season from the stage. Pacini's opera vanished like a mirage with all the rest.

One positive feature only of this abortive season was indicative of economic advance, however, if in its way almost as perverse: Pacini received a commission for his first "official" cantata. This was *La felicità nel Lario* for the Teatro Nuovo of Como and a trailblazer in what would be his very long list of *scorrect* political cantatas. Its dedicatee was the King of Lombardy - the Emperor Francesco I - who arrived to grace the royal box of the Teatro Nuovo and hear a specially commissioned musical welcome-back after his protracted absence from northern Italy with a musical entertainment whose concept challenged the entire gamut of nationalistic political views. This particular spectacle was truly lavish and flattering for the protagonists and still-obscure composer with a décor by the glorious star of La Scala - the gifted architect/set-designer Alessandro Sanquirico no less - and featured a monumental pasteboard *Arco di trionfo* to greet the Austrian Sovereign's footfall on the Como lakeside to be lauded by a coro of five Olympian soloists with suitably sycophantic verse by Francesco Marconi mellifluously set by Pacini.[xix] This cantata, exceptionally well received, enhanced the young composer notably in official circles.

Before this year actually ended there was a great convocation of the old men dear to the maestro with a burlesque component no doubt missing on that last occasion. On 22 November 1816 appeared on stage at La Pergola in Firenze (with a cantankerously spiky argument by Angelo Anelli) *Lo sprezzatore schernito* in honour of Geltrude Righetti-Giorgi.[xx] This multi-composer *burletta in musica a quattro voce in un atto* boasted a coven of maestri whose combined ages would have been stratospheric except that it included the nineteen-year-old "*catanese."* It featured an overture by Ferdinando Paër,[xxi] an aria by Ercole Paganini,[xxii] a duetto by Pietro Carlo Guglielmi,[xxiii] an aria by Francesco Sampieri, [xxiv] another by Pietro Generali,[xxv] a duettino by Marco Portogallo[xxvi] and another by Giuseppe Farinelli[xxvii] the whole headed by a cavatina for *basso buffo* by the barely adult maestro as cheerleader for this veteran assemblage.

It would seem that such a sabbath of ancient sorcerers was the special choice of the formidable Righetti-Giorgi and given a seamlessly happy performance. Louis Spohr, who was in the audience, was astounded at the extent of the voice of the diva (two and a half octaves) but found her florid singing far too aggressive for Northern ears. He made no comment on its elderly constitution, alas, nor on Pacini's cavatina except that the latter's 'Tren la donna quattro mali' with its execrable comic verse was sung impeccably by Paolo Rosich. [xxviii] But, in such company and after a traumatic year, Giovanni must have thought himself in Heaven at long last.

Headed by *La chiarina*[xxix] in Venice, the year of 1817 was to prove to be the most memorable of all in the ascent to fame of the young composer. A year of advance on all fronts marking both his prowess as a resourceful opportunist and staking place in the romantic evolution now about to take shape in the shadow of Rossini.

Could it have been his damp squibs that set Pacini on course for lyrical revenge, had *L'ambizione delusa* and the antics of Morandi put him on the same wavelength as Anelli? Once he and the rancorous librettist met again in Milan they put their heads together to plot what must have been the most memorable confrontation of the day as well as a source of wicked joy to the chronically acrimonious poet. As far as Pacini was concerned it was this hilarious coup that put his name on the map.[xxx]

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It all began when Angelo Anelli became seriously annoyed with Vincenzo Monti [xxxi] with a starting date of 6 January 1816. During the French occupation of Italy abjectly prostrate before a triumphant Bonaparte the vainglorious Monti - his Italian *poet laureate* - on this January occasion and predating *La felicità nel Lario* was discovered to have supplied the text for a congratulatory cantata to rejoice in the return to power of the Austrian Emperor

'*Il ritorno di Astrea' Azione drammatica da rappresentarsi nel I e R Teatro alla Scala alla presenza delle LL.MM.II.RR. L'imperatore e re l'imperatrice e regina*

which was greeted with antagonism, amusement and despair by Monti's admirers and detractors. Its music was by Joseph Weigl and the resounding literary rhetoric *"ricevuti con vivi e ripetuti applausi*" according to the official press gave rise to nothing less than pure choleric fury on the part of the long derided and despised poetic Angelo.

But it was simply a point of departure. A few weeks later the incoming impresario of La Scala, the *cavaliere* Angelo Petracchi, launched a competition to ensure a supply of lofty texts to add lustre to his great stage now about to be returned to autonomy after years of rigid control. Radical in intention it invited selected poets to write worthy libretti to be submitted to a jury presided over by none other than Vincenzo Monti! [xxxii]

All this was too much for Angelo Anelli who was not among the selected candidates as a result taking a wildly sarcastic view of the entire project, its intentions, its management and most specially the seamless effrontery of its presiding 'Sunflower' whose Gallic stance in occupied

Italy, had, in his view, "*seriously damaged the reputation of Italian poetry.*"[xxxiii]

Without hesitation Anelli began a war of words publishing a searing directive '*Il ritorno della clemenza*' [xxxiv] jeering at Monti's '*Astrea'* mimicking its text and parodying its dedication to great effect - a merciless epistle read with great joy in intellectual and liberal circles.

It was the offended former laureate's wounded riposte in the *Biblioteca Italiana* claiming international protection that added unwise verbal fuel to the whole business, above all simply resulting in adding Germaine de Staël's name to Anelli's list of targets.

The whole thing smouldered and burst into flame in the following carnival. On 2 January 1817 in the modest Teatro Re – a vaguely anti-establishment stage confronting La Scala on the opposite side of the square on the site of a vanished church in the via San Salvatore – there emerged a thoroughly disreputable spectacle: *Dalla beffa il disinganno ossia La poetessa, drama buffo in un atto,* an undisguised slanderous confection with the bland assertion in its heading that*"...Per una gara collo Scannamuse, in meno di otto ore il presente drama fu inventato e dettato da Gasparo Scopabirbe."*

It proposed a riotous entertainment which could have left no one in any doubt about its targets, its implications or its intentions. At first shocked, then delighted, intellectual Milan was convulsed by a wicked compound of libel, invective and improper insinuations about the intimate relations between a priapic Vincenzo Monti - thinly disguised as 'Giovan Matteo' and sung by Luigi Pacini - and a blowsy Egeria (Camilla Ferlendis) got-up to look like Germaine de Staël (*La poetessa*), whose contribution to the *Biblioteca Italiana* had included an unwise defence of the limited skills of the unfortunate Monti as a translator.

It offered a feast of scathing ridicule for a learned audience at the expense of the two sacred targets. Now and then quoting from Mme de Staël's 'Corinne" and the poet laureate, above all supplied with a glittering score by Giovanni Pacini featuring a zany selection of frivolous musical quotation and snatches of popular song while investing in quotes from Simon Mayr's hysterical *Che originali* (1798) with its absurd personaggi and grotesque indulgence in make-believe discovery. The whole sung and danced with a verve not far short of indecency.

This "*Marriage of Inconvenience*" between the wounded Napoleonic apologist and the internationally celebrated female literary authority in exile led to Anelli's parting dismissal of them both…

'Alla Beffa il giubbilo

Succeda e il Disinganno
Chi semina discordie
Sempre ha la beffe e il danno.
Forse a più d'un proficua
Questa lezion sarà'

Initially disbelieving, then outraged, the suffused poet ran to the Viceroy (the Archduke Anton Victor) at this personal attack upon the dignity of distinguished notables in his realm and with his amused compliance the naughty spectacle was shut-down after three neo-apoplectic appearances.[xxxv]

According to plan, its authors then stepped-up their torment. Hardly had the theatre closed when the curtain rose again on an even more slanderous offering. On 11 January emerged a second version: *Il matrimonio per procura* - a gross repeat of the earlier scurrilous cohabitation the joke being that its libellous components were exactly the same as that of the preceding - its arias the same, sung by the same vocal protagonists to the same music with replacement texts ingeniously contrived by Anelli to fit the music that Giovanni had already supplied.

With new and even more fantastic sets, its libretto written "*in meno di nove ore*" (which might even have been true) the entire coup fully packaged in advance: new costumes, parts distributed and rehearsed; libretto reprinted; sets re-built and re-painted and with its distribution now including Serafina Rubini and Domenico Ronconi bent to the same wicked task in an even more depraved farcical confection. Its fake wedding causing such a furore in the streets around La Scala that once again a laughing Viceroy was begged to intercede and it too was removed as swiftly as before.

But Monti's (second) sigh of relief was misplaced. In a theatre packed to the limits, the audience now completely aware of the malicious intentions of its progenitors the curtain rose yet again. This third essay in derision: *Il carnevale di Milano* opened on 23 February with an identical cast, identical music and identical verve but even more ridiculous settings (Chinese) and costumes, with a libretto by '*Paolo Lattanzio*' and a parade of parodies in a succession of carnival masks among whom were all the earlier targets posturing wildly as never before. With two small changes: an now enchanted Pacini had added a memorable aria for an extravagantly dressed Ser Gasparo (sung by Ronconi) and a new and glossy finale of triumph to bring the whole to a riotously improper conclusion.

At this third flowering the Imperial Governor washed his hands and refused to intervene further. Monti fled to the country and the culprits

hugged-themselves publicly on stage with self-satisfied glee before an incandescent house full to bursting.[xxxvi]

However disreputable, this trio of *farse* was a sequence not without historic roots, *opera buffa* had found itself once more conforming to its traditional task: that of deflating the pompous and bringing the powerful to ridicule. An ethos dear to Pacini's old men the century before.

The dismay of its victims and the delight of its victors had added hugely to the fun. But for the composer this trio was more than simple notoriety; his perverse skill in turning the "Tartar" music of *Dalla beffa il disinganno* into the "Chinese ballet" of *Il carnevale di Milano* gave him a new professional fillip. From now on he was a composer to be noted. His fluency was confirmed - that he could flower on the spin of a coin was a real portent for the future. His melodies were whistled in the streets. And for the benefit of posterity they were not lost in the usual way of parallel musical ephemera - sections of the brazen score ended-up in Pacini's wildly successful *Il barone di Dolsheim* the following year.

It was one of the very rare occasions when the tiny Teatro Re could get in its oar before the giant neighbour across the way.[xxxvii]

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Pacini's romantic potential was not in demand by any such frivolous assault. Nor did the scores that immediately followed confirm him to be anything but an entertainer. Only five days later the Teatro Re mounted a light-hearted coda: *La bottega da caffè* with its Goldonian charm as adapted by Anelli. Never again would Pacini find such a colleague, they had arrived at a joint fantasy rarely achieved on stage.

Alas, it was not destined to last, their final stage venture came unstuck. *Piglia il mondo come viene* had actually been written before the Monti farse (the autograph score is dated "*1816*"). Was this too early for a symbiosis to become truly unassailable? Mounted in the wake of their triumph at the Teatro Re on 29 May 1817 and with enthusiasm for its authors still running high the first act was applauded with cheering and demand for repeats, Pacini and the poet embraced several times before the stage curtain, but the second act fell so flat that the audience shuffled out in silence. Though the cast was exemplary, including his father and most of the anti-Monti stars *Piglia il mondo come viene*[xxxviii] was withdrawn and never seen again.

It was a severe blow. Anelli was ill. Even Pacini's fertile pen was stymied by this deluge of opera, He had staged no less than five – possibly six [xxxix] operas in the course of one year and another six month

period was to elapse before he took the stage again, and then he re-emerged as a different composer.

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How this fundamental evolution came about has never been clear. Maybe such a burst of levity proposed a compensating awareness of the ephemeral nature of comic success? Perhaps he knew he had gone too far? Probably it was a dawning recognition that the real destiny of Italian opera lay somewhere other than in comic defamation. At any rate it was news of the radical season of 1816 in Naples with Rossini's *Otello* and Carafa's *Gabriella di Vergi* that brought the stream of Pacinian *farse* to an end.

It will always be obvious that this composer was never less than modish in his choice of arguments. That one ear would always be bent to current modes. He had never wanted to be a mono-directional maestro – a trait that would be in evidence throughout his life. His view of comic entertainment had never been totally immune from extraordinary imagery, to exaggerated depiction, extravagant behaviour and the bizarre and picturesque - a fantasy often enough reflected in the moist eye of popular fiction. And then probably it was a chance encounter with another librettist, this time with the Venice-based Gaetano Rossi [xl] whose well-known preoccupation with rocks and ruins and *semi-seria* plots would bring about a radical change of direction in the young composer. This poet was the other side of the coin from Angelo Anelli, all-encompassing in his literary roots, open-minded, and accessible to every current trend with an ear to sentimental drama. After 1817 the stage was ready for change all over Europe, the goods-and-chattels of a prospective Romanticism already endorsed by the onset of a *Restaurazione* which brought money back into opera houses everywhere, encouraging composers to write for bigger voices and bigger orchestras – *via sacra* to a more expansive artform.

Romanticism on the musical stage in the Italian peninsula was not due to any passionate access to composers across the Alps (whatever *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* would have liked to suggest), if it was due to any foreign impulse at all it was due to Gallic literature whose wide dissemination was the unintended lyrical legacy of Napoleonic occupation. Pacini was certainly perfectly familiar with Andea Leone Tottola's[xli] high profile libretto for Valentino Fioravanti's *Adelaide maritata* (Teatro Nuovo, Naples 1812) a changeling grandchild of Baculard d'Arnaud's lachrymose "Les amants malheureux ou le comte de Comminge' from as far distant as 1765 which had gone the rounds in a cultured Europe and had won a surprisingly extended operatic destiny.[xlii] In a truly remarkable move Pacini - at this critical moment in

his career - asked Rossi to supply him with a similar text.[xliii] An inspirational change of focus as the opera was yet again intended for the Teatro Re.

This was not a house where audiences expected to weep with emotion. Its reputation remained confrontational and would continue to be so for any identifiable future.

ADELAIDE E COMINGIO

Melodramma semiserio in due atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi

Source: 1. François-Thomas-Marie de Baculard d'Arnaud *Les amants malheureux ou Le comte de Comminge* Paris 1765. 2. Giacomoantonio Gualzetti d'Eriso *Gli amori di Comingio, Adelaide maritata*, and *Adelaide e Comingio romiti* [It.trans. Naples 1789] 3. Andrea Leone Tottola *Adelaide maritata* (music by Valentino Fioravanti) Naples 1812

1st Perf: Teatro Re, Milan 30 December 1817

Cast: *Carolina Brizzi* (Adelaide), *Domenico Ronconi* (Comingio), *Luigi Pacini* (Maresciallo di Benavides), *Michele Cavara* (Conte di Benavides). *Antonio Razzani* (Lorenzo), *Serafina Rubini* (Lisaura), *Angelo Ferri* (Alberico)

The impact of this his new offering was to be completely unpredictable. Staged at the end of December *Adelaide e Comingio* was received with handkerchiefs and moist eyes (though it should be observed that *farse* had to be played between the acts to keep house traditions intact!) Against all the odds Pacini carried the day even with the critics. Yesterday's *enfant terrible* was suddenly a respectable maestro. In this way the year of 1817 was allowed to continue its evolutionary course.

Romantically paced and coloured, there were good arias and ensembles for everyone in the cast and though not deprived of humour (Luigi Pacini had a major role) the wistful ending left many spectators sniffling happily as they left their seats. Remarkably the composer's Leipzig-based critic had something good to say about the opera: that Pacini "*began to flower*"; and that some of the arie were "*beautiful and new*". [xliv] This *Adelaide e Comingio* the very first Pacini opera to circulate widely, getting a boost the following year when Giuditta Pasta sang Adelaide at Padua – a high profile staging for which (the Pacini touch to come) he supplied a large quantity of new music. The celebrated soprano remained faithful to the opera for some years, singing her *aria di sortita* 'Alme belle, che spiegate' in concerts initiating a gala performance in Rome when the opera was revived under the replacement title of *Isabella e Florange* on 13 April 1819 before the Emperor Francesco I for his State Visit. [xlv]

Adelaide e Comingio – in many ways was his real beginning as an adult protagonist remained in the Italian repertoire for two decades until such time as the romantically sentimental melodrama faded before the arrival of the "*veleni, pugnali, e morte*" of the Donizetti/Bellini apogee.

[i] Correspondingly Pacini makes no mention of Verdi in his memoirs

[ii] His date of birth is almost invariably wrong in encyclopedias, where it appears as 17 February. His baptismal certificate reads as follows:

MAGNAE ARCHIEPISCOPALIS CURIÆ GENERALE
NECNON ET CIVITAS CATANENSIS
UNICUM PAROCHIALE ARCHIVIUM

Die undecima Februarii 1796
Ego Sacerdos Franciscus Xaverius Riccioli Concapppel-
lanus Curatus Sacramentalis Ecclesiae Curatae Sanctae
Mariae, translatae in Ecclesiam Sanctiae Mariae de
Auxiliis hujus Urbis Catanae, baptizavi infantem in hora 10
circiter natum ex Isabella Paulillo, et procreatum ab
Aloysio Pacini, jugalibus, cui imposita fuere nomina
Joannes, Vincentius, Benedictus,
Patrinus vero fuit
Ill.mus Don Vincentius Benedictus Paternò, et Tedeschi.

It will be apparent that Pacini shared the same musical god-father as Bellini and partly the same Christian name - as a consequence of which the latter's fervent antagonism might have found additional fuel for its fire

[iii] She is often reported to have been a singer upon the evidence of papers surviving from her husband's engagement at the private "*teatrino in Via Abate Ferrara*" of Catania where her name features on the payroll of artists. But this could have been a financial disposition only or that she was among the *comparse* (she was in a state of advanced pregnancy at the time). When her son created an opera for family entertainment *Il convitato di pietra* in 1832 in which his immediate family was recruited to sing it is notable that Isabella was the *only* member not to take part. She was still alive in the early 1850's

[iv] According to a fragmentary autobiographical memoir in the hand of the composer conserved in the Fondo Pacini at Pescia. There is no trace of his birth at Popiglio di Piteglio (Pistoia) where he is often claimed to have been born but which might well have seen the family origins. Luigi Pacini was educated in Naples under Giacomo Tritto which would appear to confirm his Roman orientation

[v] The house where Pacini was born, 12 Piazza Sant'Antonio in Catania, on one side of a dusty square on two levels with a few battered plants and some benches is not far from the via Abate Ferrara where Luigi Pacini was engaged to sing. There is a bust of Giovanni Pacini on the facade and a memorial plaque. Bellini's more frequented birthplace is a few streets away

[vi] Two of his uncles were dancers. His revenge may have been the ballets he insisted upon inserting into many of his operas in later life (ballets were almost invariably hissed by audiences who wanted only to hear the latest diva). But he was probably impelled to do so by modish Parisian emulation

[vii] The diverting account of his stage début appears in his memoirs (pages 3-4) but lacks, as so often in that amusing book, the correct date. Pacini gives a date *"quaresima del 1809"* whereas the printed libretto reads as follows:

Il trionfo di Gedeone
Dramma sacro per musica
da rappresentarsi nel Teatro del Corso
la quadragesima del 1810
in Bologna

Its failure (with Pacini's assistance) was so complete that the unhappy Pavesi only consented to revive it in concert form in Modena ten years later, and then with no juvenile angels hanging around. Pacini insists that he was so nervous suspended from the shrouds that he sang 'Non temer Zabaion' instead of 'Non temer Gedeon' which saucy plea may (or may not) have been actually uttered. He enjoyed inventing comic anecdotes about himself. Stefano Pavesi (1779-1850) almost immediately responded to the Pacini-led fiasco at Bologna replacing it with another Dramma sacro *Giobbe* (also of 1810)

[viii] These lessons may well be apocryphal, the great *castrato* Luigi Marchesi could scarcely have been expected to give any sort of lessons to a child!

[ix] Stanislao Mattei (1750-1825), teacher, amongst others, of Rossini and Donizetti.

[x] If nothing else, Bonaventura Furlanetto (1738-1817) author of a Treatise on counterpoint, may have been the inspiration for Pacini's own didactic ambitions much later in life.

[xi] The obliging family friend and librettist was "Il signor dottor Paganini d'Oleggio" an aged paternal crony. Autograph fragments of this initial opera have survived (in the Fondo Pacini, in the Biblioteca Civica di Pescia)

[xii] AMZ April 1814, 231 "*Den 18ten Octbre. gab man im Theater St. Radagonda (sic): Annetta e Lucinda (sic), eine Farce, mit Musik von Hrn. Pacini, dem sechszehnjahrigen Sohne des obenerwähnten Buffo. Sie wurde mit Beyfall aufgenommen, und ist die erste Oper, welche der junge P. zu schreiben unternnahm; er gab dadurch viele Beweise von musikal. Talent. Mit Vergnügen bemerkte ich, dass ihm auch die deutsche Musik nicht ganz fremd sey. Fahrt er fort, wie er begonnen, so kann er einst brav werden."*

[Trans.18th October Annetta e Lucinda was played at the Teatro S.Radegonda, a farce with music by Pacini the 16 year old son of the buffo. The opera was applauded and is the first opera which the composer has undertaken to write. He thereby gave many proofs of musical talent. I noticed with pleasure that he is also no complete stranger to German music. If he goes on as he has started he will be very good one day"]

This brief notice was Pacini's honeymoon with this famous German publication and it would not last.

[xiii] Though *L'ambizione delusa* (surely one of the most appropriate titles available for a disappointed apprentice) was treated badly it was more more than once revived - even being described later as his "*applauditissima opera*"

[xiv] The following title was *La ballerina raggiratrice,* farsetta in un atto, with a replacement text by Giuseppe Palomba reappearing promptly at La Pergola in Florence with exactly the same music. A trial run it would appear for a composer reusing an intact score to supply the music for a brand new opera, a feat to be repeated momentously with hilarious results in the Teatro Re in 1817

[xv] It is not impossible that some of the younger Pacini family members took part - an exercise in economic barrel-scraping that did not escape the alert *milanesi*. A hint of this emerged

when he composed his *Il convitato di pietr*a (1832) for a family staging, including arie sung or rehearsed for him by members of his family on earlier occasions

[xvi] Angelo Anelli (1761-1820)

[xvii] This perennially difficult diva also succeeded in ruining Vaccai's apprentice opera *Malvina* (8 June 1816), as well as Coccia's *Etelinda* (26 June 1816), neither of which, like Pacini's *L'ingenua* which had preceded them in the same season with the same prima donna ever recovered. Luigi Pacini sang in all three

[xviii] *AmZ* July 1816, 49

[xix] Pacini's manuscript calls it *"La felicità di Lario"* as the autograph score sold at Sotheby's in London on 6 December 1991 confirms. The classical name "Larius" for Lake Como had long been italianised as "Lario" Pacini's cantata is a voluble and colourful piece for five soloists and orchestra which, supported by the full weight of the I&R Teatro alla Scala (together with Sanquirico), shows how promising his potential was viewed there. A support that would be in evidence later - most notably in his conflicts with Bellini

[xx] Geltrude Righetti-Giorgi (1793-?)

[xxi] Ferdinando Paër (1771-1839)

[xxii] Ercole Paganini (1770-1824)

[xxiii] Pietro Carlo Guglielmi (1763-1827)

[xxiv] The *marchese* Francesco Sampieri (1790-1863)

[xxv] Pietro Generali (1783-1832)

[xxvi] Marcos Antonio da Fonseca (dit *Portogallo*) (1762-1830)

[xxvii] Giuseppe Farinelli (1769-1836)

[xxviii] The *pasticcio* nature of *Lo sprezzatore schernito* is self-evident, but some pieces were written expressly for the occasion and as one or two of the composers were apparently present it is probably best described as a "collaborative" score

[xxix] Perhaps a spin-off from Anelli's preparation with Farinelli of the text for *Lo sprezzatore schernito. La chiarina* was put on in a hurry and taken off equally quickly. Pacini had merely supplied a surface refurbishing to some of the more dated music to his own taste rather than to that of the Venetians

[xxx] As well as in the black books of the hard-pressed Austrian Governor

[xxxi] Vincenzo Monti (1754-1828). His claims as a translator earned him the contempt of Italian scholars especially his classical posturing in view of a notoriously poor command of ancient Greek. All this had been brought to a high level of ridicule by his enthusiasm for Germaine de Staël and her fundamental article *Sulla maniera e utilità delle traduzioni*

in the *Biblioteca Italiana* with its contentious contribution to the on-going polemic between Classicists and Romanticists

[xxxii] On 5 April 1816 Felice Romani was awarded 1.000 Austrian lire for his text of *La testa di bronzo o sia La capanna solitaria* to be set to music by Carlo Soliva.

[xxxiii] Monti's unstable political affinities have been extravagantly criticised. A poet with conventional papal affiliation in his youth, he first was an apologist for the *ancien-régime* with his Dantesque 'Bassvilliana', later making a bold U turn by accepting a republican Chair of Rhetoric at Pavia. This was followed by his appointment as an officer of the Cisalpine Republic and then by the post of Official Poet of Napoleon's Kingdom of Italy. With the return of the Austrians he began to write poems in honour of the Dual Monarchy bobbing to the surface like a proverbial cork

[xxxiv] Angelo Anelli *Il trionfo della clemenza* "componimento in terza rima pel solenne ingresso in Milano delle LL MM II RR publicato pel fausto giorno natalizio di SM L'Imperatore e Re Francesco I^{o} "

[xxxv] This banning has a parallel in the suppression of Joseph Haydn's juvenile opera *Der neue krumme teufel* (1752) with a similar justification in that it too was a libelous satire upon a theatrical notability - in this case Giuseppe Afflisio. This last opera also survived for just three appearances. The Pacini/Anelli offering had far less a decorous sequel but Pacini (who had studied Haydn) was probably aware of the parallel. Could it have been Pacini, in fact, rather than Anelli, who proposed the actual sequences of the 1817 spoof?

[xxxvi] This precise appearance of these *tre operette* (as Pacini calls them) is confirmed by Pacini himself in *Le mie memorie artistiche* (p 11); by *AmZ* July 1817, 470; and by the dated libretti. It is clear even from the state of the surviving fragmented autograph manuscripts in the Ricordi Archive that considerable musical preparation went into the planning of these disreputable farse, including a bold change of plot, and some very considerable re-phasing of the music. It is a confusing picture, but the existing printed libretti establish the sequence and the roles. The actual music (and no doubt some of the actual manuscript pages used for the three *farse*) re-appears partially in the score of *Il barone di Dolsheim* (La Scala 23 September 1818) in a decidedly cheeky riposte to the authorities who had banned these mischievous operas a year earlier. Incestuously united in an attempt to discredit Vincenzo Monti and his literary crony Giuseppe Acerbi, these three *farse* can easily be referred back to the bitter war-of-words surrounding the publishing of the *Biblioteca Italiana* in 1816 in which Mme de Staël played a leading role. Anelli was incensed by Monti's dismissal of his talents in this latter and set about revenge.

In the *Programma di Sala* for the performance of an amusing edition of some of this music at Pesaro in 2001 Federico Agostinelli produced a vivid study of the bellicose event in itself a comedy. He also extracted from the remaining pages - some of them discarded pages in the Ricordi Archive - an opera with the title "*La poetessa idrofoba"* (this last derived from one of Anelli's sallies) from which he made a performing version. This was most diverting and valuable but has little or no correlation with the printed libretti. The pages of music used were not all autograph and the total result owes much to Rossini, a certain amount to Mayr (and a *frisson* to Johann Christian Bach). Though a setting of sorts can indeed be extracted from the disorderly surviving pages there is no certainty that any modern version is in any way definitive or establishes a precise priority for the music The "Donna Taddea" of *La poetessa idfrofoba* may well have parodied Monti as he suggests - knockabout comedy favours transvestism - but the stage appearance of "Donna Aristéa" [cfr *Che originali* of Simon Mayr] her actual counterpart in *Dalla beffa il disinganno* was contemporaneously reported as having been made-up to resemble Mme de Staël a special target and a blow below-the-belt like Ugo Foscolo's "*The Great Translator of Homer's translators*"). It is

unwise to be too dogmatic about precedence in any recreation as there has been re-circulated music and a choice of text. The precise dating and content of these three *farse* requires something more specific in view of extant contemporary reports

[xxxvii] *Il barone di Dolsheim*, libretto by Felice Romani. Teatro alla Scala, Milan 23 September 1818

[xxxviii] Though *Piglia il mondo come viene* was certainly a valedictory gesture it was not their last collaboration, this was the cantata *L'omaggio più grato* whose text was supplied by the irascible Anelli for a performance at the Teatro dei Quattro Compadroni at Pavia in 1819. Anelli died the following year

[xxxix] Sources, not highly reliable, name a "Pacini" opera called *I virtuosi di teatro* for this year which may, if it existed at all, have been a *pasticcio* with this rather overused title in operatic chronologies of the day

[xl] Gaetano Rossi (1774-1855) Hugely fertile librettist whose career was as long as that of Metastasio but who never claimed any such merit, or even any merit at all. Somewhat mechanical in the unrelenting delivery of his verse but loyal and reliable his true métier was *opera semiseria* where he could claim an innovatory role in the early decades of the century

[xli] Andrea Leone Tottola (?-1831) A French-inclined scholar of obscure origins and antecedents, a priest in lower orders with a taste for survival, witty and self-effacing, he managed to effect the near-miraculous transition from being *Poeta de'teatri reali* under Murat in Naples to become *Poeta de'teatri reali* under the restored Bourbons. Author of a vast but indeterminate number of libretti in every genre he served many important composers – most notably Rossini for whom he supplied texts of true significance. Much underestimated and as important as any contemporary theatrical poet he sometimes displayed a taste for self-parody that was almost a revelation

[xlii] The Tottola/Fioravanti *Adelaide maritata* was performed in the smaller theatres of Naples nearly every year until 1845, lasting far longer in the Neapolitan sub-culture than the Rossi/Pacini *Adelaide e Comingio* whose flowering - despite an effective lyricism and important champions - was relatively brief

[xliii] With the odd result that Pacini's *Adelaide e Comingio* - his first essay in operatic emotion, and highly influenced by Fioravanti's trilogy, in fact preceded the last of Tottola's three operas on this same plot. Prompting a speculation that maybe Fioravanti had not paid Tottola for his texts - a factor that could have permitted a rival poet to take up the tale with a new composer. The final opera of the Tottola series, *La morte di Adelaide,* did not reach the stage until 1818 (the printed libretto says "*Quaresima dell'anno 1817*") at the Fiorentini of Naples and may have been postponed because of Pacini's *Adelaide e Comingio. La morte di Adelaide* was frequently revived in Naples until 1838. This *Adelaide* series of operas, and most especially the plot as set by Pacini would have an exceptional sequel in that an *Adelaide* would become one of the root sources for Donizetti's *La Favorite* of 1840. (The incomplete manuscript of Donizetti's *Adelaide* of c1834, librettist unknown is in the Bibliotèque Nationale de France in Paris)

[xliv] *AmZ* February 1818, 95-6 *Gestern Abend gab man auf diesem Theater eine neue Opera semiseria , vom jungen Pacini; Adelaide e Comingio. Die Musik ist grösstentheils ein Quodlibet von andern Meistern, hat aber einige nicht üble Stüke, und die Cabalette der Arie der Prima-Donna im 2ten Act is sehr schön und neu zu nennen. Dem Brizzi war im ersten*

Acte nicht gut bey Stimme, sang aber benannte Arie in 2ten Acte meisterhafte. Meister und Sänger wurden nach jedem Acte hervorgerufen.
"At the Teatro Re in the present season all the singers are the same as I have mentioned" [The singers engaged for the season included Carolina Brizzi (who left early), Claudio Bonoldi, Violante Camporesi and Marianna Marconi-Shönberger – it was Carolina Brizzi who sang in Pacini's opera] *"Last evening was performed in this theatre a new opera semiseria by young Pacini Adelaide e Comingio. The music is to the greater part a mixture from other masters but contains some pieces which are not bad at all and the various cabalette to the arias of the prima donna in the second act must be described as very beautiful and new. Mademoiselle Brizzi was not in very good voice in the first act but sang these arias in a masterly fashion. The composer and singers had curtain calls after each act".*
The *sinfonia* was an extremely accomplished composition and may well have been the kind of music instrumental in encouraging the *pesarese* to invite the young Pacini to fill in some of the gaps in his *Matilde di Shabran* (1821) when pressed by a too urgent contract and too little time. In fact, here, Pacini first essayed music beyond the limits established by the repertoire of his father, achieving a colouring and an emotion that was genuinely expressive. And despite some buffo interludes this *opera semiseria* reversed convention by beginning with optimism and ending in tragedy

[xlv] In the audience was the poet Franz Grillparzer author of a 'Sappho' long presumed (incorrectly) to be the literary source for Pacini's *Saffo* of 1840. Grillparzer did not think much of Pacini's *Isabella e Florange* as he noted in his diary
Cfr Franz Grillparzer *Sämtliche Werke* Ed. Peter Frank and Karl Pörnbacher (Munich 1965)

Chapter two

"L'alacrità prodigiosa"

From now on he could hear his tunes whistled in the streets. The *Fiera del Santo* (St. Anthony of Padua) of 1818 saw him in that city following a commission in the wake of Pasta's success in his much fêted *Adelaide.* His choice of plot emerged as another benchmark - dictated by a desire to find another vehicle for such a great singer and such great singing[i] *Atala,* a highly-emotional effusion of impeccable archi-romantic origins was intended to press his modish point home.[ii] But the opera's overripe setting and resplendent cast went hardly any way to mitigate a clockwork adherence to convention on the part of its poet, Antonio Peracchi's pedestrian delving into Chateaubriand's exotic farrago broke no new ground whatsoever. All it did was confirm Pacini's strengths: his fluent invention, his ease in gaining the ear of the house and a willingness to deluge his audience in a cascade of shameless virtuosity. The potential of the plot went for nothing. Though an ability to create a mood was in evidence throughout it seldom went beyond a series of promising *ritornelli.*

This notwithstanding *Atala* was a huge success with audiences at the Teatro Nuovo of Padua. The composer was able to claim that *Adelaide e Comingio* and *Atala* "*furono ammesse all'onoranza di riprodursi su tutti I teatri della nostra Peninsola*" [iii] with only a slight exaggeration.

Alas, his *Atala* had followed Rossini's *Elisabetta regina d'Inghilterra* in the cartello and its proximity seems to have upset Pacini's reformist resolve by undermining his seedling romantic intentions : "*…per potenza di quell Mago che si chiamava, come dissi Rossini"* he confessed. Thus, despite a radical mindset *Atala* was merely a pause in an evolutional progress. For two years he would shadow the *sommo pesarese* even if not quite as slavishly as his critics would have us believe.

This decision proved both prudent and timely. Towards the end of its run his father succeeded in opening the door of La Scala for him (by using a form of blackmail[iv]). Instant compliance being part of the package the enchanted offspring concocted a score on the spot: adapting music from the disreputable "Monti" farse, adding a fine overture and a clutch of new *arie* among which was the soon-to-be-famous cavatina 'Cara adorata immagine'[v] and a brilliant finale. All of which *fritto-misto* was bent to a libretto supplied in haste by Felice Romani. The result was not less than sensational.

Fruit of paternal graft and musico/political expediency *Il barone di Dolsheim*, staged on 23 September 1818 went on to be performed forty-seven times. From the *Sinfonia* onwards the audience applauded everything. Like the *pesarese,* Pacini could make a *rifacimento* seem like new.

One thing *was* new. It was now that Pacini began to codify his *pezzi di bravura* to create a *cabaletta* template for all seasons and all *Stagioni* - with tic-toc rhythms and infectious syncopation, following convention to be sure but unmistakably his own thing, rocketing up and down like a roller-coaster, infinitely extendable and as challenging as possible vocally the maestro would be ready to exploit its blueprint for the rest of his circuit of the stage. From henceforth in Italy his name would be inseparable from its visceral excitement.

Romani, too, had achieved a comic breakthrough. This paragon of classical melodrama had masterminded a comic model true to his own tastes - a bande-desinée sequential *Il barone di Dolsheim* that reduced Frederick the Great of Prussia to legendary entertainment in parallel with a Peter the Great of Russia soon to follow - a remarkable pairing of Realpolitik monsters lowered to farce thus enabling Italian audiences to view political events *oltralpe* with an improbable good-humour.

Pacini discovered a light-hearted strain in this improvised score; the title-role sung by Giacomo Rubini (elder brother of the celebrated sibling[vi]); Violante Camporesi a favorite soprano and Luigi his father sang together perfectly irresistibly (Stendhal praised their "*duo superbe*"); the music was rushed into print and went round Italy instantly. Probably its most prestigious staging was at Trieste on 20 December 1819 with Giuditta Pasta once more heading the cast, with Luigi Sirletti, and Luigi Pacini; then at the San Carlo of Naples in 1821 with Giovanni Battista Rubini in the title role created by his big brother. Donizetti staged it at Palermo in 1825 (let down by a hopeless orchestra) and La Scala mounted it anew that same year with Joséphine De Méric as prima donna when it reappeared twenty more times. Abroad it collected new titles: "*Federico II re di Prussia*"; "*Il barone di Felcheim*" and "*La colpa emendata dal valore*" (in Germany one did not fool around with Frederick the Great). It had its feeblest revival of all in London at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket on 22 January 1822.

Paradoxically the *enfant terrible* had achieved respectability with his scandalous music. Such a barefaced appropriation of Rossini's delirious catalogue of foolery, mocking invention, and apparently limitless musical resource did him no harm at all -

unashamed parody (his own special *forte*) allowing him to side-step the slavish imitation that sank so many rivals. And there was one special boon. Following a wave of enthusiasm for his 'Cara adorata immagine' he set about writing operatic "hits" in response. This aria had been the first of many to find a place on every piano in Italy.

As if pursued Pacini rushed to Venice without taking a breath to fulfil a commission from the Teatro San Benedetto. Gaetano Rossi had offered him a perfectly zany libretto so excruciatingly funny that in some ways it could claim to be the most promising he had ever set to music, with verses of a rare distinction almost describable as "*serious opera semiseria.*" An incredibly inventive spoof to which he responded so urgently that his score was conceived entirely on his lap *en route*, *La sposa fedele* had a pungently picturesque setting sent-up with dilapidated castles, bosky groves, rivulets and gothick caverns in cardboard mountains (as in Act I, Sc. 13) - its poet mercilessly guying most of the precious ingredients of his own cherished *semi-seria* mode. Pacini's music rose to the occasion. Mocking, modish, cunning and infinitely varied, delivered with such unblushing panache that few in the San Benedetto were able to resist the seduction of its fantastic propositions bolstered by utter recklessness.[vii]

On 14 January 1819 the audience found an opera as gay and compelling as any light-hearted score by any his predecessors at their comic apogee. There were extraordinarily varied vocal opportunities in *La sposa fedele* for everyone in the cast. One or two of the more memorable *pezzi* summed-up Pacini's current eclectic mode: the tenor *aria con coro* 'Si venite a me d'intorno' is a good example,[viii] its recitative stilted and almost prosaic; its *cantabile* underpinned by rhythms borrowed unashamedly from Neapolitan popular song underscored by swooning-strings; the whole arriving at a concertato in crescendo of irresistibly infectious verve. No wonder Rossini took note of Pacini's potential. And no wonder his rivals trembled. A revival at La Scala later that same year was nothing less than a *furore* for Violante Camporesi. With its brilliantly dead-pan décor by Sanquirico *La sposa fedele* was repeated seventeen times. For a revival at the Teatro Carignano in Turin in 1820 [ix] Pacini wrote a new cavatina for Giuditta Pasta: this was 'Lungi dal caro ben' which featured in concert programmes to the end of the century. *La sposa fedele* circulated widely, printed extracts fluttered all over Europe transposed up and down for every kind of voice. It was the first of Pacini's operas to appear in print in France (as an arrangement for flute and piano by Nicolas Charles Bochsa).[x]

Three months later he was on stage again. At La Scala once more and with yet another *bande desinée* proposal - but this time with new music throughout. Its hero *Pietro il Grande* managing to combine Big Bad Wolf with Fairy Godmother at cross purposes with a *Magistrato* (Luigi Pacini) and pointed confrontations at every moment in the score. This *Il falegname di Livonia* proved also to be an unexpected milestone. Performed at La Scala on 12 April 1819 it was to be his first clash with Gaetano Donizetti whose *Pietro il grande, Kzar delle Russie* made an appearance eight months later at the Teatro San Samuele in Venice on 26 December 1819 with exactly the same argument.

In point of fact there was no comparison between the composers neither now nor later. Though they shared several plots they were never on the same wavelength. Pacini's riotous comedy went on to be performed into the 1830's[xi] and the two libretti were not comparable: Romani's perfectly fabulous text was sly, witty, and replete with a delirious literary fantasy, every character was a vignette of sorts with verses so apt that they could be savoured as well as sung. The opera's starring role (not *Pietro* but the *Magistrato*) was a *buffo* masterpiece at the very apex of the theatrical poet's art, hilarious, imbecile, with patter at a level of drivel so inspired that there was no moment for the audience even to draw breath. Though snobbish to excess and perfectly idiotic as purported history this *Cenerentola-in-trousers* had more than enough wit and ingenuity to keep the house on the edge of its seat to the last notes.

As was to be expected, Donizetti took a quite different view of the same story. His music too is witty but much less a slave to *brio*. His libretto more rambling and introspective and his roles such as those of *Madame Fritz* and the *Magistrato* in particular protracted almost to excess - his starring buffo *Magistrato* eked-out interminably as if well aware that he would have to live-up-to the challenge of Luigi Pacini. Donizetti's characters are less pointed, more ingratiating and more prone to sentimentality (which was never Pacini's *forte*). Though his poet, the ingenious *marchese* Gherardo Bevilacqua-Aldobrandini cannot be compared with Felice Romani he does make some good points (the duet between the *Magistrato* and the incognito Emperor after the latter has turned the tables by pulling rank is especially deft and invites a cunning setting by the Bergamasc). But Donizetti's score has not the same clarity nor quite the same finesse. Pacini's experience shows.[xii] And Bevilacqua's plot

is more earthbound, he short-circuits the theatrical fuse painfully at the end of Act I.

Donizetti's *Il falegname di Livonia,* however, to give it the title he preferred, marks a major step forward in the theatre of the day: his *Pietro* is no *deus-ex-machina,* this alone indicates a sea-change on the stage. Whereas the Bergamasc maestro is bent on a recognisable humanity in his opera the gilded grandiloquent post-Metastasian kitsch of the opera by Romani/Pacini ['*Oh generoso'* '*Oh grande!*'] such as even then still engaged the great Rossini seems now out of date. Audiences had changed, the public had not the same deference. The power of rulers was up for bids. To this extent Donizetti emerges as a composer of a later generation than his rival -- despite the single year that lay between their dates of birth.

But Pacini's opera had a far more generous reception (Cambiasi gives it *Buonissimo*) and all sorts of great singers were to appear in it. It would also bear witness to a characteristic faible of its maestro: revision. As originally composed this opera did not offer a role for a *prima donna soprano* [xiii] unimaginable as it seems. .At some unspecified date [after 1825] Pacini put the record straight and corrected its gender-specific priorities. A manuscript score in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France includes a *Caterina* expanded to a point where she now has the leading role in *Il falegname di Livonia*. She has a brand-new 'Gran scena ed aria' in Act II; she has enhanced participation in *duetti* and *terzetti* throughout, and takes charge of a completely transformed *quintetto* that becomes the pivot of the drama - the '*Quintetto ossia Aria di Caterina'* which now is the moment when she cuts everyone down to size - including her imperial husband.

It may have become feasible because Luigi Pacini was on the point of retiring from the stage and relinquishing his famous role. But it might equally have been due to a new mistress for the maestro! [xiv] At any event in its first form this Pacini comedy had many brilliant revivals: at Florence (1830); Genoa (1832); and Bologna (1832). At Naples (Teatro San Carlo 13 November 1823) with Giovanni-Battista Rubini as *Pietro* its ecstatic reception confirmed Pacini as Rossini's successor[xv] as *Direttore de' reali teatri* an honour he would endure impatiently until a welcome lyrical upheaval allowed him to escape.

The immediate impact of all this was operatic wear-and-tear. His constant travelling, scoring, rehearsing, placating singers, finding lodgings, finding copyists, searching out

new libretti and librettists, negotiating new contracts with an ever-widening circle of theatres, had, if only momentarily perhaps, taken its toll. Uncharacteristically he toyed with a *Gli'Illinesi* and abandoned it semi-composed.[xvi]

And then a major musical change was under way in Italy: the supremacy of comedy in the opera house was on the wane. Once the only respite for hard-pressed audiences prey to war and invasion *opera seria* had returned to favour with the defeat of Naploéon – the *Restaurazione* urgently needing retro tales of glory to bolster the lost historical authenticity of their restored régimes. Together with barbaric foreign authors like Schiller, Walter Scott and Shakespeare with their medievalising phantasmagoria and troubadouresque nostalgia, historical escapism took hold anew of opera hoses and librettists Italy-wide. Not one to fail to put his ear to the ground, Pacini was as early an any in coming to terms with all this. The next two operas were prophetic.

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Pacini insists that *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul* was written in twenty-eight days and in 1817[xvii] in one of the more wayward statements in his memoirs. After half-a-lifetime he may be permitted a margin of error, no doubt he would have *preferred* this opera to have been composed earlier than it was given the conflict he was to encounter later with *Norma,* its composer, and its poet. But in fact *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul* and its companion score *Vallace o sia L'eroe scozzese* were composed more or less together in the last months of 1819 with the first – the more difficult to cast – finding a stage *after* the other.

Vallace was a fashionable choice. Both Pacini and Romani were ready to respond to the sporrans and claymores that the Tottola/Rossini *La donna del lago* had scattered over the S.Carlo stage in September 1819. Both were willing to take part in a Highland fling but Romani unwisely chose to revert to pseudo-Ossian for his plot. Textually *Vallace* is *vieux jeu* but has some almost triumphant moments. Pacini dismisses his score, he says that the quintet from Rossini's *Bianca e Falliero* which preceded *Vallace* at La Scala was worth more than the entire opera[xviii] but the *Vallace* text - even if outmoded - is far superior to that of *Bianca* and his opera was let down only by a storyline that was far too virtuous to survive a contemporary audience. Pacini's music has effective moments - trademark duets, which Carolina Bassi (in the trouser role of Wallace[xix]) and Violante Camporesi (as Elena) made memorable. Key extracts became popular in the opera's sillage among them the cavatina 'Prodi amici' and the fine extended *duetto* 'Ah se dal caro principe' which was received with near-ecstatic cheers.

Opening at La Scala on 14 February 1820 *Vallace* had the best of receptions and was repeated thirty times ('*Buonissimo*"). And whatever his negative views, this opera had reassuring revivals and one major rifacimento, that at the Teatro Pergola in Florence in 1821 with Fanny Eckerlin as Elena in which *Vallace* was retitled *Odoardo re d'Inghilterra* to reflect drastic major readjustments to the plot. And then, after the despised La Scala staging, Pacini found himself with seven hundred francs in his pocket, a small fortune.

If neither *Vallace* nor its twin *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul* with its intriguing title had much more than a hint of real romantic fervour, both shared a proto-emotional orchestration with a surfeit of local colour, thus eroding the predictable structures and catchy rhythms then in vogue but not yet displaying the pacing, exaggeration and emotional excess of the operas Pacini would be writing before long. Romani had stooped to conquer with the second of these operas, taking the argument of *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul* - not from his lofty literary library - but from a flimsy Parisian vaudeville 'Clodomire ou La Prètresse d'Irminsul' by J.P.J.Noel and Henri Lemaire, a source as distant from Marmontel as Soumet's 'Norma'. This notwithstanding, the *mise-en-scène* of Druids, sacred oak tree, and Romilda's apparent betrayal and paternal anguish would be enough to arouse Pacini's indignant fury when Romani later, and with long contemplated malice, furnished a rival text for Bellini's *Norma*[xx] the proud poet had been embarrassed by anyone remembering '*Clodomire.'* On the other hand Pacini's insistence on the precise date of its genesis meant only that he continued to cherish his score.

A musico/political conflict would be generated between Pacini and Bellini in due course: while *Norma* was to be a vehicle for its primadonna, *Irminsul* had been a showpiece for Giovanni Bettista Velluti - the one surviving castrato on the operatic stage who put pressure on composers to endorse his florid reputation

Pacini took great care with his opera. There was a substantial overture – not without atmosphere (but resorting to *banda*) and a plethora of that kind of duet he would develop in the next years – prolonged, discursive, quasi-continuous with a string of cantabile episodes, *ariosi* and dramatic interludes like currants in a cake, evolving organically and ending unlike any Rossinian formula with a big tune. *Irminsul* did make attempts to establish a mood but in a discontinuous manner, its frantic vocal athletics leading to the paper-thin happy-ending in which Velluti came into his own.

But the response of the critics will surprise those who believe the opera to have been

an irrelevance: at the prima of *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul* at Trieste on 11 May 1820 this *melodramma eroico* attracted rave reviews: *"Una bella musica, ricca di soavissime", "un sentimento di sublime tristezza"*[xxi]. As the last remark implies the opera harks back to *Adelaide e Comingio* and offers at least a hint of the grand style and extravagant emotions of Pacini's maturity and. found favour in a long series of revivals [xxii] in which Velluti's role was taken-over- if less strenuously- by a succession of contraltos and mezzo-sopranos including Vaccai's diva Adele Cesari and Rosmunda Pisaroni-Carrara. *Brani staccati* were published worldwide and manuscript copies of the full score found their way to distant shores.

Any elegiac intimations in these two operas were soon to be put aside. The plot to which he now turned his hand proved yet another step in his now increasingly bitter divorce from Felice Romani: a certain "Vittorio Pezzi" (a pseudonym?) had purloined the plot of Basily's *Il califfo e la schiava* with its Romani libretto (La Scala 21 August 1819) apparently at paternal behest! How Pacini (or Pezzi or his father) hoped to get away with this theft is a mystery [xxiii] especially as the Pezzi opera was intended for performance in the poet's fief of Torino. If it was Luigi's doing, his wish to end his reign in the opera house with a role in which he could shine without even trying[xxiv] would bring incalculable trouble to his son.

On 28 October 1820 the Teatro Carignano was overflowing for *La schiava in Bagdad* - the fruit of the Pezzi robbery. Giuditta Pasta sang the title role of Zora and with the memory of a fabulous 'Lungi dal caro bene' to her credit carried her growing popularity to fever pitch. Luigi's *Mustafà* - a mirror-image of the role he had sung in the Basily score - carried everything before it - yet another turbaned *buffo* in which a baffled Ottoman potentate is tricked into getting "drunk" and, in this case, committing "incest" was very much to the taste of the audience. Every nuance of his father's comic repertory was exploited to the last hilarious detail by his son.. As for Pasta, she triumphed, her 'Donne, voi che siete amanti' the resplendent *rondo finale* of joy with its violin *obbligato* and brilliant variations was encored every evening. As "incest" was an especially popular notion on Italian stages *La schiava in Bagdad* won an extended lease of life. [xxv] Revivals continued for a decade.[xxvi]

Mustafà was the final role supplied for paternal exploitation. An important marker had been passed. Nino now was free to write serious operas to his heart's content! [xxvii]

With the Luigi's absence lightening his portfolio, he arrived in Rome on 2 December and was taken that evening to hear Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto* in which he was surprised to hear his aria 'Si venite a me d'intorno'[xxviii] from *La sposa fedele* applauded by a full and enthusiastic house. It was the happiest of auguries.

*

It was not the only augury. In the Teatro Valle and under the aegis of Cimarosa's maltreated masterpiece Pacini found himself bending over the hand of the fabulous and feckless *principessa* Borghese, Pauline Bonaparte, for the very first time.[xxix] Napoléon's sister had asked that the popular young maestro be brought to her box. He was twenty-three years old and it would be the last of her great passions.



Pauline Bonaparte, Principessa Borghese

She preferred composers to music. Her highly orchestrated romance with Felice Blangini [xxx] had been conducted under disapproving imperial eyes in Paris in 1807 but in the papal redoubt her cultural profile was sufficiently marked to allow her to indulge in unlimited musical variations. Pacini was certainly aware that she had featured prominently among those friends of Paisiello who had set out to wreck the début of Rossini's *Almaviva ossia L'inutile precauzine* aka *Il barbiere di Seviglia* in Rome in 1816. She would represent a distinct shift in his operatic orientation.

His public image promptly took a turn for the better but it made almost no difference to his working schedule. While Paolina rehearsed his songs in her salon at the Palazzo Borghese and engaged Ester Mombelli, Carlo Zuchelli and Nicola Tacci to give a private performance of his *La schiava in Bagdad* with the maestro at the piano, he spent his days – if not his nights – in composing against the clock. But the celebrated encounter had drawn immediate endorsement from the Roman operatic establishment: a *scrittura* to write for the Teatro Valle had followed within days and it is against his new social backcloth of dinners, receptions, unlimited flattery and wealth, and against all the odds, that *La gioventù di Enrico Quinto* came into existence..

Away from palaces and princesses he discovered that he was competing with Saverio Mercadante. The latter's *Scipione in Cartagine* was due to open the Roman *carnevale* in the biggest theatre in Rome, the Teatro Argentina. The libretto Pacini had been given for the Teatro Valle based not on Shakespeare but on a ragbag of Parisian sources by Filippo Tarducci was not impressive, nothing anglo-saxon in the plot but its London setting and its verse in need of urgent correction by Romani and Jacopo Ferretti.[xxxi] Appropriately enough, however, in this Roman context, the plot struck a romantic note. There was not much excitement, few *cabalette* (three only and all for the prima donna) but a great many of the long, long engaging duets fast becoming his *forte.* The cast was modest, with the young tenor Amerigo Sbigoli [xxxii]in the title role and a *primo musico* Eduardo sung by Cecilia Smith – a true anglo-saxon – as a result of whom this boy-gets-girl story ends as girl-gets-girl one of them singing a taxing aria finale. It was an attractive proposition, even so, and no less than four composers were to take up the plot in the next years.[xxxiii] Staged on 26 December 1820 the same date as *Scipione in Cartagine,* a big reversal of theatrical fortunes took place in the Papal Capital that evening; the *gratin* abandoned the Argentina and flocked to the modest

Teatro Valle - real-life imperial events taking preference over pasteboard regalia where theatrical worth was at issue, Scipione didn't stand a chance, Paolina and Pacini side-by-side in the same box offered a spectacle of the first magnitude. As for the now rather blasé composer - his opera pleased, he was a social draw, he had won the favours of a famous beauty and far less easy to win he had a commission to write for the Teatro Argentina the following season.

It was during the Roman run of *La gioventù di Enrico Quinto* that Pacini had his unnerving interview with Cardinal Consalvi, the powerful and dictatorial Secretary of State. His self-deprecating account of this encounter is worthy of recording (especially in view of his recent if unwitting offence against Cimarosa). Confronted by the sacred potentate at Montecavallo the following conversation ensued:

> "*Tell me, young maestro, do you know the music of Paisiello and Cimarosa?"*
> *"Yes your Eminence"*
> *"Good, which of the two maestri do you consider to have the most genius?"*
> *"Your Eminence, both are equally great masters"*
>
> *"No! No! I want to know which is the more important in your opinion"*

In the face of this insistence Pacini crossed his fingers and plumped for Cimarosa, at which the burly Cardinal rose to his feet, grabbed the maestro by the scruff of his neck and frogmarched him into his library where were ranged all the manuscript scores of Cimarosa:

"Kneel, young maestro" commanded the Man of God: *"Love the music of this genius and model yourself on him so that in time you could possibly do something worthy".*

Pacini knelt and fled, wondering what could possibly have happened had he chosen Paisiello[xxxiv].

Of course he did nothing of the kind. His mentor continued to be his antiquated mentors even if now with diminishing returns. Early in February (Pacini had just

dashed off a cantata for Trieste *Lo schietto omaggio* given on 12 February 1821) when he was stopped in the street by yet another sacred potentate: Gioacchino Rossini. The musical idol of all Italy invited him to help complete his *Matilde di Shabran* which was falling behind schedule[xxxv] farming out to him the texts of three pieces The young composer's pleasure at this flattering collaboration was tempered only when *Matilde* was given a poor reception at the Teatro Apollo on 24 February (the opera, full of novelty, had been only half-rehearsed). In great good humour Rossini proceeded to blame him for the fiasco while re-writing Pacini's three sections as soon as he could.

Rome had other compensations, he stayed with Paolina at Frascati throughout the spring and early summer and in her company (with the excuse of restaging *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul*) travelled to Lucca – a city that would become his home in due course of time. With Emilia Bonini and Carolina Bassi the opera was such a success at the Real Teatro del Giglio that the sovereign Duchessa di Lucca, Maria Luisa di Borbone, Infanta di Spagna [xxxvi] (one of those glittering children featured in Goya's celebrated family portrait of Carlos IV and his wife) made him her *Maestro di Camera e Cappella,* an honorary post that would tie him Tuscany for the rest of his life. From henceforth it was in Viareggio, or Lucca, or Pescia that he took refuge.[xxxvii]

In the autumn they returned to Rome for his Argentina commission. Quite how he accepted the fustian plot of *Cesare in Egitto* is unknown unless *Scipione in Cartagine* needed a further nail in its coffin, or simply because he needed an acknowledgment of his Roman kudos (it was in rejecting such a plot later that Bellini came out with his contemptuous "*Vecchio come Noè*"). In the event, instead of suffering from the cobwebs hanging over the argument Pacini's music was found to be too cheerful, too jaunty, his cast too extrovert and his score one of almost continual brio. Against all the odds *Cesare in Egitto* was to be praised for its originality! [xxxviii]

Roman audiences were divided at this time, the Valle had just closed for redecoration and its company removed to the Apollo, thus the Argentina had become ultra-sensitive about its status as a serious house. The prima, on 26 December 1821 was applauded enthusiastically. Pacini's vaunted "*sistema di melodie semplice – strumentale facile*" had paid off, the score was suitably elegant. Ester Mombelli who was receiving the incredible sum of two thousand one hundred scudi (no doubt thanks to Paolina) excelled herself as Cleopatra, as did Domenico Donzelli in the title role. Such vocal excess would be the undoing of *Cesare in Egitto*; two weeks into the run, the second tenor Amerigo Sbigoli singing Tolomeo attempted to imitate an *ad lib in alt* by Donzelli in

the Act II *quintetto,* to the horror of everyone in the theatre a brilliant jet of blood gushed from his mouth, the curtain fell and the performance was abandoned. He had burst a blood vessel in his throat and died soon after, leaving a widow and four children. Though the opera survived and continued on stage until 27 January (with Tolomeo sung by an unhappy substitute) it was thoroughly blighted.

This tragedy threw a shadow over the score. [xxxix] *Cesare in Egitto* never had much luck forthwith, though it had a revival at the Teatro Valle in 1831 the opera was not considered to be *buffa* enough for that house and the critics decided it was "*outmoded.*"

It was during the Spring of that year that Pacini began to build a house at Viareggio, it would be complete by 1824. It due course it would house his mother, brother Francesco, both his sisters Claudia [xl] and Giuseppina [xli]and – from 1825 onwards – his father whose last real contract (with the *cavaliere* Glossop) had expired in March that year. Building concerns apart, he spent most of the year shadowing Paolina, in the summer to the Bagni di Lucca, in the autumn to stay with her in the Palazzo Toscanelli in Pisa, notable only for the fabulous relic she bestowed on him within its walls: of a scarcity almost comparable with that of the toe of the Buddha - a lock of Napoléon's not too copious hair. [xlii] Not just did the Emperor lose his hair himself but Pacini lost it too. He left it in a drawer of the hotel where it was stolen by a chambermaid. It is improbable that Paolina ever forgave him.

On 25 July 1822 *Lucchese* citizenship was conferred on the composer by the duchess Maria Luisa (thus winning *carte blanche* to escort Paolina in the city and without comment as the princess had acquired a villa at Monte San Quirico on 12 August of that year[xliii]). These domestic honours never impinged on his incessant composition: during the year he wrote another cantata for Trieste – the onorific *Il puro omaggio* to celebrate yet another visit by the Austrian Emperor as well as an *Album of Romanze* but around him great names were plunging into the void. Generali, Pavesi, Morlacchi, Paër – even Mayr - though still in existence - were scarcely audible, Mercadante and Donizetti were yet to find a voice strong enough to make a real impact.

As for Pacini, he was about to embark upon foreign conquest. A commission for a new *La Vestale* from La Scala truly represented a major challenge, Milan was prepared to offer material support for a version to rival that of Spontini who had subjected a proudly Roman theme to outrageous Parisian embroidery! La Scala was ready to supply grandiose settings by Alessandro Sanquirico to fill its immense stage.

It was the prospect of outsize Roman columns, Roman prestige, and the outsize cast of Teresa Belloc-Giorgi, Isabella Fabbrica, Savino Monelli and Luigi Lablache that persuaded him to take on he monumental challenge.

The primary feature of his *La Vestale* would be its orchestration; following some delving into authentic classical precedent he came up with a grossly augmented orchestral score which of course had the effect of enraging the critics who true to their limitations would complain of "…*a want of finish in the parts and an extraordinary mis-employment of wind instruments. "*[xliv] It is true that in this opera unwonted decibels tended to drown an overladen vocal line (set very low for Belloc) but of course he had to endure an immediate cacophony of critical voices raised in protest against Pacini's "sacrilege."[xlv] The prima, however, on 6 February of 1823 justified all his research, it would be operatic spectacle that would be Pacini's way forward for almost a decade.

Almost certainly

Paolina was the real source of Pacini's interest in French Opera, its merits and its challenge Did he select *La Vestale* in defence of her Roman rights? Was it his discovery of Winckelmann in Paolina's library that suggested that the Gallic distortions for Spontini needed to be corrected? In any event Paolina and her sisters had no reason to perpetuate the glory of its original dedicatee.[xlvi] Irrespective of the highly praised Belloc and of Lablache's brilliant *entrata,* this was an opera of ensembles and *tableaux vivants* [xlvii] that came up to all the idiosyncratic demands of its Milanese audience.

Its subsequent history was typical of Pacini's taste for revision. Probably the excuse he would have made was that every opera needed to be brought up-to-date; that every new cast needed changes and that no score of his was ever sacrosanct. Whatever the explanation it was the *re-appearance* of Pacini's *La Vestale* in Florence on 4 April 1831 that won his *La vestale* a certain immortality thanks to the negative contribution of Hector Berlioz.[xlviii]

The Teatro Pergola had offered Pacini a revival of *La vestale.* Pacini turned the opera upside-down for the occasion, only five items from the original opera survived. [xlix] The music of the title role had been raised to accommodate the *spinto* voice of Giulia Grisi, twinned with another soprano Anna Del Serre as a musico Licinio; the orchestra was reduced (for a house only half the size of La Scala) and the plot amended. The score now reflected the changes in style which had emerged in the

interim, that is, with less formula and more immediacy.

None of this cut any ice with Berlioz in Italy for a belated *prix de Rome,* he effected, or so he says he did, an exit after only a few moments, muttering "*wormwood, wormwood*." [l] Had he stayed longer he might have justified his *bourse*. The vocal score was republished and dedicated to the "*Contessa Giulia Samoyloff, nata contessa di Pahlen"* a far more welcome contributor to the opera of the day. [li]

*

It was his Tuscan affiliation that earned him his next *scrittura* but Rossinian precedent that reflected his choice of plot. *Temistocle* - like *Semiramide* - being a Metastasian revision modified by a much lesser poet with up-to-date views.[lii] Fully aware of this, *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* commented predictably on the "*strong smell of Rossini*" [liii] of *Temistocle* but to those with less predictable nostrils the hallmarks of a rebellious Pacini were far more strongly in evidence. That he was in the process of taking wing was obvious. The Real Teatro del Giglio in Lucca offered him a cast of supernatural virtuosity including Rosmunda Pisaroni-Carrara in the *musico* role of Serse, Santina Ferlotti as Aspasia and the veteran Niccolò Tacchinardi in the title role. The auspices were good, the plot was heroic, and the preparation exhaustive with the composer present throughout. It was the temperature that lost the battle. Opening on 28 August 1823 the theatre was suffocating, everyone – artists, audience and maestro were completely exhausted - under such circumstances the weight of florid music proved completely unbearable. Pisaroni's heroic virtues were legendary but she was tested to the limits by her *aria di sortita* with its horn obbligato (redolent of the *sortite* in so many operas to come) an exordium of frightening virtuosity. Much of the tessitura was testing; but the score itself gloried in a precocious lilt and lyricism that was certainly more romantic than anything the Italy of the *pesarese* had been accustomed to hearing. There were fabulous items, like the languishing oboe introduction to the *scena e preghiera* of Temistocle beautifully blending with his contraltino accents and many studied set pieces - a *gran duetto* between Serse and Temistocle at the height of the drama 'E istinto di natura, l'amor del Patrio lido' of perfectly staggering complexity and emotive colouring being at the very apex of current vocal allure - but none of these things made any impact at the first appearance of the opera. *Temistocle* was a disaster. Pacini was thoroughly upset by such a check

on his home ground primarily because *Temistocle* ran in tandem with Mercadante's *Didone abbandonata,* which – more fortunate in temperature at its Lucchese revival - had far less a limp reception with exactly the same cast. Happily for Pacini's *amour propre* - when the two operas were put on again in tandem at Livorno - *Temistocle* triumphed and *Didone* died abandoned by its audience.

Pisaroni loved this opera, and revived it (with Claudio Bonoldi as Temistocle) at La Scala in 1824 when it had twelve performances; together with Tacchinardi she sang it at La Pergola that same year. Tacchinardi sang it with Carolina Bassi at Trieste with a new cavatina for the tenor. A manuscript score in London reveals that a staging with Giuditta Pasta was projected and extracts published in vocal score but the performance never got beyond the first hurdles, Pacini was no more on the urgent revival list in London than in Paris, even if Pasta sang the Serse entrata to torrents of applause in concerts![liv]

The following months were stressful. Paolina fell ill. Was it anaemia or anorexia? Most probably it was leukaemia. Certainly it was one of those languid states that decimated young women in the nineteenth century leaving them sofa-bound - becoming paler and weaker every day - a focus for sympathy and concern with a poetry book dangling from a feeble hand. She was not an endearing person but she had charm and courage: "*I dined with a beautiful and famous personage, who thinks of nothing but her little handsome person and of her dress. She is illiterate, and amusing when she does not attempt to read Tasso. Her court is made up of singers, some sycophants, and of handsome young officers"*[lv]. No doubt she found Pacini diverting and energetic, whether he returned the compliment is not certain. Even at the time of their first meeting she was a shadow of her former voluptuousness, probably he enjoyed her entourage even if there was more kudos than entertainment in their company. The noble contacts he made were useful - even reassuring in the face of his wayward *métier*. Paolina supplied the social equivalent of the *cabalette* that epitomised his music in the public mind - her dizzy existence the perfect corollary to his whirlwind of composition sending him flying from place to place, prima to prima.

On the other side, the impossibly fertile composer must have seemed like a life force to the dying princess. In his memoirs he is always discreet about his long ago *affaire*, at the time of writing not only did he have a possessive third wife but the Bonaparte dynasty was again a power in the land. Did she make him famous? She certainly made him notorious. Did she make him rich? It seems not. Barbiera [lvi]insists that she

showered him with gifts all of which he disdained or discarded - the Emperor's forelock (which he could ill-afford to lose) being a fine example. This fabled romance remains shadowy: legend has it that the Borghese family begged Pacini to return the gilt-edged beauty to the bosom of her husband; the chronology of events appears to indicate that he would have done so had he been able. She is reputed to have said "*I shall return to my family only when you marry*" with the unflattering consequence that he got married one week later. To this extent only, are legends born. His loyalty was to his art.

Her illness encouraged him to spend Christmas at home for once S.Stefano (the opening of the carnival season) failed to tempt him. He had two commissions in any case, a cantata and another important *scrittura* for La Scala. The first of these *La reggia di Astrea* was given on 12 February 1824 at the newly rebaptised Teatro Grande in Trieste and once again in honour of Francesco I (whose stoicism in this respect must have been extraordinary) came as a background to reproaches from the fractious Paolina at his absence, reproaches which appear to have put him off his guard in respect of the second contract. The opera *Isabella ed Enrico* – staged in one of the weakest seasons ever at La Scala (four operas in succession failed including a revival of Rossini's *Maometto II*) – and the administration of the great theatre totally collapsed. The score was not one of the composer's more impetuous creations and had not the constitution to survive inadequate staging and an absence of rehearsals. The prima on 12 June 1824 had a surface glow, but his anxiety about the lack of a real *primadonna* seems to have been born out. *Harmonicon* in an unusually succinct account does something to balance Cambiasi's "*Cattivo"*:

> *"…it was received with great applause. And at the conclusion the maestro and principal singers were called for to receive the congratulations of the public. On the second evening, however, the applause was much less: neither the maestro nor the singers were called on the stage, and on the third evening the theatre was empty".*
> *"…the present opera, the introduction and the finale excepted, possesses nothing remarkable, except it be that the violoncellos are, without any apparent reason, kept hard at work during every part of it"*

A later issue gives some further information: the sinfonia was "*brilliant"*, the accompaniments "*noisy…he loves trumpets (like Rossini) and the trombone*" and that "*he can never give his hearers too much for their money*" [lvii]

Here the truth was out, and the real explanation for his welcome appearance on so many stages in Italy. He was always prodigal with his melodies, duets, trios and cori, even if of unpredictable quality. He knew when to strike effectively but seldom sensed

when enough was enough. In the case of *Isabella ed Enrico* Pacini regretted its poor poem (by Luigi Romanelli) and railed at its "*semifiasco*", he refused even to mention the cast in his memoirs. The opera appeared seven times, he later insisted (as so often when struck by fate) that he was studying the great masters at the time, Lulli, Rameau and Grétry - but no evidence of this auspicious study remains in his score.[lviii]

The following months were far from restful. The composer spent two weeks of August with Paolina in a cloud of recrimination and reproach; leaving for Trieste again a letter was flung after him on 21 August telling him it was all off. It was merely a tiff. In no way perturbed Pacini set about reviving *Temistocle*, first at Trieste (2 September), then at Milan (4 September) during this whistle-stop existence writing another opera for Naples. As a result he soon fell ill, and it was put about that he would retire from the stage. Neither illness, nor exhaustion, nor irritation (with Paolina) stemmed the musical flow nor put him off his stride, Pacini was an obsessional. His antiquarian nature reasserting itself under such stress he sought a companion for *Temistocle*, and searched for another Metastasian *rifacimento*. With the complicity of the poet Giovanni Federico Schmidt (whose real name was Vincent Smith and of English descent)[lix] he alighted upon *Alessandro nell'Indie,* Schmidt's verses (with some help from Tottola) were set to music, approved by the censors, rehearsed and ready for staging in record time. It would be a huge score, taking the spectacular possibilities offered to great lengths and its timing was perfect: with Rossini in Paris, with Donizetti dismayed by two failures, with Mercadante dismayed by three failures and absent, and with Bellini not yet on the horizon he had the vast stage of the S.Carlo to himself. He had every excuse to be bold, innovatory and extravagant and to the astonishment of all, *Alessandro nell'Indie* made a good claim to be all three.

With its prima on that vast stage on 30 November 1824, with its frieze of dramatic set-pieces designed to be worthy of its Metastasian origins, with two stellar voices – Adelaide Tosi and Andrea Nozzari, with the vocal "hit'of Tosi's cavatina 'se d'amor fra le ritorte' received with *furore* [lx] (even Pacini was bowled over by its success: "*Dio! Dio buono*" he says in his memoirs "*..in tal modo avrà assicurato l'avvenire ai miei genitori ed all'intiera mia famiglia*" [lxi]and happily all of them were there in the theatre – mother, father, brothers and sisters) this opera by Pacini was widely, if erroneously, reported as having had seventy performances [lxii]on its first appearance. King Ferdinand was in the Royal Box. *Harmonicon* rose to the occasion with a priceless piece of misinformation and malice:

> *"Pacini's new opera Alessandro nell'Indie, has just been brought out here: it is a meagre imitation of Rossini, as all his compositions are. An order is just issued here, from the Sovereign, prohibiting all persons from hissing at the Teatro San Carlo, and also commanding that none shall presume to encore anything, till his Majesty sets the example!"*[lxiii]

Cheered to the echo, the king received Pacini in his private box at the side of the stage (and came to the opera every few days throughout its long run). Replete with subtleties, highly coloured, this *Alessandro* threw Pacini into the hands of Domenico Barbaja who made every effort to "place" him on the stages he controlled - no little boast as by 1826 he would be running no less than three of the world's bravest sites: the S. Carlo, La Scala and the Kärntnertortheater in Vienna. Pacini, only too aware of the mantra of the proto-rossiniani (as above), tries to give credence to a German influence in his orchestration:

> "*Mi applicai pertando a rintracciare pensieri puri e semplici, non tralasciando però di accurare la parte concertata ed istrumentale, nella quale era andato di mano in mano pregredendo, studiando gli effetti delle varie famiglie degli strumenti, a facendo ognor più tesoro dei sommi musicisti alemanni"*[lxiv]

But there is no need to make such exotic claims, though the orchestration was unusually dense and vigorous in this quasi-barocco pastiche the audience responded mostly to his inventive duetti and its spectacular impact. In Naples – Rossini's erstwhile capital – his junior tasted real glory - up to now an assimilator, he began to break chains[lxv].

In a state of near collapse the diminutive maestro was escorted back to Viareggio by his family. Here, other chains awaited. The sequence of events has never been quite clear. Paolina's illness had become common knowledge; now she was in steep decline. Once again the carnival season passed without an opera. That they met at this time in certain; Paolina was in Florence; some sort of repeat performance of their earlier tiff ended the *affaire* for good. Pacini merely records that an "*alta relazione che in forza delle circostanze (onde il mio nome non ne soffrisse) dovetti troncare"*[lxvi]. From the stricken princess a little later, on 29 April 1825, there came a sad letter to her former *dame d'atour* Madame d'Hautmenil "*I remain alone and lonely, but nothing matters to me now…"* (I have) "*dismissed my musician Pacini and sold my horses"*[lxvii]. But maybe the embers took a little longer to cool: *Le mie memorie artistiche* gives a more specific timing. At the end of May Pacini rushed out of his house shouting that he was going to Naples to find a wife. [lxviii]

After a courtship of eight days he did so marrying Adelaide Castelli the daughter of a family friend. They left on honeymoon in the first days of June to stay in a house in Portici belonging to his parents-in-law. On 9 June 1825 Paolina died alone in Florence. There was one final coquetry, the still-beautiful princess insisted that there should be no *post-mortem*. She died smiling and pale like Canova's famous marble statue having written her will that very last morning[lxix].

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All at once everything had changed. In 1825 Naples had a new king, Lucca a new duke. Musically too there were changes, Rossini's legacy was dwindling fast, his Frenchified scores had met with resistance in Italy.

Married in Naples, applauded in Naples, with two commissions for Naples, whole new vistas opened-up for Pacini in that city. Ferdinando I had died in January, his son Francesco I preferred an iron hand without the velvet glove of streetwise geniality of his father but the Royal Theatres continued undaunted with their customary rush of operas and cantatas; Pacini in his element lost no time in coming back to the stage.

Amazilia appeared on 6 July, this unusual husband had spent his honeymoon at his desk. *Amazilia* had been scheduled for the birthday of the new Queen [lxx] so no delay or dilution could even be contemplated. Once again he had a plot in essence no novelty in Naples[lxxi] but he supplied music of a remarkable quality, progressively inventing new and fluent aria-forms, its ten items culminating in a *trio finale* that was a complete surprise – the distribution with Joséphine Fodor-Mainvielle in the title role, Luigi Lablache and Giovanni David was a revelation. In this opera too Pacini modified his own cabaletta template with a *slow* cabaletta - the compelling 'Parmi vederlo…ahi misero,' a war-horse later of Henriette Méric-Lalande and even now a sensational item [lxxii] while David repeated his rocketing cavatina and cabaletta "Come mai calmar le pene' almost everywhere he could. Pacini said of the opera "*Piacque non poco*" - an understatement. Revived by Barbaja in Vienna in 1827 Pacini extended it into 2 acts [lxxiii] adding much new music and with *both* acts now ending with a *trio.*[lxxiv] No one expected one-act operas mounted for royal occasions to last so long; Loreto Garcia sang the title role at La Scala (1826); Tamburini sang Cabana at Palermo (1827); Méric-Lalande supported by Lablache and Savino Monelli raised the roof with it at Vienna (1827). Perhaps its most disturbing appearance of its music was at Paris in 1832 when

Wilhelmine Schröder–Devrient decided to interpolate 'Parmi vederlo…ahi misero' into Bellini's *Il pirata* (Théâtre-Italien 2 February 1832 adding a duet that supplied a happy ending… The music of this version was published immediately.

The Royal Gala for *Amazilia* was deprived of the new King. Francesco I returned on 17 July after a visit to Milan and Rome to confer with his allies. The evening of his return saw a visit to the S.Carlo and in his best laudatory vein Pacini dashed off an *Inno con ballo analoghi* (the *Inno* by Pacini - the ballo with music by Luigi Carlini) whch "*riuscì brilliantissimi*" according to the press and whose outrageously obsequious libretto was interpreted by a cast of no less quality than Fodor, Tosi, David and Lablache. It was repeated on 19 July –a signal honour for musical ephemera.[lxxv]

But it was the Pacini opera which followed that confirmed his place in operatic history. The working title *La distruzione di Pompei* (which survives on the earliest printed extracts) and the overwhelming impact it made, reflecting, not just the need for a splash – not just the rare absence of rivals - but also the truly momentous changes taking place in Naples.

To what extent this opera, a deliberate and scarifying theatrical coup, had been masterminded by the architect of the S.Carlo, Antonio Niccolini, who was responsible for its staging, has never been made quite clear. This *scenografo ed architetto de'reali teatri* knew better than anyone what would draw attention to his magnificent edifice.[lxxvi] Yet the portentous concept of the staging has an opulence and extravagance worthy of all the Baroque masterpieces of Pacini's antiquarian peers. Whoever conceived the opera, its setting and climactic nature were to become synonymous with Pacini's reputation,[lxxvii] its cross-fertilisation with France - processions punctuated by *ballabile*, *tableaux vivants* and religious rites - to confirm his tastes for the future. As for its volcanic climax, it was French *grand-opéra* that would follow Pacini, not the other way round.[lxxviii] An utterly painful realism was to carry all before it with the Neapolitan populace. On the night of the prima of *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* opera became <u>*real.*</u>

Niccolini had contrived a décor where the monolithic columns on either side of the vast stage of the great theatre had been repeated in a huge mimic classical curve of wood and plaster dummies to frame the action on the stage. On the night of 19 November 1825 the scene was set. When the opera reached its climax – when the dark depiction of Vesuvius at the rear of the stage suddenly flashed into blinding light

and exploded with a deafening crash this mock entablature split, crumbled, and began to fall away. At once the audience rose like a man - the S.Carlo was falling around their ears - and ran for the exits. Even the King stood up in his box, but warned in advance, the Queen put her hand on his arm.[lxxix] The whole stage - statues, monuments, vast temples crumbled in a thudding cloud of dust. From one side to the other of the stage a chariot crossed drawn by a white horse carrying the opera's heroine Ottavia and her family to safety; layer after layer of gauze descended progressively obscuring the stage through which fires glowed and flames rose higher and higher (they were painted on a roll of cloth which oscillated from side to side like an elephantine typewriter ribbon)[lxxx] In a monstrous foretaste of cinemascope horror, the opera house cowered before such a vision of nemesis, driven by Pacini's relentless percussion in repeated shock-waves of drumming and cries. The curtain fell on a half empty auditorium and pale faces too shaken to applaud. Naples and Vesuvius were old foes.

It is of note that the music of *L'utimo giorno di Pompei* forced itself into public consciousness – less by its *cabalette* which were few – than by two neo -duets, the Act I 'Fermati Ottavia', and the Act II 'Squarciami il core o barbaro'.[lxxxi] The opera discarded his familiar quirks and even if only limited structural changes were made to the sum-total of his *pezzi* he achieved a through-composed effect with music that was far more eloquent, more harmonically linked, more discursive and far more responsive to the text than usual. Even though lilting, dancing, beguiling even, at times, he made no attempt to charm. His familiar solid core of operatic expertise loosened, he took daring risks to achieve something nearer to verbatim truth. Tottola too excelled himself, the *personaggi* of *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* are memorable. This frequently under-rated versifier offered truly convincing vocal portraits: the vain and unwitting Sallustio; the unheeding and cruel Ottavia; and one of opera's most sardonic creations Appio Diomede - the Roman Tribune who explains carefully in one of the composer's most captivating arias - that the reason he has condemned Ottavia to death is because he loves her! The cast at the S. Carlo prima on 19 November, on the Queen's nameday was superb with the fabulous trio of Adelaide Tosi as Ottavia, Luigi Lablache as Sallustio and Giovanni David as Appio Diomede; its eighteen repetitions must have been the despair of the stagehands obliged to put back all the fallen debris every night! And this fantastic spectacle proved irresistible in Naples for long years; Charles de Bériot (composer-violinist husband of Malibran and a rare unbiased witness in the

turbulent city) said in 1835 that *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* was one of the three operas that had *genuinely* succeeded on that stage, all the operas now so praised had been whistled and booed at times.[lxxxii] It was even revived in the tiniest theatres of Naples (how they could have done so is a matter for amazement.[lxxxiii])

The opera went on to be a runaway success almost everywhere theatres were prepared to stage it. [lxxxiv] It gathered together all the major voices: Méric-Lalande, Tamburini, G-B Rubini, Rosalbina Carradori-Allen, Domenico Cosselli, reaching Lisbon (1828), Stuttgart (1829), Madrid (1830), Prague (1834), Budapest (1835) and Mexico City (1838) where its volcanic climax must have been viewed with dismay. Vienna had a staging on 17 July 1827 which Pacini supervised himself. The Théâtre-Italien in Paris put on a bungled staging at the dawn of the July Revolution which did Pacini's reputation no good at all (Rossini, who had proposed it, had wisely departed). Even with Henriette Méric-Lalande and a miscast Domenico Donzelli on the stage: "*Vésuve flambant, peint par Ferri, machiné par Marti"* its *chœur* singing "*horriblement faux"*[lxxxv] its impact was nil. In perfect mimicry London put on a pop-up-book style staging on 17 March 1831 with Giovanni David and Miss Paton.[lxxxvi]

With its scale, ambition, its passionate colouring and staging this opera aspires to the same romanticism as the classical fortunes dear to Berlioz et al but – this time with a bitter relevance to the life and death around them all…

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[i] Pacini - willfully or carelessly - it is not clear which, insists in his memoirs that it was the success of his *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul* at Trieste that earned him this Padua commission, but the latter was not begun until 1819. [Pacini op cit 14] It may have been simple confusion, both operas concerned tragic priestesses

[ii] *Atala* was set in central America, a much favoured venue for opera as witnessed by the long series of *tragédies-lyriques* based-on Jean-François Marmontel's 'Les Incas, ou La destruction de l'Empire du Pérou' (1777) - a seminal plot of the French Revolution (Louis XVI could be equated with the defeated Inca Atahualpa). At least twenty subsequent stageworks followed afterwards all featuring religious and/or royal "despotism". In view of such prominent entertainments with the same roots like Spontini's *La Vestale* (1807) and *Fernand Cortes* (1809) Chateaubriand was simply jumping on a bandwagon rolling in his youth. Pacini himself would have known Simon Mayr's opera *Cora* (1815) also based on the Marmontel plot, whose volcanic eruption anticipated key scores of his own

[iii] Pacini op cit 15

[iv] Asked to fill a role at La Scala – according to legend - in a desperate emergency, Luigi Pacini had agreed only if his son was given a contract to write an opera for that famous stage

[v] Atto primo Sc.V. She sang it while reading a romance, just as Adina would do in the more rarified world of Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* with the same librettist

[vi] Giacomo and Geremia Rubini were both tenors like their celebrated brother: their sister was Serafina Rubini, a soprano of real temperament who had made a splash in the "Monti" farse: Pacini had a decided affinity with this family

[vii] A special distinction of *La sposa fedele* was its innovative orchestration, Pacini even uses a hurdy-gurdy to boost his bucolic colour with a boldness that anticipates Donizetti's *Linda di Chamounix* (1843) by twenty-four years. (The Bergamasc composer could have heard Pacini's opera in Naples early in the 1830's – and both operas share the same librettist Gaetano Rossi). For a study of the operatic dimensions of the *ghironda-vielle* (the hurdy-gurdy) *Cfr* Emilio Sala *La "Vielleuse" e il Savoiardo :Tradizione e drammaturgia* [in] 'Donizetti, Parigi e Vienna': Atti dei Convegni Lincei 156 (Rome 2000), 47-77

[viii] Atto primo Sc.II. Infinitely varied it incorporates dialogue with individuals and climaxes in a *concertato*

[ix] Gaetano Rossi had slightly adjusted his funny plot in accordance with Pacini's extra music: the heroine has been rechristened "Matilde" (instead of Teodora) and Arrigo conte di Provenza has been raised to the rank of *principe*

[x] As turbulent a figure as Pacini himself, but considerably less respectable, Nicolas-Charles Bochsa (1789-1856), distinguished French harpist, swindler, and seducer, eventually fled Europe leaving a trail of lawsuits and important publications, including a still valid 'Tutor' for the Harp. He died in Australia

[xi] Donizetti's opera lasted only two or three years on the stage, Pacini's *Il falegname di Livonia* was revived very much longer. Most theatrical chronologies have automatically attributed this opera to Donizetti when they have encountered an "*Il falegname di Livonia*" in the lists but, after 1825, all the revivals known were of Pacini's opera

[xii] It was Pacini's twentieth opera, Donizetti's fifth

[xiii] At a revival of Pacini's *Il falegname di Livonia* at Casal Monferrato for instance in 1823 Giuditta Schiroli singing the role of the aria-less Caterina interpolated Rossini's 'Tanti affetti' from *La donna del lago* into Act II with the opening words of the rondò changed to 'Fra lo sposo e fra il germano' thus letting the dramatic cat-out-of-the-bag with a vengeance (presumably Carlo was out of earshot).

[xiv] The contessa Gulia Samoiloff counted the family of *Caterina* (the Empress Catherine I of Russia) among her ancestors

[xv] Rossini had departed from Naples on 7 March 1822 -the city of his greatest triumphs - never to live in that city again. To its bereft citizens Pacini seemed like a natural heir. Donizetti, however, would soon wrest this distinction from his hands and in the following decade there would be a great deal of coming-and-going in the role, *direttori artistico dei reali teatro di Napoli* being appointed by ephemeral managements and changing abruptly; it was a far-from enviable post, Carlo Coccia became Artistic Director of the S.Carlo for part of 1834-5 and

relinquished this post with relief after relentless hostility from rival composers

[xvi] A *Gl'Illinesi* (Romani) had been begun by Pacini in 1819 – the need for abandonment and dismemberment of this score before any attempt at staging was probably due to the poet who had received payment only very belatedly for his libretto by Francesco Basily (1767-1850 and whose *Gl'Illinesi* had opened at the start of the year at La Scala (26 January 1819). Romani was always furious (as we shall see) when composers did not pay-up on time and liked to offer the text to rivals as soon as possible to get his revenge!

[xvii] Pacini op cit 13-14

[xviii] Pacini idem 18

[xix] Carolina Bassi's first *musico* role dated back to 1812, when almost all her rivals were *castrati*

[xx] It was at this moment that conflict with the acrimonious Felice Romani really began its long festering trail of destruction. It would reach a climax after many disturbing episodes, especially those surrounding the sour polemic of *I cavalieri di Valenza* in 1828. After the débâcle of his Venice commission "purloined" by Bellini in 1830 and capped by *Norma,* Pacini set no more Romani texts

[xxi] *Osservatore triestino* 25 May 1820, 252

[xxii] Occasionally retitled *La foresta d'Irminsul* under which title many *brani staccati* were published, thus causing some confusion with *Norma* which too had extracts published under this name.
Significantly perhaps, Velluti had sung earlier in Stefano Pavesi's *Celanira* with a not totally dissimilar "Irminsul" plot (libretto by Gaetano Rossi and first performed at Venice in 1815) in its Trieste revival a few months earlier (1819). The source and *lieto fine,* however, of the Pavesi opera, reflects neither that of Pacini nor that of Bellini. Ominously enough, Gaetano Rossi and Felice Romani were to clash noisily in the future, leading quite near to open warfare

[xxiii] It is not impossible that Felice Romani is in fact "Vittorio Pezzi" himself, thus getting paid twice for the same libretto and his revenge upon Basily after his spat with that composer over *Gl'Illinesi* the year before (and an additional revenge for Pacini)

[xxiv] The plot of *Il califfo e la schiava* (1819) would be commandeered once more, this time by Rossini for his *Adina o Il califfo di Bagdad* (libretto by Gherado Bevilacqua-Aldobrandini) staged at Lisbon in 1826. [It had been composed much earlier, Weinstock *Rossini* 89, gives a date of 1818 - but also insists that Aldobrandini "quoted intact" some of Romani's verses. This being the case the date of "1818" for Rossini's version is improbable. More interesting is the conjecture that Pacini had known that Rossini was interested in this plot - did it offer a sly challenge on his part?]

[xxv] Note, however, that Michele Carafa's *Abufar ossia La famiglia araba* fell foul of the Viennese censors over implied "incest" (Kärntnertortheater, Vienna 28 June 1823, based upon yet an even more distant relative of this libretto by Romani). They insisted that the paternity of the "Schiava" be spelled out from the start, thus ruining the plot

[xxvi] A revival in London some six years later where the music was popular enough to be printed aroused the hilarious antagonism of *Harmonicon*, apologist of everything German in the capital:
"Pacini is an imitator of Rossini, and, it has been well observed, belongs to that class of

composers who rather find than make their operas - whose talent lies in distinguishing between their own sterility and the abundance of their more gifted contemporaries and predecessors, and in appropriating the conceptions of others instead of attempting to draw anything from their own slender resources. This aptitude is particularly apparent in the finale to the first act, most of which is borrowed from Rossini, who himself obtained many of the materials thus retaken from him, by loans from others". Adding that *"there are some few, though very few, brilliant things in this opera"* with praise for Rosalbina Caradori-Allan, Curioni and Zuchelli. As for poor Giuseppe De Begnis, he unleashed the Anglo-saxon backlash with a vengeance: *"...his introduction of "English" into his dialogue, cannot but displease those who exercise their judgment at an opera: the jokes may be very interesting to Italians, and to all those who do not understand our language, but to Britons the humour of them-if they possess any - is quite undiscoverable"*
Harmonicon 1827 37-8
F.F.Chorley later, put this hostility into perspective:
"A third Italian composer, already of some home note, living and writing in 1860, fared, and has always fared, worse in England ... Signor Pacini was not unknown here; for a comic opera by him La Schiava in Bagdad had been performed some years earlier, the rondo finale of which - a varied air with violin obbligato - survives to this day as a show song. This contempt is the more singular because Signor Pacini has shown in such tunes distinct originality. Three or four of his airs of parade are admirable, and his own - let me instance 'Il soave e bel contento' (Niobe), and 'Lungi dal caro ben' (I forget from which opera), in the last movement of which there is an early example of those syncopations which have been since so largely used and abused by the Riccis, Lillos, Coppolas of modern Italy, and most of all by Signor Verdi. Yet in spite of this claim as a melodist, not one opera by Signor Pacini ...has kept the stage for a month in London or Paris".
Henry.C. Chorley *Thirty Years Musical Recollections* (London 1862) 18
This London staging (King's Theatre 30 December 1826) of *La schiava in Bagdad* (the full score in the Fondo Pacini at Pescia calls it *"La schiava di Bagdad"* as Pacini himself did at times but also says rather ingenuously "poesia di Romani" thus letting the cat out of the bag?) was a most compromised edition, justifying at least an iota of the foolish *Harmonican* notice above: Carlo Zuchelli interpolated Rossini's 'Sento destarmi' into the score (no wonder Pacini was accused of imitating the *pesarese* when singers insisted upon merging their music), and Alberico Curioni sang a cavatina 'Chi sa dir se in queste sponde' in a brand-new version he had requested expressly from Pacini for the occasion. This music was published in London by Goulding and d'Almaine. Carlo Coccia conducted the performance in 1826

[xxvii] Exception has to be made only for *Il convitato di pietra,* a pasticcio written in 1832 for a family celebration and in which his father – who had finally retired from the stage in the last years of the previous decade – sang the role of the comic servant Ficcanaso.

[xxviii] Sung by the tenor Erardo. Atto primo Sc.II

[xxix] The principessa Paolina Borghese (1780-1825) is the subject of a chapter in Raffaelo Barbiera's *Vite ardenti nel teatro* (Milan 1831) where her liaison with Pacini - some half her age - is investigated with enthusiasm and very small regard for fact. Rossini, who probably took a poor view of the famous beauty, commented upon their liaison in inimitable fashion in the following celebrated exchange:

> Rossini: "*Caro Pacini, mi compiaccio per i vostri successi. Tutti le opere vi vengono applaudite*;" Pacini: "*Oh, non tutti Maestro*!" Rossini: "*Eh ... ma bona parte si!"*

A very factual, if mostly garbled hearsay rather than reliable account of their actual meeting, is given by Joachim Kühn *Pauline Bonaparte, Napoleon's Attendant Star* (London 1937), 266:
"...the cause was to be found in a new and final infatuation by which she was seized in

December, 1820 - to be precise, on the 2nd December, the Bonapartes' Day of Victory. Its object was the young Sicilian composer, Giovanni Pacini, who was presented to her at a performance of the Matrimonio Segreto in the Teatro dal Valle. One of his arias had been introduced into Cimarosa's opera and had been enthusiastically applauded, and this applause had led Pauline to ask that the composer, of whose presence in the house she had been told, should be brought to her box. When he entered it she had experienced one more of those electric shocks which in former years she had so passionately sought but which she had not experienced since (the Baron) Duchand had vanished from her sight. Pacini was as beautiful as a god, full of temperament, a brilliant singer and pianist, in short, a blending of Canouville and Blangini; his operas were played in all the theatres of Italy, his contemporaries thought of him as an equal rival of the young Rossini, whose star had been shining triumphantly for a short time previously in the musical firmament. Reason enough for Pauline to encourage Pacini's advances. She gave a musical direction to her salon in his honour; she herself played on the spinet and on the harp songs which Pacini - Nino, as she had christened him - had set to music for her; she engaged Mombelli, Zuchelli and Tacchi (sic) to sing in his Schiava di Bagdad in her house, he himself playing a piano accompaniment; and, so that they might serve as foils to him, she drew other composers of the time into her musical circle; Caraffa (sic), who appealed to her in that he had been originally a Neapolitan officer and had accompanied Murat as an orderly officer on the Russian campaign; Mercadante, whose Geloso Raveduto fascinated all hearers; and above all, Rossini, Pacini's rival, who rendered for her the air of Bartolo from the Barbier de Seville. This won such a storm of applause that Pauline became reconciled to him - she had regarded his masterpiece as almost a sacrilege against Paisiello, whose setting of the Barbier was one of her favorite operas. In order to wreck Rossini's Barbier, she had actually distributed free tickets for the first performance to people who were pledged to hiss it! Evil tongues declared, however, that she did this less from enthusiasm for Paisiello than from regard for the tenor, for whom Rossini would not make the alterations he wanted".

[xxx] Felice Blangini (1781-1841) Ridiculously snobbish, one-time Parisian suitor of Pauline Borghese whose Imperial title, if not her descent, attracted him, composer of *Notturni* and opéras-comique of short duration on the stage, he consorted only with the highest nobility and his works were dedicated to as many crowned heads as was feasible. With the advent of Louis-Philippe and a bourgeois court he took himself off to the country and died.
(Leaving a volume of memoirs: *Felix Blangini Souvenirs*, publiés par son ami Maxime de Villemarest (Paris 1834)).

[xxxi] Though the libretto for Pacini's opera says "*poesia nuova*" Tarducci had in fact written the text originally for Luigi Carlini for a staging at Naples in 1819, an opera which was revived at La Scala only three months before Pacini's Roman prima. Romani and Ferretti had a hand in the large number of additions and subtractions that were made to *La gioventù di Enrico Quinto* over the years, it was an especially far-flung score with staging's at Munich (1822); Lisbon (1823); Madrid (1824); Zara (1826); and Copenhagen (1831 in Danish); a staging at the Teatro Re in Milan in 1823 gave it the odd title of *La bella tavernara ossia Le avventure d'una notte* (the Teatro Re repeated its production of *La gioventu di Enrico Quinto* in 1832. It is interesting to reflect that Verdi may well have taken note that the leading role in this "Shakespearian" romp was called Rocester); Rubini sang the title role at the Teatro del Fondo in Naples in 1826. The opera was still going at Cagliari in 1848 when the world was changing.

[xxxii] See *Cesare in Egitto*

[xxxiii] The list included Morlacchi (Dresden 1823), and Mercadante (Milan 1834) - this last with a text by Romani, a changed setting, and a Falstaff among the roles (the opera failed)

[xxxiv] Pacini op cit 19. The account has to be taken with a big pinch of salt. It was common knowledge that Cimarosa had willed his manuscripts to Cardinal Consalvi, his friend and patron. These scores, after the death of the Cardinal-connoisseur, were turned over the library of the Conservatorio di S.Pietro a Majella in Naples where they remain today

[xxxv] The pieces contributed by Pacini to the initial version of *Matilde di Shabran* , all in Act II, were as follows:

1. Introduzione (Act II)
2. Terzetto (Act II ScV) 'Deh! serena il mesto ciglio'
3. Duetto (primo tempo)
   (Act II Sc 12 'No Matilde, non morrai!'

This music was piously conserved by the composer and was resurrected in a private staging of Rossini's opera - or a version of it - at Viareggio in 1836 sung by members of Pacini's family. There remains in the Fondo Pacini at Pescia an otherwise mysterious rondò for Matilde among the unidentifiable pieces which may either have been originally written for this initial version, or possibly for the Viareggio resurrection under the title of *Bellezza e Cuor di ferro*.

[xxxvi] Maria Luisa di Borbone - a short lived but effective sovereign of Lucca - had been made Queen of Etruria by Talleyrand at the Treaty of Lunéville on 19 February 1801 and was given the Duchy of Lucca in compensation after the Napoleonic rout, in 1817. She died at Rome on 13 March 1824 but not before making a real impact upon the walled city (even though local adepts still noisily applaud Elisa Bonaparte whom she displaced). Maria Luisa founded the Cappella Reale in 1818 and it would form the basis of a music school headed by Pacini in which – so many decades later - Giacomo Puccini would begin his musical training

[xxxvii] Pacini's three Tuscan places of residence can be equated with his three wives: that at Viareggio with his first wife; that at Lucca with his second wife; and that at Pescia with his third wife. The palazzo Pacini at Viareggio (an urban-seeming villa of some mild distinction) no longer exists but was intended - according to tradition - to be a home for his mother. It was kept up throughout his life as a holiday residence often being let to friends (photographs remain of its façade). He would build a theatre adjacent during his brief period of retrenchment in the mid-1830's (which too no longer exists). The Lucca house was dim (like his second marriage); the third - the bungalow-like Villa Marianna, remains in Pescia and is named for his third wife. It stands on the flank of the hill upon the summit of which rises the church in which the maestro is buried. His widow put flowers on his tomb every week until her own death (1895) some three decades later. The number three continued to dominate his life: he had three children by each of his three wives (three of these children died in infancy).

[xxxviii] Mario Rinaldi *Due secoli di musica al Teatro Argentina* (Firenze 1978), 583

[xxxix] Another casualty was the youthful Donizetti whose important opera *Zoraida di Granata* was due to follow *Cesare in Egitto* at the Argentina; he was obliged to recast his *Zoraida*, with its prima of the 28 January he cut three numbers and gave Sbigoli's role to a *mezzo* Adelaide Mazzanti as was so often the only possible expedient in those days. The two composers commiserated with each other it would seem even if they were never very close (Donizetti's initial *Zoraida di Granata* (1822), exceptionally well-received, owed much to Mayr and thus scored political points as a kind of reproach to the sophisticated entourage of Paolina Borghese and Pacini. On its revival in Rome in 1824 as "*Zoraide di Granata"* it was discovered that Donizetti had surrendered to Rossini and the opera had a much less fervent reception!)

[xl] Claudia Pacini (1805-1883) married a successful businessman Antonio Belluomini in 1823,

they were separated twenty years later. At their villa were given many musical parties. Antonio's brother Giacomo was a part-time architect for Paolina Borghese

[xli] Giuseppina Pacini (married Gaetano Giorgi of Rome; their baritone son Pietro Giorgi (1826-1882), had a successful career singing under the name of Pietro Giorgi Pacini; he married a Spanish bride, Felizia Tomasa Quintero, and their third child, Regina Isabel Luisa Giorgi Pacini (1871-1965) became one of the most celebrated *verismo* sopranos in the Latin- American world with a resounding international career which she capped by marrying Marcelo Torcuato Alvear, President of the Republic of Argentina in 1922

[xlii] Pacini's casual treatment of this important relic can only be condemned. He forgot it!

[xliii] The Duchess Maria Luisa had a certain sympathy with Paolina (she too had a Napoleonic past even as a Bourbon princess) and, perfectly ready to accept her Maestro di Cappella as the official lover of the princess, wrote at least once to Pacini to make discreet enquiries about her health (letter of 14 April 1823)

[xliv] They had failed to read Luigi Romanelli's preface :
"Malgrado tutto ciò, il maestro di cappella implora l'indulgenza del pubblico per aver introdotti nell'azione...alcuni stromento di fiato, che Roma in quell'epoca non conosceva".
Did Pacini feel that he should apologise on behalf of an orchestra unable to fulfil his antiquarian demands?

[xlv] The librettist Romanelli made it clear, in the preface to the printed libretto, that his opera was based primarily upon the ballet by Salvatore Viganò, its final dénouement indeed owes more to decorous balletic modes than to the strenuous (if equally improbable) ending of Spontini : the goddess Vespa appears and on behalf of Pallas Athene, Venus and Cupid, frees poor Giulia from her living tomb and the opera ends with a *vaudeville finale.* The *La Vestale* of Vincenzo Pucitta (born in Civitavecchia) librettist unknown, has both an authentic birthright and is loyal to Winckelmann; staged in London in 1810 where Spontini's opera was both inaccessible and undesirable it was composed as a vehicle for one the greatest sopranos of all times - Angelica Catalani - and in great measure musically has greater strengths that the rival version by Spontini

[xlvi] Its original dedicatee was the Empress Joséphine - a fact that almost certainly disposed Paolina to urge Pacini to take up the Milanese *scrittura* and supply a legitimate Roman replacement

[xlvii] In its mature form (that of the 1831 version) the opera contained no less than seven cori, two big ensembles and two *concertati,* though far from deprived of *arie* it was a monumental score appropriate to its plot.

[xlviii] The devotion of Berlioz to Spontini was perhaps the most bizarre trait among many

[xlix] From Act I survived the *cavatina* for basso: the *recitativo e cavatina* for the prima donna; the *aria* for tenor; and the *terzetto* (which had been partly recomposed); in Act II the *preghiera* survived. The *sinfonia* had been dropped in favour of a very brief *preludio*

[l] The translation is that of David Cairns [in] *The memoirs of Hector Berlioz...1803-1865* (London 1969)
This revised version of Pacini's opera was wildly dramatic and certainly as far as possible from the frigid French *tragédie-lyrique* so revered by the Gallic visitor, and asking for those kind of gestural *tableaux vivants* that we should now associate with silent film; in both the Pacini

versions, Licinio makes his entry into the temple via an underground passageway appearing like a ghost before the lovelorn Giulia "*Hammer-Horror*" style, and in some respects the plot now anticipates both Pacini's *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* (1825) so soon shatter the Rossinian carapace and also *Saffo* (1840) which would restart his operatic career. Not only does the entombed victim now resemble (vocally at least) Ottavia in the first of these operas, a soprano as here with a similar *gran scena*, but the Gran Sacerdote Erennio is revealed - like Alcandro in *Saffo* - to be the father of a long-lost daughter threatened with instant death thus anticipating the ironies of his own masterpiece at its apogee. Three signals preface Giulia's demise -just like those of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*! Berlioz was deaf to any of this naturally

[li] Giulia von der Pahlen (born in St.Peterburg 6 April 1803) was a grand-daughter on one of the generals of Catherine II claiming descent from the family of the Empress Catherine I née Marta Skavronskaia (*cfr* Kristen Regina "*Love letter to a goddess*" [in] Apollo 1st June 2007) a family linked - via the Order of Malta - to the Ducal Litta family who had donated a Villa near Lake Como to her ancestors. She was an intelligent, archi-luxurious, rich, exotic and eccentric siren, invariably followed by a train of dogs and with a penchant for tenors (as she was also a supporter of the Austrian domination in Italy these tenors were always booed whenever they appeared on stage.) Her arrival in Pacini's life co-incided with his declining *affaire* with Paolina Bonaparte, thus his first marriage neatly papered over the departure of a princess mistress and the arrival of the beautiful countess mistress substitute. In every way one lady handed him over to another, the countess had divorced her first husband Count Nicolai Samoilov in 1824 just in time. Pacini seems to have relished his status as sexual currency. She lived in the Via Borgonuovo in Milan in a palazzo with its own theatre where she presided over a dotty assemblage in which Austrian sympathers were conspicuous but otherwise was charitable, kind, and in great demand as a patron. She bathed regularly in ass's milk which her admirers made into ice cream. There was scarcely any time when she was not the centre of attention, her actual liaison with Pacini did not last long and was over by 1829 when she moved on but they remained faithful supporters of each other, she adopted his daughter Amazilia, and was in contact with the maestro up to the time of his death in 1867. She went through a brief marriage with a basso-profondo in 1845 but this excursion into the F clef was not a success: in 1848 she refused to close her house to Austrian officers as requested politely by Italian patriots and instead left for France where she remained more-or-less for the rest of her life, marrying for the third time the Comte de Mornay in 1863. She was painted by Karl Briullov (Hillwood Estate Museum).and died in a famous chateau near Paris in 1875.
(Pacini revised his *Il falegname di Livonia* after the year 1825 in which the near-ancestress of his new mistress, Caterina, is suddenly given a greatly enhanced role - quite possibly on her behalf)

[lii] In Pacini's *Temistocle* the modifications to Metastasio were made by Giovanni Anguillesi

[liii] AMZ November 1823, 774 *"Pacini composed here a new opera Temisticle. However, when one heard it, it had an exceptionally strong smell of Rossini, generally it had a cold response. Among the singers were Pisaroni, Ferlotti and Herr Tacchinardi. And those one mentions with pleasure."*

[liv] The aria has long formed part of the concert repertoire of Montserrat Caballé and a recording distributed worldwide

[lv] [Colonel the Hon.) Henry Hely-Hutchinson [in] Osbert Sitwell *Left Hand, Right Hand* (London 1946). The writer was his great-grandfather and made this note in a travel diary of 1817.

[lvi]. "*Temeva che le sfruggisse a ogni momento, e s'illudeva di trattenerlo coi regali. Egli non ne accettò alcuno ...*"
Raffaello Barbiera *Vite ardenti nel Teatro* (Milan 1931) 96

[lvii] *Harmonicon* XXIII 1824, 213

[lviii] He nonetheless tenderly preserved extracts from the score in his archive

[lix] Pacini sometimes uses his real name in his memoirs, he came from a colony of English catholics who had sought refuge at Livorno

[lx] Such was the triumph of this cavatina that it later appeared in the printed vocal score of *Norma* in its French-language version, where, as 'Vois, grand Dieu! vois ma détresse' it appears as a bravura *scène* for *Adalgise* (No. 6 in the published vocal score) inserted after the trio that is supposed to end Act I

[lxi] Pacini op cit 37

[lxii] These "70 performances" are a result of over-enthusiasm on the part of the composer. (Pacini op cit 38) A more modern reckoning puts it at 38 repetitions during the year 1824-5 at the S.Carlo. But this figure is not to be dismissed lightly, the opera was indeed a tremendous success

[lxiii] Harmonicon XXIII 1824, 212. This delicious review is one of the most engaging of that sad publication. Indeed *Alessandro nell'Indie* was of course heard in silence (without any hissing) at the prima, as the King was there in State. Etiquette forbad applause; on the second night the audience rose to a reception that even *Harmonicon* could not have mistaken for anything but the most emphatic *furore*

[lxiv] Pacini op cit 34. Tutonic aspirations of this kind should not be viewed with complete cynicism, Mayr's continuous reference to German composers was fully in evidence in the education of Donizetti, and Rossini was permanently accused of betraying his orchestration to the *"oltremontani*". Only the Germans themselves disagreed

[lxv] *Alessandro* nell'Indie went on to almost a decade of revivals, the most important being those where a new tenor took the title role, most notably that with Giovanni David (La Scala) and that with Niccolò Tacchinardi (La Fenice), for both of whom Pacini supplied a new cavatina, changing the tessitura throughout the opera in its wake

[lxvi] Thus, Pacini briefly dismissed the *affaire* that had fascinated the tabloids of his day. He never mentioned her again, he named his first child after her, that is all. His extremely friendly relations, however, with other members of the Bonaparte family at the time of the Paris revival of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* in 1855 when he was greeted with open arms - most notably by Napoléon III who made him a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur - belay the possibility that any kind of blame could have been attached to his behaviour by her long-suffering relations

[lxvii] Letter of 29 April 1825. *Catalogue d'autographes Etienne Charavay* (Paris 1888), No.14. On 21st August 1824 she had written to Giacomo Belluomini from the villa he had built for her near Viareggio in order to be near Pacini, à propos this latter*: " I had told him before that his first lie would mean a breech. I have already forgiven him so often that I am tired at last of being deceived by a man on whom I have rained kindnesses. I have come to the firm decision*

to break with him completely and to leave him to his lies and dishonesties - I am not less distressed as to them... All in all, I am wounded to the heart, I was not accustomed to such coldness, it is a shame and he will be sorry one day; then he will understand what he has lost [Kühn op cit 280]. But this was before the musical horse had bolted, the beautiful princess was not used to playing second fiddle to an opera, the lady who had left behind in the Hôtel Charost in Paris (when she sold it to the Duke of Wellington after Waterloo) a chiming clock in every room of the house each one a gift from each of her lovers in turn, had her reputation to defend. Pacini undoubtedly found her impossible, boring, made every excuse to avoid her, and finally shed her from his life. She had been an irrelevance in the life of a busy composer, almost from the start

[lxviii] "*Sei pazzo*" said his father

[lxix] She was buried in the family vault in Rome, her small casket placed between two Borghese Popes

[lxx] Maria Isabella of Spain, the second wife of Francesco I, married in 1802 and equipped with what the French like to call a "cuisse légère" she would prove to be an important patron of Pacini

[lxxi] The history of *Amazilia* confounds its actual timing. Staged on 6 July 1825 it had originally been commissioned for performance more than a year earlier, for the birthday of Ferdinando I on 12 January 1824. A manuscript libretto was prepared for this projected performance but something seems to have gone wrong, the text was not approved by the censors until the 20th January 1824 and the performance postponed. Regal and political (not to say amorous) problems appear to have intervened. In the interim the libretto was turned upside down (to disguise its resemblance to Mayr's *Cora* staged in Naples in 1815?): the original role of Paromba had become Cabana; that of Iglow had become Orozimbo; two roles had vanished - Atala intended be sung by"Signora Gorini", and Zalmiro byTeresa Cecconi. Whether it was poet or maestro or some other who was responsible for these adjustments is not clear

[lxxii] It is the concluding section of the Gran'scena e rondò following the cantabile 'Ah! non fia mai ver ch'io viva' in the two act version of *Amazilia*

[lxxiii] *Amazilia's* subsequent division into two-acts was not difficult to achieve, there was already a central concertato in the one-act version (ie the important first terzetto) which could be promoted to the status of *finale primo*, and this refashioning simply involved the addition of two scenes - an opening duetto for soprano and bass 'Tu sprezzar gli affetti miei', and the ensuing coro, scena ed aria for tenor 'Affanno spietato' which was especially conceived for Savino Monelli in the role of Zadiro at Vienna. Though the famous *cabaletta* 'Parmi vederlo ahi misero' (later to be interpolated regularly into revivals of his triumphant *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* (1827) at the instance of Henriette Méric-Lalande) had already a place in the one-act score it was partly recomposed for the subsequent revivals at La Scala and the Kärntnertortheater

[lxxiv] The first is the furious 'Frena quell labbro audace', the second the serene 'Dovè sei mio dolce amore' with its ecstatic *stretta* 'Mio cor, ah si, ti sento'

[lxxv] The *Giornale del Regno Delle Due Sicilie* took the trouble to stress that *all* the stars took part in this repeat, so perhaps some urging had been necessary to get them together again

[lxxvi] Antonio Niccolini (1776-1850) (a manuscript autobiographical note he supplied in 1848 at Naples confirms these dates) was of Tuscan origins, an architect of neo-classical

taste and training (ironically his first juvenile engagement was to make alterations to the theatre at Pescia – now called the Teatro Pacini) in 1806 he had become *Direttore delle scene* at the S.Carlo, in 1816 he rebuilt the great theatre attached to the Royal Palace after a disastrous fire when it became one of the most famous opera houses in the world. He staged many operas by Mayr, for whom he seems to have cherished a decided warmth and who was commissioned to reopen the S.Carlo after the fire (with *Il sogno di Partenope* 12 January 1817), Mayr's *Cora* (27 March 1815), with its volcanic eruption, seems to have been the immediate precursor of Pacini's opera. In *Cora* the *finale primo* curtain is lowered upon a volcanic catastrophe, also in *Cora* – the volcano itself - as in the Pacini/Tottola opera - plays something of the role of protagonist at salient points in the plot. Almost certainly it was Niccolini's taste and choices that lay behind both this opera and the Pacini opera that came just before it, *Amazilia*

[lxxvii] Neither its title nor its plot owes anything to Edward Bulwer-Lytton's famous novel (published in Italy as 'Gli ultimi giorni di Pompei') which was not written until nine years later and may, in fact, have owed much to the opera which was staged badly in London in 1831)

[lxxviii] There is of course a direct link between Pacini's *L'ultimo giorno di Pomei* and Parisian *grand-opéra*. Before the première of Auber's *La Muette de Portici* (Opéra, Paris 29 February 1828) - an work often supposed to be the real genesis of *grand-opéra* - its designer Pierre-Luc-Charles Ciceri (1782-1868) *peintre-en-chef* at the Opéra made a trip to Milan in order to see a revival of *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* at La Scala (16 August 1827) to study the mechanics of the terminal eruption of Vesuvius necessary for Auber's own *dénouement*. This puts Pacini's opera into its correct historical perspective.
[*Cfr* Catalogue *Auber et l'opéra romantique* (Paris 1982), 24]. Ciceri had contacts with the great Parisian theatre for almost all his life, the son-in-law of the painter J-B Isabey he had quasi-total responsibility for the décors of the Opéra in the vital period for grand-opéra between 1822 and 1831 – seeing the advent equally of *La Muette de Portici, Guillaume Tell* and *Robert le diable*).

[lxxix] During his singing lessons with the princess daughters of the King that morning Pacini had warned them not to be frightened. They had passed the message on to their mother whose birthday it was. These princesses, due to be Queens and Empresses throughout Europe and beyond, carried Pacini's music to many exotic places – his kindness and sympathy with these gilded children led one of them – now the Empress Teresa Cristina of Brazil - to urge her husband Dom Pedro II to commission an opera from Pacini to open a new opera house in Rio

[lxxx] *Cfr* John Black *The eruption of Vesuvius in Pacini's L'Ultimo giorno di Pompei* [in] Donizetti Society Journal 6 (London 1988), 96-104

[lxxxi] An absence obliging Giovanni Battista Rubini – in compensation - to interpolate his all-purpose 'I tuoi frequenti palpiti' from *Niobe,* yet to be written, at the re-edition of the opera at La Scala in 1827 thus not only achieving personal celebrity but the opera had forty-three more repeats

[lxxxii] *Cfr* Donizetti Society Newsletter 79 (February 2000), 12. This throws an interesting light on the reception of Bellini and Mercadante in Naples: the other two operas he cited were *L'esule di Roma* of Donizetti and *Inès de Casto* of Giuseppe Persiani

[lxxxiii] It was revived at the Teatro Fenice in Naples in 1826/1827/1828/1835/1840; the Teatro San Ferdinando in 1829/1840; the Teatro Partenope in 1835 and the Teatro Nuovo in 1842/43.

[lxxxiv] A major irony derives from this opera: the music of the fêted patriotic chorus from Mercadante's *Donna Caritea* 'Chi per la Patria muore', sung on one momentous occasion by two tragic dissidents en route for the scaffold, was "borrowed" by the *altamurese* (and not the only fragment he purloined from this composer) from a chorus in *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei,* staged in honour of the "reactionary" Bourbon monarchy in Naples!

[lxxxv] *Revue Musicale*, Tome IX 9 Livraison (Paris 1830):

"Il faut avouer que tout cela est bien pauvre et mérite peu d'être rangé parmi les productions de l'art. Pacini n'est pourtant point depourvu de tout talent. Il a de la facilité, une certaine habitude de la construction dramatique à la connaissance des effets d'instrumentation. Mais tout cela est gâté par sa négligance habituelle, et par ce mépris de l'art auquel parviennnent les musicians italiens habituées à fabriquer leur musique plutôt qu'a la composer...Que dis-je? Il lui sont funestes; car ils inspirent le dégoût d'une belle et noble partie du plus puissant de tous les arts" [Fétis] This refrain by a failed composer of operas does not permit repetition except to point out that the opera was mutilated in this incompetent Paris staging; ill-cast (Donizelli as Appio Diomede was incapable of singing a role written for Giovanni David and he sang throughout only in a downwards transposition, omitting the show-piece of the opera - the grand air for tenor in Act II [*"Le public a marqué par sa froideur pendant la répresentations de cet ouvrage, et surtout pendant le seconde acte*"], Méric-Lalande was in vocal crisis (she had been replaced as Bellini's favorite soprano by Giuditta Pasta) and the opera was a travesty – fully worthy of Fétis. Only his final statement "*je ne crois point que L'ultimo giorno di Pomei ait une longue existence à Paris"* had a ring of truth. (p278)

The production was totally unsupervised, though Pacini had gone to Paris for the staging, the outbreak of the July Revolution had obliged him to leave and the opera was staged belatedly on 2 October that year as a pitiable rump and with a negligence that was truly staggering. Fétis makes great play of his status as an authority, of his knowledge of previous successful operas by Pacini, but the only music he had actually heard had formed part of a pastiche put on at the Théâtre de l'Odéon on 1 August 1826, *Le neveu de Monseigneur*, which even with the very young Gilbert-Louis Duprez at the start of a great career, was not more than a farce

[lxxxvi] A pupil of Carlo Coccia. Chorley gave the performance a snub: "In one of his (Giovanni David's) favorite operas , *L'ultimo giorno,* by Signor Pacini, he was unlucky as having to sing with Mrs.Wood (Miss Paton) who, whatever might be her merits, did not number among them any knowledge of the modern Italian style."
Chorley op cit 19

Chapter Three

"Una indiscrizione da alcova"

As soon as the clouds of (volcanic) dust had settled Barbaja proposed a nine-year contract to the happy composer - to write two operas a year - on the same terms he had offered Rossini, that is, two hundred ducats a month; his travel paid; and his living expenses covered on tour. It was the benevolent slavery offered to the most favoured as a gauge of their worth. The maestro, dizzy with acclamation, his future assured, escorted his new wife north to meet his family, then set off for Milan leaving Adelaide pregnant with a daughter they would call Paolina.[i]

Optimistic and freed from imperial bondage Pacini set to work with an appetite rare in recent years. The libretto he accepted gave him no trouble at all but *La gelosia corretta* has given rise to trouble ever since - it had exactly the same title as Michele Carafa's early opera (Naples 1815) but a plot that was entirely different, and a Romanelli text that was compelling enough to be taken up by Domenico Gilardoni and reset to music by Donizetti - this time under the title of *Francesca di Foi*x (Naples 1831).[ii] These operas have frequently to be disentangled. Pacini's *semiseria* score was feather-light in contrast to the comic duo above, his music poured-out with the usual breath-taking speed, taking on board some mildly unexpected features: an offbeat *introduzione*, a dearth of items in the punctual places and a refreshing absence of predictable routines. Instead there was sensibility, even a wistfulness that may have echoed his newfound domestic bliss. This pleasing opera basked in a flat calm; with uncharacteristically benign settings by Alessandro Sanquirico *La gelosia corretta* arrived onstage at La Scala on 27 March 1826 and

was given sixteen performances, the composer says of it modestly "*che non dispiacque.*" But though it was a sunny score and had many revivals (difficult as it is to separate them from those of Carafa) it turned out to possess a flawed *business model,* or so it did at its prima. For one simple reason - his bosom-friend Giovanni David courted disaster with his high-camp gestures and effete use of falsetto - so much so that he invited rude noises whenever he set foot on stage. Even worse, after he ceased singing there was complete silence - especially after his fabulous *aria di sortita* sung with amazing skill. No one in the vast house relished the provocative physical postures he adopted on stage and often it seemed as if he was sending-up the opera, his role, and the audience all at the same time. The composer ground his teeth at a parade of grimaces, posturing and pirouetting that the celebrated tenor seemed unable to control. After several evenings of *La gelosia corretta,* when David had been heard in an ominous silence now cut by a thin thread of hissing - he refused to sing at all. This threatened the future of his attractive opera, Pacini would have to take the star in hand.

In contrast to all this the maestro was earning praise from unexpected circles. The ease of his score and its rejection of modish formulae won him plaudits from many improbable voices: *Harmonicon,* even, came up with frothy enthusiasm: "*With respect to Pacini, he deserves top rank as one of the best among the apostles of Rossini, and is by no means devoid of fancy. In the present instance he furnishes two duets of no ordinary power; and if he had no higher merit, could at least claim that of having the courage to omit the fashionable crescendo, which is called Rossinian, but which Mosca claimed as his property."*[iii] (Pacini might have believed he was back among Papa's aged reactionaries with this British musical rag but

endorsement for his *duetti* was long overdue). At any event *La gelosia corretta* pushed-off his new contract into choppy waters for a memorable voyage, the *catanese* composer's nine years in the galleys began well and Barbaja revived this opera eagerly in later years (most notably at Vienna in 1827).

Returning without delay to Naples its successor opera would be something in the nature of a swan-song. A brilliant burst of fireworks in the tufa-paved capital before the city was claimed by a further *catanese* contender. In a matter of months Pacini would find a jealous rival yapping at his heels. Barbaja gave him a superlative cast for this particular consecration: four world stars:-the great Luigi Lablache, Carolina Ungher, Giuditta Pasta and Giovanni-Battista Rubini all at their peak and all destined to endorse Italy's claim for international vocal supremacy. As for the opera they would create together - *Niobe* - it would have a claim of its own for supremacy as Franz Liszt surprisingly enough was to confirm.[iv]

Earmarked for another Royal Gala, the newly-liberated maestro supplied a torrent of music for his *Niobe* that was vehement, anguished, amorous and threatening in turn in the cause of a brilliantly gory bloodbath erupting among the inhabitants of Parnassus. A score set-off by jaunty syncopation and vocal flights at the very limit of physical credibility.

Arriving headlong after a family summer[v] Pacini set Tottola's unremarkable verse without taking breath, it was yet another exploration of antique fantasy with an *embarrass* of scenic side effects and an integral *ballabile,* processions and choral pomp culminating in a neo-hysterical augmented vocal climax. Homer's sanguinary tale being spared nothing the nineteenth-century romantic

score could offer, and with Pacini prepared to spare nothing either vocally or imaginatively to bring-off yet another coup,

As far as the circumstances of its first performance on the principal Neapolitan stage was concerned *Niobe* was just as strenuous as *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* (but for the absence of a comprimario volcano). The same theatrical parameters were in place: a house full to bursting; finery in all the boxes; rows of military in the parterre and no applause unless the monarch deigned to lead it (which was only when someone from the *Real Cappella* was singing). This is how the scene was set on 19 November 1826, but *Niobe* created a precedent even so, and without the theatre collapsing around the ears of the maestro perched on his stool before his "cembalo," [vi]

Crammed with the rich and powerful and ill-attuned to anything resembling disorder no one could imagine a less-suitable moment for an audience to take the reception of an opera into its own hands. But music of galloping rhythms, pounding bass and crazily testing vocal acrobatics soon put an end to any semblance of aristocratic calm. Not long after the curtains parted the incredible voice of Lablache with his "*Sogno d'Anfione'* followed by that of Pasta with her cavatina sent shivers through the ranks in all the regions of the house, but as Pacini records in his memoirs, it was Giovanni Battista Rubini who was the undoing of the rule of silence. Act I Sc.6 was to blame. The *primo tempo* of his cavatina 'Il soave e bel contento*'* saw the audience turn and stare hard at the Royal Box: but when it came to the cabaletta 'I tuoi frequenti palpiti*'* a hoarse cry of pain came from the sea of faces peering towards the immobile monarch. From among them came a cry "*E se tu non batti, battimo nui!"* [vii] at which King Franceso I made a feeble gesture and the entire house exploded. After that everything was *furore* with the cadet members of the royal family joining-in and

a house delirious with applause and counter applause. Pacini had judged his fellow citizens with great skill, he had dressed this cruel drama of posturing revenge in Parnassus with a wardrobe of exceedingly colourful vocal garments of every popular shape and dimension. Everyone present was conscious of a of a joyous tearing-up of the vocal rule book, an impulse to rebellion that had been in the gift of this composer since his earliest years.

The reception of *Niobe* was truly momentous, it went down in operatic lore. But born as an exploitation of topical indulgence into popular rhythms and vocal mannerisms specific to Naples it could be no surprise that it made such a short appearance on the Italian stage – a dependence upon the very greatest voices allowed for only nine repetitions.[viii] Like *L'ultimo giorno di Pomei* earlier, its cumbersome *mis-en-scène* could only have guaranteed the most restricted of shelf-lives.

The same cannot be said for its music, one particular fragment from *Niobe* was to reappear at regular intervals for more than three decades. Rubini's cabaletta made a worldwide operatic circuit - its catchy pulsation not just putting an end to a sovereign's rule of silence but intervening into every likely and unlikely opera under every kind of ægis…[ix]

> *"Jusqu'à present nous avions regardé l'exécution de la cavatine de Niobe comme une telle merveille, qui'il nous semblait impossible, à Rubini lui même, de jamais dépasser les limites qu'il s'était tracées…"*[x]

There would be many grotesque examples of him passing the limits, misuse of this cabaletta became almost legendary: Rubini himself inserted 'I tuoi frequenti palpiti' into *La straniera* at Paris in 1832 (daring the fatal palpitations from its composer!)[xi] and as for

his *Niobe*, Giuditta Pasta did not hesitate to misappropriate her rival's swansong (though in a downwards transposition) on every possible occasion. She chose 'Il soave e bel contento' as Desdemona's *sortita* in Rossini's *Otello* at the Kärntnertortheater in Vienna in 1830 as well as interpolating it into operas by Mercadante and other composers, most especially those unfriendly to its author. It became a core item of her concert repertoire[xii] a sonnet being printed to commemorate such a prestation:

ALLA CELEBRATISSIMA SIGNORA
GIUDITTA PASTA
CHE CANTÒ LA PARTE DI NIOBE
SONETTO

Tenacemente ardita in tuo pensiero
Niobe, al pari di questa un di ne andavi
E a turbar della Diva il queto impero
Alto core e fortezza egual mostravi...

Almost all Pacini's operatic contemporaries fell victim to Rubini's showpiece: Carolina Ungher (who had created the role of Asteria in *Niobe*) replaced 'Ah! bello a me ritorna' with 'Il soave e bel contento' in *Norma* at Rome in 1835 and even later still (1853) - as far away as London - Angiolina Bosio used this well-worn scena for the "*lesson scene*" of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Covent Garden. The one time Pacini managed to get inside those forbidding portals. Liszt's *Niobe Fantasy* (originally "*Divertissement*") was first heard in public on 18 December 1836 in the Salle du Conservatoire in Paris as part of a concert shared with Berlioz; it was repeated more emphatically at the Opéra on 19 March 1837 when the lionised virtuoso played it in an

entr'acte between sections from Louise Bertin's *Esmeralda* and a ballet by Adam; its real ascent to glory came a few days later, however (on 30 March) when the *principessa* Belgiojoso persuaded Liszt and Sigismond Thalberg to compete on the same piano at her house in the rue d'Anjou, the latter playing his *Moïse Fantasy* and Liszt countering with his *Fantasy* from *Niobe,* prestidigitation almost to the death for the benefit of the Princess's charity "*Italiens indigens.*" Liszt's *Niobe Fantasy* has never been out of print.

The day after the prima of of this opera[xiii] (the account in his memoirs is typically convoluted)[xiv] Giovanni Pacini was escorted around the Conservatorio di S. Pietro a Majella in Naples by its director Niccolò Zingarelli. In the *Refettorio degli Alunni* he encountered Vincenzo Bellini face to face for perhaps the first time[xv] among a crowd of students who threw bottles and plates in the air in his honour. That the meeting between the *concittadini* did not go well this welcoming chorus notwithstanding can be taken for granted. No doubt the condescending presence of the current star composer, championed by Barbaja was interpreted as hostile by the student. In point of fact Pacini had come to see the new building at Zingarelli's invitation not to meet the pupils.[xvi]

Maybe Bellini felt piqued at not receiving the friendly congratulation he believed to be his due from a fellow *catanese*? At any event that they began on the wrong foot and remained on the wrong foot until Bellini believed he had dismissed Pacini for good is a fact of history (and henceforth Pacini referred to his concittadino with a sweet smile as "*Il divino Bellini*")

Unaware of any such operatic gaffe the triumphal composer of the day continued on his way to Milan where *Alessandro nell'Indie* was to open the carnival season. It did not get a good reception despite the fact that he had supplied David (still furious at his reception in *La gelosia corretta*)

with no less than *five* different *cabalette* for his aria di sortita, not one of which succeeded in stifling audible protests at the way he sang. The maestro, however remained close to this extraordinary tenorino, even though *both* now were reported to be lovers of the fatal *contessa* Samoyloff (but such a report can be taken with a Bellinian pinch of salt!)

This exceptional Russian expatriate is worth much more than a footnote. A very beautiful woman indeed, her name appears more than any other as the dedicatee of opera scores of the day[xvii] she reigned over the most fashionable musical circles in Milan. Seven years younger than Pacini, supposed (without a shred of truth) to have been an Imperial mistress back home, separated from her husband, she diverted the city with her flamboyant lifestyle and reckless generosity.

Followed by a trail of dogs and indigents dependent on her charity, a vision of exotic elegance, mad about the arts, her box at La Scala was the focus of every pair of binoculars every evening she attended. She hosted performances in her own theatre of reduced versions of operas currently in vogue. Her weakness for tenors – lyrical ostinato of her bedroom - did them no good at all; as she made no bones about being an advocate of Austrian rule they all got booed whenever they set foot on stage. (She herself was carefully respected). Her affair with Pacini was probably an aberration because he never attempted to sing and was always at his desk. Both were socially extravagant; as both were capable of following any interest whatsoever to its extremes they had much in common, both were restless and inventive and both were easily bored. Their amorous liaison did not last long - two or three years at the very most - but they remained close until his death some forty years later. It was a relationship based on love as not one of their host of critics ever detected. He was proud to be hissed on her account.

For the moment this purported trio of effete tenor, *femme fatale* and ex-imperial conquest was content to raise the hackles of the operatic coterie in Milan. Their comings and goings a source of constant conjecture. But Pacini never lost sight of his musical objectives: if *Alessandro* failed to please he would *make* the scaligeri applaud whether they liked it or not. That he succeeded is undeniable, he would do it with *Gli arabi nelle Gallie ossia Il trionfo della fede*. A triumph of faith in his own compositional birthright.

*

Gli arabi nelle Gallie is the only opera by Pacini to feature in Bellini's jealous correspondence with grudging respect. Its plot had been chosen with unusual prescience; based upon the *vicomte* d'Arlincourt's extravagant 'Le Renégat' of 1822[xviii] breathlessly extoling outcasts, seclusion and the trauma of lost-love, the composer alighted squarely on a blueprint to be exploited by all his rivals. It was a hyper-emotional topos about to capture the imagination of operatic Europe. That his opera was planned with exceptional care is certain; it was to be another major theme to follow *Pompei* and *Niobe*. The still-extant *prima stesura* autograph[xix] written months before the La Scala *prima* shows that a number of embryonic features failed to emerge in its initial composition - that some were discarded and a few were earmarked for usage only many years later during the opera's long tenure of the stage.[xx]

Thanks to the vocal problems of Giovanni David this opera also proposed a coup: *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* was to be a tour-de-force for the tenor. The soprano was to be obliged to take second place.[xxi] Thus anticipating a vocal parameter to emerge in the operas of his rivals. In his memoirs Pacini speaks mostly of David's lyrical impasse, but this factor proved to be of much less importance than its immediate impact upon

audiences: *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* emerged as a *stereophonic* statement with its introductory chorus deployed across the whole width of the proscenium, divided, marching and countermarching, swelling and diminishing and engaging with a single soloist. The prototype opening for a scenic spectacular before long to be the mode. With drum-rolls and trumpets repeated from side to side, with dotted rhythms and noisy syncopation, a spacious battleground *alla Meyerbeer* laying the scene for his own cherished concept of theatre. This captivating stereophonic opening was to be the only fragment to survive three decades of rewriting, the destiny of this opera would be a saga of renewal, every single item of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* would be rewritten over and over again - every aria, every duet, every trio, ensemble and each of the concertati being recomposed, revised or recast sometimes several times in the long series of revivals of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* to come. All the principal arias would have alternative music, nothing would ever be inviolate, each dramatic confrontation could be reversed, the whole plot could be in a state of flux. The opera's final resolution could be an *aria finale con coro* of triumph or of despair in every possible configuration - with any number of credible (or incredible) possibilities in-between. It could be a *rondo* of athletic virtuosity, or a *vaudeville* of corporate satisfaction with everyone on stage rejoicing irrespective of the d'Arlincourt tragedy that had given birth to the plot.

The composer claimed the right to amend his opera as and when he pleased. With well-publicised nonchalance Pacini wrote new music for any artist on simple demand, turning the dramatic sequence upside-down at the whim of theatre managements or to fulfill the requirements of any stage of any dimensions whether modest-and-provincial or imposing-and-Metropolitan.

Gli arabi nelle Gallie was to be fully representative of a philosophy for

operatic performance that ran counter to the strictures of an emergent generation. Opera should be thematically alive, not a packaged product. Performing Rights should *not* dictate the artform. A stage-work could be *different* every night instead of always the same. A stance defiant of the production stranglehold, against the tide championed by the commercial imperatives of music publishers and about to become the norm. The motive was clear: *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* was to have all the ingredients for success whatever the scale of production, whoever, wherever or whenever it was to be performed, thus fulfilling the requirements of the audiences of Pacini's heyday accustomed to attending an opera house every night. .

No opera could have a better beginning. The cast at the prima won a runaway triumph, Giovanni David in the role of the returned Merovingian prince turned Moorish-warrior created a conscience-stricken changeling with his Agobar, a martyr both to love and duty his "*bella morte"* not only conquering a reluctant audience but presaging whole vistas of enjoyable tenorial extinction in operas to come on that and interminable other stages in Italy, its stricken hero faltering his adieu in broken words and phrases, terminal fragments of pathos against a failing thread of music. Almost every rival composer in Italy took note of this affecting terminus-quo in the decades to come.

Pacini had pruned David's head-voice with *cantilena* in the place of strained virtuosity, creating a virile but fallible hero in which he recovered both his form and vocal esteem. With an optimum prima on 8 March 1827, with Stefania Favelli and Brigida Lorenzani as co-stars it provided maximum excitement during all that remained of the season. David, restored to life (literally), hissing and catcalling forgotten, appearing before the final curtain arm-in-arm with Pacini to deafening cheers. He was painted in his magnificent costume by Hayez, the image encapsulating

the colourful impact of this opera upon the annals of the day.

Gli arabi nelle Gallie began an interminable circuit of the world's opera houses immediately but its revival on that same stage in Milan a year later on 26 February 1828 was seminal for Pacini's operatic profile in that city - not only had the opera been packed in the interim with extra pieces in Naples but for Henriette Méric-Lalande as Ezilda he extended her role with a new cavatina[xxii] and a strenuous duet, but allowed her to interpolate her famous *scena* from *Amazilia* including the moving 'Ah! non fia mai ver' and its slow cabaletta 'Parmi verderlo, ahi misero' with utterly sensational results. *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* was the first of Pacini's opera to get to New York.

The flood of extra music with which this opera was constantly amended for almost every stage of his day is not only astonishing, it is unique, as the composer intended it should be. During the next few years he composed four more arias for Ezilda; four more for Leodato; [xxiii] and at least two further arias for Agobar (including one only slightly more modest for Giovanni Battista Verger 'A quell'anima oltraggiata' to let tenors off David's strenuous hook). Unsurprisingly, in view of the composer's stance *all* the *comprimario* roles were given the chance to shine at the footlights in the interminable later versions of the opera!

Great Ezildas included Giulia Grisi (in Lucca), Violante Camporesi (in Trieste), Luigia Boccabadati (in Rome), Emilia Bonini (in Vicenza), Virginia Blasis (in Genova), Desiderata Derancourt (in Firenze) and Marietta Albini (his second wife – in Madrid and Rome); great Agobars included Domenico Reina (in Lucca), Pietro Gentili (in Genova), Lorenzo Bonfigli (in Torino), Napoleone Moriani (in Pavia, in which the "*tenore della bella morte*" found his vocation) and Giovanni Battista Rubini (in Vicenza); Leodatos included Rosa Mariani (in Trieste, Genova, Roma and London), Amalia Schütz-Oldosi (in Trieste), Adele Cesari (in Milano and

Livorno) and Clorinda Corradi-Pantanelli (in Padova), while the small role of Gondair accumulated such great names as Luigi Lablache (in Napoli), Vincenzo Galli (in Torino), Celestino Salvatori (in Verona) and Michael William Balfe (in Bergamo and Milano). Giovanni David continued singing the role of Agobar until 1838 (in Bergamo).

It was the final version, however, of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* that was its true apotheosis. At the express wish of the Emperor Napoléon III who had heard Pacini's opera with emotion in exile (in Rome on 17 January 1829 and retained a vivid memory of its impact upon his rejection by his fellow citizens) a brand new edition was commissioned for the Théâtre-Italien in Paris. Staged momentously on 30 January 1855 with a refurbished text by Achille de Lauzières replete with patriotic semaphoring at a quite indecent level and with a piety completely foreign to its original plot - a new *preghiera* 'A te, signor dei popoli' for Ezilda, Gondair and coro - conferring a respectable Christianity upon Agobar at the express demand of the Empress Eugènie.

Pacini wrote nine new , numbers for this Parisian *dramma lirico* in its quasi *grand-opéra* guise, blessed with the outstanding voices of Angiolina Bosio (Ezilda) and Carlo Baucardé (Agobar) and let-down only by Adelaide Borghi-Mamo as Leodato whose moustachioed commander-in-chief of the Frankish Army was so blatantly pregnant that audiences could not stop giggling.[xxiv] Thanks to Paolina, Pacini was greeted in quasi-kinship by Imperial cousins and found himself with the Légion d'Honneur and a diamond encrusted snuff-box embellished with the Emperor's cipher in his pocket.[xxv]

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Hardly had the 1828 Milan season closed than Barbaja began a Viennese *stagione* and Pacini set off for the Autro-Hungarian capital with David sharing his carriage. It was a carefree jaunt along flowery alpine roads,

interrupted by picnics, sightseeing and general frivolity so much so that Barbaja – who had started out several days later that the composer and from Naples - got there first. But despite a testy encounter on stage the season went well.

Pacini had the lion's share of the Kärntnertortheater cartellone with four operas "*bene accolta da quella fredda, ma intelligente udienza,*"[xxvi] especially *Amazilia* (now in two acts), but also *La gelosia corretta, Gli arabi nelle Gallie* and *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei*. David sang in almost all of this quartet but shared some of the roles with Savino Monelli fearing exhaustion.[xxvii] Pacini made a great deal of money. But when he got back to Italy he found it had changed. Bellini had taken Milan by storm with *Il pirata* on 27 October 1827 and neither *his* life, nor that of his *concittadino,* would ever be the same again.

In one sole coup Bellini had become a star. Prey to apprehension at a challenge he understood perfectly Pacini over-reached his response. He was on stage in Naples scarcely three weeks later and made the fatal error of imitating himself (not imitating Bellini as the latter liked to pretend[xxviii]). *Margherita regina d'Inghilterra* was the first real fiasco of his career. He had a wonderful cast with Adelaide Tosi in the title role and Lablache in full flow, it too invoked Meyerbeer[xxix] but the S.Carlo staging on 19 November 1827 fell completely flat. The spectacular scenic effects he asked-for seemed like a parody of those of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* opening with an *Introduzione* of acoustic aspirations. It was a characteristic example of the S.Carlo chaos known to every composer: scandalously under-rehearsed and rushed on and off-stage with indecent haste. Two years later a remorseful management revived *Margherita regina d'Inghilterra* (4 October 1829) with an almost identical cast when it was discovered to have all kinds of merit. It was too late. The composer's comment "*Non cadde no, precipitò di sella*" [xxx] reveals that it had been

confined to oblivion as far as he was concerned.

Ill at ease, aware that he would have to change, would need to tackle a fundamental crisis where no longer would his expertise, elegance and virtuosity be enough to arouse frantic applause he attempted to evade these issues by reverting to comedy, setting a slight text by Bartolomeo Merelli[xxxi] with the title of *Per Dio non intendo cosa dice,* an opera buffa whose score seems to have been completed but which never saw the light of day.[xxxii] 1828 began in this way but at some point he seems to have determined upon a counter-attack - to tackle the ugly mood of triumph that Bellini and his list of champions maintained at his discomfiture.

How precisely he assembled his allies[xxxiii] is not easy to know at this distance, possibly some form of retaliation was suggested by Gaetano Rossi. Maybe a war between librettists took hold of their imagination as it had done ten years earlier with the Anelli *farse* - Gaetano Rossi and Felice Romani (librettist of *Il pirata*) were at bitter loggerheads over money - both had courted the deep pockets of Giacomo Meyerbeer and the struggle [xxxiv] had left a deep web of resentment. Pacini's *I cavalieri di Valenza* would be a sour *compte rendu* of this struggle.

No one could doubt it, the contrast between Bellini and Pacini was one of character, but it was also one of fashionable dress and deportment. Pacini was buoyant and worldly, Bellini was self-absorbed and *shed his blood* to give life to his scores. Pacini enjoyed mocking this pallid newcomer from the catanese sticks - as so he appeared to this ex-lover of her Imperial Highness the princess Paolina Bonaparte - for this high profile musical competitor he was merely a charlatan practicing his sentimental tunes on a provincial piano. News of the former's intention to challenge the new and dangerous rival's vogue spread rapidly in Milan. Rumours of scale and spectacle were rife especially as Sanquirico was known to be

hard at work on some challenging sets, Bellini even reporting that "*I cavalieri di Lara*" [xxxv] was to be a "*spettacolo straordinario*" and congratulating himself on being able to write operas without "*battles, ballets and eruptions of Vesuvius*".

It was while he was composing *I cavalieri di Valenza* that Pacini's young wife died in childbirth.[xxxvi] Though he turned to his desk "*tornare alla musica…il dolore abbelliva il canto d'Orfeo"* there is no doubt of his devastation. He was left a widower with three infant children.[xxxvii] Bellini extended his condolences via a go-between but it was the last time there would be any civil communication between them. This loss would have a negative impact on Pacini's future - even on the future of opera itself - as harassed by funeral debts he accepted as many commissions as he could (more than he could possibly fulfil) with the result that Bellini was squeezed and without any contract at all. It would prove a grave error for the decorous operatic future of both these composers.

The response to *Il pirata* was traumatic on both sides. Bellini had become obsessed with rivalry. Almost every letter is peppered with repetitive monothematic fantasies about *nemici*, about the "*cavaliere maestro*" and his imaginary sins, every page sprinkled with "*Pirata"* and "*Pacini*" - the most fantastical of which being that of 24 March 1828 invoking Felice Romani and his resentments, claiming that Adelaide Tosi "*mi ha detto che Pacini spacconeggiava contro di me, fulminando minaccie*" and relating that he had confided to Giovanni David his great theory - his "*gran coglioneria*" - that the poor reception of his *Il pirata* in Vienna had been masterminded by Pacini's father "*che lá si trovava.*"[xxxviii]

This completely unbalanced nonsense must have been reported immediately to Pacini with amused embroidery by Giovanni David. Can anyone be surprised that the offspring of the great *buffo* decided he had to respond in kind? *I cavalieri di Valenza* was the result. Bellini lost his

head after *Il pirata,* and it went missing for most of the rest of his life..

Excited hopes a war between composers were not to be disappointed, when *I cavalieri di Valenza* opened at La Scala on 11 June 1828 the audience discovered to its great joy that their summer boredom was to be enlivened by a jeering parody of *Il pirata* featuring the same *primadonna*[xxxix] in similar dramatic situations; an identically despised lover returning from exile, and a ghostly web of shadow confrontations thematically and musically challenging Bellini's exquisite melancholy; the whole climaxing with a noisome sea-battle worthy of that bone of contention Giacomo Meyerbeer (who, quite unintentionally and unaware was financially and artistically the *deus ex-machina* of the whole affair)[xl]

Shades of Angelo Anelli high on the agenda was Gaetano Rossi's taste for verbal mimickry; whereas the returned exile Gualtiero of *Il pirata* had sung 'Nell'furor delle tempeste' the returned exile Gusmano of *I cavalieri di Valenza* sang 'Nell'orror di mie sciagure' (a transcription Pacini joyously exploited with comic dismay by pretending it referred to his own plight at the rise of Bellini!). Every situation of *Il pirata* had a sly mirror image in *I cavalieri di Valenza*, each member of the cast had a vocal *doppelgänger* with simian mockery throughout from beginning to end. There is no doubt that Bellini's antagonists had selected their target with care, not actually *imitating* the unfortunate composer[xli] but tormenting him mercilessly with infantile derision and comic-book caricaturing of the original creation.

This operatic conflict unleashed an undignified polemic in the musical journals of the day. The critics sharpened their pens. the audience at La Scala took sides; Bellini, dismayed, as was his nature hurried to report to his family at home in Catania that Pacini's opera had been a *"colossal*

fiasco" but this was not even remotely true like most things he wrote to them. Audiences found Pacini's naughty opera to be the most compelling musical draw of the season. Pompeo Cambiasi gave it a rating of Buonissimo, It went on to receive twenty-five performances and was most successful opera of the summer stagione.

With such a tremendous spectacle as its background the critics had a field-day. Accusations of *plagio e furto* were cast to and fro by Pacinian and Bellinian aficionadi, Pacini defiantly defended himself in a flurry of facetious statements in the press that became patently vicious before the end of the season. But he did have the last word upon *plagio e furto*: his witty reference to Bellini's own sources as "*una vera pirateria*"[xlii] enchanted his supporters.

Sanquirico's sets were widely circulated in coloured lithographs. The vocal score of *I cavalieri di Valenza* was published by Ricordi and sold out at once. To cap his campaign, Pacini dedicated this score to the contessa Samoyloff who had presided over the conflict in her box. Could the whole affair be described as a pyrrhic victory? There was no victory in sight, a further Venetian confrontation was to follow. Gaetano Rossi's verbal teasing would bear bitter fruit, the prickly Romani was affronted by people making fun of his verse. He would take battle into Rossi's home waters. Things would go from bad to worse in a matter of months.

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Antonio Ghislanzoni's thumbnail sketch of the composer is especially revealing:

"*Pacini ebbe statura mediocre, occhio vivace, fisonomia non bella ma espressiva, persona snella ed elegante. Tuttochè*

amabilissimo e qualche volta cortigiano, non conosceva l'arte di c attivarsi le simpatie. Si creò non pochi nemici; fu ingiustamente p erseguitato e fatto oggetto di basse calunnie" [xliii]

For a time the peninsula was large enough to keep the combatants apart. The following score – designed for Trieste – was distant enough for acrimony and amusement to subside in the distance. In the autumn he staged *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* at the Teatro Grande of that city with, as a chaser, the last of his Meyerbeer-inspired operas: *I crociati a Tolemaide,* It should never have won over the *triestini*, both its star singers Violante Camporesi and Rosa Mariani were at the end of their careers; Calisto Bassi's text was routine[xliv] and based upon Sophie Cottin's well-worn 'Mathilde' which had given birth to innumerable offspring. There were *longueurs* and it ended with everyone dead (or almost dead). Hurriedly conceived and composed it arrived on stage on 13 November 1828 with every sign of pleasure, the audience galvanised by the especially brilliant aria[xlv] Pacini had supplied for Rosa Mariani in the *musico* role of Malek-Adel in order to keep this notorious troublemaker quiet. (He had been obliged to supply a brand new double aria for her to sing in the preceding *Gli arabi nelle Gallie*[xlvi])

The critics were harder to please, according to them *I crociati a Tolemaide* was too full of *cori*, was stretched and too monotonous. The fact is there was a gulf emerging in Pacini's composing subject to stylistic lapses that were not resolved. Was it the fraught encounters in Milan that gave rise to what amounted to a musical mid-life crisis? A dilemma was apparent in this score where (thanks to Bellini possibly) a species of romantic attenuation was now inserting itself - if inconsistently. The action was halted by too many intermezzi as Pacini struggled to add an orchestral richness to music stymied by the bravura vocalism expected by his fans. In compensation he extended the *cori* but this was merely cosmetic. *I*

crociati a Tolemaide did well in revival however and extracts in vocal score were published widely. Pacini was not displeased with its reception, "*che'ebbe successo felicissimo"* he said and despite some initial doubts the opera was no failure.

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His orientation in flux, for whatever reason – his tussle with Bellini, the death of his wife, a disenchantment with his mentor Meyerbeer, all could be the explanation - a softening of his musical mode now began to emerge. Two operas in the second half of 1829 showed the way the wind was blowing. In all probably Gaetano Barbieri was the catalyst for this change, at Pacini's shoulder in the Bellinian confrontation, he was one of those fringe figures essential to musical debate in Italy.[xlvii] They began their actual collaboration at the start of this year: Barbieri had revamped a text for Luigia Boccabadati to sing in *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* at Rome[xlviii] but it was his renown as a translator that attracted Pacini. In no way unaware of the nature of the competition he now faced he turned to the literary shooting star for his next opera: Sir Walter Scott. The Pacini/Barbieri *Il talismano ossia La terza crociata in Palestina* [xlix]was the result.

La Scala offered a *scrittura*, he had Rubini and Tamburini and another décor by Sanquirico, Pacini took his time, almost six months (!) which meant that he paid the very greatest care with his score.[l] Indeed, this opera's leisurely pacing heralds a change in his aria forms – a further indulgence in mood with a grace new to his pen. Significantly the most enthusiastically received item in the opera was the *recitativo e romanza* 'Luna conforto al cor', carefully drawn-out and marked *sotto voce.* A dreamy recitativo 'Soave notte' followed by a languid cantabile with the

voice of Rubini raised in contemplative reflection. Reflection! Not in recent yers a Pacinian trait but it is necessary to reflect that this was the stage on which Rubini had triumphed in the indisputable success of his rival.

Not that Pacini's opera lacked digressions; in the vocal exchanges that followed swiftly on the Romanza the tenor astonished everyone by throwing out an interpolated top C from the chest (or so it is claimed) and then repeated it and sustained it in a *messa di voce*. Night after night this feat was awaited and so much applauded that by the eighth performance he was recorded as singing no less than fourteen of these wondrous *acuti* that he broke a clavicle in the process (but went on singing). Emilia Bonini, Tamburini and his wife together with the buffo Frezzolini (both Barbieri and Pacini had attempted to do justice to Scott's mix of comic and tragic characters) all had splendid receptions. A modish troubadouresque confection now à la mode, staged on 10 June 1829, *Il talismano* was repeated sixteen times and in October it returned for eighteen more. The composer blessed his new poet (and Scott) especially as Bellini's *Bianca e Fernando* had languished in between these two dates. The diminutive maestro was enchanted when news of its continuing success reached him in Naples where he had gone to supervise a revival: "*Il nostro Talismano in Napoli si canta in tutte le Società, e fa furore*" he wrote to Barbieri where the press there had praised both libretto and music:*"il tuo Pacini gode qualche riputazione nella Partenope Capitale."*[li]

Bellini or no Bellini, *Pirata* or no *Pirata* he still was getting commissions galore, all of them noted bitterly by his *catanese* competitor One of them – for Genoa - masterminded by Bartolomeo Merelli he had rejected in favour an *Annibale in Torino* offered by the Teatro Regio in Turin, which Barbaja ('*Il mio Sultano*") had approved as one of his series of contractual scores. Intended for the *carnevale* of 1830 it was to have had a libretto

by Felice Romani (whether it was to be an old one or a new one we do not know [lii]) but for precisely the same date he had signed an agreement to compose a new opera for La Fenice! The fatal outcome of accepting *both* these commissions for the same *carnevale* will soon be seen.

In the meanwhile Naples had all his attention. His evident fame earned him a royal commission for another honorific cantata; this was *L'annunzio felice* which came about as a result of the announcement of a request for the hand of Princess Maria Cristina by the much-married Ferdinando VII of Spain. It led to another of those glittering launchings in the S. Carlo with every available star on stage. Mounted on 7 September 1829 this "*cantata con balli analoghi*" was somewhat modified when it came on stage: *Harmonicon* says that "*the best pieces are a duet and a quartet. The music was admirably executed by Madame Fodor, the Tosi, Lablache, and Winter. Pacini had written a cavatina for Fodor but the singer substituted for it one in Bianca e Falliero."* Pacini, it was claimed, had written his music in eight days.[liii]

All this time he was writing a second Scott opera (like Donizetti he was prone to doing things in pairs); Friedrich Lippman in his *Giovanni Pacini: Bemerkungen zum Stil seiner Opern* [liv] though resolutely convinced that the operas preceding it were simply servile imitations of Rossini - attributes to *Il contestabile di Chester* a frontier role in that its "*dark colouring*" was "*absolutely foreign to the Rossinian heredity*". The opera has indeed confounded his most severe critics in his day and ours. Based on Scott's 'The Betrothed' (and not of course on Manzoni's 'I promessi sposi' as is often supposed - an error endorsed by the title Pacini himself used "*I fidanzati"*) it is a remarkably lively score, full of bouncing rhythms, special effects, surprising interventions and so much invention and innovation that the audiences were deposited ouside in a state of exhaustion. The vocal recipes necessary to ensure their fullest attention

retained, but their components becoming longer and asymmetrically stretched throughout the entire score. Its début was initially delayed owing to Adelaide Tosi's illness (intended for 19 November it had to wait until the 23 November), Pacini and "Giraldoni" (the composer never managed to master the spelling of Gilardoni's name) had formed an excellent team and *Il contestabile di Chester* made a powerful impact from the start. Even Fétis in his *Revue Musicale* in Paris gave it *chef-d'œuvre* status making only the perverse complaint that as Pacini had broken precedent and written-out all the vocal ornaments the talents of the singers were not fully employed!

Harmonicon went overboard:

> *"Pacini's new opera, Il Contestabile di Chester, was received with rapturous acclamations on the 23rd of November. The applause daily becomes more enthusiastic and general. All agree that this work is the author's masterpiece; and he is censured only for having sacrificed all the parts, even those of Lablache and Madame Boccabadati, to that of La Tosi. This latter lady is said to be admirable in the new opera, though she was but recovering from a severe indisposition, when the first performance took place. She was applauded con furore in all her pieces, but particularly in the cavatina, in her duet with Boccabadati, and in the trio with that lady and Lablache; and in her final air, a piece in which Pacini has brought together all kind of difficult and delightful combinations. The composer and the singers were several times called on the stage, both separately and en masse, a mark of approbation extremely rare at Naples. The absence of the court on the present occasion[lv] left the audience unrestrained in the manifestation of their enthusiasm."*[lvi]

Pacini however insists that his score was cut, and indeed *bravura* had given way to as many *cori, ritornelli,* marches, fanfares and through-composing as he thought the Neapolitans could stand. With its battles and willfully discursive ensembles *Il contestabile di Chester* is long it is true, but also touching and jaunty. If memorable arias are in short supply, instead there is urgency, energy and good tunes. By no means an unwise formula

for success in Naples.

Fétis concluded his review "*Pacini était engagé pour écrire un opéra à Milan; mais une indisposition grave le retient à Naples."*

We are to hear much of this "*indisposition*". Not only would his health suffer but also his pocket.

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Was he ill? It has never been confirmed. It was November 1829, he had accepted two major commissions for the coming carnival not one note of which had yet been committed to paper. Moreover, under the terms of his contract with Barbaja he was obliged to supply a third opera for La Scala in the Spring. This was enough to make anyone ill. Had he been in optimum health he might well have composed all three, as it was, this near-impossible over-commitment that gave an opening to Bellini who had failed to secure a Venice contract due to his exorbitant demands for money.[lvii] He was an expensive "*provincial*". His trump card was Felice Romani, current crony and poet contracted to supply the text for two of Pacini's commissions. For several months Bellini had been wringing his hands over Pacini's determination to go ahead with his obscene (as he saw it) hoard of contracts which he took as a personal insult. If his resentment was expressed mainly in literary bile and exchanges within a circle of kindred spirits - that of Romani had a more material expression. Indeed were as much to do with his pocket as poetic pride.

Romani is the key to all the coming events. For the moment Bellini assuaged his fractious muse with comforting news from the direction of the Grand Canal; following a lead from Venetian insiders he heard that in the event of Pacini's defection at La Fenice he would get the chance to take his place. With this salving thought in mind he set about investigating Pacini's torinese engagement. In October 1829 he took coach to Romani's

fief of Turin to spread as much Pacinian discomfort as possible (and miss the revival of *Il talismano* at La Scala). It bore scant fruit apart from a saccharine reception by local bigwigs. But back in Milan in December his Venetian prospects suddenly brightened, he obtained a compensatory invitation to stage *Il pirata* in the watery city and too became aware that the dilatory Romani had written little or nothing of the two texts he was supposed to be supplying to his rival *concittadino*. Who can doubt that the creative possibilities of this situation were discussed together in considerable detail?

If Bellini rejoiced in his *nemici*, so did Romani. His relations with Pacini had not been cordial since *La schiava in Bagdad*. A fervent admirer of Vincenzo Monti he had always looked askance at this collaborator of his youth and Pacini's amused indulgence in Gaetano Rossi's parodied verses in *I cavalieri di Valenza* was judged completely inadmissible. An even more urgent target was Nicola Vaccaj, the author of *Giulietta e Romeo,* whose libretto for *Saul*[lviii] had never been paid-for. Worse, the wretch had had the effrontery to ask the miserable Tottola to make changes to the text in the face of Romani's refusal to write a line more without cash down. These two maestri would pay for their sins.

In Naples Pacini awaited the arrival of one or another of his texts. No text of course arrived as was to be expected. When, exactly he renounced his Turin commission is not clear.[lix] In the interim Bellini arrived in Venice. He had left Casalbuttano on 17 December though his *Il pirata* was not due on stage in Venice for another month. He wanted to be sure that he was on the spot to act decisively. The weather was frightful, the lagoon had frozen over, everyone in Venice was shivering and shortly after his arrival the city was cut-off from the outside. The La Fenice season began

as badly as possible, Giuseppe Persiani whose slender reputation was at stake, had accepted a contract to open the *carnevale* but finding the libretto he was given to be utterly impossible had tried to withdraw. In the face of legal threats by the *nobile Presidenza* he set *Costantino in Arles* to music in two weeks and it failed abjectly.[lx] The young composer's fledgling renown vanished overnight. This rebuff notwithstanding the *Presidenza* refused to listen to Bellini's pestering that he should replace Pacini; his tales of the latter's "illness" were received with scepticism. *Il pirata* was staged as intended: *"Le second opera*" (after Persiani's *Costantino*) *"...qui sera joué au théâtre de la Fenice, est Le Pirata* (sic) *de Bellini; le troisième, Olga ou l'Orfana Moscovita, de Pacini; et le quatrième, Malek-Adel, de Guillon"* stated the 'Revue Musicale.' [lxi]

The fact that this notice was in the wake of Persiani's opera ("*une musique monotone*") reveals that even so late in the day the *Presidenza* was not yet completely aware of the conspiracy contrived by the poetical plotters.

On 5 January 1830 the *Presidenza* agreed that Bellini should replace Pacini only if the latter's score was not in their hands by 20 January. Bellini held all the cards. On 15 January he wrote to Gaetano Cantù: "*non só se sia finito ancora*" (ie Romani's text for Pacini) "*perché io ne ho letto il p[ri]mo atto e porzione del 2do, che in nostro intima confidenza è più insulso dell'istessa fredezza in persona*"[lxii] with a wide-eyed innocence seeing that the poet was even then beside him in Venice working on the transformation of Vaccaj's *Giulietta e Romeo* into *I Capuleti e i Montecc*hi.[lxiii]

That plans to do so had been made well in advance is revealed by his letter to Alessandro Lanari of that very 5 January day: "*Qualora il Maestro Pacini manchi al suo Contratto di venire a scrivere la sua Opera al Gran Teatro La Fenice, dietro l'invito da voi fattomi mi prenderó l'impegno di*

scrivervi io il Libro, Giulietta, e Cappellio da Romani restringendomi all'Onorario di Napoleoni d'oro effettivi – Trecentoventicinque – dico Napoleoni d'oro N.325"[lxiv]

On that same day of 5 January Pacini arrived in Milan in search of Romani.[lxv] He was not of course to be found. No one knew where he was. But by then Pacini had recognised the nature of the *fait accompli*. It was defeat, Romani had killed two birds with one stone. The few verses he had supplied for Pacini's aborted *Olga* could be comfortably re-used in the libretto for Bellini's *La sonnambula.*[lxvi] Thus all loose ends were tied.

And Bellini could congratulate himself. As he wrote in his letter of 15 January: *"..il governo e quasi tutto Venezia mi ha tanto pregato, che se Pacini non verrá per scrivere egli l'opera nuova, bisogna che lo facci io…" I Capuleti e i Montecchi* duly ready and waiting, was staged and received with rapture.[lxvii]

But nemesis has its own agenda. It was from water in a well of the frozen city that he contracted the amœbic infection from which he died five years later.[lxviii] When he got back to Milan a commission from the Teatro Regio in Turin awaited him for the next *carnevale*. Bellini, however, had no further interest in Turin.

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[i] Pacini's sense of humour was not quite independent of his family planning: Paolina Pacini (1826-1847) was the first of three children each born at nine-monthly intervals to his first wife, the last of whom, Maria Amazilia (named after the opera) would be adopted by the *contessa* Samoyloff

[ii] *Françoise de Foix* was the title given to an opéra by Berton (Paris 1809) in which this particular plot had its origins

[iii] Harmonicon 1826, 206

[iv] Liszt's 1836 piano transcription of the cabaletta *I tuoi frequeti palpiti* from *Niobe* initiated at least twenty years of continuous popularity of the aria in concert form

[v] It was a summer when his music began to be published abroad - with mixed results. At the Odéon in Paris for example was staged a pastiche (Paris was a gross-consumer of such

confections) called *Le Neveu de Monseigneur* (première 7 August 1826) officially attributed to Morlacchi but which also included music by Pacini - both tarred with a Rossinian brush by the press (Rossini may in fact have had had a hand in the project). The libretto was by Jean-François Bayard, Augusta Kernoc de Chamilly (pseud. Romieu), and Thomas-Marie-François Sauvage and based upon an episode in the life of Madame de Pompadour as recounted by her maid. Pacini's contribution could indeed have been selected by Rossini as arias from his operas had been in print in Paris and London for some time and there is no certainty that he acknowledged their use in this instance

[vi] Though the *secco* recitative had been discarded in Naples in opera seria - thanks to the French régime of Murat - the cembalo itself still made an appearance and the maestro was still obliged to sit at it for three uncomfortable days - a confrontation both of praise or blame on the part of habitually disrespectful audiences

[vii] Pacini op cit 46-7

[viii] One of them, unusually, and in order to exploit a house full to overflowing every evening, was for charity: Pasta notes in her diary that on 27 November was given a "*Niobe per poveri*"

[ix] But it was invariably lowered in key, there were no contenders for Rubini's top register. The autograph version of 'Il soave e bel contento' is in Eflat Major (with an *acuto* of D in alt), the published version (Ricordi) is in Bflat Major with an equivalent acuto of B flat (but the amendments to the fioriture of this latter version may well have been supplied by Pacini himself)

[x] Revue des Deux Mondes, Paris March 1835, 724

[xi] He also inserted it into his *Il pirata*, into Rossini's *Donna del lago* and *Mosé,* as well as into Pacini's *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei.* In an opportune fashion it was interpolated into revivals of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* in none of which operas was it in the least bit appropriate

[xii] *Cfr* Alexander Weatherson *Frequent palpitation* [in] Donizetti Society Newsletter 133 (February 2018) 9-12 Can anyone imagine Maria Callas singing 'Di quella pira'?

[xiii] 20 November 1826

[xiv] Cfr Alexander Weatherson*"Nell'orror di mie sciagure": Pacini, parody and Il pirata* Atti del Convegno Internazionale 'Bellini : Verso l'edizione critica' (Siena 2000). Italian translation [in] Chigiana Vol. XLV: *'Nell'orror di mie sciagure' Pacini, La Parodia e Il Pirata* [in] 'Vincenzo Bellini Verso L'Edizione Critica'(Olschki, Firenze 2004), 219-244

[xv] Pacini, who had been appointed artistic director at the S.Carlo in 1823 may or may not have attended rehearsals of Bellini's *Bianca e Gernando* in May 1826 as he later claimed. There is no evidence that they had actually met before this occasion

[xvi] Among the students encountered on this visit were Luigi Ricci and the very young Errico Petrella who was later to compose *Jone* (1858) with its catastrophic culminating eruption of Vesuvius in the manner of *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei*

[xvii] Pacini's first dedication to her dates back to 1826. Bellini made unsuccessful efforts to wrest her from this important rival and hopefully dedicated his *Bianca e Fernando* to her; she sent him a gold watch and chain in acknowledgment

[xviii] The choice of plot - *pace* d'Arlincourt's 'Le Rénégat' which is the official source of Pacini's libretto - was not without a backward glance at the *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* of Franz (Francesco) Schoberlechner (1797-1843) which Pacini may have come across at Florence in 1815 and was revived at Lucca under the auspices of Pacini's patron the Duchess Maria Luisa di Borbone in 1819. The Austrian maestro was a friend of his father and had created a starring role for him in his *I virtuosi teatrali* at Florence in 1817. [Later, Schoberlechner may have returned the compliment to the son by re-setting his *Il barone di Dolsheim* (St.Petersburg 1828)] As for d'Arlincourt; *poete et romancier* Charles-Victor Prévost d'Arlincourt *dit Vicomte* d'Arlincourt was born at Magny-les-Hameaux in the château de Mérantais near Versailles on 26 September 1788, and died at Paris on 22 January 1856. He was a romantic cult figure of the day, the title of whose most famous work 'Le Solitaire*'* (1821) says everything about his poetical niche

[xix] In the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di S.Pietro a Majella in Naples . It dates from the last weeks of 1826

[xx] In particular, the modesty of the role of the soprano is very marked (the *musico* even at the beginning has a rather more important role). The soprano got a major foothold in later editions.

[xxi] Probably in response to Pasta's outrageous behaviour in appropriating the music of Rubini in *Niobe.* Pacini was never to warm to Pasta again

[xxii] Bellini, awaiting the outcome of this aria for the soprano who would become his Imogene in a matter of weeks, anxious that the *primadonna* should not upstage the music he was writing for her, said fearfully "*Certo faran furore".* In the event the cavatina did not "*faran furore*" but the *Amazilia* interpolation certainly did

[xxiii] A manuscript score in London's British Library (of c1832?) presents a version of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* where Leodato has the major role, including a new contralto aria probably composed for Rosa Mariani (also an aria for the comprimario Zarele). These new changes may or may not have been performed in London as certainly the *primadonna* soprano Giulia Grisi would have held out against them

[xxiv] She gave birth in the following *Trovatore* where, singing Azucena, such an infant was in danger of being thrown on a bonfire it is to be supposed

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[xxv] *Cfr* Alexander Weatherson *One size fits all/Pacini's Gli arabi nelle Gallie* [in] Donizetti Society Newsletter 96 (October 2005) 17-24

[xxvi] Pacini op cit 52

[xxvii] The Viennese public liked his operas, though the critics (as usual) did not; Pacini takes issue with those who simply wanted to denigrate Italian Opera *'ciò per volere abbassare gli Autori italiani"*

[xxviii] Bellini, with scant justification, was to cultivate the paranoid accusation that both Pacini and Donizetti maliciously appropriated his tragic colouring, the key structure and the protracted delirium of his heroine in *Il pirata* as if there had been no earlier precedents! His detestation of both these rivals - paradoxically - had its real genesis in the unclouded success of this work of genius which his limited self-esteem was never able to accept. But Pacini's earlier disdain in Naples was endorsed by the animosities of rival librettists. The letter's insistence that it was *he* who persuaded Barbaja to give Bellini his La Scala contract (which may perhaps have been true) compounded this paranoia

[xxix] Meyerbeer's *Marguerite d'Anjou* (French version 1826) was unmistakably the inspiration for the plot and shared the same Pixérécourt source

[xxx] Pacini op cit 53

[xxxi] Bartolomeo Merelli (1793-1879) a pupil of Mayr, writing libretti both for Donizetti and Nicola Vaccai, he would later achieve notoriety as the *bête noir* of Giuseppe Verdi during the long years (1836-1850 and 1861-1863) when he was impresario at La Scala

[xxxii] Merelli [*Cfr* Marcello De Angelis *Le cifre del melodramma*: *l'archivio inedito dell'impresario teatrale Alessandro Lanari nella Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze (1815-1870)* (Firenze 1982) [Letter No. 103, 299] wrote from Milan to Alessandro Lanari on 20 August 1828 to say that *Per Dio non intendo cosa dice* was ready for staging, together with the costumes. He requests Lanari to beg Pacini not to renounce the project as the "Governor" has given permission to go ahead. But apparently Pacini did renounce the project

[xxxiii] Pacini never lacked allies or enemies in the musical press of Milan. *l Teatri,* edited by Gaetano Barbieri, invariably took up the cudgels on his behalf as did *La Fama.* These publications were mobilised for the forthcoming struggle he envisaged at this time.

[xxxiv] They had alternated in the "possession" of this particular goldmine: Rossi took possession first beginning with *Romilda e Costanza* (1817) and *Emma di Resburgo* (1819), but then Romani managed to seduce the wealthy maestro and supplied the texts for *Margherita d'Anjou* (1820) and *L'esule di Granata*(1822); unfortunately for this last, however, at the very crisis moment (it would be Meyerbeer's last Italian opera) Rossi snatched the crown wit*h Il crociato in Egitto* (1824) whose success was nothing less than sensational. Romani deeply resented Rossi's triumph and subsequently tried to oust Rossi from several of his contacts while the latter reciprocated in kind. One major reciprocation would be *I cavalieri di Valenza*

[xxxv] The working title of *I cavalieri di Valenza*

[xxxvi] On 26 April 1828

[xxxvii] Adelaide Castelli had died in childbirth, her orphaned child, christened Maria Amazilia, was immediately adopted by the kind *contessa* Samoyloff who brought her up like a daughter. She lived with her adoptive mother until she married the lawyer Achille Manara. An infant son, Carlo Ludovico (named after the *duca* di Lucca), had died only a few weeks before, aged one year

[xxxviii] *Cfr* Carmelo Neri *Vincenzo Bellini: Nuovo Epiostolario 1819-1835* (Aci Sant'Antonio 2005), Letter no 26, 57

[xxxix] *Cfr* Alexander Weatherson *"Nell'orror di mie sciagure": Pacini, La Parodia e Il Pirata* [in] Vincenzo Bellini verso L'edizione critica, Atti di Convegno Internazionale, Siena 2000, 219-244 (Olschki Firenze 2004)

[xl] "*...dunque attacca il finale che è un tal porcheria inenarrabile con l'aggiunta che il Largo...è rubato dal quintetto di Meyerbeer nel Crociato: O cielo clemente e con l'istessa ripresa"* Letter of Bellini to Florimo of 14 June 1828.
Cfr Carmelo Neri op cit [Letter No. 43],82-84.

[xli] Bellini accused Pacini of pouncing-upon the tragic colouring, key structure and protracted delirium of his heroine in *Il pirata,* but it is not true, sometimes Pacini shadowed the obvious features of *Il pirata* for provocative reasons but that was all, when it came to the important features of the score, *I cavalieri di Valenza* was radically different. Bellini's accusation that his rival's opera was "*all in a minor key*" parroted critical jibes that Pacini had written a duet in a minor key throughout, refusing a resolution in the major, but Pacini - whose duets had long been full of bold tonal experiments – had long preceded Bellini in this respect - his gran'duetti were in full display in *l'ultimo giorno di Pompei* - an opera actually on stage at La Scala at precisely the time Bellini was writing *Il pirata* (as well as being sung by the same cast for whom he was composing)

[xlii] Pacini alluded to the fact that the plot of *Il pirata* - whatever Romani's purported source - was simply another variant of the Gabriella di Vergy story which had been going round Italy for a decade (*Gabriella di Vergi* by Michele Carafa - a friend of Bellini - had initially been staged at the Teatro del Fondo in Naples in 1816)

[xliii] Antonio Ghislanzoni (1824-1893) *libro serio* (Milan 1879), 18

[xliv] Calisto Bassi (1800-1860) was the poetic standby at La Scala, his name is not mentioned in the printed libretto of *I crociati a Tolemaide*

[xlv] The aria 'Occulto a lei che adoro' was one of his all-time showpieces, florid but irresistibly haunting with its triple-time lilt

[xlvi] On 27 September 1828, together with two new pieces for Camporesi

[xlvii] Barbieri was the author and publisher of a series of translations *"trasporta in versi italiani dal Professore G.Barbieri"* entitled *"Repertorio scelto ad uso de'teatri italiani* (pub. 1823-4), including translations of Moliere and other French plays. In early life he had made his living teaching Italian to tourists, he had graduated to music journalism only in 1827 publishing the periodical *I Teatri* in Milan in partnership with his printer and a friend. His rather odd struggle to survive in earlier years endowed him with a romantic aura *sui genesis* and his erratic fount of knowledge proved useful to the composer (who, characteristically, made fun of him, insisting that he had taught mathematics in his youth and that "*le formole algebriche mal si confanno colla poesia"*)

[xlviii] The aria was the celebrated 'Immagine adorata' (Ezilda) first sung at the revival of the *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* at the Teatro Argentina on 17 January 1829

[xlix] A Meyerbeer valedictory title with Sir Walter Scott as its catalyst, thus he made a bridge with his operas in the coming decade

[l] It is clear (from his family opera *Il convitato di pietra*) that Pacini tried out the music of *Il talsmano* on his siblings in preliminary rehearsal – but this was almost certainly a practice he had initiated in earlier years

[li] Pacini to Gaetano Barbieri, letter of 8 July 1829 (Private Collection)

[lii] In all probability this was the libretto that would be set by Luigi Ricci at the end of the year (*Annibale in Torino*, Teatro Regio, Turin, 26 December 1830). Its text was published as by "N.N" but was in fact by Romani who made repeated attempts to cover his tracks by subterfuge in this particular period of theatrical deviousness

[liii] *Harmonicon* 1830,42: The reason for the change of cavatina is relatively simple, Joséphine Fodor-Mainvielle sang 'Della rosa il bel vermiglio' from *Bianca e Falliero*, whose recitative ('Come sereno il di') was considered more appropriate to the occasion than the text supplied to Pacini by his librettist Emmanuele Vaccaro. Harmonicon also insists that Pacini took twenty-four days to write his music which is highly improbable – in such a time he would have composed an entire opera!

[liv] Friedrich Lippman *Giovanni Pacini: Bemerkungen zumStil seiner Opern* [in] Chigiana (Siena 1968)

[lv] Queen Maria Isabella had been deprived of the Royal Gala on her name day (19 November) as a result of Tosi's Illness

[lvi] *Harmonicon* 1830, 90

[lvii] On 13 April 1829 Vaccai had reported in a letter to his friend Viezzoli "*Egli mi assicurò che Bellini non è ancora scritturato per la seconda Opera giacchè avanzò le sue pretese troppo esagerate, a cui il Crivelli non intende di accedere."*
Cfr Commons ed. *Il carteggio personale di Nicola Vaccaj, Vol 1*, Letter 235, 753

[lviii] The *Saul* affair was truly unfortunate, especially for Vaccaj, this tragedia lirica with an excellent libretto by Romani it had been delayed from month to month. Scheduled for performance at the S. Carlo in the autumn of 1828, as a letter in the Archivio di Stato from the *Segretario di Stato per L'Affari Interni* of 22 January 1829 makes clear, the Sopraintendente de'Teatri thought that, on mature consideration, "*Saulle*" was too serious for the projected Royal staging *"Fu risoluto. D'accordo coll'Impresario, di darsi la rappresentazione di quest'opera in un altro epoca". Cfr* Fascia 4661 Gran'Archivio di Stato, Napoli.

As a result, Vaccaj who had not paid the poet for the libretto (he was *careful* with money), fell foul of Romani. When he was offered another date for *Saul* with a brand new cast he asked Romani to make changes but Romani insisted upon cash-down before he wrote another word. Irritated, Vaccaj asked Tottola to do the changes instead thus doubling his offence. The following quite extensive portions were revised or rewritten by Tottola. (Was Tottola *paid* for his services?):

Act 1	Sc 6	Cavatina Se il braccio mio guidasti' (except recit.) (David)'
	Sc 7	[all this scene] Duetto (Micol/David)
Act II	Sc 1	[all this scene] Duetto (Saul/Achimelech)
	Sc 2	[all this scene] Duetto (Pitonessa/Saul)
	Sc 6	Final quatrain Cabaletta (Micol)
	Sc 8	[all this scene] Duetto con coro (Gionata/David)
	Sc 10	Final two lines of Cabaletta (Saul)
		Finale- Intervention of Saul

In the event, as it transpired, *Saul* had been delayed so long that the original cast had come back to Naples and Vaccai reversed all the Tottola changes and the opera was received very happily at the S.Carlo on 11 March 1829 with the verses Romani had supplied in the first place. But Romani never forgave him (was he ever paid?) and it led to the dereliction of the libretto of his one real success - *Giulietta e Romeo* - handed over to Bellini in an act of malice

[lix] Almost certainly he had pleaded illness, enabling Bellini to broadcast widely in Venice that his illness would oblige him to renounce there too. Only when the Romani/Bellini *coup* against Pacini and Vaccaj had been accomplished in Venice, did Romani supply an *Annibale in Torino* text for Luigi Ricci. (Teatro Regio, Turin 26 December 1830)

[lx] The librettist was the *cavaliere* Paolo Polo, a local dilettante; the prima of Persiani's opera was not 15 December 1829 as given in the *Cronache* of the Teatro La Fenice by Dalla Libera, but 26 December (S.Stefano) as is confirmed by the Bolognese Journal 'Teatri, Arte e Letteratura' of 7 January 1830

[lxi] Revue Musicale, Paris 1829, 594

[lxii] Neri op cit Letter No. 105, 156-7

[lxiii] It is obvious that Romani's presence was essential for the *rifacimento* of Vaccai's text as in all previous collaborations with Bellini. Important autograph portions in full score of *I Capuleti*, however, from the end of Sc. 2 and the whole of Sc.3 of Act I; including the famous cabaletta 'La tremenda ultrice spada' for Romeo, are dated 1829 (ie well before there was any question of Pacini's "defection"). They were sold as from the collection of Giovanni Battista Perucchini by Christies in London on 10 May 1977: "*The present MS has been compared with the earliest known vocal score of I Capuleti published by Ricordi in circa 1830, and with a modern full-score issued, also by Ricordi, in circa 1955: in both of these texts the particular sections of the opera represented by the MS., there basically in A flat, are transposed a semi-tone down into G major. This probably indicates an alteration made for Giuditta Grisi: and either that A flat was the original key, and that this was subsequently lowered in the score as finally performed and published in G major to suit the mezzo-soprano compass; or that the present MS. was a temporary revision in A flat, designed to show off her high notes to better advantage. In possible support of the first mentioned suggestion, it should be noted that Tibaldo's recitative 'Di tanto bene mi persuade amor'..."which immediately precedes the section under consideration, does indeed close on a convenient cadence of A flat*."

[Note by the compiler of Christies catalogue]

This, and other comments, readily confirm that the scheme to replace Pacini was initiated well before the actual *coup*, and that some of the new text had already been supplied ('La tremenda ultrice spada' was not part of Vaccai's original text) indeed - in spite of insistence upon the "haste" with which Bellini was "obliged to compose his score" - some of it had only to be tailored to the Venice cast. Some instrumentation would also appear to be in evidence, however provisional, at this early stage. Bellini was a guest of Perucchini during "part of his stay in Venice"

[lxiv] Neri op cit Letter No. 101, p153. *Cfr* De Angelis op cit (n23) 27. The affairs of La Fenice had been handed-over to Giuseppe Crivelli, Bellini was trying to go over his head such was the prize almost within his grasp. It should be made clear that whereas Romani's motivation in replacing Vaccai's libretto of *Giulietta e Romeo* with that of *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* for Bellini was that of revenge, that of Bellini in replacing Pacini was that of money. He resented Pacini's ability to undercut all his rivals.

[lxv] *"Pacini arrived here on the 5th of January, to complete the composition of the opera of Romani, which he had undertaken to prepare for the Carnival"*. Harmonicon (reporting from Milan) 1830, 133

[lxvi] A draft only of *Olga* remains in the Fondo Galletti of the Archivio di Stato in Milan, it was certainly derived from the play by Jacques Arséne Polycarpe François Ancelot 'Olga, ou L'orpheline moscovite', a *tragédie en cinq actes* of 1828, but more pertinently was yet another *semi-rifacimento* of the text supplied to Rastrelli in 1824 for La Scala: *Amina o L'innocenza perseguitata,* which failed and whose argument Ferretti had had the intemperance to emulate for his *L'orfanella di Ginevra* (1829) with music by Luigi Ricci [Additional sources may well have included Giovanni Galzerani's ballet 'L'orfanella di Ginevra' and Luigi Marchionni's prose version L'orfanella della Svizzera' which was going the rounds]. It is probable that

Pacini's incomplete *Olga* was subsumed into the libretto of *La sonnambula* the following year thus Romani could happily present his friend Bellini with a perfect *compte rendu* of all possible and impossible antagonists. [Donizetti also (another "nemico") had set some of Rastrelli's text under the mysterious title *La bella prigionera* (a brief section in vocal score only remains) but which may simply have been composed for a pasticcio opera attributed to Giacomo Cordella with exactly this title given at the Teatro del Fondo in Naples (Lib.N.N) in 1826]

[lxvii] Its prima at La Fenice was on 11 March 1830. The *Presidenza* would soon be aware, however, of the extent to which their season had been manipulated, and offered Pacini compensatory contracts for the rest of his life

[lxviii] For a modern clinical account of Bellini's illness and death [see] (Dr) Nino Cannavà *La causa di morte di Vincenzo Bellini* (Catania 2002)

Chapter Four

"Un misérable eunuque"

He had his Spring contract, his librettist was by his side and he had sympathy galore - no one whatsoever in musical circles in Milan could have been unaware of the Venetian scam,[i] from now on the guilty pair would be viewed askance by operatic managements throughout the peninsula. The direction of La Scala - only too willing to be supportive - agreed against all their usual caution to a religious heroine to fulfil Pacini's contractual engagement and *Giovanna d'Arco* was the result - a saintly martyr bedevilled not just by the familiar occult and heretic foes but by the dilatory behaviour of the librettist in question - Gaetano Barbieri - who confessed that only half his text was actually in hand when rehearsals began in February 1830.

Even if the great theatre was not unduly dismayed by the delay that resulted it put the opera and its composer into bad odour with its audience, after excuse after excuse and postponement after postponement of the *prima,* Pacini was obliged to ask the Chief of Police to impose a measure of calm and it was only at the very last gasp of the season that the curtains parted on his *Giovanna* and then before a sea of angry faces. The composer was hissed as he took his seat at the *cembalo* but smiled merely as they were confronted by a genuine novelty: Henriette Méric-Lalande in bed asleep. Her "*dream aria*" in which the *bienheureuse* greets her sacred destiny met with murmurs (Italian audiences seldom warmed to devotional intimacies on stage) but her truly seraphic cavatina, immaculately sung, brought them down to earth like a perfect miracle. Librettist and composer had thrown caution to the winds with the plot, Giovanna was allowed her "English" lover (Leonello) that Schiller had put into his play - an entanglement regarded as sacrilegious even when sung by Rubini (Temistocle Solera with his "*diluted Schiller*" of fifteen years later for a far more timid Verdi cut him out); Antonio Tamburini made everyone laugh with his portrayal of the tongue-tied Dauphin (Carlo VII in the opera), and so did Méric-Lalande in her *décolleté* suit of armour - her second-act entrance provoked such a gale of laughing that she was left momentarily helpless. Instead of an odour of sanctity this historical confection turned out to be an opera of unexpectedly good humour, of cheers and counter-cheers, and replete with all the awaited belcantist moments

of glory. Cambiasi gave it a "*Buono*" on 14 March 1830 (three days after the perjured *Capuleti* in Venice) and it stormed through the remaining dates of the season. Each night Giovanna's *rondò finale* was heard "*con trasporto"* according to the press and arias and duets from this opera by Pacini found themselves applauded in profane Italian drawing room surroundings in the next decade.

Once the season had come to a close and he had taken stock of the immediate situation Pacini took coach to Paris where his *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* was scheduled to appear at the Théâtre-Italien. He left with a sigh of relief. In no hurry, taking his time to get there arm-in-arm with the *contessa* Samoyloff they set foot on the famed cobbles of the "*operatic capital of the world"* early in July only to find them being torn-up to throw at the army of the Bourbon successor of his Carlo VII, Charles X. [ii] The theatre closed almost immediately and his opera was shelved. After a week they set off home. This useless visit was a portent: he never took to France and France never took to him. He did, however, bring back some ideas for future operatic fodder from the load of books that came back in his carriage - a speculative *Maria Stuarda*[iii] (thanks to his recent reflections upon decapitated queens) and a *Conte di Lennox*. By the time they got back home he had alighted upon a plot he had found in a volume in his lap: the poems of Lord Byron. Though "dead and damned" in smart circles in his native country George Gordon, Lord Byron was deified across the channel largely because his treacherous muse made more sense under skies wider and more dangerous than those of London. *Byronic* expertise in a Barbieri translation being thin-on-the-ground, Jacopo Ferretti - the hard-pressed librettist recruited for his next opera - chose to extract a ready-made argument from a sleezy five-act ballet scenario *Il corsaro* by Giovanni Galzerani first danced at La Scala on 18 August 1826.

It was not a wise choice.

*

His affiliation with the papal capital not quite extinct, Pacini had received a flattering commission from the Teatro Apollo to inaugurate a spectacular season on its sumptuously restored stage. The former lover of the *principessa* Borghese responded almost sentimentally and the Duca Torlonia - who owned the Apollo

made him feel at home. Preparation went well: Ferretti's completed text was in his hands by the first week of November and the orchestral score was ready for rehearsal by 12 December. Alas the best laid plans would lead to the most solemn fiasco of his career. One erasing all recollection of previous shipwrecks.

All the ingredients for success were in place on the night of 15 January 1831. An auditorium decked with flowers; enough illumination to light the entire Piazza del Campidoglio; ranks of gilded Roman *noblesse* with their irreverent progeny spread out in the surrounding tiers of boxes *en grande tenue* for a gala occasion, with the Duca and his aged mother at the centre - Giulia Samoyloff at their elbow so extravagantly garbed that she was ironically applauded when she made her entrance…

As a bonus the twenty-two year old Felix Mendelssohn had taken his seat in the parterre. He would be an important witness to a major discomforture - eager to be just but far from dispassionate he was travelling around Italy with his German rectitude like an outsize suitcase bumping into his good intentions. Despite a general wish to be pleased finding himself quite unable to cope with Italian *désinvolture* and taste for last-minute improvisation. A very young man programmed to suspect any music beyond the heaven-sent barrier of the Alps and never willing to grasp the fact that audiences went to the opera to be entertained and not to be cowed by imposing conceptions.

He wrote two days after the prima of Pacini's *Il corsaro*: "*performance here is quite out of the question. The orchestras are worse than anyone could believe…the great singers have left the country, Lablache, David, Lalande, Pisaroni…sing in Paris"*[iv]

After this priceless piece of misinformation, he undertook a graphic description of the ensuing disorderly prima so well-chosen for his theme. To everyone else the evening was probably exceptionally diverting – certainly memorable, Pacini was cheered when he sat down at the *cembalo*, everyone was determined to have a good time even though the opera opened abruptly without either overture or prelude and the curtains parted with most spectators still deposing wraps and settling into their seats (some having waited five hours to get into the house)

But things began well. Mendelssohn reported that the singers bowed to the State Box (Rosa Mariani after her cavatina) and the *maestro* below. But before long things began to get out of hand: a cross-dressed Corrado engaged himself

in distinctly outré embraces with two female lovers (Ferretti made weak excuses for these Galzerani touches in his printed text) which provoked some tittering. It encouraged the young bloods in the boxes to make subdued comments - echoing the transports on stage and singing-along slyly with the music. A crescendo of discontent gradually mounted: the jeunesse signalled to their friends, they pulled faces and enjoyed themselves hugely. By the time of the *finale primo* the house was simmering, in ferment with whistles, catcalls, protests at the catcalling, rude gestures and reproaches at the rude gestures by the elders. The Ducal proprietor left abruptly, the *contessa* Samoyloff too (or swooned – according to a malicious press). Pacini abandoned his *cembalo* and bolted backstage.

An intermission ballet (not by Pacini) *Barbebleu* was whistled like a fully-fledged tornado. This notwithstanding, Act II of the ill-fated *Corsaro* was at the nadir of all fiaschi; barracked from beginning to end with the singers struggling to be heard against a ground-bass of slow-handclapping from the *jeunesse dorée* and the performance reduced to a siege-economy of useless gestures and vocal marking.

Mendelssohn was outraged, especially at the treatment of Pacini. How could a civilised people so behave? The dignity of music was at stake (not the dignity of Italian opera - he dismissed *Il corsaro* though of course he never heard it performed or studied the score) *"I should have been angry if the music had created a furore, because it is so wretched as to be beneath criticism. But that they should turn their back on their adored Pacini, whom they wanted to garland on the Capitol, ape and caricature his melodies, makes me angry too and it shows how low a composer stands in their general esteem. On another occasion they would carry him home on their shoulders".*[v]

Once the adored Felix Mendelssohn, his self-esteem fully intact, his judgement in place had shaken off the dust of the venerable capital with its despicable mœurs *Il corsaro* picked up and went-on to be applauded - even if Pacini was not carried home on anyone's shoulders (*Barbableu* having been suppressed). But audiences were thin and after the first four performances ticket prices were reduced. Its composer was understandably indignant, complaining of the circus mentality of Roman youth. He had thought well of his score, its

qualities and potential had fallen to infantile caprice (a criticism that might also be extended to that of the visiting prodigy)

The history of this opera needs special coverage. The fact is there are two *quite distinct versions* of Pacini's *Il corsaro* - each vastly different irrespective of inexpert comment and unprepared antagonists.[vi] Had any Roman or the German perception been present it would have been able to relish the most engaging series of duets and trios for every combination of the soprano/contralto timbre the post-belcanto stage could devise Graceful to a fault, a light-headed feminine spoof clothed in some of the most delectable music the composer would ever write. History has not yet finished with these two *corsari*. But the age was not enlightening [vii]

Summer in Viareggio was not marked by the annual rush to complete a score, its sole venture was a birthday cantata for Giulia Samoyloff upset by theatrical misadventure - a votive offering for a vestal but no longer in all probability a mistress.[viii] The cantata was sung by members of his family at the Villa Pacini on 28 July 1831.[ix] Nor was the following winter in Naples especially full of music; he worked on a recuperative revision of the score of his *Il corsaro* commissioned for Milan but otherwise supplied only another royal cantata - but an especially important one - for the wedding of Ferdinando II of the Two Sicilies[x] to the later beatified Maria Cristina of Savoy. A suitably lavish score for a national celebration.

But this year of confrontations, celebrations and disasters would continue to the very end. The event on the horizon would be Bellini's *Norma*. Did Pacini engage a claque to *jeer* his rival's masterstroke at La Scala on 26 December 1831?

It would have been perfectly understandable had he done so. His grievance was obvious. Further to the shamelessly unrepentant glee of the Venetian duo it is clear that *Norma* was an additional taunt - a deliberately provocative *rifacimento* of an earlier opera by Pacini[xi] chosen by the poisonous poet to avenge both the culprits for the operatic disdain they encountered everywhere for their scurvy behavior.

But there were other contestants in the ring where the initial booing of *Norma* was concerned. For some time Milan had been split musically: La Scala and

the Teatro Carcano had been disputing an innovative operatic crown. The Duca Litta - head of a celebrated musical dynasty as well as that of the triumvirate that ruled the Carcano - had featured Giuditta Pasta and. Giovanni-Battista Rubini together on its smaller stage for the brilliantly successful prima of Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* as the carnival opening the preceding year.[xii] The discarded English queen was a role Pasta would cherish to the end of her singing career. Carcano's triumph had been especially persuasive for its operatic status in the city and the noble Duca had become obsessed with idea of taking over La Scala in its highly applauded wake.

But the Imperial and Royal rival put up a spirited defence. To the fury of the Carcano triumvirate the La Scala impresario Giuseppe Crivelli managed to lure away Pasta with an offer of vast sums of money in order to embellish *his* next carnival, and this time with a *cartellone* only feasible by a truly powerful establishment: a *prima* by Bellini; another by Donizetti; a revival of *Anna Bolena* on its much larger stage[xiii] and adding – so as not to take sides – a consoling reedition of Pacini's blighted *Il corsaro* revoking the sins of Rome. However well or badly intentioned thus bringing into play all the major composers; all the major musical contestants; and most of the truly celebrated singers - invoking all the current conflicts and thereby ensuring that *Norma* would bear the brunt of one of the most memorably unjust brandings of operatic legend. [xiv]

Pacini's much later attempt to blow out the candles burning before the shrine of his (by then defunct) rival is here worthy of recording: *"Bellini era affabile, di maniere gentili, aveva però (sia detto con qualche riserva) aveva un poco troppo di eccessivo amor proprio."*[xv]

It is clear that both La Scala and *Norma* were to become a target for ducal wrath. The Carcano triumvirate was insistent that Crivelli and his purloined diva Giuditta Pasta should pay dearly for this betrayal [xvi] - this seduction of their star singer together with the opera it had commissioned. What part did the fatal *contessa* play in the standoff ? She was a kinswoman of the Duca Litta, she was the "*maitresse en titre*" of his intolerable *nemico*. Bellini did not hesitate to

blame her for the events that ensued.[xvii] All the booing and disruption of Norma's *prima*. As so often with the angelic maestro any theatrical *setback* he suffered must be attributed to the failings of anyone but himself.

The *contessa* being perfectly indignant at his crass behavior had every reason to punish Bellini and possibly she booed with all the rest (behind her fan). But organising a claque? That is something a Russian aristocrat could not do. And Pacini? He insists he was present.[xviii] But his presence is an irrelevance. It was a matter of indifference to him who controlled La Scala or where Pasta sang[xix] and he could have had no illusions about Bellini's ability to compose for any theatre he chose. He will have remarked only that *Norma* was a final resting place for various earlier *pezzi* that in this opera found a better home but did not take the trouble to point it out loud and clear. If he was in fact present at the contested *prima* it is equally certain he took no active part, he was too conspicuous a figure to join in a claque in view of the bad blood that had been shed. Everyone would have kept him in view. In any event history has not bothered to record that his own *Corsaro* would receive an equally crass reception from Bellini's posse of admirers with an equally disruptive début.

Calm having being restored Pacini set off for La Fenice and Venice where he was invited to fulfil his blighted contract of two years before.[xx] He took with him the almost complete score of *Gusmano d'Almeida ossia Il rinnegato portoghese* with a libretto by Luigi Romanelli, but on arrival at La Fenice and witnessing at first hand Domenico Reina's poor vocal condition (among other undisclosed factors) decided to shelve *Gusmano* and write a replacement opera on the spot. [xxi] It is thus that his *Ivanhoe* came into existence. With a text by Gaetano Rossi, the poet *in situ* who supplied a voluble argument that Pacini set to music without taking breath (in one month but with some small sections borrowed from *Gusmano d'Almeida*)

Ivanhoe was yet another Scott paraphrase if not quite as bowdlerised [xxii] as earlier examples and in which Pacini made an attempt to evoke the world of the Templars crossed with Robin Hood. This opera had a decided ease; appearing very late in the season on 9 March 1832, just like *Giovanna d'Arco* having the shortest of runs, it was cheered to the echo. Rosalbina Carradori-Allan as Rebecca (a star in *Capuleti*) made a *furore* with her florid cabaletta 'Dal cielo mi

scende'; there was an extraordinary series of *terzetti* in Act II; as for the despised Reina in the role of Briano de Boisguilbert he had a brilliant reception with music perfectly tailored to his restricted means (Pacini was probably the most expert musical couturier of them all). "*Cantante pieno d'anima ed attore perfetto*" he calls him shamelessly in his memoirs.

Ivanhoe became a favourite, though revivals were kept for special occasions - the opera's medieval mystique, colourful instrumentation and cunning *mise-en-scène* did much to advance a Waverley vogue that would feature in this decade. And contemporary publicity recognised its worth: a widely circulated lithograph in Europe depicted Bellini with *Norma* under his arm, Donizetti with *Anna Bolena,* and Pacini with *Ivanhoe* clasped to his bosom.

Our operatic world has forgotten such an image.

And its success in fact concealed a false dawn. Pacini now was increasingly out on a limb. The operas that followed were consumer products that failed to sell. The summer was given to feverish composition: Pacini found it hard to stop writing without devising any new initiative. He claims he was studying Haydn and Mozart and perhaps he was on this occasion as he dashed off an *Il convitato di pietra* for a family gathering in the salon of the Belluomini home of his sister. Very little documentation for this bucolic enterprise has survived. It would appear that the active perpetrator was Gaetano Barbieri among whose published translations [xxiii] was a "Don Giovanni ossia Il convitato di Pietra" a translation of Molière's 'Dom Juan' of 1665 which would seem to have been his sole qualification for compiling the composite text for his friend. Pacini's family opera is an offering high on nostalgia, mixing affectionate souvenirs of Papa's cronies – Gazzaniga and Foppa - with echoes of his own adolescent theatrical baptism (*Gli sponsali de'silfi* of 1815 for example) and other stints of significance to himself, his close-knit family, and a small knot of valued aficionadi. There was a musical backing of flutes, piccolo and strings to be consigned to a band of willing dilettante but the vocal requirements of this mini-operatic spoof were anything but *amateur*: his sister Claudia as Zerlina - the *primadonna* of the piece - has a show-stopping 'Sento brillarmi il core'[xxiv] which she sang triumphantly; his brother Francesco as Don Giovanni was required to sing a Barbieri *Romanza* written for Rubini,[xxv] Francesco's wife Rosa (in the

role of Donna Anna) together with a probable pupil of Luigi Pacini - Giovanni Billé (singing both Masetto and the Commendatore) had important roles while Luigi himself was cast hilariously as Ficcanaso, an all-purpose Leporello set up with mockingly geriatric patter to echo a career that had conquered the stage. A tiny all-male chorus faced notable vocal challenges.

The two acts of *Il convitato di pietra* based on a mismatch of texts proved to be a tender introduction to a truly trying year. By mid-August he was back in Naples [xxvi] where he completed the unfinished *Gli Elvezj o sia Corrado di Tochenburgo,* an opera he had begun sketching two years earlier as yet another installment of his contract. No doubt its librettist Gaetano Rossi had urged him to look at it again. If so, it was not good advice. The score was slow in gestation, always a bad sign with Pacini, staged on 12 January 1833 it proved an excessively lachrymose diatribe not at all suitable for the birthday celebrations of anyone - certainly not the King who was eager only to hear his favorite *primadonna,* the opulent Giuseppina Ronzi De Begnis (*"bella quanta brava*") who had been given the gloomy role of Idalide against all practical considerations.

Nothing caught fire, there were endless recitatives and neither Lablache (in the title role) nor the tenor of the moment Nicola Ivanoff had enough to sing as the audience complained bitterly (Ivanoff had no real aria - only a declamatory interlude, anathema in Naples, and small parts in ensembles!) An audience eagerly awaiting vocal fireworks from such stars expressed themselves suitably - that is, the opera was heard in silence not due not to the presence of the king but as the only option (booing was not feasible at a royal gala). Idalide's *scena finale* "Ode un sospir che lugubre' put an obvious dampener on everyone and everything.

Pacini refers to this *Gli Elvezj* as "*questa mia debolissima opera.*" [xxvii] Hardly pausing to take this check in his stride, he had another score ready for the San Carlo by the early summer. It was the even more "*debolissima." Fernando, duca di Valenza* which not only had a routine text by that *cavaliere* Paolo Pola (the poet who had wrecked Giuseppe Persiani's incipient fame in Venice) but boasted a lacklustre series of events and an unconvincingly benevolent hero whose name was intended to flatter its royal dedicatee.[xxviii] At the mercy of the same disillusioned cast as the last opera (but now with Reina instead of Ivanoff)

and despite extravagant scenery and costumes, limped on stage on 30 May 1833 and off again after two meagre evenings. It is doubtful if Ferdinando II was enchanted by the depiction of his adored soprano as a schoolmarm. Pacini was dismayed. He felt that even if these two scores did not quite live up to his chain of successes in the past they were not devoid of merit but merely victims of his slavish contract.

Escaping an incandescent summer of Naples he was in Florence in July (where he wrote an album item for a primadonna heroine to feature in an unknown future Augusta Albertini-Baudardé), and then was home in Viareggio by August. If morale was lacking and there was a hint of a career in crisis - he managed to conceal it.

Or at least he managed to conceal it from his close friends. One of the best descriptions of the composer comes from the travel diary of John Orlando Parry [xxix] a British musician and entertainer who spent some months in Naples in the later part of 1833. This diary supplies the most detailed account of life in the southern capital at its ultimate musical flowering.

He arrived there in time to hear a revival of *I fidanzati* (*Il contestabile di Chester*); or more strictly, a part of it, as the routine evening at the San Carlo consisted of a mixed-bag of bits from various current scores pumped-up with ballet and an assemblage of random scenery and costumes.

In this way the evening of 29 September 1833 consisted of Acts I and II of *Il contestabile di Chester* followed by a new ballet *Il conte di Pini* with music by Paolo Samengo, its star ballerino. This was the actual draw: most of the spectators arriving just as the operatic component was coming to an end. It was as well. There was no libretto for the two acts of Pacini's opera, no singers were announced, the music began without overture or introduction of any kind and the artists scampered through their roles attracting very little attention from a half-empty house. In the course of the singing, the King – who had earlier been seen passing through the streets of Naples preceded by an equerry on horseback brandishing a flaming torch – stole quietly into his private box at the left of the stage (it consisted of three small boxes thrown together, hung with azure silk and ablaze with lights). In vain this discreet royal entrance - ignoring the opera on stage and everyone else, all the officers in the parterre rose stiffly to attention,

saluted, and the King bowed. Parry was far more impressed by the ballet than with the opera, and for good reason; *Il conte di Pini* was truly spectacular, coming to an climax with a ballroom-scene full of walzing couples which was suddenly blown to smithereens to the huge delight of a now thronging audience. The San Carlo ballet thrived on spectacular depiction of the most expensive and revolutionary kind.

Parry gives a candid description of the Real Teatro in terms worthy of any English Mendelssohn:

> "*I now saw the great size of the stage for when the lady (prima donna!) came near the foot lights she looked like a dwarf. We could hardly hear her, the band was all "smothered like", no distinction, yet they played very well & it is a tremendous orchestra, upward of 100 performers. But of all poor, stupid, dismal operas I have ever heard this was the worst – Pacini is idolised here! The singers were most wretched, everyone sang as sharp as possible! Oh! Horrible!"* [xxx]

The entertainment, such as it was, was not expensive for the audience. He paid five *carlini* for his seat which he explains was the equivalent then of two shillings (€.08). Parry's visit was followed by another in Naples - to the miniscule Teatro Fenice where *farsa* was the rule with a twice-nightly programme. Here he paid even less, sat in a cellar-like auditorium (the theatre was partly underground), and amid a stifling pack of. spectators heard a revival of Luigi Ricci's *Il diavolo condannato nel mondo a prender moglie* (the devil having been obliged to marry a Frenchwoman who made him suffer), a triumphantly xenophobic comedy which had been playing in Naples for more than a decade. The twenty-strong orchestra played expertly and Parry was entranced by the wit and immediacy of the Italian popular stage, the women were pretty, the audience very involved everyone shouting back at the singer's sallies in Neapolitan dialect:

> *"The whole of the performance did ample justice to the very pretty & pleasing music of Signor Ricci… There was a man who played a Creditor & is supposed to be sent mad, by enchantment – he was dreadfully thin, and very funnily dressed, and when his mad fit came on he put himself in most horrid and ridiculous shapes & and improvised poetry etc etc – that convulsed the people with laughter… Altogether I do not know when I was more pleased & delighted with a piece… the opera was over by 11 (poor things they had been performing since four!"*[xxxi]

John Orlando Parry met Pacini in person on the Sunday evening performance (27 October 1833) of *Guglielmo Tell*[xxxii] at the San Carlo. Once more he was unawed:

"The piece was (with the exception of Lablache) very badly executed - ! horrible dresses, scenery…I never saw anything worsely done – Signor David's singing was the most wretched! No voice! No effect! No music! And they applauded him to the skys (sic)!" In the middle of the performance Pacini came into the box and he made his acquaintance: *"He is such a funny man! Full of frolic! Full of wit – in less than five minutes we were all as well acquainted as if we had known each other for years."* It cannot be said in fact that in this stressful period the composer was behaving well. On 29 October they met again this time at the Real Teatro del Fondo to attend the *prima* of a new opera by Tomás Genovès, a Spanish maestro whose operatic fortunes had never been sparkling. Parry's description of this secondary Royal Theatre is devastating:

"Of all the horrid, dirty, filthy, mean, poor, despicable shabby places I ever saw, this beat them! - It is really dropping to pieces for the want of a bit of paint etc – Dreadfully dark! – the ceiling – with holes knocked thro'it - ! Cob-webs hanging from it etc etc & filth too much to name – However the Neapolitan gentry suffer it to remain in such a shocking state – is a great wonder! The orchestra (or rather I should say) the front of the stage is quite circular – where the foot lights are – so that the light is thrown more on the actors and scenery – than in our theatres – & besides the singer or performer comes more into the house – when he has anything particular to communicate"[xxxiii]

It seems there was very little to communicate on this "circular" stage on this occasion. Genovès' opera *Bianca di Belmonte*, despite the presence of Lablache in the cast, went the way of all the rest of his operas - it was Pacini who provided the entertainment of the evening (especially for the inhabitants of the boxes nearby) sweeping cobwebs down with a giant broom he had found outside and making jokes: "*He made us laugh very much*". His pranks on this occasion, his disrespect for a fellow contender for operatic fame (and Genovès was a friend) was the stuff that provoked the alarmed distaste of the prissy Bellini, his bosom pal Florimo and the envious Mercadante.

He would reap this whirlwind. Pacini was staying in the Palazzo Barbaja, a fellow guest with Maria Malibran for whom he was writing a new opera to be staged one month after the *Bianca* of the unfortunate Genovès. Her fame was so mesmerising that no composer could ever hope to achieve a complete collaboration - being too cowed to assert themselves according to some of his rivals - but Pacini had fallen under her spell on hearing her Ninetta in a performance of Rossini's *La gazza ladra* that had bowled him over.

It was a subjugation shared by John Orlando Parry: "*twas in some parts really too much. What a splendid creature she is! - what a voice."*

It is in these terms only that we can witness Malibran's impact. Accused of an addiction to champagne and frivolity Pacini leaped to her defence; he reported that she behaved admirably to everyone, rich or poor, noble or otherwise, that she spoke five languages, scarcely ate or drank even though her energy, caprice, resilience and repartee displayed some of the unfeminine attributes of an Amazon. They seem to have spent more time in high junks in a happy cohabitation than in rehearsal. Pacini accepted the libretto of *Irene o L'assedio di Messina* even though he felt it flawed to an extent that he was obliged to apologise for its defects in advance publicity - invoking a specifically *catanese* claim that this improbably bloody tale of historical Sicily was based on an account written by a *palermitano* hero!

Parry was present at the *prima*:

"It is called "Irene" or "The Siege of Messina". – It is very well cast, - with Malibran – Rinzt (sic)*, Lablache, David (!), Reina – Ambroggi* (sic) *etc etc., Malibran has several showy duets, scenes and a grand dashing finale (à la "Non piu mesta"). – David sung as usual up to the moon – attitudinising – etc etc. The Introduction is very good indeed…there was some hissing at the end and also a great deal of applause. – Malibran, Pacini, Lablache & David were called on after it was finished. But it has not made that "furore" that was expected – "The little Woman" made a great deal of her Finale, which she sang most splendidly…it was so dreadfully long – began at 1/2 7 and did not finish until 11!"*[xxxiv]

To some extent the composer concealed his disappointment with the reception of *Irene o L'assedio di Messina.* Not much more than a *succès d'estime* on 30

November 1833 it appeared six times only with a further attempt at revival in 1834 (but without Malibran - it was without an audience!)

Many of its numbers were praised; most notably the duet for Malibran and her half-sister [xxxv] Giuseppina Ruiz-Garcia, as well as an unusually effective coro in Act II, while the amazing *aria finale* was received with unreserved furore.[xxxvi] In his *memorie artistiche* the composer simply observes that Malibran astonished everyone, and that it was she and Lablache who sustained his "*fragile edifizio*."

He was being modest. He was right, the opera is a substantial offering to the stage. Had he not been gallant he would have made the point that Malibran was never very happy with unfamiliar music. She was more at home *out-singing* her rivals in competition with well-worn pieces. This was her speciality. Her voice was no longer at an optimum level, she was ill-at-ease and she knew it - a defect to be made clear not just in Pacini's bloodthirsty *Irene* but also in Carlo Coccia's far less testing *La figlia dell'arciere* which flopped painfully one month later. She had been singing too much and too much was expected of her.

The cabal of critics in the city who tried to blame Pacini for the opera's lukewarm reception found it imprudent to point a finger at Malibran or the entire pack of operatic fanatics would have been out for their blood. Needless to say this has given much scope for critical posturing ever since: Arthur Pougin with the usual shallowness of hagiographers in his "Marie Malibran" of half-a-decade later, says of Pacini's *Irene* that "*the music was so feeble that it proved an utter failure*" without seeing or hearing a note of the score.[xxxvii] His diva, however, cherished Pacini's superb *aria finale* specifically conceived for her voice without seeking the French pundit's permission and in due course it found its way into the hands of her sister Pauline Viardot and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Once the applause died down (there was "*a great deal of applause*" as Parry bears witness) Pacini had to face the fact that his musical graph was falling sharply.

At the end of 1833 his contract with Barbaja expired and he sought new pastures. The 1865 edition of *Le mie memorie artistiche* falls into two halves, the first half ends with the envoi:

"Principiai a conscere ch'io doveva ritirami dalla palestra – Bellini, il divino Bellini, e Donizetti mi avevano sorpassato"

Was it true? Most of what he says about "retreat" - now and later - is not true at all. Certainly he became aware that he must revamp his style, operas reliant mainly upon vivacity and continuous brio were falling behind in the face of a new middle-class taste who for historically credible portraits on stage in response to the stream of Victorian literary stereotypes now to reside on their sofas.

At the start of 1834 Pacini had no commissions at all, and Bellini who scented victory turned his attention to a less elusive nemico Gaetano Donizetti (who remained either unaware or immune to ticks in the musical undergrowth). In the interim Pacini's one spark of hope was Malibran's request for a *rondò* to terminate Rossini's *Tancredi* in her accredited style. This was 'Dopo tante e tante pene" which she sang at the Fondo on Maria Isabella's name-day 19 November 1834 and won one of the most riotous receptions of her career. [xxxviii] That summer led only to a surprising crossing of the ways with exQueen Caroline Murat, now fat and living in Firenze to whom he dedicated three romances and a nocturne, this encounter at Viareggio with Paolina's youngest sister was emblematic of the favorable reception the Bonaparte family always extended to her former inamorato. Despite his long-term Bourbon affiliation they never forgot him, tried to assist him, and forgave his scandalous behavior with the lock of the Emperor's hair.

Happily, at the very last moment, La Fenice came up with a *scrittura* for the carnival of 1834-35. This contract, or so he liked to insist, led to a tactical abandonment of his former easy command of the stage which later he described as being "*sorpassato*".

Like most of his preceding operas, the score of *Carlo di Borgogna* was simply too long. The critics - few of whom actually condemned-it, complained instead that there was enough music for two or more operas. Politically it was not a good choice of plot, this never-ending tale of improbable Burgundians out-classed by the cunning Swiss was perhaps too close to home for comfort to their Italian neighbours. The cast was good only on paper. Certainly Henriette Méric-Lalande had got back some of her vocal sheen in revivals of Meyerbeer's *Il crociato in Egitto* but the thrilling vibrato of her heyday even as recently as *Giovanna d'Arco* was now a wobble, though she could still sing effectively the

fabulous delicacy of her ecstatic singing was gone. Giuditta Grisi was miscast, her booming Estella provided a love-interest but was more determined and dogged than convincing; Domenico Donzelli in the title role had a voice that was drying-up, his friend Donizetti rather cruelly ridiculed his assumption of romantic roles saying that he looked too old. Rehearsals were notable for cuts at every session. Of course there was scope for brevity, that was obvious, but Méric-Lalande insisted on dropping the key soprano/basso duet upon which the composer had pinned all his hopes of a furore. Her instinct was not to blame, the audience was to be tried to its limits. The *prima* of what we now know to be a rich and fascinating opera [xxxix] *Carlo di Borgogna,* a *melodramma romantico in tre parti* staged at La Fenice on 21 February 1835 was an ordeal for everyone concerned. One scholar insists that the opera was performed without intervals and was reduced to two acts! [xl] Could it possibly be true? What is true is that the whole house wilted, even Carlotta Grisi (dancing an *Intermezzo* supplied to her by Antonio Cortesi) failed to raise any spirits. The "*generoso veneto pubblico*" as Gaetano Rossi liked to call them were generous with their yawns and involuntary gestures of boredom. Pacini – desperate for novelty - had even suppressed his terminal burst of fireworks which habitually brought even the most weary of audiences to its feet at the end.[xli]

Its initial poor reception was not to be fatal, this long opera was performed nine times whatever Pacini says. He insisted that it "*riusci squallidissimo*" which is not correct but *Carlo di Borgogna* was not revived in his lifetime. His "*Ecco com'ebbe termine la mia prima carriera*"[xlii] reads only like a literary attempt at a coda.

It was nothing like the truth. He made his way back to Viareggio and built a small theatre (in ninety days with the usual Pacinian alacrity) capable of seating 800 people he staged *Ivanhoe* in its first season together with *L'elisir d'amore*. In the summer he went to Naples to stage *Ivanhoe* in a new edition with two performances at the San Carlo and five more at the Fondo, so much for his retirement from the stage. And he began teaching on a daily basis. Was it true that Bellini and Donizetti had surpassed him? The principal evolution of Italian Opera since the start of the century had been left to Rossini whose stylistic serendipity had endured for decades, but it was other composers – and not

always Italian composers - who supplied the cultural framework within which Bellini and Donizetti now displayed their wares. Though Bellini appeared more *singular* and Donizetti more *concise*, Pacini was able to raise the temperature of an opera house more than any other contemporary in the years before Verdi. [xliii]

1835 was the year when voices became secondary to real theatre. It was not that *Pacini* was *sorpassato* as the virtuoso dependency upon which he had thrived.

"*Il mio strumentale non è stato mai abbastanza accurate, e se qualche volta riusci vago e brillante, non accade per riflessione, ma bensi per quel naturale gusto che Iddio mi concesse"* reads more like advice for his students than a stance for his future.

More than anything else, the world had turned: Bellini had died; Donizetti left for France and then did then same; Maria Malibran, Giuditta Pasta and Henriette Méric-Lalande left the stage and their quite extraordinary timbres were not replaced. Verdi makes it clear in his letters that his dramatic scope was encouraged by the unavailability of superstars. No one could follow Rubini; Lablache's vocal empire became fragmented - from henceforth there would be baritones and basses all the varieties of which had once been unified in his one huge frame.

It soon became clear, however, that even if Pacini was awed by this cataclysm, he was no spent force.

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[i] No composer in Italy ever completely trusted Felice Romani again – with the exception of Saverio Mercadante - a Bellinian *epigono* who was consistently let-down by Romani's repeated failure to supply texts for which he had been begged on bended knees [*voire* Mercadante's *I briganti*]. Bellini's thoroughly sinister bonding with Romani would end catastrophically with *Beatrice di Tenda*

[ii] The July Revolution dethroned Charles X - the brother-in-law of Marie Antoinette, the *comte* d'Artois

[iii] As a result of this momentary interest the UTET dictionary (voce Pacini 535) lists a *Maria Stuarda* among his works

[iv] Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy *Lettere dall'Italia* (Ed.Raoul Meloncelli] (Turin 1983), 146

[v] *Ibid* It is as well that Pacini did not hear the *piano concerto* the young man was composing during his stay in Italy. Even his refractory audience would have joined him in despising what they would have considered to be a cascade of empty virtuosity and vulgar thematic material - a work suggesting that though Leipzig audiences remained in the grip of discipline when tormented by music they were far less discriminating in their choice of repertoire

[vi] Especially from the serried ranks of Verdiani. The second version was to appear at La Scala on 10 January 1832 following the noisy prima of Bellini's *Norma* "*Expressamente ridotto e posto in iscena dall'autore"* The amendments he made to the plot and score are highly significant, the composer turning Ferretti's fallible intrigue into something nearer to a cynical recipe worthy of a more sophisticated century while remaining true to its brilliant vocal expenditure.

Did Verdi do better? History has not equated him with any triumph. Even in the wake of the disorderly prima of *Norma* the second version of *Il Corsaro* went on to sixteen performances *pace* a not totally incorrect "*Cattivo*" from Cambiasi for its immediate reception at the hands of vindictive Belliniani

Il corsaro, in both versions, is worthy of greater consideration than either Mendelssohn, Cambiasi, or history has accorded it. Certainly its plot (like that of Byron) is extremely foolish but unlike the Verdian version its absurdities are gloried-in rather than obscured; this operatic travesty has a Rosenkavalieresque relish for parody when Medora puts on men's clothing in search of the cross-dressing Corrado – a sly piece of clowning fully anticipatory of post verismo kitsch

[vii] Berlioz reviewed Pacini's *La Vestale* in Florence in April and wrote with his innate elegance (to his sister): "Puis un misérable eunuque, nommé Pacini, a fait une Vestale…"

[viii] She had a passing liaison with Giovanni David perhaps (though he was a loyal husband) but would soon turn her attention to the husband of Eugenia Tadolini, Antonio Poggi, who would thus become the following tenor to be booed at La Scala

[ix] It differs from the much slighter cantata offered to the *contessa* as recorded by Opera Rara

[x] Francesco I of the Two Sicilies had died in 1830, the widowed Maria Isabella of Spain would continue to be an eager patron at the S.Carlo for many years to come. *Il felice imenèo* with its spectacular scenic effects was sung and danced on that stage on 15 January 1832 with a cast that would have made even Felix Mendelssohn review his list of absentees - it included Luigi Lablache, Giovanni David and Nicola Ivanoff and some unusual *corifei* like Giuseppina Ronzi De Begnis, Paolo Ambrosini and Michele Benedetti whose pirouettes must have shaken the stage

[xi] *La sacerdotessa d'Irminsul*

[xii] Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* with a libretto by Felice Romani had first been staged at the Teatro Carcano on 26 December 1830

[xiii] Rubini, whose success as Lord Henry Percy in *Anna Bolena* at the Carcano had been as momentous as that of Pasta, did not sing in this La Scala revival of Donizetti's opera. He maintained the mistrust (even detestation) of this "*prima donna assoluta"* that first emerged in Pacini's *Niobe* and avoided singing with her whenever he could

[xiv] The sequence was truly remarkable and reveals that Giuseppe Crivelli - impresario until the autumn of 1832 - tried to avoid taking sides:
Norma 26 December 1831 (Pasta, Giulia Grisi)
Il Corsaro 10 January 1832 (Schutz, Giulia Grisi)
Anna Bolena 25 February (Pasta, Giulia Grisi)
Ugo conte di Parigi 13 March (Pasta, Giulia Grisi)

[xv] Cicconetti letter ibid

[xvi] A view Bellini cultivated is that he was blameless and easily led astray by Felice Romani. That he was also led astray by the *maitresse femme* - that Giuditta Pasta

ruthlessly "frog-marched" him to her villa at Como to take control of his *Norma,* the cherished tale that his 'Casta Diva' had to be written and rewritten time after time before being found to her satisfaction - is an integral part of this myth even if vehemently denied by recent biographers

Cfr Kenneth Stern *Giuditta Pasta – A life on the lyric stage* (2011)

[xvii] *"A dispetto d'un partito formidabile, a me contrario, perché sucitato da una persona potente, e da una ricchissima, la mia Norma ha sbalordito, e più jer sera, che fu la 2da rap[presentazio]ne, che la prima. Il giornale uffiziale di Milano puo aver dato la nova di un fiasco deciso, perché nella prima sera il partito contrario, mentre il giusto applaudiva, zittava; e perché la persona potente è padrona e può ordinare che il giornale scriva come ad essa piace. La persona potente fa questo perché e un nemico acerrimo della Pasta, e la ricca perché è l'amante di Pacini, quindi mia nemica…"*

Letter to his uncle Vincenzo Ferlito, 28 December 1831. Neri op cit Letter No.168, 203
The "*persona potente"* is the Duca Litta, and "*la ricca*" is the *contessa* Samoyloff. He does not actually dare name the Duca Litta here out of fear that he might in fact become Master of La Scala before long

[xviii] A letter of more than a quarter-of-a-century later, from Pacini to Filippo Cicconetti (now in the Museo Belliniano of Catania) states that he was indeed there, and confirms [see Neri Letter No. 168] that *Norma* was indeed poorly received on its second and third performances:

"Rivido Bellini in Milano, nella circostanza in cui fece rappresentare il suo capo lavoro la Norma, e ben mi rammento che alla prima, seconda e terza rappresentazione, quel sublime lavoro ebbe esito quasi sventurato lo che afflisse il giovane compositore, e lo vidi versare qualche lagrima. Io lo rincorai e gli feci conoscere che molti altri capi lavori erano stati sogetti a tale disgrazia, ma che presto o tardi avevano trionfato. Il mio asserto, com'Ella ben conosce, si avverò."

Letter of 24 April 1855. That protest was mounted against Pasta (rather than Bellini) and was continuous and not confined to one evening as is sometimes stated: Cicconetti, laywer and biographer and far too young to have known Bellini - the context makes it clear - had requested first-hand memories of Pacini's contacts with the rival *catanese* composer but whether they were objective in these fraternal recollections is debatable, the tearful reconciliation he claims existed with the *concittadino* is frankly implausible if not impossible. Pacini was well-aware that candour seldom pays dividends with biographers, however friendly, and in any case enjoyed making amusing adjustments to the truth…

[xix] Pacini never wrote again for Pasta, or set another word by Felice Romani (a prohibition echoed by Vaccaj)

[xx] The loyalty of the "citta lagunare" to Pacini was to be remarkable and consistent, he would receive commissions to the very end of his life. Whereas Bellini would receive a bruising comparable to that of Pacini when the by-then squabbling duo mounted their *Beatrice di Tenda* in that city with an opera scarcely endearing Giuditta Pasta to their audience. The Presidenza of La Fenice was in no way unaware of the underhand plotting of the miscreants in 1830

[xxi] *Gusmano d'Almeida* never saw the stage. An opera seria, it was derived from a ballet, a five-act azione mimico-tragico by Antonio Monticini with its prima at Parma but restaged at the Canobbiana of Milan in the Spring of 1835. Only fragments of the dismantled score have survived. Domenico Reina was to have sung the title role.

[xxii] The printed libretto goes on to bended-knees and insists that the change of opera was due to *"unfortunate circumstances*" and that the authors "*of both the music and the words displayed the most noble indulgence, and generously encouraged by the goodwill of the kind, cultured and intelligent Venetian public..."* had hurried together the new score. Soft-soap essential as Reina (who was contracted to sing in the new opera, had been booed (both in *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* - Reina was completely unable to sing a role written for Giovanni David - and in *La straniera*). But the lack of bowdlerisation in *Ivanhoè* is only relative, it was based primarily upon a curious confection by Emile Deschamps and de Wailly staged in Rossini's name at the Odéon in Paris in 1826, thus Scott was doubly distanced. Pacini, however, made a respectable attempt to recreate the original, aided, no doubt, by the fact that Rossi had probably prepared most of his libretto for some other composer

[xxiii] *Cfr Prof*. Gaetano Barbieri *Repertorio scelto ad uso de'teatri italiani* 8 volumes (Milan 1823-4), a collection of foreign plays set into Italian verse, mostly classic French plays (mainly Molière) but also plays by Delavigne, Planard, Duval, Sewrin and others, some of them contemporary. 'Don Giovanni' is No.22 in this collection

[xxiv] Claudia Pacini (1805-1883) was married to doctor Antonio Belluomini in 1823, they separated in 1843. She must have been a lyric soprano of some accomplishment, her

brilliantly florid aria in Act II was taken from *Gli sponsali de'silfi* of 1815

[xxv] Francesco Pacini would seem to have sung this 'Luna conforto al cor' at the piano with his brother when the completed *Talismano* and Rubini were still in the future

[xxvi] Pacini says he arrived in Naples *"Sul finir dell'ottobre*", actually he had been there more than two months with Giulia Samoyloff. According to Donizetti who cast a sardonic eye over the activities of this exotic duo "*Pacini, riappattumato colla russa dea ha fatto venire Rossi da Milano a sue spese* (*vedi generosità*)*"* [Gaetano Rossi in his role as librettist had travelled from Venice at Pacini's expense: letter to Ferretti of 18 August 1832 [in] Alberto Cametti *Donizetti a Roma* (Torino 1807), 88] She elected to stay as a guest at the "Villa Estherazj" (Esterhazy) at Chiaia while he put-up as usual at the Palazzo Barbaja. While she was there she became godmother to one of Giovanni David's children. Donizetti, in a further letter, adds *"Pacini e David, diavolo e croce (dicono) ecco il termometro del giorno*". Letter to Gaetano Melzi 27 September 1832. *Zavadini* 302

[xxvii] *"La bella quanto brava Ronzi-De-Begnis, il caro tenore Iwanoff (allora esordiente e che dipoi divenne si celebre), non che il papà Lablache (cosi si chiamava da tutti questo sommo artista di voce potente, di nobile sentire, cantante per eccellenza, colto, ottimo amico e padre di famiglia), formavano la triade eletta a sostegno di questa mia debolissima composiizione. Un solo duetto più meritare qualche elogio per l'eleganza della frase del largo, e per la vaghezza della cabaletta".*

Pacini op cit 67

It should be added that *Gli Elvezj* was not abandoned by this excellent cast with quite the ease implied, despite a determined claque it was given three times at the S.Carlo with a fourth performance at the Teatro del Fondo, with at least two of its items published in vocal score (by Girard and Lucca). Among these the vast duetto (referred to above) 'Quei che m'uccise il figlio' was one of those extraordinarily extended encounters full of drama, *tremolandi,* snatches of cantilena and pounding *insieme* which were his trademark throughout his mature career, with improbable emotional coups but wonderfully tailored to the voices of Ronzi and Lablache, the cabaletta – a truly rip-roaring affair 'Meco omai più barbaro' - sung partly unisone, was as good an example of his power to capture his audience as any of his earlier years

[xxviii] *"Fernando Duca di Valenza, che pure mi riusci di niun pregio".* Pacini idem.

[xxix] John Orlando Parry (1810-1879) was something of a chimera: a pupil of the harpist N.C.Bochsa (who had eloped with (Sir) Henry Bishop's wife, a Donizettian diva under the name of *Anna Bishop*) moving freely in smart musical circles but with a taste for burlesque "Drag" performances which must have plumbed the depths even of Regency vulgarity. His travel diary for the years 1833-34, published under the title of *Victorian Swansdown*, edited by Cyril Bruyn Andrews and J.A.Orr-Ewing (London 1935) manages to combine detailed vignettes of life both in sophisticated and (very) unsophisticated circles in Italy and France with extraordinary candour. He knew everyone it seems, and was welcomed by *Grandees* and low-life characters alike. Piquantly, early in September 1833 he dined in Paris with "*Mr.Lewis (of Regent Street London)"* [p92] under whose suburban roof Bellini would expire in solitude two years later. Louis-Samuel and Frederick [Frédéric] Lévy [Lewis] were jewellers of French-Canadian origin whose parents had emigrated from Canada to Birmingham in the Industrial Midlands of England, they had learned their craft in Birmingham, subsequently transferring to London and opening a depot in Paris, winning in that last city sufficient musical connections to enable them to let out rooms to foreign artists in London (at 61 Regent Street). Musicians and singers to whom they were especially useful in view of their unique freeway for covert financial transactions - their *coffre-forts*, crossing the channel were a viable means of conveying Customs-Free sums of gold across the channel. This was a business that thrived between 1820 and 1850. French-speaking their shop at 128 Regent Street - opened in 1833 - was called the *"Magazin de Bijouterie"* (sic) and they imported and exported gems and gold coins to and from Paris where the senior Mr.Lewis had both a base and a wife (a Mlle Olivier, with a similar background). Bellini - whose lodgings in Old Burlington Street during his brief stay in London were just round the corner from 128 Regent Street - made their acquaintance early in his stay in the British capital and was offered their courier assistance. It was a kindness uniquely endorsed by an open friendship to which was later added the privileged use of their villa in Puteaux which retreat became a refuge for the *catanese* who needed peace and quiet to write his music.

After his tragic death, alone, in the abandoned house and garden at Puteaux, the proprietors having made themselves scarce fearing he was suffering from cholera, the shady business activities of these hosts were enough to ensure complete silence from their many clients in Paris and in London. A total silence underpinned by all those who had no wish to be caught-up in a police investigation in Bellini's wake. Many, if not all of those present at the moving funeral of the famous and tragically youthful composer,

must have known these useful people well, but no one would open his mouth - other than to sing in the aisles of the church during the Requiem Mass. Thus Bellini's - and John Orlando Parry's - *"Mr Lewis*" - has long remained in the shadow, if not precisely an enigma. Villified ever since by Bellini's family and friends in Sicily (but not, of course, by Rossini or anyone else in the know).

These brothers had a cadet - soon to preside in [Lower] Regent Street also – indeed at the other end of the musical spectrum - the Benjamin of the family - best known to operatic history as Benjamin Lumley [né Lévy] (born in Birmingham 1810 - died in London 1875). The famous impresario kept his elder brothers at a considerable distance.

Regent Street, an elegant thoroughfare built by John Nash, was also tempered by music: Rossini had lived at 90 Regent Street in 1823-4; Vaccaj had lived at 172 Regent Street in the 1830's; Napoleone Moriani wrote to Benjamin Lumley from 61 Regent Street in 1849 (See LIM Catalogue 33 (2001), item 66]

[xxx] Cyril Bruyn Andrews & J.A. Orr-Ewing *Victorian Swansdown: Extracts from the Early Travel Diaries of John Orlando Parry the Victorian Entertainer* (London, John Murray 1935), 124

[xxxi] Ibid 147-8

[xxxii] Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* sung in Italian

[xxxiii] The Teatro del Fondo had an apron stage. Ibid 158

[xxxiv] Ibid 169

[xxxv] Maria Malibran called her *"sister*" not without justification, Josefa Ruiz-Garcia was the daughter of the composer-tenor Manuel Garcia by his first wife Maria Morales. She was a fine artist in her own right, she and Malibran had a notable partnership at La Scala in 1834 when they caused a sensation with their vocal twinning in *Norma*, Giuseppina singing Adalgisa. The performance was "*Ottimo*" according to Cambiasi

[xxxvi] The Scena ultima in which its heroine commits suicide instead of killing her lover (Manfredi sung by Giovanni David) 'Se un mio desir', 'Cedi al duol' and cabaletta 'Ira del ciel'

[xxxvii] *Cfr* Arthur Pougin *Marie Malibran* (London 1911), 166 Had he waited a little longer for the Malherbe bequest to reach its shelves he could have seen the copy of the *aria-finale* from this tragedia lirica *Irene o L'assedio di Messina* in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris bearing the signature of that revered apostle of vocal probity of his day - her [real] sister Pauline Viardot. Cecilia Bartoli sings the *aria finale* from Pacini's *Irene* in her album "Maria" of 2007: the *primo tempo* 'Se un mio desir, se un voto ascolti, o padre' the *cantabile* 'Cedi al duol' the *tempo di mezzo* 'Al mio pianto, al mio lamento' capped by the ferocious *cabaletta con coro* 'Ira del ciel, tu sangue, innanzi a Dio chiedesti?'

[xxxviii] 'Dopo tante e tante pene' has a fabulous history: Mercadante had "borrowed" a *terzetto* from Pacini's *Amazilia* to insert into his *Gabriella di Vergy* in Portugal (Lisbon 1828) where he could easily get away with stolen music. But on revival in Italy (Turin 1832) he was obliged to replace it with a *terzetto* of his own composition. Pacini, who had observed all this theft with a sarcastic eye, "borrowed" a strophe of the text of the reborn *Gabriella di Vergy terzetto* and set it for Malibran: *Dopo tante e tante pene* - an ironic *tit-for-tat* registered grimly by Mercadante in the audience on 21 November 1834. Cecilia Bartoli sings this *rondo* in the "Maria" album listed above.

[xxxix] The general view of the critics is that concealed in this very long score is a very good opera. The concert performance of *Carlo di Borgogna* recorded by Opera Rara in 2001 reveals much astonishing invention - clearly Pacini's muse had not suffered by his sense of being overtaken by his rivals. Above all that many of the musical advances claimed for his operas after *Saffo* (1840) were not in "*embryo'* in *Carlo di Borgogna* but fully in existence - note that the confrontational duetto 'Qual d'un angelo nel core' between Estella and Leonora [MS and S] of *Carlo di Borgogna* is almost a mirror-image of that between Maria and Clotilde [MS and S] of Act III of *Maria, regina d'Inghilterra* of 1843. He was trying too hard in the face of so many much vaunted scores - not only those of Bellini but those now by Donizetti - his fantastic powers of imagination overflowing and distinctly out of control

[xl] Thomas Milholt in his *Le opera dimenticate del melodramma italiano* (Ravenna 2016) 79 insists that "*L'opera venne rappresentata per tre ore di seguito, senza pause"* and

that afterwards – though he gives no source for his strange information - that "*Pacini ridusse l'opera a due atti per le successive rappresentazioni"*

[xli] Leonora (Méric-Lalande) having her last florid word in the penultimate cabaletta [Sc VI *Parte Terza*] 'La cara spoglia esanime' (though Carlo is not yet dead!) while the *scena ultima* is a bloodbath for the hero and a coro of triumph for the Swiss. There is a suspicion that Leonora's cabaletta had been originally intended to close the opera but Pacini had moved it to an earlier place to achieve dramatic novelty

[xlii] Pacini op cit 70

[xliii] Friedrich Lipmann in his many distinguished studies [*Cfr* Friederich Lippmann *Giovanni Pacini: Bemerkungen zum stil seiner Opern* [in] Chigiana Vol.24 No.4 (Siena 1967) vividly compares Pacini with Bellini when in any real context it might be more appropriate to compare Bellini with Pacini - the Bellinian œuvre can only be put-up against one-third of Pacini's output: Bellini wrote no *opera buffa*, *Adelson e Salvini* is not a convincing *opera semiseria* and as for serious *melodrammi* the Pacinian scope is far wider than any opera of Bellini. The younger maestro is more focused and marks his listener more indelibly but these distinguishing characteristics have their limits - which is what Rossini implies when he attributes *"genio"* to Pacini and not to the rival *catanese*. Professor Lipmann identifies with characteristic sharpness many of the features that militated against real success in such operas as *Carlo di Borgogna*: pointing to his overloaded scores; pointing to stylistic extravagance, music that is too jaunty, too passionate, too self-indulgent and so on. But they never militated against his potential and he always paid attention to the needs of his audience which was in a state of flux throughout this period. Often - in the first half of his career - his melodies fly in the face of the text (but what poor texts they were – maybe it can be understood). *Saffo* begins the second stage of his career (and not *Furio Camillo* which shows every sign of being composed earlier) in which there is an intensification and integration as well as a lyrical intoxication which has a cumulative effect upon the sacred music of Pacini's maturity in contrast with that of Bellini and Donizetti who in this respect are thoroughly *sorpassato*

Chapter Five

"*Sorpassato!*"

"*Nuovo qual era*" he said flamboyantly of his *Saffo* in his memoirs"…*per Napoli, poichè una generazione era intieramente passata dal tempo che il mio nome non aveva più risuonato in quell vasto recinto del San Carlo"*[i] suggesting, with characteristic hyperbole that a whole Neapolitan generation had sprung up in five years. Any such statement must be taken with a whole handful of salt – especially as it enabled him to wax-lyrical on the successes to come with the same strategic impact and extravagance of his *ultimi giorni.* [ii]

What exactly happened when his name was *no longer resounding*? It soon became clear: it meant no interruption whatsoever to his feverish activities. Perhaps he wrote a little less music and this music lost its brio now and then but that is all. Certainly in the short term he paid more attention to the school he had started at Viareggio than to writing operas. But his didactic concerns had started much earlier: his *Cenni storici sulla musica e trattato di contrapunto* was published long before he had decided he was "*sorpassato*" and the long list of his educational scripts to come show that he was perfectly able - when he wished - to combine a theatrical vocation with teaching. His *Sulla originalità della musica melodrammatica italiana del secolo XVIII: ragionamento* (his century of sentimental resort) was published in Lucca in 1841 soon after his *Saffo* had put his feet on a brand-new pedestal.[iii] For someone whose education had been so patchy and episodic this composer was surprisingly erudite.

And then his disenchantment with the stage was no more than fiction, his attention to its protagonists in no way diminished. This is made obvious by his ready collaboration with Donizetti, Mercadante, Pier-Antonio Coppola and Vaccaj in supplying the opening section of a joint cantata in memory of the heroine of his *Irene,* tragically dead after a tempestuous vocal stint at Manchester. *In morte di M.F.Malibran de Bériot* staged at La Scala on 17 March 1837 with a text by Antonio Piazza[iv] was a curious assemblage of music by composers not all of whom had featured notably in her career but in which his own heartfelt contribution - its opening the *Introduzione e quintetto, recitativo e stretta "Il cippo di Manchester"*- being so detailed and so florid that it is almost unsingable - its tormented manuscript so dense in blots, blurs and tear-stains that it was heavily cut before it could appear

on stage (its orchestration asked for a pair of harps appropriate to her new place of residence!)

Nor was he overlooked in any way whatsoever, whatever he claimed later. That same year, 1837, Venice invited him to reopen the opera house of the notorious scam (destroyed by fire in 1836) giving him precedence over Donizetti and Mercadante as well as a host of lesser claimants. But he did not respond to the invitation, the season at La Fenice produced *Maria de Rudenz* and *Le due illustri rivali* (by these two illustrious rivals) but silence only from Pacini. His own theatre at Viareggio took up all his time and energy; for its second season he had composed an inaugural cantata for the sympathetic dowager Queen Maria Isabella of Naples who solemnly gave the tiny stage a Royal baptism with a mini State-Visit capped by revivals of his *Cesare in Egitto* and *Il talismano*.



Maria Isabella di Spagna, Regina Delle Due Sicilie

A Mass he wrote at the same time for his Viareggio pupils and then a *Vespro* let loose a trickle of religious music that turned into a flood. Hardly, however, had his Viareggio school and its theatre become a reality than Duke Carlo Ludovico di Lucca (at the urging of his aunt Maria Isabella) invited Pacini to open a far more ambitious school in the walled confines of his Duchy, as a result from 1837 onwards Pacini began a slow move from Viareggio to its grander site and destiny, given the imposing title of *Istituto musicale di Lucca* and with Giovanni as *Direttore*; Eugenio Galli as *professor of counterpoint;* and Massimiliano Quilici as *professor of harmony.* [v] With its spacious premises and judicious curriculum this music school became truly functional only in 1842 but it would honour all Italy in due course. In an unimaginable future the *"Istituto Musicale Pacini"* would supply the first news of the arrival of Alfredo Catalani and Giacomo Puccini on the operatic horizon. [vi]

His fame as a teacher surprised his detractors. Those *forestieri* who had treated his musical skills with contempt were obliged to change their tune. And indeed, a pedagogic crown would be conferred publicly: not long after its establishment Rossini invited him to accept the post of *Director* of the Bologna *Liceo Musicale* (where both he and Rossini had taken a few early steps) a post he refused on the modest grounds that he was not "*capable of so much*" (by this time his operatic career had blossomed anew and in no way was he going to let the Jupiter of the day off the employment hook he had so unwisely assumed for his temporary place of refuge from France!)

Lucca became his musical base with the foundation of his *Istituto.* He seems to have discovered a sudden need for roots, to consolidate his growing family on "ancestral" soil.

It was in these transitional years of rediscovered Tuscan affinity that he launched a whole series of idiosyncratic operatic revivals: he staged a *Bellezza e cuor di ferro* at the Belluomini Villa - a re-run in all probability of Rossini's *Matilde di Shabran* with the three pieces he had composed at his mentor's request in a light-hearted resurrection whose score has not survived; other retrospective delving included a transcription of Mayr's *Elisa* in a similar nostalgic mood as well as a re- evocation of Coccia's *Clotilde* (as *La foresta d'Hermannstadt*) - both these last in happy paternal souvenir.[vii] They were summer caprices, memories of poignant moments

recollected in family tranquillity and brought to life by brother, sisters and their friends.

An oratorio *Il trionfo della religione* too made its appearance, in 1838, and began a long saga - coming and going in endless re-editions with endless titles throughout this whole period, re-emerging momentously at Rome in 1847 and enhanced and utterly transformed for Lucca in 1858 when it was called *Il trionfo della fede* and conducted by Pacini himself.[viii] Sacred dramas of this recurrent nature had a vegetative role in replacing operatic trauma at all the more tender phases of his career.

In the autumn of 1839 Cencio Jacovacci [ix] induced him to return to the ring. "*Tutto ciò mi faceva seriamente pensare all via, in cui di nuovo m'incamminava.*"[x] His acceptance may have been intended to be no more than a testing of the temperature of the water, he may have been sincere in stressing the immense effort it took to get him to give his consent. Jacopo Ferretti, always helpful and supportive offered an unproblematic *Furio Camillo* so that Pacini – misty-eyed over Togas and Triumphs once again (*pace Pompei* and Paolina) - eventually agreed to accept the contract. Needless to say, when he claims that this opera was composed with the firm intention of deleting all traces of his earlier manner he was pulling wool over the eyes of the readers of his memoirs. Various sections of the autograph manuscript of *Furio Camillo* give every indication of having been written at an earlier date and even intrinsically the opera is far nearer to *Corsaro* than to *Saffo* which soon would revitalise his career.

But *Furio Camillo* does indeed offer one small step forward – an advance to a more substantial artform even if the listener would be disappointed if he expected to hear an opera without familiar traits: Pacini never dispenses with the switch of moods, the energetic burst of frenzy at key moments, and the characteristic surrender to a show-stopping vocal meltdown at moments of enlightenment - everything thrown at the score to achieve a dénouement as might be expected.

Nor was anyone deprived of *fioriture*; Carolina Ungher's music in particular has a decorative rococo lavishness we hear almost for the last time. The enormously long and ambitious *scena ed aria* 'Io d'Imen m'affretto all'ara'[xi] a species of *racconto* with declamatory passages and choral interventions may have been something in the nature of an adieu to the past but in practise she sang it to such effect, with so much *slancio,* that it made a dated impact at the dawn of Verdi.

The plot was minimal. Ferretti admitted he had grafted a love interest onto a crude example of Roman in-fighting but Pacini's efforts to create a *tinta locale* owed more to his imagination than to impact in a city deaf to aural imponderables and where he had been dismissed by young bloods. On 26 December 1839[xii] innovation did creep in even so: [xiii] the vehemence of the duetto 'In si feral momento' with its complex rhythmic and harmonic contrasts really does revoke the suspicion that *Furio Camillo* was conceived before he was "*sorpassato.*" Its central *andante religioso* with the protagonists wrangling furiously against a *pianissimo coro* shows just how soon he would become an exponent of real stage drama.

And at least he was not discouraged by its reception, he had 1000 scudi in his pocket. On revival further south at the San Carlo in 1841 *Furio Camillo* was praised but its brief exposure - two performances only - reveal that this opera, however beckoning to the future, was viewed as a backward step after audiences had heard *Saffo.*[xiv]

*

It would seem that no longer was he the supremely over-confident Pacini. The actual genesis of the masterwork that would become integral to his survival on the world's stages was fraught with doubts; without Salvadore Cammarano to underpin his resolution *Saffo* might never have been composed.

Of its actual engendering all we know is that in June 1840 he was offered a text by the most celebrated librettist of the day. Little has survived of the actual contract for the S. Carlo except that it was signed by Vincenzo Flauto.[xv] John Black gives the best account of what happened: he had received a "*programma*" from Cammarano (ie a skeletal resumé of the plot) and the first verses were on his desk almost by return of post. But Pacini had serious doubts about his ability to go ahead and with a few folios of the piano score in his hand travelled unhappily to Naples in September with the firm intention of asking the librettist for some other plot as he could not - he felt - do justice either to him or to his genius.

Pacini sat down at the piano and sang through the opening music: the poet turned pale, seized him, threw his arms round the composer's neck and cried

"*For Heaven's sake continue with your work; you will give Italy a masterpiece.*"[xvi]

With the schoolboy diligence we have encountered earlier a reanimated composer put himself to study as many of the accounts of his heroine as was feasible: historical and unhistorical; scandalous and scatological; genuine and generic of the Lesbian poetess - meditating long and painfully upon Hellenic metrical conventions; Pythagorean precepts; Doric, Ionic and Lidian scales; diatonic, chromatic and enharmonic modes with the inevitable result that he fell ill, victim to operatic indigestion in a compound of mid-career anxiety and self-consciousness he had never experienced before.

It was a predictable response, according to popular opinion the *Saffo* text he was offered was one of the very best libretti ever to emerge in the Italy of the day and set the standard for theatrical poetry for years to come - "*Worthy of Saffo*" was praise for decades. [xvii]

But it was Parthenopeia that came to his assistance - the complete score of *Saffo* was ready for rehearsal in twenty-eight days, a potent Hellenic subsoil having supplied the pace for a truly Olympian feat: the *gran'scena finale* of the opera, the most protracted *tour-de-force* ever to be offered on the Italian stage in that fertile era – an extraordinary vocal sequence consisting of *coro funebre, recitativo, improviso alla Greca, tempo di mezzo* and *cabaletta di forza* after which amazing immolation the romantically deranged heroine throws herself off the Leucadian cliff having been composed in two hours according to its composer![xviii]

Written without respite, the *prima* of *Saffo* on 29 November 1840 was as fabulous and sensational as any of his first career. Pacini was so very nervous that his contractual obligation to sit at the keyboard was waived and he took his seat in a box. Three friends escorted him to the third tier of the S. Carlo cheerfully reminding him that the cast had been whistled in all the previous operas. From the very first notes the music took fire. Every item was greeted with deafening applause, the artists were awed by standing ovations and demands for repeats; at the end of the *finale primo* – one of the most sustained and impressive of concerted movements ever to be heard that century - with the house in an uproar - everyone turned to look towards the box where Pacini was sitting but he was nowhere to be seen.

Running to the box the three friends found that he had fainted. This cynic, this joker, this irreverent tease whose last real success when he had been fêted, honoured and praised had been all of fifteen years earlier, who had suffered indecent intrigue,

tricked by mindless antagonists, who had despaired of ever hearing such plaudits again, was found lying on the floor.

Brought to the footlights he looked speechlessly at a raging house. It was the *furore* of a lifetime. The whole theatre *shook* according to a breathless witness, like that of *Pompei* a musical millennium before.

Saffo does inaugurate his second style. For the first time he had achieved a flawless commentary underpinned by an insistent and almost mechanical pulse which runs through the score. Searching for comparisons it has been commonplace to claim the impact of this opera to be that of his Greek heredity – his island birthplace - but nothing of his defunct rival quite equals the fundamental energy of this exceptional opera nor anything as lyrical *per se*. Friedrich Lippmann has described Pacini as either "*Before, or After his time,*" an especially perceptive intuition [xix] this is an opera that presages the veristic psychopathology of the end of the century. An organic rather than conceptual continuity here transcends itself, climax upon climax, to reach a succession of peaks of emotion whose sheer desperation tears apart a bel canto envelope.[xx] Though *arie* are singled-out, especially that of the tenor Faone with its undermining prelude the opera stands and falls on the prima donna's climactic leap to eternity - at once touching, outrageous, painful and lost. The composer's extraordinary insight into regret and self-absorbed angst achieving a resolution that for the first and last time in his œuvre has a contour that, if not Greek or classical, has the timelessness of legend.

A cumulative effect begins from this momentous prima onwards to dominate his musical development, inset with surprises, digressions and orchestral sophistication to be sure but to pervade almost all the operas to come. There is an intoxication in his melodic extravagance that was never there before. His fascination with remote keys dates from *Saffo* as would be the case from now on. Pacini here rejects the onset of routine together with an instrumentation as strange as science fiction (or as strange as audiences could swallow) That he understood this was his turning-point is clear: *Saffo* is perhaps his only opera to escape modification or extra music to the amazement of those in the business of publication.[xxi]

His cast had not been entirely predictable. The soprano of the title role was not an obvious candidate for *furore,* but Francilla Pixis unexpectedly carried everything

before her,[xxii] Eloisa Buccini, Orazio Cartagenova and Gaetano Fraschini found themselves with the audience at their feet. After the astonishment of the final jump the curtain-calls went on until the early hours.

This heroic reception was repeated ten times in Naples that season and twenty-seven times the next, *Saffo* would have eleven different productions in Naples in the nineteenth century. This opera, the first Pacini score to earn international star rating went on to revivals world-wide, it has been played subsequently in almost every operatic centre. The composer, both proud and protective, made the rather touching point of being present at as many performances as he could for nearly three decades. An unexpected accolade came from Giuseppina Strepponi: *"Saffo continues to enchant and we are all called out and then recalled every night. My favourite pieces are the second act finale and the third-act aria after which I am called to the footlights five or six times. You know I tell the truth…"*[xxiii]

And the most absurd revival was in Parma, the city of her husband; in the carnival of 1842 on the night of 9 January 1843, after ten or so more-or-less normal performances, the impresario had the brilliant idea of beginning with Act III, this was followed by a violin recital after which *Saffo* clawed her way back up the cliff and sang Acts I and II. It seems the stunt man who jumped was obliged to go home early!

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As a result of the upturn in his fortunes, commissions poured in on all sides. Impresarios silent for a decade wrote to remind him of their close association. Even Barbaja – in the last year of his life – recalled his prized associate and urged on him a commission for the Teatro Nuovo in Naples which Pacini magnanimously accepted even though such a stage ill-accorded with his newfound elevation to glory. The opera that transpired was a strange sort of codicil to *Saffo*, a wild child conceived in a haze in tandem with Neapolitan cronies and composed in fits and starts. Was the composer overcome by the disequilibrium of success? There is something slightly nonsensical about his acceptance of a stage-weepy almost completely dominated by men's voices and based on Sir Walter Scott's 'The Black Dwarf' [*Il nano misterioso*] a bucolic *semiseria* fantasy replete with Lowland Scots worthies with Neapolitan accents, one of them singing in dialect (and one of them in drag). Together with its librettist - the dilettante marchese Domenico Andreotti,

Pacini nonetheless succeeded in making his *L'uomo del mistero* acceptable to audiences eager only to hear *farse.* With an expert comic line-up: Raffaele Cassacia - son of the great *buffo* Carlo Cassacia ("Cassaciello") and a clutch of adept rascals its composition was far from smooth. Pacini despatched the first two parts with his usual alacrity and sent them to Naples in July 1841. Then came a long silence. No one knows why. But Barbaja was obliged to plead for the remaining portion. The maestro replied that he had already sent it but enclosed a second copy. As a result of this delay the celebrated impresario was deprived of staging his last Pacini opera. He died on 19 October 1841. *L'uomo del mistero* reached performance three weeks later and had a happy reception (Pacini says "*esito felicissimo*"). The tartan gothic transports of this chaser to *Saffo* pleased its rather special audience, it got twelve performances in 1841 and seventeen more the following year with revivals in Turin and Rome - after which it went the way of similar spoofs written for specific voices and specific stages. Some items were printed.

His second career

Maybe this Scott-inspired intermezzo should not be dismissed as a trifling extra. It is from now on that he began to take his sources with the utmost seriousness. From henceforth it was literary integrity combined with his special flair for vocal definition that emerges as the compulsive factor in a long series of historical tragedies - a chain of over-life-sized scores which forms the bedrock of his second career. Dramatic portraiture will be its most obvious feature; not only a concession to emerging tastes but designed to enable the shape, strength and emotive distinction of theatrically compulsive arguments in which a runaway energy will be all his own.

Cammarano of course was high on this agenda. In the summer of 1841 Pacini had persuaded the *Presidenza* of La Fenice in Venice to accept a refurbished version of Cammerano's *Il conte di Chalais*, a text Giuseppe Lillo had set in 1839[xxiv] now prudently retouched with the new title of *Maria contessa di Rohan*. This project was approved in July. Pacini had already sketched some of the music and progress was made to the extent even of disputing the casting – the maestro having doubts about a contralto *primadonna,* but nothing survives to explain why such a promising project simply vanished.[xxv] All the more baffling as Cammarano had forwarded an autograph

manuscript poem for the occasion. Possibly the casting was insoluble (Venice having a *faible* for sonorous female voices dug it's heels in, and Pacini simply had to desist?) but much more persuasively he had been warned by friends in Naples that Donizetti intended to set the "*Chalais*" text himself (Donizetti's *Maria di Rohan* with the Cammarano libretto would emerge in 1843). For this reason it may not be entirely speculative that Pacini's substitute for the *Rohan* text - his *Il duca d'Alba* - was *tit-for-tat* the Bergomasc having been obliged to discard his *Le Duc d'Albe* (with a Scribe libretto) as a result of conflicts of interest in the Paris of 1840.[xxvi]

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In his memoirs Pacini would have us believe that he began work on his *La fidanzata corsa* in the autumn and winter of 1841. But the libretto for this opera was not submitted for the censor's approval until October 1842 so unless he began composing without any text at all (which could of course be the case) he has got his dates wrong yet again. In fact the winter of 1841 was devoted to the composition of *Il duca d'Alba* with its poem to be supplied by Giovanni Peruzzini. It was not a good choice of poet, he was ill and could only manage to complete two thirds of the verses, Pacini was faced with the task of writing the rest of the libretto himself. As he had made strenuous efforts to select an argument in accordance with his new literary precepts and based directly upon Goethe's 'Egmont' there were delays and struggles with translation. But while scribbling ineffectually at all hours he came across a prentice bilingual versifier in the house of a friend.

This was a far more momentous event than it seems. It was Francesco Maria Piave, star to be of an emergent Verdian heaven. Piave was not yet bloodied on the operatic stage: he had made one essay only in theatrical poetry[xxvii] but was instantly recruited to polish up the crude stanzas of the overwhelmed maestro. For this reason, it is Pacini who has the honour of claiming Piave for the operatic merry-go-round and not the pitiless tormentor of a well-documented destiny.

Piave was the only stroke of good fortune he had. Problems with casting predominated; he was trying to persuade the *Presidenza* that Fanny Goldberg - their choice of *primadonna* - would not be suitable for his heroine - and that Francilla Pixis should be engaged instead; he had been assured before arriving in Venice that La Pixis would be contracted and she would receive 18,000 Austrian lire (the composer -

to be paid a fraction of that amount - was outraged) but when he set foot in La Fenice there was La Goldberg waiting! Furious at this *fait accompli* an instant recasting of his score for mezzo-soprano became mandatory, many pieces were cut, ensembles were mutilated, with the result that the opera – when it emerged - showed disastrous signs of haste; unequal in its two halves the first act was now very choral, and the second too long, strident, episodic and unbalanced with stretches of verse (*pace* Piave) that were almost painfully tedious.

Nonetheless the season began well. Fanny Goldberg had a triumph in *Saffo* which had twenty repetitions. Pacini was obliged to pay his respects to the lady (who fortunately knew nothing of his efforts to get rid of her!) [xxviii] His *Il duca d'alba* reached the stage on 26 February 1842.[xxix] The audience detected the fractured nature of the score immediately: after a noisy and shapeless Act I they discovered that Act II had the remarkable distinction of dispensing with the duke of the title-role almost completely and though his victim - the count of Egmont (Egmondo) - had a vibrant death scene composed expressly for Napoleone Moriani ("*tenore della bella morte*") only the excessively dramatic *concertato finale* succeeded in silencing exaggerated yawns. By which time rows of seats and many of the boxes had been vacated. Pacini's displeasure was made loud and clear. Nine months later he gave *Il duca d'Alba* a second chance, this time in Naples and with the golden cast of Sofia Loewe, Gaetano Fraschini and Filippo Coletti with the score rebalanced [xxx]and retitled *Adolfo di Warbel* (the Duke of Alba now called "Duca di Herz"). Staged at the S.Carlo on 4 November 1842 it gave rise to a tepid enthusiasm in a season that would be full of glory.

The opera that followed on that stage was almost to rival *Saffo*. *La fidanzata corsa* is perhaps the most satisfactorily balanced of all of Pacini's operas and in many ways the most deserving of fame - even in the face of so many scores to come. The composer himself had chosen the source for the plot: based on a lurid melodrama by Victor Ducange 'La Vendetta ou La Fiancée Corse" staged in Paris in 1831[xxxi] and far too bloody according to Cammarano who described it as "*too savage"* and that it needed time to tame its excesses. Did he try to avoid the challenge? Even though he had written to say that he knew the composer " *had another Saffo boiling in his veins* " [xxxii] *La fidanzata corsa* took an "unconscionable" time to get off the ground. Indeed there could have been some truth that Pacini began writing the music much earlier (though not a *year* earlier) as the *Sovrintendente* of the Royal Theatres of Naples felt impelled to send him a stern message: "*composers are not to begin work on a text*

until it has been approved."[xxxiii] in a reproof fully emblematic of the irrational administration of that theatre. The opera was scheduled for appearance on 10 December, its libretto was approved only on 10 November - which left *one month only* to compose the score, design the sets, paint the scenery, make the costumes, rehearse the artists and get the whole thing on stage. Pacini, like all his peers, treated such nonsense with the contempt it deserved.

La fidanzata corsa, a Hitchcock thriller in music, trumps *Saffo* in one respect only, its refusal of any sort of digression whatsoever. There is an urgent convergence between composer and poet which creates a nail-biting tension rising to its final indecorous coup. At once a superb overview of his talents the opera focuses on what he now knew to be his strongest cards: his ability to "place" his arias impeccably, to engage his audience almost physically in the drama and seduce them with orchestral colour.[xxxiv] Above all, in this *melodramma tragico,* he succeeds in having his trademark "*cake*" and eats it momentously: he has both a *lieto fine* replete with the ecstatic *fioriture* everyone anticipated and yet ends with a curtain of spectacular horror! The final moments of *La fidanzata corsa* demolished the audience at its prima: as Rosa turns ecstatically from the altar at the end of her *aria finale* by the side of the husband she has won against all the odds she is shot dead (by her rejected suitor). The curtain falls on the wide-open mouths of the spectators.

Some of the music of this opera is so attractive that it undoubtedly impeded revival. Pietro Zampardi's cavatina 'Per me tacque una vendetta' with its cabaletta 'Sento fra voi quest'anima' is one of the peaks of the baritone repertoire so seductive that it has made casting directors freeze and yet it is one detail only of an *Introduzione* that also includes a memorable *duetto* between Ettore and the tragic Rosa that is at the very apex of the art.

It is clear that both *Roberto Devereux* and *La fidanzata corsa* have propelled Cammarano into challenging territory. Of the two, Pacini's opera suffers more from epic casting; two extravagantly combative but contrasted tenors are required (sung at the prima by Giovanni Basadonna and Gaetano Fraschini), it also needs a Lucia-like Rosa who is both *lirico* and *spinto* (sung by Eugenia Tadolini). On 10 December 1842 given a near-perfect performance at the S.Carlo, *La fidanzata corsa* took the audience by the throar almost literally leaving the press, the management, and the composer in near delerium: "*il successo fu pari, se nol supero, a quello della Saffo*"

[xxxv] was an accurate summary.

With five performances immediately and twenty-eight the following year - like his *Saffo* his *La fidanzata corsa* was to reappear at regular intervals throughout the rest of his life. Some thirty productions are recorded.[xxxvi] The two-tenor requirement was an expensive headache, [xxxvii] during the carnival of 1845-46 La Scala attempted an economic solution with one of the them replaced by a mezzo-soprano (Elena Angri) but with bathotic consequences. A slightly bolder Paris put on a revival at the end of that same year (Théâtre-Italien 17 November 1846) with Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani, Coletti, Mario (and a modest tenor in Fraschini's role of Ettore) "*Plusieurs morceaux ont été applaudis*" was the sum-total of its lukewarm reception - but it was published in vocal score.

In contrast it was a huge success in his homeland whenever enough finance could be found to foot the bill, it flourished in South America, even reaching Russia. Revivals persisted to the very end of Pacini's existence - the most moving perhaps – a last burst of ecstatic applause and the fourth time the opera had been revived in Naples, on 11 December 1866 at the S.Carlo conducted by Nicola De Giosa [xxxviii] barely a year before Pacini's own final departure.

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The pace, now as intense as in his youth, and describing himself portentously as "*Cavaliere Professore Giovanni Pacini, Maestro Direttore della Reale Cappella e Pubbliche Scuola di Musica del Ducato di Lucca"* he set out for Palermo. He had been delighted to receive an invitation to write for the Teatro Carolino. Only Pacini would ever have accepted such a commission at such short notice, with just two or three weeks to spare as the opera was intended for the coming *carnevale* – and only accepting then because he had a suitably daring libretto.[xxxix] The inducements were many: Rossini's protégé Nicola Ivanoff was to be its star and he wanted to be seen to excel on a stage associated with Donizetti (not Bellini). And apart from any such attractions the *principe* di Cutò, Intendente of this the major opera house in Palermo, had offered him his seaside villa to work in. The verses he had in his hand were by Leopoldo Tarantini, a Neapolitan lawyer with a new taste for glory, a specialist in simple fare for modest composers the text he had offered Pacini was emblematic of renewed ambition - derived from Hugo's 'Marie Tudor' it was intended to give him the chance to upstage Cammarano with a composer who had set one of his momentous texts.[xl]

It is clear that the maestro would be writing at maximum pressure - the autograph of *Maria regina d'Inghilterra* has vanished so it is not possible to know the extent of the adjustments or short cuts he made or if any significant compositional struggles are concealed behind the smooth surface of this very long work. In some ways parodying *Roberto Devereux* with an even more travestied argument, [xli] echoing its regal fury, anguish, unwelcome lovers and vocal exaltation, in Pacini's case it added an invasive Funeral March. But the opera has the same kind of rapt absorption and bold portraiture - the same authentic contour against all historical odds like that of his Bergamasc rival. The *palermitani* - however - liked to believe that Pacini was trying to lay the ghost of Bellini with this score and certainly the Maria/Clotilde duets sound familiar with their shared distrust of men and sisterly tears in thirds *à la Norma.* But Pacini's portraiture is much sharper and his reliance on *cantabile* much less. And the plot is more complex than either *Norma* or *Roberto Devereux*: several remote strands intertwine and the gloomy scaffold theme of the opening *preludio* weaves in and out of the score - re-appearing at the central climax and at the opera's crux, while the action comes to a head in another of those Pacinian dual-purpose endings – the very reverse to that of *La fidanzata corsa*[xlii] and now going from dark to light - Maria's unworthy lover having been decapitated despite her cunning expedients she is in despair - but all at once – enheartened by her loyal subjects - she switches from misery to exalted emancipation in her *aria finale* acknowledging a ray from heaven that falls on her throne 'Un raggio di luce' and the opera comes to a head in headlong flurries of quavers and demisemiquavers.

The opera had a real triumph on 11 February 1843; Ivanoff sang as he had never sung before; Antonietta Rainieri-Marini as Maria - with her regal impediment (she was too fat) sang as if inspired; while Teresa Merli-Clerici as Clotilde capped them all - not only by singing magisterially but by marrying the *principe* di Cutò in its wake.

After the *prima* Pacini's coach was dragged back to his princely abode in a torchlight procession with crowds hailing him as Bellini's heir.[xliii]

It is necessary to ask –especially in view of this very long score - to what extent did such a composer expect his opera to survive intact in performance? *Maria regina d'Inghilterra* is a protracted drama with a string of discrete scenes simply asking to be discarded, a philosophy totally opposite to the aesthetic proclaimed by Bellini and Verdi. Did he deliberately offer theatre managements the opportunity to make a

performing edition of their own choice?[xliv] If so the calculation was misguided. A La Scala revival later that year [xlv]was a damp squib, the opera was cut to shreds and Ivanoff out of voice. At Genoa in 1844 with both original ladies [xlvi]its reception did not correspond to its merits (the critics said the music "*rarely corresponds to the words*") but this is an opera where modern recording has turned the tables on disreputable journalistic slurs from the past.[xlvii]

The remainder of this year of 1843 was given up to the extremes of Pacini's repertoire: he composed a solemn Mass for Pope Gregory XVI which was sung before him at Sant'Appollinaire in Rome; a Requiem Mass published by Ricordi; [xlviii] and a feather-light *melodramma giocoso* once more for the Nuovo in Naples. Were all three on his desk at the same time? It is most likely. He spoke of "*Il multiforme Donizetti*" in his memoirs but he himself revelled in feats of mixed composition - this year too saw the birth of *Medea* - one of his most vehement offerings which upstaged *Luisetta o La cantarice del molo* at the Nuovo. This latter, with another poem by Tarantini may well have been written first but it was *Medea,* a follow-up at the Teatro Carolino, that got in earlier:

> "Gli spettacoli del 1843-44 furono contrariati da molte malattie di attori a da turbolenze di pubblico, le quali costrinsero le autorità ad anticipare di qualche giorno la chiusura del teatro. All'organizzazione tecnica era stato chiamato il Pacini, al quale, dopo l'ottimo successo dell'anno precedente, si rinnovò la scrittura per altra opera nuovissima…"[xlix]

The above introduces *Medea,* a wise choice for a turbulent Palermo with a plot prudently remote from political turbulence and a Sicilian librettist under the aegis of another local patron. Pacini's view of the Colchican princess is refreshingly modern, even feminist, she is no sorceress - a jilted wife only fighting to recover her unfaithful husband. Indeed some of his own grievances against mindless denigration may well have been woven into his defence of an anti-heroine for whom he insists upon sympathy from the start.

For such a well-received opera (and *Medea* travelled the western world getting to New York and South America before being revived in modern times) its history is elusive. There is much additional music but when and for whom it was written remains imprecise. [l] It is not at all clear for example on which occasion the *sinfonia* (a resumé of some of the prominent themes) was added, and extensive changes were made to the

libretto even before the *prima* (resulting in the virtual disappearance of one of the characters - Cassandra); alternative music of all kinds abounds but the principal features of *Medea* – and especially the two extravagantly structured duets (for the title-role and Giasone and the title-role and Creonte) - remain constant being among the most irresistible items in the whole of his corpus of memorable music.[li] All in all he seems to have collated the superb emotions of his two previous heroines in *Medea* adding a dignity and prosaic realism upon which neither of the earlier pair had focused.

Once again he was not too pleased with the cast he was offered; Geltrude Bortolotti as Medea would not have been his first choice even though she had scored a big success in *La fidanzata corsa* six weeks before, [lii] he had wanted Rita Gabussi whose voice he almost worshipped,[liii] *Medea* depended wholly on its *primadonna*.This notwithstanding the opera, staged on 28 November 1843, was greeted with rapture with Giovanni Pancani making a seductive impact as the perfidious Giasone. Though the press found it less pleasing than *La fidanzata corsa* and *Maria regina d'Inghilterr*a the *palermitani* were completely bowled-over and even commissioned a bust in Pacini's honour. Sculpted by Rosolino Barbera, when he saw it in place for the first time the composer noted dryly that "*at last he had been put on the same level as Bellini*!" [liv] *Medea* did as well in revival as both the two earlier scores and it got to Buenos Aires even as late as 1866. There was a grandiose revival at Naples in 1853 with Carolina Alaimo (some of the extra music was certainly written for this occasion in a venue where Mercadante's *Medea* had failed!); Bortolotti herself revived it at Madrid in 1847 with Tamberlick as Giasone. An amazingly forthright Adelaide Cortesi with balletic determination sang the title-role for ten years or more - including stagings at Ancona, Florence, Forlì, Ravenna, Rome, Venice, Vicenza, Mexico City, New York and Havana. Her last appearance as *Medea* was in 1861 at Caracas.[lv] Rita Gabussi never sang it at all.

Without taking breath Pacini rushed back to Naples to stage *Luisetta* two weeks later. Though it had been composed in parallel [lvi] no opera could ever have been in greater contrast. Confounding the murderous *Medea* its plot was as near to sentiment as Pacini could contrive. The tale of a street singer whose trilling earned her a contract for La Scala but who abandons all her acquired glory to marry the young fellow who had accompanied her on his barrel organ, Tarantini's text is touching. If Pacini stooped-to-conquer he stooped to good effect, [lvii] for once, as he notes in his memoirs, people threw bouquets (instead of insults) at the composer. *Luisetta o La cantatrice del molo* is an *opéra comique* of traditional form with all that implies of ballad-like

songs and spoken dialogue, the plot allowing for self-parody in that its excursions into La Scala could be "borrowed" from his own repertory and while describable as a distaff *Postillon de Longjumeau*[lviii] the heroine's orgies of roulades are sent up gloriously. After 13 December 1843 amazing those of the audience who had only just adjusted their responses to *Saffo* and *La fidanzata corsa* this slight opera became a favorite, reappearing regularly at the Nuovo until 1867 updated regularly with new quotes from Pacini's later operas. All Naples was enchanted by this light score, with the exception of Bellini's bereft Francesco Florimo who felt obliged to write "*the only composer who was never liked in Naples was Pacini"* (Old grudges live to compile theatrical chronologies!)

In fact, it was precisely in this year of 1843, that Bellini became finally irrelevant to Pacini, an even more intransigent competitor was now treading on his toes. The Verdian threat can be noted clearly with this misleading announcement of 1843:

"Nuove scritture del maestro Pacini…In autunno è scritturato per la Pergola a Firenze, ove esporrà un nuova opera, Alzira. con poesia di Cammarano, da eseguirsi dalla Frezzolini, dal tenor Poggi e del basso Colini"[lix]

Did Pacini intend to compose an *Alzira* or is this a complete fantasy? Whatever the truth it reveals the name of the composer who from now on would compete for the favours of the best librettists and be a thorn in his flesh for the rest of his life. Perhaps the report was in error? *Alzira* is a plot too close to his *Amazilia* - but Giuseppe Verdi's *Alzira* with a libretto by Cammarano would surface in 1845. [lx]

He had already accepted a text by a fellow *catanese.* Giacomo Sacchero's[lxi] libretti had wide exposure but were emerging only now with real reclâme when set with maximum skill by Federico Ricci for his *Corrado di Altamura.*[lxii] The coming opera would repeat all the problems he had with *La Vestale*: the critics eager to accuse him of purloining the plot (in this case from Halévy and Scribe but not with any scholarly insight as the information was printed in the libretto). Pacini's *L'ebrea* was born somewhere between Naples and Lucca over a chaotic Christmas distinguished only by Pacini's elevation to a senior rank in the Order of San Ludovico (the order of his patron the Duca di Lucca). In this opera he would again have trouble with his prima donna - in this case even worse than usual, the title-role was written for Antonietta Montenegro whose remarkable voice was almost untrained and who had no real professional

experience. Donizetti had failed with her at Vienna when her Elisabetta (in *Roberto Devereux*) had been disastrous irrespective of his patiently sympathetic coaching.[lxiii] As far as *L'ebrea* was concerned the score was ready in good time, rehearsals began, but after thirty-five piano rehearsals - Pacini tells us in his memoirs - she still could not remember the words! To support her he had Marietta Alboni, Ignazio Marini and Nicola Ivanoff but there was a hole in the middle of his opera. And Ivanoff too gave him trouble this time – not because he was out of voice, very much the reverse - but because he was so enthusiastic about his *scena* in Act IV 'In quei di clemente il cielo' with its fabulous cabaletta 'Non sollevo più gli sguardi' that he had sung it repeatedly in concerts in Milan to Pacini's disquiet and many people already knew it by heart![lxiv]

L'ebrea's prima on 27 February 1844 was unremarkable, not actually a failure but everyone agreed that La Montenegro deserved her boiling oil at the end whatever her good intentions. But it had felicitous moments, he says of the opera "*mi ebbe non pochi applausi*".[lxv] *L'ebrea* has a vibrant score, with numerous potent ensembles, much novelty in its structure, and is as eloquent and impressively orchestrated as any opera of its day. Sacchero's libretto was fully worthy of success, neat, economical and emotionally devastating to a fault. Nor did *L'ebrea* vanish quite as quickly as has usually been stated in operatic chronologies True, it failed to find revivals in Italy but was especially favoured by the tenor Enrico Tamberlick[lxvi] who succeeded in restaging it twice at the Teatro Principal in Barcelona in 1848 and 1850; like Ivanoff he had fallen in love with Manlio's music. The composer himself presided over a very dim re-staging at Viterbo in 1864 when it was re-titled *I romani in Siria*, a version which seems to have re-surfaced in Venice in the fatal year (for Pacini) of 1867 when it was greeted, or so it was reported, "*with general approval.*"

Even if not up to his expectations he made a special manuscript copy of the autograph of *L'ebrea* to keep in his personal library. This confirms his own opinion of its merits: *L'ebrea* must be an especially tempting candidate for revival.

He was now at the zenith of his skills. Even if he never aspired to be "learned" in any Teutonic sense he had everything, urgency, inventiveness, unparalleled fluency and a melodic reserve that never failed him to the end of his operatic parabola. He had bent the orchestra to his will, tamed his vocal line and succeeded at last in having a dramatic whole. He had already received the libretto of *Bondelmonte* from Cammarano [lxvii]and began working on it immediately. Why then was there a sudden interval?

There were big changes in the business of opera under way. With the arrival of a Verdian era backed by a crushing music industry in the North, easy packaged productions of operas for hire, score and parts, complete with printed libretti began to appear. Cheap, standardised and readily available. The *non-localizzato* libretto now made its appearance, at first with adhesive labels naming the theatre and cast in question: later, after 1850,[lxviii] without indication either of theatre or listing any of the singer or roles, *professori* of the orchestra or production details in a meagre reduction of an artform that once had taken pride in its quality and singularity. Opera had to pay a price for becoming a commercial product. Together with this, a gradual elimination of the *minori* began which would cut the number of composers on the boards by two thirds. At the same time a cult of revival began to undercut stagioni which no longer commissioned new operas for audiences. This heralded opera as it has been known ever since.

It was in the summer of 1844 that Pacini decided upon confrontation: he would write three operas in one year, three historical portraits, three body blows against this tide of institutional deterioration - three operas expressly composed for his three most important historical sites and taking-on three of his major opponents.

In all probability, since the historical Lorenzino had been murdered in Venice in 1548 it was the composer's wry sense of humour that selected *Lorenzino de'Medici* for that particular city. He was fully prepared for the same fate. Only twelve months before his *La fidanzata corsa* had failed to get to the end of its second act at La Fenice as a result of the jeering of an ultra-professional claque sent from Milan in an attempt to wrest control of the repertoire. Verdi, even, felt constrained to protest on Pacini's behalf but such unwonted charity did not prevent him from trying to get hold of *Lorenzino de'Medici* - its cowering poet having now become the subject of a tug-of-war between the two composers.

It is far from clear who alighted upon the plot of *Lorenzino de'Medici* in the first place. Did Piave suggest it to Pacini or Pacini to Piave? Or could it have been someone else? In any event the browbeaten poet felt obliged to unburden himself tremblingly to his new mentor on his shameful commitment to the detested rival who had begun his professional career…

With unconvincing nonchalance Verdi had replied:

"By all means agree to write for Pacini, but try not to do Lorenzino, because this

we can do together some other time. But if you can't avoid it, then do Lorenzino. Act in your own interests" (Letter of 22 May 1844)[lxix]

With His Master's Voice ringing in his ears Piave did just that. At the date of this letter not one word of the text of *Lorenzino* had been written and even in October Piave sent Alessandro Lanari a note to say that "*as soon as I have finished I due Foscari I shall finish Lorenzino for Pacini."*[lxx]

Had Pacini read this letter his secondary ranking would have been painfully clear, but the plot he had chosen had undoubted merits, the real-life Lorenzino, born in 1514, was more genuinely colourful than any opera plot; a fabulous Renaissance anti-hero, at once handsome, noble and deadly, a brilliant memorialist, ruthless lover, traitor, assassin and dissident, all at the same time. The perfect model for those shifts of tempo, *crescendi*, cadenzas and codas integral to the opera of the 1840's as well as being a Brutus clone whose political acumen could be viewed as an advance of the Risorgimento to come.

As far as Pacini was concerned it was to be an opera designed to snatch the laurels from the Verdian crown; dealing gingerly with chronology as well as with the truth Piave created in a fictional *affaire du cœur* for him, turning his back as much on the sordid underside of his hero as too on the Florentine strife that would have drawn his hawkish rival like honey to a bee. Set during a nasty moment in the Carnival of 1537 nothing at all survives in Piave's libretto of Lorenzino's literary feats (his 'Aridosio' or his 'Apologia') and only a hint of his political ideals, he is unstable, duplicitous and double-dealing, of his altruism (if it existed) there is scarcely a mention. There is violence and vehemence, an authentic setting (the Bargello prison), but the action is tamed, political passion devolves primarily upon Filippo Strozzi (rival banker to the Medici among a lot else) rather than upon the title-role, while the opera's dénouement - the off-stage murder of Alessandro de'Medici is for all those sentimental circumlocutions of the *melodramma romantico.*

For Pacini it was of course Luisa Strozzi who took most of his attention, as usual the primadonna soprano held all the cards. She emerged in the person of the stupendous Marianna Barbieri-Nini, [lxxi] paramount '*Cantante di Camera di S.A.I. e R. il Granduca di Toscana*' who would be both the triumph of *Lorenzino de'Medici* and its principal stumbling-block for any successful revival. Pacini himself said of her*: "Questa eletta cantante, oltre ai doni di cui fu prodiga natura, concendendole una voce che niun mi*

ricorda, flessibile, toccante nelle corde medie, ed estesa, possedeva tale maestria (acquisitata col perenne studio) da farla a buon diritto proclamare una gemma del Teatro italiano."[lxxii] Rival sopranos found her impossible to follow. In the opinion of one of them, Caterina Hayez [lxxiii] *"To sing this opera you need an extraordinarily powerful voice such as the Signora Barbieri can boast, but I, instead of force, have a graceful timbre, as you know very well."* (Letter to Alessandro Lanari 27 October 1847). It was a refusal many other sopranos would subsequently be obliged to echo. The rest of the cast of *Lorenzino de'Medici* at La Fenice on 4 March 1845 was relatively restrained in spite of its glorious heroine, Filippo Strozzi was sung by Sebastiano Ronconi and not by his more famous brother; Alessandro was sung by the basso profondo Giuseppe Miral; and Lorenzino was created by the modest Andrea Castellan. [lxxiv] Though *Lorenzino de'Medici* had a freezing début, Donizetti who had passed through Venice reported: *"La neve, la neve...inverno - cosi rigido che interpidisce il genio in certi mesi ... anche Pacini fece tre quarti di fiasco"* [Note the "anche" Pacini] (Letter to Teodoro Cottrau 19 March 1845[lxxv]). Semi-freddo, indeed, not a semi-fiasco, with nine performances to its credit, and ending the icy carnevale, *Lorenzino de'Medici* was soon to inflame imagination throughout Italy and abroad.

Pacini's characteristic response to the challenge of Verdi was to write absolutely tremendous arias. He had confronted Bellini with cantilena,[lxxvi] stood-up to Donizetti with concertati, but as the hue and cry of the *bussetano* became really strident behind him gathered-up all his vocal skills to invest his plots with solos to kill. Marianna Barbieri-Nini's cavatina 'Povero cor!' which opens the second part of Act 1 is perhaps unique in Pacini's œuvre in that not only is it almost superhuman - one of the most arduous arias ever to confront a trembling soprano taking the stage - but remained more or less intact throughout a long series of revivals uncharacteristically sticking to its steeplechase of vocal hurdles even into the major Neapolitan revision of 1858. Clearly it was a Pacinian lynchpin despite the nightmare challenge it proved for a whole generation of *primedonne* to come. Then she has a second huge aria in Act 2. Both Alessandro and Filippo have mammoth vocal stints, most of them *con coro* (Filippo even keeping his coro with him in prison!) but these monumental solos, the very antithesis, it would seem, of the urgent dramatic propulsion favoured by his great antagonist are not in fact backward-looking or anticlimactic, instead they anticipate a fin-de-siècle model - the artist alone on stage - cynosure of all eyes and ears engulfed

in a technicolour surge of unrestrained lyricism to such an extent that it is almost impossible to hear them without rediscovering the full-throated phonograph scratching of a Battistini or a Caruso 0f a very different world to come.

A similar pre-echo applies to Lorenzino's huge *Scena ed aria* that begins Act II, an epitome aria of Pacini's maturity, subsequently fitted-out with no less than three different *cabalette.* After its Venetian début *Lorenzino de'Medici* went on to a strenuous reception almost everywhere - both with and without its formidable primadonna and with and without cuts. At Trieste on 14 February 1846 Anna De La Grange had a huge success as Luisa with Luigi Mei as Lorenzino, a performance made memorable by the fact that it was mounted by Luigi Ricci whose wife Ludmilla Stolz ("Liddy") had been recruited to sing the seconda donna role of Assunta. The capricious Verdian primadonna Sofia Cruvelli sang Luisa at Rovigo in 1847. Here and there the assassination of a Florentine ruler proved too much for the local censors and the opera ended with Luisa's suicide instead (as at Reggio Emilia in 1845), a cut Pacini accepted philosophically. But many unclouded successes followed during the 1846-7 season, Pacini notes with pride that *Lorenzino de'Medici* was staged with such furore at the Teatro Pergolesi of Jesi that a bust of him was put in the foyer of the theatre (it seems not to have survived)

Some thirty initial revivals are recorded, many with drastically modified settings, changes of title, personaggi and plot: Rome heard the opera in 1854 with the title of *Luisa Velasco* and in three acts with Barbieri-Nini as its star; for a nervous pre-Risorgimento Florence in 1857 it was retitled *Elisa Velasco*. [lxxvii] An 1858 re-edition as *Rolandino de' Torrismondi* in Naples (with a text jointly by Domenico Bolognese and Pacini himself with many changes to the music) [lxxviii] had the curious side-effect of ensuring the revival of the opera in its original form elsewhere: at La Scala on 22 October 1959 *Lorenzino de'Medici* made a belated début (Cambiasi gives it 'buono') with Giacinto Ghislanzoni as Lorenzino, Giovanni Corsi as Filippo and Elisa Galli as Luisa, the latter clearly rejoicing in her freakish vocal range as only two or three weeks before she had sung Gilda in *Rigoletto* - scarcely a Barbieri-Nini role! This La Scala version offered yet another replacement cabaletta for Lorenzino's Act 2 aria. There followed similar revivals at Vienna and Barcelona that same year (this last with Barbieri-Nini, still singing Luisa after almost fifteen years in the role - something she neither attempted or proposed for her historic Lady Macbeth) as well as many others in

the 1860's. According to Neapolitan sources the *Rolandino de'Torrismondi* version had revivals too: at Chieti in 1868, and another as late as 1899.

The second partner of the triumvirate, *Bondelmonte,* with its libretto by Cammarano staged at La Pergola on 18 June 1845 was no less momentous an offering. A larger-than-life epic unlikely ever to have attracted Verdi, sprawling and extravagant, replete with a plethora of outrageous climaxes, full of frightful imprecations and uncontrolled animosities enshrining a number of the well-worn themes dear to its librettist: an interrupted wedding; insanity; and a painfully sanguinary final curtain in which the soprano *primadonna* dabbling in the blood of her murdered lover shrieks 'Or…sei pago…disumano' to her psychopathic brother and then dies in his arms, echoing *Lucia*. Just as its "target" (Donizetti of course[lxxix]) was less clearly defined, *Bondelmonte* was markedly less critical in its overall intentions - despite its gore and mayhem. It had a much longer genesis: as early as 1833 Alessandro Lanari had been instrumental in persuading Felice Romani <u>*not*</u> to write a *Bondelmonte* for the Bergamasc - a factor all the more ironic in that Donizetti's forbidden *Maria Stuarda* should have re-emerged briefly in Naples under the title of *Buondelmonte* the following year. For Pacini, Lanari had retracted his earlier ukase and proposed it for confrontational purposes. Its complete libretto had been on Pacini's desk much longer than the previous opera and its argument even more a pertinent to its place of début: the celebrity Bondelmonte, as recorded by Dante[lxxx] all in white and riding a white horse, had been cut-down on the Ponte Vecchio in broad daylight after jilting a daughter of the arrogant Amedei in 1215. It seems that Pacini relished this one-man-between-two-women rather more than *Lorenzino* and considered it had better verse as was certainly the case; in contrast with *Lorenzino* having taken even more care with its finishing was not inclined to tinker with it subsequently in revivals.

There was a remarkable input of quality items in the music of *Bondelmonte*, a whole series of *brani staccati* were regarded as momentous. The *Sinfonia* (an integral part of the score and not an after-thought); the *terzetto finale* of the Parte Prima 'Dell'ingrato all'alma'; the duet for the two men in the Parte Seconda and the amazing finale to this section; *Bondelmonte*'s aria in Parte Terza 'Scendea la notte' and its cabaletta 'Ah! quant'ella seppe amarmi'; above all Beatrice's horrendous *scena finale*.

Bondelmonte's trajectory began in triumph at La Pergola: because it remained the

property of the composer (whatever it says in the printed libretti) it was not immediately toured round the Lanari empire but took off on its own volition - more than doubling the revivals of *Lorenzino* and interpreted by almost every major artist of the day. The role of Beatrice was subsequently sung by Fanny Salvini-Donatelli (at Bologna, Faenza, Ferrara, Milan, Reggio Emilia and Venice), Marianna Barbieri-Nini sang the same role in no less than fifteen productions (including four revivals in Spain), the role was also sung by Teresa Brambilla, Isabella Galletti-Gianoli and Clelia Forti (who had sung Isaura at the *prima* – this latter performance at Catania on 20 November 1852 must have given Pacini great pleasure as it also included his own baritone nephew Pietro Giorgi-Pacini as Amedei). Singers in the title role included Emilio Naudin, Settimio Malvezzi, Lodovico Graziani and Carlo Miraglia; Amedei's included Sebastiano Ronconi, Filippo Colini, Felice Varesi and Filippo Coletti. Once it had run through most of western Europe it had staging's in Argentina, Uraguay, Greece, Mexico and then Russia and outliving *Lorenzino* by almost a decade.[lxxxi]

It is surprising that *Bondelmonte* did not reach the twentieth century. But operas of this quality, like its hero - did not die a natural death, they were squeezed out of the repertoire by force.

As for the third score of the triumvirate, *Stella di Napo*li put Cammarano in a terrible quandary, indeed not very far from panic. The journal *La Fama* summed-up its reception at the S.Carlo: "*Se questo non è un trionfo compiuto, non sapremmo a qual successo debbasi dare titolo somigliante."*[lxxxii]

The poet had given the composer an ultimatum, he could have either the libretto of *Orazi e Curiazi* or of *Stella.* With Mercadante waiting for Pacini to make up his mind Cammarano made his own opinion clear: his letter of pained reproach to Giovanni Pacini is dated 5 September 1845:

"...I hoped that all your unfortunate prejudice against the plot [Orazi] *had vanished, but your silence has led me to suspect the opposite... with one bold stroke we can put everything to rights. Stella di Napoli, which so much appealed to you, serves as my excuse: when you regretted having left me to choose between Stella and Orazi, you wanted to return to Stella, but I could not, because I had not yet then overcome the obstacles which the role of the father put before me. Afterwards, while versifying Orazi, my thoughts turned every now and again to the beloved Stella, and these obstacles fell away, and now I can undertake the poetry. It is late, you'll tell me; no, it is not late when two men fervently desire something, one of them daring to want a great success, the other being Pacini, strong in the inexhaustible power of his genius*." [lxxxiii]

Late indeed it was, but *Stella di Napoli,* with Pacini's music, would open at the S.Carlo – the maestro's terrible scribble deciphered, parts prepared, sets painted and the opera fully rehearsed making a momentous début on that stage on 11 December 1845 when the plot had been settled only twelve weeks before!

This innocent seeming missive, however, opens an incredible can of worms. Why should the poet have been so upset? We read of *"obstacles*": of Pacini's resistance to *Orazi* - a tremendous neo-classical *farrago* eminently worthy of his *Pompei* (and upon which Mercadante pounced with glee[lxxxiv]) We hear too of his uncharacteristic insistence upon *Stella…* and on nothing but *Stella.*

Why, exactly, did this subject "*so much appeal*" to the sig. maestro *cavaliere* Giovanni Pacini?

The explanation is not without comedy. Or mischief. The argument of *Stella di Napoli* was based on the very same play that had given birth to Mercadante's only recognised masterpiece, *Il giuramento,* and was to be played under his nose on the supreme stage in Mercadante's fief of Naples!

Cammarano knew that he would have to be very clever if he was not find himself in the same position as Piave – harried by the operatic dogs of war. The source in question was none other than Victor Hugo's play 'Angelo, tyran de Padoue' first staged in Paris in 1827. A much later Ponchiellian distribution based on this same source helps identify the roles in their Pacinian guise: Stella is *La Gioconda*; Marta is *La Cieca*; Olimpia d'Acri is *Laura*; Armando is *Enzio* and D'Aubigni is *Alvise Mocenigo*. In Pacini's *Stella di Napoli* these roles would be sung with exactly the same voices that Amilcare Ponchielli chose so memorably. Even more significantly perhaps, Cammarano's dilemma - as he makes clear in the letter above - (*"the role of the father"*) parallels the identical dilemma of Boito for *his* composer: how to articulate the *causus-belli* (how to turn the wretch, spy and seducer that would in *La gioconda* be *Barnaba*) into the heroic Gianni da Capua?

Cammarano applied himself to the making of red-herrings; Gaetano Rossi's convoluted text for *Il giuramento* was of great assistance (even repeated hearings do not make Mercadante's opera much more than obscure) he further obfuscated the *ugolian* chronology [lxxxv] throwing in a few local landmarks of his own, upstaging Rossi (and Boito). he bent his site to Calabria and a historical paraphrase thus cleverly pulling

wool over the eyes of the Mercadantian lobby in the S.Carlo.

But as a result, the motivation of *Stella di Napoli* is thoroughly improbable yet offers an unexpected foretaste of operatic *chiaroscuro* to come: plunged in Aragonese gloom, despairing, sinister, with a violence and unmanning intimations of *Il trovatore* yet to emerge, *Stella di Napoli* would be heavily dependent on gypsies, prophesy, prisons and sacrifice.

Timing was the issue. Once they agreed to go ahead the actual forging of *Stella di Napoli* set out at an unimaginable pace, Pacini had arrived in Naples early in September[lxxxvi] and got to work immediately; on 10 October 1845 he wrote to Cammarano:

> *"...vi aspetto domani mattina alle ore 12 per rivedere la Stella, so tratta di cambiare alcune parole. Tutto il resto non ammette eccezione, Laus Deo. Avete pensato al vostro Pacini?"*[lxxxvii]

To have been able to forget the maestro might have been difficult. With the role of Gianni da Capua to his satisfaction the text was ready for a final submission to the censors on 6 November 1845 by which time most of the score had already been composed. The libretto was passed without a murmur; this notwithstanding Cammarano thought it prudent to supply a long prefacing *argomento* to the printed text in the libretto whose contents threw very little real light on the plot or the concerns of the censors but helped to muddy the waters usefully à propos its composer's malicious intentions and the dogs of war…

With such a traumatic genesis and even better received on 11 December 1845 than its two predecessors in the triumvirate, *Stella di Napoli* insolently called upon all the exceptional vocal resources of the city, with Eugenia Tadolini in the title- role, Gaetano Fraschini as Armando, Eloisa Buccini as Olimpia d'Acri and Filippo Coletti as Gianni it had twenty-six performances extending into 1846. With its chain of deft coups lavish with instrumental obbligati even Pacini's severest critics found themselves obliged to concede that *Stella "racchiude alcuni brani assai pregevoli per fattura e melodia*" together with a momentum, freshness and vitality that took the S. Carlo habitués by surprise. Stella's cavatina, for example, is a tour-de-force prefaced by a long arcane exchange, its andante affettuoso 'Ove colui dimora' graceful

and airy with its polished vocal definition that Eugenia Tadolini explored ecstatically; its cabaletta, 'Ove t'aggiri o barbaro', with a pounding rhythmic pulse and terminal whiplash of *fioriture* slyly caricaturing the Verdian manner and the obvious intention of putting *Alzira* (its Verdian rival in Naples [lxxxviii]) in the shade.

Stella di Napoli leans quite heavily on deliberate emulation - not all of it malicious, some of it entrancing. It was reported that *Stella*'s tunes were whistled in the streets for a whole season. As a result of its fraught genesis Cammarano's text is perhaps its weakest point - a rag-bag of circumlocutions with an ending no more convincing than that of his *Alzira* - it made many problems for its composer, but Pacini - at the very height of his confidence now - no longer *sorpassato* - exceeded himself stupendously with this score.

Utterly demanding, in revival it seldom achieved optimum results after its brilliant *prima*, the standards of virtuosity it required at all costs becoming harder and harder to accomplish as the mid-century approached. *Stella di Napoli* did have a dozen or so revivals in Italy and two or three abroad but never with the same éclat; Isabella Galletti-Gianoli twice made a stab at it in Rome in 1858 when it was well-praised though the supporting cast was incapable of fulfilling the maestro's demands.

The merits of *Stella di Napoli* had been noted in Milan. What Mercadante thought of it has not been recorded. Whatever glee Pacini may have felt he kept to himself. Ricordi purchased the score and impeded its revival so that Verdi could persuade himself it did not exist. [lxxxix]

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[i] Pacini op cit 81

[ii] Including not just *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei*, but also *Alessandro nell'Indie, Gli arabi nelle Gallie* and *Niobe* among other Neapolitan *ultimi giorni*

[iii] A far from exhaustive list of his didactic writings includes the following:

1. *Cenni storica sulla musica e trattato di contrapunto compendiati dal cav. Giovanni Pacini, maestro di camera e cappella (1834), reprinted 1864*
2. *Sulla originalita della musica melodrammatica italiana del secolo XVIII; ragionamento (1841)*
3. *Corso teorico-pratico di lezioni di armonia (1845)*
4. *Principi elementari col metodo del meloplasto (1849)*
5. *Memorie sul migliore indirizzo degli studi musicali (1863)*
6. *Progetto pei giovani compositori (1863)*

7. *Considerazioni sulla musica e sui miglior indirizzo da darsi agli studi musicali (1864)*

(His *Corso teorico-pratico* (34pp of lessons in Harmony) for use of his Lucca students was published by Ricordi. His *Principi elementari di musica* was published by the Tipografia Baroni of Lucca in 1849 as indicated above and not at the time of his Viareggio School as he implies in his *Memorie artistiche*. Some of the annual *discorsi* he was in the habit of delivering to his pupils were also published. His *Principi elementari col metodo del meloplasto* was a domestication of the theories of the mathematician Pierre Galin (1786-1821) *Méthode du Méloplaste pour l'enseignement de la musique* (Paris 1824) and Emilio Chevé (1804-1864) with, as a fundamental principle, the use of numbers instead of notes as an educational tool)

[iv] Antonio Piazza (1794-1872). *Cfr* Alexander Weatherson *Malibran recalled (Harps and tears) The Malibran Memorial Cantata of 1837* [in] Donizetti Society Newsletter 128 (June 2016), 11-20. Pacini's is the opening vocal section (following a *sinfonia* by Donizetti); it is clear that only a very abbreviated version of Pacini's *Introduzione e quintetto, recitativo e stretta* in fact reached performance, almost certainly due to its indecipherability and length, the autograph manuscript in the Ricordi Archive is barely legible. If the printed vocal score is to be taken as a guide, in performance all the very brilliant and demanding orchestral *Introduzione* was omitted at La Scala, it opened after eight bars of a rising phrase marked pianissimo with the *coro di donne* "Gitiamo narcissi mortelle', the quintetto seems to have been intact with some very elaborate and testing singing for the two soprani (Benedetta Colleoni-Corti and Marietta Brambilla) followed by a very jaunty stretta "E della vaga immagine" with its emphasis on male voices. This, as well as much of the music by the other contributors, would have needed very protracted rehearsal and the relative "*failure*" of the cantata was due, it can. only be surmised, to its absence

[v] Adelmo Damerini *L'Istituto Musicale "Giovanni Pacini" di Lucca* (Firenze 1942), 74-5

[vi] The *Istituto Pacini* is now re-named after Luigi Boccherini by a grateful twentieth century Lucca. (this last - master of the salon string ensemble - was born in Lucca and made his career in Vienna, Paris and Madrid where he died)

[vii] The casting of these ephemeral operas may well have been similar to that of *Il convitato di pietra* of seven years before though uncertainly including his father - possibly they were performances in *honour* of Luigi. His mother Isabella took no part though still alive - a letter from Giovanni Pacini to his mother dated 24 December 1861 is conserved in the Fondo Ferrajoli of the Biblioteca Vaticana] The Belluomini villa at Viareggio, possessed its own tiny stage, of the three brothers, Giuseppe had been a former Tuscan Minister while Giacomo was not only the architect of Paolina Bonaparte's villa but was also a person delegated by her to inform Giovanni that the abandoned princess would *"not answer any of his letters after their break."* (There is no evidence to suggest that Pacini ever sent any). All three of these family performances had a hidden agenda relating to the past. Indeed *Elisa* may well have been a final offering to his father who died on 2 March 1837; Luigi Pacini had starred in Mayr's *Elisa* singing the role of Jonas and the opera represented an especially poignant souvenir for his son aged 14 who had made a precocious stage appearance in the tiny role of Germano alongside his Jonas at Bologna in 1810. Some fragments survive of both *Hermannstadt* and *Elisa.*

[viii] "*Il trionfo della fede*" was of course the sub title of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie*! In 1859 Pacini worked on the oratorio again, extending it instrumentally and dividing it into two parts. *Cfr* LIM Catalogue 56, 61-2 A markedly Christian theme dominated his music throughout this period, most notably emerging in his *la distruzione di Gerusalemme* with a libretto by

Fioretti - an ominously apocalyptic ex-Oratorio staged in the grand-ducal capital of Firenze in June 1858

[ix] Cencio (Vincenzo) Jacovacci 1811-1881 longtime impresario of several of the most important theatres of Rome, well known for his committed support of many of those composers suffering a Verdian ukase

[x] Pacini op cit 7

[xi] In fact arriving on stage full of mystery, her hair in disorder, archi-dramatic in text, incongruously archi-brilliant in musical substance, and going through every possible mood swing before arriving at a predictable *cabaletta* of joy

[xii] Ferretti wrote an extraordinarily long and apologetic preface to his text: "*Parole storiche e apologetiche del verseggiatore*" full of a candour all too rare in theatre poets.

[xiii] In particular the *finale ultimo* of the opera which belongs to the tenor (Domenico Donzelli in the title role) and a bold step despite its predictable heroics

'Voce di Gloria- vi parli in core/Per voi Vittoria – scintillerà'

[xiv] *Saffo* overwhelmed the repertoire at the San Carlo in this particular year.

[xv] Flauto, who had taken over the "*Società Impresaria*" at the S.Carlo was the almost indestructible publisher of libretti in Naples with several decades of presence in that city. Bartolomeo Merelli is also reputed (without much evidence) to have had a hand in the commissioning of *Saffo*

[xvi] John Black *The Italian romantic libretto - a study of Salvadore Cammarano* (Edinburgh 1984), 72

[xvii] Idem 74

[xviii] Pacini op cit 8i

[xix] In any comparison with other operas of that day – it is of note that Verdi wrote *Un giorno di regno* and Donizetti wrote *La Favorite* in 1840 – In contrast Pacini's opera would appear to be on another planet

[xx] Probably the most convincing evidence of such a cross-fertilisation between the primo Ottocento at its apex, as here, and of verismo at its apogee, comes from the memorable performance of Eugenia Burzio in the revival of *Saffo* at La Scala on 29 January 1911. Her singing of the title-role in Pacini's opera, extraordinary for its force and concentrated emotion and sounding fully contemporary, survives on disc as an amazing witness to the enduring relevance of this music.

[xxi] A view reflected by its modern *revisore* Rubino Profeta after the 1967 revival at the S.Carlo of this opera, when he wrote in the review 'La Scala'(Milano 1967):

"A noi bastera ricordare come alcune pagine - quali il duetto Saffo-Climene, quello Saffo-Faone, e le "arie" rispettive dei quattro protagonisti - deliziarono per lunghi anni i nostri nonni, che non disdegnarono di porre Giovanni Pacini sullo stesso piedistallo degli idoli piu famosi dell'Ottocento operistico."

[xxii] Francilla del Castillo Pixis-Göhringer was the adopted daughter of the German pianist Johann Peter Pixis and no beginner as she had been given lessons by Rossini as well as by Joséphine Fodor and Henriette Sontag. She already had a Parisian *Semiramide* to her credit alongside Grisi and Tamburini. She retired from the stage, however, painfully early after her marriage in 1845.

[xxiii] Cited by Jarro (pseud. G.Piccini) [in] *Memorie d'un impresario fiorentino* (Florence 1892), 156. Letter written to Alessandro Lanari of 28 January 1842. Despite the fact that Strepponi was later (in her last role of all as "Signora Verdi") to attempt to expunge both Pacini and his *Saffo* from her memory she wrote to Lanari in this instance to reconcile the latter with the composer as they had not been on good terms in recent months. According to her account *Saffo* was received with such enthusiasm at the Carlo Felice that not only was every member of the cast obliged to sing an encore at the end of the opera, but, on the evening in question, the stunt-man who had stood in for her on her terminal leap from the Leucade, was obliged to do his jump again at the insistent demand of the audience!

[xxiv] It is to most probable that for reasons unknown (probably illness) Lillo had not paid for this libretto - thus Cammarano made it available to other composers; Pacini was well known to be punctilious in paying his librettists. The harried but impoverished librettist had a large family and was overcome by debts so naturally he was eager and willing to defend Pacini's interests in Naples and elsewhere

[xxv] Black op cit 75-76

[xxvi] Donizetti's unfinished *Le Duc d'Albe* was later to be reset to an Italian text with its music augmented by Matteo Salvi and others to appear in 1882 as *Il duca d'Alba*. Its argument differs from that set by Pacini.

[xxvii] Piave had written, tentatively, a *Don Marzio* for the Venetian composer Samuele Levi that was never set to music.

[xxviii] From as early as 25 April 1841 (in a letter to the *marchesa* Martellini) [*Cfr* Richard Macnutt Quarto 17] as well as in similar missives to the *Presidenza,* Pacini had made rude remarks about Fanny Goldberg, who, he claimed *"is not a singer capable of taking the part of Saffo"* and trying to replace her with Francilla Pixis in both operas. In response to which he was assured that La Goldberg had not been engaged and he happily communicated this good news to the *marchesa.* In the event Pixis never sang at La Fenice, in his *Memorie* the composer goes out of his way to describe La Goldberg as "*bella e brava,"* the twenty performances of *Saffo* in which she sang with distinction quite outweighing the disappointment of the five she modestly received in his *Il duca d'Alba*. *Cfr* Pacini op cit 86.

[xxix] It was in the wake of an opera by a virtual beginner whose text, to Pacini's fury Peruzzini *had* managed to complete. This opera was *Pietro Candiano IV* by Giovanni Battista Ferrari who died tragically not long after. Pacini made light of Peruzzini's inconsistency and praises the youthful maestro in his memoirs but was seriously annoyed at the time

[xxx] Pacini had corrected the musical and textual imbalance to some extent, notably with a rewritten *stretta* to the Act I *duetto* between Margarita and the Duca and a revised orchestration but despite his efforts (and his personal supervision of the Naples production) the score cannot be said to have come together in either version. For Piave, however, this essay in the *melodramma romantico* at its peak may have initiated a taste for strong drama. *Il duca d'Alba* was nonetheless published in vocal score so it cannot be accounted a failure.

[xxxi] The Paris press, upon the staging of *La fidanzata corsa* in that city described it as a "*facheuse adaptation de Colomba.* " But the opera is in no way based on this work by Mérimée, almost certainly the reviewer was confusing 'Colomba' with Mérimée's 'Mateo Falcone' of 1829 which has a trifling resemblance - but the error has been repeated *ad nauseam* ever since. Pacini's steely melodrama had a much-less prestigious source so confusion and pretence were to be expected in Paris. The reviews began promisingly: *"Nous avons une prédeliction bien prononcée pour la musique italiennne, et nous étions prévenus en faveur de la musique de Pacini, a qui l'on doit quelques œuvres distinguées"* they soon took up the more normal Parisian vein: *"La Fidanzata corsa ne contient, en effet, que deux morceaux dignes d'être cités, un chœur et un duo ...le livret est un des plus détestables que les poètes italiens aient produit depuis longues années"* (Ducange was thus deprived of his birthright). Going on to complain that, as this score did not contain any obvious *"morceaux-de-salon*" (unlike, one can only presume, the salon inspired works of Berlioz or the unhappy Wagner), such an opera was not likely to *naturalise itself in France*. An interesting remark but in no way complimentary to the musical tastes either of the reviewer or his *concittadini.*
(Pacini had made some slight changes to the text, and several transpositions for this Paris version of the score mostly for Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani's Rosa)

[xxxii] Black op cit 79

[xxxiii] Pacini op cit 84

[xxxiv] In this score he uses Corsican guitars

[xxxv] Ibid

[xxxvi] *Cfr* Thomas G.Kaufman *Verdi and his major contemporaries* (New York and London 1990), 128-130

[xxxvii] It continues to be a problem, as a tentative for revival at the Festival of Radio France Montpellier –Languedoc-Roussillon in 2001 failed on precisely this issue.

[xxxviii] With a decor by Fausto Niccolini, *La fidanzata corsa* (with Luigia Bendazzi as Rosa, Giorgio Stigelli as Alberto Doria, Remigio Bertolini as Ettore, and Luigi Colonnese as Piero Zampardi), conducted by Nicola De Giosa, had thirteen performances; *Il trovatore,* which preceded it, had five performances. Pacini was in the audience to see his former pupil Marco Arati singing the role of Guido Tobianchi which he had created two decades earlier.

[xxxix] All plots based upon Victor Hugo were frowned upon in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies

[xl] *Cfr* Jeremy Commons *Giovanni Pacini and "Maria Tudor*" [in] Donizetti Society Journal 6 (London 1988), 57-92. Tarantini later became renowned for his highly dramatic eloquence in the courtroom.

[xli] Queen Mary I (*"Bloody Mary*") is represented as a conventional lovelorn English Queen in the opera enamored of an unsuitable adventurer from whose clutches she is extracted by a patriotic courtier, in this instance, by an earlier member of the family of Sir Winston Churchill! Tarantini was obliged to sanitise Hugo's (already nonsensical) original of 1833 in order not to offend his fellow Italians and renamed the heartless lover Fabiano Fabiani (a would-be Concino Concini) sung by Ivanoff, giving him the identity of Riccardo Fenimoore a Scottish parvenu.

[xlii] A formula that had been essayed as early as 1833 in his *Gli Elvesj*

[xliii] He may even have been trying to lay the ghost of *Carlo di Borgogna* as some of the duets recall those of this opera - a work that had its fateful *prima* in the year of Bellini's death

[xliv] This after all, is what he did with *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* with its endless supply of extra music

[xlv] 26 December 1843. The Samoyloff factor still militated against a Pacini success in Milan and the cast was modest indeed. Cambiasi said "Cattivo"

[xlvi] Teatro Carlo Felice, Genoa 1 February 1844. Apart from the two ladies the production was scandalous, the long climactic duet between Maria and Clotilde to the sound of the funeral march – the highest point of Act II Sc.XI if not the whole opera - immediately before the Queen hears the drum-roll announcing the decapitation of Fenimoore, had simply been cut. (A performance indeed that "*rarely responded to the words or music*" of the composer!)

[xlvii] Opera Rara's recording of *Maria regina d'Inghilterra* of 1998 with a cast of Nelly Miricioiu as Maria, Bruce Ford as Fenimoore, Mary Plazas as Clotilde and Alastair Miles as Gualtiero Churchill has proved a milestone in Pacinian rediscovery. In its wake the opera has been put forward for further revival despite the hurdles this particular score invariably presents.

[xlviii] Messa di Requiem for soprano, contralto, tenor bass and orchestra (composed 1843-4) Pl. No 14371-9

[xlix] Ottavio Tiby *Il real teatro Carolino e L'ottocento musicale palermitano* (Firenze 1957), 190

[l] For the simple reason that in most instances the original text was supplied with new music, a change that is undetectable in printed libretti.

[li] *Cfr* Alexander Weatherson *Il maestro delle cabalette* [in] notes for the Arkadia recording of *Medea* AK 146-2 (1994)

[lii] Teatro Carolino, Palermo 28 October 1843

[liii] Tiby op cit 191

[liv] (Palermo) "*nella cui Villa Reale si sta innalzando all'illustre maestro un busto in marmo da collocarsi appo quello di Bellini…"*
Corriere delle Dame No.17 23 March 1843

[lv] The vividly compelling performance of Adelaide Cortesi-Servadio (1828-1889) in this opera of Pacini carried it forward into the age of Verdi (who paid close attention to its career, even requesting a manuscript copy of the *entrata* of the primadonna, this copy, with Verdi's signature, is conserved in the library of the Padua Conservatorio). The style of the cabaletta to this entrata is Verdian: who actually initiated the characteristic Verdian cabaletta remains to be determined.

[lvi] He may also have composed an oratorio *Il giudizio universale* at Palermo *in his spare time!* [Quadorno dell'Istituto verdiano 5 (Milan 1988), 102] but care should be taken that the work

is not confused with Pietro Raimondi's oratorio of this title first performed at Palermo in 1844 (pub. Lucca c1845)

[lvii] The plot bears some slight resemblance to that of *Il saltimbanco* (1858) which would be one of his very last triumphs.

[lviii] It was based on a French vaudeville by Michel and Fontaine, *Louisette, ou La Chanteuse des rues* of 1840, as a consequence of which - for a proposed French revival for which Pacini may have supplied some new music - it was deemed prudent that *Luisetta* should be renamed "*Luisella*" This gave rise to confusion later. A few items of the music of *Luisetta* were published in Paris as from "*Luisella de Pacini* "; as such Casali, Dassori and notably Grove VI all list *Luisetta o La cantatrice del molo* erroneously as "*Luisella o La cantarice del molo"*. To add to this confusion, Francesco Lucca – getting his copy from an undisclosed French source (possibly from Pacini himself?) - published several items in Italy as from "*Luisella"*.

[lix] Corriere delle Dame No.17 op cit (23 March 1843) p.133

[lx] Verdi's *Alzira* with a libretto by Cammarano would be staged at the S.Carlo on 12August 1845

[lxi] Giacomo Sacchero (1815-1875)

[lxii] Federico Ricci's *Corrado di Altamura* had been received with great praise at La Scala on 16 November 1841. Cambiasi "Ottimo"

[lxiii] Montenegro was a tardy replacement for Teresa De-Giuli Borsi who had been originally contracted, alas she had intonation problems and memory lapses which Pacini shrugged aside blithely merely remarking that*"Le stonazioni non furono poche"* and selecting some of the opera for praise *"malgrado ancora la mancanza di memoria per parte della nuova arrivata."*

[lxiv] The *scena*, an elaborate set-piece, proved a favorite *cavallo di battaglia* for Nicola Ivanoff who even interpolated it into Donizetti's *Caterina Cornaro* when this opera was revived at last successfully at Parma on 6 February 1845 to Donizetti's great joy (though it is not known if he was ever told of Ivanoff's Pacinian *pezzo da baule*!)

[lxv] Pacini op cit 93.

[lxvi] Enrico Tamberlick (1820-1889)

[lxvii] Cammarano began work on *Bondelmonte* immediately – an opera whose Florentine setting was especially appropriate for a staging at La Pergola, the permanently hard-up poet was even paid for his text in advance - as early as 24 August 1843 (*Cfr* Black op cit 87). No less than three operas passed through Pacini's hands (*Medea; Luisetta; L'ebrea*) before he could begin composition in earnest and *Lorenzino de'Medici* was staged in Venice in Pacini's presence before *Bondelmonte* could receive its final polish.

[lxviii] It is this period – the early 1850's - that he renounced the services of Ricordi and other publishers to become his own agent, writing and negotiating his own contracts, thus, while his *Lorenzino de'Medici* was handed-over to Alessandro Lanari who had commissioned it his *Bondelmonte* he kept to himself. The questionable wisdom of all this will be apparent in due course

[lxix] Giuseppe Verdi *Copialettere* 426 (trans.Charles Osborne). Not only had the *bussetino* laid

claim to Piave but insisted upon his right to possess the best libretti that came from his hand. That Pacini had made the first move cannot be doubted; in Verdi's list of *Argomenti d'opere* begun in March 1844 which lists the subjects suitable for him in the coming period there is no mention of "Lorenzino de'Medici*"* it only manifests itself when Verdi - in discussion with the poet or with Lanari's son - Verdi had contracts with Antonio Lanari, had been told of Pacini's choice of plot and decided it would be more suitable for himself.

The graciously conceded permission to write for Pacini, and the magnanimous *"Act in your own interests"* rings painfully false in view of the following: Antonio Lanari did not obtain the lease of the Teatro Argentina in Rome for which house Verdi had s *scrittura* until April 1844. Verdi wrote on 18 April 1844 for permission to write a "Lorenzino de'Medici" which the censors refused

[lxx] Francesco Maria Piave, letter to Alessandro Lanari of 16 October 1844

[lxxi] Marianna Barbieri-Nini (1820-1887)

[lxxii] Pacini op cit 96

[lxxiii] Catherine Hayes (1818-1861)

[lxxiv] Andrea Castellan was not wholly to the taste of the composer so it seems, his name was willfully omitted by the maestro in his memoirs who mentions only Giacomo Roppa, Verdi's first Jacopo Foscari a year earlier, who sang the role of Lorenzino many times most notably vis-à-vis la Barbieri Nini, at Florence later in 1845, at Forlì and Reggio too that same year, at Padiue in 1847 and Trieste in 1848.

[lxxv] Zavadini op cit 625 but Donizetti was passing-on information he had received from a hostile source in Venice.

[lxxvi] Pacini's success in Venice re-established his social status in that city, a factor of some importance in the coming decade. Even to the extent of finally quashing the shadow of Bellini. On 8 March 1845, for example, he wrote two album-items in Venice: the first for "Mlle Barbieri "(ie Marianna Barbieri-Nini); the second for Giovanni-Battista Perucchini, Bellini's longtime champion (the latter album-item was a *Kyrie* perhaps intended as a prayer that the unhappy past be buried for good)

[lxxvii] *Elisa Velasco* saw the setting mutated to a less politically-sensitive fifteenth-century Spain: Lorenzino now rechristened Vellido Dolfos, Alessandro as Don Sancio, Filippo as Fernando Velasco (sometimes Valasco) and his daughter as Elisa, of course. Also a Donna Uraca degli Alcarez (Assunta), Diego and Gomez. The libretto by Piave was more-or-less unchanged - only the roles and their off-stage problems. This hispanified version (with Pacini's blessing) had a wide distribution – actually opening the carnival season at Terni in 1853, then appearing at Florence and Pisa in 1857, and at Bergamo in 1859. [The Bergamo revival could especially be said to have had a *Verdian* pedigree: with Elisa Galli - a very resourceful patriot - in the title role outfacing a line of Austrian officials in the front row at the Teatro Sociale, the intrepid soprano '*con foga appassionata e con malcelate intenzioni*' deliberately pointed the words of her electrifying Act 2 cabaletta

'O fratelli, sorgete, sorgete,
d'amistade la man vi porgete...'

with the result that the audience joined-in every evening. An indignant stand-up protest from one of the Austrian officers led finally to an excuse for a violent demonstration outside the theatre, sufficiently bloody for at least one of the insurgents to have to flee the country]. *Elisa*

Velasco obtained huge plaudits from across the Atlantic [*Cfr Dwight's Journal of Music* (New York 1858). 395-6] It is clear that the correspondent had heard the revival of 26 December 1857 at the Teatro Pagliano in Florence with a cast of G. Ghirlanda-Tortolini as Elisa and Giuseppe Limberti as Vellido Dolfos. The reviewer, pen-name "Trovator", goes on to make very unflattering comparisons between Verdi's *I Lombardi* and the opera of Pacini: *"...this Lombardi is most decidedly what I should call a brown sugar opera :- that is, there is a constant striving after effect, and a vehemence of noise, and a repeated bolstering up of puny melodies by resorting to effects of brass, of bands behind the scenes, that have a corresponding effect on the ear to that of very sweet, brown second quality sugar on the palate…but Elisa Velasco has been withdrawn to make room for I Lombardi, and Pacini is forced to yield before Verdi. It must be said that the latter shines but poorly in comparison."*

[lxxviii] *Rolandino de'Torresmondi* had been refashioned into two acts ("*quattro parti"*); the text of the original had been much modified; there were four new arias; a duetto had been turned into a quartetto; there was yet another new cabaletta (written at the very last moment) for "Rolandino" and there was a new *finale primo.* The *scena ultima* had been abridged, it was now far more abrupt – Pacini's former expansiveness now much pruned as befitted the operatic climate of the 1850's. To pacify the censors, the setting of the opera had been retrograded from sixteenth-century Florence to thirteenth-century Belluno.

[lxxix] Donizetti's own "*Buondelmonte"* had been created in 1834 to replace his aborted *Maria Suarda* in Naples - employing the music written for the earlier opera: it had the briefest of stage exposure but some additional pieces in it were later to be salvaged

[lxxx] *"O Bondelonte, quanto mal fuggisti*
le nozze sue per gli altrui conforti!"

[lxxxi] The last recorded performance of *Bondelmonte* seems to have been in 1885 (Teatro Carcano, Milan) *Cfr* Kaufman op cit 137-142

[lxxxii] *La Fama* (Milan) 29 January 1846. The review added that "neither Foscari nor Alzira was ever produced again after this *Stella paciniana*" a fact that will have been noted grimly in the Ricordi headquarters.

[lxxxiii] Black op cit 100

[lxxxiv] And turned into his one of his very best scores

[lxxxv] Irrespective of any Mercadantean claque in the S.Carlo, obfuscation was mandatory as all Hugo's plays were viewed with horror by the Neapolitan *censura* – his very name was anathema.

[lxxxvi] Soon after arrival he combined composition with attendance at the *VII Congresso degli scienziati italiani* to which he had been invited. It was the brainchild of the cultivated but feared *marchese* Nicola Santangelo, Minister of the Interior, who had selected the delegates from all branches of the arts and science. Inaugurated by Ferdinando II it went on for three weeks (20 September-5 October). It seems to have been a hotbed of political invective despite a grand ball and visits to the crater of Vesuvius. The Neapolitan view was to call the delegates *"scroscienzati".* What the composer felt about it he never bothered to disclose.

[lxxxvii] *Cfr* Gallini catalogue Inverno 2006/7. Item No. 575 (the date and the opera have been misread)

[lxxxviii] *Alzira, prima* S.Carlo 12 August 1845

[lxxxix] In 1845 Ricordi published Pacini's *Corso teorico-pratico di lezioni d'armonia*, not disdaining a money-spinner unthreatening to its major protégé.

Chapter Six

"Tanti guai"

1850 was a year in crisis - a mid-century crisis - too many key players had left the musical arena and as the months advanced an intrusive continent above the Alps leaned more and more heavily upon theatrical fortunes below. Even more disconcerting, once the false dawn of 1848 had faded the embattled régimes that made-up the peninsula went on the run, a *terremoto* of dismay and indecision became all too evident in the *cartelloni.* As had been the case in the first few years of the century when invasion and political mayhem had driven a tidal wave of *farse* across the great opera houses of Italy so now a species of *bitter comedy* drew breath and *opera seria* beat a hasty retreat. Masked by Verdi, serious operas by his rivals dropped like stones from the billboards and in their place the mid-century took to its bosom a cynical cargo of derision and doubt - confections like *Don Bucefalo*[i]*, Crispino e la comare*[ii]*, Don Checco*[iii]*, Le precauzioni*[iv] and *Tutti in maschere* [v] fell like manna on provincial ears and stayed there, irrespective of Milanese condemnation, until a watershed *fin-de-siècle* swept them all away.

As for Giovanni Pacini, though his year of confrontation had proved as pyrrhic as might have been predicted he was on stage again a few weeks later. His choice of plot went against all the canons of good taste: the general view was that *La regina di Cipro* was an attempt to take advantage of the disappearance of his Bergamasc rival. In point of fact Alessandro Lanari who commissioned the opera had paid for its text on 13 October 1845 - a date far too early for news of Donizetti's fatal illness to have reached him but purely and simply because *Caterina Cornaro* had been jeered on its traumatic first appearance in Naples[vi] - and as its composer's sad fate had now become common knowledge - the general opinion, whatever quibbles there had been about its timing and commission, was that Pacini's *La regina di Cipro* was tantamount to offensive behaviour.

In view of this fact, once the dire news had reached them, both composer and poet went to almost bizarre lengths to disassociate themselves from the earlier setting. Though dependant upon the same source [vii] they imposed a mood, an impetus that made the historical certainties of Donizetti's opera – especially its optimistic dénouement -

seem as remote as Mars, in their place offering a virulent tale of continuously amorous frustration in which the derision and cynicism of the day made its presence felt. The love duet of the blighted lovers in *La regina di Cipro* 'De'miei sospir, de palpiti' degenerates immediately into violence and an angry concertato with machine-gun versification and a fervid tension as if ideas and motifs are emerging so rapidly that emotional control has been lost or put aside. The *prima donna soprano* immediately takes the spotlight in this version of the tale: everyone in it is angry and aggressive while she is the epitome of distress. The enormously long and strenuous *Atto secondo* sums up the opera as a whole: it is nothing other than an extended *scena* for the distraught heroine ranging over the entire gamut of her famous voice: from the recitative 'Cadde tutta mia speme' - passing over the soothing intervention of the *pescatori* on the canal outside her window - to the cantabile 'Quest'orfana figlia che piange' with its cabaletta 'Alfin pietoso, amico' as she tries to come to terms with her destiny; a black *tempo di mezzo* inserts itself here as Mocenigo enters and threatens Caterina with the death of her lover unless she agrees to marry the King of Cyprus; as a consequence the act arrives at its conclusion with a climactic *stretta* - its dramatic nexus - her duetto with the tragic Gerardo in which she is obliged to renounce him to save his life. Furiously dismissed by her uncomprehending lover, Caterina's despairing 'Cessa, o Gerardo. ah tu non sai' 'Ma spergiura non son io'; his insensate rejection 'Va, ti scosta, a chi t'adora'; and her heartrending response, are, not only fine examples of textbook belcantist-revival pathos but an epitome display of the Pacinian willingness to throw every conceivable vocal nuance at the apotheosis of a celebrated soprano voice.

The heroine of *La regina di Cipro* is no *consorella* of Donizetti's *Caterina*. She engages in enormous duets with every major opponent, one after another, replete with the encyclopaedic contents of Pacini's unparalleled compendium of vocal ornament. She has two gigantic arie. In this *dramma lirico* the composer took every possible advantage of Erminia Frezzolini's fabulous timbre to write arias of exquisite anguish (a mood not at all present in the preceding triad) to which he even augmented on its revival in Naples with the same primadonna. Above all, *La regina di Cipro* is an opera in which a protracted and engorged vocal line throughout ensures that the

audience shares both her despair and her exhaustion, An opera in no way a votive offering to the fainthearted.

*

La regina di Cipro proved no less an achievement than the three huge scores of 1845 but made only too clear that the mid-century crisis was about to become a *mid-life crisis* for its composer. La Frezzolini[viii] would be almost the last of her line. Rarely in the future would he have such virtuosity at his disposal, such a capacity to underpin every single vocal command, her stupendous stamina combined with an apparently fragile timbre made her the supreme operatic *vittima* in Italian opera at the very apex of a national lyrical investment in such a role.

If he was now to face competition on a daily basis - if he was now progressively to lose status - it was primarily because his operas became undone from within. He could no longer rely upon the inner support his art demanded.

Imaginatively presented, staged, and costumed *La regina di Cipro* opened at the Teatro Regio in Turin on 7 February 1846 following Verdi's *Giovanna d'Arco* which was hissed. Erminia Frezzolini was pelted with flowers when she appeared side-by-side with the enchanted composer at the final curtain. He had dedicated the score to her. The opera had fifteen repetitions, but its revival proved contentious, even flawed, this score too became a disputed property. The composer's insistence on being his own agent was beginning to pay sour dividends - even in the face of such a benevolent impresario as the enlightened and enterprising Lanari. Initially at least it had revivals only within his catchment area of Lombardy, the Veneto and Modena, with the one key revival in Naples,[ix] but once freed from this jewelled circuit found greatly extended support in the wider world. The popularity of this opera was remarkable in a country like Portugal, in Latin America it held-out for more than a decade (even perhaps manifesting itself obscurely in Paris in 1856 in French – it is far from clear) With some twenty revivals in Italy, though it put the opera of the great Bergamasc completely in the shade, is has yet to be revived anywhere in the twentieth century and beyond.

A premature withering? Not one of his subsequent theatrical offering would have the reception it deserved.

The hiccup took no time to arrive. With the concurrence of this same Florentine impresario and a libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, Pacini's *Elnava ossia L'assedio di Leida* was doubly stillborn, creating problems equally for its poet, impresario and maestro and resulting only in two neglected complete manuscript full scores on the shelves of the Fondo Pacini in his sanctuary of Pescia.

Where was this *Elnava* intended to appear? For which theatre? At the end of 1846 Lanari wrote to Pacini to say that "*the censura was asking for modifications and he was returning the text of Elnava to Piave for correction*." [x] But to which censors was he referring? A week or two later - early in 1847 Piave himself wrote to the composer explaining that he was still at work, that "*L'assedio di Leida"* had been delayed to his regret, but asking him not to be discouraged "*anche fra Piavetto e Pacinone abbiamo ancora a far qualcosa di buono*" [xi] A few of the celebrated librettist's more endearing terms are scarcely imaginable in reference to any other maestro - could an "*adorabile Verdinone*" ever have been contemplated?

By April 1847 discussion of the casting was underway and *figurini* had been prepared. [xii] And then? Nothing at all. [xiii] The two manuscripts in the Fondo Pacini add to the puzzle. The first of the two (mostly in Pacini's hand) is dated 1847 as can be expected; the second is a completely new version, fully autograph, written – as the manuscript makes clear - in 1859. It seems that Pacini has found time to rewrite the whole score anew in his mature sophisticated vein, passionate, fluent and florid, as taxing as any other large-scale melodramma in his long career. More protracted, more imposing, with a greatly enhanced orchestra and with the grandiloquence then filling the Italian theatre but with the same plot and text even if greatly modified (by the composer himself?) [xiv]

Where did he intend to stage it? How could a composer still in popular demand afford to write the same opera twice and then leave it on a shelf? These are mysteries that will remain central to this composer. How many scores did this workaholic take-up, elaborate and then discard? He claimed *one-hundred* operas from his pen. Perhaps, in a final analysis it was not a complete exaggeration?

There is the briefest of codas to *Elnava*. Our composer judged the highly successful *L'assedio di Leida* (La Scala, 4 March 1856) [xv] by the schoolboy he once glimpsed in

the refectory of the Naples Conservatorio to be "*puerile*". On this one single occasion he had found himself on the same wavelength as Giuseppe Verdi!

As usual, in moments of crisis, Pacini returned to the past. The projects for the rest of the year were a journey back to the world of his parental old men. He had received a commission to compose the incidental music for a production of Sophocles play *Edipo Re* (*Edipus in Kolonos*) having been second choice as *maestro compositore* for a prestigious recreation (though it is doubtful if he knew of his *second* place), a grandiose production to be mounted especially magnificently in the fabled Teatro Olimpico of Vicenza. The original intention had been to use a score by Mendelssohn conserved in the Royal Library in Berlin but for reasons undisclosed the idea was dropped. [xvi] No one seems to know quite how or why Pacini was chosen to take his place (not only was Mendelssohn discarded but for more obvious reasons of safety so was the idea of lighting the ancient structure with gas lamps) But there would be illuminating consequences in the choice of composer - neither the enterprise in toto, nor the cast, nor the antiquarian concept was to the taste of everyone or it would appear judging by the local press but against all the odds it was Pacini who came out best…

He had been required to supply a *sinfonia* and five choruses one of which should incorporate a tenor solo, a musical intervention upsetting poetic purists while delighting those who found antique drama declaimed by specialists in archaic costumes to be a bit too effortful for popular consumption (the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* commented sourly that "*La musica…fece tirannna della poesia*" which was no doubt true)

It was a high-profile proposition however. Angelo Mariani was to conduct an augmented orchestra drawn from local talent to which an undeterred Pacini asked for an additional six cellos and four more brass, while offering to help with the actual preparation.[xvii] The role of Edipo was to be declaimed by the celebrated actor Gustavo Modena no less - Pacini is excessively polite about him in his memoirs - not entirely endorsed by the local press ("*Il Modena omise molti pezzi e recitò male gli altri…*"[xviii]) but gave a special puff to Francesco Ciaffei (the tenor) who both sang and spoke the role of Eupompo. [xix] Meanwhile indulging luxuriously in self-effacement in respect of his own contribution. He need not have been so modest, there was general praise for his six pieces and their impact on the antique surroundings when the prima took place

on 18 September 1847. Even if rather quirky, his contribution – based on the simple metrical forms he believed to be Greek which had swum tantalisingly before his eyes ever since *Saffo* - was considered to be worthy of the event and won genuine applause. Though the clamour of his added brass put the ancient building at risk this *Edipo Re* was a success. His score was published. Gasparo Spontini, a composer highly appreciative of decibels, in succession repeated the music and choruses at a concert performance in Berlin which won Pacini a cross and yet another ribbon for his buttonhole. Pacini, genuinely moved by the action of such a touchy compatriot later wrote a Messa di Gloria in honour of Spontini which was sung at Jesi when a bust of the latter was unveiled.

The opera that shared its birth pangs was equally antique and as confrontational though with a totally dissimilar scale and implications. It had been planned at exactly the same time. In the late autumn of 1847 he set out for Naples, in Rome *en route* presiding over a revival of his 1838 oratorio *Il trionfo della religione* in the Sala del Campidoglio. Some of the text of the new opera was in his portfolio and it is certain that sections of *Merope* were dashed-off in moments of reflection between the Papal Capital and the Capital of the Two Sicilies. A plot "*Vecchio come Noè"* [xx] with a vengeance (Cammarano claimed the text of his Merope was based on Voltaire with an input from Metastasio, Alfieri and Scipione Maffei)[xxi] but as its symbiotic origin owed so much to *Edipo Re* its composer decided to give each of the principals of the new venture an Olympic way of singing: "*A Merope destinai il canto appassionato; ad Egisto il canto energetico e concitato; a Polifonte il canto represso, dissimulato. Ciò mi occupai di fare, lusingandomi di ottener lode"*[xxii]

All of which may have been amusing to contemplate; even would win him praise in antiquarian circles further north - but for Naples was frankly suicidal. The Teatro di S. Carlo was not a place in which to try out anything vocally unprecedented.

As was to be expected Pacini's *Merope* got a mixed reception when it opened on 25 November 1847 but the opera was not in any way whatsoever the *fiascone* he would have us believe. According to his memoirs only the "*rondeau final…eseguito divinamente dalla celebre Barbieri*" was applauded and the opera "*non venne più riprodotta.*" [xxiii] All of which is complete and utter nonsense. A more accurate account was printed in the *Gazzetta musicale di Milano* which itemised all the plusses

and minuses of this operatic blockbuster: Gaetano Fraschini's aria was badly received and discarded after the first night; no one seems to have liked Francesco Gionfrida as Polifonte (who was almost certainly thrown by his "*canto represso*") but the overwhelming Marianna Barbieri-Nini had a completely unblemished *furore* with her "*canto appassionato*" from one end of the opera to the other and not just with her *aria finale*.

This *Gazzetta* notice is especially revealing about the prolific maestro himself: "*Pacini often starts out wonderfully promisingly but is addicted to changing his mind, his tempi, his keys and his themes with too rich a profusion of ideas that only very few of his pieces come to a proper conclusion.* Such faults, if this is what they were, led to the celebrated apocryphal conversation that Donizetti is supposed to have had with Rossini: the Bergamasc is reputed to have said that it was shame that Pacini "*did not know music*" to which the *pesarese* is supposed to have replied: "*What do you mean, a shame? It is lucky for us otherwise no one would be able to resist him!*"[xxiv]

Merope suffers from too much declamation, from too many people standing in the middle of the stage holding forth, but the well-worn plot is not without a certain statuesque *andamento* and Pacini's score has real dramatic potential.[xxv] It survived its flawed prima, even gained momentum, was given twelve times before Christmas and ten more times in the new year. Though not a wild success elsewhere it was certainly not "*non più riprodotta.*" Six revivals have been traced, one of them in Rio de Janeiro and another in Malta (in 1866)[xxvi]

Its true impact can be gauged by the following rabid exchange between Mercadante (absent in Venice) and his improbable friend Francesco Florimo, an effective witness to the decline of Neapolitan musical propriety in the years when the operatic flower that had bloomed under an enlightened Bourbon monarchy was already withering:

> *"Il tuo veritiero resconto dell'esito del Merope, che perfettamente si trova d'accordo con quello del nostro Tomaso (Persico) ci ha fatto piacere mentre questi giornali qui di Venezia, gridano vittoria, entusiasmo, capo d'opera e cose simili, e provano che l'invadenza di quell ciarlatano è stata communicata per mezzo di denaro, a tutti questi banditori dell'efimera gloria di quest'imbecille vecchio compositore, che reso da smodata brama di Gloria, scrive quattro Opere in un anno e distribuisce il guadagno agli adulatori, a giornalisti, a danno dell'arte e del suo vero interesse – Lo stesso accade qui con Verdi…La Gerusalemme ha fatto fiasco a Parigi, mentre qui si stampa sfacciatamente furore."*[xxvii]

Other rabbits (pace Mercadante) were ready to be pulled out of the hat. Very different in shape and size. *Ester d'Engaddi* was partially under way even before *Merope* had reached the stage and full of the lofty sentiments and vocal restraints that were appropriate to its distinguished literary source (a play by Silvio Pellico). Both the composer and his poet Francesco Guidi had been commissioned to repeat their success with *La regina di Cipro* at the Teatro Regio of Turin, Pacini traversed almost the whole length of the country to the Piemontese capital city at Christmas with the score of *Ester d'Engaddi* almost complete under his arm, but immediately was embroiled in an acrimonious dispute with Alessandro Lanari which simmered persistently up to curtain rise. Three weeks of rehearsal were accompanied by heated correspondence, misunderstandings and a persistent huffiness on all sides, which communicated itself to the cast. The composer was indignant because he had been promised Erminia Frezzolini and had tailored his music accordingly (an impasse recurring yet again for this composer) too late he had found that she had "*taken herself off to Russia*" and he had Eugenia Garcia in her place. As she was now a mezzo-soprano - as on earlier traumatic occasions - he found himself obliged to recast all the music of the title role. Being French[xxviii]and congenitally vulnerable to changes of temperature she immediately fell ill.[xxix] The opera – scheduled for 12 January - had to be delayed and Donizetti's *Don Sebastiano* was rushed back instead; when she reappeared *Ester d'Engaddi* had a royal prima (on 1 February) but she was in such poor voice that it was immediately taken off and *Sebastiano* once more returned to grace the stage. A search was organised to find a replacement; Emilia Dielitz, a German soprano, learned the Frezzolini version at high speed and *Ester d'Engaddi* began again on 12 February, the warm reception for Dielitz encouraged Garcia to recover her voice and from 4 March onwards she sang three performances until the season closed. All this reduced the composer, poet (and the costume and wigs department of the Teatro Regio) to a state of depression and confusion, so pervasive indeed, that the composer insists in his memoirs that with *La regina di Cipro* he had abandoned "*Lo stile declamato*" of *Merope,* when what he actually meant was this particular accolade had in fact been reserved for *Ester d'Engaddi.*[xxx]

Indeed Guidi's poetry did not invite experiment. Teething troubles only encouraged routine and playing for safety. Pacini tapped a vein of formidable sobriety. The opera is notable for its tremendous *cori,* while Ester's dying *scena* (she has been poisoned among a series of operatic clichés) is really very moving - the composer in his state of desperation fed into it music of genuine depth and feeling. The critics were sympathetic; it was not a failure but had only one revival. Lanari resurrected it in Firenze in 1851 with an inferior cast. The inevitable dispute over ownership of the score put paid to any further interest (including that of the composer)[xxxi]

Discord of an unmusical kind was now to be imminent. Six weeks later Pacini was on stage again but the brevity of the staging was not the fault of any impresario or cast. Hardly had he set foot in Venice when insurrection broke loose. He was putting a final polish to his politically sensitive *Allan Cameron* on 17 March 1848 when a revolt freed the two patriots Daniele Manin and Niccolò Tommaseo from the prison into which the Austrian authorities had thrown them. His opera appeared on the stage of La Fenice on 21 March, the very next day was proclaimed a *Governo Provvisorio* with Manin as *Presidente.* In a matter of hours the *cittå lagunare* was in a state of total chaos. (Pacini waspishly describes its citizens as being "*somewhere between hope and timidity"*[xxxii])

Where he stood in the matter is not known for sure. His memoirs give a coolly disingenuous account of the troubles: he maintains that he was recruited to head a company of volunteers to defend the San Marco sector of the city (an honorific title of "Major" in the Urban Guard of Viareggio conferred on him earlier being his only qualification) which turned out to be a linguistically inaccessible and inebriated rabble including many Croats – whose antics were completely decorative as they had no weapons (though they raided the famous Armoury near the Doge's Palace and came out with halberds and an operatic array of medieval pikes and breastplates) and no inclination to take part. In among an unfunny disorder [xxxiii] he managed to compose overnight a laudatory *Ronda della Guardia Civica*[xxxiv] which was sung between the acts of the second performance (23 March) of *Allan Cameron* with himself in the chorus.

This opera fitted the occasion perfectly (except perhaps for its happy ending). The plot was a throwback to Verdi's projected *Allan Cameron* of 1843 based on a "Scott-

derived" Parisian confection covering the flight of Charles II of England from the Roundheads. That particular '*Allan Cameron'* was based on a Gallic travesty by Pierre-Auguste Callet and Javelin Pagnon (1841) which claimed to be translation of Scott's 'Woodstock or The Cavalier' (1826) [xxxv] but Verdi's hankering after the potential and kudos of Victor Hugo put paid to the project: after insisting upon changing its title to "*Cromwell"* and trying to insert at least an echo of Hugo's play of 1827 into the second act, he jettisoned the entire project in favour of an uncomplicated *Ernani* with Hugo in undiluted ascendance.

This left the "*Allan Cameron"* project to fall into the hands of Pacini. Five years later on it made its appearance in Venice. The maestro was happy to rejoin Piave once more and on his home ground but needless to say there were problems both before and after the new opera reached performance. He had been offered the tenor Domenico Conti for the key role of Carlo but his out-of-tune singing had just sunk the unfortunate Antonio Buzzola's *Amleto*, [xxxvi] only with gritted teeth had Pacini allowed him to sing at the *prima*. The second night he was replaced with Raffaele Mirate who joined Annetta De la Grange and Felice Varesi for two disorderly nights in front of an audience in full disarray – grinding out political chants, whooping anything deemed to be inflammatory, flag waving, standing on seats with riotous applause and with a cheering only coincidentally due to the opera or its representation on stage.. On the third night the opera was removed and the theatre closed.

Thus *Allan Cameron* vanished. At least, initially vanished. Pacini almost forgets it in his memoirs. Its true *prima* came three years later in that same theatre on 11 January 1851, very much longer and now in 4 acts with much the same cast as had been intended with Felice Varesi (who must have felt at home in a kilt again after *Macbeth*); that of the fugitive Carlo sung once again by the Neapolitan tenor Raffaele Mirate, but with one notable change - Annetta De la Grange who had sung like an angel in the disorder of 1848 had been replaced in by Teresina Brambilla, Verdi's first Gilda and the wife of Amilcare Ponchielli whose Editta proved no less spectacular. [Two months later this same team would emerge as the starring trio of *Rigoletto* born on that stage at the end of the same season] but Pacini's opera became a popular success and had eleven performances. Replete with romantic imagery, rousing choruses, bagpipes (fortunately off stage), and an immensely imposing *finale primo.* The final act was full

of invention and ended with a remarkable vocal stint for the prima donna. Whatever its tumultuous genesis this *Allan Cameron* brought no dishonour to its composer.

It was a revival in Modena that put a term to its survival. Some five months later, on 12 July 1851 *Allan Cameron* was staged again, this time at the Teatro Comunale in Modena with Mirate once more in his royal role. No one can imagine, even for a moment, that Pacini could leave any score of his untouched for five months. And so it proved.

The libretto for this Modena edition makes much of the fact that Pacini staged the opera himself and the impresario's dedication to the Duca di Modena, Francesco V, really goes over the top:

"... ho divisato di far rappresentare nell'anzidetto Teatro l'applauditissima Opera ALLAN CAMERON, dell'illustre Pacini, e d'invitare lo stesso Compositore a dirigerne la esecuzione, perchè questo suo felice ultimo parto musicale consegua maggiore universale suffragio, e quindi più brillante successo."

But irrespective of his *applauditissima* status the illustrious Pacini had made radical changes to his music. A new broom had swept away practically all the pieces that had been so applauded in Venice. Pacini has now opted for a full-frontal dramatic surge and spectacle if not at all Verdian in its political stance. The major protagonist is now the tenor; though the Modena *primadonna* was none other than Fanny Salvini-Donatelli (of *Traviata* fame to come) she has lost her ecstatic *aria finale* so eminently suitable to her Violetta-voice as well as her key place in the plot; [xxxvii] the Roundheads, so prominent earlier, are now almost silenced; (their impressive Act IV chorus eliminated and Cromwell demoted) and much of the romantic disorderly colouring of the first versions of the opera (noises-off, ruins, stormy seas) discarded. There is a new *cantabile* for Allan and two reworked duets; the momentous *finale primo* (at the end of Act II) has been re-articulated to rival the finale primo of *Rigoletto*; the coro is ever-present and the whole opera is shorter, bolder, rejecting emotive deviation - the orchestra enhanced and the *finale ultimo* deprived both of sentiment and heaven. Huge changes: no filial devotion, no vocal athletics, all replaced by a grandiose *insieme* to make a final curtain of truly imposing dimensions; Charles II (Carlo) is no longer shuffled-off ignominiously behind Editta's skirts and upstaged as in the earlier versions

of *Allan Cameron* (as in real life perhaps) but on his feet at the end in the centre of a triumphal tableau in a rainbow of glory.

Who supplied the amended text? Almost certainly the composer himself. What supplied the impetus? It can be laid at the feet of political dissent. Pacini had failed to recognise the dangers of insurrection to the art he defended. The opera, set in 1651 was to strike a positive chord in 1851 - a message of encouragement to the beleaguered *status quo*. That particular message, as we know well fell on deaf ears (especially in Modena). One of Pacini's more rewarding scores had been laid at the feet of political reaction. It had one more revival at Verona in 1854[xxxviii] and then vanished for good. [xxxix]

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[i] Antonio Cagnoni, 1847

[ii] Luigi and Federico Ricci, 1850

[iii] Nicola De Giosa, 1850

[iv] Errico Petrella, 1851

[v] Carlo Pedrotti 1856

[vi] *Caterina Cornaro* (1844) was the last new Donizetti opera to be staged in his lifetime

[vii] *La Reine de Chypre* by Jules-Henri de Saint-Georges and Fromental Halévy had been staged at the Opéra in Paris in 1841. This source was acknowledged in the printed libretti

[viii] Erminia Frezzolini-Poggi (1818-1884)

[ix] Kaufman op cit 143-4. During the Naples revival of *La regina di Cipro* on 10 October 1846 the composer was heaped with praise for *"having restored the antique virtues of bel canto*" indeed the Naples cast was truly superlative with Frezzolini, Gaetano Fraschini and Pietro Balzar at their finest and with many items of the score especially retouched. Caterina's heart rending *aria finale*, passing from tragedy, to hope to ecstatic prayer has been recorded under the aegis of Opera Rara in London

[x] Letter from Alessandro Lanari to Pacini of 20 November 1846. *Cfr* Marcello De Angelis (a cura): *Le cifre del melodramma: L'Archivio inedito dell'impresario teatrale Alessandro Lanari* (Florence 1982), 333. Details of the argomento e sceneggiatura of *Elnava* are contained in Cassetta 9.4cc 1-4 of this archive, which is conserved in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze

[xi] Letter from Francesco Maria Piave to Pacini of 9 February 1847. Fondo Pacini, Pescia. Letter No. 1408

[xii] Marcello De Angelis op cit 337. No.150. Correspondence between Lanari and various others on this projected opera by Pacini continues until 16 April 1847 and then ceases completely

[xiii] In 1853 the *recto* of the first printed edition of the libretto of *La traviata* at La Fenice lists a copy of the libretto for a *L'assedio di Leida* by Piave, with music by Pacini for sale. Was the opera intended for Venice? If so it came to nothing.

[xiv] The earlier of the two manuscript scores, both in upright folio: (1.D. 17/18), a copyist score with autograph corrections in two volumes is titled *Elnava* (with "*ossia L'assedio di Leida"* added on the Prologo). The later manuscript: (1.D. 14/15/16) is titled *Elnava* (only) and is wholly autograph in three volumes; it is dated by the composer at the end of volume 16 : *"Fine dell'opera li di 5 ottobre 1859: compiutto il lavoro"* (sic). Piave's manuscript libretto of *Elnava* (in folder 2.6.10 of the Fondo Pacini at Pescia)is heavily overwritten by Pacini himself, this overwriting being principally relevant to the second of these scores.

[xv] Libretto by Domenico Bolognese.

[xvi] Mendelssohn's permission may have been sought but he died that year.

[xvii] The orchestra for this *Edipo Re* was already very large and strange, with a vast chorus, a huge doubling of wind instruments (plus a *serpentone,* but no high strings!) the composer supplies a very conservative *compte rendu* in his memoirs (op cit 97): the theatre, built in 1585, must have been as much at risk from sonic vibration as from the gas lamps. But there were lyrical rewards, Ciaffei's *romanza* 'Edipo, o misero', despite its gloomy text, delivered in the fourth intervention of the chorus, was very elegantly constructed, a most beautiful melody, and excellently delivered

[xviii] Gino Nogara *Cronache degli spettacoli nel teatro olimpico di Vicenza dal 1585 al 1970* (Vicenza 1970), 25

[xix] The other roles (all spoken roles) were as follows: Rosalind Caruso (Giocasta); Tommaso Pomei (Creonte); Luigi Braccini (Tiresia); Luigi Forti (unSacerdote); Massimo Vedova (un Corintio); Napoleone Colombino (un Pastore); Ernesto Rossi (un Nunzio).

[xx]. He had, maybe, noted the dramatic possibilities of the plot as early as 1829 at Turin when a revival of his *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* (which he attended) had been accompanied by Antonio Cortesi's ballet 'Merope', a ballo eroico in cinque atti (with music by Luigi Viviani). Any attempt to stigmatise as "*retro*" Pacini's taste for "classical" plots is remarkably blinkered: ("The hallmark of Italian Romanticism was precisely its rejection of the classical past") as if operas like *L'esule di Roma, Belisario* or *Poliuto* (not to mention *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei*) had no current application or relevance. *Merope*, *like Gli Orazi e i Curiazi* or *Virginia*, enjoyed an enthusiastic championship by the leading librettists even in Verdi's heyday. A more acute understanding of the role of tradition in the Italian theatre is basic for an appreciation of librettistic choice in the primo Ottocento.

[xxi] His preface to the printed libretto for the S.Carlo is brief but certainly one of his most engaging

[xxii] Pacini op cit 102-3

[xxiii] Ibid 103

[xxiv] *"Guai se conoscesse la musica! Nessuno potrebbe resistergli."* *Cfr* Dario Della Porta (a cura) *Dentro Donizetti* (Bergamo 1983), 224. Though many times quoted, the precise origin of this dialogue appears never to have been traced

[xxv] It is not a coincidence that the décor of *Merope* was by Antonio Niccolini the architect of the S.Carlo

[xxvi] Kaufman op cit 144-145. (South American revivals are difficult to determine as they were usually undertaken by touring companies with stagings in theatres and cities where chronologies are poor or non-existent, for this reason especially the number of revivals of an opera like *Merope* may well be greater than those recorded here). Many reliable scholars, have, however, been quite happy to reprint Pacini's mock modest dismissal of his own work

[xxvii] *Cfr* Santo Palermo *Saverio Mercadante* (Fasano di Puglia1985), 255. Letter from Mercadante to Florimo of 7 December 1847. At this date Mercadante, one year older than *"quest'imbecille vecchio compositore*" was increasingly conscious of his rapid decline, his three next operas: *La schiava Saracena* (1848), *Medea* (1850), *Statira* (1853) would all fail. The letter reveals the furious antagonism that was the background to the genesis of Pacini's *Stella di Napoli.* It has to be read side-by-side with the appallingly hypocritical letter he wrote to Pacini on 11 February 1867 after receipt in Naples of the latter's 'Sinfonia Dante' and one of his string quartets:
"Pregiatissimo Commendatore, Il nostro archivista cavalier Francesco Florimo mi die subito parte del prezioso dono che Ella si e compiaciuta fare alla Biblioteca di questo Real Collegio, della sua grande partizione Sinfonia Dante ...quella freschezza e vaghezza d'idee sempre figlie del suo inesauiribile genio, di modo che l'ho rinvenuta opera ben degna della rinomanza dell'autore e dell'altezza del soggetto che ha impreso a trattare.... Gradisca percio gli attestati della mia inalterabile stima e riconoscenza...Il suo devotissimo ed affezionatissimo S.Mercadante" Ibid 299-300

[xxviii] The cast also included a gallic Prosper Dérivis as Jefte who proved more impervious to cold

[xxix] Eugènie (Eugenia) Garcia (1815-1880) was the wife of Manoel (Manuel) Garcia and thus sister-in-law both of the defunct Malibran and of Pauline Viardot (whose range and style she attempted to rival). She had begun as a light soprano but in Turin was undertaking mezzo-soprano roles thus Pacini had to effect some downwards transpositions with deleterious effect to the ensembles and orchestration of *Ester d'Engaddi*. De Angelis op cit 289 (Letter of F.Guidi to Lanari of 6 February 1848). The substitution of Emilia Dielitz involved further adjustments to the title-role.

[xxx] Pacini op cit 105. *La regina di Cipro* had, of course, preceded *Merope*. Such misinformation is a *sine-qua-non* of *Le mie memorie artistiche* but the muddling of the sequence of his operas (due probably - quite simply - to faulty memory) has some justification in that *La regina di Cipro* in some measure does revert to his "*prima maniera*" a quality reflected in the praise of *La regina di Cipro* by the Naples critics for its "bel canto" credentials.

[xxxi] There was always trouble extracting music from operas commissioned by the Teatro Regio, but Pacini's abandonment of this opera forthwith, of an opera with very marked qualities and paralleling his dismissal of *Merope* (though the latter had a better fate), indicates the onset of a kind of fatalism in the face both of the relentless commercial hostility of the Verdi/Ricordi partnership and of theatrical ill-fortune. These factors he attempted to put-aside solely by reliance upon his incredible

ability to produce score after score, but in due course even this philosophy and resource began to flag. In the event the publisher Francesco Lucca, Ricordi's rival, acquired the rights for *Ester d'Engaddi* but even then it failed to make a reappearance…!

[xxxii] Pacini op cit 98

[xxxiii] He describes (Ibid) the bitter skirmishes between the patriots and the Austrian soldiers as "*piccole scaramucce*" (little farces) adding "*some of them got thrown in the canal and some got stabbed"*

[xxxiv] Michele Girard and Franco Rossi *Il Teatro La Fenice* (Venice 1989), 186 give this cantata the title of *"Inno alla Guarda civica*"; while Pacini's own title is certainly correct, his statement in his memoirs that it was sung at the prima is incorrect as Mirate was among the soloists. The author of the text of the *Ronda* - the hot-headed 23-year-old Dalmatian political activist Federico Seismit Doda (1825-1893), born in Ragusa (a member of Pacini's corps of volunteers?) is certainly his most unlikely collaborator in all his long list of poets. Pacini characteristically could not remember his name properly:*"Il carissimo amico Federigo Schmit"* he calls him [Pacini op cit 101] being especially misleading of course

[xxxv] *Cfr* Julian Budden 'The Operas of Verdi Vol 1' (London 1973) 140. Budden, who has not identified the source, doubts the claim of the authors, adding, in a footnote "Assuming, however, a confusion between the two Charleses, ie Charles II and the Young Pretender, *Allan Cameron* could be seen as a remote descendent of *Waverley*"

[xxxvi] Antonio Buzzola (1815-1871). His *Amleto* had been staged at La Fenice on 24 February 1848

[xxxvii] She retains her splendid Act I *cavatina* but is otherwise restricted almost entirely to duets. Maybe Pacini subsequently felt guilty, as in his memoirs he goes out of his way to give her an unexpected boost *"…Salvini-Doniatelli, il cui talento emerge ancora…non che quella di Editta, con plauso universale nel mio* Allan Cameron*, nella primavera* [sic] *del 1851*" Pacini op cit 119

[xxxviii] On 7 February 1854 at the Teatro Filarmonico of Verona, once again with Salvini-Donatelli in the role of Editta, but this time *post-Traviata* with some of her florid music re-instated (or so it would seem). It nearly had another revival in the interim: in point of fact Rossini had written to Pacini on 22 October 1851 proposing that his protégé Nicola Ivanoff (1810-1880) would like to sing in *Allan Cameron* in a projected appearance at Palermo at he end of the year: "*Egli vorrebbe fare il suo debutto nella tua opera Opera intitolata Alallan* (sic) *Cameron sempre che tu la metessi in scena*." In the event, despite Pacini's influence ("*Tu sei meritemante idolatrato a Palermo*") this opera was not revived in the Carnevale, Pacini rapidly assessed the poor vocal condition of the Russian tenor – Ivanoff was desperately out-of-voice and failed badly in a restaging of *Maria regina d'Inghilterra* whose role of Fenimoore he had created. The humiliated tenor left Palermo in a huff, closely followed by the composer
Cfr LIM catalogue 62 (Lucca 2010), item 72

[xxxix] Not entirely for good as the aria finale for Editta 'O d'un re martire' from the original version of *Allan Cameron* was one of the most successful items in the selection of arias etc in "Paventa insano" ORR236 (2005) a very fine compilation CD published by Opera Rara at its very

apex. Sung by Annick Massis (with Alan Opie) its brilliance then attracted almost the greatest attention

Chapter Seven

"Il convulso anelito di un ingegno già esaurito"

No more contrary, frustrating, difficult or distressing years from the mid century to the end of his life could ever be imagined, yet in many ways they proved the most heartening. At the beginning all went well: Pacini's popularity with the management of La Fenice survived the troubles of 1848. This was reassuring, he was "*second to Verdi"* it seems. When the 1850-51 season came up for discussion the *Presidenza* insisted that if the maestro from Busseto could not come and compose Pacini should be approached without delay. It was a rare affirmation: "*Non vi sarebbe altro maestro dopo il Verdi che il Pacini di un merito, e di un fama corrispondente alla scene nel nostro Gran Teatro."* [i]

Alas, after *Rigoletto,* Pacini's courage and patience would be tested to the limits. His marriage and family have passed almost like a blur in this account of his life, reduced to tiny figures in the distance, waving repeated farewells and hailing his infrequent returns as if he was a half-forgotten comprimario singer permitted one brief chant of glory. His second wife died in 1849 [ii] leaving him a daughter Giulia named after the famous *contessa*[iii] and due to become his favourite child. He married again that same year and had three more children who would preside over his legacy together with their mother Marianna Scoti soon to emerge as the most personable and persuasive of all his three wives.

There can be no doubt that he was a devoted family man - peripatetic demands notwithstanding and quasi-unique among the operatic gratin nearly all of whom suffered a cold hearth. He would share a heartening domesticity with this large family paused only by the disparagement and disappointments of a musical career and sustaining him to the very end.

For the moment there was no interruption whatsoever to his frantic activities. In 1849 he had published *his Principj elementari di musica e metodo per l'insegnamento del Melo-Plasto* one of the more fundamental of his didactic offerings to the world outside. It cannot be said to have been more than *pasticcio* learning however in that its teaching was adapted from earlier French essays on musical notation through the use of figuration – most notably by Galin and Chevé refurbished by Philippe de Gaslin in the first decades of the nineteenth century,

but it did him credit in that a popular composer was willing to apply his mind to such technical dispensations. Otherwise his compositional nous continued at its usual hectic pace, possibly he began writing an *Alfrida*, certainly he started writing a *Belfagor* which did not appear for a decade but whose malefic subject-matter may well have been a snide comment upon the tricking and treating of an ambitious music establishment threatening the future of every composer in the Italian peninsula.

His opera *Zaffira o La riconciliazione* followed swiftly upon the *rifacimento* of *Allan Cameron* at Modena. No one can say that it was a momentous score - leaving as it did no trace on the music of its day or upon any reliable documentation. Its source was obscure, [iv] its cast modest, and it was composed jointly in tandem with his *Malvina di Scozia* that took flight five weeks later in the same city. With a libretto by "A. de L" one of the many cyphers of the *marchese* Achille de Lauzières-Thémines to ensure a suitably aristocratic distance *Zaffira* was staged at the Teatro Nuovo in Naples on 14 November 1851 and came and went without a ripple, a *melodramma lirico in tre atti* notable only for the curious relationship it would have with its genetic twin. This would be a very odd affair: to all intents and purposes *Malvina di Scozia* with a libretto by Salvadore Cammarano was a work in another dimension – a world apart - announced to the press portentously on 1 October, followed on 8 November by another notice stating that composition had been completed, *Malvina*'s wilful overlap with *Zaffira* – an utterly incomprehensible dichotomy - was an epitome example of Pacini's compositional sophistry out of reach of any musical philosophy then, and indeed now.

A commitment to Verdi and *Il trovatore* must have been the real reason that Cammarano decided to save time and energy and revamp his anti-establishment *Ines de Castro* set by Giuseppe Persiani in 1835 for an enthusiastic Pacini, in this way bringing back to life a banned tale of royal conspiracy and blood-letting that never failed to charge its audience with extremes of emotion most especially when under permanent ukase by the censorship. With a change of setting from a torrid Portugal to a placid Edinburgh, its title-role role now Malvina, her powerful rival now become Morna, Princess of Ireland and (with the aid of Varesi's discarded kilt and baritonal timbre) recreating her distraught husband as Prince Arturo son of an unidentifiable King Malcolm of Scotland,[v] he was able to re-launch a severely

dramatic confection not only avoiding sanction but supplying a favoured maestro with an argument in complete contrast with *Zaffira* and its modest train of domestic abuse. From conception *Malvina di Scozia* was a mega-score with all sorts of challenges, its *Introduzione* with *a banda approaching from afar* - a *ballabile* – Celtic harps twanging and covey of women banging tambourines and clansmen skirling bagpipes (inherited too from *Allan Cameron*) not only attention grabbing but setting the scene in the most scenically imposing way imaginable and more-or-less mandatory in view of the taste for antiquarian kitsch on the part of the "*Signor maestro Comm. Pacini."* That bagpipes were improbably in existence in ninth-century Scotland was unlikely to trouble the audience at the S. Carlo (only their din and unholy distraction) but a more-or-less essential factor for the maestro.

Cammarano proposed other novelties too and also from the start. Arturo's *entrata* was a *brindisi* - a pair of bipartite strophe with a choral bridge passage: 'Se voce rimbomba' and 'Se in armi s'avanza' each divided and concluded by the refrain:

'Libiamo alla Scozia
Libiamo al suo Re!'

underpinned by an ensemble of Bards.

This *tragedia lirica* went even further than Pacini's previous essay in folkloric excess with Highland dress obligatory, an orchestration relying upon innovative instrumentation and all its roles put to premium acting skills far beyond the norm (thus militating against easy revival). In complete contrast with the streetwise *Zaffira* the *pseudo*-arcadian versifying of *Malvina di Scozia* was a feature: a bold coro for example opens *Atto terzo* with Cammarano's lapidary

Nefando eccesso, empio inaudito!
I tardi posteri fremer farà.
Da questa Reggia inorridito
Il nuovo sole fuggir dovrà.

set magisterially by the composer, and the act coming to a dramatic climax with as verbose a scene of despair, dismay, and sheer lachrymose indulgence as anything to be expected of any other terminating *quadro* of the decade. As in *Ines di Castro* its heroine has been given a *veleno* but Malvina's demise is much more extravagant than that of Ines, her farewell as protracted, discursive and formidable a showpiece as any to be heard at that date. Opening with the declamatory 'Ove m'aggiro? Fra gli estinti?' followed by the cantabile 'Giorno

di gioja è questo' and then by no less than *two cabalette* set wide apart: first the violent 'Oh qual tremenda furia' after which cathartic outburst, Malvina – discovered by the courtiers in a dying condition – caps the whole (after the stretch of dialogue that is a regular feature of Cammarano *cabalette*) by an exceptional slow cabaletta:

Quelle lagrime scorrenti
Versa qui…sul petto mio…(ad Arturo)
Questo amplesso...e questo addio
Serbi ognora…il tuo pensier

Ti conforta…I miei tormenti
Lascio in terra…e un fragil velo
Ma non moro, vado il Cielo
I miei figli a riveder…

whose accents might well serve as the actual farewell of the poet himself.

Irrespective of such literary felicities and the tragic scene above, in a bizarre *jeu d'esprit* the impish composer seems to have deliberately underlined - *played games* is certainly the term. - with those aspects of *Zaffira* that could be crossed with those of *Malvina di Scozia* - two operas conceived for theatres, audiences, and a material reality with quite different implications.

Zaffira has been incarcerated by her gloomy husband; Malvina has been poisoned by a jealous courtier, both emerge in distress from a "*luogo sepolcrale*" or "*camera sotterranea*" in dishevelled attire: "*pallida, si avanza lentamente*" in the case of the former "*si avanza correndo*" in the case of the latter. In the most surprising way, however, and presumably for his own entertainment, not only has Pacini endorsed their comparable fates with a similar setting but has found a cynical concordance between the two heroines *parodying* his own music to do so (!)

Quasi-frivolous *désinvolture* of this kind is, perhaps, in a final analysis, the most enduring quality of the so-called *catanese*. An independence of mind, a solemn disbelief in the portentous role of composers of a kind that enabled him to keep his head in a brutal operatic round that obliged a Donizetti to rail against his fate, destroyed a Bellini and brought a Verdi into acrimonious dispute with his money-minded sponsors.

This *Malvina di Scozia* represents something of a *statement* both for its terminally-ill poet and its capricious composer. Staged for the opening of the

carnevale at the S.Carlo on 27 December 1851 with an unexpected cast with no *primo tenore, Malvina di Scozia* was a tremendous success. An indomitable Adelaide Cortesi (*Medea* many times over) carried everything before her; Adelaide Borghi-Mamo (as Morna) and Achille De Bassini (as Arturo) were no less than stupendous and the opera surged confidently into the following year. Cammarano died in July 1852. This opera would be the last of the major offerings for a stage he dominated the poet was actually to witness - yet this collaboration with one his most prominent maestri has not yet been revived in a viable form - only long ago in Malta and Brazil.[vi] It would seem that even now a major Italian romantic melodrama without a tenor remains unthinkable a prospect

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The first mention of the work that would emerge two decades later – a Pacinian *postscript* or so it is described – the so-called "*posthumous*" *Niccolò dei Lapi* [vii] emerges on 16 July 1852 the day before Cammarano died.

It is in a letter that announces one of the most protracted examples of lyrical regeneration ever recorded in which the composer shows himself to be as good a culinary manipulator as the *pesarese* in reheating operatic dishes according to the appetite of the audience concerned. The letter was from Rossini

"*Tu sai che solo dopo le tue sollecitudine ho indotto Niccolino ad eccettare le condizioni le più discrete che sia possible. Il tenore non ha calcolato che il piacere di riprendere la sua carriera con un opera tua e da te stesso posto in scena; più ancora si è ritenuto fortunate di aggiungere al suo repertorio un tuo nuovo lavoro, come che edificherebbo anche un macigno. Io ti prego adunque di preparare con Niccolino batterie inespugnabile, affine trionfi il vero merito. Io ho diretto di contare sul tuo senno e sul tuo genio; non dimenticare che è un tuo costante ammiratore e amico che ti prega.*"[viii]

The tenor in question was his beloved protégé Nicola Ivanoff (sometimes *Niccolò*, more usually *Nicolino*, but this time *Niccolino*) who had been having a vocal crisis but now had been induced by one or another of these maestri – almost certainly the former - to accept a contract to sing at Palermo in the coming season.

The "*batterie inespugnabile*" to be written by Pacini was to have concerned a new opera with a starring role for Ivanoff called *Rodrigo di Valenza* that would never see the light of day.[ix] All sorts of unwelcome complications would

intervene. In the first place the impresario of the Teatro Carolino of Palermo was the cantankerous retired tenor Giovanni-Battista Verger who promised to make difficulties from the start: Rossini had already shown doubts about "*Verzè*" (almost no Italian of the day was able to spell his name properly) and within a week of Pacini's arrival a bitter conflict came to light that would end in *Rodrigo'*s abandonment. There were three possible explanations for this: Verger did not relish the Pacini/Rossini/Ivanoff consortium that could threaten his autonomy; he was not convinced (and a retired tenor would probably be almost impossible to convince) that Ivanoff had recovered his form;[x] or that he did not like the proposed libretto (Stefano Fioretti or whoever it was given as poet, was no Cammarano).

Both Pacini and Ivanoff had duly arrived in Palermo in October. Ivanoff won applause on one evening only after which he was "*voiceless.*" Much of the season was under threat as a result. By the beginning of December Rossini was writing to calm his incensed Niccolino who promptly departed. At the start of 1853, *Rodrigo* "*già quasi ultimato"*[xi] or so Pacini says - was officially withdrawn and the composer began to revamp or re-model its music to a new text called *Lidia di Brabante* (with a soprano as its star). To what extent it was indeed a *brand-new text* is now hard to determine: *Lidia di Brabante* too contains a *Rodrigo* and it is probable that the earlier project - both text and music - were simply subsumed into the later score. What is certain, however, is that this "*Lidia di Brabante"* (in cursive on the only extant manuscript of which Atto I survives[xii] that Pacini left behind with his friend conte Lucchesi-Palli) would be the first tangible item in an operatic daisy-chain that would end up as *Niccolò dei Lapi* six years after his death.

As far as Pacini's memoirs are concerned this was the end of the matter.[xiii] Another project of the same place and date proved equally inconclusive. During this Palermo visit and quite out of the blue, he was approached by his birthplace to write a *cantata sacra* for the mid-August Catanese festival of S. Agata, an "*Ester"* being proposed with a text by Mario Torrisi. In the event, he would write a *Giuditta* with verses by his friend Giuseppe Raffaele Abate whose text he had in his portfolio and seems to have offered to Catania as a practical alternative. For undisclosed reasons *Giuditta* fell victim to serious objections and was rejected. [xiv] But though a notably discarded initiative of this miserable year

Pacini's *Giuditta* would have a posthumous destiny - unperformed until after his death in 1869 it was staged in the Piazza Università of Catania and like *Saffo* would become one of the very few works by the composer to survive into the twentieth century. The last performance of *Giuditta* was in 1926. [xv]

Once returned to the mainland after this abortive visit he threw himself into a project that had been simmering since *Malvina*. To add to his annoying Sicilian experience this would end in unmitigated disaster! A disaster all the more disturbing since this year of 1853 would demonstrate unconditionally that Verdi was taking Italy by storm. [xvi]

With a *scrittura* for La Scala scheduled for March and with that gilded. caravanserai in one of its far-from-infrequent interludes of institutional chaos Pacini discovered that he had no idea what opera he would be composing even as late as two months before its scheduled *prima*. He was contracted to write an opera in a vacuum.

How did he get into such a situation? Only a proudly vaunted reliance upon *superior inventive powers* could explain his uncomplaining acceptance of an absurd and unrealisable timetable but as a result of La Scala's bad faith he was left with *two weeks only* to compose *Il Cid* whose music – inevitably - would have to be culled from all sorts of discarded and forgotten scores.[xvii] Achille de Lauzières had been preparing its libretto for more than a year (the preface to the printed text which spells the poet's name incorrectly - is dated "*Firenze 1852*") [xviii] but this was no compensation as it was not in his hands. Luckily neither the plot nor the dramatic structure of *Il Cid* offered any real surprise but in a competition for sheer incompetence *Il Cid* would win first prize.

Because of the disorder the cast he was given was a mixed bag with no real star; at the *prima* no one - neither vocal star nor orchestral musician - knew their music. The composer supplied a score in time but with rehearsal barely begun the opera was thrust on stage on 12 March 1853 in a blaze of confusion in front of an outraged audience. *Il Cid*, in spite of Pacini's desperate recycling emerged as a shrieking mockery inaudible in a cacophony of barracking. The glorious *marcia-trionfale* of its *finale primo* was nothing of the kind; the fatal first act entitled "*L'insulto"* was taken at its word. Only this part appeared before the indignant spectators - Pacini refers to *Il Cid* as "*il disgraziatissimo."* He had

shaken-off the dust of Milan during the shambles leaving his unwanted child to fend for itself and it succumbed to whistles.[xix]

1853 would be a year when everything failed. The shelved *Elnava* proposed or re-proposed for Venice did not materialise. [xx] He passed a bitter summer in the bosom of his family at Viareggio then went to Naples in the autumn to stage his *Romilda di Provenza* which had benefitted from an unwonted genesis – the sole positive benefit of all the preceding failures. But his evil star remained in the ascendant. The librettist for *Romilda,* Gaetano Micci, was in no way an asset, indeed a very dubious choice - a text supplied to Francesco Chiaromonte the year before by Micci, *Giovanna di Castiglia* (1852), had enjoyed a truly memorable dismissal:

"*Scene inverosimili, lunghe, senza interesse e senza passione, caratteri con poco verità e condotto poco felice*" [xxi]

a rebuke that would have deterred anyone but this particular maestro. It says something for Pacini's stoicism (or cynicism) that he could contemplate writing music with such a blighted poet at his side.

He had sent a vocal score of *Romilda* to Teresa De Giuli-Borsi in advance, she returned it with a touching note to say that she had just had a failure with Verdi's *I Lombardi* and did not wish to be the cause of a second fiasco. This did not dissuade the maestro. Pacini was greatly moved by the humility of the great Verdian soprano and persuaded her to keep her contract with the S.Carlo. She won his gratitude, *Romilda di Provenza* had earned his full attention and it did in fact contain some exceptionally brilliant music – unusually elaborate and considered music compensating for an unpromising text; the instrumental interludes in *Romilda* are highly dramatic and effective and the three acts give the impression even – and very unusually - of having been composed in one single breath with a through-composed drive that evaded the audience on first hearing. There was a full house at the S.Carlo on 8 December 1853. The first act went flawlessly, the *finale primo* in the form of a duetto sung by Gaetano Ferri and Teresa De Giuli was cheered to the echo with the composer and everyone else called out of stage. A *furore* seemed to be on its way but Acts II and III became subject to a law of diminishing returns, the audience response tailed-off and was progressively feebler and feebler with a sort of spreading disenchantment that flattened any impulse to respond. Pacini had made a similar

miscalculation with other operas written for this particular stage where novelty was received with surprised incomprehension. Though there was no scarcity of vocal pyrotechnics throughout he inserted an instrumental subtlety in the place of the pounding resonance then bringing Verdian audiences to their feet. He had. even essayed a "*finale nuovo"* in this opera (a 6/8 larghetto instead of the anticipated "*rondò"*) which simply disconcerted his admirers who trailed off glumly into the night. Most of the reviews complained of failed expectations. *La Fama* insisted that too much singing took place *off-stage.*[xxii] *Romilda di Provenza* was compared not only unfavourably with *Il trovatore* that had captivated Naples understandably but also with *Saffo*, *La fidanzata corsa* and *Bondelmonte:* "*La musica non è tale da farci scordare essere parto della stessa mente"* was an especially wounding jibe. That it was never revived might imply that this opera was a failure; in fact it was nothing of the kind. On the second evening before a less superficial audience the house rallied, "*barbaramente eseguita*" at the *prima*, *Romilda* was now hugely praised. Pacini was called before the curtain after each of the acts. True Gaetano Fraschini was ill-at-ease ("*freddo e non canto con amore*") but his highly enjoyable extinction to the sound of a lute ballad off-stage was affecting and inspirational and there was overwhelming applause for De Giuli's singing in the *primo tempo* of the (earlier) disdained *finale ultimo* - which on the second night brought the house to its feet. Pacini had made brutal cuts.[xxiii] Alas it did not save the opera which vanished forthwith.[xxiv] Why did he never attempt to revive it? He had made huge efforts to write music that would endure. Other operas have had unhappy receptions but survived as Verdi would witness. Was his wasteful *throw-away* behaviour a species of resignation or protest at the malign destiny of composers - which view - after such a year might well be the case? Until these operas are brought again before the public no one will have an answer.

To follow came a further check - quite as unjust a check - in respect of the quality of the music he offered. His outrage (understandable enough) at the evaporation of the 4000 lire proposed for an ephemeral *Elnava* did not prevent La Fenice from proposing a Pacinian return to its famous stage. Piave put himself out to help. There was no special reason for their joint project to give any trouble. The opera was destined for the carnevale of 1854 a contract having been signed in August 1853. He had selected the subject himself: Sir Walter Scott's 'The

Pirate' of 1822 whose heroine, impossible in Italian called "Ulla" – a *Norn* (soothsayer) referred-to in the Scott novel as "Norna" - and thus impossible for this composer had been given short shift by the maestro and she was re-baptised Cora immediately "*cambierò il nome di Norna in quello di Cora*…" he said extremely promptly.

But the *La donna delle isole* that emerged - set in stormy waters around Scotland with a neat text by Francesco Maria Piave - hit an unexpected reef. With its music copied, parts prepared and rehearsals begun, with its libretto approved by the Venetian censors on 18 November 1843 the contracted *primadonna* Augusta Albertini refused flatly to sing the title role. Finding that she would be obliged to be the *mother* of the "Pirate" in question (the oddly-named Clemente Cloveland) to be sung by Raffaele Mirate who was old enough to be her father she declined to take part. With no time to lose Pacini resigned himself to conjuring up another opera to take its place. *La donna delle isole*, despite the pain and expense of composition and preparation with some attempts at resuscitation the following year, was abandoned for good. [xxv]

The replacement - which Pacini referred-to in his memoirs as "*questo mio nuovo lavoro*"[xxvi] or equally unreliably as "*espressamente composta"* was a *lavoro* new in the sense only that it was new to performance. It was none other than *Lidia di Brabante* extracted from limbo in Palermo and given the more pungent title of *La punizione* - with the Florentine disorder of Massimo D'Azeglio's 'Niccolò de'Lapi' switched for the time being to Brussels. At this early stage in the evolution of the daisy-chain of operas, *La punizione* is a complex and vehement showpiece filled with the classic situations of pathos, despair, rage and injustice upon which Pacini would hang a lifetime of operatic endeavour.

It is impossible to know how much of the music of the dismantled *Rodrigo di Valenza/Lidia di Brabante* survived after arie and ensembles had been extracted for *Il Cid* but *La punizione* is now in three acts. There is a claim that Piave was the librettist for this new version but all that is certain is that Piave (who was paid for the libretto and acted as *direttore della messa in scena* a role he could never expect in his Verdian guise) extended the text and gave it a more compelling form. The change of title may have been simply a matter of theatrical *convenienze*: in the *Fondo Pacini* at Pescia there is a autograph note of its cast

with Rodrigo, Lidia, Arminio, Brenno, Paolo, Montosino, Maser and Amalia and stating quite clearly that it is the personaggi of "*Lidia di Brabante*, *dramma lirico da rappresentarsi nel Gran Teatro della Fenice nel carnevale 1853-54"*

Nor did this version have a brilliant *prima* on 8 March 1854. Framed by two Verdi operas and unable to benefit by any such context, some of *La punizione* sounded overfamiliar (according to the critics), no one except Augusta Albertini had a warm reception and everyone else seemed subdued. Albertini's strident behaviour may not have endeared her to the rest of the cast but the torrent of arias of really incredible substance of this opera must in any real context ensure survival. Despite fractured genesis *La punizione* is an especially important and complete music drama offered to posterity. Its heroine's brief recapitulation of a childhood song giving an indelible touch of sublime horror to the heartrending conclusion. Anticipating the Verdian *Otell*o, in Act II Scene 2, Lidia – alone in her chamber – preparing for bed kneels for her prayer to the Virgin and sings a *canzone* to herself 'Dormi, su via, bell'angelo/ E chiudi al sonno il ciglio' a lullaby in two quatrains [xxvii] a touching moment of childhood calm brutally scattered by sounds of insurrection outside and her frightened cabaletta 'La tua tremenda folgore' that Pacini set with great skill.

In the horrific final scene of the opera, however, as her father is led to the scaffold and embraces his child for the last time, the by-now demented Lidia responds to his farewell by repeating her simple *canzone* with an eerie dramatic frisson that is not only shockingly surrealist but stands out as an unforgettable marker among all the acclaim for a Verdian apotheosis.

A revival in Rome in February 1857 marks yet a further evolution and adds yet another poet to the list of those who may or may not have had a hand in this snowball of an operatic dimensions: this is Giuseppe Cencetti named in the printed libretto as *Poeta Direttore di scena.* By this time Albertini has become Augusta Albertini-Baucardé and is singing with her husband Carlo Baucardé as Arminio who has a new cabaletta, a new stretta with his wife, a new duetto with Rodrigo and some sympathetic extras by the maestro. [xxviii] The opera is growing. But in the interim there had been another version which is even more provocative. Following a plea by the Empress Teresa Cristina of Brazil, born princess of the Two Sicilies, daughter of Maria Isabella and known to Pacini since her childhood when he taught music to her and her sisters [xxix] he had sent a score to her husband,

Dom Pedro II. [xxx] Intended to be the opening commission for a proposed new Opera House in Rio, a grandiose structure to be built by Wagner's celebrated architect, Gottfried Semper. Now titled unequivocally "*Niccolò De Lapi"* the score is dated 1855 and inscribed "*Dramma lirico diviso in un Prologo e tre Atti dedicato a Sua Maesta L'Imperatore del Brasile in signo di profonda venerazione dal maestro…"* From this evidence it can be seen that *La punizione* has been yet again extended. This opera was never performed.[xxxi] Nor, alas, did the Semper opera house materialise.[xxxii]



Teresa Cristina Delle Due Sicilie, Imperatriz (Empress) of Brazil

The summer of 1854 saw convivial evenings with Rossini who was taking the waters at the Bagni di Lucca – protracted suppers that led at his instigation to an invitation to Pacini to take over the Direction of the Palermo Conservatorio following the departure of Pietro Raimondi. This Pacini rejected on the grounds of his prior commitment to the Court of Tuscany and his beloved school but his close contacts with Palermo were far from over as we shall see. [xxxiii] In the meanwhile another Emperor, this time Napoléon III, had made a figurative appearance in Pacini's Tuscan retreat. Apparently the sovereign had confessed to Lancellotti - then manager of the Théâtre-Italien in Paris of his emotion on falling prey to homesick nostalgia in the audience of of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* in unhappy exile in Rome. His wish was a command. A Gallic invitation to stage

the opera was swift to follow with the result that Pacini's holiday was spent on a momentous Parisian *rifacimento* of an opera that had never left the stage since its 1827 début. Extensive changes and additions to the text were commissioned from Achille de Lauzières (a Gallic exile himself[xxxiv]) in which a host of unctuous religious sentiments unknown to the original were inserted to please the Empress Eugènie. No less than seven new pieces were added to a score in which every single item had been revised, replaced or retouched over two decades. Each item was given a new gloss. This Imperial version was imposing as never before: more grandly orchestrated, more martial, more sentimental, a *grand-opéra* manqué more triumphal and heroic with every lachrymose situation reinforced to honour of the Imperial couple who would preside in State at the première. With a few favorites surviving intact for the august patron including the celebrated *duetti* 'Va menzogner' and 'La mia destra all'armi usata' firmly in place,' the Merovingian prince-turned-Arab- warrior Agobar retaining his celebrated cavatina ' Non è ver che sia diletto' [xxxv] reserved for the Emperor's delectation. Pacini arrived in the French capital in November 1854 and had a warm welcome from Gallic confrères including Adolphe Adam, Daniel Auber and Fromental Halévy and found himself with a cast that was outstanding

The term may be taken literally. Staged on 24 January 1855 Adelaide Borghi-Mamo who was singing the musico role of Leodato - the heroic Gallic general with manly moustaches and strong resistance to foreign intrusion – was found to be pregnant. A wonderfully elegant audience was overcome by giggles whenever she waved her sword and with the baby threatening to make its début - despite the opera's warm reception it was taken off after only four appearances.[xxxvi] With the grandiose, witty and spiteful notices to be expected this ultimate *rifacimento* of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* [xxxvii]was a success. Angiolina Bosio scored as Ezilda, Carlo Baucardé – the tessitura of his Agobar lowered and strengthened and thus more imposing than ever made a moving impression. Napoléon III took the *enceinte generalissima* in his stride and on the third evening presented Pacini with a diamond-studded *tabatière* with his cipher.

Though it would be a last truly high-profile *apotheosis* of this opera solong a staple of the repertory Pacini enjoyed himself in Paris for the first time, was welcomed tearfully by Giulia Samoyloff and his daughter Amazilia (both resident there since 1848) and less tearfully but with open arms by the Bonaparte family

(who regarded him as a Saint for his dutiful services to Paolina). He made his way back to Pescia early in February with well-earned satisfaction and the Legion d'Honneur.

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It was on his return for what would prove a fallow year that he determined to set-up his own theatrical agency. To market his own operas and act as his own impresario. The Verdi cartel, the ruthless control of the repertoire by increasingly powerful publishers impelled him to order his own affairs. He could have had no illusions about such an undertaking but the actual mechanics of his stage at Viareggio having opened his eyes and awareness to exploitation (among his surviving papers is much documentation) that encouraged him to take a step of this kind. [xxxviii] It lasted for some five years and had the unfortunate effect of preventing the survival of some later works, which, well-received on first hearing, were never heard-of again. Obliged to negotiate with the composer - impresarios simply did not bother, they were not prepared to share their *expertise* – their handouts and hard-headed monetary manipulation - with the author!

He had intended to set an opera for the S.Carlo called *Alboino e Rosmunda* this year with a libretto by Domenico Bolognese[xxxix] who held the post of *Poeta concertatore de'Reali Teatri di Napoli* but the *censura* had rejected the project while he was in Paris as a letter sent to him from Bolognese on 17 January 1855 makes clear. It threw him into utter confusion, the poet was furious at what he considered to be a dismissal of his text for perfectly trivial reasons. As a result *when* precisely the alternative choice of *Margherita Pusterla* was alighted upon remains a mystery. That Pacini chose the subject himself rather than Bolognese is certain, the plot had been under his nose since as early as 1845 when an opera with this Florentine subject by Domenico Maestrini had been given at the Teatro Alfieri in the Tuscan capital just one week after the prima of *Bondelmonte*.[xl] But neither the poet nor maestro appears to have been seriously committed to the project even at this very late date and tinkering with the music continued well into the autumn. The persuasion of Pacini that operas for Naples needed sparking-up – a mindset all too evident in most of his scores for the S.Carlo - seems to have impelled him to take the stately plot at its face value and he not only supplied music with a Florentine *tinta* (which meant unusual instrumentation) but also

with "*alcuni cori, formandomi un concetto dei canti del XIV secolo*" which might have succeeded anywhere else but certainly not in Naples.

Experiments were still continuing in December 1855 when he received an imperative letter from the *Sovrintendente* telling him that his opera would go on, not in Lent 1856 (for which he was contracted) but during the carnevale leaving no time to bring his compositional sorties to an adequate conclusion.[xli] Pacini did delay *Margherita Pusterla* long enough to ensure that his score had *some* credibility but preparation was incomplete when it was staged on 25 February 1856 so that - in memory of the blighted *Il Cid* - none of the cast knew their roles and few of the orchestra were quite sure what they were playing.

It was yet another fiasco, the house whistled blissfully almost all the time and the medieval polyphony fell on deafened ears. Though over three later evenings it went rather better the opera was doomed. As the score remained his own property *Margherita Pusterla* was never revived.

Begun so inauspiciously 1856 was a year of mixed fortunes. During a visit to Rome to revive *Medea*, Cencio Jacovacci not only offered to stage *La punizione* but commissioned no less than three further operas, they would emerge as *Il saltimbanco* (1858), *Gianni di Nisida* (1860) and *Il mulattiere di Toledo* (1861) all three of which would offer more evidence of his eagerness – if such evidence was needed - to renew himself. *La punizione* proved the happiest of auguries for these Roman projects; Augusta Albertini-Baucardé excelled herself and Pacini made note of further improvements he could make to the score. The city was always close to his heart; he wrote an oratorio *Sant'Agnese* with a text by Prinzivalli which he dedicated to Pius IX whose popularity was seeping away; he appears to have determined upon a further restorative offertorio and his summer at Bologna to supervise a *Bondelmonte* at the Teatro Comunale with Fanny Salvini-Donatelli witnessed yet another tribute to His beleaguered Holiness, a cantata in his honour sung in Bologna on 7 June 1857 with Antonio Poggi as its soloist. Pacini and Poggi each were awarded a gold medal, and Pacini in addition not only got a gold watch but was made a *cavaliere* of the Papal Order of San Gregorio Magno which he capped with a *miserere* for voices and strings sung at the Palazzo Governativo accompanied by a peon of praise from the press. The clouds having opened - from now on he wrote more and more for the church. Rome was worth more than one Mass.

Il saltimbanco would be as near this cynical maestro could get to an affecting score, a gentle tale, and the other side of the coin from the bloodbaths of more recent facture and only rivalled in his oeuvre by *Luisetta o La cantatrice del molo* of a decade earlier. Giuseppe Checchetelli had derived the plot from a *ballo di mezzo carattere* by Giovanni Casati set in seventeenth century France and a streetwise French comedy, far-fetched, compassionate, and even though well beyond his usual chosen range Pacini responded both with style and flair and showed himself to be a credible storyteller. With bizarre foresight he had changed its original title from *Il pagliaccio* to *Il saltimbanco* while Jacovvacci with an equally deft move changed the venue from the Teatro Apollo to the far more elegant Teatro Argentina,[xlii] delaying production so that the composer had the opposite situation to that which had led to the Naples fiasco giving him the chance to dash back to that city in the Spring with *Il saltimbanco* not yet rehearsed.

The excuse was a revival of *Lorenzino de'Medici* at the S.Carlo in a *rifacimento* so extensive that it counts almost as a new opera. With Piave's text partially rewritten (reputedly by Domenico Bolognese but Pacini certainly had a hand in it) *Rolandino de'Torrismondi* began as Piave had intended and then became progressively changed - most notably at the end of the opera where instead of boldly imbibing her poison poor Elisa (as she is now called) reads the letter revealing that she has been betrayed while taking little sips of the fatal concoction almost as an aside, without histrionics (no tormented gasp or interpolated *acuto*) as a result more poignant and compelling, a refinement capped by her expiry with one musical "sigh." Pacini, here, bowing to the new need for a realism unreasonably attributed to "*the Verdian years*" and now making great strides[xliii].

That same realism was the most compelling feature of *Il saltimbanco* whose last minute *lieto fine* - after so much sadness and despair - proved actually to find its spectators in tears. At once carnivalesque, fantastic and tragic, with more than an echo of the *Belfegor* [xliv] he had been writing earlier, a plot both snobbish and noble, the roles of Guglielmo and Lena were seriously touching. Elena Kenneth (the Scottish soprano Helen Kenneth – Pacini calls her "Kennet") had a personal triumph in this *Saltimbanco* as the "noble orphan" who has married a clown to the horror of her ducal father. A role which, though she herself repeated

once only (in Madrid) attracted a remarkable range of *primedonne* in a long series of revivals, including Fanny Salvini-Donatelli, Giuseppina Medori, Maria Lafon, Angelina Ortolani-Tiberini and Luigia Ponti dall'Armi. Pacini's own nephew, Pietro Giorgi-Pacini [xlv] sang the role of Guglielmo Belfegor at Cadiz the year following the prima.

His uncle generally had astounded his critics with this score, not only finding the *mot juste* for such colourful music, memorable tunes, and extraordinary choral writing, but with the whole opera replete with waltzes, circus ditties, and a riotously discordant *finale primo* among unexpected items as though he had recovered the form of the Monti *farse*. Those people who thought they knew his limits had a shock. At its prima in the Teatro Argentina in Rome on 24 May 1858 the press praised his "*genio*" at this truly unexpected addition to the repertoire, the whole cast was praised and applauded. *Il saltimbanco* was revived in most of the cities of Italy [xlvi] and had a joyous circuit almost everywhere it reached but not in Milan – wherever Ricordi presided it was not staged - and it failed too in Naples where his music now had few friends. But *Il saltimbanco* flourished under wider skies: especially in Portugal, Argentina, Corfu, Malta, Peru, Cuba, Russia and Turkey. Pacini had sold the score to Ricordi's publishing rival Francesco Lucca who "placed" the score without difficulty worldwide.

It is completely in character that Pacini dropped the wry, touching mood of *Il saltimbanco* immediately. Two months later he was putting all his energies into the realisation of one of his most wide-ranging religious works with nothing in common with his Roman triumph except for its *primadonna.* The initiative for the three-part opera/oratorio *La distruzione di Gerusalemme* seems to have come, appropriately enough from the Grand Ducal court in Florence - itself so soon to be destroyed. Stefano Fioretti had intended it to be an opera (the manuscript libretto in the *Fondo Pacini* at Pescia describes it as a *dramma tragico in tre atti*)[xlvii] but the dénouement may have dissuaded the composer – Romans, Arabs and Syrians vaunt their victory over the Jews but the latter pray for heavenly assistance and the Temple bursts into flames - the city of Jerusalem collapses into a pile of rubble, crushing the conquerors and ending at once far too prophetically for the Grand Duke as well as much too reminiscent of his *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei.*

In any event Fioretti had supplied him with a new text (in 1857) this time in the form of an oratorio, thus a religious *La distruzione di Gersalemme* was heard at the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence on 27 June 1858 in *due atti* only, its morning concert performance in aid of the *Società di muto soccorso* may have been the result of political discretion diluting its apocalyptic message. The editor of the 1875 edition of *Le mie memorie artistiche* gives the impression in a footnote[xlviii] that Pacini had not composed a third part, but the autograph score reveals that all three parts had been composed by 19 August 1857. At Florence the oratorio ended with lamenting Jews, while the condition of the manuscript reveals that Part Two was the last section to be set to music![xlix] Whatever religious *convenienze*, however, this oratorio was clearly tailored to alert his Florentine sponsors.

It was not the only religious offering to bloom this year, he revived *Il trionfo della religione* of 1838 as *Il trionfo della fede*[l] at Lucca, he composed a *Magnificat* for the *Grandi feste a Grotta di Castro*, he wrote a *Salve Regina* especially for the baritone Emilio Bianchi, and a full scale *Messa a quattro voci* for Leopoldo II[li]. Something more than simple withdrawal in the face of operatic mischance is indicated by this change of tack, especially as he became very close to the Abate Fioretti at this time, a priest who turned easily to the stage when circumstances beckoned.

This latter came now again to the fore. It was Fioretti, probably, who supplied additional verses when *Lidia di Brabante* re-emerged as *Lidia di Bruxelles* at the Teatro Comunale in Bologna on 21 October 1858 with an epitome rebuff as chaotic as any in the ever extending daisy-chain to which the opera belonged. The printed libretto is in an unbelievable state of disarray with blanks throughout (no *personaggi* and needless to say no librettist) the printing awry and there are crude signs of censorship - it may well have been that the text was under review until the very moment the curtain rose. [lii] It is unclear what music was played in any event; maybe it was a conflation of *La punizion*e with that version of *Niccolò dei Lapi* which went to Rio. Montosino is now called both Montesino or Montorino, a part of the text is missing, there is a new cabaletta in Act I Sc.9 while some verses have clearly been borrowed from the Roman edition of *Lidia di Brabante*. Pacini seems to have been able to foist this work on Bologna as "*new*" in a repetition of his Venetian claims for *La punizione*; possibly he had

supplied enough new music for this *Lidia di Bruxelles* to persuade Lanari of his good faith? No doubt Fioretti's cassock stood both composer and librettist in good stead in this Papal sub-capital. The cast was exemplary at least, the *primadonna soprano* was Antonietta Frietsche [Neri-Baraldi] soon to become an Austrian star of great vocal accomplishment [liii](Pacini calls her "*eletta giovane cantante signora Fricci*" and reports her earlier success in *Semiramide*) . At the age of eighteen she seems to have carried all before her, but even so, the opera vanished promptly and was never heard again under that title - in the composer's lifetime that is.

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[i] Conati op cit 278. This rare accolade measures Pacini's reputation in the period when almost all the pioneers of the *melodramma romantico* had gone or were about to go. Neither Mercadante or any similar high-profile aspirant was in the running, the pecking-order of composers to whom contracts should be offered was headed by Verdi, failing Verdi, Pacini should be approached, failing Pacini then Federico Ricci, then Mazzucato, then Muzio and then Pedrotti. A fascinating compilation of those composers then currently regarded as being in the swim

[ii] She died in childbirth and could be counted as one of the casualties of the 1848 insurrection. In 1849 the overturning of the Republican Government in Tuscany saw Pacini taking-up once more his civic duties as Gonfaloniere at Viareggio (he never makes it clear *when* he became commander of the Civic Guard or why he was ousted during the republican interregnum) a post which continued until 1853. At the same time the restored Grand Duke of Tuscany nominated him for the post of Director of the Music School of Florence then a part of the *Reale Academia delle Belle Arti*, as well as awarding him the cross of Santo Stefano which Pacini noted with amusement entitled him to call himself "Don Giovanni" (but it was improbable he was thinking of Mozart, he may have been alluding nostalgically to his *Il convitato di pietra*). He took his duties only too seriously but was no *fiorentino* and as a result encountered an inevitable resistance from all the established teaching staff. After three years of strife the Grand Duke tactfully re-nominated him Honorary-Director and soothed his feelings by giving him yet another cross – this time of that of San Giuseppe (by the end of his life Pacini had been endowed with the chivalric orders of all the more reliable Saints). Their sacred propensity supplies a clear explanation for their immediate withdrawal after reunification

[iii] By then in Paris

[iv] The opera appears to parody - with a great deal of dialogue in Neapolitan dialect at least *some* of the plot of *La prigione di Edimburgo* of Federico Ricci - but now with a happy ending. Its undoubted star was Raffaele Casaccia (c1805-c1890) as Gillotto, latest representative of a celebrated dynasty of *bassi buffi*

[v] Achille De Bassini (1819-1881)

[vi] Kaufman op cit 146-7

[vii] *Niccolò dei Lapi* melodramma tragico con danze analoghe in tre atti with a libretto by Giovanni Pacini, Cesare Perini and others was given its first official performance in the Real Teatro Pagliano of Firenze on 29 October 1873

[viii] Massimo Milo preface: *Rossini lettere* (Passigli Editore Firenze nd) Letter No.202, 206

[ix] Pacini was to go to Palermo to restage his *Maria regina d'Inghilterra* (on 30 October 1852) in which Ivanoff would repeat his Fenimoore as at its *prima* in the Teatro Carolino so many years before. He was also contracted to write a new opera which Rossini wanted to favour his protégé. In the event Ivanoff sang one Fenimoore brilliantly on the first evening but on every other occasion was "voiceless" ["*Non è più accolta con furore"* observed Pacini tactfully]. Thus the *Rodrigo di Valenza* in which Ivanoff should have sung the title role was changed to *Lidia di Brabante* (with its soprano lead).

[x] "*Verzè"* was not mistaken of course

[xi] Pacini op cit 110. Pacini adds "*ma avendo il Werger sciolto dal contratto il più volto rammentato Iwanoff, pel quale aveva scritta la parte di Rodrigo, senza darmene avviso, scritturando altro tenore…non poteva eseguire ciò che avevo composto…"* All this was very depressing for Pacini, evidence of his state of mind is cited [in] Bianca Maria Antolini *Lettere nel Fondo Farrajoli della Biblioteca Vaticana* [in] Ottocento e oltre: Scritti in onore di Raoul Meloncelli' Ed.Izzo and Strecher (Rome 1993), 92 *"…affermo di aver passato un periodo di tristezza e desolazione, pensieri sul giorno dei morti"*

[xii] But it has been crossed-out and replaced by "*Niccolò de'Lapi*" (by Pacini?) This manuscript is now in the library of the Palermo Conservatorio.

[xiii] In fact it was the beginning. Cammarano had suggested that Niccolò de'Lapi might be a good subject for Verdi in 1848. In 1850 Marianna Barbieri-Nini (letter dated 22 October 1850. *Fondo Pacini*, Pescia. Letter No.1157) had written to Pacini expressing an interest in singing a *Niccolò de'Lapi.* Her letter makes it clear that either the maestro had proposed the subject to her or that it was common knowledge that he had shown a willingness to set it as early as 1850 (which Cammarano's earlier interest in the subject no doubt confirms). Certainly the plot was in the air. Ulderico Rolandi in his *Musica e Musicisti in Malta* (Livorno 1932) confidently asserts that a *Nicolò de'Lapi* (sic) by Pacini was performed at the Teatro Manoel in Malta in the season 1850-51. There is, no doubt, the composer being what he was, a remote possibility that he could have been the composer of this opera but more plausibly Rolandi was mistaking Pacini's then posthumous score for that of Giovanni Bracciolini (1808-1852) whose *Niccolò de'Lapi* had first been staged at Pistoia (on Pacini's doorstep) in 1846, and which could well have been revived on the Mediterranean island - a well-known site for the exhumation of operatic corpses. The opera by Bracciolini may be nothing but a red-herring, its librettist, however, was the Abate Stefano Fioretti who was a crony of Pacini and will appear shortly as the librettist of his 1858 dramma tragico *La distruzione di Gerusalemme.* There may be more than a fortuitous link between all these people; as his printed libretto makes clear. Poor Bracciolini had taken great care to protect his libretto from rival composers which he reserved exclusively for himself. Possibly Pacini had planned to evade his proscription a fact of which Barbieri-Nini may even have been aware. As Bracciolini died conveniently in 1852, could this not in fact somehow have set-off what would become a snowball rolling towards a posthumous destiny? There is even the possibility that Pacini and the Abate Fioretti together had conspired to evade Bracciolini's rights by extracting a version

of his text as "Rodrigo di Valenza" (though the verses and plot of the various Pacini operas that would ensue differ notably from that of Bracciolini).

But this kind of dubious ploy is surely the reason why not one of the various versions of "*Niccolò dei Lapi*" that follow actually put a name to its librettist? In the end, however, it was probably Ivanoff's vocal collapse that put a spoke in their villainous machinations.

It was not the only codicil to this confused stay in Palermo. After Pietro Raimondi had given up his post as Director of the Palermo Conservatorio on 8 February 1853 the job was offered to Pacini, he refused on the grounds that "all his interests were in Tuscany" but indicated that he might accept if he could spend just six months of each year there, the authorities countered by suggesting *eight months*: but the offer lapsed. Later Mercadante suggested a list of composers including the *fratelli* Ricci but neither of these brothers was approached it seems. Eventually, in 1861, the post went to Pacini's pupil Pietro Platania who was appointed by a commission headed by his former teacher!
Cfr Ottavio Tiby *Il Real Teatro Carolino e L'Ottocento musicale palermitano* (Firenze 1957)n44, 159

[xiv] The subject of Judith and Holophernes was claimed to be symbolic of a desire to extract revenge after the depredations of the 1848 revolt and was consequently banned. One of the reasons advanced was that the "*célèbre maestro disdains to return to his native land.*" Was Pacini making a political stance? The biblical heroine Giuditta was openly taken to symbolise popular retaliation against a powerful oppressor, in this case it seems, against Carlo Filangieri, *principe* di Satriano who had combioned ruthlessness with a fervent loyalty to the dual monarchy at the time of the Sicilian uprising of 1848. He was openly identified with the *"Oloferne"* in question. Whether Pacini quite realised this politicising of his oratorio until the last moment is open to question but it may have explained his "diplomatic" absence as well as the suppression of *Giuditta* in 1853. Later, *Giuditta* may have been appreciated both on musical as well as on patriotic grounds. He was offered a gold medal in compensation for its original banning which he refused asking that its value should be given to an orphanage

[xv] Having been revived in Catania repeatedly: in 1878; 1881; 1898; and 1906

[xvi] With *Rigoletto, Il trovatore* and *La Traviata*

[xvii] Including some small sections perhaps from the abandoned Iberian *Rodrigo di Valenza* (Il Cid had the baptismal name of Rodrigo as it happens) and the opera was set in Andalusia

[xviii] De Lauzières had originally derived a plot from Corneille's Le Cid for Luigi Savi in 1834 (Teatro Ducale, Parma, for Pacini he had patched-it-up with some small "improvements" including an unwarranted tranquil dénouement) but he had taken the trouble to read Corneille's original

[xix] It should not be supposed that the score has no merits. An examination of *Il Cid* reveals many moments of lyrical beauty and it may well be a candidate for revival in retribution

[xx] La Fenice had made out pecking order of composers to whom contracts should be offered for 1852-3: it was headed by Verdi; failing Verdi, Pacini; then Federico Ricci; then Mazzucato: Muzio; and lastly, Pedrotti. In the belief that Verdi would not accept Pacini was contacted and offered 4000 lire for a new score; he returned to *Elnava* and rewrote several small sections but Verdi decided to fulfil his prior place; Pacini withdrew *Elnava*, and Verdi wrote *La traviata* with the results we all know. At least *Bondelmonte* opened the Fenice carnevale, and had twenty-one repetitions. *La traviata* had six

[xxi] *Gazzetta di Genova* 12 February 1852

[xxii] *La Fama* 104 (Milan 29 December 1853)

[xxiii] "Extensive modifications" were reported in *La Moda* of Naples (which added to the *La Fama* review): *"Seconda sera: Modificazioni alla lunghezza delle spartito; esecuzione migliore. Applausi alla De Giuli, Ferri, la Borghi - chiamata del maestro del primo, secondo e terzo atto. I pezzi piaciuti sono il duetto finale del primo atto (Ferri e la Borghi), la cavatina della De Giuli al secondo, e il primo tempo del finale, l'aria finale di Ferri al terzo atto e il duetto delle due donne (De Giuli e Borghi)"*

[xxiv] Kaufman op cit 147. *Romilda di Provenza* had the same fate as *Il Cid* it vanished in a way that is quite inexplicable

[xxv] *Cfr* Bianca Maria Antolini *La collaborazione tra Piave e Pacini nelle lettere della Biblioteca Nazionale di Roma* [in] Intorno a Giovanni Pacini ed. Capra (Pisa 2003).195-202

[xxvi] Albertini may herself have decided the choice of opera to replace *La donna delle isole: "La somma Albertini, cantante, il cui accento scende soavemente all'anima, fece in questo mio nuovo lavoro prodigi di valore, e sostenne, ad onor del vero, essa sola il successo dell'opera*". Pacini op cit 113. From this remark alone it may be deduced that he considered the score to be scarcely more than a project at this stage.

[xxvii] This was unmistakably noted by Verdi. Pacini's recapitulation of the *canzone* in Atto III, Scena ultima, trumps the later Verdian emulation

[xxviii] Baucardé was high in his favour after his starring Agobar in the revamped *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* for Paris of 1855

[xxix] The Empress Teresa Cristina Maria (1822-1889) was the seventh daughter of Francesco I Delle due Sicilie and sister of Ferdinando II. Pacini had given her music lessons in his Neapolitan years. As a father with many children he was especially beloved by the princesses in respect of his gaiety and propensity for making jokes. A very singular piano teacher obviously! It is thanks to her that he was made a Cavaliere of the *Ordine della Rosa* of Brazil in 1852 in respect of the birthday cantata she had commissioned for Dom Pedro II - *L'Alleanza* - which had been sung at the Imperial palace of Petrópolis some thirty miles or so from Rio a year earlier

[xxx] Dom Pedro had wide musical interests, at least to the extent of having had as his mistress (for a short time only) the redoubtable Rosine Stoltz - Donizetti's contentious super-star in *La Favorite*

[xxxi] The manuscript of this *Niccolò De Lapi* (sic) was exhibited at Rio in 1962. In two volumes, it was shown in the exhibition "*Musica no Rio de Janeiro Imperial 1822-1870, Biblioteca Nacional, item No. 23"*. Appended is the following comment: '*não nos constatenha sido representada no Rio de Janeiro*" ("but it does not seem to us that it was presented in Rio de Janeiro"). No librettist is indicated. Some of Pacini's operas had been performed in Rio, notably *La regina di Cipro* in 1852 and *Merope* in 1853, but the theme of *Niccolò de' Lapi* concerned as it is with insurrection and political execution may not have been welcome in the capital in view of the contrary state of monarchies in Latin America. According to Tom Kaufman, however, who quotes a Brazilian source: "*The opera had to be cancelled owing to the departure of the prima donna Rosina Laborde"*

[xxxii] Various authorities including Chilesotti and Grove VI have reported that Pacini also composed an *I portoghesi nel Brasile* (with a text by de Lauzières) in this period and given a prima at Rio in 1855-6. This opera is non-existent. [*Cfr* Kaufman op cit 149 n17]. It is not impossible that Pacini may have been invited to write such an opera but nothing further supports the claim. The confusion may well be with his honorific cantata '*L'Alleanza*' [P94] whose content may be interpreted as dealing with this topic. Dom Pedro never had enough money to build the opera house of his dreams, and refused help from the rubber traders whose reliance upon slavery he was determined to terminate

[xxxiii] Pietro Raimondi had given up his post as Director of the Palermo Conservatorio on 8 February 1853; according to Ottavio Tiby *Il Real Teatro Carolino e L'Ottocento Musicale palermitano* (Firenze 1957), 159 n44. Pacini had refused the post as "all his interests were in Tuscany" but suggested - in mitigation - that he could accept the post if he could spend six months of each year there only. The authority countered by proposing eight months, this Pacini rejected so the offer lapsed. Later Mercadante – assuming Rossini's mantle - suggested a list of alternative composers including both Luigi and Federico Ricci neither of whom were actually approached it would seem. Eventually, in 1861, a commission headed by Pacini appointed Pietro Platania, a *catanese* maestro and his former pupil

[xxxiv] Achille de Thémines, *marquis* de Lauzières et Thémines (1818-1894) was descended from a noble family exiled during the eighteenth century revolution who had stabilised in the Bourbon Kingdom of Naples. Apart from many libretti he wrote reviews under the pseudonym of "Elias de Rauze" - an anagram of his name (and used several similar disguises). He eventually returned to France and died in Paris. *Cfr* Alexander Weatherson *Un exilé lyrique* [in] Donizetti Society Newsletter 115 (London, February 2012) 10-18

[xxxv] *Cfr* Giuseppina Mascari *La revisione parigina degli Arabi nelle Gallie di Pacini e le fonti monoscritte della Biblioteca comunale di Pescia* [in] Intorno a Giovanni Pacini op cit 161-176

[xxxvi] The baby was born in the next opera - when its mother was singing Azucena. It was a girl when a boy would have been more appropriate

[xxxvii] A few sources, some of them normally reliable, report that the title of the Paris version of the opera was "*L'ultimo de(i) Clodovei*" (Stieger for example with an incorrect date) but this appears to have been the heading of a leading article in the press. In fact it was staged at the Théâtre-Italien under its original title of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie*

[xxxviii] He had printed a letter-head proclaiming his "Agency" copies of which appear on letters and documents in the *Fondo Pacini* at Pescia. He used this letter-head until about 1860 and perhaps beyond but as with this composer, it was not maintained consistently, and seems to have fizzled-out in the disenchantment of the new decade

[xxxix] Domenico Bolognese (1819-1881)

[xl] Domenico Maestrini's *Margherita Pusterla*, with a libretto by a "D.Zuccagnini" had been staged at Pistoia in 1844

[xli] The composer, indeed, was even threatened with undisclosed sanctions if he did not supply his score in advance of the contractual time [*Cfr* John Rosselli *The opera industry in Italy from Cimarosa to Verdi* Cambridge 1984) 87 and np 192] a very commonplace abuse at the time but scarcely conducive to success on the stage

[xlii] The contract for *"Il pagliaccio",* signed on 29 August 1857 stipulates the Teatro Apollo but both theatres were a the disposition of the longtime Roman impresario and devotee of innovative operas: Vincenzo ("Cencio") Jacovacci (1811-1881)

[xliii] Both *Stella di Napoli* and *Romilda di Provenza* ended in a dramatic diminuendo, Verdi had not been needed in any way. Such "*realism*", if only relative in such melodramatic plots, usually manifested itself by cutting-short the florid transports of the prima donna - especially at the end of the opera - hence the predictably amended *finali* of Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* and *Caterina Cornaro.* [Nothing in *real* life actually justified such a tabloid pruning]. But if this was the *rationale,* Pacini generally elected to repeat the formula first essayed in his *Carlo di Borgogna* where the aria finale is not so much curtailed as shunted-back to an earlier stage in the plot and thus out of audience earshot leaving the stage free for a brutal termination. This was the case with his transformation of *Lorenzino de'Medici* into the retouched *Rolandino de'Torrismondi* (which had its prima at the S.Carlo): Act I saw few changes except for a new aria [and a quartetto which was an amplification of a former duetto] but Act II is completely changed, re-paced, re-orchestrated, though some of the original text remains there is a new *scena* for Rolandino who had a cabaletta added at the very last moment according to the manuscript score used for the performance, a new *concertato*, a new aria for Elisa, and the whole is capped by the hugely transformed *finale ultimo*. These changes were far from ensuring success in Naples

[xliv] The name of the *Saltimbanco* hero is Guglielmo Belfegor

[xlv] Pietro Giorgi-Pacini (1826-1882) was the son of Pacini's sister Giuseppina, he had a successful baritone career, his grand-daughter, Regina Isabel Luisa Giorgi-Pacini (1871-1965) would become the most remarkable scion of the family: a celebrated lyric soprano in the Latin-American and Iberian world between 1895 and 1905, singing in Milan, Rome, Naples, Warsaw, Madrid, Lisbon and St. Petersburg as well as in London at Covent Garden, she eventually through her marriage to Marcelo Torcuoto de Alvear, became the wife of the President of Argentina (in 1922). Her repertoire, alas, did not reflect her neglected forebear, she sang Mozart and Massenet with great success and was a fine actress with a superb limpid lyric soprano.

[xlvi] Pacini's *Saltimbanco,* in the 1858-9 season, had the honour of being the last opera to be staged at the Teatro La Fenice in Venice before its unification with Italy.

[xlvii] It had been in the composer's hands for two years, apparently awaiting a suitable moment for setting to music, Fioretti had sent it to him on 10 December 1856.

[xlviii] Pacini (1875 ed) op cit n121

[xlix] Simple avoidance of the technical problems of staging the third part of the *dramma tragico* may have been responsible. Factually, Parts I and III of the autograph score of *La distruzione di Gerusalemme* in the *Fondo Pacini* at Pescia are in oblong folio; Part II is in upright folio - while this last is dated 19 August 1857 - almost a year before the Firenze prima. It is curious that another of his opera/oratorios: *Il carcere Mamertino* of 1867, should have gone through a very similar - if not quite identical - series of changes

[l] It was subsequently extended orchestrally into two parts (Ms copy dated 1859) Cast: Demonio (basso); S. Agnese (soprano). Chorus of Angels and Demons

[li] Autograph: Biblioteca del Seminario di Lucca

[lii] A copy in the library of the Bologna Conservatorio reads as follows:

LIDIA
DI BRUXELLES
MELODRAMMA IN 3 ATTI
PER MUSICA
DEL CAV. COMMENDATORE
GIOVANNI PACINI
DA RAPPRESENTARSI
NE GRAN TEATRO COMUNALE
DI BOLOGNA
L'autunno 1858
Bologna, Tip delle Belle Arti
A SPESE DELL'IMPRESA

Page 2 has a copyright notice (by Lanari), but pages 4,5 and 6 are blank. Otherwise the text of the libretto is not lined-up, omitting words and leaving gaps, and contains frequent "blacked-out" passages - some of them apparently due toan ongoing censorship in preparation for performance. A further copy in the Bertoccchi collection (362) has pages 4 and 6 blank but page 5 now has the cast including Luigi Walter as Rodrigo, Anonietta Fricci as Lidia and Giuseppe Limberti as Arminio and dates the plot as: "nel 1425" the setting as: "in Bruxelles e suoi dintorni"

[liii] Antonietta Fricci (Frietsche) though well known under her married name Neri-Baraldi (1840-1912) was unmarried at the time of *Lidia di Bruxelles* [she married in 1863]. She was famed for singing both soprano and mezzo-soprano roles

Chapter eight

"Nuovi tormenti e nuovi tormentati"

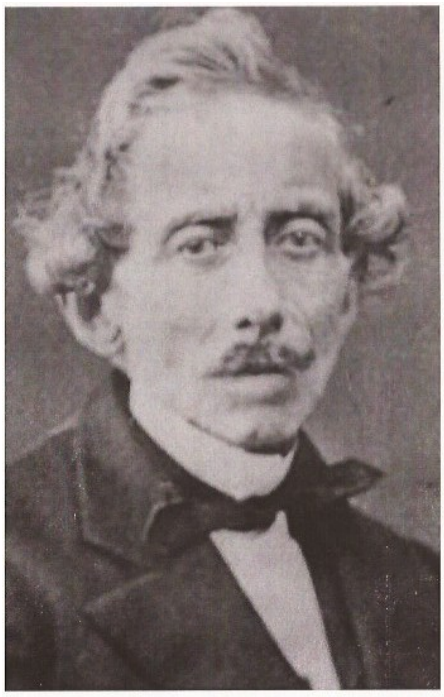
False starts and frustration would be the hallmark of his final years. The eclipse of the sovereign states of a divided Italy would put paid to any fragile protection he might have had from the winds of change - would put paid too to the need for a cultural identity in the various states so that the wave of *scritture* offered two or three times a year - the thirst for new operas for the traditional *stagioni* - now dried up. An operatic *terra ferma* ceased to exist. The certainties formerly under-pinning the musical objectives of the lyric stage fled, in most cases for good. An all-Italy audience began to emerge, less specific, better informed, and far more concerned with revivals than with innovation.

Pacini's persistence however remained. He rushed frenetically from one end of the peninsula to the other in the first months of 1859 to stage his *Il saltimbanco* in Turin, Venice, Naples and Palermo - with Piacenza alone bringing a rare boost to his ego. Though its carnival had consisted of nothing but an extended banquet for its local hero, his *Saffo* - like an exotic entrée - was given no less than ten ovations and he found himself crowned with a welcome gold wreath.

Much of this year was spent tinkering with *Berta di Varnol* – a further Piave collaboration that would prove contradictory; traditional in conception, improbably gruesome, set in seventeenth century Westphalia and impossibly verbose in contrast with the poet's severe texts for the all-conquering rival - yet another project for La Fenice before it could be staged the *nobile Presidenza* slammed the door in protest at Austrian provocation leaving Pacini to fend for himself. *Berta* was discarded: "*Quando il cielo lo permetterà*" said the composer in feigned resignation.[i]

These years, 1859, 1860 and 1861 were not years of easy existence for Italian operisti. Austria invaded Piedmont in 1859; Garibaldi landed in Sicily in May 1860 and was in Naples the following September; the first all-Italian parliament sat in Turin on 14 February 1861. Verdi – voting for Parma's annexation as an independent state - was given honorary citizenship in Turin. His compatriot composers, those resident in Italy that is, kept a low profile, with a weather-eye open for random commissions *pro or contro* the state of the country and its fate.

Pacini found himself in limbo. His cherished titles and orders of knighthood dropped into the side-drawer of his desk: [ii] one moment he had been Director of an important music school, the next he was unemployed. He read that he had been summarily dismissed from his musical posts in Firenze in a newspaper during a stop at an auberge *en route* for the Tuscan capital![iii] Such was this new unity for a swathe of the most talented. In due course an all-Italy sovereign would offer replacement honours and titles to the demoted but not much in the way of employment - in the case of Giovanni Pacini - without being unpatriotic or unrealistic regretting his "*augusto Mecenate*" [iv] and the vanquished Leopoldo II with whom he continued to exchange letters on musical topics.



The composer in his last decade

He would find refuge in revamping old scores, in 1858-9 rewriting his oratorio *Il trionfo della religione* of 1838 composed for Longiano and now (pointedly) retitled *Il trionfo della fede* [v] and offered to Rome - the one city whose foundations were sufficiently robust – or so at least he thought - whose operatic *scritture* would be protected from last-minute *door-slamming à la Veneziana* under heavenly ægis. He would not be mistaken. The contract was for *Gianni di Nisida*, an outsize summation of much that had gone before, its librettist Giuseppe Ccchetelli offering an argument taking to its heart almost every operatic set-piece then in vogue with enough Pacinian invention for several such scores - a busy confection whose pace and indulgence would supply enough bombast and

visceral excitement to excel any other of his apogee. Out of focus in every way but a declaration of faith in Rome.

Cencio Jacovacci had contracted the rising diva Luigia Ponti Dell'Armi and Pacini poured into his *Gianni di Nisida* all the wild children of his last years in a ruthless denial of Verdian concision: sprawling, with a kind-of wide-screen vulgarity, *Gianni di Nisida* was an opera the very antithesis of the narrowing operatic vision then emerging - a plot to frame a *super-bitch* soprano and tailored to a noisy score with cruelty its prime motivation as well as its saving grace. Restless, over-inventive, and perfectly representative of the untrammeled compositional surge that had long been his forte, this *dramma lirico in quattro atti*, though successful on first hearing would prove an unhappy portent. Its fate emblematic of much that was to come.

In the changed conditions in which he had found himself, cloistered within a papal enclave under siege, Pacini set himself immense tasks. This four-act marathon tackled so many issues, taking so many risks that its rumbustious prima tested the audience to the limits. Anticipating later verismo parameters with a colourful procession of overlifesize characters with huge voices in an excess of imposing melodies *Gianni di Nisida* took the spectators by the scruff of the neck. No confrontation missing, every kind of *scena*, duet, trio, *ballabile popolare* was featured including a momentous curse followed by a whispered *largo* - a noisy mid-term dénouement (the Act II finale) with no dramatic trick missing. It paid off. At the Teatro Apollo on 29 October 1860 every artist was vigorously applauded: Luigia Ponti fulfilled all the nastiness of a role so testing that she alone was willing to sing it (which she repeated on a subsequent staging) even if her on-stage suicide from the usual poison needed something in the nature of a papal dispensation to appear at all.[vi] She was supported robustly by Geremia Bettini in the title role, Davide Squarcia (a pacinian faithful who had earlier sung in *La distruzione di Gerusalemme*) Raffaele Laterza and Eufemia Barlani-Dini. All this major cast was fêted with warmth. *Gianni di Nisida* was an uncontested local success, worthy of the reputation of any composer, in among the big score pieces as impressive as any he was to compose so late in life.

But such a roaring début was far from ensuring any kind of shelf life. Its success alerted the opposition. Revived again in Rome in April 1861 with the

same prima donna it survived a change of cast [vii] but a further revival, to open the next carnival season at the Pergola in Firenze, failed abjectly, Pacini did not hesitiate to point to the reason. An insignificant ballet called *Il conte di Montecristo* had been cheered to the roof rafters but *Gianna di Nisida* was whistled unmercifully from the first notes. A *claque* prominently installed made it impossible to hear both singers and orchestra[viii] as a result his contracts for revivals at Modena and Genoa were broken-off. "*Someone"* took the trouble to notify them of the*"failure"* of *Gianni di Nisidia* in the Tuscan capital. Calumny[ix] he says, with justice - pointing a finger in the direction of Milan but such a disgrace was happily endorsed by his supplanters in a city in no way disposed to approve his music. He would find it very hard to make any sort of impression in Tuscany forthwith.

Whatever the praiseworthy intentions, historic justice and general euphoria national unity supplied vicious weapons to unprincipled musical adventure. A hungry hegemony of music publishers – once limited by unnatural boundaries now extended its tentacles over the whole of the peninsula; the impresario (Novaro) of the Carlo Felice (Genoa) broke his contract with Pacini in the Spring of 1862 after physical threats had been made to him, Managements were informed that they would not be permitted to hire or stage Verdian operas if they persisted in mounting works threatening the supremacy of their investment. This commercial *ostinato*, with every underhand dischord at its disposal, was a major feature of musical life even into the following century. [x]

As the score of *Gianni di Nisida* remained Pacini's own property it was never revived again, and a friendly letter from Leopoldo II congratulating him upon his Roman success rubbed salt into the wound.[xi]

The monetary impact of this painful impasse was underlined by an incident later in 1861. The Teatro di S. Carlo had shown an interest in Pacini's most recent opera; Nicola De Giosa[xii] composer-conductor and fervent defender of lost causes wrote to Francesco Lucca, Ricordi's publishing rival, in indignant fury:

"*Un momento si parlava del Gianni da Nisida (sic) di Pacini, che per mio riguardo, avendogli scritto, domendava e pel nolo dello spartito e per la venuta qui, 1500 ducati. Allora questa impresa ardi propormi di offrire ad un Pacini, 50, dico, <u>cinquanta</u> ducati!!!, denaro che non basta neppure per la copia della partitura…"*[xiii]

De Giosa withdrew one of his own operas in disgust at this treatment of a colleague no longer defended by an enfeebled status quo. Hard times were upon those outside the authorised perimeter.

*

The year had been infuriating. It began with a begging letter from Temistocle Solera, since 1846 in the operatic wilderness and now almost an outcast, asking Pacini to send him "*300 franchi*" in return for a new libretto. In turn distressed by the abandoned poet's misery he sent him the money on 16 January 1861[xiv] but a libretto was never forthcoming. The early months were spent polishing[xv] the second Roman commission, one intended to reclaim the thematic range he had always considered his own. *Il mulattiere di Toledo* was a comedy, if a wry example of humour with its underlying social commentary; the composer had persuaded his Bolognese friend Giuseppe Cencetti to adapt the 1854 livret Adolphe d'Ennery and Louis-François Nicolae (pseud. Clairville) had supplied to Adolphe Adam[xvi] - in no way an inappropriate project for Rome - the embattled capital was certain to fall eagerly for plot featuring a king obliged to disguise himself as a mule driver - amusingly appropriate in view of its continuing role as a bolthole for exiled crowned heads.

His versatility undimmed, Pacini was thus able to fight his current woes with a stream of romances and songs to point all the charm of which he was capable. In a Toledo more Neapolitan than Spanish and some heavyweight casting, with Luigia Ponti Dell'Armi and Giuseppina Tati in roles the antithesis of those they normally sang, with Luigi Fioravanti, Pietro Bignardi and Ludovico Buti in gigantic ensembles this *commedia lirica in tre atti* (heavily cut) tuneful and irreverent carried *Il mulattiere di Toledo* to a clamorous reception at the Teatro Apollo on 25 May 1861. There were surprises, ballads, and high-jinks galore; a chorus of bassi buffi was a riot. Enthusiastically applauded, cheered, it was never revived. It received just this one Roman staging. Fantasy was hard to sustain in 1861, the dates were all wrong - the future was far too uncertain especially for satirical amusement to obtain more than a brief grimace. Perhaps Jacovacci put too much of a ring-fence around its dissemination[xvii] - made it so difficult to repeat that it never *was* repeated and the score is now lost. [xviii]

If he was dismayed he was in no way silenced. The Roman Spring of 1862 with a Viareggio summer *Dixit* composed for voices and orchestra to please the Abate Francesco Guerra, it was this vocal endorsement from heaven that witnessed the first scribblings on scraps of paper of *Le mie memorie artistiche* - that passionate if treacherous quasi-testament which despite incoherencies, evasions, mistakes and omissions - dependant on publishers in an unfaithful Firenze [xix] - has never been far from the desks of music historians indifferent to his destiny.

Initially intended to amuse his friends, full of sly asides, he may well have thought the venture to be no more than a pastime. But once begun, his high spirits and propensity for anecdotes raised the surrounding gloom to the extent that the literary challenge was pursued with the same extravagance formerly expended on *cadenze* and *cabalette.* He also resumed writing chamber music. Since 1858 he had occasionally supplied a String Quartet for the *Società del Quartetto di Firenze*, an enterprise dear to the heart of his publisher-friend Giovanni Gualberto Guidi to which he had contributed since initiation.

In these fruitless months he wrote two more String Quartets , completing six before 1864. They were compositions he may have believed to be of pedagogic worth only but brought forth a kind of contemplative refinement which seldom found a place in his music for the stage or church. Two were published promptly (one by G.G.Guidi a second by Giudici e Strada[xx]). All repay investigation. It was in this period too that he composed his *Ottetto in fa maggiore per oboe, fagotto, corno, tre violini, violoncello e contrabasso* which proved surprising:

> *"V'è in tal musica, dissimulata sotto lo smalto di una mondana disinvoltura e tra piacevoli reminiscenze teatrali spinte talora al limite di una consapevole auto-ironia, un'assoluta conscienziosità artistica, una sorprendente sicurezza nell'affrontare e risolvere per vie niente affatto scolastiche delicati problemi di equilibrio fonico e di quadratura formale.*" [xxi]

Sent to the same Società for performance an un-familiar Pacini was revealed – one who largely eludes even his admirers.

It was lucky he had these distractions: the end of 1861 was so devastating that Pacini simply deleted it from the memoirs so recently begun.[xxii] Florence failed him so traumatically that he scarcely went there willingly ever again.

After ten years on the shelf his *Belfagor* finally made an appearance. Its librettist Antonio Lanari had many of his father's traits and talents. In 1844 he had taken an eight-year lease of the Teatro Argentina in Rome to which he shortly added that of the Teatro Comunale at Faenza. He was not at all unworthy of the family reputation for prudence and flair but proprietorial gifts did not necessarily combine either with taste or dramatic flair or an ability to handle experienced composers with tact. There were on-going Roman irritants: Pacini's firm friendship with Jacovacci irked. The composer's unwilling conformity, Pacini was something of a relic in the Tuscan capital but in no way shrinking or subdued.

He was especially vocal about the quality of Antonio's text; based on Macchiavelli and thus more-or-less *hors concours* in the city but with an admixture of malodorous French vaudeville far too close to pantomime unrelieved either by wit or irony. Pacini himself had retouched Antonio's ten-year-old libretto without much faith in its outcome against a frieze of second-thoughts and last-minute additions from the poet as well as antagonism from the hosts at the projected venue. The composer was writing new music until the curtain rose.

The libretto for the *prima* was actually printed *twice* - there are two different editions - the first so full of errors and misprints that it ends in a long list of amendments. The opera's eventual inauguration at the Teatro Pergola on 1 December 1861 saw purgatory turn swiftly into theatrical damnation: *Belfagor* was received in a sulphurous cloud, the principals semaphoring vainly in a hell of hissing and whistling at the fall of the curtain. Pacini – confirmed in his opinion as to its demerits - kept his head down, prayed that it would go away, but it lingered stubbornly thanks to a faithful cast determined upon success. This utterly predictable fiasco put an end to a second attempt at revival of *Gianni di Nisida* scheduled to succeed *Belfagor.*

Thus musically tarnished, Antonio Lanari's feelings are not known but he married the Scottish prima donna Helen Macleod ("*Elena Maklod"*) just three days after his opera's sad demise. And then the death of Antonio's father - for long years the *bras-armé* of so much of his earlier career - Alessandro Lanari

a few weeks later - must have put a cap on Pacini's feeling of humiliation on what he had liked to claim as his home ground.

His fame at a discount, his rival now at the top of every agenda, despairing almost - of survival he turned he face as far away as distant as possible from home and *VIVA VERDI.* Providentially he had received what he may have believed to be a lifeline from a city where his flame had never burned brightly if at all.

How, precisely, Pacini became embroiled in the London International Exhibition of 1862 is a matter of considerable guesswork. The finger points at the all-powerful *voire* dictatorial composer Sir Michael Costa, the talented, ruthless, massively bearded Caliban wielding a baton in place of a club at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden where he was principal conductor. In his youth a fellow-student of Bellini in Naples and a friend of Rossini, Pacini may have known him as a very young man.[xxiii] Michele Costa had become a pillar of the established musical authority in the Victorian metropolis. Early in 1862 the Secretary of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the projected *Window on the World* F.R. Sandford had written to Costa that the Exhibition Commission wished to receive compositions from

> *"...artists representing France, Germany, Italy and England"* to be performed at the opening ceremony: *"They have requested Messrs, Auber, Meyerbeer and Verdi to supply each a new piece of music* (and) *having invited contributions from artists of such eminence, and having assured them, that all means of adequate execution will be provided...the Commissioners feel that they cannot hope to fulfil their engagement more satisfactorily than by inducing you to undertake the direction and management of the musical arrangements."*[xxiv]

All very flattering of course but these sentiments were inevitably to fall on stony ground as a result of a certain unfamiliarity with the maestro in question: Costa loathed Verdi, [xxv] despised Meyerbeer and barely tolerated Auber; as for the unfortunate William Sterndale Bennett – imprudently chosen by innocent political minds to represent England, Costa knew him as a Teutonic ingrate

whose music he had always refused to accept at Covent Garden under any circumstances whatsoever.

Whatever the international intentions, musically speaking the venture was destined to crash even on its launching pad: Costa ordered Meyerbeer out of Covent Garden and gave his score to an assistant;[xxvi] Verdi was told on arrival at Dover that his *Inno delle nazioni* would *not* be performed. The indignant *bussetino,* brandishing his letter of invitation, travelled to London where he wrote to "The Times" to complain of his reception. With belated pressure from above, the *Inno* was diplomatically shunted to the Her Majesty's Theatre where it duly emerged - its solo voice intended for Tamberlick transposed a little for Thérèse Tietjens - on 24 May 1862 and not of course sung at the opening ceremony and not of course conducted by Sir Michael Costa.[xxvii]

Did, however, the enterprising Michele Costa approach two of Verdi's most prominent rivals in order to replace him? Early in 1862 Pacini began composing a vast cantata dedicated to the recently defunct Prince Albert. At much the same time Felice Romani put pen to paper to create an honorific showpiece:

"Sospiri d'Italia all'Inghilterra. Elegia di F.R. posta in musica dal Mº…M… nei solenni dell'esposizione di Londra"

intended for, no doubt, but never in fact composed by, Saverio Mercadante.[xxviii]

Pacini, was quicker off the mark than *Maestro…M* and supplied his cantata, or very nearly did. With a text as far as can be determined by himself, his ample composition is a voluble affair with a cast of *Italia, Favore tutelare, Gallia* and *Genio inglese* each of whom attempts to out-sing the other in the way all too familiar long before the European Union took it to new lengths. With a vast mixed chorus and an even vaster orchestra giving the composer full rein to draw upon his extensive experience of contentious composition.

But something brought composition to a halt. No doubt Verdi's letter to "The Times." Pacini's manuscript was never quite finished, beginning with a Queen-soothing "*Sul marmo del principe Alberto*" the long score lacks its final pages. Yet another abandoned project? It can only be regretted; an ambitious Lisztian ebullience and sentiments worthy of the United Nations are not to be despised. Pacini's perfidious cantata would have been thoroughly worthy of its time and place.[xxix]

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This year of 1862 he described as "*L'anno di poi mi riposai"* was not even remotely true, not just because of the cantata but primarily because he had signed a contract (despite considerable misgivings) with Bartolommeo Merelli to write an opera to open the Scala carnival of 1862-3. Most of the latter part of the year was spent on its conception, composition, scope and possible impact. Unusual care had been taken in the strategy of this opera at a key moment in his future survival; *Carmelita,* as it was to be called, had a libretto by Piave, one of his bolder efforts ("*Meyerbeerian"* Pacini liked to call it *pace* Costa) replete with subtly dramatic effects intended to take the new sophisticated audiences by storm. A remarkable cast had been selected at a very early date with Adelaide Borghi-Mamo in the title role, Carlo Negrini and Giovanni Gucciardini as the embattled Don Diego and Don Enrico respectively, their roles carefully tailored from the very outset.

It was a project as ambitious as any for the now sixty-five-year-old maestro, full of surrealist phantasmagoria and based on a "Don Giovanni di Marana ou La chute d'un Ange" by an overripe Dumas. Verdi could have warned Pacini about accepting projects from Merelli but the unflagging composer worked "*con amore…con quella coscienza artistica che ad uomo di matura età solo è compagna,"*[xxx] he relished the outré dramatic situations, the opera began and ended well – a sure-fire factor –and the *finale ultimo* he described as "*superiore a quello della Saffo*".

No one was to find this out for several years. With the finished score on his desk Merelli, failing visibly as an impresario, brutally reneged on the contract. He could not afford to stage such an ambitious opera, the production was aborted and the costumes used for something else. "To tell the truth" says Pacini "what happened to me in Milan in the carnival of 1863 had never happened before:

"Povera arte! Poveri artisti! In tal modo sono rispettati I contratti, e si amministra la giustizia? Dov'è più la buona fede? A che valgono le lettere di rispettabili persone poste alla teste di une Direzione teatrale!"[xxxi]

He was not alone in finding the new world deficient in morality.

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This truly was a major blow and for the first time ever he stopped composing "…*ai tempi che corrono*" he would write to Vincenzo Capecelatro "*la musica…è posta da un lato.*"[xxxii] It was almost true, in 1863 he set about writing didactic works in an all-but manic compensation: his *Memoria sul migliore indirizzo degli studi musicali*; his *Lettere ai municipi italiani per una scuola musicale*; and his *Progetto pei giovani compositori* were all written this year. His *Cenni storici sulla musica e trattato di contrapunto* was revised and published the following year. A mood of bitter reflection, combined with thoughts of the past provoked by the writing of his memoirs also turned his mind to earlier struggles. 1863 witnessed his first attempt to placate the Bellinian shade. He wrote letters supporting the project of bringing the ashes of his celebrated *concittadino* back to Catania from their grave in Père Lachaise. Later this year he composed a "*concetto fantastico*" with a text by the *catanese* Raffaele Abate intended to be performed at the ceremony of re-interment. It had to wait thirteen years to be heard. Entitled *Apoteosi di Vincenzo Bellini* it was first played in the Piazza degli Studi of Catania University on 22 September 1876, an episodic cantata for soprano, mezzo, tenor, bass and full orchestra (and in part reusing some of the music from the cantata written the year before for London - it was one small step it seems from the grave of Prince Albert to that of the *catanese* Cigno) it turned out to be an adroit compendium mixing Bellinian themes with his own that was much praised at the time. Its composition was capped in 1864[xxxiii] when he set about writing a *Messa di Requiem* for this hostile voice of his youth: *"Ebbene! io vi diro...che, rivolgendo il pensiero alla mesta santa ceremonia...mi sono occupato frattanto di comporre una nuova grandiosa messa di Requiem"* he wrote to Raffaele Abate on 24 October 1864.[xxxiv] This was of course an infinitely more substantial work but consisting of a *Kyrie* and the *Dies Irae* sequence only, blessed with fleeting melodic beauties and with a whispered diminuendo final cadence in an unresolved key, desolate and deeply disturbing. Indeed a touching reflection upon his futile confrontation with Bellini. [xxxv] Pacini was a sensitive and reasonable human being and would have made an *amende honorable* at any time if his insensate genius of a rival had ever been willing. But even this pious undertaking had to wait many years to appear.[xxxvi] It was first sung for Pacini's

own funeral at Pescia in 1867. After his death it was sent to Catania by his widow, Marianna Pacini, but despite an endorsement by Pier-Antonio Coppola [xxxvii]who considered it to be a masterpiece and despite the encouragement of the Municipio of Catania which was ready to endorse his choice the Archbishop of Catania refused to have it sung in any of his churches because there was a soprano soloist and women's voices in the coro. A *Messa di Requiem* by Coppola, composed in a hurry for male voices only, was sung instead at the ceremony of re-interment at Catania Cathedral in 1876.[xxxviii]

Indeed, though opera itself may have been "*da un lato*" at the time he now wrote his fourth and best String Quartet [xxxix]and turned his attention to forward planning of a politic kind. He sent a fulsome letter to the Committee formed to erect a statue of Rossini at Pesaro proposing the composition of a cantata to mark the occasion, an offer that the Committee accepted gratefully (or found hard to refuse). Mercadante was enjoined to write an *Inno*, the great maestro, however, even if amused by these votive efforts of his behalf by old friends and enemies, elected to stay at home.

He knew what he was doing, the actual singing of Pacini's cantata *Rossini e la patria* was marred by poor planning. 21 August 1864 began with Pacini busying himself importantly with the niceties of the staging of *Guillaume Tell* at the Teatro Rossini; his cantata was programmed for the end of a long day which began with the unveiling of the statue to the strains of Mercdante's *Inno* about which Pacini waxes positively effusive (the *altamurese* being able to take advantage of the current Amnesty with Bellini): *"600 professori erano in bell'ordine disposti per eseguire l'inno di Mercadante.. .Gli evviva, gli applausi furono interminabili"*[xl] For the Pacini cantata he had the cast of *Guilluame Tell* which included Helen Macleod-Lanari, Angelo Zamboni, the German tenor Georgio Stigelli (*nom-d'arte* of Georg Stiegel), and Davide Squarcia, the conductor being Angelo Mariani. [xli] But it got off to a very bad start. Hardly had the music begun than a great heaving behind the painted backcloth caused the conductor to put down his baton, the backcloth had to be raised to release a host of unauthorised listeners. Pacini, with recent Florentine experiences in mind suspected deliberate trouble-making but once more on track the cantata seems to have pleased, if not extravagantly. He would not have cared, it was aimed primarily at the absent *pesarese* whose friendship, warmth and support he had

enjoyed throughout his career and which he now wanted to record: it repeated carefully, and several times over, "Di tanti palpiti" with a deliberately heartfelt recapitulation and emphasis! In succession he enjoyed the honorary citizenship of Rossini's home town.

Without taking breath he left for Ponte Buggianese in which Tuscan village his friend the Abate Francesco Guerra was mounting a two-day festival primarily of sacred music where three works by Pacini were to be sung, two of them brand new: a *Componimento a quattro voci* with an idiosyncratic accompaniment of strings, harp and organ; a *Messa e Vespro* for full orchestra and soloists; and a work already published by Lucca: a *Messa a cappella* for three male voices, organ and string bass.[xlii] He puts in a claim here to have written more than sixty sacred works but it is scarcely ever possible to be sure about the exact number of his compositions in any genre. In any event, in this "silent" period he was busy with compositions of many kinds including another quartet ("*Offersi al chiaro signor maestro Taglioni di Napoli*"), two piano trios and a romance composed for a musical journal.

His back was not quite turned to the stage, in 1864 he did manage to revise his twenty-year-old *L'ebrea* which had never had a proper showing, for a rather zany exhumation at Viterbo (it was retitled *I romani in Siria*), but this year in essence indeed was a retrenchment with painful didactic attempts to retrieve his lost fame. Despondent, his wife had frequently to remind her cash-strapped husband that he was "*un celebro maestro*". The year was not made more cheerful by disappearances of many in his circle - most notably that of Michele Puccini, his colleague whose patronymic, though no one would ever have guessed it at the time, would one day replace his own in their beloved Lucca. His *Messa di Requiem* for Michele Puccini set the mood for the whole year as far as Pacini was concerned.[xliii]

1865 was not dissimilar, he received an invitation from the publishing house of Fabbricatore in Naples to compose an opera on an unperformed text by Cammarano which he turned down, seemingly, as they did not offer him enough money, adding with some bitterness: "*Di noi vecchi non sanno più che fare, ed il giovin, se vuole, ha da pagare.*"[xliv] Instead the early months of the year were given over to diverse music, notably his *Sinfonia Dante*, an *Inno a Guido*

Monaco, another for the *Vicerè d'Egitto*, a *Messa in otto parte reali* for S.Croce in Lucca, a *Messa in tre parti* to be published by Lucca [of which, in another world, the De Profundis, the Crucifixus and the Agnus Dei would be sung at the funeral of Pope John Paul II] and a *Messa di Gloria* for his own church the Chiesa del Monte in Pescia where, indeed, he himself would find permanent refuge before the end of the decade.[xlv]

There was another burst of *Discorsi*, some of which to be published: the *Discorso nel primo pubblico esperimento degli alunni dell'Istituto musicale in Lucca* for instance, another, his *Considerazione sulla musica e sul miglior indirizzo da darsi agli studi musicali* was actually expounded in some pomp at the Accademia del Reale Istituto musicale di Firenze of which he had once been Honorary Director which represented a response to the indignity he had encountered in that city at the time of *Belfagor*.

Of all these initiatives the *Sinfonia Dante* was the most singular and a work which he took to be emblematic of his current non-operatic distinction. Intended to celebrate the sixth century of the birth of the poet this decidedly quirky orchestral poem was intended to redress the levity of which he had long been accused. It is divided into four parts

1st Part	*Inferno*
2nd Part	*Purgatorio*
3rd Part	*Paradiso*
4th Part	*Il ritorno trionfale di Dante sulla terra*

Over and above its literary programme (which may have had some reference to his musical parabola and aspirations) it was an essay in a kind of free orchestration he was almost never permitted, replete with piano solo and thematic digressions which if not all that profound at least have the merit of departure from routine. Melodically linked, *Inferno* undershoots somewhat its hopeless theme; *Purgatorio* is a lilting triple-time *allegretto* with a greater emphasis on *speranze* than *sofferenze*; *Paradiso* is an endearing *larghetto angelico* while *Il trionfo di Dante* is rousingly catchy, modish with swooning strings and sprightly instrumental colouring that brings this *sinfonia* to a beguiling if not notably symphonic conclusion.[xlvi] First heard on 15 April 1865 conducted by his close friend Teodulo Mabellini at the fatal Teatro Pergola in tandem with his *Inno a Guido Monaco* as well as by music by Mabellini and Mendelssohn the work did

not lack admirers and even if it did not ensure any kind of return triumph on earth for the composer was soon published.

The April edition of L'Omnibus commented "*che fuoco! che vivacità*" and the 1875 edition of *Le mie memorie artistiche* dutifully reprints a letter Mercadante addressed to its composer after the *Sinfonia Dante* had been played to him on his piano in the presence of Florimo, Carlo Conti and other antagonists of earlier years effusively praising its form and freshness[xlvii]. Through the good offices of a student Pacini sent a copy of the *Sinfonia Dante* to Liszt whose generous letter in reply remains in the Fondo Pacini at Pescia. He must have been astonished to receive news from the author of *Niobe.*

Possibly it was the generosity of its reception that persuaded him to put his memoirs aside – the portion published in his lifetime ends with the *Sinfonia Dante* and a reference to the "*Città dei fiori."*[xlviii] But even after a considerable section of abandoned material was incorporated into the text posthumously by Ferdinando Magnani a vast pile remains, much of it illegible. There are many plausible reasons for his withdrawal from the project: the pained reaction of Rossini who believed he was mistreated; those of many of his friends unhappy with the uncovering of musical skeletons; and the acid tone which now was ousting the detachment of the earlier installments. He may have felt that such public heart-searching was doing him a disservice.

He detested the current operatic scene "*Il vaso di Pandora seguitando a spandere I suoi malefici profumi"* he said in one with almost all his remaining contemporaries. All loathed the voices obliged to strain to surmount enormous orchestras in outsize opera houses with conductors calling the tune. All resented the power of the pit and the monopoly of publishing houses. But any resolution to turn his back on the theatre began to waver this year, thanks to Nicola De Giosa who persuaded him to write an *Inno* that might possibly encourage the Viceroy of Egypt – planning an operatic inauguration of the Suez Canal – to offer him a commission.[xlix] It came to nothing of course but was not unnoticed as a declaration of intent. In 1866 he found himself once more in demand. It is an exaggeration to claim that impresarios from Venice and Naples beat a path to his Pescia door but he was not being ignored: the town of Fucecchio commissioned a *scena*, il *Canto del prigionero* with a text by a local hero, sung there on 22 August 1866; as for Naples, Pacini was eager to reply in kind to the excitement

attendant upon the belated appearance of Mercadante's *Virginia* long refused stubbornly in the Bourbon era.[1] All at once to his great surprise he found himself with a contract in the same theatre. In the late autumn he made up his mind to take the plunge, with *Berta di Varnol* under his arm he set out for the Parthenopean city arriving just in time to take part in a revival of *La fidanzata corsa* (11 November 1866) with Giorgio Stigelli in the role of Alberto and Luigia Bendazzi-Secchi as Rosa. He was given a tremendous reception and called on stage no less than twelve times after the Act II finale, greatly moved he greeted the blind Mercadante who had attended to meet his erstwhile foe.

But the S.Carlo had scarcely evolved. The management did not fail to live up to its reputation for disorder on a heroic scale, there was no one contracted to sing *Berta*, no scenery and no costumes. He was offered 2000 francs *not* to stage it in the *carnevale* as planned in his contract but to present it later in the less prominent slot of April. Pacini was indignant and others were indignant on his behalf, but with a magisterial flash of his old adaptability he succeeded in worming out an alternative carnival *scrittura* for Venice. Thus he left Naples in mollified dudgeon very shortly after he had arrived. If this was a false start, it was in no way a false step, he proposed now to stage his *Carmelita* but an opera totally transformed (but nominally "*espressamente composta"*). The opera now is called *Don Diego De'Mendoza*; the tenor of the title-role has much more to sing, the text much extended and the score greatly cut. Carmelita herself is now Donna Mariquita - though other roles remain mostly as planned for La Scala five years before. That Pacini understood *Don Diego De'Mendoza* to be a valedictory offering in a city that had been so loyal over so many decades is clear from the dedication in the libretto:

ALLA NOBILE PRESIDENZA
DEL GRAN TEATRO LA FENICE
CHE PARI IN VIRTÙ
AI SUOI MAGNANIMI CONCITTADINI
SALDA NELLA SUA FEDE
NON PIEGÒ A STRANIERE VOGLIE
ATTESTATO D'AMMIRAZIONE
QUEST'ULTIMA SUA FATICA
G.PACINI

Pacini's confidence in his opera was not misplaced. Nor was that of his *aficionadi,* it turned out to be something of a field-day with its bizarre coups-de-théâtre and outrageous animosities. *Don Diego De'Mendoza* is a tale of estranged brothers not unlike an uneasy partnership between *Il trovatore*, *Crispino e la comare, La Dame Blanche* and *Faust* with good and bad devils, a deranged sister who takes the veil, ghosts, a statue that comes to life and an overabundance of vengeance and religiosity. It was intended to astonish and it did. The opening scene was worthy of any contemporary *giallo*: the curtain rises on a darkened stage, a cavernous room above a strangely discordant tremolo from the orchestra, from a lighted doorway at the rear of the stage comes the hoarse cry of a dying man *"Enrico…mio figlio!"* at which point the whole setting opens-up to reveal a brilliantly lit apartment with people dining and a vast statue of an Angel holding down Satan with its foot.

Pacini's music rose tirelessly to the outré challenges of this plot, highly declamatory, frenchified, with hardly any *cabalette* and these slow and momentous and for male voices only; Donna Mariquita (sung by Signora Tiberini) has a ballad-like aria in the *Quadro Secondo* with a very brief explosion of joy but that is all. Piave had been reasonably faithful to Dumas' *Mystère en cinq actes et sept tableaux,* the huge list of characters reduced to three principals and six comprimario (with the banishment of two angels), a teeming plot to which the maestro has added a hectic pace and a kind of resilient spring of vehement melody in no way pruned by age and experience. Venice had supplied him with a remarkably effective cast, the conductor – in an ultimate touch of bizarre fantasy, proving to be Verdi's prostrate amanuensis Emanuele Muzio!

Without an extended rehearsal period *Don Diego De'Mendoza* took the stage on 12 January 1867. The settings were impressive, the cast superlative and the house full to bursting: blood-and-thunder, death and retribution so emblematic of popular taste made the day, but fate was on the side of the devils, on the night of the fourth performance Venice was swamped by one of the most damaging floods ever to be remembered. *Don Diego De'Mendoza* was drowned never to be revived anywhere owing to its length, complexity and vocal demands.

But also owing to the amour propre of its author who was the proprietor both of the music and its libretto. He refused publishing rights to Ricordi and Lucca

in the days following the *prima*. [Only relenting on 20 May when at last he signed over the rights to Francesco Lucca for 1000 lire just at the very period when too much water had gone under the bridges to revive it painlessly with its original cast, Lucca published some extracts the following month, had Pacini lived a little longer *Don Diego* would certainly have been heard again[li]]

He raced back to Naples on 21 January, via Pescia and Rome, hearing with maximum emotion his *Saffo* en route with the Marchisio sisters in a very high-profile production at the Teatro Apollo.[lii] The tremendous applause for their championship of his most famous opera left him on top of the wave but Jacovvaci's offer of a further contract for the next carnival he declined.

It may have been a premonition, but his eyesight was weakening after a lifetime of scribbling at his desk or was no more than simple precaution. By 16 February he was back at the S.Carlo to fulfil his April contract with *Berta di Varnol.* To coincide with his reappearance, the Teatro Bellini revived *Luisetta* (14 March 1867) and the audience joyfully repeated the floral feat of 1843. He was pelted with flowers in his box. Alas, in its turn, the S.Carlo also was ready to live up to its past performance. Pacini kicked his heels for a month then sinister forces emerged. The cast became aware that threats were being made against the staging of *Berta di Varnol*. Nicola De Giosa, who had taken over the direction of the opera learned that a malicious campaign of disparagement had been hatched. As a result, the Direction of the S.Carlo announced out of the blue that *Berta* would not appear! De Giosa, outraged, promptly assembled all the cast: Luigia Bendazzi-Secchi, Giorgio Stigelli, Giuseppina Tati, Luigi Colonnese, Giuseppe Benedetti and Pacini's former pupil Marco Arati (most of whom had sung in *La fidanzata corsa*) and in a band together with the coro, the *comparse,* and most of the orchestra they marched *en masse* to confront the Management which immediately capitulated without a whimper in the face of such forces. *Berta* not only was staged as originally planned but ran to the very end of the season. In the sequel to his memoirs Pacini returned the compliment emotionally praising to the skies: *"...un orchestra che solo puo trovarsi a Napoli quando diretta da un De-Giosa"* (sic) *"uomo di cuore, d'intelleto e modello di onesta".*[liii]

Some delay had been inevitable. *Berta* is a big score with a *sinfonia* (rare in Naples), many *concertati,* and Act I ended in an orgy. It demanded all the skills

of the Architetto decoratore with an interminable list of exotic cori and extras: "*popolo di Detmolda, Sorveglianti della notte, allegre Fanciulle* (sic), *Minatori, Fonditori,* and *Montanari del Teutoburgerwald*".

Presteau, the impresario, had placed *Berta di Varnol* immediately after a staging of Gounod's *Faust* - an opera itself greedy for rehearsals, but which he thought might not be to local taste. So there were further delays, even so the curtain rose on 6 April 1867 under the baton of De Giosa: "*it had all the Pacinian qualities and defects*" observed the press the day after but the audience responded in kind and the composer was called to bow before the footlights no less than twenty-eight times at the prima. L'Omnibus made the priorities clear "*after the first evening the dreadful libretto was forgotten and one listened only to the music and the singing.*" The *sinfonia* was much admired (!) the *cavatine* of both Bendazzi and Colonnese were cheered to the echo; Giuseppina Tati's *romanza* and the orgy were riotously applauded. *Berta*'s seven-year genesis paid off. No one liked the plot or the verses but Pacini's immense vitality freshness and ingenuity carried the day.

It would be his final tribute to this nirvana of his youth and as if aware of this fact before leaving Naples took care to call on every old friend and acquaintance, writing a memorial stave in the album of every admirer. He even called on Francesco Florimo under the pressure of times past.[liv] His journey back to Pescia was leisurely. Valedictory embraces retarded his return in the many cities he traversed. Up to this last year he had kept his image as a wiry, restless, indefaticable music-machine and though he had sometimes pleaded indisposition he never stopped work on his scores, was never a recluse and scrawled illegible letters daily to people as required (these had frequently to be rewritten by his wife). Key figures kept him abreast of theatrical gossip most notably ex-pupils like Marco Arati, loyal supporters like Raffaele Abate, critics and scholars like Abramo Basevi and Alessandro Biagi. Rossini wrote to him on a regular basis, Giulia Samoyloff too, her letters from Paris continued to his death. He paid the maximum attention to his pupils and though now retired delivered yet another discourse in this very last year, his *Discorso nel secondo pubblico esperimento degli alunni dell'Istituto musical* was published in Lucca in 1867 and he remained at the disposal of its staff and governing body to the end.

The extent to which *Il carcere Mamertino* may be considered a completed work

remains contradictory. It was intended to grace the *Diciotessima ricorrenza centenaria di San Pietro* but was decided upon when? In Rome at the time of the *Saffo* of the Marchisio sisters? Or much earlier? He was supplied with a text by Francesco Massi. but when was it actually composed? Much of its music could well have been written while waiting for *Berta* to make her belated appearance in Naples. In a two-act form and without him being present *Il carcere Mamertino* was performed on 27 May 1867 in the Sala di Campidoglio in Rome, the printed libretto makes it clear that this *melodramma in due atti* - as much an opera as an oratorio - was incomplete and that Act I Sc. 2 had not been composed. No one knows why this should have been, perhaps time was too short, possibly failing sight impeded composition but it is appropriate that this his final offering to Rome should have been such a stately composition with Isabella Gianoli-Galletti in the leading role. Once home at the Villa Marianna and at leisure in the following months Pacini composed a third-act to *Il carcere Mamertino* and made a present of it to the poet whose text he much admired[lv].

He was not present either when a concert of his music was given in San Marino on 3 September when his *Inno alla vetusta Reppublica Sammarinese* was given its first performance, together with a votive Mass he had composed in a concert which included arias from *Don Diego De'Mendoza* sung by Luisa Kopp and Ludovico Buti. In recognition the Republic of San Martino sent him its Sovereign Order and a gold medal. Later that month he delivered his final *Discorso* and composed an *Elegy* for a friend. October saw the composition of a beatific *Inno alla Vergine* and in November he began to write yet another Mass.[lvi] It was still incomplete when he went to visit his old friend and Lucchese ally the conte Bernardini. On his return after a stay of four days he caught a chill. By the end of the month he was seriously ill with pneumonia. Dr. Morandi who had looked after his health for twelve years consulted the specialist Prof. Fedeli but Pacini died uncomplainingly on 6 December. Fully articulate to the last, his wit and amusement remaining intact in contrast to that of the people at his bedside; surrounded by four of his children, by Marianna and her relatives, his brother, and a host of distraught friends he interviewed each and every one saying farewell to every colleague in turn; to the weeping Cesare Perini he delivered his final instructions, consoling his friend with such serenity that poor Perini stumbled out of the room without ever having managed to utter a word.

Giovanni Pacini was given a civic funeral and buried in the Chiesa del Monte just a few yards up the hill from the room in which he had died and in which he had spun so many notes. He was buried as he wished:

> **"***Circa i disattesi voleri del Maestro che voleva essere sepolto nella quiete del monte incaricando di questa ultima volontà al confessore. Al contrario i pesciatini volevano subito seppellirlo in Duomo ma che la vedova e i figli si opposero proprio per questo desiderio umile"*

For the next twenty-five years Marianna Pacini put flowers on his tomb. A bust was erected above it. Requests for the transfer of his body to Catania have always been refused. Much later Antonio Ghislanzoni commented ironically on the response of his fellow citizens:

> "*Alla famiglia superstite furono non lieve conforto gli onori che in alcune città d'Italia si resero alla memoria di lui. Arezzo decretò all'autore della Saffo uno splendido monumento. A Napoli, per iniziati vadei signori Torelli e Colucci, vide la luce una Strenna funebre dedicata alla vedova dell'illustre maestro - esequie solenni si celebra rono a Pescia ed a Lucca - e in altre insigni capitali del Regno.*
> *Gli Italiani non sono ingrati coi.... morti."* [lvii]

Naples announced a memorial Mass but nothing came of it. Ferdinando Magnani however persuaded the Management of the S.Carlo to commission an *Omaggio a Pacini* [lviii] from Mercadante (!) It was sung more than a year later, on 8 December 1868 with his long-time antagonist sitting in the third tier of boxes. It was a huge success and was repeated on four successive evenings. Even Pacini's obsequies had a *bis*. This he would have approved.

*

Pacini's restless spirit was not quieted by his disappearance, the snowball of *Niccolò dei Lapi* continued rolling, the loyal Perini ensuring its momentum. Excluding an improbable staging in Malta the opera had made two credible appearances, neither of them finite[lix]; the score he had sent to Rio[lx] was never performed but another staging remains on the edge of credibility, the published *cronache* of performances at the Teatro delle Muse of Ancona [lxi]lists a *Niccolò*

dei Lapi by Pacini for the year 1864; if, indeed, this opera *was* by Pacini it would have been a maverick tentative on the part of the composer (in no way improbable but no hint remains in his papers) or was one of those unauthorised stagings which were such an abusive feature of the day. By insisting on handling his own affairs he had no impresarial muscle to redress theft of his property. In any event all modern sources claim *Niccolò dei Lapi* to be a "posthumous score" which made its début at the Real Teatro Pagliano of Florence on 29 October 1873.

Scarcely a note of the score begun in 1852 had remained unchanged in fifteen years of updating, not only the music but the text was constantly amended and its setting changed according to political sentiment, only the casting remained more–or-less static until its ultimate appearance. But at no time did the composer attempt to conceal that *Rodrigo di Valenza, Lidia di Brabante*, *La punizione*, *Lidia di Bruxelles* and *Niccolò dei Lapi* et al were one and all the same opera as an undated letter to Gatti makes perfectly clear[lxii].

Nonetheless *Niccolò dei Lapi* was his last word, few composers have made deliberate provision for posterity but this very large score was a calculated codicil to a hectic career bequeathed to a lost public, polished in private and deposited as a final *coup* of operatic deviousness from the safety of the grave.

The snowball effect had quality as well as quantity, the definitive *Niccolò dei Lapi* of 1873 was a summation at once vocally as orchestrally of all he knew of the theatre, flaunting a sumptuous compilation of every quirk in his own musical make-up. As far as he was concerned this vast *melodramma-tragico in tre attic con danze analoghe* was a swan song grand-opéra with everything on a large scale, every ensemble extended, squeezed vocally to the maximum, massive, protracted with over-the-top treachery and excessive despair, excessive gloom and excessive joy in a tragedy too distressing to be borne. Every cliché, in fact, of his operatic age in epic proportions.

He had made concessions to the decline in vocal standards of his apogee, though voices were tested to their limits ("*sedotto dagli esempi del Verdi e del Mercadante, ha dato alle parti del canto tessitura più che eccezionali e faticosisime*" [lxiii] he had said wickedly) he had kept virtuosity to a minimum. He merely asked for singing that was loud and lyrical. In compensation the instrumentation was doubled or trebled even insisting that this "opera colossale" should feature what he called a "*gariglione armonico*"[lxiv] not unrelated to the

keyboard sonorities he hankered-for in his later works [lxv]in the interests of "*un'esecuzione orchestrale perfetta e una direzione d'orchestra assai valente*"[lxvi] that he was destined to obtain from Teodulo Mabellini, fellow figure of the Tuscan ancien-régime.

His spirit must have been assuaged by the reception of this work. The opera's reception in the former capital was tremendous, several of the arias and duets were amongst his most imposing, the Act II finale left audiences thunderstruck (almost literally, such was the concerted impact), and though the Teatro Pagliano was a very large theatre indeed it is reported that even at the third performance some four or five hundred people were turned away. The first edition libretto claims that Pacini wrote both the words and the music, an assertion that is thoroughly mendacious [lxvii] but the impact of *Niccolò dei Lapi* was all-embracing. It was all there, heart-stopping confessions of love, hate and repentance, thunder-storms, torture, political insurrection and the defeat of benign forces by tyrannical conspiracy in the most lachrymose settings imaginable. He knew his audience. And Pacini expressly bequeathed all this to Florence, the city that had jeered him. The words of Lamberto amid the storm of the Act II finale put it in a nutshell:

Fratelli, amaro è il calice
Che apprestano i tiranni;
Incerto e pien d'affanni
E il torbido avvenir.
Ebben, prostriamci e al simbolo
Del nostro Re giuriamo
Che liberi vogliamo
Combattere o morir.

his own scathing views upon the new order that had ordered his demise.

The Roman musical journal La Riforma ended its long review by saying that Pacini's final offering "*merita di avere uno dei posti distinti tra le opere melodrammatiche dei grandi Maestri italiani*"[lxviii]. It was nothing less than the truth. It had five subsequent productions's until 1887 never very wide of the Tuscan orbit. Then it vanished owing to what Filippo Cicconetti called "*la grossa ignoranza degl'impresarii.* " [lxix]

The least reticent of important Italian composers, he was also the most abused;

"*Si creò non pochi nemici; fu ingiustamente perseguitato e fatto oggetto di basse calunnie…*" [lxx]

"*Pacini fu il più odiato e pericoloso competitore milanese di Vincenzo Bellini,*

Essendo ben organizzata negli ambienti austriacanti dell'Italia settentrionale grazie a numerose amicizie altolocate e ai suoi intrighi d'alcova."

Is the flower of a catalogue devoted to an unwary Giuditta Pasta published in 1997.[lxxi]

Resilient and wide-ranging, his versatility made him the most feared composer on the music stage of his day, his energy and imagination were dreaded, a factor reflected in the hagiographic essays devoted to his rivals. But his instinct for *slancio* had a curiously devious effect, this is apparent even in his very earliest works, he liked to initiate strange modulations – taking an oblique path though a web of key changes but arriving at a home key with the squarest of rhythms and most-obvious of melodic structures whose principal target was excited applause. Hence his title of "*maestro delle cabalette*". No one seems to know whether he enjoyed this title or not. Few composers could ever have been more gifted or more prodigal, such a lavish endowment struggled for survival with conventional structures in the earliest phase of his career but gained a freer and freer rein once the climateric of *Saffo* had been past. Of course he wrote far too quickly. He did it for survival, but there is no evidence that taking more time led to greater inspiration, he relied upon the same kind of instantaneous solution of problems as a painter or poet. He did not laboriously elaborate his music ("sweat blood"), it emerged on the page intact, speed and spontaneity were not simply his *modus vivendi* but his *raison d'être.* He gloried in complex compositional feats, writing two or three different operas all at the same time. Correspondingly, he could handle complex musical structures from a very early age, he never lacked technical skills and there are very elaborate concerted pieces even in the most juvenile of his compositions. He was not a lucky composer, but was far too proud to persist with works which had been dismissed too easily, he simply laid them aside. Some of his ill-luck was self-inflicted, most of his operas – especially those in revival – were simply too technically demanding to survive the negligent rehearsal standards of the day, he knew this but was not prepared to fight his corner by reducing his demands. And then, paradoxically enough, it was not his outrageously difficult arias – those that ensured him renown - that caused opera after opera to be abandoned after the original staging - it was the presewntation that he found essential and whose dilution he would not accept, it was the lavish props, the extravagant instrumentation often little short of bizarre (in

La fidanzata corsa he had insisted upon having *chitarre nazionali* to give local colour. However were these be assured in revival?) as well as the hugely specific tailoring of music to a compositional formula where recitative and aria were to be increasingly blended.

But he did suffer greatly from making perilous demands on famous singers for whom his major roles were written; at a revival of *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* in London in the summer of 1832, both Berardo Winter and then Domenico Donzelli made an attempt at singing Agobar but neither was capable of singing a role created for Giovanni David. At his height, in the 1840 and 50's, he favoured an organic development, sometimes, an entire act would consist of almost nothing but an enormous duet or a generic series invoking one-by-one a different palette of surprises, wasteful and extravagant with different elements of confrontation, different colours and melodies any one of which might have supplied material for a complete statement by another composer. Even at his most adroit his music was far more vulnerable than that of Donizetti and Bellini, the eccentric modulations he chose, the sequence of fleeting melodic propositions he favoured (especially in the works that followed *Saffo*) were both hard to sing and to sustain. No wonder these works kept the stage so briefly. He tried to insert ballet into his operas in the teeth of opposition and gales of whistling, this began as early as *L'ultimo giorno di Pompei* and continued stubbornly to his belated *Niccolò dei Lapi. Pace* Rossini's unforgettable contribution, he could claim to be the first Italian maestro to warm to *grand opéra*, his taste for spectacle, processions, the stereophonic disposition of his orchestral forces and interminable concertati judged to be *un-Italian* are the proof - nothing deterred him.

The full-scale battle of *I cavalieri di Valenza*, was both emblematic of his operatic stance and of his chosen arena of combat vis-à-vis his rivals; Raffaele Colucci - writing in the final year of life of the composer - can be given credit for his most searching epitaph:

"*Egli ha avuto entusiasti da legare e detrattori colla schiuma all bocca; più volte è stato trascinato nella polvere, più volte è stato li li per essere canonizzato. Il certo è che anche i suoi più implacabili nemici – i lividi pedanti della stampa, intendiamoci – hanno dovuto riconescere in lui un ingegno*

eccezionale" [lxxii]

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[i] Pacini op cit 199. In the text of the *Memorie artistiche* of the 1875 edition of his son-in-law there are additional pages which contradict Pacini's original version of events. In this later edition, despite earlier insistence that the work was put-aside simply through political disorder, Pacini is persuaded to say that he only began serious work on the opera in 1866: "*Concluso l'affare*, *e stabilito il libretto ch'io già possedevo da qualche anno, intitolato Berta di Varnol (lavoro di quel Piave, oltre il dovere malmenato da chi sa criticare al solito, ma che non sa fare o non vuol fare), mi posi al lavoro."* The autograph score, however, has an appended terminal date of "1859." But no doubt some rewriting and amendment took place at the later date

[ii] Where they remain. The desk in question stands in the rooms devoted to him in the Fondo Pacini at Pescia



The Imperial Order of the Rose awarded to Pacini by Dom Pedro II of Brazil

[iii] *Cfr* AAVV *Ricordo dei Parentali a Teodulo Mabellini in Pistoia* (Firenze 1899) 30-31. Pacini had written a cantata in honour of the Grand Duke in c1859 (Fondo Pacini, Pescia) which seems never to have reached performance

[iv] Carlo Ludovico di Borbone, son of his first patron and Duca di Lucca; later Duca di Parma

[v] The oratorio had been revamped for a performance at the Teatro del Giglio in Lucca with its new title (whatever Pacini says in his memoirs) on 20 September 1858, with Emilio Bianchi as the Demon and the rest of the cast (angels and devils) divided amongst a group of aristocratic dilettanti. The following year he extended it orchestrally into two parts, with a bold quasi-theatrical impact worthy of a later evolution and with enhanced principal roles: Demonio (basso) and S.Agnese (soprano) and solo tenor - its title now borrowed confusingly from the alternative title under which *Gli arabi nelle Gallie* had sometimes been performed. This version, with a new text by Prinzivalli, was intended for Rome in honour of Pius IX but performance details remain uncertain

[vi] Permission had been granted as early as 22 December 1859 by no less than three Vatican authorities, the *Eminentissimo Vicario*; the *Revisore Politico;* and the *Deputazione de'Pubblici Spettacoli* having given the text a detailed scrutiny. The date confirms the long gestation this plot entailed and the precision of its presentation

[vii] The casting was appropriately convulsive given the worsening political situation but Pacini staged the Rome revival himself. A letter of 8 January 1861 (Fondo Farrajoli in the Biblioteca Vaticana [5466]), as an example of the convulsion reveals that the contracted Bartolini (engaged to sing Squarcia's role of Roberto) was ill, and that he was be replaced by Filippo Coletti who Pacini welcomed enthusiastically (*"un colpo di maestro*") and that he would enjoy working with him [but in the event the role was sung by Lodovico Buti]. Fulfilling contracts had gone by the board in the political mayhem all over the peninsula

[viii] Staged for S.Stefano on 26 December 1861 the cast included both Luigia Ponti Dell'Armi and Eufemia Barlani-Dini but was otherwise unworthy of the event. The score had been heavily cut.

[ix] Pacini op cit 122

[x] Until Giacomo Puccini, Ruggero Leoncavallo and Pietro Mascagni broke the mould. A supercilious view of Italian Opera in worldwide intellectual circles in the twentieth century was to be its legacy: "*it's only Verdi*" would be a cry taken up widely [taking in its stride such twentieth century landmarks as: "*A Night at the Opera*" and the Disney " *Donald Duck and Clara Cluck*"]

[xi] The letter from the exiled Grand Duke is in the Fondo Pacini at Pescia

[xii] Nicola De Giosa (1820-1885), Naples-based composer-conductor and one of the first Italian conductors to attain a genuinely international circuit including tournées in Egypt and Argentina. He set his face against a repertoire inimical to actual musical merit as practiced by several dominant publishers

[xiii] Letter of 3 December 1861 cited in: Franco Schlitzer *Mondo teatrale dell'Ottocento* (Naples 1954), 190

[xiv] Solera's letter, undated, and its reply (dated), are in the Fondo Pacini, Pescia

[xv] *Il mulattiere di Toledo* had been written in tandem with *Gianni di Nisida* - both scores side by side on his desk - no unusual feat of course for this composer. Pacini had written to Jacovacci on 27 September 1860, when on his way to Rome to stage *Gianni* to say that he would be in the Eternal City on 5 October with the completed score of *Il mulattiere* under his arm (Letter in the Fondo Farrajoli, Biblioteca Vaticana [5465])

[xvi] *Le muletier de Tolède* by Adolphe d'Ennery and Louis-François Nicolae pseud. Clairville is an *opéra comique en trois actes* (Paris, Théâtre-Lyrique 1854) and published in 1857. It was used also as a basis for Michael William Balfe's *The Rose of Castille* (London 1857) of whose existence some details may have been known by Pacini most especially as its heroine had been Maria Malibran

[xvii] The printed libretto contains the following note:

> Il presente libretto essendo di esclusiva proprietà del Sig. *Vincenzo Jacovacci*, a la Musica essendo di proprietà dell'Autore Sig.Cav.*Pacini*, quanto al libretto resta diffidato chiunque dalla ristampa del medesimo, o dalla introduzione e vendita non autorizzata dal proprietario, quanto alla musica resta diffidato chiunque dal ritenerla, contrafarla, noleggiarla e farne qualunque traffico non autorizzato dal proprietario: per cui entrambi I suddetti procederanno con tutto il rigore delle leggi verso chi si rendesse colpevole di simili infrazioni a'loro diritti di propriatà.

[xviii] It is not inconceivable that the score of *Il mulattiere di Toledo* may have been destroyed by accident

[xix] But the actual brainchild for his *La mie memorie artistiche* was his Florentine friend the *editore* G.G.Guidi together with Abramo Basevi, as the brief (but extravagant) preface to the first assembled edition of the separate articles (1865), published by Guidi, (the name of the original editor appears in this simple publication but is omitted in later printings) makes clear:

Dichiarazione

> Invitato dal benemerito sig. *G.G.Guidi* a voler far parte dei Collaboratori che d'ora innanzi illustreranno il Giornale "BOCCHERINI" ed istigatò dal dotto e chiarissimo sig. Prof. *Abramo Basevi* a scegliere per tema la mia VITA ARTISTICA, io a dir vero (pensando quanto poco valgo), non sapeva decidermi ad accondiscendere alle officiose istanze che ad onoranza mi venivano fatte….

This brochure of 148 pages, ending with his celebrated envoi "*Fiaschi, trionfi, pianti ed altri guai*", is notable in that it makes the only mention of Giuseppe Verdi in this entire Pacinian publishing venture: the back cover advertises for sale Basevi's *Studio sulle Opere di Giuseppe Verdi* for 4 Lire. The monthly journal "Boccherini" was primarily the work of Basevi, and featured contributions from Alessandro Biaggi, Luigi Ferdinando Casamorata, Baldassare Gamucci, Ricardo Gandolfi, Alberto Mazzucato and others. For a history of the publication see Bianca Maria Antolini (a cura) *Dizionario degli editori musicali italiani* 1750-1930 (Pisa 200), 191

[xx] Having been refused by Giulio Ricordi, in that this kind of music "*non avea mercato*" *Cfr* Guido Salvetti *Una vecchiaia avventurosa* [in] Intorno a Giovanni Pacini op cit 269-270

[xxi] *Cfr* Giovanni Carli Ballola *Divertimento all'Italiana* (Olschki, Florence 1876), 336. The Pacini *Octe*t. rvsn. by Giovanni Carli Ballola, has been published in the *collana* ORPHEUS ITALICUS by Edizioni Suvini Zerboni – Milano 1981

[xxii] His *Belfagor* will not appear in *Le mie memorie artistiche*, it is mentioned only in the 'Specchio delle opere teatrali di Giovanni Pacini' appended posthumously in the 1875 edition by his son-in-law

[xxiii] Michele Andrea Agniello Costa, *anglicised* as Sir Michael Andrew Angus Costa (1808-1884) a composer/conductor of Sephardic descent, had enjoyed Bellini as his *"maestrino*" first at the Conservatorio di S.Sebastiano then later that of S.Pietro a Majella in Naples - his début opera being given a Conservatorio staging when he was eighteen years old in the same year as Pacini's *Niobe*. The latter certainly set eyes on him during his ill-fated visit to view the new premises at the invitation of Zingarelli. They shared the friendship later of such international stars as Maria Malibran and Giulia Grisi.

[xxiv] Letter detailed in the Lisa Cox Catalogue No.4 (1985), item 102.

[xxv] It was a detestation that would bear especially bitter fruit later when Verdi's *Don Carlos* was staged with maximum publicity in Paris in 1866 thus putting Costa's earlier *Don Carlo* of 1844 forever in the shade. Donizetti, however, did set a fragment of Leopoldo Tarantini's text for Costa, presumably for his own satisfaction, the incipit survives in the Malherbe collection

[xxvi] Cox Catalogue *op cit*. Costa had delegated the rehearsal of Meyerbeer's work to an assistant, the perfectionist maestro had requested ten rehearsals and was given two!

[xxvii] *Cfr* Herbert Weinstock *Rossini* (New York 1975), 474, np321 It was played however several times conducted by Luigi Arditi

[xxviii] *Cfr* Richard Macnutt Catalogue No.110 (1980). item 126

[xxix] The unfinished manuscript of the cantata was later in the hands of Pacini's *lucchese* friend Massimiliano Quilici. It is currently in the hands of the author

[xxx] Pacini *op cit* 123

[xxxi] *Ibid* An elaborately detailed account of the abortive negotiations between Piave, his opera *Carmelita/ Don Diego de' Mondoza,* Pacini, Merelli and his *genero* Leoni can be found [in] Intorno a Giovanni Pacini: Bianca Maria Antolini *La collaborazione tra Piave e Pacini nelle lettere della Biblioteca Nazionale di Roma* (Pisa 2003), 206-216. These letters reveal that the name change from *Carmelita* to *Don Diego* was as late as 30 August 1866

[xxxii] Letter of 6 August 1864 (private coll.) The *marchese* Vincenzo Capecelatro (1815-1874) who had taken a few lessons from Pacini in the 1830's, author of a trio of operas and several ambitious religious works (in one of which Pacini had consented to sing as a chorus member) was unfortunately reputed to have the "evil eye" and was thus avoided even by his best friends. There is

a letter from the unhappy Capecelatro asking Pacini (in fragile health at the time and feeling vulnerable) to find him some summer accommodation for himself and his family at Viareggio, to which Pacini, who loved him dearly, replied that his house was let, everything was full, no rooms anywhere near, not even on the entire coast and so forth... There is celebrated account of Giuseppe Verdi contemptuously dismissing such superstitious nonsense ostentatiously greeting Capecelatro backstage – and almost immediately missing death by inches when a huge piece of scenery fell from the wings

[xxxiii] 1864 began solemnly with a *Messa di Requiem* for Michele Puccini (1813-1864) father of Giacomo and erstwhile teacher at the Istituto Pacini whose funeral at Lucca in February was conducted by Pacini

[xxxiv] Letter published in: *Strenna del Corriere* (Milan 1878), 21-3

[xxxv] Pacini was known for several earlier Requiems, most notably that published by Ricordi in 1843 (Pl. Nos 14371-14379) for soprano, contralto, tenor and bass and orchestra which contains the entire litany for the rite, including a very substantial *Dies Irae sequencia, Sanctus, Benedictus* etc.

[xxxvi] *Ibid* note p.22

[xxxvii] Pietro Antonio Coppola (1793-1877) After a successful if turbulent international operatic career had returned to Sicily writing much sacred music in his later years. His *Requiem per Bellini* was almost his final work.

[xxxviii] *Cfr* Maria Giordano *Pietro Antonio Coppola* (Lucca 2003), 29

[xxxix] It was dedicated to Abramo Basevi and published by G.C. Guidi of Florence

[xl] Pacini *op cit* 147 (1875 Ed.)

[xli] Pacini waxes equally euphoric about the role of Mariani *("O tu, mio Mariani*") *ibid* but the printed notice says the conductor was Teodulo Mabellini!

[xlii] In fact, apparently a revision of the *Messa a Quattro voci reali a due cori*, which is a *Messa di Gloria* published by Lucca in 1840 (Pl.No. 4434), but abbreviated chorally and orchestrally while retaining its alternative organ accompaniment and featuring the celebrated *Crucifixus* for tenor and bass.

[xliii] Michele Puccini (1813-1864) scion of a long established family of musicians in Lucca had been engaged as a teacher at the Istituto Pacini. Highly respected author of sacred compositions he had had some educational contact with both Donizetti and Mercadante in earlier life, thus in some ways is an involuntary catalyst between these masters, Pacini, and the *veristi* of the early twentieth century.
Pacini's discourse upon the death of his colleague, delivered in 1864, subsequently appeared in print:

Ne'Funerali di MICHELE PUCCINI/Maestro in Musica/Discorso/Di GIOVANNI PACINI/letto il dì 18 febbraio 1864/nella Chiesa de'Santi Giovanni e Reparata

It included a famous prophesy worthy of any orator:

"Voi, fratelli dilettissimi, a cui i sensi di cristiana carità si caldamente parlano al cuore, ben volgerete un pensiero alla ottuagenaria Madre, ad una desolata Sposa, a sei tenere fanciullette, ad un garzoncello, solo supersite ed erede di quella gloria, che i suoi antenati ben si meritarono nell'arte armonica, a che forse potrà egli far rivivere un giorno."

The *garzoncello* in question was Giacomo Puccini.

Cfr Discorso reprinted in *Le mie memorie artistiche* edizione a cura di Luciano Nicolosi e Salvatore Pinnavaia (Maria Pacini Fazzi, Lucca 1981), 337-346

[xliv] Pacini op cit 155

[xlv] One of these late Masses (it is not clear which) provoking a letter from Rossini which managed to combine some degree of regret for his "*gran diavolo*" jibe; praise for the music he had received; and a more poignant plea for a further supply of olive oil from Pacini's Lucchese friend, conte Bernardini:

> "*Giovanni mio carissimo, derogando alle mie abitudini, riscontro a volo di posta l'affettuosa tua, datata col 2/8, piuttosto che col 2/4; locché ringiovanische di 4 mesi e meglio mi prepara alla lettera del tuo "bel Kyrie", nobile incominciamento della tua Messa, testè ricevuta e che ho cominciato tosto a percorrere col massimo interesse. È questo un prezioso dono che mi vien fatto dal collega e dall'amico, che ho ognora amato con sincere tenerezza e pel quale mi dichiaro riconoscentissimo. Seguo la mia "lettura". Eccomi al Gloria. Ti richiami altre volte un gran diavolo! Oggi m'è forza chiamarti un gran profeta! L'aver tu incominciato il tuo Gloria colle parole "et in terra pax hominibus" (cosa inusitata) mi è prova che, allorquando tu componevi la tua Messa, "leggevi nell'avvenire" e sentivi che dobbiamo modestamente augurarci la pace fra gli uomini, negata essendoti (per ora) dal cielo la "Gloria"! Le barbarie sociale, letterarie e artistica non ti rattristino; ripeti con pace il mio - "Laus Deo"* –
> [Letter of 7 August 1866. Pacini op cit 260-1]

[xlvi] A live recording of the *Requiem per Bellini* (Bongiovanni) includes the *Sinfonia Dante*. Both were recorded at the Chiesa di S.Francesco at Lucca on 3 June 1988

[xlvii] The honeyed tone of this letter from Mercadante of 11 February 1867 [Pacini op cit 262-3 (1875 Ed.)] is not easy to swallow after the vicious personal skirmishes of earlier years. Peace, however, had officially been declared before the statue of Rossini at Pesaro in 1864. The composer had offered Francesco Florimo (equally amnestied, it would seem, even though an appendage of Bellini) a copy of the *Sinfonia Dante* for the Conservatorio Library at the time of the momentous revival of *La fidanzata corsa* in Naples in November 1866

[xlviii] Firenze

[xlix] It is probable that he had in mind, should such a commission materialise, his *Niccolò dei Lapi* was constantly under revision and already assured of some sort of international status. In the event the only recompense for his cantata was membership of the *Istituto Egiziano*!

[l] Mercadante's *Virginia* was first staged at the S.Carlo on 7 April 1866

[li] That Pacini did not give up hope of revival both of *Don Diego De'Mendoza* and *Berta di Varnol* is demonstrated by a letter from Pescia of 28 May 1867 to Alessandro Biaggi [Catalogue of Autographs: Leonardo Capiccirella item 164 (Florence 1956)]:

> "*Il tuo vecchio amico ed ammiratore ti pregherebbe...di rammentare le ultime mie due produzione cioè Don Diego di Mendoza (sic) e la Berta di Varnol...un tuo cenno nella "Nazione" potrebbe far decidare qualche appaltatore...a farle rappresentare in Firenze..."*

Alas nothing came of this. Neither opera has ever been revived either in Florence or anywhere else at the time of writing.

[lii] This celebrated staging had begun on 15 January. The sisters Marchisio, Barbara (1833-1819) contralto and Carlotta (1835-1872) soprano, were a phenomenal duo who attracted a maximum attention from the press, though they were primarily Rossinian specialists their *Saffo* (with Carlotta in the title role, and Barbara as Climene) was one of their more spectacular ventures and

repeated elsewhere. They put on an especially sensational performance of this opera in St. Peterburg two years later (1 November 1969)

[liii] Giovanni Pacini *Le mie memorie artistiche* (1875 ed,) 222 [*Autobiografia riscontrata sugli autografi e pubblicata da Ferdinando Magnani*]. The grateful accolade to De Giosa confirms that Pacini was ready to keep on adding to his memoirs in the years after official publication had ceased.

[liv] It was a paper-thin reconciliation and did not prevent an unrepentant Florimo from continuing to misrepresent Pacini's music and achievement in the Neapolitan chronologies he compiled and published when most of his friends and victims were dead. In the echo of the twenty-eight curtain calls for *Berta di Varnol* it is not difficult to perceive the deficiency of a scholar who could insist that "*the only composer who was not well-received in Naples was Pacini*."

[lv] The performance history of the Roman *Il carcere Mamertino* is oddly similar to that of his earlier sacred opera/oratorio, the Florentine *drama tragico*, *La distruzione di Gerusalemme* of 1858. That he could not have been present at the first performance (it was almost incredible that Pacini should have been absent from a prima) of *Il carcere Mamertino* at the Campidoglio is confirmed by the date of the letter he wrote from Pescia on 28 May 1867 (see note XIV above)

[lvi] This was a Messa a tre voci, its incomplete manuscript at Pescia has the following words signed by Marianna Scoti on the final page: "*ultime note scritte dal mio diletto consort/ Marianna Pacini nata Scoti."*

[lvii] Ghizlanzoni *Libro Serio* op cit 18

[lviii] Mercadante called it *"La mia Fantasia in quattro parti consecutive ed a Grande Orchestra"* and not a "*Sinfonia"* which is sometimes used to describe this *Omaggio a Pacini*. In essence it is a compendium of motives from the Pacini operas known in Naples.

[lix] *La punizione* of 1854, and *Lidia di Bruxelles* of 1858

[lx] To the Emperor of Brazil in 1855

[lxi] *Cfr* Antonio Fazi *I teatri di Ancona* (Ancona 1979)

[lxii] Letter from Pacini to Nazzareno Gatti nd (Fondo Pacini, Pescia) Letter No.580

[lxiii] Pacini quoted [in] "*Un opera postuma di Pacini"* published as an Appendix to the Roman Journal La Riforma [reprinted in : Pacini *op cit* 304 (1875 Ed)]

[lxiv] A bell-ringing contraption related to a Glockenspiel sometimes supplied with a keyboard.

[lxv] The *Sinfonia Dante* requires similar exotic instrumental components.

[lxvi] **"***Un opera postuma" op cit* 302-3

[lxvii] The Pagliano libretto states on its frontespiece:

POESIA E MUSICA DEL MAESTRO GIOVANNI PACINI

On revival at the Teatro Principe Umberto in Florence on 8 July 1879 (also conducted by Mabellini) the frontespiece states very clearly however:

MELODRAMMA-TRAGICO IN TRE ATTI
CON DANZE ANALOGHI
DI CESARE PERINI
MUSICA
DEL MAESTRO
Comm. GIOVANNI PACINI

[lxviii] "*un opera postuma" op cit* 309

[lxix] Filippo Cicconetti *"Nella morte di Giovanni Pacini"* [in] Pacini *op cit* 314 (1875 Ed)]

[lxx] Ghizlanzoni *op cit* 19

[lxxi] *Cfr "Son regina son guerriera"* catalogue per la mostra in occasione del bicentenario della nascita [di] Giuditta Pasta (Saronno 1997), 135

[lxxii] Raffaele Colucci [in] *L'Emporio pittoresco* Anno IV, N.129 (Venezia 1867),99

Outline catalogue Giovanni Pacini

Operas

P1 DON POMPONIO
Farsa in un atto. Libretto by "signor dottor Paganini d'Oleggio"
Source: Carlo Goldoni *Il matrimonio per concorso* Venice 1762-3
Unperformed. Composed 1812
Cast: (Don Pomponio), (Pasquale), (Conte)
[The text by Luigi Pacini's friend *dottor* Paganini may have been known by Giuseppe Palomba in the same circle whose farsa LA GAZZETTA for Rossini (1816) employs the name 'Don Pomponio' instead of 'Pandolfo' as in Goldoni's original]
Autograph (Introduzione and fragments) I-PEA

P2 ANNETTA E LUCINDO
Farsa comico in un atto. Libretto by Francesco Marconi
Source: Marie-Justine-Benoîte Duronceray Favart, Charles-Simon Favart and J.B.L. de Santerre *Annette e Lubin* (music by Adolphe-Benoît Blaise) Paris 1762
1st Perf: Teatro Santa Radegonda, Milan 17 October 1813
Cast: *Giuseppe Crespi* (Lucindo), *Cristina Cassotti* (Annetta), *Luigi Pacini* (Maestro Prospero), *Giovanni Battista Binaghi* (Dioscoride), *Marietta Cuneo* (Rosina), *Giuseppe Bencivenga* (Giulio)
MS I-Mr Bc Fc

P3 LA ROSINA
Farsa in un atto. Libretto by Giuseppe Palomba
Source: A *part-rifacimento* of P2 ANNETTA E LUCINDO?
1st Perf: Teatro della Pergola, Florence Spring 1814
Cast: (Ernesto), *Luigi Pacini* (Don Prospero), (Rosina), (Volpino)
MS (with autograph corrections and additions) I-PEA

P4 L'AMBIZIONE DELUSA
Dramma buffo in due atti. Libretto by Giuseppe Palomba
Source: Unknown, possibly an original text
1st Perf: Teatro della Pergola, Florence May 1814
Cast: *Maria Marcolini* (Fiordispina), *Luigi Zamboni* (Trespolo), *Luigi Pacini* (Gianfabistone), *Domenico Bertozzi* (Piero), *Giuseppe Spirito* (Fulgenzio), *Maddalena De'Paolis* (Bettina*), Giuseppe Bencivenga* (Leandro)
Autographs I-PEA (Act 1 only) Mr

P5 L'ESCAVAZIONE DEL TESORO
(revived immediately afterwards at La Pergola in Florence as LA BALLERINA RAGGIRATRICE and in two acts with a refurbished text by Giuseppe Palomba)
Farsetta in un atto. Libretto by Francesco Marconi
Source: Mezzanotte *La ballerina raggiratrice* (music by Luigi Caruso) Rome 1805
1st Perf: Teatro Costanti, Pisa 18 December 1814
Cast: *Luigia Franzoni* (Rosa), *Luigi Pacini* (Gelsumino), *Giuseppe Tavani, Nicola Tosi, Paolo Basichi*
Autograph I-PEA (as L'ESCAVAZIONE DEL TESORO – that of LA BALLERINA RAGGIRATRICE lost)

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P6 GLI SPONSALI DE'SILFI
Commedia in due atti. Libretto by Francesco Marconi
Source: based on a folk tale
1stPerf: Teatro de'Filodrammatici, Milan carnevale 1815
Cast: *Cecilia Gaddi* (Rosaspina), *Giuseppe Pasta* (Odoardo), *Angelo Maria Gussoni* (Bertolone), *Carlotta Braghieri* (Giulietta), *Gaetano Pirola* (Cuccuzzolo), *Giuseppe Lombardi* (Don Marziale)
Autograph I-PEA MS F-Pn

P7 IL SEGUITO DI SER MARCANTONIO
(known also as BETTINA VEDOVA)
Opera buffa in due atti. Libretto by Angelo Anelli
Source: Devised as a sequel to Anelli's *Ser Marcantonio* (music by Pavesi), Milan 1810
1stPerf: Teatro San Moise, Venice June 1815
Cast: *Maria Marcolini* (Bettina), (Dorina), (Lisetta), (Lindoro), (Tobia), (Pasquino), (Nardone)
Autograph (not quite complete) I-PEA [rvsd. vsn. of 1820]

P8 L'INGENUA ossia IL FELICE RAVVEDIMENTO
Farsa in un atto. Libretto by Francesco Marconi
Source: A German play
1stPerf: Teatro San Benedetto, Venice 5 May 1816
Cast: *Ranieri Remorini* (Marchese Walmoden), *Teresa Bartolini* (Contessa Amalia), *Francesco Del Medico* (Grifone), *Rosa Morandi* (Nina), *Domenico Saini* (Cecco), *Luigi Pacini* (Bastiano), *Francesco Desirò* (Gasparo)
MS I-PEA (inc. fragments)

P9 LO SPREZZATORE SCHERNITO
(Burletta comprising music by Ferdinando Paër, Ercole Paganini, Pietro Carlo Guglielmi, Francesco Sampieri, Pietro Generali, Marco Portogallo, Giuseppe Farinelli and Giovanni Pacini – some of which having been especially supplied for the occasion)
Burletta per musica a quattro voci in un atto. Libretto by "N.N" (but Angelo Anelli)
Source: A retro parody rivalling Pergolesi's intermezzo *Il geloso schernito* of 1732; Pacini's contribution, is a cavatina for the "sprezzatore" Don Chiffen 'Tren la donna quattro mali'
1stPerf: Teatro della Pergola, 22 November 1816
Cast: *Geltrude Righetti-Giorgi* (Violante), *Paolo Rosich* (Don Aliberto Chiffen), *Amerigo Sbigoli* (Geppino), *Antonio Parlamagni* (Don Seme)
Autograph lost

P10 LA CHIARINA
Farsa in due atti. Libretto by Angelo Anelli
Source: Angelo Anelli *La Chiarina* (music by Giuseppe Farinelli) Milan 1816, but with the music completely revamped by Pacini with the collaboration of the librettist
1stPerf: Teatro San Moise, Venice carnevale 1817 (late December 1816)
Cast: (Emilia), (Chiarina), (Maso), (Dorina), (Generale), (Adjutante), (Servitore)
Autograph (Introduzione only) I-PEA

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P11 DALLA BEFFA IL DISINGANNO
Dramma buffo d'un atto solo. Libretto by Gasparo Scopabirbe (Angelo Anelli)
Source: An original text "*Per una gara collo Scannamuse"* in part parodying Mayr's *Che originali* with references to the *Corinne* of Mme de Staël
1stPerf: Teatro Re, Milan 2 January 1817
Cast: *Camilla Ferlendis* (Donna Aristéa), *Teresa Cesarani* (Albina), *Gaetano Pozzi* (Sandrino), *Luigi Pacini* (Giovan Matteo), *Giuliano Pucci* (Nardone), *Serafina Rubini* (Fiammetta)
Autograph recycled: (fragments only) I-Mr PEA

P12 IL MATRIMONIO PER PROCURA
Dramma giocoso di un atto. Libretto by Giordano Scannamuse (Angelo Anelli)
Source: An even more vulgar elaboration of the plot of P11 with identical music
1stPerf: Teatro Re, Milan 11 January 1817
Cast: *Luigi Pacini* (Pangrazio), *Teresa Cesarani* (Lauretta), *Domenico Ronconi* (Medoro), , *Giuliano Pucci* (Barone Ventoso), *Serafina Rubini* (Rosina), *Gaetano Pozzi* (Lesbino) *"N.N"* (un notajo)
Autograph recycled (see P13)

P13 IL CARNEVALE DI MILANO
Dramma giocoso per musica d'un atto solo. Libretto by Paolo Lattanzio (Angelo Anelli)
Source: P11 and P12 with identical music except for a new Cavatina for Ser Gasparo and new Finale, complete with a ballet with fake Chinese setting
1stPerf: Teatro Re, Milan 23 February 1817
Cast: *Camilla Ferlendis* (Contessa Tea), *Luigi Pacini* (Conte Maccabeo), *Teresa Cesarani* (Peppina), *Gaetano Pozzi* (Lindoro), *Serafina Rubini* (Claudina), *Domenico Ronconi* (Ser Gasparo)
MS I-Mr (as *Il matrimonio per procura*)

P14 LA BOTTEGA DA CAFFÈ
Farsa in un atto. Libretto by Angelo Anelli
Source: 1. Carlo Goldoni *La bottega del caffè* Venice 1750-1. 2. Giuseppe Maria Foppa *La bottega di caffè* (music by Francesco Gardi) Venice 1801. 3.Antonio Gasbarri *Il maldicente o sia La bottega del caffè* (music by Pavesi) Florence 1807
1stPerf: Teatro Re, Milan 28 February 1817
Cast: (Narciso), (Zanetto), (Dorilla)
Autograph lost or recycled

P15 PIGLIA IL MONDO COME VIENE
Dramma giocoso per musica in due atti. Libretto by "N.N" (but Angelo Anelli)
Source: A near relative of PP11, P12 and P13 and with some of the same characters but with entirely new music (the score is dated by Pacini "1816")
1stPerf: Teatro Re, Milan 29 May 1817
Cast: *Giuseppe Crespi* (Don Peppino), *Luigi Pacini* (Ser Bartolommeo), *Carolina Crespi Bianchi* (Donna Tea), *Rosa Nerini* (Agnese), *Serafina Rubini* (Albina), *Francesco Del Medico* (Dottor Michelazzo), *Domenico Ronconi* (Il tramontano)
Autograph I-PEA MS I-Mr F-Pn

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P16 ADELAIDE E COMINGIO
Melodramma semiserio in due atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi
Source: 1. François-Thomas-Marie de Baculard d'Arnaud *Les amants malheureux ou Le comte de Comminge* Paris 1765. 2. Giacomoantonio Gualzetti d'Eriso *Gli amori di Comingio, Adelaide maritata*, and *Adelaide e Comingio romiti* [It.trans. Naples 1789] 3. Andrea Leone Tottola *Adelaide maritata* (music by Valentino Fioravanti) Naples 1812
1stPerf: Teatro Re, Milan 30 December 1817
Cast: *Carolina Brizzi* (Adelaide), *Domenico Ronconi* (Comingio), *Luigi Pacini* (Maresciallo di Benavides), *Michele Cavara* (Conte di Benavides). *Antonio Razzani* (Lorenzo), *Serafina Rubini* (Lisaura), *Angelo Ferri* (Alberico)
Autograph I-Mr (fragments) PEA (Act 1) MS F-Pn I-OS DK-Kk

P17 ATALA
Azione drammatica in due atti. Libretto by Antonio Peracchi
Source: François-René vicomte de Chateaubriand *Atala ou les amours de deux sauvages dans le désert* Paris 1801
1stPerf: Teatro Nuovo, Padua June 1818
Cast: *Domenico Ronconi* (Simagham), *Eugenia Angeloni* (Atala), *Francesco Del Medico* (Orisloco), *Emilia Bonini* (Corebo), *Giuseppe Pasta* (Rodrigo), *Carolina Chiappa* (Mila), *"N.N"* (Eremita)
Autograph I-PEA (fragments)

P18 IL BARONE DI DOLSHEIM
Melodramma in due atti. Libretto by Felice Romani
Source: 1. Luciano Francisco Comella *Federico II Re di Prussia* Barcelona 1790 [It. trans. 1796]. 2. Charles-Antoine-Pigault de l'Épinoy pseud. Pigault-Lebrun *Le baron de Dolsheim* Paris 1811
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 23 September 1818
Cast: *Ranieri Remorini* (Federico), *Giacomo Rubini* (Carlo, Barone di Dolsheim), *Antonio Ambrosi* (Teodoro), *Francesco Biscottini* (Blumenthal), *Violante Camporesi* (Amalia), *Maria Gioja* (Batilde), *Luigi Pacini* (Brandt), *Alessandro De Angioli* (Uffiziale)
MS I-Mr Mc Nc Vt F-Pn Vsc Milan (2 editions)

P19 LA SPOSA FEDELE
Melodramma semiserio in due atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi (rvsd.by Pietro Guglielmi 1827)
Source: "N.N." *La moglie fedele* (music by Felice Alessandri) London 1768
1stPerf: Teatro San Benedetto, Venice 14 January 1819
CVast: *Domenico Ronconi* (Conte di Provenza), *Alberico Curioni* (Erardo), *Cristina Cassotti* (Teodora*), Ranieri Remorini* (Roberto di Foix*), Lelio Masetti* (Riccardo), *Maddalena Simonetti* (Brigida), *Luigi Pacini* (Michelone), *Elena Badoera* (Carlotta)
Autographs I-PEA Mr MS I-Bc Fc Mc (2vsns.) Us-Bp (all containing contrasting versions of the score)

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P20 IL FALEGNAME DI LIVONIA
Melodramma in due atti. Libretto by Felice Romani
Source: Alexandre-Vincent Pineu Duval *Le Menuisier de Livonie ou les illustres voyageurs* Paris 1805
1st Perf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 12 April 1819
Cast: *Gaetano Crivelli* (Pietro il Grande), *Francesca Maffei-Festa* (Caterina), *Ranieri Remorini* (Falegname), *Serafina Rubini* (Sofia Mazepa), *Giuseppe Salvioni* (Madama Fritz), *Luigi Pacini* (Magistrato), *Francesco Biscottini* (Birman), *Alessandro De Angeli* (Cancelliere)
Autographs I-Rsc PEA (fragments) MS I-Mr F-Pn (with changes to the role of Caterina)

P21 GL'ILLINESI
Opera seria in due atti. Libretto by Felice Romani
Source: Felice Romani *Gl'Illinesi* (music by Basily) Milan 1819
Unperformed. Composed in 1819
Cast: (Monreal), (Guido)
Autograph ([Introduzione, coro ('*dei francesi*) and cavatina) I-PEA

P22 VALLACE O SIA L'EROE SCOZZESE
Melodramma serio in due atti. Libretto by Felice Romani
Source: Jane Porter *The Scottish Chiefs* London 1810
1st Perf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 14 February 1820
Cast: *Violante Camporesi* (Elena Mar), *Carolina Bassi* (Vallace, Reggente di Scozia), *Adelaide Ghinzani* (Giovanna Mar), *Claudio Bonoldi* (Odoardo Re d'Inghilterra), *Giuseppe Fioravanti* (Cumino), *Alessandro De Angeli* (Glocester), *Francesco Biscottini* (Bruce, Re di Scozia)
MS I-Mc Mr PEA (rvsd.vsn of 1821)

P23 LA SACERDOTESSA D'IRMINSUL
Melo-dramma eroico in due atti. Libretto by Felice Romani
Source: Jean-Pierre Noël and Henri Lemaire *Clodomire ou La Prêtresse d'Irminsul* Paris 1803
1st Perf: Teatro Nuovo, Trieste 11 May 1820
Cast: *Carolina Pellegrini* (Romilda), *Giovanni Battista Velluti* (Ruggiero), *Pietro Bolognesi* (Clodomiro), *Carlo Zucchelli* (Sennone), *Pietro Gentili* (Ubaldo)
Autograph I-PEA MS GB-Lbm F-Pn

P24 LA SCHIAVA IN BAGDAD
Melodramma in due atti. Libretto by "N.N" (Vittorio Pezzi, acc. to some sources, but this may have been simply a ruse to avoid paying the real poet as Pacini's own autograph copy of the score (I-PEA) says "*poesia di Romani*")
Source: Felice Romani *Il califo e la schiava* Milan 1819
1st Perf: Teatro Carignano, Turin 28 October 1820
Cast: *Pio Botticelli* (Califfo), *Savino Monelli* (Nadir), *Giuditta Pasta* (Zora), *Giovanni Battista Cipriani* (Tamas), *Luigi Pacini* (Mustafà), *Adelaide Cassago* (Zulma), *Angelo Quadri* (Rustano)
Autograph I-PEA MS I-Nc Mt Vt F-Pn

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P25 LA GIOVENTÙ DI ENRICO QUINTO
Melo-dramma giocoso per musica in due atti. Libretto by Filippo Tarducci with rvsns. by Felice Romani and Jacopo Ferretti
Source: 1. Alexandre-Vincent Pineu Duval *La jeunesse de Henri V* Paris 1806. 2. Landiani *La gioventù di Enrico Quinto* (music by Herold) Naples 1815. 3. Filippo Tarducci *La gioventù di Enrico Quinto* (music by Luigi Carlini) Naples 1819
1st Perf: Teatro Valle, Rome 26 December 1820
Cast: *Giustina Casagli* (Bettina), *Amerigo Sbigoli* (Enrico), *Carlo Zucchelli* (Rocester), *Nicola Tacci* (Coop), *Cecilia Smith* (Eduardo), *Zenobio Vitarelli* (Milord Clark)
Autograph I-PEA MS I-Fc Mr Nc F-Pn DK-Kk Vsc Rome

P26 CESARE IN EGITTO
Melodramma eroico in due atti. Libretto by Jacopo Ferretti
Source: 1. Gaetano Gioja *Cesare in Egitto* (ballo) Naples 1807. 2. Luigi Andrioli *Cesare in Egitto* (music by Ercole Paganini) Turin 1814
1st Perf: Teatro Argentina, Rome 26 December 1821
Cast: *Maria Ester Mombelli* (Cleopatra), *Alberto Torri* (Achille), *Domenico Donzelli* (Giulio Cesare), *Amerigo Sbigoli* (Tolomeo), *Gaetana Corini* (Idalide), *Gaetano Rambaldi* (Apollodoro)
Autograph I-PEA MS F-Pn DK-Kk

P27 LA VESTALE
Melodramma serio in due atti. Libretto by Luigi Romanelli
Source: 1. Johann Joachim Winckelmann *Monumenti antichi ineditit* Rome 1767-68 [Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle *Ericie ou La Vestale* Paris 1769 for Victor-Joseph-Étienne de Jouy *La Vestale* (music by Gaspare Spontini) Paris 1807] 2. Anon *La Vestale* (music by Vincenzo Pucitta) London 1810 3. Salvatore Viganò *La vestale* (ballo) Milan 1818
1st Perf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 6 February 1823
Cast: *Teresa Belloc* (Giulia), *Isabella Fabbrica* (Licinio), *Luigi Lablache* (Erennio), *Savino Monelli* (Cinna), *Carlo Poggiali* (Fabio), *Giuseppa Rovetta* (Emilia), *Angela Maria Silvestri-Bertozzi* (Fulvia), *Carlo Donà* (Sempronio)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-Mc PEA Vt Vsc Milan (this last, part-original vsn./part that of 1831 revival)

P28 TEMISTOCLE [IL TEMISTOCLE]
Dramma per musica in due atti. Libretto by Pietro Metastasio revised by Pietro Anguillesi
Source: Pietro Antonio Domenico Bonaventura Trapassi pseud. Metastasio *Temistocle* (music by Antonio Caldara) Vienna 1736
1st Perf: Regio Teatro del Giglio, Lucca 28 August 1823
Cast: *Benedetta Rosmunda Pisaroni* (Serse), *Nicola Tacchinardi* (Temistocle), *Santina Ferlotti* (Aspasia), *Beatrice Anti* (Neocle), *Fanny Ayton* (Rossane), *Luigi Biondini* (Lisimaco), *Giuseppe Visanetti* (Sebaste)
MS I-PEA Rsc Mr GB-Lbm F-Pn B-Bc DK-Kk

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P29 ISABELLA ED ENRICO
Melodramma semiserio in due atti. Libretto by Luigi Romanelli
Source: Unknown
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 12 June 1824
Cast: *Nicola De Grecis* (Pandolfo), *Cecilia Gaddi* (Lauretta), *Filippo Galli* (Podestà), *Marianna Kainz* (Isabella), *Carlo Poggiali* (Carlo), *Giovanni Battista Verger* (Enrico)
Autograph I-Mr PEA (fragment)

P30 ALESSANDRO NELL'INDIE
Dramma per musica in due atti. Libretto by Giovanni Federico Schmidt and Andrea Leone Tottola
Source: Pietro Antonio Domenico Bonaventura Trapassi pseud. Metastasio *Alessandro nelle Indie* (music by Leonardo Vinci) Rome 1729 (but in edition prepared by Johann Christian Bach, Teatro San Carlo, Naples 1762)
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 29 September 1824
Cast: *Adelaide To*si (Cleofide), *Caterina Liparini* (Poro), *Andrea Nozzari* (Alessandro), *Carlo Moncada* (Timagene), *Giovanni Boccaccio* (Gandarte)
MS I-PEA Nc GB-Lbm F-Pn

P31 AMAZILIA
Dramma per musica in un atto (rvsd. into 2 acts in 1827). Libretto by Giovanni Federico Schmidt
Source: 1. Jean-François Marmontel *Les Incas ou La destruction de l'Empire du Pérou* Paris 1777. 2. Giovanni Federico Schmidt *Gli americani* (music by Giacomo Tritto) Naples 1802
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 6 July 1825
Cast: *Joséphine Fodor-Mainvielle* (Amazilia), *Lugi Lablache* (Cabana*), Almerinda Manzocchi* (Mila), *Giovanni David* (Zadiro), *Gaetano Chizzola* (Orozimbo), *Pizzoni* (Alvaro)
Autograph I-Nc (1act vsn) MS I-Fc Mc Nc Raanc
Autograph I-PEA (2act vsn) Vsc Milan (2act vsn.)

P32 L'ULTIMO GIORNO DI POMPEI
Dramma per musica in due atti. Libretto by Andrea Leone Tottola
Source: An original scenario by Antonio Nicolini, architect of the Teatro San Carlo
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 19 November 1825
Cast: *Adelaide Tosi* (Ottavia), *Almerinda Manzocchi* (Clodio), *Giovanni David* (Appio Diomede), *Luigi Lablache* (Sallustio), *Giuseppe Ciccimara* (Publio), *Michele Benedetti* (Gran Sacerdote), *Eloisa Manzocchi* (Menenio), *Gaetano Chizzola* (Fausto)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-Mr PEA F-Pn Vsc Milan

P33 LA GELOSIA CORRETTA
Melodramma semiserio in due atti. Libretto by Luigi Romanelli
Source: Jean-Nicolas Bouilly and Louis-Emmanuel-Félicité-Charles Mercier Dupaty *Françoise de Foix* (music by Berton) Paris 1809
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 27 March 1826
Cast: *Antonio Ambrogi* (Anselmo), *Giovanni David* (Enrico II), *Stefania Favelli* (Clotilde), *Carlo Moncada* (Ernesto), *Marietta Sacchi* (Eleonora), *Carolina Franchini* (Edmondo)

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Autograph I-Mr MS I-Mc

P34 NIOBE
Dramma eroico-mitologico in due atti. Libretto by Andrea Leone Tottola.
Source: 1. *Homer Iliade XXIV*. 2. Gaetano Gioja *Niobe o sia La vendetta di Latona* (ballo spettacolo o pantomimico in sei atti) Florence 1825
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 19 November 1826
Cast: *Luigi Lablache* (Anfione), *Giuditta Pasta* (Niobe), *Almerinda Manzocchi* (Learco), *Carolina Ungher* (Asteria), *Giovanni Battista Rubi*ni (Licida), *Antonio Orlandini* (Arcandro), *Gaetano Chizzola* (Adrasto), *Eloisa Manzocchi* (Doride), *Giacomo Fortini* (Demetrio), *Michele Benedetti* (Vulcano, *"N.N"* (Diana)
[The roles of Ismeno,Alfenore,Tantalo, Fedimo, Iliomeo, Medea, Pelopia, Pitia, Astioche and Amiclea were danced by pupils of the *Reali Scuole di Ballo*]
Autograph I-Nc MS I-PEA Mr

P35 GLI ARABI NELLE GALLIE (also IL TRIONFO DELLA FEDE)
Melodramma serio in due atti. Libretto by Luigi Romanelli
Source: Charles-Victor Prévost vicomte d'Arlincourt *Le Rénégat* Paris 1822
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 8 March 1827
Cast: *Stefania Favelli* (Ezilda), *Brigida Lorenzani* (Leodato), *Giovanni David* (Agobar), *Vincenzo Galli* (Gondair), *Teresa Ruggeri* (Zarele), *Lorenzo Lombardi* (Aloar), *Carlo Poggiali* (Mohamud)
Autographs I-Nc PEA (Paris 1855 vsn) also parts, fragments and extracts of many versions; MS I-Nc Bc Mc Gb-Lbm F-Pn (1 act) DK-Kk Vsc Milan

P36 MARGHERITA REGINA D'INGHILTERRA
Dramma per musica in due atti. Libretto by Andrea Leone Tottola
Source: A bowderised version of the *mélodrame* by René-Charles-Guilbert de Pixérécourt *Marguerite d'Anjou* Paris 1810?
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 19 November 1827
Cast: *Luigi Lablache* (Enrico VI), *"N.N"* (Principe de Galles), *Berardo Winter* (Eduardo di Jorck), *Capranico [figlio]* (Conte di Warvick), *Michele Benedetti* (Athol), *Gaetano Chizzola* (Melford), *Adelaide Tosi* (Margherita di Anjou), *Eloisa Manzocchi* (Adel)
MS I-Nc

P37 PER DIO NON INTENDO COSA DICE
Opera buffa. Libretto by Bartolomeo Merelli
Composed in 1828 and intended for a Bologna staging
Autograph lost or recycled

P38 I CAVALIERI DI VALENZA
Melodramma tragico in due atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi
Source: René-Charles-Guilbert de Pixérécourt *La femme à deux maris* Paris 1801
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 11 June 1828
Cast: *Henriette Méric-Lalande* (Isabella di Lara), *Berardo Winter* (Gusmano), *Carolina Ungher* (Ramiro), *Luigi Biondini* (Giuliano), *Clotilde Marchisio* (Elvira), *Domenico Spiaggi* (Fernandez), *Lorenzo Lombardi* (Alfonzo)
Autograph I-Mc MS I-Mr PEA Vsc Milan

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P39 I CROCIATI A TOLEMAIDE ossia MALEK ADEL
Melodramma serio in due atti. Libretto by Calisto Bassi
Source: 1. Sophie Risteau Cottin *Mathilde* London 1805. 2. Francesco Clerico *Matilde e Malek-Adel* (ballo) Milan 1824
1stPerf: Teatro Grande, Trieste, 13 November 1828
Cast: *Violante Camporesi* (Matilde), *Rosa Mariani* (Malek-Adel), *Luciano Mariani* (Guglielmo), *Francesco Piermarini* (Lusignano), *Adelaide Annoni* (Argene), *Giuseppe Brunelli* (Kaled), *"N.N"* (Ugone)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-PEA (inc. parts)

P40 IL TALISMANO o sia LA TERZA CROCIATA IN PALESTINA
Melodramma storico in tre atti. Libretto by Gaetano Barbieri
Source: Sir Walter Scott *Tales of the Crusaders – The Talisman* London 1825
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 10 June 1829
Cast: *Antonio Tamburini* (Riccardo, Cuor di Leone), *Maria Tamburini-Gioja* (Berengaria), *Emilia Bonini* (Edita), *Giovanni Battista Rubini* (Il Cavaliere del Leopardo), *Giuseppe Frezzolini* (Lord Multon), *Luigi Biondini* (Medico Saracino), *Lorenzo Biondi* (Il Gran Maestro de'Templari), *Marietta Biondi* (Enrico), *Lorenzo Lombardi* (un Capo di Marabuti)
Autographs I-Mc PEA MS E-Mp Vsc Milan

P41 IL CONTESTABILE DI CHESTER OVVERO I FIDANZATI
Melodramma romantico in tre parti. Libretto by Domenico Gilardoni
Source: Sir Walter Scott *The Betrothed* London 1825
1syPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 23 November 1829
Cast: *Luigi Lablache* (Ugo di Lacy), *Adelaide Tosi* (Damiano), *Luigia Boccabadati* (Evelina), *Giovanni Arrigotti* (Armando), *Virgimà Eden* (Adele), *Gennaro Ambrosini* (Venoino), *Gaetano Chizzola* (Rodolfo)
Autograph I-Nc MS I-Mc PEA Mr Nc F-Pn E-Mp Vsc Milan

P42 GIOVANNA D'ARCO
Azione drammatica musicale in quattro atti. Libretto by Gaetano Barbieri
Source: Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* Berlin 1802
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 14 March 1830
Cast: *Antonio Tamburin*i (Carlo VII), *Henriette Méric-Lalande* (Giovanna), *Giovan Battista Rubini* (Leonello), *Luigi Biondini* (Tebaldo), *Lorenzo Biondi* (Castiglione), *Lorenzo Lombardi* (Fastolfo), *Margherita* Rubini (Giovine)
Autograph I-Mc MS I-PEA Mr

P43 IL CORSARO
Melo-dramma romantico in due atti. Libretto by Jacopo Ferretti
(Completely revised with a reversal of plot in tre parti in 1832).
Source: 1. George Gordon Noël Lord Byron *The Corsair* London 1814. 2. Jacopo Ferretti *Il corsaro* (music by Filippo Celli) Rome 1822. 3. Giovanni Galzerani *Il corsaro* azione mimica in cinque atti Milan 1826
1stPerf: Teatro Apollo, Rome 15 January 1831

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Cast: *Rosa Mariani* (Corrado), *Carolina Carobbi* (Medora), *Marietta Albini* (Gulnara), *Pietro Gentili* (Seid), *Alberto Torri* (Giovanni), *Alessandro Giacchini* (Gonsalvo*), Giuseppa Marini* (Zoè)
Autograph: I-Mc MS I-Rsc PEA F-Pn Vsc Rome
Rvsd vsn.
Melodramma romantico in tre parti. Libretto by Jacopo Ferretti
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, 10 January 1832
Cast: *Clorinda Corradi-Pantanelli* (Corrado), *Amalia Schütz-Oldosi* (Medora), *Piantanida* (Giovanni), *Dell-Oro* (Gonsalvo*), Cesare Badiali* (Seid), *Giulia Grisi* (Gulnara), *Marietta Sacchi* (Zoè)
MS I-Mr Vsc Milan

P44 GUSMANO D'ALMEIDA
Opera seria in tre atti. Libretto by Luigi Romanelli
Source: Antonio Monticini *Gusmano d'Almeida ossia Il rinnegato di Portogallo* (ballo) (azione mimico-drammatica) Parma 1831
Composed in 1832 for a Venice staging but unperformed
Cast: (Gusmano – intended for *Domenico Reina*), (Zulmira), (Acmet), (Adelgonda), (Almanzor), (Sofia), (Agabet)
Autograph I-PEA (fragments/Introduzione as ADELGONDA E ZULMIRA). Some of its music was recycled into P45 IVANHOE (eg. aria for Briano) and possibly into P46 IL CONVITATO DI PIETRA

P45. IVANHOE
Melodramma in due atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi
Source: 1. Sir Walter Scott *Ivanhoe* London 1819. 2 Émile Deschamps and Gabriel-Gustave de Wailly *Ivanhoe* (pastiche of music by Rossini) Paris 1826
1stPerf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 19 March 1832
Cast: *Domenico Cosselli* (Cedrico), *Giuditta Grisi* (Wilfredo), *Anna Del Serre* (Editta), *Alessandro Giacchini* (Alberto), *Domenico Reina* (Briano), *Natale Costantini* (Ismaele), *Rosalbina Carradori-Allan* (Rebecca)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-PEA Vt Vsc Milan MS I-Nc (rvsd.vsn. of 1835)

P46 IL CONVITATO DI PIETRA
Farsa in due atti. Libretto compiled by Gaetano Barbieri from texts by Moliére (remotely from 'Don Juan' 1665 trans.Barbieri 1823); Lorenzo Da Ponte (Mozart); Bertati (Gazzaniga); Giuseppe Maria Foppa (Guardi); and others including Pacini himself (?)
1stPerf: Teatrino of the Villa of the Belluomini family, Viareggio 28 July 1832
Cast: *Francesco Pacini* (Don Giovanni), *Rosa Pacini* (Donn'Anna*), Claudia Pacini-Belluomini* (Zerlina), *Giovanni Billé* (Masetto/Commendatore), *Luigi Pacini* (Ficcanaso), *Domenico Tonelli* (Duca Ottavio)
Autograph I-PEA Rsc

P47 GLI ELVEZJ O SIA CORRADO DI TOCHENBURGO
Melo-dramma in due atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi
Source: Giulio Viganò *Idda contessa di Tokenburgo ossia La forza dell'amore coniugale* (ballo) Venice 1805
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 12 January 1833

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Cast: *Luigi Lablache* (Corrado), *Giuseppina Ronzi-De Begnis* (Idalide), *Gennaro Ambrosini* (Illonello), *Nicola Ivanoff* (Teoberto), *Francesco Lombardi* (Sigiero)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-Mc

P48 FERNANDO, DUCA DI VALENZA
Melodramma in un atto. Libretto by Paolo Pola
Source: Unknown, but a drama of reconciliation remotely emulating parts of Tottola's text for Donizetti's *Imelda de'Lambertazzi* (Naples 1830) with a lieto fine for the *giorno onomastico* of Ferdinando II Delle Due Sicilie
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 30 May 1833
Cast: *Luigi Lablache* (Alfonso), *Domenico Reina* (Fernando), *Francesco Lombardi* (Diego), *Giuseppina Ronzi-De Begnis* (Imelda), *Elisabetta Speranza* (Irene), *Giovanni Andaver* (Gonsalvo)
Autograph I-Mr

P49 IRENE O L'ASSEDIO DI MESSINA
Melodramma in tre atti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi
Source: A play by Cirino?
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 30 November 1833
Cast: *Maria Malibran* (Irene), *Josefa Ruiz-Garcia* (Esma), *Giovanni David* (Manfredi), *Luigi Lablache* (Esarca), *Domenico Reina* (Gualtiero), *Michele Benedetti* (Palmiero), *Antonio Ambrogi* (Eufemio)
Autographs I-Nc (fragment) US-Stu MS I-Mr

P50 CARLO DI BORGOGNA
Melodramma romantico in tre parti. Libretto by Gaetano Rossi
Source: 1. Erman Nadier *Estella d'Ivry* Paris nd. 2. Giuseppe Sorentino *Carlo di Borgogna* ballo eroico-pantomimo in sei atti Bologna 1829
1stPerf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 21 February 1835
Cast: *Domenico Donzelli* (Carlo), *Henriette Méric-Lalande* (Leonora), *Domenico Cosselli* (Arnoldo), *Giuditta Grisi* (Estella), *Marietta Bramati* (Amelia), *"N.N"* (Oberto), *Lorenzo Lombardi* (Lord Athol), *Antonio Solari* (Guglielmo)
MS I-Vt PEA

P51 LA FORESTA D'HERMANNSTADT
Farsa (in due parti?). Libretto by Giovanni Pacini?
Source: A satirical version of the plot of CLOTILDE (1815) by Carlo Coccia using texts by Romani
1stPerf: Teatrino in the villa of the Belluomini family in Viareggio in 1839
Cast: Unknown
Autograph I-PEA (fragment)

P52 FURIO CAMILLO
Melodramma tragico in tre parti. Libretto by Jacopo Ferretti
Source: Salvatore Taglioni *Furio Camillo* (ballo) Naples 1838
1stPerf: Teatro Apollo, Rome 21 December 1839
Cast: *Domenico Donzelli* (Camillo), *Luciano Fornasari* (Lucio), *Carolina Ungher* (Emilia*), Pietro Gasperini* (Ponzio), *Gaetano Coccetti* (Manlio), *Cleto Capitani* (Brenno), *Adelaide Gualdi* (Valeria)
MS I-Nc

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P53 SAFFO
Tragedia lirica in tre parti. Libretto by Salvadore Cammarano
Source: Pietro Beltrame *Saffo* Naples 1838 in combination, possibly, with suggestions offered by the composer himself
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 29 November 1840
Cast: *Orazio Cartagenova* (Alcandro), *Eloisa Buccini* (Climene), *Francilla Pixis* (Saffo), *Gaetano Fraschini* (Faone), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Lisimaco), *Anna Salvetti* (Dirce), *Pietro Rossi* (Ippia)
Autograph I-Nc MS I-Mc Mr CATc Bc PEA GB-Lbm F-Pn Vsc Milan (many editions)

P54 L'UOMO DEL MISTERO
Melodramma semiserio in tre atti. Libretto by Domenico de'Marchesi Andreotti
Source: Sir Walter Scott pseud. Jedediah Cleishbotham *The Black Dwarf* London 1816
1stPerf: Teatro Nuovo, Naples 9 November 1841
Cast: *Timoleone Barattini* (Mauley), *Giuseppe Lodi* (Ellieslaw), *Giuseppina David* (Isabella Vere), *Adelaide Gambaro* (Earcliff), *Raffaele Casaccia* (Tom), *Luigi Fioravanti* (Langley), *Michele Tucci* (Ratcliffe)
Autograph I-Nc MS I-Mr Nc Vsc Milan and Naples (both incomplete)

P55 IL DUCA D'ALBA
Tragedia lirica in due atti. Libretto by Giovanni Peruzzini, Francesco Maria Piave and Giovanni Pacini (rvd. as ADOLFO DI WARBEL in November 1842 with the text transformed by an anonymous poet and added music)
Source: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe *Egmont* Leipzig 1787
1stPerf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 26 February 1842
Cast: *Fanny Goldberg* (Margarita), *Napoleone Moriani* (Egmondo), *Filippo Coletti* (Duca d'Alba), *Ida Bertran*d (Elvira*), Gaetano Salani* (Giovanni), *Antonio Zanchi* (Arnoldo*), Giuseppe Bianchi* (Diego), *Teresa Cucchi* (Ines)
Autograph I-MR MS I-Vt Vsc Milan
As ADOLFO DI WARBEL
Dramma tragico in due atti
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Napoli 4 November 1842
Cast*: Sofia Löwe* (Margherita), *Gaetano Fraschini* (Adolfo), *Filippo Coletti* (Duca di Herz), *Carlotta Gruitz* (Elvida*), Marco Arati* (Arnaldo), *Teofilo Rossi* (Gustavo), *Michele Benedetti* (Atlei), *Anna Salvetti* (Ida)
MS I-Nc (2 copies)

P56 LA FIDANZATA CORSA
Melodramma tragico in tre atti. Libretto by Salvadore Cammarano
Source: Victor-Henri-Joseph Brahain Ducange *La Vendetta ou la fiancée corse* Paris 1831
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 10 December 1842
Cast: *Giovanni Basadonna* (Alberto Doria), *Filippo Coletti* (Piero Zampardi), *Gaetano Fraschini* (Ettore), *Eugenia Tadolini* (Rosa), *Marco Arati* (Guido Tobianchi), *Teofilo Rossi* (Alessio), *Anna Salvetti* (Giacinta), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Leone)

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Autograph I-Nc MS I-Mc Mr Nc F-Pn Vsc Milan and Paris

P57 MARIA REGINA D'INGHILTERRA
Tragedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Leopoldo Tarantini
Source: Victor-Marie Hugo *Marie Tudor* Paris 1833
1stPerf: Teatro Carolino, Palermo 11 February 1843
Cast: *Antonietta Ranieri-Marini* (Maria), *Nicola Ivanoff* (Fenimoore), *Antonio Superchi* (Ernesto), *Teresa Merli-Clerici* (Clotilde), *Antonio Benciolini* (Gualtiero), *Giovanni D'Ippolito* (Custode), *Orlandi Benanti* (Paggio)
MS I-Mc PEA Vsc Milan

P58 MEDEA
Tragedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Benedetto Castiglia
Source: [Euripedes; Seneca] Cesare Della Valle duca di Ventignano *Medea* Rome 1822 (in part)
1stPerf: Teatro Carolino, Palermo 28 November 1843
Cast: *Geltrude Bortolotti* (Medea), *Luigi Valli* (Creonte), *Giovanni Pancani* (Giasone), *Giovanna Austin* (Cassandra), *Secondo Torre* (Calcante), *Adelaide Orlandi* (Licisca)
Autograph I-Ms MS I-Nc Vsc Milan

P59 LUISETTA O LA CANTATRICE DEL MOLO
Melodramma giocoso in due atti. Libretto by Leopoldo Tarantini
Source: Marc-Antoine-Amédée Michel and Émile Fontaine *Louisette ou la chanteuse des rues* Paris 1840
1stPerf: Teatro Nuovo, Naples 13 December 1843
Cast: *Adele Rossetti-Rebussini* (Luisetta), *Raffaele Casaccia* (Cesare), *Annetta Silvestri* (Floresca), Giuseppe *Fioravanti* (Saltarelli). *Domenico Laboccetta* (Giulio), *Salvatore Perrelli* (Pecchino), *Antonietta Carmignani* (Rossetta), *Gaetano De Nicola* (Cantore di Rinaldo), *Pietro Rossi* (Sergente), *Cinque* (Servitore)
Ms I-Mr Nc PEA (incomplete) Vsc Naples

P60 L'EBREA
Dramma lirico in quattro atti. Libretto by Giacomo Sacchero (rvsd. as I ROMANI IN SIRIA at Viterbo in 1864 with a new text (libretto in I-Rn) and changed score)
Source: partially based on Eugène Scribe *La Juive* (music by Halèvy) Paris 1838
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 27 February 1844
Cast: *Giovanni Battista Acquarone* (Cesennio), *Marietta Alboni* (Berenice), *Nicola Ivanoff* (Manlio), *Raffaele Ferlotti* (Antioco), *Teresa Ruggeri* (Ottavia), *Luigi Bottagisi* (Sejano), *Ignazio Marini* (Eleazaro), *Antonietta Montenegro* (Rachele)
Autographs I-Mr PEA (fragments and parts) MS I-Mc

P61 LORENZINO DE'MEDICI
(staged with changed roles as LUISA VELASCO and ELISA VELASCO)
Tragedia lirica in quattro parti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave (rvd. as ROLANDINO DE'TORRISMONDI at Naples in 1858 with text rvsd. by Domenico Bolognese and Giovanni Pacini and added music)

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Source: 1. Giuseppe Revere *Lorenzino de'Medici* Milan 1839. 2. Pietro Beltrame *Luisa Strozzi* (music by Pietro Combi) Genoa 1841
1st Perf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 4 March 1845
Cast: *Marianna Barbieri-Nini* (Luisa Strozzi), *Sebastiano Ronconi* (Filippo Strozzi), *Andrea Castellan* (Lorenzino), *Giuseppe Miral* (Alessandro), *Francesco Rossi* (Giomo), *Amalia Patriozzi* (Assunta), *Ignazio Patriozzi* (Michele), *"N.N"* (Guardia)
MS I-Vt
As ROLANDINO DE'TORRISMONDI
Tragedia lirica in due atti e quattro parti
1st Perf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 20 March 1858
Cast: *Giacomo Galvani* (Rolandino), *Giovanni Battista Antonucci* (Ildebrando), *Filippo Coliva* (Roberto Viscardi), *Elena Fioretti* (Elisa), *Lusignani* (Assunta), *Corrado Laudano* (Ugo), *Giovanni Lauri* (Custode)
MS I-Nc (2 copies)

P62 BONDELMONTE
Tragedia lirica in tre parti. Libretto by Salvadore Cammaano
Source: 1. Carlo Marenco *Bondelmonte e gli Amedei* Turin 1827. 2. Giovanni Galzerani *Buondelmonte* (azione mimica in sei atti) (ballo) Venice 1827
1st Perf: Teatro della Pergola, Florence 18 June 1845
Cast: *Marietta Gazzaniga* (Beatrice), *Clelia Forti* (Isaura), *Cesare Badiali* (Amedei), *Ettore Caggiati* (Bondelmonte), *Faustina Piombanti* (Bianca Donati), *Demetrio Masselli* (Uberti), *Giovacchino Lucchesi* (Gangalandi), *Ettore Profili* (Mosca), *Giovanni Nottoli* (Fifanti)
Autograph I-PEA (parts only) MS I-Mc Vsc Milan

P63 STELLA DI NAPOLI
Dramma lirico in tre parti. Libretto by Salvadore Cammarano
Source: Victor-Marie Hugo *Angelo* Paris 1835 (greatly remodelled by Cammarano)
1st Perf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 11 December 1845
Cast: *Filippo Coletti* (Gianni da Capua), *Eugenia Tadolini* (Stella), *Eloisa Buccini* (Olimpia d'Acri), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Alberto), *Anna Salvetti* (Marta), *Marco Arati* (D'Aubigni), *Gaetano Fraschini* (Armando), *Teofilo Rossi* (Clodoveo)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-Nc Bc Vsc Milan

P64 LA REGINA DI CIPRO
Dramma lirico in quattro atti. Libretto by Francesco Guidi
Source: Jules-Henri Vernoy marquis de Saint-Georges *La Reine de Chypre* (music by Halèvy) Paris 1841
1st Perf: Teatro Regio, Turin 7 February 1846
Cast: *Francesco Lodetti* (Lusignano), *Stanislao Demi* (Andrea Cornaro), *Erminia Frezzolini* (Caterina), *Luigi Ferretti* (Gerardo), *Cesare Badiali* (Mocenigo), *Marietta Laghi* (Adele), *Giovanni Battista Boeri* (Marco)
Autograph I-Mr Vsc Milan

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P65 ELNAVA ossia L'ASSEDIO DI LEIDA
Dramma in un prologo e tre atti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Source: 1. Michele Cuciniello *Elnava* 1841. 2. Salvatore Taglioni *L'assedio di Leida* (ballo) Naples 1843
1st version, composed in 1847 (later projected for Venice 1853)
Unperformed
Cast: (Giovanni Duza), (Luigi Boiso), (Elnava), (Valdes), (Inigo)
Autograph I-PEA

ELNAVA
Tragedia lirica in tre parti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave and Giovanni Pacini
2nd version, composed in 1859
Unperformed
Cast: [as above]
Autograph I-PEA

P66 MEROPE
Tragedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Salvadore Cammarano
Source: 1. Vittorio Alfieri *Merope* Turin 1782 2. Scipione Maffei *Merope* Modena 1713 3. François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire *Mérope* Paris 1743 4. Salvatore Taglioni *Merope* (ballo) Naples 1846
1st Perf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 25 November 1847
Cast: *Francesco Gionfrida* (Polifonte), *Gaetano Fraschini* (Egisto), *Marco Arati* (Polidoro), *Pasquale Ceci* (Ipparco), *Marianna Barbieri-Nini* (Merope), *Anna Salvetti* (Ismene)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-Nc Vsc Naples

P67 ESTER D'ENGADDI
Dreamma tragico in tre atti. Libretto by Francesco Guidi
Source: 1. Silvio Pellico *Ester d'Engaddi* Milan 1821 (pub 1830). 2. Ferdinando Gioja *Ester d'Engaddi* (ballo) Naples 1837
1st Perf: Teatro Regio, Turin 1 February 1848
Cast: *Eugènie Garcia* (Ester), *Prosper Dérivis* (Jefte), *Giuseppe Sinico* (Azaria), *Cesare Ferri* (Eleazaro), *Francesco Lombardi* (Sommo Sacerdote), *Marietta Boeri* (Sara)
Autograph lost?

P68 ALLAN CAMERON
Opera seria in quattro atti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Source: Pierre-Auguste Callet and Javelin Pagnon *Allan Cameron* Paris 1841
1st Perf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 21 March 1848
Cast: *Domenico Conti* (replaced by *Raffaele Mirate*) (Carlo II), *Felice Varesi* (Allan), Annetta De la Grange (*Editta*), Angelo Zuliani (*Evano*), Maria Zambelli-De Rosa (*Malvina*), Eugenio Monzani (*Gionata*), *"N.N"* (Rob)
Autograph I-Mr MS I-Vt

P69 ZAFFIRA O LA RICONCILIAZIONE
Melodramma lirico in tre atti. Libretto by "A. de L." (Achille de Lauzières)
Source: basically Benoît-Joseph Marsollier de Vivetières *Camille, ou Le souterrain* (as pub, Paris 1822) but with tragico-comic and fashionably spectral modifications
1st Perf: Teatro Nuovo, Naples 14 November 1851

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Cast: *Raffaele Mastriani* (Duca Gualtiero), *Ranieri Remorini* (Armando), *Rachele Gianfredi* (Zaffira), *Raffaele Casaccia* (Gillotto), *Raffaele Grandillo* (Gennaro), *Carolina D'Amora* (Ghita), *"N.N"* (Ufficiale), *Ferdinando Imbimbo* (Assessore)
MS I-Nc

P70 MALVINA DI SCOZIA
Tragedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Salvadore Cammarano
Source: 1. Antoine Houdar de la Motte *Inès de Castro* Paris 1723. 2. Davide Bertolotti *Ines di Castro* Turin 1826. 3. Salvadore Cammerano *Ines di Castro* (music by Persiani) Naples 1835
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 27 December 1851
Cast: *Marco Arati* (Malcolm), *Achille De Bassini* (Arturo), *Adelaide Borghi-Mamo* (Morna), *Adelaide Cortesi* (Malvina), *Corrado Laudano* (Wortimer), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Rodwaldo), *Anna Salvetti* (Edwige)
MS I-Mr PEA Vsc Milan

P71 RODRIGO DI VALENZA
Dramma lirico in tre atti. Libretto by Stefano Fioretti?
Incomplete. Composed in November 1852
Autograph I-Plcon (Act I only)

P72 LIDIA BI BRABANTE
Drama lirico in due atti. Libretto by Stefano Fioretti and Giovanni Pacini?
Source: Massimo Tapparelli marchese D'Azeglio *Niccolò de'Lapi ovvero I Palleschi e i Piagnoni* Milan 1841
Unperformed, composed in 1852-3
Cast: (Rodrigo), (Lidia), (Arminio), (Maser), (Amalia), (Brenno), (Paolo), (Montosino)

P73 IL CID
Tragedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Achille de Lauzières
Source: 1.Pierre Corneille *Le Cid* Paris 1637. 2. Jacopo Ferretti *Il Cid* (music by Luigi Salvi) Parma 1834
1stPerf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 12 March 1853
Cast: *Agostino Rodas* (Fernando), *Luigi Alessandrini* (Gomez), *Giovanni Corsi* (Diego), *Carlo Negrini* (Il Cid), *Giacomo Redaelli* (Alonzo), *Marietta Gazzaniga-Malaspina* (Climene), *Orsolina Bignami* (Edita)
Autograph I-Mc

P74 ROMILDA DI PROVENZA
Tragedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Gaetano Micci
Source: partly upon Abramo Basevi's *Romilda ed Ezzolino* Firenze 1840?
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 8 December 1853
Cast: *Teresa De Giuli–Borsi* (Romilda), *Marco Arati* (Arturo), *Gaetano Fraschini* (Carlo Lorgue), *Gaetano Ferri* (Ubaldo), *Adelaide Borghi-Mamo* (Odetta), *Anna Salvetti* (Ida), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Artos)
Autograph I-Nc MS I-PEA Nc (Act I only)

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P75 LA DONNA DELLE ISOLE
Melodramma serio in un prologo e tre atti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Source: Sir Walter Scott *The Pirate* Edinburgh 1822
Unperformed, composed in 1854 in Venice
Cast: (Cora), (Magno), (Mina), (Brenda), (Clemente Cloveland), (Mertuno)
Autograph I-PEA (Prologue and Act I only)

P76 LA PUNIZIONE
Melodramma in tre atti. No librettist (but Stefano Fioretti, Giovanni Pacini and Francesco Maria Piave)
Source: same as P72 LIDIA DI BRABANTE
1st Perf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 8 March 1854
Cast: *Giovanni Battista Bencich* (Rodrigo), *Augusta Albertini* (Lidia), *Raffaele Mirate* (Arminio), *Angelo Zuliani* (Brenno), *Placido Meneguzzi* (Paolo), *Giuseppe Rossetti* (Montosino), *Marco Ghini* (Maser*), Luigia Morselli* (Amalia), *"N.N"* (Carceriere)
MS I-Vt BR-Rn (with title of *Niccolò de'Lapi* and changed cast, in un prologo e tre atti and dated 1855 (see P87 NICCOLÒ DE LAPI)

P77 MARGHERITA PUSTERLA
Melodramma tragico in quattro atti. Libretto by Domenico Bolognese
Source: 1. Cesare Cantù *Margherita Pusterla* Florence 1839. 2. Salvatore Taglioni *Margherita Pusterla* (ballo) Naples 1846
1st Perf: Teatro San Carlo, Naple 25 February 1856
Cast: *Giuseppina Medori* (Margherita Pusterla), *Ester Paganini* (Alpinolo), *Raffaele Mirate* (Franciscolo Pusterla), *Filippo Coletti* (Luchino Visconti), *Marco Arati* (Ramengo da Casale), *"N.N"* (Venturino), *Pasquale Ceci* (Galeazzo Visconti), *Anna Salvetti* (Isabella del Fiesco), *Teofilo Rossi* (Mastino da Besozzo), *Gaetana Barito* (Bice), *Leopoldo Cammarano* (Maso*), Claudina Landi* (Nena), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Macaruffo), *Giovanni Lauri* (un segretario)
MS I-Nc PEA

P78 IL SALTIMBANCO
Dramma lirico in tre atti. Libretto by Giuseppe Checchetelli
Source: 1. Marc Fournier and Adolphe Philippe pseud. Adolphe d'Ennery *Paillasse* Paris 1850. 2. Giovanni Casati *Il saltimbanco* (ballo) Milan 1852
1st Perf: Teatro Argentina, Rome 24 May 1858
Cast: *Ottavio Bartolini* (Guglielmo Belfagor), *Elena Kennet* [Helen Kenneth] (Lena), *"N.N"* (Enrico and Elvira), *Remigio Bertolini* (Alfredo), *Giuseppe Bazzoli* (D'Almonte), *Caterina Decaroli* (Geltrude), *Stefano Santucci* (Arnaldo/Rolando), *Teodolinda Rotolini* (Linda), *Luigi Rossi* (Scudiere)
Autograph I-PEA MS I-Nc Rn (2 copies) Rsc (Acts I and II only) Vsc Naples

P79 LA DISTRUZIONE DI GERUSALEMME
Dramma tragico in tre atti (but performed. as an "Oratorio in tre parti") Libretto by Stefano Fioretti
Source: Simeone Antonio Sografi *La distruzione di Gerusalemme* (music by Zingarelli) revised by Jacopo Ferretti, Rome 1810
[see ORATORIOS P125]
Autograph I-PEA

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P80 LIDIA DI BRUXELLES
Melodramma in tre atti. Libretto by "N.N" (but Giovanni Pacini, Giuseppe Cencetti and Stefano Fioretti)
Source: as for P72 LIDIA DI BRABANTE
1stPerf: Teatro Comunale, Bologna 21 October 1858
Cast: *Luigi Walter* (Rodrigo), *Antonietta Fricci* (Lidia), *Giuseppe Limberti* (Arminio), *Pietro Vitale* (Brenno), *Antonio Belondini* (Paolo), *Guglielmo Giordani* (Montosino), *"N.N"* (Maser), *Luigia Morselli* (Amalia), *Alessandro Ungarelli* (Carciere)
Score subsumed into P87 NICCOLÒ DEI LAPI

P81 GIANNI DI NISIDA
Dramma lirico in quattro atti. Libretto by Giuseppe Checchetelli
Source: Possibly an original text
1stPerf: Teatro Apollo, Rome 29 October 1860
Cast: *David Squarcia* (Roberto), *Geremia Bettini* (Gianni), *Raffaele Laterza* (Vertunno), *Luigia Ponti-Dell'Armi* (Chiara), *Eufemia Barlani-Dini* (Bionda), *Giovanni Bernardoni* (Ramadà), *Caterina Decaroli* (Giamir), *Giuseppe Bazzoli* (Marco), Cesare Bossi (Giacomo)
Autograph I-PEA (2 copies inc. parts)

P82 IL MULATTIERE DI TOLEDO
Commedia lirica in tre atti. Libretto by Giuseppe Cencetti
Source: Adolphe Philippe pseud. Adolphe d'Ennery and Louis-François Nicolae pseud. Clairville *Le muletier de Tolède* (music by Adam) Paris 1854
1stPerf: Teatro Apollo, Rome 25 May 1861
Cast: *Luigia Ponti-Dell'Armi* (Elvira), *Giuseppina Tati* (Carmine), *Pietro Bignardi* (Raffaele), *Ludovico Buti* (Don Pedro), *Luigi Fioravanti* (Don Cesare), *Pietro Cassani* (Don Sallustio), *Filippo Vitalini* (Paolo), *Giocomo Castelli* (Alfonso), *Luigi Fossi* (Capitano), *Caterina Decaroli* (Geltrude)
Autograph lost

P83 BELFAGOR
Melodramma fantastico in un prologo e quattro parti. Libretto by Antonio Lanari
Source: 1. Niccolò Machiavelli *Novella di Belfagor* pub.1795. 2. Philippe-François Pinel pseud. Dumanoir, Édouard Déaddé pseud. Saint-Yves and Adolphe Choler *Belphégor* Paris 1846
1stPerf: Teatro della Pergola, Florence 1 December 1861
Cast: *Marcellina Lotti Della Santa* (Virginia), *Ludovico Buti* (Belfagor), *Ernesto Nicolini* (Fernando), *Antonio Guerrini* (Plutone), *Sofia Vera-Lorini* (Ines), (Alonso), (Pedrillo), (Servo)
MS I-PEA

P84 CARMELITA
Opera fantastica in tre atti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Source: Alexandre Dumas *Don Juan de Marana ou La chute d'un Ange* Paris 1836
Unperformed under this title, composed in 1862

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Cast: (intended) *Adelaide Borghi-Mamo* (Carmelita), *Carlo Negrini* (Don Diego), *Giovanni Guicciardi* (Don Enrico), (Drey), (Malgenio), (Sandoval)
Retitled, and with renamed cast as:
DON DIEGO DE'MENDOZA
Opera fantastica in tre atti e cinque quadri. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Source: [as above]
1stPerf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 12 January 1867
Cast: *Angelina Ortolani- Tiberini* (Donna Mariquita), *Elvira Stecchi* (Paquita), *Clotilde Mainetti* (Donna Vittoria), *Mario Tiberini* (Don Diego), *Giuseppe Federico Beneventano* (Don Enrico), *Paolo Poli-Lenzi* (Malgenio), *Antonio Galletti* (Don Cristoval), *Augusto Pelletti* (Don Sandoval), *Giovanni Rebusini* (Francesco)
Autographs I-Vt PEA (inc. parts) Vsc Milan (extracts)

P85 BERTA DI VARNOL
Dramma lirico in un prologo e tre atti. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave
Source: Emanuello Gonzales *I giudici di Vehma* Madrid nd. trans. Venice 1847 [acc. to Pacini himself: Haffau *Le streghe* 1859-60]
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 6 April 1867
Cast: *Luigia Bendazzi-Secchi* (Berta), *Georg Stiegel* (Corrado), *Luigi Colonnese* (Ottone), *Giuseppina Tati* (Irene), *Marco Arati* (Pietro l'Eremita), *Enrico Guarnieri* (Gualtiero*), Giovanni Donadio* (Mattia), *Giuseppe Benedetti* (Verner), *Giuseppina De Marinis* (Eino), *Carolina Cetrone* (Marsa)
Autograph I-PEA

P86 IL CARCERE MAMERTINO
Melodramma in due atti. Libretto by Francesco Massi
Source: An imaginative transcription of sacred texts
1stPerf: Sala di Campidoglio, Rome 27 May 1867
Cast: *Isabella Gianoli-Galletti* (Claudia), *Giovanni Bernardoni* (St Paolo), *Giuseppe Cencetti* (St Pietro), *Luigi Rosati* (Angelo), *Cesare Busi* (Onesimo), *Savelli* (Fulvio), *Di Luglio*
Autograph I-PEA (first part) MS I-Rsc (inc. parts)

P87 NICCOLÒ DEI LAPI
Melodramma tragico con danze analoghe in tre atti. Libretto by Giovanni Pacini and Cesare Perini and others
Source: fundamentally as for P72 LIDIA DI BRABANTE but with greatly modified roles
1stPerf: Real Teatro Pagliano, Florence 29 October 1873
Cast: *Luigi Merly* (Niccolò), *Giuditta Ronzi Checci* (Lisa), *Alessandro Silvestri* (Troilo), *Paolo Augusti* (Lamberto), *Clemente Scannavino* (Averado*), Federico Becheri* (Vieri), *Pietro Lybert* (Bindo), *Bianca Cortesi Dell'Ozzi* (Fede), *Fortunato Cherubini* (Monaco), *"N.N"* (Carciere)
MS I-Fc [1855 (Rio vsn) MS Br-Rn]

Doubtful, incomplete and unverified operas

1. I VIRTUOSI DI TEATRO
Listed by Oscar Chilesotti (*I nostri maestri* Milan 1882) as an opera with a libretto by Gaetano Rossi and staged in 1817. It may either have been a *pasticcio* with a

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contribution by Pacini, or the revival of the opera by Mayr (Venice 1801) with some new music by Pacini.

2. ZAIRA

According to a letter from Bellini to Florimo (letter of 16 February 1828 [in: Carmelo Neri *Lettere di Vincenzo Bellini (1819-1835),* 26] Pacini had written some pieces of an opera with this title for a staging in the re-opened Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa. No music has been found.

3. BELLEZZA E CUOR DI FERRO

Described as a Melodramma giocoso in due atti with an unknown librettist, and to have been performed by members of the Pacini family at the Belluomini Villa at Viareggio in 1836, it may well have been simply a revival of part of Rossini's *Matilde di Shabran* including the three pieces composed by Pacini in 1821. There is no documentary evidence of its existence.

4. ELISA

A bifolio of music from a collection of Pacini MSs assembled by Massimiliano Quilici (but which shows no sign of Pacini's hand) suggests that the composer had been working on a re-setting of the opera ELISA by Mayr (of 1804). The upright folio indicates a date of c1850. The appeal of this plot may have been the singing of the role of Jonas by Luigi Pacini in 1810 at Bologna, not only a high point in the career of the famous buffo but a souvenir of his own stage appearance in the tiny role of Germano – one stretch of recitative – when he was fourteen years old. Maybe intended as a *memento mori* of his father, the extant pages, however, include only the roles of Elisa/Duplessis/Carli/Laura

5. GLI ARAGONESE IN NAPOLI

Quoted by Marcello De Angelis *Le cifre del melodrama Vol.1* (Florence 1982), 315 in a letter from the Naples publisher Cottrau to Alessandro Laneri, this Pacini opera may have been either an abortive project; a proposed revival of P35 GLI ARABI NELLE GALLIE subject to censorial changes; or a confusion with the opera by Carlo Conti with this title (Naples 1827)

6. L'ORFANA MOSCOVITA

Begun in December 1829 to fulfil a commission at La Fenice for the carnevale 1829/30 with a libretto to be supplied by Felice Romani, setting was only initiated as the remainder of the text was deliberately withheld [*Cfr Harmonicon* (London 1830)133]. A draft of *Olga* remains in the Fondo Galletti of the Archivio di Stato in Milan derived from a play by Jacques Arséne Polycarpe François Ancelot called 'Olga, ou L'orpheline moscovite' *tragédie en cinq actes* of 1828

7. L'ORFANA SVIZZERA

Described as an opera semiseria with a libretto by Francesco Rubino staged at the Teatro del Fondo of Naples in 1848, listed by Chilesotti (echoed by *Grove VI* and Conati) and perhaps a confusion with Luigi Ricci's L'ORFANELLA DI GINEVRA, there is no sign of any such item in more authoritative chronologies, but the troubled Spring of 1848 allowed operas to appear and disappear freely and such a Pacinian venture cannot entirely be ruled out

8. ALFRIDA

An opera seria composed in 1850 according to Chilesotti but no documentary evidence for its existence survives, nor a possible place or date for its performance.

9. I PORTOGHESI NEL BRASILE

Described as an opera giocosa in due atti with a libretto by the marchese Achille de Lauzières and staged at Rio de Janeiro in 1856, the information derives from Chilesotti - a confusion no doubt with the cantata commissioned for the birthday of Dom Pedro II

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of Brazil in 1851 [P94] with verses by de Lauzières there is no evidence that any such work was either projected or materialised. It may have been a reference to a possible staging of P44 GUSMANO D'ALMEIDA in Rio but if so came to nothing

10. MARIA STUARDA

UTET Pacini 535 claims that Pacini wrote a score on this theme but that the work remained unperformed. Neither text nor music has come to light

11. MARIA CONTESSA DI ROHAN

Cammarano supplied Pacini with a libretto for this opera (earlier set by Lillo as *Il conte di Chalais*) in 1841, and the music was sketched, but it failed to be completed owing to a dispute with the Teatro La Fenice over casting

12. ALZIRA

An opera with this title and a libretto by Cammarano was announced for La Pergola in Florence in the autumn of 1843. It may well have been contemplated but Pacini is unlikely to have gone ahead with such a plot so similar to that of AMAZILIA and it was later set by Verdi

13. MARIA D'ARLES

In the paper *Editoria musicale a Napoli: Lo Stabilimento Musicale Partenopeo* [in] *Francesco Florimo e L'Ottocento Musicale: Atti di convegno 19-21 aprile 1990 a cura di Rosa Cafiero e Marina Marino* (Reggio Calabria 1999), 469-497 with its itemised list of scores the property of the firm Girard/Cottrau published in 1857, Francesca Seller lists, under *voce* "Pacini", a "MARIA D'ARLES (nuova)". This elusive *rifacimento*, possibly of P74 ROMILDA DI PROVENZA is otherwise untraceable and may well have been mistaken for the *Maria d'Arles* of Mario Aspa (T. Nuovo, Naples 1840)

14. LA VERGINE DI KERMO

Pacini contributed (if posthumously) to a multi-composer *pastiche* melodramma romantico in tre atti of this title with a libretto by Francesco Guidi and staged at the Teatro della Concordia [now Ponchielli] at Cremona on 16 February 1870 for charity, the other composers being Amilcare Ponchielli, Lauro Rossi, Alberto Mazzucato, Antonio Cagnoni, Carlo Pedrotti and Jacopo Foroni

15. PROSPERO E DIOSCORIDE

Incomplete autograph fragments of a score survive in the Fondo Pacini of Pescia and the Biblioteca Nazionale di Roma, including a cavatina, duetto, a finale, a recitativo and a quartetto finale etc. The cast being Prospero (basso), Dioscoride (basso), Ghitta (mezzo-soprano), Rosina (soprano), Capitano (tenore), and Giulio (baritono), the plot having distinct parallels with that of ANNETTA E LUCINDO (1813) these items may perhaps be survivals from an earlier essay

Scenic Cantatas

P88 LA FELICITÀ NEL LARIO

Cantata to celebrate the return to power in Lombardy of Francesco I of Austria Libretto by Francesco Marconi

1st Perf. Teatro Nuovo, Como 1816

Solists:: *Carolina Bassi* (Cerere), *Maria Lossetti* (Minerva), *Giuseppina Riva Ferrario* (Felicità), *Luigi Campitelli* (Marte), *Giovanni Bottari* (Mercurio)

The decor included an *Arco trionfale* on the port of Lake Como to welcome the Emperor, designed by Alessandro Sanquirico in addition to that of the cantata itself

Autograph Priv.Coll

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P89 L'OMAGGIO PIÙ GRATO
Cantata in un atto. Libretto by Angelo Anelli
For the arrival in Pavia of Francesco I of Austria with his wife Carolina of Bavaria
1stPerf: Teatro de'Quattro Signori Cavalieri Compadroni, Pavia 16 August 1819
Soloists: *Carolina Contini* (Euterpe), *Antonio Berini* (Il tesino)
MS I-PEA

P90 IL PURO OMAGGIO
Cantata in un atto. Libretto extracted from Metastasian texts
For the name day of Francesco I of Austria
1stPerf: Teatro Grande, Trieste 4 October 1822
Soloists*: Emilia Bonini* (Astrea), *Bottari* (Prometeo), *Passanti* (Mercurio)
MS I-PEA

P91 IL FELICE RITORNO
Inno con Ballo *" per festeggiare nel Real Teatro di S.Carlo il fausto ritorno delle LL. MM la sera de'17 luglio 1825"* (musica di ballo by Luigi Carlini) libretto by Gioacchino Ponto for the return of Francesco I and Maria Isabella from Milan
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 17 July 1825
Soloists: *Joséphine Fodor-Mainvielle, Adelaide Tosi, Giovanni David, Luigi Lablache*
MS I-Bl

P92 L'ANNUZIO FELICE
Cantata in un atto, choreography by Luigi Henri, libretto by Emmanuele Vaccaro, in honour of the betrothal of Maria Cristina Delle due Sicilie and Ferdinando VII of Spain
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 9 September 1829
Soloists: *Joséphine Fodor-Mainvielle, Adelaide Tosi, Berardo Winter, Luigi Lablache*
Autograph I-PEA

P93 IL FELICE IMENÈO
Cantata in due parti con ballo, choreography by Salvatore Taglioni, libretto by Gaetano Rossi, for the marriage of Ferdinando II Delle due Sicilie and Maria Cristina of Savoy
1stPerf: Teatro San Carlo, Naples 3 December 1832
Soloists: *Luigi Lablache* (Il Sebeto), *Giovanni David* (Genio Siculo), *Nicola Ivanoff* (Genio di Liguria), *Giuseppina Ronzi De Begnis* (Minerva). All the pupils of the Conservatorio di S. Pietro a Majella took part; the corifei included *Paolo Ambrosini*, *Anna Salvetti* and *Michele Benedetti*
Autograph I-Nc

[IN MORTE DI M.F.MALIBRAN DE BÉRIOT (collaborative cantata composed by Donizetti, Pacini, Mercadante, Pietro Antonio Coppola and Nicola Vaccaj)
Cantata in un atto. Libretto by Antonio Piazza
1st Perf: Teatro alla Scala, Milan 17 March 1837
Soloists: *Sofia Dell'Oca Schoberlechner, Francesco Pedrazzi, Pietro Milesi, Benedetta Colleoni-Corti, Marietta Brambilla, Teresa Brambilla, Ignazio Marini, Orazio Cartagenova, Carlo Marcolini, Felicità Baillou-Hilaret*
Pacini composed the opening section (after Donizetti's *sinfonia*): the *Introduzione e quintetto, recitativo e stretta "Il cippo di Manchester"*
Autograph I-Mr Vsc Milan

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P94 LA RONDA DELLA GUARDA CIVICA
Cantata in honour of the participants in the Venetian uprising. Libretto by Federico Seismit Doda
1stPerf: Teatro La Fenice, Venice 23 March 1848
Soloists: *Annetta De la Grange, Raffaele Mirate, Felice Varesi*
MS I-PEA

P95 L'ALLEANZA
Cantata for the birthday of Dom Pedro II Emperor of Brazil. Libretto by marchese Achille de Lauzières
1stPerf: Petropolis Palace, Brazil 1 September 1851
MS Br-Rn

Cantatas

P96 LO SCHIETTO OMAGGIO
Cantata composed for performance at Trieste on 12 February 1821

P97 LA REGGIA D'ASTREA
Cantata in honour of Francesco I of Austria for performance at Trieste on 12 February 1824
MS I-PEA

P98 CANTATA for the *giorno onomastico* of Francesco I Delle due Sicilie on 4 October 1825

P99 PARTENOPE
Cantata for performance at the Teatro San Carlo, Naples in 1826

P100 CANTATA to mark the elevation to the throne of Ferdinando II Delle due Sicilie at the Teatro San Carlo, Naples on 8 November 1830

P101 '*Cantata da eseguirsi in occasione del giorno onomastico di sua eccellenza la Sig. contessa Giulia Samoyloff nata Contessa Pahlen. Poesia da Michele Lunardini"*.
2 sopranos, tenor, bass and piano. For performance at Viareggio on 28 July 1831
"Ecco alfin dall'Indo fuora"

P102 CANTATA for the visit of S.M. Maria Isabella Delle Due Sicilie to Viareggio in 1836 for the opening of the theatre of Pacini's School
Instrumental parts only I-PEA

P103 CANTATA per la faustissima esaltazione della santità di N.S. Papa Pio IX. Libretto by Cesare Dall'Olio and Pietro Ercole Visconti for performance in the Aula Massima del Palazzo Senatorio in Campidoglio, Rome on 15 December 1847
Soloists:
La Religione: *Luigia Finetti*
Genio di Roma Cristiana: *Gaspare Pozzolini*
Genio di Roma Pagana: *Ludovico Buti*
Autograph I-Raf

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P104 GIUDITTA *cantata sacra in tre parti*. Libretto by Giuseppe Raffaele Abate. Commissioned 1853 for S.Agata, Catania. First performed Catania August 1869

P105 INNO *in occasione dell'Accademia degli ospizii Marini*, Viareggio 11 August 1856, for soprano, contralto and chorus with piano accompaniment
Autograph coll. the author

P106 CANTATA PER SOLENIZZARE LA VISITA DEL S.P. PIO IX Composed for performance on 7 June 1857 at the Archiginasio, Bologna.
Soloist: Angelo tutelare di Bologna: *Antonio Poggi*
Autograph I-Bl

P107 CANTATA *in onore di Napoleon III*. For performance in December 1859
MS I-PEA

P108 INNO *Della S.Infanzia. Cantata nella Chiesa de'Servi di Maria a Viareggo* 24 April 1860
Pub. Zuanich, Venezia 1860

P109 CANTATA "*per Le nozze di Sua Altezza Reale il principe Ferdinando con Sua Altezza Reale Anna Maria di Sassonia"*

P110 CANTATA 'Pietoso bocca che soleva in *vita' Ottava cVIII nel canto XIX del Tasso* for voice and piano

P111 CANTATA in honour of Leopoldo II, Granduca di Toscana. Unperformed
Autograph I-PEA

P112 CANTATA for the London Exhibition of 1862. Unperformed
Cast: (Italia), (Favore tutelar), (Gallia), (Genio Inglese)
MS (part Autograph) coll. the author

P113 L'APOTEOSI DI VINCENZO BELLINI
Libretto by Giuseppe Raffaele Abate, composed in 1863, performed in Catania in 1876.
Cast: (L'Italia), (Genio di Europa), (Genio di Africa), (Genio di Asia), (Genio di America)

P114 ROSSINI E LA PATRIA
Cantata with libretto by Luigi Mercantini for performance at the Teatro Rossini, Pesaro on 21 August 1864
MS I-PEA

P115 INNO A GUIDO MONACO
Libretto by Niccolò Tommaseo. Composed in 1865

P116 INNO PEL VICERÈ D'EGITTO
Libretto by conte Ferdinando De'Pellegrini. Composed in 1865
MS I-PEA

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P117 L'ITALIA CATTOLICA
Libretto by Vincenzo De Cesari. Intended for performance at the Accademia dei Quiriti, Rome. For soprano, tenor, baritone and orchestra. Unperformed

P118 INNO ALLA VETUSTA REPUBBLICA SANMARINESE
Libretto by Niccolò Tommaseo. For baritone, chorus and orchestra, performed at San Marino on 3 September 1867

P119 INNO ALLA VERGINE
Libretto by Balzofiore. Composed October 1867

Ballets

P120 DIE FEE UND DER RITTER
Collaborative ballet with music by Giovan Gaspare Aiblinger, Saverio Mercadante, Pietro Romani, Gioacchino Rossini, Adalbert Gyrowetz and Giovanni Pacini
Ballo in quattro atti. Choreography by Armand Vestris
1st Perf: Kärntnertortheater, Vienna January 1824
Cast: *Marie Taglioni*

P121 MATILDE DI SPOLETTO
Collaborative ballet with music by Adalbert Gyrowetz, Gioacchino Rossini and Giovanni Pacini
Ballo in cinque atti. Choreography by Luigi Astolfi
1st Perf: Kärntnertortheater, Vienna 6 January 1829
PS Vienna

Incidental music

P122 EDIPO RE
Source: Sophocles *Œdipus in Kolonos* tragedia It.trans Felice Bellotti, set into verse by Jacopo Cabianca, with incidental music by Giovanni Pacini
1st Perf: Teatro Olimpico, Vicenza 18 September 1847
Cast: *Francesco Ciaffei* (Eupompo) tenor: *Gustavo Modena* (Edipo) and *Giovanni Paolo Calloud* (both actors). Conductor *Angelo Mariani*
[Pacini supplied a *Sinfonia* and five choruses]
MS US-Wc Vsc Milan

Major religious music

Oratorios

IL TRIONFO DELLA RELIGIONE/SANT'AGNESE/ILTRIONFO DELLA FEDE
P123a Composed in 1838 as IL TRIONFO DELLA RELIGIONE "*per la terra di Longiano*"

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P123b Revised and given as SANT'AGNESE (1854)
Partitura I-PEA Pub. "*presso il Convento dei Salesiani a Monte.S.Quirico a Lucca*"
P123c Revised with new libretto by Luigi Prinzivalli as
IL TRIONFO DELLA FEDE
1st Perf: Teatro del Giglio, Lucca 20 September 1858
Cast*:* *Alaide Orsetti* (S.Agnese), *Emilio Bianchi* (Demonio)
Autograph priv. coll. (Italy) MS I-Ls
P123d Recomposed April 1859 and dedicated to Sua Santità Pio IX as
IL TRIONFO DELLA FEDE
Cast: (S.Agnese), (Demonio), (Angelo della Fede)
MS part autograph LIM Catalogue 56, 141

P124 SETTE PAROLE DELL'AGONIE DI GESU CHRISTO (1840)
Autograph I-Rsc

P125 LA DISTRUZIONE DI GERUSALEMME (1858)
Oratorio in tre parti. Libretto: Stefano Fioretti
1st Perf. Salone di Palazzo Vecchio, Firenze 27 June 1858
Dedicated to Leopoldo II Granduca di Toscana
Cast: (Siri), (Ebrei), (Romani), (Auguri), (Aruspici)
Giuseppe Limberti (Tito), *Elena Kennet* [Helen Kenneth] (Berenice), *Augusto Pecori* (Agrippa/Eleazaro), *David Squarcia* (Flavio), *Domenico Paolicchi* (Giosué), *Raffaelo Manca* (Anano), Augusto Franceschi (Cornelio), *Maria Turchini* (Rossane)
Autograph I-PEA

Major items of sacred music

[There is a very large holding of sacred music by Pacini, including innumerable items of the ordinary of the Mass in the Biblioteca Comunale Carlo Magnani di Pescia]

P126 MESSA A QUATTRO VOCI REALI A DUE CORI
With full orchestra, 2 four-part cori and organ, composed for Bologna in 1840
Dedicated a Tommaso Marchesi
Pub. F. Lucca

P127 MISERERE A QUATTRO VOCI
Composto espressamente per la Pontifica Cappella di S.Pietro in Roma
Dedicated "*a Sua Eccellenza Reveredissima Bartolomeo Pacca*"
Pub. G.Canti (Milano)

P128 MESSA DA REQUIEM A QUATTRO VOCI REALI in C minor
for orchestra and organ
"*Dedicata alla sua terra natale La Sicilia*"
Pub. Ricordi [Pl. Nos 14361, 14371-79] 1843
Autograph I-Nc Ms I-Ls PEA

P129 I TRE DOMINE DUETTO PER TENORE E BASSO
Laudamus for soloists, chorus and string orchestra (1855)
MS *spartito e parti* I-PEA

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P130 DE PROFUNDIS A QUATTRO VOCI CONCERTATI CON CORO
for full orchestra, soprano, alto, tenor and bass, composed in 1858
for Bologna
Dedicated to Monsignore Camillo Amici
Pub. Lucca

P131 MAGNIFICAT
With full orchestra, soprano solo and coro for the Grotta di Castro 1858
MS I-Ls

P132 MESSA DA REQUIEM
Composed/compiled/and conducted by Giovanni Pacini on 18 February 1864 for the funeral of Michele Puccini in the Chiesa de'Santi Giovanni e Reparata di Lucca
MS I-Ls

P133 MESSA DA REQUIEM
"*Composto espressamente per il trasporto delle ceneri del sommo Bellini"*
Composed in October 1864 [First sung at Pescia in 1867 for the funeral of Giovanni Pacini]
MS I-Ls PEA

P134 MESSA A TRE VOCI CONCERTATA
Con ripieni ed accompagnamento di violini, viole, violoncelli, contrabassi, arpa ed organo
Dedicated "*all'amatissimo amico e collega Andrea Bernardini*"
Composed in 1865
Pub. F.Lucca

Major items in his song repertoire

P135 SERENATA
'L'Amante alla tomba'
Scena ed aria composed in 1819 for Adelaide Secchi Gussoni to sing on the occasion of the "*Apertura del Casino Filarmonico degli Orfei"*
Pub. Ricordi
MS The author

P136 DUE ARIETTE ITALIANE
Dedicated to conte Stanislao de Mniszek, Vienna 1827
"Quando la miro io non saprei'"
"Due ottave del Tasso"
Pub. Vienna, Mechetti qm Carlo

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P137 SOUVENIRS DE VIAREGGIO PENDANT L'ÉTÉ DE 1834
Trois Romances et un Nocturne dediée à "*Mme la Comtesse de Lipona par Le Chev. Jean Pacini"* [ie dedicated to Queen Caroline Murat]
Trois romances
"Fata cara'
"Vieni sul fragil legno"
"Il faut partir"
Notturno à 2 voci
"Quando la tortorella geme soavemente"
MS I-PEA Pub. Beauvais (rue Gilles No.10) Paris 1834

P138 SOUVENIRS DE FLORENCE PENDANT L'HIVER DE 1835
Romance dedicated to Princess Soltikoff Dolgorouki
Pub. Beauvais, Paris 1835

P139 SEI ROMANZE, poesia di G.Regaldi
"Il gondoliere"
"Il boschetto"
"La cieca"
"La rosa del due Novembre"
"Il Santuario"
"La rosa"
Pub. Napoli, B. Girard e C

P140 LE RONDINI
"La rampogna" romanza, text by Raffaele Colucci, ded. Rosina Vercolini
"La tradita"
"L'estasi"
"La canzone della Chitarra"
"Amore e innocenza" duettino campestre
Pub. Naples, Giuseppe Orlandini c1866

P141 LA VENDITRICE DI FIORI
Dedicated "*al Gentil Sesso Bolognese*"
Pub. in 'La Stella Musicale' periodico Bolognese 15 February 1866

P142 CANTO DEL PRIGIONERO
Text by Dottor Montanelli.
Sung at the Teatro di Fucecchio on 22 August 1866

P143 ALBE E TRAMONTI
"La triste istoria" canto drammatico, text by G.A.Limoncelli
Autograph [formerly coll. Patric Schmid, London]

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"Il Soldato" ballata, text by De Ferraris dedicated to Avvocato Sardone
"L'Angelo mio" melodia, dedicated to the Principessa di Forino
"La Saracena" stornello, text by Raffaele Colucci
"Elegia in morte di Amalia Queriau" text by Raffaele Colucci
Pub. Naples, Teodoro Cottrau 1867

P144 SONGS PUBLISHED IN THE NEAPOLITAN JOURNAL
IL SIBILO 1843-44

"Come nube che leggere"	Barcarola dedicated to Donna Vincenza De'Marchesi Delcarretto
"Per la figlia d'un barone"	Romanza
"Il Pellegrino"	dedicated to Pietro d'Alessandro
"La Vucca"	Canzone siciliana dedicated to Giuseppe Venturelli
"Se di note all'aer nero"	Romanza
"T'amai, con te dividere"	Romanza
"Bella, nel di novella"	Romanza
"Il paggio"	dedicated to Elisa e Giulietta Bouchet
"La rimembranza"	Romanza

Chamber music

P145 7 STRING QUARTETS
No.1 (dedicated to Marianna Scoti) 1858?
MS I-PEA

No2 (dedicated to Ferdinando Giorgetti) 1863
Pub. Giudici e Strada

No3 (dedicated to the *Società del Quartetto di Firenze*)1863
MS I-PEA

No.4 (dedicated to Abramo Basevi) 1863
MS I-PEA Pub. Guidi

No5. (dedicated to Ferdinando Taglioni) 1863
MS I-PEA

No.6 (dedicated to Angelo Mariani) 1863
MS I-PEA

No.7 1865
Autograph I-PEA

P146 OTTETTO IN F MAJOR
(for oboe, fagotto, corno, tre violini, violoncello, contrabasso)1864?
(dedicted to Giosuè Maraviglia)
Pub. Suvini Zerboni

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P147 SONATA (Theme and Variations) for clarinetto, corno di bassetto e pianoforte 1864?

P148 GRAN TRIO per pianoforte,violino e violoncello
Dedicated to Saffo Castelli (1865)
Autograph I-PEA

P149 DIVERTIMENTO IN D minor (1865)
Two versions: (1st for violino, violoncello and pianoforte): (2nd for clarinetto. violoncello and pianoforte)
Pub. Suvini Zerboni

Orchestral Music

P150 SINFONIA DANTE 1864
First performed 1865 Teatro Pergola, Firenze, conducted by Teodulo Mabellini
(grande orchestra e piano forte)
1ª parte *Inferno*
2ª parte *Purgatorio*
3ªparte *Paradiso*
4ªparte *Il ritorno trionfale Dante sulla terra*
Autograph I-PEA
Pub. Guidi/Boccaccini & Spada

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