

## Scraping the Rust off Berezovsky's *Demofonte*

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Maxim Berezovsky (early 1740s–77) was the first Russian composer of European art music, and, as such, merits a special place in the history of Russian music. However, his life is shrouded in a lack of biographic information, and literature of past centuries has much mythicized his figure, even to the extent of culminating the narration with a suicide—that seems today dubious at the least.<sup>1</sup>

According to Marina Ritzarev, P.A. Smirnov (*Maxim Sozontovich Berezovsky*, 1841), Nestor Kuklonik (*Maxim Berezovsky*, 1844), and Vera Zhakova (*Maxim Berezovsky*, 1932–36) are the writers who mainly contributed to turning his biography into an hagiography. These works contributed to forging the myth of Berezovsky in “the darkest, most chauvinistic periods of Russian history, those of Nikolai I and Stalin, and appealed to Russian nationalism at its worst.”<sup>2</sup>

What is certain is that Berezovsky spent more than a decade playing in operas at Oranienbaum,<sup>3</sup> and studying singing and composition in St. Petersburg. Since the imperial capital of that time was full of Italian maestri, he had every opportunity to absorb Italian music styles and features.

In 1769, he left St. Petersburg to pursue a career in Italy.<sup>4</sup> We may understand from this, that times were now ripe for Russians to take an active part in the Western musical tradition. He settled first in Bologna, where he was permitted acceptance into the prestigious Accademia Filarmonica directed by Padre Martini.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently, resulting from his connections with Count Alexsej Orlov (1737–1808),<sup>6</sup> who was also a general in the military, Berezovsky worked in the Tuscan cities of Livorno and Pisa.

It is probably safe to assume that Berezovsky's first and only opera—notable because it is the first Italian opera composed by a Russian—was staged chiefly for the Count's amusement. This opera was *Il Demofonte*, based on a libretto by Pietro Metastasio. It was staged at the Teatro di San Sebastiano in Livorno during the 1773 Carnival. By the winter of that same

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1 \* I wish to thank all the people that have helped me and collaborated through such an entangled research: Profs. Federico Marri, Fulvio Venturi, Mario Corti and Vera Futer, the Russian Society for Music Theory plus Marina Ritzarev and Yulia. Without the first I would have never had the necessary support, competence and knowledge to end this article; without the latter, it would have never been started.

Marina Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music* (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2006), 129-31. All information on Berezovsky's life has been taken from this monography, to this day the most updated and authoritative.

Interestingly enough, Berezovsky's death was used by the Russian filmmaker Andrej Tarkovsky as the starting point for one of his most critically-acclaimed movies, *Nostalghia* (1983).

2 Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, 3.

3 Araya's *Alessandro Nell'Indie* in 1759 (Claudio Sartori, *I libretti a stampa dalle origini al 1800*, 4 vols. [Cuneo: Bertola & Locatelli, 1994]: entry no. 779) and Manfredini's *Semiramide Riconosciuta* in 1760 (entry no. 21576) are the two only stagings in which Berezovsky is openly mentioned in the cast.

4 Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, 114-18.

5 Berezovsky's admission exam is still kept in the Biblioteca della Musica di Bologna, I-Bc MS.MARTINI.2.6(80). It is the same admission exam that Mozart also famously took, MS.MARTINI.2.6(2).

6 Orlov was stationed there with his fleet at the time of the Russo-Turkish war (1768–74).

year, Berezovsky returned to St. Petersburg. He continued to compose music for the Russian royal court and died in 1777, most likely because of ill health.<sup>7</sup>

The *Demofonte* libretto by Metastasio gained immense popularity and, from its first production in Vienna in 1733 (music by Antonio Caldara) until its last appearance (Venice 1795, music by Luigi Marchesi), it was staged at least 125 times all over Europe.<sup>8</sup> The Grove Online entry states that “as a libretto, *Demofonte* ranks in popularity with Metastasio’s top six works, beside *Olimpiade* and second only to *Artaserse* and *Alessandro nell’Indie*.”<sup>9</sup>

The plot takes place in ancient Greece, revolving around *Demofonte*’s (king of Thracia) struggle to put an end to human sacrifice to Apollo in his kingdom. It makes full use of all the entanglements that were so fashionable in late seventeenth- to mid-eighteenth-century Italian opera, such as unexpected parenthood, and husbands and wives turning out to be brothers and sisters.

Coming now to Berezovsky’s setting, there are three extant accepted sources:

1) Two articles in the February (1a) and November (1b) 1773 issues of *Notizie dal Mondo* (*News from the World*).<sup>10</sup> 1a clearly states that Berezovsky’s *Il Demofonte* was staged in Livorno with great success; 1b reports that a *Demofonte* was staged at the Teatro di via del Cocomero in Florence, omitting the name of the composer. As I will shortly show, 1b was not connected to Berezovsky.

2) The frontispiece of the Livorno libretto, a precious document, mentioned just about every person involved in this staging, including the time—Carnival 1773—and the place, Teatro di San Sebastiano. Robert Mooser discovered these details in a catalogue called *Indice de’ teatrali spettacoli*,<sup>11</sup> an almanac that listed information about every Italian opera for that year. It ran from 1764 to 1823, and it is an invaluable source for eighteenth-century Italian opera.<sup>12</sup>

3) The last and most important piece of evidence is the manuscript held in the Florence Conservatory (I-Fc D-I. 207 Partit. ms. obl.). This manuscript contains eleven arias and two duos. Four of the arias are from Berezovsky’s *Demofonte*.

Past scholarship has inferred much—and rightly so—from these three points, but a further investigation of available evidence and documentation shows faults in the musicological approaches and conclusions, which need to be amended.

Firstly, the *Demofonte* held in November at Teatro del Cocomero, of which Mooser found mention in *Notizie del Mondo* (1b), was actually by Pasquale Anfossi, as the relevant entry of the Sartori Catalogue shows.<sup>13</sup> Ironically enough, the première of Anfossi’s *Demofonte* had

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7 Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, 124-30.

8 Sartori: *I libretti*, Vol. VI, 289-90.

9 Entry by Don Neville.

10 1a) “Fra gli spettacoli rappresentati nel passato Carnevale, si è molto distinto quello dell’Opera in musica, scritta dal Sig. Masimo Berezowskoy, Maestro di Cappella Russo all’attual servizio di S. M. l’Imperatrice di tutte le Russie, soggetto, che al possesso della Scienza Musica riunisce la vivacità, e il buon gusto”; 1b) “Nella sera v’è stata illuminazione al Teatro di via del Cocomero, ove si rappresenta con grande incontro l’Opera *Il Demofonte*.”

11 Robert Aloys Mooser (1876–1969) gathered a massive amount of evidence and material on eighteenth-century Russian musicians, which resulted in the *Annales de la musique et des musiciens en Russie au 18. siecle* (Geneve: Mont-Blanc, 1948–51, 3 vols.), an unmissable work for all successive scholarship on these matters.

12 See especially Roberto Verti, “The *Indice de’ teatrali spettacoli*, Milan, Venice, Rome, 1764–1823: Preliminary Research on a Source for the History of Italian Opera,” *Periodica Musica* 3 (1985): 1-7. Free access to the article at <http://www.ripm.org/pdf/PeriodicaMusica/pm03.pdf> (last checked 12 January 2016).

13 Sartori, *I libretti*, entry no. 7553.

taken place in Rome the previous February, contemporaneously to Berezovsky's one in Livorno.

DEMOFOONTE. *Dramma per musica da rappresentarsi in Firenze nel Teatro di Via del Cocomero nell'autunno dell'anno 1773 sotto la protezione del serenissimo Pietro Leopoldo [...] arciduca d'Austria e gran-duca di Toscana. Firenze, Anton-Giuseppe Pagani, 1773. Pag. 48, antiporta figurata.*  
Personaggi: Salvatore Casetti (Demofonte); Caterina Bonafini (Dircea); Giuseppa del Buono (Creusa); Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci, virt. di camera del granduca di Toscana (Timante); Tommaso Galeazzi (Cherinto); Francesco Papi (Matusio); Nina Marchiò (Adrasto).  
Musica di Pasquale Anfossi, maestro di capp. napolitano.  
Vestiario di Ferdinando Mainero fiorentino.  
Balli di Giuseppe Banti.  
*I-Bc - Fc - Vgc* 7553)

Extant sources for Anfossi's opera are abundant. RISM lists more than sixty manuscripts; one even reports the entire work.<sup>14</sup> There is therefore little room to doubt Anfossi's authorship of the whole Florence *Demofonte*. Given that no other composer is mentioned in any of these sixty sources, even a pastiche with some hypothetical Berezovsky numbers inserted is out of the question.

Georgy Keldish, referring to the November issue of *Notizie del Mondo* (1b), wrote that although there is no mention of a composer's name, one can with great probability suggest that it was Berezovsky's opera. It thus became clear why parts of his *Demofonte* appeared in the library of Florence conservatory. Mooser drew my attention to this newspaper article in personal correspondence.<sup>15</sup>

However, now that Anfossi has been shown to be the only composer of the opera mentioned by *Notizie dal Mondo* (1b), connections between the Florence *Demofonte* staging and the extant arias in the Conservatory manuscript cease to be tenable.

The second point to be rectified regards the *Indice de' Teatrali Spettacoli*, which Mooser was able to examine in a Milanese library. As she communicated to me, this got Marina Ritzarev thinking that this catalogue referred specifically to operas staged in Milan. This is not the case: this journal was edited in Milan prior to 1800, and Milan is the city where Mooser consulted it. Thus, mention in this journal does not prove that the echo of Berezovsky's *Demofonte* arrived in Milan.<sup>16</sup>

Finally: the crux of the "*Demofonte* question"—the Florence manuscript. Earlier studies on this question are flawed in that they limit themselves to Berezovsky's connections and biography. What was still missing was the deduction of objective evidence from the manuscript itself, something understandably hard to obtain for a Russian musicologist, due to the distance from Italy.

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14 This particular source for the whole opera is now in the Santini Collection in Muenster, Germany. Consulting it, however, was beyond my financial capabilities.

15 Georgy V. Keldysh, *Ocherki i issledovania po istorii russkoi muzyki* (Moscow: Sovetsky Kompozitor, 1978), 119. See also *ibidem*, 113-29. Passage and translation kindly provided by Marina Ritzarev.

16 Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, 115-16.

What follows is based on my personal evaluation of the manuscript in Florence, which leads me to suggest a completely new interpretation of Berezovsky's *Demofonte*.

The volume is quite large, in the typical horizontal format of Italian music sheets: approximately 27 x 15 x 7 cm. Apart from Berezovsky's works, it contains other nine numbers from different versions of the same libretto, all staged in 1773. Seven are by Pasquale Anfossi (Rome, Teatro Argentina), and two by Niccolò Piccini (Rome, Teatro della Valle).

Pagination is continuous, a very important detail proving the unity of the manuscript as a whole and the idea behind it. Moreover, the paper is uniform in appearance throughout the entire volume (in consistency, color, absorbency...): it probably came from a single lot. It is quite robust, yet clearly cheap. There are no watermarks.

The manuscript is in good condition throughout, and there are no signs of wear or usage. Mention of the year 1773 is very prominent, appearing in large characters on an initial leaf, and well marked in the titles of each number.

Four different copyists worked on the manuscript. Surprisingly, yet somewhat predictably, the copyist setting down Berezovsky's arias did not also write numbers from other composers, as copyists 1 and 3 do in writing music both from Anfossi and Piccini.

The volume comes from the archive of the noble Florentine Rinuccini family, about whom not much is known. One of the owners inserted a higher-quality paper leaf that serves as an index before the beginning of the actual volume. This single, smaller leaf bears a watermark saying "AL MASSO," the name of a place not far from Florence, where an important paper factory was located. This sets the date of the index, if it is of any importance, as post-1783.

All Berezovsky's arias were corrected with a pencil at the points where the original copyist made mistakes, while the other arias show no sign of correction and/or checking.

Marina Ritzarev informed me that the editors of these arias worked on microfilms. So who went to Florence specifically to check on Berezovsky's music—who went all that way to write on an eighteenth-century manuscript? Perhaps Mooser himself, or Sergei Diaghilev (or one of his assistants), who was said to have had the idea of staging the opera?<sup>17</sup>

**Table 1** Showing the information given for each number of the manuscript

Composer	Type	Title	Pp	Staged	Description	Hand
Pasquale Anfossi	Aria	Misero Pargoletto	1-37	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	1
Pasquale Anfossi	Aria	In te spero a [sic] sposo amato	38-77	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	2
Pasquale Anfossi	Aria	Odo il suono di queruli accenti	78-117	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	1
Pasquale Anfossi	Aria	Dall'affanno ho il cuore oppresso	118-145	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	3
Pasquale Anfossi	Aria	Per lei fra l'armi	146-185	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	1
Pasquale Anfossi	Aria	Perfidi giacché in vita	186-217	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	1
Pasquale Anfossi	Scena e duo	Sposo consorte	218-289	Argentina 1773	Aria del Sig. Pasquale Anfossi	1
Niccolò Piccini	Scena e aria	È giorno o notte	290-353	Alla Valle 1773	Scena del Sig. Nicolò Piccini	1

17 Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, 116.

Niccolò Piccini	Duetto	Vada fa ben così	354-421	Alla Valle 1773	Scena del Sig. Niccolò Piccini	3
Massimo Beresovvskoy	Aria	Misero Pargoletto	422-445	In Livorno 1773	Aria Misero Pargoletto del Sig.re Massimo Beresovvskoy Russo	4
Massimo Beresovvskoy	Aria	Per lei fra l'armi	446-477	In Livorno 1773	Aria Per lei fra l'armi del Sig.re Massimo Beresovvskoy Russo	4
Massimo Beresovvskoy	Aria	Mentre il cor con meste voci	478-505	In Livorno 1773	Aria Mentre il cor con meste voci del Sig.re Massimo Beresovvskoy Russo	4
Massimo Beresovvskoy	Aria	Prudente mi chiedi	506-535	In Livorno 1773	Aria Prudente mi chiedi del Sig.re Massimo Beresovvskoy Russo	4

There are, however, some problems with dating the Piccinni staging.<sup>18</sup> The manuscript states that it was presented at the Roman theater Alla Valle in 1773, but Sartori lists a *Demofonte* by Piccinni only in Reggio Emilia, central Italy, in 1761.<sup>19</sup> Nor does a highly specific chronology<sup>20</sup> of the Alla Valle Theater list any *Demofonte* by Piccinni being held there. The fact that the two Piccinni numbers were written by two different copyists further complicates matters. Perhaps both take their dating from a previous—incorrect?—document? Or perhaps there really was a 1773 staging—of which no evidence remains today?

Coming back to the manuscript enquiry in order to draw a conclusion, I suggest that the key to its proper comprehension is the desire of a single person—perhaps an impresario—to compile numbers from the most recent 1773 stagings of *Demofonte*. This could lead us to the conclusion that the finding of Berezovsky's music in it is simply fortuitous. Maybe we would not even have had these four arias if he had composed his opera a couple of years earlier or later.

One last finding remains. The aria *Mentre il cor* is a re-working of an earlier aria by Antonio Sacchini, who in turn copied (or, more likely, re-worked) an aria with the same lyrics by Tommaso Traetta, apparently the first composer to have set the four *Mentre il cor* verses to music.

This is why Mooser himself was not able to contextualize the aria in the standard *Demofonte* libretto, nor trace the origins of the lyrics<sup>21</sup>: *Mentre il cor* began as an independent non-operatic composition by Tommaso Traetta. Even today, a search on Google for the lyrics of *Mentre il cor* brings no significant results. Its author remains unknown, at least to the extent of my knowledge.

Originally, Traetta wrote a parasacred work consisting of two parts, the first in Latin and the second—*Mentre il cor*—in Italian. The only source for this piece is found in a library in

18 Nevertheless, this only marginally affects considerations on Berezovsky.

19 Sartori, *I libretti*, entry no. 7544.

20 Freely consultable at [http://dhi-roma.it/fileadmin/user\\_upload/pdf-dateien/Online-Publikationen/Grempler/Chronologie\\_Teatro\\_Valle\\_III.pdf](http://dhi-roma.it/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf-dateien/Online-Publikationen/Grempler/Chronologie_Teatro_Valle_III.pdf) (last entry 12 January 2016).

21 Mario Corti, "La musica italiana a San Pietroburgo," *Philomusica Online*, 4-1 (2005): n. 7. Freely consultable at [https://www.academia.edu/4859532/La\\_musica\\_italiana\\_nel\\_Settecento\\_a\\_San\\_Pietroburgo](https://www.academia.edu/4859532/La_musica_italiana_nel_Settecento_a_San_Pietroburgo)

Prague. I contacted the library via e-mail but have received no response, and have not been able to see the music.

Sacchini evidently knew this work, and decided to insert the second part of it in his opera *Artaserse* (Naples, 1768). Until the manuscript in the Prague library can be accessed, it is impossible to cast aside doubts whether Sacchini entirely copied or merely took inspiration from Traetta.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, Berezovsky came to know Sacchini's *Mentre il cor* thanks to Giuseppe Afferi, tenor singer in both Berezovsky and Sacchini's operas.<sup>23</sup> However, Berezovsky did not limit himself to passively adding Sacchini's piece in his play, simply confining the whole affair to a "suitcase aria," for which the singer was the only person responsible. In all likelihood, Berezovsky saw the aria and decided instead to re-work it, perhaps with a feeling of positive confrontation with the individual who was regarded as the most skilled and successful author of Opera Seria.<sup>24</sup>

A comparison of the two arias is of particular interest, as it shows how Berezovsky reshaped an earlier piece in his own way, granting an original hint at his writing style.

The lyrics greatly influence the overall structure of both arias:

*Mentre il cor con meste voci  
Mi palesa il duol che asconde,  
La speranza al cor risponde  
Che contento al fin godrà.*

[While the heart with mournful voices  
Discloses the grief that it hides  
Hope reassures the heart  
That joyful it will delight at last.]

The lyrics consist of a single quatrain of eight-syllable verses instead of the usual two quatrains (with the second repeat for musical contrast); therefore, the arias correspondingly lack the characteristic ABA form. Both composers repeat the lyrics four times. Key is C major in Sacchini, D major in Berezovsky.

The following tables show how the two composers deal with the appearance of each of the four statements.

Sacchini	Measure	Theme	Tonal Area	Harmony of the statement in regard to the Tonal Area	Bass note
<i>I Statement</i>	44	"A "	C Major	C Major – Tonic	C
<i>II</i>	77	"B "	G Major	D Major – Dominant	D (pedal)
<i>III</i>	105	"A "	C Major	F# diminished – Subdom.	G (pedal)
<i>IV</i>	141	"C "	C Major	C Major – Tonic	C

<sup>22</sup> However, in the Sacchini aria, there appear certain characteristic harmonic treatments that suggest a re-working of Traetta's original. This is what the *Antonio Sacchini* entry in Grove online writes about his harmonic style: "Sacchini's harmony tends to be richer than that of most of his contemporary Italian opera composers, and especially effective is his judicious use of diminished seventh chords, dominants of degrees of the scale other than the tonic, and augmented sixth chords. He often achieved dramatic tension through the use of changing harmonies over a tonic pedal point or with a sudden change from major to minor." Almost all of this is to be found in *Mentre il cor*, as will be shown later (entry by David DiChiera and Joyce Johnson Robinson).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Sartori, *I libretti*: entry no. 3062.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem

Berezovsky	Measure	Theme	Tonal Area	Harmony of the statement in regard to the Tonal Area	Bass
<i>I Statement</i>	24	“A “	D Major	D Major – Tonic	D
<i>II</i>	51	“B “	A Major	E Major – Dominant	E (pedal)
<i>III</i>	82	“A “	D Major	A Major – Dominant	G (seventh of A Maj. chord)
<i>IV</i>	106	“B “	D Major	D Major in 4-6 – Tonic	A (pedal)

It is evident that Berezovsky chooses to maintain the overall organization set by Sacchini. The most notable difference is that the former refuses to introduce a third theme, as does the latter for the final statement. Berezovsky's aria is also significantly shorter, accounting for some thirty measures less (140 against 171).

**Example 1** Sacchini's *Mentre il cor* instrumental and vocal incipits

**Example 2** Berezovsky's *Mentre il cor* instrumental and vocal incipits<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Both composers actually ask for two oboes (in Sacchini the first is *concertante*), two horns and strings. The reduction I present here is intended solely to simplify.

1

Tenor

Violins

Cello

24

Tenor

Men - tre il cor con me - ste vo - ci

Violins

Cello

Detailed description: This musical score shows the beginning of a piece. It features three staves: Tenor, Violins, and Cello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Tenor part starts with a whole rest for the first four measures, then begins with a melodic line starting on a half note. The Violins play a continuous, rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Cello provides a harmonic foundation with a series of chords, primarily dyads and triads.

The similarities in the melodic line A are striking. However, the ceaseless semiquavers livening up the instrumental background of Sacchini's aria make evident his more active writing, even tumultuous at times, that runs throughout the work. Berezovsky instead opts for a transparent texture that becomes essential when the tenor starts singing.

With regard to texture, Berezovsky maintains this simplicity throughout, while Sacchini sometimes allows a slightly richer counterpoint to come out, here and there, even using contrary motions.

**Example 3** Sacchini's end of second statement of lyrics

96

Soprano

che con - ten - to fin go - drà, che con - ten - to al fin go - drà.

Violins

Cello

Detailed description: This musical score shows the end of a second statement of lyrics. It features three staves: Soprano, Violins, and Cello. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Soprano part begins with a melodic line starting on a half note. The Violins play a complex, rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Cello provides a harmonic foundation with a series of chords, primarily dyads and triads.

**Example 4** The same passage in Berezovsky. A<sup>6</sup> is held for two more measures, then the melody continues with a 5-measures long melisma

Musical score for Example 4, measures 64-68. The Tenor part is in G major and features the lyrics "che con - ten - to al fin go - drà". The Violins and Cello provide accompaniment. The Tenor part has a melisma of five measures starting at measure 68.

The simplicity of Berezovsky's aria can be inferred from his almost total use of perfect chords and more pronounced diatonicism, whereas Sacchini gives full show to his peculiar harmonic palette<sup>26</sup>:

"[Sacchini] often achieved dramatic tension through the use of changing harmonies over a tonic pedal point or with a sudden change from major to minor." Also, notice how this third statement of the lyrics begins on strongly dissonant grounds.

**Example 5**

Musical score for Example 5, measures 105-113. The Soprano part is in G major and features the lyrics "Men - tre il cor con mes - te vo - ci mi pa - le - sa il duol che as - con - de che as - con - de". The Violins and Cello provide accompaniment. The Soprano part has a melisma of five measures starting at measure 110.

26 As outlined above in n. 12.

The overall result of Berezovsky's efforts is a rejection of Sacchini's very personal style in favor of a more immediate, Italianate style. This is very natural, considering the fact that Berezovsky had spent the previous fifteen years singing Italian opera, and that Count Orlov was one of the many Russians who fell in love at that time with that very music<sup>27</sup>: he would surely have enjoyed its clear style.

Some new reflections on Berezovsky's *Demofonte* are thus possible, or at least conjecturable.

The feeble hints of a Florence staging have been eliminated, confining the only definite staging we know of to Livorno, Carnival 1773. This is actually in line with the overwhelming majority of Italian operas of that time, which were staged only for one particular occasion (especially true for operas by less well-known composers).<sup>28</sup>

Unlinking Berezovsky from the Teatro del Cocomero also invalidates the main hypothesis surrounding the reason Berezovsky's arias are to found in the Florence manuscript. I have proposed instead that they were copied to create a collection of numbers from the three stagings of *Demofonte* held in 1773.<sup>29</sup> Without pretending that this is a definitive solution of this enigma, it is perhaps the most likely suggestion until new evidence is revealed.

Finally, the discovery that at least one of the four arias is a re-working of music by another composer opens up interesting research and analysis scenarios: in what proportion does *Mentre il cor* differ stylistically from the three other arias and the rest of Berezovsky's output? Such a question would further advance the understanding of his compositional logics in reshaping a previous piece; can we trace other similar cases in Berezovsky's *Demofonte*? Is it possible that Dmitry Bortniansky did the same somewhere in his operas?

Although my contribution has updated current knowledge of Berezovsky's supposedly only opera and his own reception in contemporary Italy, it is clear that much remains to be discovered about him, the time he spent in Italy, and what he composed while there.

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27 Ritzarev, *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*, 116, n.12.

28 Further confirmation of this custom can be inferred easily by leafing through Sartori, *I Libretti*, Vol. VI, 111-39.

29 *Ibidem*, 290. Berezovsky's *Demofonte* is not listed here because the libretto is not extant.