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Vying for the Monk: competing ideological strands in the 1882 Guidonian celebrations in Arezzo*

«Among the many monuments erected anywhere in our times,
one of the very few before which any competition, any difference of opinion
falls silent, and which can really be said to be cosmopolitan,
is this one to Guido of Arezzo»

Commendatore Alessandro Kraus, son¹

The monument object of such a flattering judgement is the statue of Guido Monaco by Livornese sculptor Salvino Salvini, in white Carrara marble, which still towers today in the middle of the eponymous piazza in Arezzo. The unveiling of the monument on September 2, 1882 marked the beginning of two weeks of impressive celebrations in honour of Guido Monaco, and was the highlight of a vast and yet unfinished project of urban renewal that had started sixteen years earlier, aimed at giving a modern appearance to the district downstream of the city, between the railway station and the old town.

The new, spacious via Guido Monaco, begun as early as 1865 and virtually completed five years later, provided a link between the old town and the station, while the new circular square of the same name – at the meeting point of the two perpendicular axes of via Guido Monaco and later

* This study is the product of research carried out at the Archivio di Stato and Biblioteca Civica of Arezzo between 2008 and 2011. A special thanks goes to the staff of both institutions, for their kind collaboration, in particular to Dr. Ilaria Marcelli (Archivio di Stato) and Dr. Elisa Boffa (Biblioteca Civica), for providing information on documents concerning the Feste. The final text benefited from the many critical feedback, suggestions and bibliographic recommendations of Alessandro Garofoli, Mauro Casadei Turrone Monti and the anonymous reviewers of *Polifonie*, whom I wholeheartedly thank. Finally, I would like to thank Cecilia Luzzi and Claudio Santori for their editorial and logistic support.

¹ «Cronaca aretina» [henceforth CA], 10, 3 September 1882, p. 2.



Fig. 1 – *The statue of Guido Monaco in Arezzo* (Photo courtesy of Valeria Gudini)

via Petrarca/via Roma – effectively became the heart of Arezzo's new economy.²

Stressing the huge meaning of the Feste for the Tuscan city, as well as for Italian and European musical culture, as many as twenty-five issues of a new periodical created for the occasion, the *Cronaca aretina*, were entirely devoted to documenting the thick web of events in the program and to complementing – often from a different perspective – the editorials of the weekly *Gazzetta aretina*. In addition, a large group of pamphlets and mostly local reports, not to mention the intense epistolary exchanges between organizers and collaborators, document the celebrations step by step, providing us with an opportunity to study those momentous Aretine days in their historical and political context.³

The purpose of this study is to show how the comment by Kraus, a distinguished figure in the musical and 'musical-archaeological' culture of his time, does not in fact stand up to a thorough reading of the ideological and social components that met – and more often avoided one another – in Arezzo in that late summer at the end of the 19th century.⁴ More precisely: while on the one hand it is true that the statue of Guido was able to incorporate «any difference of opinion», as opined by the Tuscan aristocrat, on the other hand it did not in any way contribute to tone down, let alone bridge such differences – nor was such a result expected by the organizers themselves. What instead seems more accurate is that Guido Monaco was more or less legitimately appropriated by opposing ideological agendas – a figure vied for indeed, as will be argued in the following pages.

The main themes and messages of the Aretine celebrations have been the object of several recent studies. Laura Basini has analyzed the aesthetic and cultural motivations behind the revival of sacred music in post-unification

² For more details on the urbanistic transformation of Arezzo in the post-unification era, see ANDREA ANDANTI, *L'apertura di via Guido Monaco*, «Bollettino d'Informazione della Brigata Aretina degli Annali dei Monumenti», XXVII, 1979, pp. 5-15, and especially ALESSANDRO GAROFOLI, *L'incanto della modernità: Arezzo nell'Italia unita*, Florence, Centro Editoriale Toscano, 2012, pp. 132-136. Garofoli emphasizes in particular the major scale and impact of the renovation, which involved tearing down over a third of the old town, including buildings of fine workmanship and historical value (*ivi*, p. 134).

³ The whole series of the *Cronaca Aretina* and a partial series of the *Gazzetta* are accessible at the Biblioteca Civica di Arezzo.

⁴ For a portrait of Alessandro Kraus's activities as a collector of musical instruments and as a scholar (among his publications is a monograph on Japanese traditional music), see *Alessandro Kraus, musicologo e antropologo: guida alla mostra*, edited by Gabriele Rossi Rognoni, Florence, Giunti, 2004.

Italy, which yielded a wide spectrum of stylistic solutions, ranging from imitations of Palestrina to Verdi's *Requiem*.⁵ Such revisitations of the sacred music of the past in the concert genres – Basini argues – did not aim at reconciling the Catholic faith with nationalism, but rather at enlisting the aura of religion and music history in the service of a new idea of Italianness («citizenship») that conformed with the new political climate in a now unified country.⁶ Conversely, a full recovery of religion and the sacred as essential components of the new idea of Italianness were at the center of the reform program of the Cecilian movement led by don Guerrino Amelli, in part pursued through commemorations of illustrious musicians of the past such as the Aretine monk.⁷ An objective that was at least partly realized, if we consider that the European Congress of Liturgical Chant held on that occasion had the effect of «rekindling Gregorian Chant» in Arezzo, in the words of Alfredo Grandini, so much so that today the Concorso Polifonico still includes a liturgical chant competition.⁸

In a recent study, Alessandro Garofoli concentrates on the trade-show component of the celebrations, more than on the historical-celebratory one. Strongly advocated by the Aretine and Tuscan entrepreneurial sectors, with the support of prominent political figures and various sponsoring institutions, the Feste marked a turning point in the development of both the rural and the budding industrial economy. In the wake of the recent opening of the railway station and of the already mentioned urban renewal, September 1882 de facto ushered Arezzo officially into modernity, leaving behind the immobility and isolation that had blocked its development for a long time.⁹ The highlights of the Feste, as a showcase of the promises and

⁵ LAURA BASINI, *Verdi and Sacred Revivalism in Post-Unification Italy*, «Nineteenth-Century Music», XXVIII, 2, 2004, pp. 133-159.

⁶ «[The function of the Requiem] was defined less in religious terms than in those of the history of music and the nation»; *ivi*, p. 136.

⁷ *Ivi*, p. 142 sg.

⁸ ALFREDO GRANDINI, *Il Concorso Polifonico di Arezzo: le origini e il primo quinquennio (1952-1956)*, «Annali Aretini», XXII, 2014, pp. 199-257, in particular 201-202.

⁹ ALESSANDRO GAROFOLI, 'Quel meraviglioso 1882: Concorsi agrari e industriali nazionali: Le 'Feste' di Arezzo', «Storia e Futuro: rivista di storia e storiografia on line», LII, April 2020 <<http://storiaefuturo.eu/quel-meraviglioso-1882-concorsi-agrari-e-industriali-nazionali-le-feste-di-arezzo/>> [accessed 7 August 2020]. The article summarizes the detailed analysis of the Feste featured in the monograph (GAROFOLI, *L'incanto della modernità* cit., pp. 326-355). On the difficult, and in many respects disappointing integration of Arezzo during the first two decades of the new Kingdom of Italy see *Ivi*, pp. 65-122 and 319-20. See also the concise report of the Feste in ALFREDO GRANDINI, *Cronache musicali del Teatro Petrarca di*

aspirations of Arezzo in the economic arena, were the Tuscan Agricultural Fair and Contest and the Provincial Industrial Contest, flanked by a Cattle Exhibit, the National Contest for Makers of Musical Instruments, the Tuscan Gymnastics Tournament and the Provincial Pedagogical Conference. There was also a great number of side activities, among them bingo sessions, horse shows, round races ‘alla romana’, as well as bands, parades and torchlight walks down the streets and along the festively decorated gardens. For their part, the academic and musical sections of the Feste contributed several performances of Arrigo Boito’s *Mefistofele* at Teatro Petrarca, conducted by Luigi Mancinelli, a ‘solemn session’ of the Accademia Petrarca devoted to Guido Monaco, and the European Congress of Liturgical Chant, among other events.¹⁰ Finally, September 2 saw the introduction of electric lighting in Arezzo, which greatly impressed the Feste participants despite the fact that the still rudimentary technology left much to be desired.¹¹ The organizational machine was also very modern: the Feste were widely publicized by the Italian and foreign press, and participants could access the various events by showing pre-printed tickets at the entrance.

As one may already infer from this short description, the Feste celebrated values and goals not necessarily in accordance with one another. To what extent could a Medieval Benedictine monk represent the new Post-unification Italianness and the new vision of economic progress? And what model of Italianness, in particular? The Italian clergy, for instance, could not but be at the very least suspicious of the markedly secular tone of the Feste, and predictably remained at due distance from them. As Garofoli states:

The archpriest [Giovanni Battista Ristori, one of the organizers of the Feste] was a rare religious attendee in a patchwork of events that, although not openly anticlerical, could be described as secular and liberal. This is confirmed by the laughably small participation of religious authorities in the ceremonies, as well as by the marginal role played by local religious charities, despite their power. While the overwhelming majority of the organizers were devout, the Feste conveyed an essentially positivistic world vision that clashed with the Church’s conservative positions against liberalism and social evolution.¹²

In short, there was little doubt about the specific political message

Arezzo: il primo cinquantennio (1833-1882), Florence, Olschki, 1995, pp. 299-309.

¹⁰ On *Mefistofele* and the other music events connected to the Arezzo festivities, see ALFREDO GRANDINI, *Cronache musicali del Teatro Petrarca di Arezzo* cit., pp. 309-317.

¹¹ GAROFOLI, ‘*Quel meraviglioso 1882*’ cit., in the section “Programma definitivo”.

¹² *Ivi*, in the “Eventi per tutti” section.

emanating from the impressive 1882 festivities, in spite of the relatively broad civic base they rested upon. Thus, in the context of post-unification festivals as privileged moments for the development of new and convincing symbols of national consciousness, the case of the Guidonian celebrations of Arezzo provides a precious occasion to revisit not only the role of history in the building of such consciousness – or the ‘invention’ of it, as some may argue – but also the cross-relationships between State and Church, between cultural tradition and economic and technological progress, and between various political and cultural institutions at the local and international levels – the city, the nation, Europe – that operated in late 19th-century Tuscany. The 1882 Feste are historically important precisely because they became an opportunity for a rare showdown of starkly opposing notions of Italianness, science, progress and culture. The aim of this study is to analyze what may be regarded as the prominent features of this colourful ideological landscape.

The Risorgimento roots of the Monumento Europeo to Guido Monaco

As is already known, the idea of erecting a monument to Guido of Arezzo was first put forward in 1864 by an Aretine nobleman, Cavaliere Angiolo Antonio De Bacci-Venuti, one of the main proponents of the Gioacchino Rossini statue unveiled that same year in Pesaro. The City Council of Arezzo accepted De Bacci’s proposal and established two commissions, an artistic and an administrative one, with the primary purpose of raising the funds needed to carry out the initiative.¹³

At this early stage the rationale behind the «European monument» was to extol the musical primacy of Italy in the European context, a primacy that could not but go back to the «inventor of musical notes» of more than eight centuries earlier. Guido was thus celebrated as nothing less than the Italic foundation of the whole Western musical genealogy, a reading of history that the other European nations implicitly endorsed by contributing to monument expenses and by sending their delegations to participate in the Feste. Supporting this celebratory model was an idea of homeland that was by definition all-embracing, as it included not only several centuries of history of the peninsula, but above all Italians of all walks of life and

¹³ Biblioteca Civica di Arezzo, M.A.G. V, 46. An earlier version of the newsletter appears in GIOVANNI BATTISTA RISTORI, *Biografia di Guido Monaco d'Arezzo, inventore delle note musicali*, 2nd ed., Naples, 1868, pp. 56-57. The Artistic Commission included Gioacchino Rossini (honorary president), Giovanni Pacini (president), Saverio Mercadante and De Bacci himself. On the establishment of the two initial commissions see GRANDINI, *Cronache musicali* cit., pp. 302-309.

professions, lay and religious: all Italians had benefited from Guido's genius, and all Italians were now invited to pay him due tribute. Europe acted as a sounding board for both the Italian primacy in music and the newly united nation, thereby also confirming its independence and identity. The very choice to celebrate Guido as 'Monaco', instead of 'Aretino' or 'd'Arezzo', may tentatively be regarded as the product of such Europeanist perspective, aimed at emphasizing the contribution of the Tuscan town to Western culture in support of its candidacy for admission into modernity.¹⁴

The original inspiration to erect a monument to Guido Monaco therefore did not come from clerical and pro-Catholic factions, much less from sacred music circles, but rather from Tuscan moderate liberalism, which at the time was firmly in control of the political institutions and economic activities at both the local and national level. Nevertheless, at this stage immediately following the Risorgimento, the idea of recognizing the musical primacy of Italy in the world was undoubtedly attractive to liberal Catholics, led by Vincenzo Gioberti. Despite being soon destined to become irrelevant, the liberal Catholic faction was still part of the political debate before the Capture of Rome, and eager to point to the musical 'primato' of Italy as an example of the Church's positive contribution to national history.¹⁵

¹⁴ The first Medieval source that refers to Guido as 'Aretinus' is the *Chronica* by Sigebert of Gembloux (ca. 1030-1112), yet the history of music theory adopts the label with some regularity only as late as the 15th century, alternating it with 'Guido monachus'. The modern era much prefers the designation 'Guido d'Arezzo' or 'Aretino', as witnessed by the numerous biographical studies devoted to him from the 18th century to the Italian Unity (for instance those by Girolamo Tiraboschi, Luigi Angeloni, and Raphael Georg Kiesewetter), the early comprehensive music histories by John Hawkins and Charles Burney, and the music treatises themselves from the 17th century onward. On the controversial issue of Guido's birthplace see CESARINO RUINI, entry for 'Guido d'Arezzo', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, LXI (2004), <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/guido-d-arezzo_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/>, [accessed 17 August 2020], GUIDO D'AREZZO, *Le opere. Micrologus – Regulae rhythmicæ – Prologus in Antiphonarium – Epistola ad Michaellem – Epistola ad archiepiscopum Mediolanensem*, Latin text with introduction, [Italian] translation and commentary by Angelo Rusconi, Florence, Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2005, in particular pp. xxix-xxxiv), and CLAUDIO SANTORI, *La musica e i musicisti*, in *Storia di Arezzo: stato degli studi e prospettive. Atti del Convegno Arezzo, 21-23 febbraio 2006*, edited by Luca Berti and Pierluigi Licciardello, Florence, Edifir, 2010, pp. 651-658, and the many contributions on the subject cited by the three authors.

¹⁵ On Gioberti's political thought see, among other studies, BRUCE HADDOCK, *Political Union without Social Revolution: Vincenzo Gioberti's Primato*, «The Historical Journal» 41 (1998), pp. 705-723, GIOVANNA ANGELINI, *Le correnti politiche del Risorgimento*, «Il Politico» 76 (227), May-August 2011, pp. 67-87 and GAETANO QUAGLIARELLA, *I*

An eloquent sign of this attitude comes from the already mentioned Ristori, who in his *Biografia* offers a portrait of Guido as motivated in equal measure by love for the study of science and by the practice of Christian faith and of the virtues. Moreover, the author does not miss the opportunity to exalt the papal Rome of the past and of the present as a cause for glory and as a bastion of civilization for Italy.¹⁶ Also particularly illuminating is the enthusiastic letter of endorsement by canonico Cavalier Vincenzo Brancia, bishop of the Calabrian diocese of Nicotera and Tropea. After reasserting the need «to erect... a Magnificent Monument to one of those excellent Italians whose contributions have drawn high praises for Italy in the theatre of Nations, and have glorified her in the History of Inventions», he adds:

I am also pleased because, by honouring the memory of the Illustrious Italian Guido Monaco, this Monument marks a great step forward towards restoring the reputation of Monasticism after the many insults and wrongs by those ridiculous and ignorant people who, with no motive, and only to second the current awful Masonic trend, blame monks and priests for all the evil in the world. Yes, Most Excellent signor Cavaliere, the European Monument we wish to erect will serve as a reminder to present and future citizens that monks were never irrelevant to the Civic Consortium – on the contrary, they were most useful to Religion, to Science and to all kinds of civilized pursuit.¹⁷

For his own part, the canonico and Commendatore Giuseppe Tedeschi from Rotonda (Basilicata), does not even stress Guido's status as a monk, appealing instead to arguments related to civil patriotism and to the Italian primacy in the world.¹⁸ Clearly, the inclusive nationalism of the Risorgimento era still functioned as an inspiring ideal, irrespective of the social and ideological connotations of the single individuals.

The list of donations for the monument confirms that the ideals of

Cattolici, il Risorgimento e l'Italia Liberale, «Ventunesimo secolo» 10 (2011), pp. 63-72.

¹⁶ RISTORI, *Biografia di Guido Monaco* cit., pp. 5-7, 34-35, 40-41.

¹⁷ Letter to De Bacci of 3 November 1866 (*ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, n. 3, c. 360). Bishop Brancia contributed 5 lire for the monument.

¹⁸ «I am extremely pleased with the lofty goal pursued by the erection of the European Monument: it will be admired by the Universe, and the memory of Guido Monaco, inventor of the harmonic language, will always be cherished and indelibly preserved... The world... will know that the people of Arezzo are inspired by true patriotism in rescuing from oblivion the memory of their most remarkable fellow citizens » (letter to De Bacci of 4 July 1867; *ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 5, f. 22).

the Risorgimento were still in good shape in the 1860s. Like its Rossini counterpart of 1864, the monument to Guido was immediately received as a cause for national pride uniting Italians from the Alps to Sicily. Indeed, even the most remote small towns identified with an initiative of a city that, until a few years earlier, had belonged to another state.¹⁹ As Bruno Tobia has insightfully observed, the post-unification city became «the symbolic place of patriotic brotherly union, a sort of testing ground and construction site for the mutual exchange of a modern unitary sentiment».²⁰ The new railway system promoted the birth of a budding mass tourism that joyfully connected ‘brothers’ from all over the national territory, while the renaming of streets and squares, not to speak of the memorial plaques, brought together local and national glories in a well-structured, coherent patriotic pedagogy.²¹

But how should the European agenda that informed the monument be expressed, beyond the planned celebratory framework of the Feste? On this point, too, the initial project was decidedly ambitious, since it entailed not only the individual statue of Guido, but also a choreography around it, with busts of the major European composers of the past and present. The plan is described in the «informal notes of the Regulations» penned by De Bacci himself in the autumn of 1864:

Should the sum be substantial, then the monument will have to be a Panteon [*sic*] that, besides the statue of the monk, will include the busts of all the famous master

¹⁹ A few examples from the *Elenco degli oblatori a tutto agosto 1868*, published on 5 November (ASAR, *Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 19, ff. 319-328): the municipalities of Messina and Aversa (Caserta) donated the sum of 100 lire each (the equivalent of about 500 euro in today’s currency, according to ISTAT data, <<https://inflationhistory.com/>> [accessed 9 July 2020]); the Musical Band of Massa Lombarda (Ravenna), 20 lire; nearby Montevarchi (Arezzo), 10 lire. The new *Elenco delle oblazioni raccolte a prò del Monumento a Guido Monaco da erigersi in Arezzo nel 1881* of 15 January 1879 (Biblioteca Civica, M.A.XXXIX, 2 bis) reveals that many other Municipalities, both big and small, contributed to the enterprise in the 1870s, totalling 103 local administrations and 39 societies. In major urban centers in Italy and abroad (among them Barcelona, Paris, S. Petersburg, Tunis, and Alexandria, Egypt) donations were collected by local fundraisers. Private donations from members of the professions and of the aristocracy were just over a thousand.

²⁰ BRUNO TOBIA, *Un patria per gli Italiani: spazi, itinerari, monumenti nell’Italia unita* (1870-1900), Bari, Laterza, 1991, pp. 93-99 (93). See also the remarks on the idea of nation in the Risorgimento in ALBERTO MARIO BANTI, *La nazione del Risorgimento: parentela, santità e onore all’origine dell’Italia unita*, Turin, Einaudi, 2006, pp. 26-33.

²¹ TOBIA, *Una patria per gli Italiani* cit., pp. 95-97; on the specific case of Arezzo, see GAROFOLI, *L’incanto della modernità* cit., p. 169.

composers of music, including the living ones, of the 19th century. As time goes by, this Panteon will accommodate the busts of the new European masters who deserve this distinction on account of their celebrity.²²

Several years later, sculptor Salvini still entertained the idea of a «Panteon» with a flight of steps («gradinata»), as long as the municipal coffers allowed for it:

As a matter of fact, when we drafted the agreement [in January 1876] I proposed to the members of the organizing committee that the monument be enhanced, as long as there was money available. Indeed, even in the contract we made a mutual commitment to that extent... I will always be ready, anytime we want, to create (four) additional sitting statues, life-size, around the pedestal, without detracting from the harmony and the good effect of the whole, thus gaining in majesty through an expansion of the flight of steps and a slight addition of the base itself. The result will be a rich and grandiose monument whose height is to always remain constant — that is to say, about nine meters, including the main statue.²³

Baron Kraus also offered his support to this expression of Europeanism a few months later:

As for the four statues, a foreign scientist made the following remark to me, that since we are dealing with a monument about ancient musical art, a more appropriate goal [?] would be to portray four Excellent Ancient Musicians, such as 'Palestrina' for Italy, 'Bach' for Germany and two more (a Flemish, French or English musician) to be identified. This seems to me a very felicitous idea; please talk and write to me about it.²⁴

Not surprisingly, fifteen years after De Bacci's original idea, the «Panteon» was reduced to a group of four busts placed around the monument. Not only that, but in 1879 even this simplified solution already seemed out of reach due to the tight budget, and - one might suggest - perhaps no longer

²² The document is a rough draft of the terms regulating the establishment and operations of the two administrative committees and the fundraising initiative (*ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 20, f. 84).

²³ Letter to De Bacci of 20 January 1879; emphasis in the original; *ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 20, f. 49.

²⁴ Letter to De Bacci of 18 April 1879; *ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 8, f. 157.

in tune with the new political climate.²⁵ The municipal announcement of 15 June 1877 dwelt on the difficulties that frustrated the fund-raising campaign «initially due to the poor state of public health, then due to the war, and finally because a decision was made [at the national level] to honor with monuments those who had made themselves especially meritorious on behalf of the Homeland, setting aside all other projects».²⁶ Despite such an unfavourable situation, in June 1878 De Bacci reported that «already the foundations of the monument are almost completed, and in 1880 it will certainly be unveiled».²⁷ This estimate turned out to be unfounded, however, and again due to the slow pace of fundraising the Feste were postponed to 1882. The final version of the monument featured only three steps in lieu of the «gradinata», and showed the coats of arms of Italian cities and regions in a ribbon above the pedestal. The height of the monument, by contrast, remained the original one of about nine meters above the ground.²⁸

Yet, after 1870 the ideological gap between the State and the Church had widened considerably, leading to the very low participation of the clergy to the «impresa» that Aretine printer Stefano Magi noted with disappointment in his chronicle of the Feste. In this new conjuncture, as we will see shortly, the underlying theme of the 1882 celebrations was no longer the musical 'primato' of Italy, but rather the new alignment of Italian civil history and modernity that by definition excluded the Catholic component of the country. In the meantime, the composition of the ruling class had also changed: while in the immediate post-unification period the aristocracy still held the reins of economic and civil power, based on real estate ownership and land income, in 1882 the aristocrats found themselves cornered by the growing pressure exerted by the emerging bourgeoisie, whose new approach to the management of politics and the economy inexorably relegated them to

²⁵ It is at least possible that the idea of inserting the two bronze panels on either side of the pedestal of the statue, which illustrate scenes from Guido's life echoing the traditional hagiographies of the saints, took hold as an alternative to the original concept of the monument in the form of a sculptural group.

²⁶ From the «Circolare» of the City of Arezzo of 15 June 1877 (*ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 20, f. 383). The fundraising coincided with the 1866 wars and, since 1869, with the levying of the notorious tax on grinding wheat and cereals («tassa sul macinato»), extensively discussed in GAROFOLI, *L'incanto della modernità* cit., pp. 150-152.

²⁷ Letter to Kraus of 16 June 1878; *ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 20, f. 53.

²⁸ My thanks to Arch. Mauro Torelli of the Technical Office of the City of Arezzo for providing me with this information.

irrelevance. The imposing commercial apparatus of the Feste Guidoniane, set up under the banner of economic dynamism and competition, provided a clear demonstration of the weight and magnitude of the ongoing socio-political transformation, which in turn gave a new twist to the reconfiguration, also well underway, of the roles of tradition, religious faith, culture and science in society.²⁹

A monument to liberated Italy: the statue of Salvino Salvini

In a rapidly shifting political climate, Salvini's monument inevitably took on more markedly nationalist and anticlerical connotations, to the detriment of the musical and European ones. Even an illustrious figure like Guido, who after the Capture of Rome could in principle still embody an idea of *super partes* Italianness, was inevitably enlisted in support of sectarian propaganda messages. As a new symbol of secular nationalism, the bony, ascetic figure of the Benedictine, who in his life belonged to the silence of Medieval cloisters and spent his existence teaching liturgical chant, was paradoxically associated with an idea of Italianness that could not wait to shrug off those very things - the Church, silence and the Middle Ages. Such reframing of Guido's image could not but provoke an opposite reaction from the Catholic side, which for its part was embracing increasingly radical stances on theological and political issues.

It is not surprising, then, that the figure of Guido Monaco, which immediately after the Unification was able to provide a symbolic link between the moderate Catholic and secular sides, now came to expose the ideological barriers that marked the political scene after 1870. As a consequence, the clergy's initial enthusiasm for De Bacci's monument quickly turned cold. The letter to De Bacci by bishop of Terni Antonio Belli is emblematic of the new political climate. It is worth quoting it in full here:

Most Distinguished Sir and Knight—

I am honored by the trust you have placed in me by soliciting my response regarding the project described in your letter of May 8. Although my assessment of it is not altogether favorable, I regard it as my duty to examine it fully and without preconceptions. In and of itself, the basic idea is just and noble, and truly deserving of the support of the secular and regular clergy, also considering the very small offer you suggest. But within the totality of the secular clergy and of the cenobites, how

²⁹ On the democratization of the Aretine ruling class of those years, which forced the aristocracy to open up, if partially, to the logic of the market, see GAROFOLI, *L'incanto della modernità* cit., pp. 323-328.

many of them do you suppose are actually aware of that illustrious man, honor him, and understand the significance of his contribution to the clergy? How many of them would instantly reject your proposal, if the celebrations were to coincide with the centennials of St. Benedict, or St. Francis of Assisi? And to be candid, since ordinarily one judges the person making the proposal, rather than the merit and the nature of the proposal itself, leaving aside the personal titles that make Your Lordship respectable to anyone who knows Him, do you truly believe that within the totality of Italian Dioceses the name of a private person would carry sufficient influence to mobilize, if not all ordained priests, at least the greater part of them? You realize full well that by saying these things I am counting on your good disposition toward me, which encourages me to add further that in my view the proposal is inopportune and bound to be unsuccessful at the present time, though it might have more impact at a more opportune time, provided the Diocesan Bishop appeals for it to the faithful with a well-reasoned argument. This said, please do not read these observations of mine as valid currency, but rather as a tentative one; I invite you instead to carefully weigh them in your mind. Be as it may, the clergy in my Diocese and myself are always available to cooperate on whatever plan is being implemented. In the meantime, I convey to you my renewed statements of most distinguished respect and personal attachment, as I maintain myself

Most devout and affectionate servant
of Your Most Illustrious Lordship,
Bishop Antonio [Belli] of Terni
Terni, 13 May, 1879

To the Most Noble Sir and Knight Angiolo Antonio De Bacci
Arezzo³⁰

Alas, «the just and noble idea» no longer sufficed to move souls and to support the initiative, but what is surprising is above all the bishop's cynical appeal to the idea that «ordinarily one judges the person making the proposal, rather than the merit and the nature of the proposal itself», so much so that even a promoter with De Bacci's reputation cannot be expected to mobilize «if not all ordained priests, at least the greater part of them», and to convince them to make even a «very small offer».

Even the untiring Ristori experienced first-hand these new adversities in mobilizing the clergy: according to Magi, the priest

had the brilliant idea of inviting the Clergy of Arezzo to appropriately honour our Guido, even with a sacred version of the Feasts, wherefore many times he began to

³⁰ *ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, n. 20, c. 27.

publish the notices; but his noble thought did not gain traction and remained an unfulfilled, burning desire!³¹

After all, it is hard to imagine how such «sacred Feasts» could have found their place within the wider context of celebrations which, as Garofoli observes, took on decidedly anticlerical overtones, with frequent jabs explicitly directed against the now extinct papal Rome. A clear testimony of this political climate came from the mayor of Arezzo himself, Ettore Nucci, who in his opening speech for the celebrations rejoiced at the

happy time in which we are allowed to think what we want, and to freely express what we think. — This is the era of great endeavors, because it is an era of peace and freedom; this is why it was possible to erect monuments to Savonarola, Arnaldo, Guido and many other illustrious, worthy members of humanity.... And to help us, nay, to comfort us in this tribute of gratitude, we have with us some of the main sister cities, in particular Rome, which has towered over all others throughout a centuries-old history, the Rome that had two civilizations and gave them to Italy, making it perhaps more unhappy but certainly much greater than any other nation.³²

Anticipating these words, the first issue of the *Cronaca* had observed that «Guido, Savonarola and Arnaldo belong to the strong race of the *precursors*, whose goal is the progress of humanity».³³ The new secular fathers of the nation, Arnaldo and Guido, were also immortalized in the following stanzas, written on the occasion of the unveiling of the monument:

Yesterday the shadow of Arnaldo
stood upright: at long last Brescia, the strong,
summoned his restless spirit
to the peace of the urn.

The eternal embers of the odious blaze
Stir the hearts of Arnaldo's latest descendants;

³¹ STEFANO MAGI, *Le feste di Arezzo a Guido Monaco (settembre 1882) narrate dal tipografo Stefano Magi*, Arezzo, 1882, p. 72 f.

³² *Roma e i Savoia*, CA, 10, 3 September, p. 2.

³³ CA, 1, 7 August, p. 2. It is important to note here that *Cronaca aretina* was created in open competition with the more moderate *Gazzetta aretina* by Cavalier Angiolo Mascagni, the former mayor who effectively carried the project of the monument to completion (CA, 25, 6 November, p. 1). Despite its low circulation and lack of professionalism (it employed «second-hand journalists»), the *Cronaca* represented a political orientation that was probably shared by a large sector of the local administration.

a voice suppressed for seven centuries rises again
and radiates around.

Now that the chains to thought, and to the wrists,
have been broken, a free Italy pulls him out of the cloister,
as a proud symbol in the face
of the Vatican, defeated once and for all.

Today another pious figure re-emerges from sacred shadows;
he reveals the true laws of musical sounds,
and his modern-day nephews eternalize him in a marble effigy
to universal acclamation.

Hail, fathers! The rays of a new sun
Have destroyed the larvae of a dark age.
There are no monks in their vestments any longer
To issue grand anathemas.

Rome stretches her maternal arms
toward her distant children; love binds all people;
the Capitoline hill is a beacon of peace
for the new era.³⁴

Nucci, however, acknowledged that Guido withdrew «from the allure of society [...] and, in the quiet of monastic life, gave the world the gift of his splendid invention» – namely, «the new method of notation by which he paved the way for the progress of the musical art».³⁵ The mayor was followed by Cavalier Tenerani, representative of the City of Rome who, without explicitly mentioning either the Church or the papacy, placed the emphasis on the House of Savoy as a new unifying factor and as a purveyor of freedom for the new Italian nation:

[We] all merge our particular glories into the universality of Italian Glory [...] [The] glorious dynasty of Savoy [...] freeing us from centuries-old chains, has enabled us to honor our great past with dignity and freedom. Long live the King, long live the dynasty of Savoy.³⁶

A few days later Giovanni Battista Guiducci, president of the commission for the Provincial Industrial Contest, in his opening speech did not fail to

³⁴ CA, 15, 10 September, p. 1.

³⁵ *In Piazza Guido Monaco*, CA, 10, 3 September, p. 2

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

stress the symbolic significance conveyed by the hosting of the event in the old Jesuit church of S. Ignazio:

If we consider that right here, where we inaugurate the Contest, the Jesuits used to teach the youth not to sharpen, but rather to weaken the will, and if we consider that where the enemies of the homeland were once bred, today we admire the products of free citizens, we rejoice and shout from the bottom of our souls: *long live freedom!* Forever live the great men who have conquered it, long live the King!³⁷

Addressing a distinguished audience, which included ministers and members of parliament, Guiducci further stated that after making Italy, it was time to make... Italian economy, starting from a reduction of the «highly onerous» taxes: «Thanks to the Virtue of a King and the fortitude of a people, our political goal has been achieved and Rome no longer belongs to the popes, but to us. We are now waiting for a solution to the economic problem».³⁸

Still in the same vein, a commentary from the *Cronaca* summarily dismissed the performance of an unidentified Gregorian Mass by the Benedictines of Solesmes as «beautiful but, as usual, not suitable for Italian ears»,³⁹ demonstrating once again that the statue in the Piazza Guido Monaco had very little to do with the historical figure it intended to represent. The paradox is worth pointing out: Rome no longer belongs to the popes and Gregorian Chant is not Italian, but a statue is erected to a monk who dedicated his entire existence to Gregorian chant, presented as a national hero. Here, however, it is important to mention the calmer tone of the *Gazzetta aretina*, which avoided any comparison between Guido and Savonarola or Arnaldo, going so far as to exalt «the righteousness and nobility of our Congress [of

³⁷ *A S. Ignazio*, CA, 12, 6 September, p. 2. The opening of the Industrial Contest was made to coincide with the visit of King Umberto I, on 6 September. Despite its short duration of only a few hours, the royal visit was of enormous significance for Arezzo, and contributed in particular to consolidate its sense of belonging to the new Kingdom of Italy; in the press, however, there was no lack of controversy with the anti-monarchist faction (GAROFOLI, *L'incanto della modernità* cit., pp. 341-45; GAROFOLI, *Quel meraviglioso 1882*, see the section 'Umberto I e il suo seguito', featuring an image of the royal ceremony of the unveiling of the monument with Alessandro Kraus and (probably) Angiolo De Bacci at his side near the statue; drawing made by Empedocle Ximenes for «L'illustrazione italiana», XXXVII, 10 September 1882 <<http://storiaefuturo.eu/quel-meraviglioso-1882-concorsi-agrari-e-industriali-nazionali-le-feste-di-arezzo/>> [accessed 7 August 2020]).

³⁸ *A S. Ignazio*, CA, 12, 6 September, p. 2.

³⁹ CA, 21, 22 settembre, p. 1.

Liturgical Chant], which rise above any spirit of national rivalry, and the like, and aim solely towards the good of religion and ecclesiastical chant».⁴⁰

Thus, the «liberty» acquired by the new State of the Roman Church went hand in hand with the simultaneous process, then underway, of modernization and secularisation of Italian cities. Such a process seemed all the more justifiable and historically necessary precisely because, in line with the well-established narrative of Whig history, it had been anticipated by the national heroes of the past, now newly immortalized. And it did not quite matter whether these precursors came from the ecclesiastical or secular world – indeed, the possibility of celebrating the religious men of the past from a secular perspective must have been especially gratifying. Thus, the theme of freedom appears in the inscription of the monument to Arnaldo unveiled only a few days before the celebrations in Arezzo («to the precursor, to the martyr of free Italic thought, his town Brescia dedicated this monument, soon after regaining its freedom»). In a similar fashion, the new Florentine statue in honor of Savonarola erected in 1869 was meant to celebrate an Italy newly «risen to free life», and Giovanni Bovio would later salute the new Giordano Bruno in Campo dei Fiori as the coming of a new «religion of thought», instituted «by the consent of free people».⁴¹ In other words, the idea of celebrating Guido Monaco as an apostle of «liberty» was a sign of the times: after the breach of Porta Pia and the Capture of Rome, celebrating the monk as the «Inventor of the notes» that had made possible the primacy of Italy in the musical field was no longer a priority, because it was now necessary to confront ideological rather than geographical barriers.

For all intents and purposes, the monument to Guido ‘musico’ conceived by De Bacci was executed by Lorenzo Nencini in 1835 for Vasari’s Loggia at the Uffizi Palace, which assigned to the Aretine monk a dedicated niche in a temple of *l’art pour l’art*. The Guido of 1882, on the contrary, was the expression of a modern, productive, bourgeois Italy, so much so that at the Agricultural Fair an exhibitor called one of his begonias ‘Guido Monaco’ – jokingly, of course, but as if to foreshadow the sophisticated forms of branding of future advertising strategies.⁴² More than the statue itself, what mattered was its location: from the center of the ultra-secular piazza Guido Monaco,

⁴⁰ GA, III, 36, 10 September 1882, p. 2.

⁴¹ GIOVANNI BOVIO, *Per il monumento a Giordano Bruno (Roma, 1889)*, in *Discorsi*, Naples, Gennaro Maria Priore, 1900, pp. 1-3: 1.

⁴² *Fiori e foglie*, CA, 13, 7 September 1882; an appropriate nickname for a begonia with «unusually palmate leaves». Other plants on display were named after the whole Aretine cast of *Mefistofele*.

the monument did honor Guido, but with the ultimate aim of extolling the new ethos of efficiency and progress. This juxtaposition of meanings did not elude music critic Francesco d'Arcais, who judged the union of trade fairs and music history on display at the Feste as an expression of «solemnity coupled with utility», expressing at the same time his appreciation for the support given by the modern *téchne* to one of the classical liberal arts.⁴³ Far more evident, however, was a mechanism operating in the opposite direction, now well-known to cultural historians, that asserted itself with all its strength at the Feste Aretime – namely, the utilitarian use of historical memory and of the liberal arts in the service of a specific political pedagogy.

A monument to ancient faith: the European Congress of Liturgical Chant

As was seen above, over the years the Europeanist aspirations of the monuments were set aside – a conclusion that finds ample confirmation in official communications from the years immediately preceding 1882, which only speak of a «monument», or (as in the official program of the Feste) of the «Unveiling of the statue of Guido Monaco».

As a consequence, The Congress of Liturgical Chant turned out to be the only truly international event in the program. But should this be described as 'European' or 'International'? Apparently, the promoters never reached an agreement on this point. In the official publicity of the festivities issued by City Hall, which reproduces *verbatim* the minutes of the municipal meeting of July 30, the Congress is consistently announced as «International». The City of Arezzo, however, had little to do with the conference, and limited itself to granting the venue, S. Maria della Pieve, and to delegating Ristori to take care of local arrangements.

The true promoter of the conference was rather the Associazione italiana di S. Cecilia of Milan, which launched a full-scale advertising campaign on the pages of its monthly journal *Musica sacra*, consistently describing the event as a «Congresso Europeo di Canto Liturgico» starting from the February issue.⁴⁴ We might interpret this gesture as a polemical wink directed

⁴³ «How beautiful, how comforting this embrace that the sciences, the letters and the industries give to a very noble art that had no small part in the fortunes of Italy and kept the Italian name high among foreign nations in times of slavery and oppression», FRANCESCO D'ARCAIS, *Guido Monaco e le Feste aretime*, «Nuova antologia», 2nd series, XXXV, 1882, p. 15.

⁴⁴ The very first announcement invites readers to participate in a «Congresso internazionale di canto liturgico», whose aim was to shed new light on the key issue of the restoration of this chant, and at the same time to reawaken, especially in the clergy, the love, the study

at the Aretines and, more broadly, at secular nationalism. In other words, the Cecilians might have deliberately hijacked the ambitious Europeanist plan of the original De Bacci project, prompting the resistance of the city, which in turn reacted by adopting instead the term 'international' with its milder political and moral connotations. Whatever the case may have been, the loaded designation of 'European' ended up characterizing an event conceived in overt opposition to everything that the De Bacci monument stood for, in a sort of *deja vu* of the ideological controversy which, about ten years earlier, had led to the creation of two different statues of Savonarola in Florence, for and against Catholicism.⁴⁵

The official announcement of the Congress, undoubtedly penned by Guerrino Amelli himself, reveals a clear intention to counter, point by point, the populist and anticlerical tones of the *Feste*:

To the fleeting joys of the roaring square, to the passing expressions of civic enthusiasm, and to the cheap displays of sterile popular admiration, it is more than fitting for Religion and Science to add all the majesty of their public presence and ceremonies, so that this extraordinary *national-artistic-religious* event turns out not only memorable, but above all instructive and really advantageous to this religious art, regenerated by the genius of GUIDO. To this musical genius, a true glory of the Italic soil, a splendid star in the firmament of this divine art in times of thick darkness, a precious gem of monasticism and a new source of pride for the papacy, whose effective patronage was key to the significance and rapid propagation of the Guidonian discoveries, it is more than appropriate for homeland, religion and art to weave a worthy wreath of imperishable remembrance.⁴⁶

and the veneration of this distinguished artistic-religious monument, a precious legacy we have inherited from our fathers» («Musica sacra», VI, January 1882, p. 1, emphasis in the original). It is interesting to note that the congress was conceived metaphorically as a «monument» right from the beginning, and hence expressly designed to be the exact opposite of the «marmoreal monument» of Piazza Guido Monaco.

⁴⁵ ELENA BACCHIN, *I comitati sono due, anzi due i Savonarola. Identità e tensioni politico-religiose durante il Concilio Vaticano I*, «Studi Storici», LV, 3, 2014, pp. 699-726. In this case, too, the idea of 'liberty' was at the center of the controversy, as it was seen in opposition to Catholicism by one faction, and as a vehicle of civilization allied with religion and virtue by the other. It is also interesting to note that, on the Catholic side of the Savonarola celebrations (the Capponi Committee), the polemics between moderates and radicals soon became exacerbated, leading in due course to the political defeat of the former (*ivi*, pp. 709-711).

⁴⁶ The program of the congress appeared in «Musica sacra», VI, February 1882, pp. 11-15 (the passage quoted above is on p. 11) and was subsequently printed as a loose sheet (Biblioteca Civica di Arezzo, M.A.G. VI, 26).

The reader will not have failed to notice some of the characteristic features of Catholic activism after 1870, of which the Cecilian movement was, after all, one of the most prominent components.⁴⁷ The passage makes it clear that one cannot talk about an Italian nation, homeland, or art without taking into account the enduring contribution of the Catholic Church to the promotion of those values, an idea implicitly stated in the reference to the «effective patronage» of the papacy in the propagation of the «Guidonian discoveries». By the same token, the quotation in Italian and Latin from the Book of Sirach (44:1 and 5) in the document header («Let us give praise to the glorious men... who with their knowledge investigated musical harmony») obviously draws attention to the religious origin of the practice of celebrating illustrious men.

Thus, the conference was conceived as a «scientific and religious monument» with the declared goals of recovering the «golden precepts of Guido» and of restoring liturgical chant to the purity and spirituality of its origins. An important element of this monument was the new edition of Guido's *Opere teoretiche*, repeatedly advertised on *Musica sacra*.⁴⁸ The entire restoration project was inspired by a typological conception of history that tended to read the present in light of the events and outcomes of the past.

Particularly revealing of this attitude is the account of the meeting between Amelli and Pope Leo XIII on June 21, 1882, in which the Milanese priest announced to the Pope the conference in Arezzo (and no doubt also the new edition of Guido's writings).⁴⁹ On that occasion, Amelli presented

⁴⁷ For an overview of the historical-political context of the Cecilian movement, see RAFFAELE POZZI, *Il mito dell'antico tra restaurazione e modernità. Su alcune intonazioni ceciliane dell'"Ave Maria" e del "Tantum ergo" nel secondo Ottocento*, in *Aspetti del cecilianesimo nella cultura musicale italiana dell'Ottocento*, edited by Mauro Casadei Turrone Monti and Cesarino Ruini, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004, pp. 83-107.

⁴⁸ For instance, in the January 1881 issue we read: «... we are very pleased to announce this new edition which, after ten years of research and studies carried out in the major libraries of Italy, Germany and Belgium, we hope to see completed for the auspicious anniversary of the festivities that are being prepared in Arezzo in the coming 1882» («Musica sacra», V, January 1881, p. 1). Our hope is that the new edition will lead to «in-depth and most interesting studies in Musical Archaeology and History». Casadei Turrone Monti points out the crucial role played in those years by the new hard science, musical paleography, in the study of Gregorian chant (CASADEI TURRONI MONTI, *Introduzione*, in *Aspetti del cecilianesimo* cit., p. 14) – also a central theme in KATHERINE BERGERON, *Decadent Enchantments: The Revival of Gregorian Chant at Solesmes*, Berkeley - Los Angeles, California University Press, 1998 (see in particular pp. 63-91).

⁴⁹ «Musica sacra», VI, June 1882, p. 41 f.

the pontiff with a reproduction of the fresco by Giuseppe Bertini from Villa Ponti in Varese, depicting the famous episode in which Guido of Arezzo gifts Pope John XIX the antiphonary featuring his new method of musical notation (the same episode appears on the bronze panel on the right side of the statue's base, visible in Fig. 1). In the unmistakable parallel between the two scenes, it was now Amelli's turn, in his self-given role as the new Guido, to receive the pope's encouragement:

During the meeting the Venerable Pontiff received in his august hands the above-mentioned Photograph... which reminded him of the favour and encouragement that his Predecessor Pope John XIX had given to the useful musical inventions of the humble and maligned monk from Pomposa.⁵⁰

If Amelli could present himself as a new Guido, then it was only a small step for Guido himself to ideally come back to new life, as if re-generated by the ambitious paleographic and editorial effort undertaken by the expert participants to the congress :

GUIDO [in capital letters in the original] will proclaim the need to restore chant to its primitive beauty, rooted in its tonality, rhythm and traditional notation... GUIDO will persuade us that we need *uniformity in teaching* by putting before our eyes the mighty results that He was able to obtain in a very short time with his young singers, through his concise, clear and simple method, so rational and so complete. In the vivid light of his doctrine, in the vital breath of his words, this sublime chant of the Church will soon appear in all its wonderful beauty.⁵¹

The image of a Guido still present as a vital spirit - as well as worthy of a capitalized pronoun - effectively acquires the traits of a deity, or at least of a saint.⁵² But the citation also reveals that Amelli's Guido was conceived as a function of a spiritual community, as if to somehow offset the implicit individualism celebrated on the opposite front by Salvini's Guido: an enlightened figure who, by virtue of his merits and talents, contributed to the development of humanity not unlike the business entrepreneurs exhibiting

⁵⁰ *Ivi*, p. 42.

⁵¹ «Musica sacra», VI, February 1882, p. 12, emphasis in the original.

⁵² The appeal to Guido as a perpetual guarantor of an «uncontaminated educational ideal» will continue to permeate Cecilian literature for years to come. See MAURO CASADEI TURRONI MONTI, *Il 'volto' di Guido d'Arezzo nel primo cecilianesimo italiano*, in «Candotti, Tomadini, De Santi e la riforma della musica sacra», edited by Franco Colussi and Lucia Boscolo Folegana, Udine, Forum, 2011, pp. 375-87, in particular pp. 381-84.

their cutting-edge products in the trade fair section of the Feste.⁵³

Despite the militant, sectarian premises spelled out in the program, the congress was indeed ‘European’, perhaps beyond all expectations. The event saw the participation of the most authoritative Gregorian chant experts of the time, especially from the French (Solesmes) and German (Regensburg) schools, divided by deep disagreements about methods and objectives, further exacerbated by the continuing tensions between the two countries in the wake of the war of 1870: the organizing International Committee included, among others, Franz Xaver Witt, Johann Evangelista Habert and Johann Gustav Eduard Stehle, all directors of major sacred music reviews. The scientific committee, appointed to select the contributions to be presented at the conference, included outstanding names such as Dom Joseph Pothier from Solesmes and Utto Kornmüller, while the artistic committee included François-Auguste Gevaert, musicologist and director of the Bruxelles conservatory.

Despite the many nationalities represented at the conference, the specific geographical references of the announcement marked the boundaries of an organic musical and religious community that revolved around the Arezzo-Rome axis.⁵⁴ On closer inspection, however, the Europeanism of the congress was modeled after the Holy Roman Empire: the Arezzo study days aimed at harmonizing the national traditions of liturgical chant in a pan-Gregorian unity of Carolingian inspiration, strongly centralized around the undisputed authorities of Guido Monaco – ensuring continuity of that golden age into the present – and of Leo XIII, portrayed as a sort of pope/emperor in opposition to the Savoia regime (it is perhaps no coincidence that Amelli

⁵³ As Antonio Carlini has observed, the Cecilian project «was directed in principle at promoting the effacing of the individual subject by assimilating him to communal and contemplative dimensions. Yet, such dimensions were in turn re-inscribed in a world completely transformed by the bourgeois class, which regarded individual entrepreneurship as the basis of its economic and cultural doctrines», ANTONIO CARLINI, *Strumenti e voci: sentimenti e devozione nella musica sacra dell'Ottocento. Vicende italiane del movimento ceciliano*, in *Aspetti del cecilianesimo* cit., pp. 137-148, at p. 147.

⁵⁴ «From the remote coasts of Brittany, Belgium and Holland, from the beautiful banks of the Seine, the Rhine and the Danube, from the pleasant beaches of Spain and Portugal, from the picturesque districts of Helvetia and the fertile plains of Hungary and Poland – the lands from which our fathers for many centuries greeted with jubilation, and welcomed with gratitude, the fruitful musical discoveries and innovations of this wonderful genius – it is entirely appropriate to contribute to making the apotheosis of Guido of Arezzo more impressive and more solemn», («Musica sacra», VI, February 1882, p. 13).

repeatedly refers to the pontiff as «Augustus»).⁵⁵

From this perspective, the ‘musico-archaeological’ references of *Musica sacra* emerge as the clear signs of the revivalist approach to history and faith advocated by the radical Catholicism of that time:

the restoration of the *genuine Liturgical Chant*... is deserving of the generous contribution of every artistic soul – more important than saving a jewel by Cellini, a canvas by Raphael, a marble by Buonarroti, or a rare monument of Roman or ogival architecture [...]. This European Congress [...] will restore the true splendor of this wonderful canvas of religious sentiment, the perfect form of this elegant sculpture of Christian piety, and the genuine character of this grandiose monument to the faith and devotion of our ancestors.⁵⁶

From this final passage of the announcement we may conclude that the idea of the congress as a «scientific and religious monument» was actually less metaphorical than it might have seemed. Regarded as a «jewel» and as a «sculpture» of Christian piety, Gregorian chant became, in all respects, an object of veneration like a Cellini, a Michelangelo or – indeed – the Guido of Salvini. Unlike typical museum pieces, however, liturgical chant, newly mediated by Guido’s teachings, was to be dogmatically brought back to the present time in order to restore «the faith and devotion of our ancestors» and to solve, in one fell swoop, the problems of modernity: a musical monument even more rigid, if possible, than the statue of Piazza Guido Monaco.⁵⁷

Ironically, the passionate unity of purpose flaunted at the conference call actually concealed deep divisions, not only between the Roman and Milanese arms of the Italian Cecilian movement, but even more so between the aforementioned French and German schools. The winning line at the conference was that of the Solesmes school, in open conflict with the *Editio Medicaea* of Regensburg publisher Pustet, which at the time enjoyed the

⁵⁵ Leo XIII was fully in line with the revivalist objectives of the Cecilian movement, judging from his earlier plan to restore Thomism as the immutable foundation of the Church’s doctrine (encyclical *Aeterna patris* of 1879). Cfr. JAMES HENNESEY, S.J., *Leo XIII: Intellectualizing the Combat with Modernity*, «U.S. Catholic Historian», VII, 4, 1988, pp. 393-400.,

⁵⁶ «Musica sacra», VI, February 1882, p. 14.

⁵⁷ Thus, the Cecilians reduced Guido to a pretext for a political cause, no more and no less than anticlerical nationalism. In similar fashion, apropos of Savonarola Bacchin observes that «More than a historical figure [he] became a slogan, a symbol of a particular value system; almost like a totem, he was the visual representation of the kind of society one wished for» (BACCHIN, *I comitati sono due, anzi due i Savonarola* cit., p. 725).

official support of the Vatican in the form of a thirty-year press privilege. The German Cecilians, however, were soon able to reaffirm their authority, if only for a handful of years.⁵⁸ Already in April 1883 the Sacred Congregation of Rites disavowed the resolutions of the Aretine congress with the decree *Romanorum Pontificum Sollicitudo*, confirming at the same time its support for Pustet.⁵⁹ The disastrous outcome of the conference led to the resignation of Amelli as editor in chief of *Musica sacra* in 1885 (and to the discontinuation of the journal at the same time) and to his retreat to Montecassino.⁶⁰

A monument to historical certainty: new studies on Guido Monaco

A long editorial by Girolamo Alessandro Biaggi about the celebrations for Guido Monaco originally appeared in *La Nazione* and was later reprinted on two consecutive issues of the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* – a normal practice for the weekly magazine directed by Giulio Ricordi.⁶¹ Biaggi, as well as Francesco D'Arcais in the *Nuova antologia*, devoted his piece to two important musicological contributions by two local authors, Antonio Brandi and Michele Falchi, published on the occasion of the Feste.⁶² Biaggi saw both studies as important steps towards the realization of a literary «new monument» that «will promote Guido's fame, scholarly research

⁵⁸ In two personal letters to Amelli, the leader of the German Cecilians, Franz Xaver Haberl, expressed all his irritation about the objectives and conclusions of the congress, accusing Amelli himself of being «an instrument of the French». (MAURO CASADEI TURRONI MONTI, *L'attività ceciliana di Amelli a Milano (1874-1885). Dal suo epistolario presso la Badia di S. Maria del Monte di Cesena*, «Benedictina», XLVI, 1999, pp. 87-103: 99-102.

⁵⁹ On the French-German *querelle* in Arezzo see PIERRE COMBE, O.S.B., *The Restoration of Gregorian Chant: Solesmes and the Vatican Edition*, English translation by Theodore Marier and William Skinner, Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America Press, 2003 (the resolutions of the Arezzo congress, mentioned on pp. 85-87, are on p. 417 f.), and ANTHONY RUFF, O.S.B., *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform: Treasures and Transformations*, Chicago/Mundelein, IL, Hildebrand Books, 2007, pp. 108-126.

⁶⁰ On the evolution of the Cecilian movement in those years, see the contribution by ANTONIO LOVATO, 'De ratione exequendi cantum gregorianum': un'apologia dell'«Editio medicaea», in *Aspetti del cecilianesimo* cit., pp. 67-82, and the already mentioned study by CASADEI TURRONI MONTI, *L'attività ceciliana di Amelli a Milano (1874-1885)* cit.

⁶¹ GIROLAMO ALESSANDRO BIAGGI, *Un monumento nuovo a Guido Monaco*, «Gazzetta Musicale di Milano», XXXVII, 39, 24 September 1882, p. 339 f. and XXXVII, 40, 1 October 1882, p. 347 f.

⁶² ANTONIO BRANDI, *Guido Aretino, monaco di San Benedetto: della sua vita, del suo tempo e dei suoi scritti. Studio storico-critico*, Florence, Arte della Stampa, 1882 and MICHELE FALCHI, *Studi su Guido Monaco*, Florence, Barbèra, 1882).

and the glory of Italian art to a much greater extent and more effectively» than Salvini's marble monument. In the journalist's expectations, this ideal monument will include «Guido's biography, clear of errors and fairy tales, a new edition of his writings, and a historical, technical and critical commentary on those writings and their scientific value», and will once and for all fill in the gaps and remove the doubts that have surrounded the figure of the Areatine monk for centuries.

In their articles, neither Biaggi, nor the Marquis D'Arcais mention the European Congress of Liturgical Chant, perhaps yet another revealing sign of the disconnect between that event - which seems to have landed in Arezzo like a meteor - and the rest of the celebrations.⁶³ It is difficult to imagine, however, that the two journalists would not have taken note of the program of the Congress, and specifically of its stated intention to erect a «national-scientific-religious» monument alternative to that of the «roaring square». ⁶⁴ It is therefore possible to read the reference to a new «monument» in Biaggi's editorial as a veiled polemical jab at the Cecilian congress, which had wrapped up its activities just a week before.⁶⁵ The revivalist aim and the strongly emotional tones of the conference were not easily reconciled with the method of scientific historicism embraced by the new wave of Guidonian studies, which rather drew inspiration from Ranke's precept of *wie es eigentlich gewesen*.⁶⁶

In order to encourage the creation of the literary monument to Guido, in 1880 the Accademia Petrarca di Scienze, Lettere e Arti of Arezzo announced a competition for the best study on the subject with the patronage of the City of Arezzo, the Fraternita dei Laici (Confraternity of Laymen), and the

⁶³ A comment by Stefano Magi is also indicative of this state of affairs: «But the Congress alone was not enough to satisfy public expectation, and was no match for the grandeur of the popular festivities and for the extraordinary goal of remembering the immortal Friar...» (MAGI, *Le feste di Arezzo a Guido Monaco* cit., p. 72).

⁶⁴ The name of Biaggi appears in the list of «Registered congress attendees» in «Musica sacra», VI, 8-9, August-September 1882, p. [70]; the *CA*, 6, 24 August, p. 3, also confirms his participation in the congress.

⁶⁵ *La Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* gave the announcement of the Congress in no. XXXVII, 28, June 25, 1882.

⁶⁶ Among the many studies on Italian historiography during the Risorgimento and post-unification periods, see for example GABRIELE TURI, *Cultura storica e insegnamento della storia all'Istituto di studi superiori di Firenze*, «Archivio Storico Italiano», CLXXII, 4 (642), October-December 2014, pp. 691-728, in particular pp. 707-714 on the Rankean and positivist elements in the methodology of Pasquale Villari, the most authoritative Italian historian of the time.

Philharmonic Society.⁶⁷ The works were to be submitted to the scrutiny of a jury composed of three members of the Accademia dei Lincei and chaired by Oreste Tommasini, who also delivered his own contribution on Guido of Arezzo during the meeting of the Accademia Petrarca on September 5.⁶⁸ The only study submitted by the deadline of October 1881 was by Antonio Brandi, prior of the Benedictine monastery of S. Martino in Poggio outside Arezzo. The work, however, was not deemed worthy of the award.

This is not the place for an in-depth analysis of Brandi's study and of the other scientific contributions on Guido submitted in 1882 (which can only be regarded as an *annus mirabilis* for Italian 'music archaeology'). However, what clearly emerges from the report by Tommasini, the only historian in the Committee, is that the examiners expected to see many questions answered with positive certainty – concerning Guido's family of origin, for example – even when they were at best amenable to more or less plausible answers.⁶⁹ The 'scientificity' of Brandi's monograph, which from this perspective fully belongs to modern musicology, lies instead on the author's ability to reconstruct Guido's biography on the basis of extremely sparse documentary sources. Brandi skillfully weighs partial clues and more or less likely historical scenarios, which he often brings up to the reader's own judgment, while resisting the temptation to bend his narrative to this or that ideological cause. The final product is a volume of almost 500 pages (an even more admirable feat considering that apparently it was written in no more than 18 months!), about two thirds of which are devoted to the biography of Guido Monaco and to a detailed analysis of his treatises, and the last third to a new edition of the treatises. It seems difficult to imagine that more satisfactory results could have been achieved at that time, on the path to the coveted 'literary monument' to Guido that so many hoped for.

After the competition failed, at the beginning of 1882 the Accademia Petrarca invited scholars to conduct a more limited study that would still «rely on Science», in the interest of casting light on the *vexata quaestio* of the exact

⁶⁷ Information drawn from the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano*, XXXVII, 39, 24 September 1882, p. 339; the minutes of the Academy that launched the competition have not yet been located.

⁶⁸ Tommasini's report on Brandi's monograph, submitted during the «Royal Session of December 18, 1881», appears in the «Atti dell'Accademia dei Lincei», CCLXXIX, 1881-82, Third Series, Transunti, vol. VI, Rome, Salviucci, 1882, pp. 95-101.

⁶⁹ Particularly significant in this respect is Tommasini's assertion that «this hefty book adds no new knowledge or certainties to Guido's biography; nor does the author's perspective mark a definite progress since Angeloni's dissertation» (*Ivi*, p. 100).

nature of Guido's contribution to the history of music.⁷⁰ Canonico Cavalier Michele Falchi, priest, director of the Reale Collegio-Convitto Vittorio Emanuele of Arezzo and Librarian of the Accademia Petrarca, accepted the invitation and published the results of his research about a month before the beginning of the celebrations. In a small, nimble volume of about one hundred pages, Falchi sets out to demonstrate that Guido «conceived a new principle as the basis of musical notation» - namely, that of the multilinear staff, which since then has served as the foundations of musical practice.⁷¹ The study addresses the unavoidable debate on the highlights of Guido's biography and on his contributions to music theory (especially regarding the six syllables *ut-la*). It singles out the inventions that have been erroneously attributed to Guido over time (musical instruments, the church modes, counterpoint, mensural music, harmony, and even the «musical notes»),⁷² due to the irrepressible tendency to «fill the gaps in historical documents in a byzantine way».⁷³ In the final pages, after a meticulous analysis of select musical sources and other relevant historical documents, Falchi concludes that it is

in our opinion, out of the question that Guido deserves, in the strictest sense of the word, the title of INVENTOR OF THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF MUSICAL NOTATION [in capital letters in the original], and consequently that of initiator of the extraordinary progress later made in this sublime art; for such progress originated from, and was made possible by, that new system of notation, and was therefore an effect of Guido's Invention.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Letter by Marco Biondi, President of the Academy, to Cav. De Bacci of February 7, 1882; *ASAR, Comune di Arezzo, Archivi aggregati, Commissione per il monumento europeo a Guido Monaco*, no. 20, f. 22.

⁷¹ FALCHI, *Studi su Guido Monaco* cit., p. 11.

⁷² *Ivi*, pp. 64-72. The reference to Guido «inventor of the musical notes» is something of a mantra in the extensive correspondence between De Bacci and his Italian and foreign collaborators, not to speak of the hagiographical and popularizing literature of the time.

⁷³ *Ivi*, p. 14.

⁷⁴ *Ivi*, p. 108. It should be added here that present-day musicology, in substantial agreement with Falchi, continues to credit Guido with the refinement of staff notation and with the method of hexachordal solmisation. On the current state of research, see for example CESARINO RUINI, s.v. «Guido d'Arezzo», *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* cit., CLAUDE V. PALISCA and DOLORES PESCE, s.v. «Guido of Arezzo», in *Grove Music Online*, 2001, <<https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic>> [accessed 17 August 2020], and Angelo Rusconi's introduction to the edition of Guido's works, cited in note 14.

In his extensive commentary on Falchi's *Studi*, Biaggi praises the author for having directed his research «not to fish for arguments or pretexts for singing Guido's praises, but rather to draw the *true* truth from it» (emphasis in the original).⁷⁵ It should be noted, however, that the certainty of the truth did not prevent Falchi from proposing a spurious determinism that establishes a cause-effect relation between the Guidonian invention of notation and «the extraordinary progress later made in this sublime art», as if the former in and of itself was enough to explain the latter. More significantly, in Falchi the newly ascertained historical truth *ipso facto* imposes on the community the moral imperative to take action and eradicate the (supposedly) mendacious beliefs perpetuated through the centuries, in the same way as Amelli and Mocquereau viewed popular memory and traditional *usus* as annoying obstacles hindering the recovery of authentic liturgical music. Thus, in the name of the «*true* truth» the Aretine priest would not hesitate to remove «the Baroque marble inscription» that in 1821 had been affixed to a palace of the then Borgo di San Pietro in order to mark for posterity the presumed birthplace of Guido Monaco.⁷⁶ And again in the name of the «*true* truth» the Accademia Petrarca apparently had the original epigraph removed from Salvini's statue that according to De Bacci's «informal notes» should have read «A Guido Monaco, inventore dell'arte musicale. La Europa» [Europe to Guido Monaco, inventor of the musical art.].⁷⁷ The epigraph could at best mention Guido's documented invention of staff notation, as suggested by Falchi in the passage quoted above. But time was up, and the decision was somehow made to adopt a harmless «A Guido Monaco 1882» that implicitly continued to allow even the most dubious popular beliefs about the illustrious Aretine, including the image of him as a champion of freedom.

As these examples show, Falchi's interventionist attitude may be more justifiable in some cases than in others; but they also demonstrate how easily the quest for the «*true* truth» could turn into an agenda or a crusade.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ «Gazzetta Musicale di Milano», XXXVII, 39, pp. 339 f.

⁷⁶ FALCHI, *Studi su Guido Monaco* cit., p. 14.

⁷⁷ De Bacci's «notes» are quoted in footnote 22. Falchi himself ends his *Studi* with an appeal: «Let us close, therefore, by renewing the vow that the monument... makes explicit reference to [Guido's] true invention, instead of hinting, with deplorable anachronisms, at popular beliefs which critics have long done away with» (*Ivi*, p. 108). The «Gazzetta aretina» also reports that the Accademia Petrarca submitted a few critical observations to the City on some aspects of the monument that did not reflect historical truth (GA, III, 31, 5 August 1882, p. 1).

⁷⁸ For a reflection on this point, see for example GIANNI VATTIMO, *Addio alla verità*,

For its part, the monument of Piazza Guido Monaco was the result of a radically different ideology, as it sought to inscribe Guido of Arezzo in a patriotic genealogy of freedom and progress that had little or nothing to do with the historically documented Guido. In keeping with the aims of the new political power of the post-unification era, and against the backdrop of the pressing dispute between State and Church, the same vulgar *traditio* condemned for different reasons by Falchi and Amelli was summoned in support of the new civic purpose that the statue was expected to further.

It goes without saying that not even the original idea of the monument was free from ideological connotations – rather, these were simply concealed more carefully – just as it would be facile to reduce the events of 1882 to a mere clash of political factions. For Arezzo the Feste were about recovering an almost mythical figure from the «sacred shadows» of its past, in order to rethink its identity in the present and imagine the future. In this sense the monument was more ripe with meaning at the height of the post-unification era, when the very idea of Italianness was being redefined, than it could have been twenty years earlier.

The myth of Guido provided Arezzo with the reassuring memory of its deep historical roots, newly evoked to support the new modern identity of a city struggling to emerge from the latest dark period. With his pragmatic sense of problem solving, aimed at attaining concrete results – by conquering adverse forces, if necessary – Guido proved to be a surprisingly well-suited candidate for the role of spiritual protector of the nascent local bourgeoisie, calmly inviting the city to look to the future with confidence and to adopt a new work ethic. Of course people could, and did, strongly disagree as to the distinctive traits and objectives of this new identity embraced by Arezzo - innovative, democratic and resolutely secular. But as the Feste amply demonstrated, a figure at the same time so remote and so close as Guido Monaco in and of itself opened up a vast historical-cultural horizon that could provide common ground for this ideological confrontation on the city's identity and aspirations without predetermining it at the outset. Thus, the sheer variety of 'monuments' created for the 1882 celebrations may legitimately be regarded as the most eloquent testimony to the depth and range of meanings conveyed by that figure-symbol.

Rome, Meltemi, 2009; English translation by William McCuaig, *A Farewell to Truth*, preface by Robert T. Valgenti, New York, Columbia University Press, 2011.

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Abstract

Imposing celebrations in honour of Guido Monaco took place in Arezzo in September 1882, coinciding with the unveiling of the statue by Salvino Salvini. The figure of Guido, however, conveyed different connotations to the various socio-political actors that participated in the event. The secular and nationalist party, which then ruled both the city and the nation, saw the medieval theorists as the symbol of Italy's musical pre-eminence in the world, and of the long historical process that eventually led to a unified and Church-free nation. To the Cecilian movement, which held an important congress of liturgical chant in Arezzo during the Feste, Guido was the protagonist of the mythical Golden Age of religious song that the movement sought to restore, as well as the embodiment of a nation founded on Catholicism, rather than opposed to it. Finally, the Feste of 1882 spurred a new wave of scholarly studies on Guido's life and works, conceived in line with the principles and methodologies of historicism. Viewed as a whole, the various "monuments" to Guido Monaco erected during the Feste of Arezzo provide a snapshot of the cultural and political climate of the time.

Keywords

Guidonian celebrations, statue of Guido Monaco, Church and State relationships, Cecilian movement, historiography of post-unitarian Italy

English translation by Elisabetta Zoni