

CATHEDRAL VIOLINS:
TRACING ORNATE VIOLIN WRITING IN THE AMERICAS
THROUGH THE MUSIC OF
SANTIAGO BILLONI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

by

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Chapter I: Introduction

I first learned of the music of Santiago Billoni (c. 1700-c. 1763) when researching cathedral archives and various collections of works in the Americas, from roughly 1600-1790. This happy discovery came out of strictly practical reasons: I needed to choose a new program for the then-named Latin American Ensemble, through the Latin American Music Center at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University, with repertoire suitable for the mixed ensemble for around twenty students, including instruments and voices. I was immediately struck by the complexity and unusual violin writing in Billoni's music, and had the fortune to be able to feature some of his music on three concert programs. My interest was further piqued during a backstage post-concert conversation with Stanley Ritchie, who remarked that this was both "marvelous music" and that he had not heard "anything like it", which, given his extensive exploration of baroque-era violin repertoire, is a rather monumental statement! This led to deeper exploration and ultimately my choosing this topic: I wanted to explore just how unusual Billoni's writing is, how it fits within the greater cathedral music context in New Spain, and what similarities and differences it holds to European and, specifically, Italian music. My aim in doing so is to highlight this marvelous repertoire, not only as that of a unique composer writing baroque music in the so-called "new world", but also as music that I hope will be programmed and researched in greater detail across the field of historical performance.

This document relies on the valuable work of Drew Edward Davies, whose publication of the *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni* in 2011 has scores, parts, texts, translations for all surviving works of Santiago Billoni. Before I proceed with a detailed look at Billoni's music in later sections (using *Et Resurrexit* as a point of comparison, then a discussion Billoni's Paraliturgical works and his Latin Liturgical music), I will first address this repertoire's context in four ways: 1) what instrument is being discussed, that is, a brief background on violin playing in the Americas around the mid-1700s, 2) for whom is this music written, both in terms of who is playing, and who is listening, especially highlighting the contrast between mission and cathedral composition, 3) specific composers, Billoni and contemporaries, with biographical information, and 4) how cathedral archival records can help contextualize these composers' musical influences and musical context.

Violin in the Americas

By looking at iconographic evidence and a brief overview of cathedral musical appointments throughout the Americas, we can see there is no significant difference between playing styles in Europe and across the ocean. If we first turn to visual records of the violin, in E. Roubina's *Los instrumentos de arco en la Nueva España*, a comprehensive look at iconography from Mexico City, Puebla, and Tepotzotlán from the 18th century reveals that violin-family instruments were played on the left collarbone, mostly chin-off, and occasional instances of the violin being held down on the chest.¹ The bow was both held in the "Italian" way (represented in fifteen paintings), and in the "French" with thumb under, in eleven paintings.² This distinction between thumb placement by national styles was explained by Muffat in his 1698 treatise, where he clarifies: "For the holding of the bow, the Germans agree with the Lullists [the French], that is, pressing the thumb against the hair and laying the other fingers on the back of the bow... Which differs from the Italian practice... where the hair is untouched and the fingers lie between the wood and the hair."³ We see two examples of this below, in figures one and two.

¹ Roubina, Evguenia. *Los instrumentos de arco en la Nueva España*. (Mexico City: Conaculta Fonca, 1999), p. 129.

² *ibid*, p. 129.

³ Muffat, Georg. *Florilegium Secundum*. David Wilson, trans. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), p. 33.

Figure 1: *Tercera aparición de la Virgen de Guadalupe*⁴



Figure 2: *Asunción de la Virgen*⁵



⁴ Anonymous. *Tercera aparición de la Virgen de Guadalupe*, fragment. *Museo de la Basílica de Guadalupe*, Ciudad de México, 18th century.

⁵ Talavera, Vicente. *Asunción de la Virgen*, fragment. *Iglesia de la Soledad*, Puebla, Puebla, 1748.

We see corresponding iconography in the *Codex Trujillo del Perú* with two violinist figures below, suggesting the widespread use across the Spanish colonies, including the Viceroyalty of Peru, of this manner of holding and playing the violin in both cathedral and more popular styles of music. While the Codex is from much farther south, the consistency of the iconography supports that playing styles were similar.

Figure 3: *Codex Trujillo del Perú*, watercolor images⁶



If we compare this to images of Michel Corrette's *L'Ecole d'Orphée* (1738) and Leopold Mozart's *Violinschule* (1756), we see essentially a similar playing position in all four images.

⁶ Compañón, Baltasar Jaime Martínez. *Codex Trujillo del Perú*. (Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional de España, c. 1782), watercolor plates 157, 158.

Figure 4: Corrette, *L'Ecole d'Orphée*⁷



Figure 5: Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*⁸



⁷ Corrette, Michel. *L'école d'Orphée, methode pour apprendre facilement a joüer du violon*. (Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1738), p. 2.

⁸ Mozart, Leopold. *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*. (Augsburg: Lotter, 1756), p. 1.

It is worth noting that iconographical representations are not always accurate, as we might notice in some of the other contemporary cathedral paintings in Mexico City, with bow holds facing the opposite direction. One of Biber's colleagues, J. J. Printer wrote in 1677:

I have known of virtuosi of repute who put the violin against the chest, thinking it looks nice and decorative, because they have taken it from a painting where an angel is playing to St. Francis and found it more picturesque: but they should have known that the painter was more artful with his paint brush than he would have been with a violin bow.⁹

However given the prevalence of representation of the violin as played on the chest or under the chin, we can have confidence that the violin was being played in a similar fashion in New Spain and other Spanish colonies, as across Europe. (Also by the 18th century, New Spain iconography shows that the primary bowed continuo instrument was the cello, with the instrument both played between the legs and resting on a support. We see this in seven specific iconographic instances of both in Mexico City cathedrals alone.¹⁰)

In addition to images of violin players, we can also look at the records of European musical training of the chapelmasters across the Americas. Béhague mentions that the most important positions in the cathedral, those of the chapelmaster and organists, “were filled by mostly Europeans, or European-trained musicians, with few notable exceptions.”¹¹ For example, in the Mexico City Cathedral, as early as 1528, the first bishop of Mexico, Fray Juan de Zumárraga required the chapelmaster Canon Juan Xuárez to hire professional singers from Spain with special funds from Charles V, and the chapelmaster lineage of European appointments continued from his tenure through to the first exception: Manuel de Zumaya, appointed in 1715, meaning the intermediary twelve chapelmasters were born and trained in Europe.¹² As Italian music influenced composition in Madrid, the Americas saw a similar stylistic shift: Ignacio Jerusalem (c. 1710-1769) was the first Italian-born chapelmaster in Mexico City, appointed 1749.¹³ We

⁹ Manze, Andrew. “Strings” in *A Performer's Guide to Music of the Baroque Period*. Anthony Burton, ed. (London: Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 2002), p. 72.

¹⁰ Roubina, Evguenia. *Los instrumentos de arco en la Nueva España*. (Mexico City: Conaculta Fonca, 1999), p. 133.

¹¹ Béhague, Gerard. *Music in Latin America: an Introduction*. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), p. 7.

¹² *ibid*, p. 5-18.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 16.

see similar patterns in other cathedrals: the first chapelmaster in Puebla, Pedro Bermudez, appointed 1603, born in Bermuda, was first working in Cuzco, Peru, and also in Guatemala City's Cathedral. New Granada (present-day Colombia) saw chapelmasters such as Fernández Hidalgo, stepped in "the best Spanish tradition of Renaissance polyphony as developed by Victoria"¹⁴, who then later worked in the cathedrals of Quito and La Plata (present-day Sucre, Bolivia). We also see a similar shift to Italian chapelmasters in Lima, with the first appointment of an Italian, Roque Ceruti who served from 1728-1760, taking duties over from Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco who served 1676-1728.¹⁵ Of most interest for this document is the first Italian chapelmaster appointment in the Durango Cathedral, that of Santiago Billoni, who served from 1749-1756.

These cursory examples help illustrate the proliferation of European and Europe-trained musicians across cathedrals in the Americas, especially chapelmasters, and including other musical posts of singers and instrumentalists. Posts filled by a non-European-born musician were indeed the exception. This, plus iconographic evidence, reinforces that string technique was essentially the same between Europe and the Americas.

¹⁴ Béhague, Gerard. *Music in Latin America: an Introduction*. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), p. 30.

¹⁵ *ibid*, p. 40-43.

Music in the Americas: Performing Musicians and Listeners

When considering the difference in styles across religious music of the Americas, I think it is important to address the difference in function between mission compositions and those for high cathedral services. I highlight the difference between the music of Santiago Billoni and Ignacio Jerusalem, and that of Domenico Zipoli, specifically their settings of the *Et Resurrexit* moment of the Mass, discussed beginning on page 16, as representative of this distinction. This reflects the intent behind this music, that is: who is hearing this music and why. In the case of Domenico Zipoli, he was writing as a Jesuit missionary, with music as a vehicle to help with education and conversion, whereas Billoni and Jerusalem were writing for high cathedral services with the additional aim of continuing and reinforcing the height of Spanish culture in the Americas. I discuss more biographical details of these composers in the following section beginning on page 11, but before discussing specific composers, the next few paragraphs help highlight the context of these differences in musical function.

The Jesuits (“Society of Jesus”) were officially declared by Pope Paul III’s bull *Regimini militantes ecclesiae*, 1540, formed by Ignacius of Loyola and nine peers from the University of Paris. The Jesuits differed from existing orders “in that they were neither mendicants nor monks, but rather glorified God through ministries... including preaching the Word of God, administering sacraments, enacting works of mercy, and establishing schools”¹⁶. The Jesuits were offered certain flexibilities: they were not obligated to chant in the office hours, they did not have to wear religious habits but could instead dress as regional priests, and were not required to live in monasteries, as these “fixatives might impede the Society’s ministries”¹⁷. This meant that the Jesuits could incorporate indigenous elements into the celebration of mass, and that music and theater could be used to help the Jesuits communicate their teachings. Aracena states that these “artistic venues emerged from the Jesuits’ belief in accommodating to temporal and cultural circumstances”¹⁸; this flexibility enhanced the order’s profound success.

¹⁶ O’Malley, John W. *The First Jesuits*. (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 80.

¹⁷ Aracena, Beth K. *Singing Salvation: Jesuit Musics in Colonial Chile, 1600-1767*. (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 1999), p. 24.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p. 25.

This means that Zipoli's writings were for the locals to sing and perhaps also for local violinists to play, with a specific conversion/missionary goal. Zipoli's musical influence even extended to places such as "Yapeyú and other Guarany Indian villages from which Europeans were excluded" as documented by Jesuit writings of 1728 and 1732.¹⁹ For example, we have fragments of a religious drama called an *opera edificante* with text in Chiquitano: "Opera San Francisco Xavier", with music attributed to Domenico Zipoli specifically to discuss salvation and the glories awaiting the believer, with relatively simple melodies and accompanimental instrumental lines. The texts of all the arias are focused on repetitions over themes of the glory that is found in Heaven: the celebration of the believers, joy and eternal happiness, and abundant food and joyful gatherings.

These more simple lines differ from Zipoli's other output: Zipoli could write complex, difficult music for the violinist, and he certainly did so before leaving Europe. For example, his *Sonata in A Major for Violin and Continuo*, features a rather awkward final gigue movement, with large leaps and required shifting for the violin (example 1), as compared to his writing from the Americas in his Mass in F Major (example 2) on page 18.

¹⁹ Stevenson, Robert. "Domenico Zipoli". *Grove Music Online*. Accessed on March 2, 2021. <https://doi-org.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.30997>

Example 1: Zipoli: *Sonata in A Major*, IV. *Gigue*²⁰



This is in contrast with high cathedral music of Jerusalem and Billoni, whereas these both were violinist-composers trained first in Italy, writing for themselves to play the virtuosic first violin parts, writing Italianate music seen “by practitioners and listeners alike as an attribute of elite culture that embellished the most important and rarified physical space in the city.”²¹ This was especially so in the Durango Cathedral, which was situated substantially differently from others in New Spain because it was founded away from any previous indigenous population center; it was more isolated from these musical influences. Although some of the population had “at least some African heritage”, and the surrounding peoples included indigenous Tepehuanes, Acazees, and Xiximes, as well as periodic interaction with nomadic Apaches and Comanches, all ten bishops serving between 1714 and 1812 were born in Spain.²² Finally, the cathedral itself intentionally “articulated the norms of European high culture”, partly to

²⁰ Zipoli, Domenico. *Sonata in A Major for Violin and Continuo*. Composer manuscript: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, p. 4.

²¹ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain*. (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 39-40.

²² Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), x.

reinforce the social stratification and partly to maintain the universality of the Catholic Church.²³ This means that Billoni and Jerusalem's music was an "elite colonialist experience" rather than representative of the musical soundscape of the city as a whole.²⁴ This has very obvious and striking consequences in the music, especially in the instrumental parts: both composers' violin writings are considerably more complex than Zipoli's, and indeed specifically Billoni's violin writing is some of the most elaborate and virtuosic found from this era, both in Europe and in New Spain.

²³ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), x.

²⁴ *ibid*, x.

Music in the Americas: Composers

The previous section outlines the contrast in circumstance and function for this music, so I will now turn to specific biographical details about these composers. Although I am primarily focused on the music of Santiago Billoni, I will also briefly discuss that of Ignacio Jerusalem and Domenico Zipoli, to offer comparison and put Billoni's music within a wider context, with Jerusalem as evidence of broad Italian influence, and with Zipoli's writing as demonstrative of the difference between cathedral and mission musical goals.

Domenico Zipoli was born in Prato, Italy in 1688, and died in Córdoba, Argentina, in 1726. To put his dates in context, at his birth, Buxtehude was 51, Vitali was 44, Corelli and Pachelbel both 35, Purcell 30, Geminiani 14, Vivaldi 13, Bach and Handel only 3. His generation, then, was that of "*Vivaldi, Geminiani, Telemann, Rameau, Handel, y J. S. Bach*".²⁵ Zipoli was a trained keyboardist, working in Rome as a Jesuit organist when he published perhaps his most famous work, a volume for keyboard titled *Sonate d'intavolatura* in 1715. This collection was later also published by Walsh in London and in Paris, and copies were found in the Americas, both of the complete volume and also individual pieces in various cathedral archives, including within a large collection of manuscripts at the San Rafael and Santa Ana missions in eastern Bolivia.²⁶ Zipoli departed for Córdoba with fifty-three other Jesuit missionaries in April 1717, and by 1724 had finished his required three years each of philosophy and theology, with distinction. Unfortunately, he died of tuberculosis in 1725 without receiving his priest's orders as there was no current bishop in Córdoba.²⁷

Ignacio Jerusalem was born in Italy around 1710 and died in Mexico City in 1769. He was a very accomplished violinist. In 1742, he was one of a group of musicians active in Cádiz, Spain, who were sent to work in a new theatre in Mexico City.²⁸ Jerusalem was the first Italian chapelmaster at Mexico City Cathedral, beginning his tenure in 1749. We will see some of Jerusalem's writing on page 20,

²⁵ Ayestarán, Lauro. *Domenico Zipoli, vida y obra*. (Montevideo: Museo Histórico Nacional, 1962), p. 18.

²⁶ Stevenson, Robert. "Domenico Zipoli". *Grove Music Online*. Accessed on March 2, 2021. <https://doi-org.proxyiub.uits.iu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.30997>

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Harshbarger, George. *The Mass in G by Ignacio Jerusalem and its Place in the California Mission Music Repertory*. (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1985), p. 35.

specifically the *Et Resurrexit* in his Mass in G Major, where his “bravura-like violin passages... are symptomatic of the secularly character given to cathedral music of the time”.²⁹

Santiago Billoni, born c. 1700, left Rome sometime in the 1730s, and married María Ramírez de Cartagena at Guadalajara Cathedral in New Spain. Billoni was the only Italian chapelmaster to work at Durango Cathedral, and his influence on the music of the cathedral “shifting toward the contemporary Italianate aesthetic cannot be overestimated”.³⁰ Billoni began service as a violinist on the 1st of December, 1748, and was named chapelmaster the following year, officially on the 4th of October, although unofficially from much earlier, as the current chapelmaster Sebastián de Castañeda was quite ill. While Billoni was quite prolific, it seems the chapel expected higher output, eventually requiring Billoni to give his allotment of paper to Joseph Nieto who was composing at a more rapid rate.³¹ Billoni left the cathedral in 1755 to return to work in Valladolid until his death in 1763.

²⁹ Harshbarger, George. *The Mass in G by Ignacio Jerusalem and its Place in the California Mission Music Repertory*. (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1985), p. 16.

³⁰ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain*. (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 135.

³¹ *ibid*, p. 138.

Music in the Americas: Cathedral Archival Context

Although this document is mainly interested in Billoni's compositions and the only surviving manuscripts are in the Durango Cathedral, a look at the musical archive of *Santa María de Valladolid* also helps us understand both Billoni and Jerusalem's musical context, as this archive's contents relate to that of the Durango Cathedral and Mexico City. Jiménez outlines several Italianate instrumental works found in the archives, from as early as 1700 with two overtures from Antonio Rodil and Antonio Sarrier, noting that these "*podrían en rigor llamarse pequeñas sinfonías, dada su estructura e importancia*"³² ("could strictly be called small symphonies, given their structure and importance"), and notes that these correspond in general construction to "*la Obertura Italiana*", such as those written by Scarlatti. He also notes that the Italian influence is clear in the title of Rodil's overture: "*Obertura con Violini, Viola, Oboe, Trombe Obligatti, E Basso del Señor Antonio Rodil*" with a curious mix of "languages and sensibilities"³³. A look at the full catalog of the archive includes multiple *villancicos* for four or eight voices plus violins, solo cantatas and arias with violins, and Mass and Psalm settings. (Indeed it seems violin lines were so ubiquitous in these works, the *villancicos* without violins specifically list "*sin violines*" so as to clarify.) The list of *Obras Profanas* includes music by Jomelli (*Overtura a pour Stromenti*) and Galluppi (several arias), as well as the two Overtures mentioned earlier.³⁴ We also find works by Galluppi and Jomelli in the Durango archive (as discussed on page 18). Stevenson remarks while cataloguing the works in Mexico City, the presence of five of Giacomo Facco's instrumental works at the *Colegio de las Vizcainas* "illustrates in what unlikely places Italian music crops up in Mexico".³⁵ In the National Institute of Anthropology and History (microfilmed Mexico City Cathedral Archive), we find works by Italian composers such as Antonio Aurisicchio (two works copied in 1752), Antonio Brunetti, and Giacomo Facco³⁶. Even prior to the prolific string writing, Puebla's Cathedral archives, like Mexico

³² Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. *El archivo musical del Colegio de Santa Rosa de Santa María de Valladolid, siglo XVIII, Morelia colonial*. (Morelia: Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás, 1939), p. 24.

³³ Bernal Jiménez, Miguel. *El archivo musical del Colegio de Santa Rosa de Santa María de Valladolid, siglo XVIII, Morelia colonial*. (Morelia: Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás, 1939), p. 25.

³⁴ *ibid*, p. 37-45.

³⁵ Stevenson, Robert. *Renaissance and Baroque Musical Sources in the Americas*. (Washington, D.C.: Organization of American States, 1970), p. 143.

³⁶ *ibid*, p. 131-181.

City, boasted “imposing collections of sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth-century polyphony”, including works by Orlando di Lasso, Giovanni di Palestrina, and Tomás de Victoria.

While this is a cursory look at archival contents, we see there were many resources dedicated to the copying and preserving of both Renaissance polyphony and Baroque Italian string writing, and so we can infer these composers’ works and style were part of the musical knowledge and lexicon of composers such as Billoni, Zipoli, and Jerusalem. Arroyo reiterates this, saying because of the hiring of Italian musicians for Spanish cathedrals, the great proliferation of Italian opera in Spain (especially in Madrid starting in 1703, with an additional direction in 1719 that the opera produce music written “*a la italiana*”, in the Italian style), “*es natural asumir que esta predilección por ‘lo italiano’ permeara la vida cultural de la colonia*”³⁷ or, (“it is natural to assume that this predilection for “the Italian” permeated the cultural life of the colonies”). By specifically looking at the violin writing, Davies states that these violin parts offer a “barometer of the Italianization process, as Hispanic works from the early years of the century use violins primarily for echo effects within polychoral textures whereas by mid-century, independent and idiomatic violin writing showcases the mastery of the modern aesthetic in local contexts.”³⁸

According to the Spanish Jesuit José Cardiel (working in Paraguay, 1730), “we provide the best music from Spain and Rome”, meaning, the mission musicians knew of such composers as “Morales, Alonso de Ávila, Claudio de Sermisy, as well as Juan de Araujo, and Domenico Zipoli.”³⁹ Manuel de Zumaya, the first Mexican-born chapelmaster in Mexico City from 1715-1739, helped the cathedral orchestra reach its “apex”, both in size and quality⁴⁰, and his music showed a clear Italian Baroque influence. This paved the way for Ignacio Jerusalem.

In *Music in Latin America, an Introduction* (1979), Béhague has no mention of Santiago Billoni: Davies’ discovery of Santiago Billoni’s works is an incredibly exciting addition to our knowledge of music from New Spain. Billoni’s career parallels that of Jerusalem: surprisingly they were both seventh

³⁷ Arroyo, Óscar Humberto Álvarez. “La música novohispana, nuestra herencia musical y análisis de dos misas y un *Magnificat* de Billoni para su interpretación.” In *Música y Desarrollo Cultural 2*, edited by Gerardo Monjarás Luna. (Coahuila: Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 2017), p. 32.

³⁸ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), ix.

³⁹ Béhague, Gerard. *Music in Latin America: an Introduction*. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1979), p. 3.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, p. 15.

children in musical families, which, Davies says, “is itself a reason to seek work against hoards of trained musicians for jobs in Italy”.⁴¹ Both were violinists, both wrote for themselves to play the first violin part, both explored the technical capabilities of the violin, but Billoni did so to a much farther extent. Davies states that “Billoni and Jerusalem mark the maturity of the aesthetic shift toward the Italianate style, and mark the moment when Novohispanic cathedral music was most aligned with that of contemporaneous Europe.”⁴²

⁴¹ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain*. (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 141.

⁴² *ibid*, p. 141.

Chapter II: Considering the Music: *Et Resurrexit* as Point of Comparison

With musical and biographical context, we can now turn to the music itself to see how each composer, given their functional goals and cultural context, writes specifically for the violin. I will begin specific musical discussion with a pivotal moment in the Mass setting, *Et Resurrexit*, to create an equivalent point of comparison across these specific three composers, and within greater context by comparing with their European counterparts, before discussing the rest of Billoni's surviving musical works. I will specifically discuss Billoni and Jerusalem's settings as emblematic of the Italian influence spreading across the Americas during this time, in strong contrast with Zipoli's writing in the Americas, while highlighting Billoni's uniquely virtuosic violin lines.

As we saw in the earlier sections of the introduction, the virtuosic contrast between these *Credo* settings from the Americas is partly due to contrast in performer: whereas Billoni wrote the first violin line for himself to play¹, Zipoli's violin lines were written for "Indios"². The "*Et Resurrexit*" moment in the mass is a particularly appropriate place in the text for the melodic line to be more virtuosic and to highlight the contrast between the previous text line, ("*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus, et sepultus est*", that is, "Crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried"), and the glorious "*Et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas. Et ascendit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris*" ("And he rose third day, according to Scriptures. And he ascended into heaven, he sits at right hand of Father").

In all three *Credo* examples below, we see violin lines with increased rhythmic activity and embellishment to the vocal writing, both while the singers are active, and in connecting melodic material between vocal phrases.

¹ Drew Edward Davies, *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 229.

² Zipoli, Domenico. *Misa a San Ignacio: per soprano, tenore, coro, due violini e basso continuo*. Edited by Luis Szaran and Roberto Antonello, (Udine: Pizzicato, 1998), p. 7.

Example 3: Billoni: Mass in B-flat Major, *Credo*, m. 36-46⁴

The image displays a musical score for Example 3, which is a section from the Credo of a Mass in B-flat Major by Santiago Billoni. The score is marked 'Allegro' and covers measures 36 to 46. It features staves for Violins 1 and 2, Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B.), and Bassoon (B.c.). The lyrics are: 'Et re-sur-re-xit ter-ti-a di-e, se-cun-dum Scri-ptu-ras. Et a-scen-dit in cae-lum: se-det ad de-xe-ram Pa-tris. Et i-te-rum ven-tu-rus est cum glo-ri-a, ju-di-ca-re, ju-di-ca-re vi-vos et mor-tu-os: cu-jus re-gni non e-rit fi-nis, non e-rit fi-nis.' The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings.

In Example 4, Billoni again has a similar half cadence slow-section ending of the “sepultus est”, but in this Mass in C Minor, he gives the first violin a whole bar to set the new character, with a flurry of thirty-second notes. The tenor’s entrance takes focus for the next few bars, but the first violin is prominently featured in the next few vocal rests shown in Examples 5.

⁴ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 247-248.

Example 4: Billoni: Mass in C Minor, *Credo*, m. 39-42⁵

39 [Allegro]

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

S
-la- to pas-sus, et se- pul- tus est. Et re- sur-

A
-la- to pas-sus, et se- pul- tus est. Et re- sur-

T
-la- to pas-sus, et se- pul- tus est. Et re- sur-

B.r.
5 6
5 5

B.c.
5 6
5 5

Example 5: *Credo*, m. 55-58⁶

55

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

S
-tris. Et i- te- rum ven- tu- rus

A
-tris. Et i- te- rum ven- tu- rus

T
-tris. Et i- te- rum ven- tu- rus

B.r.
5 5

B.c.
5 5

⁵ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 275.

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 277.

Perhaps the most fitting comparison of Billoni's violin lines is with the work of Ignacio Jerusalem: as previously noted, Jerusalem and Billoni were the first two Italians to hold chapelmaster positions in New Spain⁷, and both were accomplished violinists writing parts for themselves to play. Let us consider Jerusalem's "*Et Resurrexit*" moment from his untitled Mass in G Major, circa 1760. This mass is scored for double choir, two violins, two trumpets, and continuo. As we might expect, the previous phrase "*sepultus est*" ends with a half cadence in A Major, following a long diminuendo on a pedal point. The "*Et Resurrexit*" moment is announced with a D Major, *Allegro*, interestingly with trumpets adding in gradually rather than beginning the movement, and featuring the violin lines beginning melodically and transitioning to harmonic excitement with a bariolage of sixteenth notes.

⁷ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 257.

Example 6: Ignacio Jerusalem: *Mass in G Major*; “*Et Resurrexit*” treble lines, m. 1-19⁸

We can see similar writing in the music of Antonio Vivaldi, which is a fitting comparison given both Billoni and Jerusalem’s Italian training. Although we do not have an “*Et Resurrexit*” moment of Vivaldi to compare, his *Gloria* has a similar *affect* and is worth comparing alongside the previous examples. Example 7 is from Vivaldi’s *Gloria* in D Major; the opening few bars for the violins show similar patterning especially compared to Zipoli and Jerusalem, with embellishment of the harmony through repeated notes and bariolage, especially in the second page of the manuscript in this example. The scoring is similar to Jerusalem, plus oboes and violas, and the violin writing is remarkably similar.

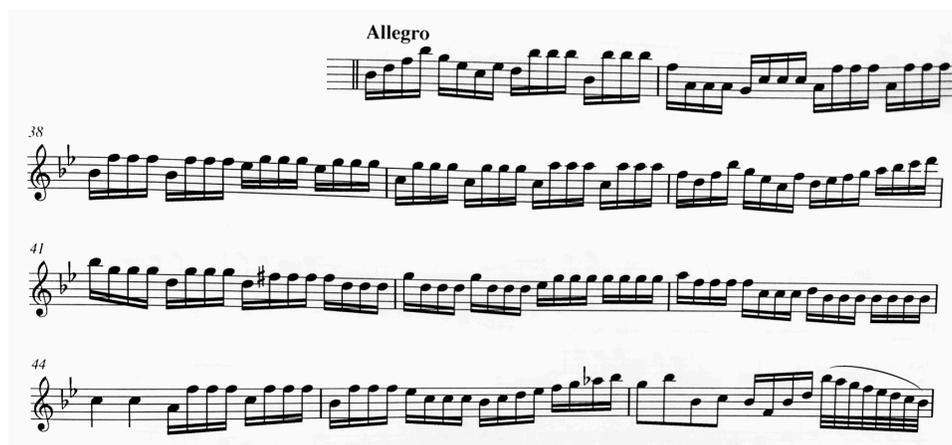
⁸ Harshbarger, George. *The Mass in G by Ignacio Jerusalem and its Place in the California Mission Music Repertory*. (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1985), p. 151-154.

Example 7: Vivaldi: *Gloria*, manuscript, m. 1-14⁹



Returning for a moment to Billoni's Mass in B-flat Major, violin I part, "Et Resurrexit" (example 8), we see further similarities in Vivaldi's music: Arroyo suggests that these measures in the Billoni B-flat Major Mass are similar to the figuration in Vivaldi's Chamber Concerto for Lute D Major, RV 93¹⁰. Example 9 shows measures 10-17, as they are the most similar to Billoni's writing.

Example 8: Billoni: "Et Resurrexit", violin I, m. 36-46¹¹



⁹Vivaldi, Antonio. *Gloria in D Major, RV 589*. (Composer manuscript, 1716?), p. 2-3.

¹⁰ Arroyo, Óscar Humberto Álvarez. "La música novohispana, nuestra herencia musical y análisis de dos misas y un *Magnificat* de Billoni para su interpretación." (Coahuila: Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 2017), p. 38.

¹¹ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), violin I, p. 58.

Example 9: Vivaldi: Lute Concerto RV 93, solo lute, m. 10-17¹²



However, given the harmonic figuration, with repeated notes, I think a more clear Vivaldi parallel is found in the opening solo portion of his violin concerto “*Grosso Mogul*” RV 208. Vivaldi uses repeated notes similarly to Billoni, to outline each chord, alternating with arpeggios, which we see very commonly in violin writing across multiple composers, as a rhetorical device to heighten the excitement and drama of a particular text or a particular musical moment.

Example 10: Vivaldi: Concerto in D Major “*Grosso Mogul*”, RV 208, solo violin line¹³



In these non-Billoni examples, Jerusalem and Vivaldi have chosen D Major for these triumphant sections whereas Zipoli chose F Major. Billoni’s figuration in B-flat major adds an additional level of virtuosity: although any competent violinists should be able to play in these keys with ease, B-flat Major is not as idiomatic as D Major. Arroyo notes that: “*con relación a la parte instrumental, es evidente que*

¹² Vivaldi, Antonio. *Concerto for Lute in D Major, RV 93*. (Orhun Orhon, ed., 2020), solo lute, p. 1.

¹³ Vivaldi, Antonio. *Concerto in D Major RV 208 “Grosso Mogul”*. (Composer manuscript, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, Turin, c. 1713), p 4.

existe cierta dificultad técnica”¹⁴ (with relation to the instrumental part, it is evident there exists a certain technical difficulty), especially given the key.

For this *Et Resurrexit* (example 4), Billoni chose an even more unexpected key: C minor. The violinist has to navigate flats, but with the added difficulty of the fast rhythm and shifting between positions. Perhaps Billoni is afforded this choice of keys because he is composing only for strings, rather than having to account for oboe, trumpet, and timpani tonalities. While we do have two works by Billoni that include oboe (*Credidi propter*, optional oboe/violin III for *Fabordones*) and trumpet (*Credidi propter*, *Salve Regina*), the rest of his surviving compositions are for multiple violins and continuo only, giving more textural responsibility to the violins, but also greater freedom. (This is discussed further in the sections on each work.) Billoni is able to explore even more virtuosity for the first violin as he is not constrained in key choice by instrumentation, and I would argue this allows him an outlet to demand more from the players.

While making these comparisons with Vivaldi, it is worth reflecting over how much of Vivaldi and Italian contemporaries’ music Billoni might have heard: Davies writes that Billoni left Europe for New Spain sometime in the mid 1730s¹⁵, which would have given him time to possibly hear Vivaldi’s *Grosso Mogul* concerto (c. 1713) or similar works. We can also use the archival catalogue both at the Durango Cathedral and the private collection Davies mentions for a sense of what manuscripts Billoni would have either performed himself or been aware of:

“An inventory of the possessions of Don Miguel de Berrio y Zaldívar, first Marquess of Jaral de Berrio (1716–1779), a landowner and Mexico City businessman, lists two sets of violin solos and divertimentos by Billoni along with pieces by Vivaldi, Sammartini, Jommelli, Galuppi, Jerusalem, and other Italians.”¹⁶

Unfortunately this private collection is lost, but we can infer that Billoni came into contact with Vivaldi’s music. Appendix 1.1 of Davies’ *The Italianized Frontier* includes complete works in manuscript at Durango Cathedral, organized by composer. This index includes works by Giovanni Pergolesi (including

¹⁴Arroyo, Óscar Humberto Álvarez. “La música novohispana, nuestra herencia musical y análisis de dos misas y un *Magnificat* de Billoni para su interpretación.” (Coahuila: Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, 2017), p. 46.

¹⁵ Davies, Drew Edward. “Billoni [Biyoni, Billonij, Villoni, Vioni], Santiago.” *Grove Music Online*.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

his *Stabat Mater*), instrumental music by Giovanni Sammartini, and arias by Giuseppe Scarlatti. Also found in the archives were an aria and a cantata by Johann Hasse, German by birth, who wrote extensive opera music, including roles performed by Farinelli¹⁷. Davies notes that the “mere existence” of a contrafactum setting of Hasse’s 1730 Venetian setting of *Artaserse* in the Durango Cathedral was extraordinary in any case, but especially this *opera seria* duet.¹⁸ We know that this work arrived at the Durango Cathedral during Billoni’s tenure, as the title page is signed by the currently unknown scribe “Cueva”, who also transcribed numerous works by Ignacio Jerusalem, meaning, he must have been working in New Spain during this time.¹⁹

¹⁷ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 489.

¹⁸ *ibid*, p. 192.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 201.

Chapter III: In-Depth: Santiago Billoni's Paraliturgical Works

Having set apart the *Et Resurrexit* moment specifically as a point of comparison between composers, and as a lens to view Billoni's virtuosic compositional style, I will now focus on Billoni's different compositional devices in his violin lines across his surviving repertoire, following Drew Edward Davies' organization of Billoni's surviving works.

Hombre, mira el dolor is discussed extensively in Drew Davies' *The Italianized Frontier*, so I will mention it only superficially here. The violin writing is some of the most elaborate written-out embellishments in eighteenth-century repertoire, indeed Davies states "as far as I have personally seen, unique in the Novohispanic repertoire"¹ (example 11). It is certainly unique in my experience thus far as a baroque violinist. Davies also draws the parallel between *Hombre mira el dolor* and Corelli's Violin Sonata op. 4 No. 2, *Grave*, as a crowning example of Billoni's use of Italianate melodic ornamentation. Although we do not know of an immediate connection between Billoni and Corelli, Davies explains that because Corelli was active in Rome, Billoni's native city, "a direct link between Billoni and Corelli's 'school' is plausible, although Billoni himself probably began to study violin only around the time of Corelli's death in 1713."²

¹Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 232.

² *Ibid*, p. 232.

Example 11: *Hombre, mira el dolor* violin parts, m. 40-45³

The image displays a musical score for three parts: Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), and Bassoon (B.c.). The score is divided into four systems, corresponding to measures 40, 41, 42, and 44. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. Measure 40 shows the Vn. 1 part with a melodic line and a triplet of eighth notes. The Vn. 2 part has a similar melodic line with a triplet. The B.c. part provides a harmonic accompaniment. Measure 41 continues the melodic development in both violin parts. Measure 42 features a dense, arpeggiated texture in the Vn. 1 part, while the Vn. 2 part has a more rhythmic accompaniment. The B.c. part includes a sixteenth-note triplet and a sixteenth-note triplet with a '6' above it. Measure 44 shows a highly technical passage in the Vn. 1 part with rapid sixteenth-note runs, while the Vn. 2 part has a more melodic line. The B.c. part continues with a steady accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings.

While arpeggiation is common in eighteenth-century violin repertoire, Billoni's arpeggiation is less suggestive and is instead completely written out, as opposed to Bach's chaconne where he simply marks

³ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 27.

“*arpeggio*” (in the top right corner of example 12), or as seen in Francesco Locatelli’s *Sonatas* op. 1, where he marks “*arpeggio battuto*” for eight bars (example 13).

Example 12: Bach: Chaconne excerpt⁴



Example 13: Locatelli: Sonata no. 7 op. 1, final *Allegro*⁵



In addition, the structure of *Hombre, mira el Dolor*, with its slower, more expansive A section, a faster B section, and *da capo*, “fits into contemporary [Italian] practice, with active bass lines reminiscent of Alessandro Scarlatti and violin embellishments suggestive of Corelli, which appear to conflate a variety of historic elements”,⁶ to which Billoni adds, heightening the genre with extremely specific, florid arpeggiation.

The other work Davies discusses in great detail is *Divina madre— ¿Podrás sin ternura?* which has the most unusually striking key signature of E-flat minor, with six flats. In addition, it is scored for solo alto voice, but in an extremely low register. Having had to navigate this issue of register in performance, it merits the question: why is this not written for a tenor? Billoni’s distinctive choices all point to Mary’s pain: perhaps the very fact that it is a struggle to sing in this range adds to the drama. Also if we look at the cathedral musician roster of the time, it is quite likely that Julián de Zúñiga was the

⁴ Bach, J. S. *Sei Solo a Violino senza Basso accompagnato*, composer manuscript, c. 1720.

⁵ Locatelli, Francesco Maria. *12 Violin Sonatas, Op. I.* (Dresden: unidentified publisher, 1721), p. 36.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 235.

alto for whom this was written, who must have had an usually low register, as evidenced by the other works written for him.⁷ The recitative includes violin lines, making it the only accompanied recitative in Billoni’s surviving works. Unlike most of other Billoni arias, the B section is in the same tempo, featuring instead some very strange, wonderful harmonic motions including C-fully-diminished-seventh chords.

What I will add to Davies’ observations of this piece are the unusual double stops for the violin I in the ritornello of the aria. This repeated use of seconds paint the sentiment of the aria, depicting the “divine heart” of Mother Mary, wounded by “sharp steel so cruel and severe... causing great pain”.⁸

Example 14: *Divina Madre*, aria ritornello excerpt, violin I, m. 1-13⁹



We find other wonderful examples of text painting in the violin lines of Billoni’s arias and duets. In *Mariposa invertida*, the text discusses the Christian love as a butterfly returning, dazzled by Heavenly light. Billoni could be suggesting the butterfly’s flight or fluttering wings with a series of triplets in the violin parts in dialogue with solo soprano, seen here 4 times (example 15).

⁷ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 510.

⁸ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), xxiv.

⁹ *ibid*, violin I part, p. 18.

Example 15: *Mariposa invertida*: m. 4-13¹⁰

The ritornellos display Billoni’s typical use of multiple rhythmic subdivisions to create complex, ornamented melodies within a slow *Grave affect*.

¿*Por qué, Pedro?* is also marked *Grave*, but with a very striking rhythm: the first violin has very long chains of lombardic falling thirds, later echoed in the voice of Jesus, sung by soprano. I suggest that this is meant to evoke weeping and rebuking, as the text opens with “Why, Peter, have you behaved so harshly toward me?” and later references tears, tears both for penance and joy at the glory of redemption. Quantz discusses how this lombardic rhythm adds to the passions, with “melancholy expressed by the slurring and brief articulated notes... and boldness as well as by figures in which dots appear regularly after the second note [lombardic rhythm]”.¹¹

¹⁰ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 32.

¹¹Quantz, Johann Joachim. *On playing the Flute*. Edward Reilly, ed. (Lebanon: Northeastern University Press, 2001), p. 125.

Example 16: *¿Por qué, Pedro?* Opening violin lines, m. 1-2¹²



The image shows the opening of a musical score for two violins. The tempo is marked 'Grave'. Violin 1 has a complex, rhythmic line with many sixteenth notes and some slurs. Violin 2 has a simpler line with quarter and eighth notes. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Also of note in this ritornello are the descending seconds in the second violin a few bars later (example 17): these double stops add to the sense of sorrow and pain (and are also not easy to play, so we can infer that Billoni's second violinist was also a player of some skill).

Example 17: *¿Por qué, Pedro?*, note second violin line, m. 6-7¹³



The image shows a musical score for measures 6 and 7. It includes staves for Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), a lute (J), and a basso continuo (B.c.). The second violin line (Vn. 2) features descending seconds. The lute part has some rests and a few notes. The basso continuo part has some figured bass notation, including 'b6', '#', '[3]', and '4'. The key signature has two flats. The tempo is 'Grave'. The text '¿Por qué.' is written below the lute staff.

In the second ritornello, Billoni extends this compositional device, with four whole bars of lombardic rhythm in the first violin:

¹²Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 36.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 36.

Example 18: ¿Por qué, Pedro? m. 20-24¹⁴

20

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

J
del, del pe- ca- do,

P
do del pe- ca- do,

B.c.
6 [4 3] 6 #6 #

23

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

B.c.
[b6] [#6] b6 #6

By contrast, the B section violin lines feature repeated notes; even the interludes are quite simple compared to that of the A section. The text just before the interlude shown in example 19 is that the tears “ignite new grace”, so perhaps this simpler line helps emphasize the change in emotion, although Billoni does not seem to be interested in painting the word “ignite”.

¹⁴Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 38.

Example 19: ¿Por qué, Pedro? m. 41-46¹⁵

By using *da capo* form, the listener must return to the sorrowful lombardic rhythm of the opening. Since this is not one of Billoni's works that was later re-texted, we can infer that the *da capo* helps the listener focus on the anguished nature of the aria (and indeed we see much of Billoni's Spanish Paraliturgical music focus on themes of pain, sadness, and weeping).

Venid, corazones is no exception to this anguish and pain: the text focuses on calling hearts to come admire the heart "wounded by seven spears."¹⁶ This duet for the Virgin of Sorrows goes through seven verses surrounding the suffering of the Virgin, and reminding the sinner of the great pain and suffering both experienced in Christ's sacrifices to pay for the sinner's scorn, and in the Virgin's pain in losing her Son. Billoni has also marked this *Grave*, with suspensions and other rhetorical devices we

¹⁵Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 41.

¹⁶ *ibid*, xxiii.

would expect in a work like Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, however with one unusual exception: Billoni at times sets these suspensions in double stops in the first violin part.

Example 20: *Venid, corazones*, m. 6-15¹⁷

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), and Bassoon (B.c.). The score is in F minor and 3/4 time. It is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 6 to 10, and the second system covers measures 11 to 15. In measures 6-10, the violins play a rising motive with double stops on the second and third sixteenth notes of the bar. The bassoon part includes a long pedal in measures 11-15, with various chordal textures in the violins.

Other unique features in this work include a lengthy pedal in the bass, lasting five bars with the voices in canon, and additional double stops in the opening ritornello of the *coplas* (verses).

Again with the theme of sorrow, Billoni uses F minor and more unexpected double stops in *Ángeles, astros, montes*. Upon first glance, a performer might assume this begins in a dance-like fashion, but Billoni's "*despacio*" tempo marking helps set the character of the chorus, and will also help the first violinist navigate some rather strange bars, especially measures 6-11. Billoni writes numerous double stops in the opening, including a repeating rising motive with double stops on the second and third sixteenth notes of the bar (measures 6, 7, 9, and 10, example 21).

¹⁷Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 43.

Example 21: *Ángeles, astros, montes* m. 6-16¹⁸

The image displays a musical score for three instruments: Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), and Bassoon (B.c.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 6 through 10, and the second system covers measures 11 through 16. The key signature is G minor (three flats) and the time signature is 3/4. In measure 14, there is a time signature change to 6/8, indicated by a bracketed '6/8' above the staff. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

This Villancico for the Virgin of Sorrows exhorts the “angels, stars, mountains.... flowers, seas, birds... fish, beasts, men” and more, to weep with the Virgin for the relentless grief of a mother over the death of her child.¹⁹ Billoni adds a specific diminuendo with *p*, *más p*, *y más p* (*piano*, more *piano*, and even more *piano*) plus dots in the vocal lines for a very extreme effect on the words *¡gemid, llorad, sentid!* [bewail, weep, feel] each time this text returns, and the same device towards the end on the text *las lágrimas, los sollozos, los suspiros* [the tears, sobs, sighs], ending with a *forte* restatement of “sighs” (example 22).

¹⁸Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 62.

¹⁹ *ibid*, xxv.

Example 22: *Ángeles, astros, montes* m. 30-35²⁰

We see Billoni’s creativity, with *Dichoso Pedro llora*, again depicting weeping, but in yet another way. This aria also begins with a *Grave* marking, in somber C minor, with violin writing we have come to expect: a few double stops of major seconds in the ritornello violin I part, and a few melodic flourishes at the close before the vocal entrance. The text centers around Peter, weeping at his misfortune, and specifically after the soprano and tenor sing “*llorando, llorando*” [weeping, weeping], the violin I answers with a weeping motive in the next ritornello, in measure 26.

Example 23: *Dichoso Pedro llora*, instrumental lines, m. 25-26²¹

²⁰Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 64.

²¹ *ibid*, p. 69.

While not specifically marked, given Billoni (or the copyist's) inconsistency in marking slurs in other works, I think the violinist would be well served to slur this figure to highlight the weeping sound.

The B section of this aria is a complete contrast: marked *allegro*, it leaps straight away into the voices' entrance with the text "the glory he treasures" and later, "in a submerging ship, the tempest reaches him", and we see the tempest painted here with a flurry of repeated notes trading off between the violins.

Example 24: *Dichoso Pedro llora*, m. 37-40²²

The image shows a page of a musical score for measures 37-40. It is titled 'Allegro' and marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The score is arranged in a system with seven staves: Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B.r.), and Continuo (B.c.). The vocal parts (S, A, T) have lyrics: 'la glo- ria que a- te- so- ra, que a- te-'. The instrumental parts, particularly the violins and continuo, feature rapid sixteenth-note passages. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 8/8. Measure numbers 37, 38, 39, and 40 are indicated at the beginning of their respective staves.

Given the rhythm of the vocal lines, this *allegro* could be played quite fast, to heighten the drama. The tempest scene is further painted with the full ensemble, when the singers reach the word "tempestad", both violins and continuo have repeated sixteenth notes (example 25). This aria is not *da capo* form, so the listener remains with the ending triumphant *Allegro* section, with the comforting words "but by placing his trust in hope, he [Peter] was saved".

²² Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 70.

Example 25: *Dichoso Pedro llora*, m. 53-56²³

53

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

S
la tem- pes- tad le al- can- za fia- do en

A

T
la tem- pes- tad le al- can- za fia- do en

B.r.
[5] b7 6 b4 5 3 b4 2

B.c.
[5] b7 6 b4 5 3 b4 2

This writing is quite reminiscent of an instrumental manuscript at the Durango Cathedral, by David Perez titled *La Tempestad del Mar* (c. 1750), also depicting Peter’s tempest at sea, and also scored for two violins and continuo. Davies remarks that this piece “stands out from the repertoire at Durango on account of its programmatic allusion”²⁴, and given how closely the sea was tied to eighteenth-century life, this parable would have resonated with the listeners of the time. This parable comes from Matthew 8:24-27, where instead of Peter, in Billoni’s setting, Jesus experiences the great storm:

And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he [Jesus] was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea.²⁵

²³ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 72.

²⁴Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 260.

²⁵Matthew 8:24-27, King James Version.

Example 26: *La Tempestad del Mar* first page²⁶

The image shows the first page of a musical score for 'La Tempestad del Mar'. It is marked '(Allegro)'. The score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes Violin I, Violin II, and Continuo. The second system includes Violin I, Violin II, and Bass (Bc). The third system includes Violin I, Violin II, and Bass (Bc). Dynamic markings of forte (f) and piano (p) are used throughout the piece to create a dramatic effect.

We see similar texture in other “storm” music, perhaps most famously in Vivaldi’s “Four Seasons”, “Summer”, the final presto, with drama building from repeated sixteenth notes on the same pitch:

Example 27: Vivaldi *Le quattro stagioni*, no. 2 in G Minor (*L’estate*) RV 315, III, solo violin²⁷

The image shows the musical score for Vivaldi's 'Le quattro stagioni', no. 2 in G Minor (*L'estate*) RV 315, III, solo violin. The tempo is marked 'Presto' and 'Tempo impetuoso d' Estate'. The score features repeated sixteenth notes on the same pitch, creating a storm-like texture. The lyrics are: 'Al che pur troppo non fuo timor, fuo vero tuono, e fulmine al ciel e grandine; e tronca il capo alle spiche e grani d'oro.'

²⁶ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 636.

²⁷ Vivaldi, Antonio. *Le quattro stagioni*. First edition, Michel-Charles Le Cène, ed. (Amsterdam, 1725).

Again, we can speculate as to whether Billoni might have heard Vivaldi's "Summer": it is possible, if not likely, as Billoni left Italy for Guadalajara in the mid 1730s, and is described as a composer firmly stepped "contemporary Italian musical styles, performance practices, repertoire, and teaching"²⁸. Even if he did not hear this particular concerto before he left for New Spain, he certainly would have been familiar with the great drama this type of violin writing would add to any text and the use of flurries of repeated notes across Italian composition. This effect was certainly passed down from Monteverdi, using a "violent instrumental effect derived from a single note held on one pitch"²⁹, known as a "pyrrhic measure" (a group of fast, repeated, equally-accented notes), such as we see here in Monteverdi's *Combattimento di Tancredo e Clorinda*. This is just a very small portion of this piece for reference, as the whole section is meant to elicit anger, disdain, and drama³⁰, filled with this repeated-note idea.

Example 28: Monteverdi, *Combattimento di Tancredo e Clorinda*, m.304-307³¹

The image shows a musical score for measures 304-307. The vocal line (T.) is in treble clef with a common time signature. The lyrics are: "ve - ce, d'en-tram - bi il fu-ror pu- gna! O che san- gui- gna e spa- zio- sa". The instrumental parts (VI., Vla., Vc., Cb., B. c.) are in various clefs and feature repeated-note patterns in the first two measures, transitioning to chords in the last two measures. Dynamics are marked p and f.

²⁸Davies, Drew Edward. "Billoni [Biyoni, Billonij, Villoni, Vioni], Santiago." *Grove Music Online*.

²⁹ Tarling, Judy. *The Weapons of Rhetoric — a Guide for Musicians and Audiences*. (Hertfordshire: Corda Music Publications, 2004), p. 174.

³⁰ Monteverdi, Claudio. Preface to *Madrigali guerrieri, et amorosi*. O. Strunk, ed., p. 158.

³¹ Monteverdi, Claudio. *Madrigali guerrieri, et amorosi*. Book 8. Philip Legge, ed. (Creative Commons Licence, 2009).

Indeed Billoni was steeped in this Italian style, and he demonstrates similar devices for heightened drama, although I would argue, with unique virtuosic elevation in the first violin line.

Within Billoni's Spanish Paraliturgical works, the final violinistic text painting I would like to highlight is in *Venid, pastorillos*. The opening ritornello features lombardic rhythms, but treated very differently from *¿Por qué, Pedro?*: instead of the slow lamenting feeling, these are in G Major, *Allegro*, and are later echoed by the tenor's entrance. This short aria is scored for tenor and alto, with the alto only joining in on the chorus "*Gloria in excelsis*". Billoni paints "*excelsis*" ("in the highest") in the violin I part in several different iterations of rising scales— first in sixteenth notes, separate bows (m. 33-36, example 29), and then with an exuberant slurred scale on the "*excelsis*" itself (m. 37 and 38, example 30).

Example 29: *Venid, pastorillos*, m. 33-35³²

33

Vn. 1

Vn. 2

A

T

[B.c.]

Glo- ria in ex- cel- sis, glo- ria in ex- cel- sis, glo- ria in ex- cel- sis, ex-

Glo- ria in ex- cel- sis, glo- ria in ex- cel- sis, glo- ria in ex- cel- sis, ex-

6 5 #4 2 6 5 4 2 6

³² Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 78.

Example 30: *Venid, pastorcillos*, m. 36-39³³

Billoni's surviving paraliturgical works not discussed here include arias for tenor- *Celeste aurora hermosa* and *En su concepción*, for soprano- *En silencioso calmo* and *De Joseph el imperio* and finally, *Oh, admirable sacramento*, scored for soprano, alto, tenor, and basso continuo. *Oh, admirable sacramento* does not have violin parts, so while it is a beautiful chorale-like homophonic setting, it is of less interest in this discussion. The other arias, while interesting in their own right, do not display particularly unusual violin lines, containing imitative passages between the violin parts, some melodic embellishment, heightened complexity in the violin lines towards final cadences, as we might expect in any *da capo* Italianate aria scored for these forces with similar composition dates. This is not to discount the beauty of these works, and to discourage performers from programming them, merely to point out that in the context of such incredible compositional richness, these works are less striking than the ones highlighted here in detail.

³³ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 78.

Chapter IV: In-Depth: Billoni’s Latin Liturgical Music

We return now to Billoni’s Latin liturgical music, looking at the violin writing specifically outside the “*Et Resurrexit*” examples discussed previously, beginning with his setting of Psalm 111, *Beatus Vir*. This Psalm features specific indications for pizzicato in the violin lines, and much of the Psalm setting requires virtuosic playing from the first violin, at times even resembling a violin concerto plus choir. In example 31 we see the opening measures set just for tenor and continuo, but on the words “*volet nimis*”, (“with exceeding willingness”), the full ensemble breaks in painting “exceeding” with exuberance in the first violin.

Example 31: *Beatus Vir*, m. 1-10¹

The musical score for Example 31, "Beatus Vir", measures 1-10, is presented in a multi-staff format. The tempo is marked "Moderato" and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes parts for Violin 1, Violin 2, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Basso ripieno, and Basso continuo. The Tenor part has the lyrics: "Be- a- tus vir qui ti- met Do- mi- num: in man-". The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) have the lyrics: "vo- let ni- mis, vo- let ni- mis, -da- tis e- jus vo- let, vo- let ni- mis,". The Basso continuo part includes figured bass notation: "6 5 3", "6 5 3", and "5 3".

¹ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 81.

This exuberant character persists in the violin I part, embellishing the homophonic vocal writing.

Example 32: *Beatus Vir*, violin I opening measures²

Musical score for violin I, measures 8-17. The tempo is marked *Moderato*. The score consists of four staves of music. Measure 8 is the starting point. The music features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals. Measure 17 ends with a fermata and a double bar line, with a '2' above it indicating a second ending.

Billoni paints the text of “mercy” in the phrase “pleasing is the man who shows mercy” with pizzicato accompaniment (*punteado* m. 55, then *con arco* m. 58), then returns to the violin I virtuosity.

Example 33: *Beatus Vir*, m. 52-59³

Musical score for violin I and vocal parts, measures 52-59. The score is in 3/4 time and features four staves: Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), Alto (A), and Bassoon (B.c.). Measures 52-55 show the violin parts with *punteado* (pizzicato) accompaniment. The vocal part (A) has the lyrics "Ju- cun- dus ho- mo". Measures 56-59 show the violin parts with *con arco* (arco) accompaniment. The vocal part (A) has the lyrics "qui mi- se- re- tur".

² Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), violin I, p. 23.

³ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 87.

Of additional note are the written-out lead-ins to tutti entrances after silence, which happen in three moments in this work. Perhaps in other composers we would expect these to be freely improvised, but Billoni has written them out specifically, such as the first of these, seen in example 34.

Example 34: *Beatus Vir*, m. 111-114⁴

The image shows a musical score for measures 111-114 of *Beatus Vir*. The score is arranged in a system with seven staves: Vn. 1, Vn. 2, S, A, T, B.r., and B.c. Measures 111 and 112 are marked with a large '111' at the beginning and contain rests for all parts. In measure 113, the Violin I part begins with a complex, rapid scale. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) enter with the lyrics 'i- ni- mi- cos su- os.' followed by 'Di- sper- sit, de- dit' in measure 114. The Bassoon and Bassoon/Contrabass parts provide harmonic support with specific chordal figures.

Billoni’s next Psalm setting features even more extravagant violin writing, in *Credidi propter* (Psalm 115), scored for oboe, trumpet, violinist, and soprano, alto, and tenor voices with continuo. The opening text statement does not yet include the winds: they enter on the words “*omnis homo mendax*” (that is, “every man is a liar”, in context of “I have believed therefore I have spoken; but I have been humbled exceedingly. I said in my excess: every man is a liar”), punctuated by a rising violin I scale (example 35). This leads into an extremely virtuosic ritornello, perhaps the most extreme demands of the player in Billoni’s surviving works, including flying staccato, double stops, and arpeggiated figures (example 36). This could be Billoni specifically painting the idea of “excess”, but could also be simply a chance to feature the violin I player, since this same ritornello music returns after the text “I will call upon the name of the Lord” in measure 61.

⁴ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 92.

Example 35: *Credidi Propter*, m. 6-7⁵

Example 36: *Credidi Propter*, m. 8-11⁶

This kind of articulation —staccato notes under a slur — is explained in Geminiani’s *Art of Playing on the Violin* as an unusual or “particular” way of playing a sequence of notes (example 37).

⁵ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 100.

⁶ *ibid*, p. 100.

Example 37: Geminiani, *Essempio XX*⁷



Although Geminiani's treatise was published just after Billoni left for the Americas, Cyr says "Geminiani's principles may be applied to most solo music in the Italian style belonging to the first half of the eighteenth-century"⁸, so would certainly apply here to Billoni's writing. We see flying staccato in other contemporary composers for special effect, or a special display of virtuosity, such as in Tartini's *The Art of Bowing*, see here the 32nd variation.

Example 38: Tartini, *L'arte del arco*, variation 32⁹

This device is certainly not new, although the effect was still novel: for example, Biber uses flying staccato extensively in the final section of the Sarabande of his "Beautification of the Virgin" from the *Mystery Sonatas*.

⁷ Geminiani, Francesco. *The Art of Playing on the Violin*, op. 9. (London: First Publication, 1751), p. 27.

⁸ Cyr, Mary. *Performing Baroque Music*. (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1998), p. 98.

⁹ Tartini, Giuseppe. *L'arte del arco*. (Paris: Leclair, 1758), p. 13.

Example 39: Biber, Mystery Sonatas, no. 15 final section¹⁰



Billoni utilizes several other striking compositional devices in this work: he paints death, from “in the death of His Saints” with moments of silence with fermatas, and tutti repetitions of the word *mors* in all parts (example 40).

¹⁰ Biber, Heinrich Ignaz Franz. *Rosenkranzsonaten*. (Manuscript, c. 1678), p. 76.

Example 40: *Credidi Propter*, m.35-39¹¹

The image displays a musical score for Example 40, *Credidi Propter*, measures 35-39. The score is arranged in two systems. The left system (measures 35-36) features vocal lines with lyrics: "spe-ctu Do-mi-ni mors," and "in con-spe-ctu Do-mi-ni mors,". The right system (measures 37-39) features vocal lines with lyrics: "mors, mors san-cto-rum e-jus." and instrumental accompaniment with figured bass notation (6, 5, 4, 4, #).

Billoni uses similar pizzicato and arco alternations as seen in *Beatus Vir*; including an indication for the continuo to also play pizzicato, and a second iteration of the elaborate first violin ritornello, as mentioned previously. He closes with a grand fugue marked “*Prestissimo e forte*”, where the instruments support the vocal lines, at times doubling the fugal entries, at times adding harmonic texture.

Billoni’s only surviving instrumental work, *Fabordones*, features three treble lines, with the option of oboe or third violin for the bottom stave. In Davies’ edition, he has added the *Dixit Dominus* chant between instrumental verses. These “*fabordones*” or orchestral versos were typically a set of six to twelve short contrasting pieces, used to “augment the intonation of the psalms by alternating chant and

¹¹ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 104-15.

orchestral verses"¹², typically maintaining the melodic contour of the corresponding psalm verse, much in the same manner as an organist would improvise between psalm verses.

All sections are set in A Major, but with highly contrasting tempos and characters. Each features a pause between sections, with at least a beat of silence with added fermata. As we expect with Billoni's writing, the first violin part is the most elaborate, but all parts have their difficulty, especially in the fugal movements. Billoni also enters adventurous harmonic territory, in the second section, Presto, moving from F-sharp Major to G-sharp minor (example 41):

Example 41: *Fabordones*, m. 42-53¹³

All of the rest of the sections feature fugal entrances, with the continuo playing the downbeat and the first violin beginning fugal material just after (with one exception, m. 113 section begins with first violin alone, and the fugal entrances pass through all voices until continuo makes the final entry six measures later). These *Fabordones* feature the most equal writing between the parts in terms of difficulty, compared to Billoni's other works, with small exceptions in measures 103-105 where the first violin has a sequence of slurred rising figures (example 42).

¹² Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. xv.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 116.

Example 42: *Fabordones*, m.102-110¹⁴

The image displays a musical score for Example 42, *Fabordones*, measures 102-110. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features four staves: Violin 1 (Vn. 1), Violin 2 (Vn. 2), Oboe (Ob.) or Violin (Vn.), and Bassoon/Contrabassoon (B.c.). Measures 102-104 show the beginning of the piece with a fugal entry in the voices and imitative violin entries. Measures 105-110 continue the fugal texture with various instrumental entries and imitations.

We next move to another Psalm setting: 121, *Laetatus Sum*. The opening features fugal voice entries in one-measure units, and imitative violin entries in half bar units, but perhaps the most interesting from a violinist compositional point of view comes in measure four and following: the voices sing homophonically, with written-out violin I lead-ins to each new entry, as we have seen in other works. The text does not seem to specifically evoke this virtuosity (“our feet”... “were standing”... “in Thy courts”... “O Jerusalem”), so perhaps this is just a joyful musical setting meant to fit the overall *affect*.

¹⁴ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 119.

part and steady eighth notes in the continuo. Billoni also chooses to repeat certain texts four times, each time with violin interjections, “*et abundantia*” (“in abundance”) in example 45, “*in turibus*” (“for those [that love Thee]”), and finally, “*amen*”.

Example 45: *Laetatus Sum*, m. 45-49¹⁷

Lauda Jerusalem, Psalm 147, has the most consistently elaborate, active violin I part of Billoni’s Psalm settings, including all elements mentioned thus far: written-out lead-ins to homophonic choral entries, virtuosic ritornello passages featuring thirty-second note arpeggiated figurations, flying staccato, and double stops. In many passages, it seems as if Billoni adds silence between choral entries just so the violinist can elaborate to text paint, such as in: “*qui emittit, eloquium, suum terrae: velociter currit sermo ejus*” that is: “He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: and his word runneth very swiftly”. The violin line certainly suggests swift running here, measures 17 and following.

¹⁷ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 134-135.

Example 46: *Lauda Jerusalem*, m. 17-22¹⁸

One additional element makes this Psalm unique: the second violin has some of the virtuosity of the first, especially in the ritornello that begins in measure 29. The first and second trade off some of the flying staccato for a few measures, seen in example 47.

¹⁸ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 146-147.

Example 47: *Lauda Jerusalem*, violin lines, m.29-34¹⁹

The image displays three systems of musical notation for violin parts, labeled Vn. 1 and Vn. 2. The first system covers measures 29-30, the second system covers measures 31-32, and the third system covers measures 33-34. The music is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first violin part (Vn. 1) features complex rhythmic patterns, including slurred triplets and thirty-second notes, particularly in measures 29, 31, and 33. The second violin part (Vn. 2) provides a more steady accompaniment with various rhythmic values.

Although there is no record of which violinist played second, from the cathedral rosters, this line would have been played by either Francisco de Arguello, hired in 1742, or Don Santiago María Viani, hired in 1741²⁰. (For violinists hired after 1800, cathedral archives specifically list “violin II”.) Nonetheless this player must have been able to execute this bow stroke, or learned the technique from Billoni. Billoni seems to be using flying staccato to paint the upcoming text, which refers to flinging ice, or “morsels of ice” (hail), before then discussing God’s grace melting the ice and scattering the frost, with slurred passages of triplets and thirty-second notes.

Billoni sets Psalm 116, *Laudate Dominum*, in a slightly less virtuosic way when compared with *Lauda Jerusalem*, but certainly consistent with the rest of his writing. There are several ritornello sections with strong technical demands of the first violinist, including sixteenth note figures that reach a high G above the staff, and running slurred thirty-second note figures. Perhaps of unique interest in this work is Billoni’s use of imitation between the soprano and the violins, from the opening of “*Gloria Patri*

¹⁹ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 148-149.

²⁰ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), Appendix 1.2.

et Filio” sung in measure 23 (example 48), and echoed in the violin in the opposition direction in the ritornello beginning in measure 32 (example 49).

Example 48: *Laudate Dominum*, soprano m.23-27²¹

s
 Glo-ria Pa-tri, et Fi-lio, et Spi-ri-tu-i San-

Example 49: *Laudate Dominum*, violin I m. 32-36²²

Vn. I

Billoni’s final surviving work for Vespers includes an F Major setting of the *Magnificat*, scored with his typical two violins, soprano, alto, tenor, and continuo. The same types of compositional devices as seen in previous works help punctuate the text, which are mostly set homophonically, with violin I flourishes such as in places like “*cordis sui*” (“their heart”).

Example 50: *Magnificat*, m. 42-44²³

Vn. 1
 Vn. 2
 S
 A
 T
 B. I.
 B. C.

su- i, cor-dis, cor-dis su- i.
 su- i, cor- dis su- i.
 su- i, cor-dis su- i.
 su- i, cor-dis su- i.

²¹ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 163.

²² *Ibid*, p. 163.

²³ *ibid*, p. 173.

Billoni also writes an F Major arpeggio in thirty-second notes for the first violin between choral entries, at measure 13 after the phrase “*ecce enim ex hoc*” (“for behold, from henceforth”), and again seen here in measure 71 after the phrase “*est ad patres*” (“to our fathers”). Since neither of these phrases suggests a particular text-painting reason for Billoni’s choice, perhaps he simply wanted a beautiful, virtuosic first violin moment.

Example 51: *Magnificat*: soprano and violin lines, m.70-72²⁴

The final section, *Gloria Patri et Filio* changes meters to 2/4 and features more simple violin writing, a small fugal section for “*Sicut erat in principio*”, and closes with the final *amen*, without any additional violin flourishes.

Of Billoni’s Marian Hymns and Antiphons, three are set for voices and continuo only, and one with trumpet, voices and continuo (*Salve Regina* in B-flat Major). The trumpet in this work joins all tutti vocal moments, but does not play any solo instrumental role, such as ritornello passages. While these works are complex and worth studying in more detail, they are of less interest from the violinistic perspective, so we will move to the *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetiae*, scored for two violins, soprano, alto, tenor, and continuo, as is the most typical instrumentation in Billoni’s surviving works.

Set in C minor, this Lamentation has a striking vocal written-out ornament for the soprano, in measure 4 on the word “*sola*” (“alone/lonely”): this is something we have seen more typically in the violin writing rather than the vocal lines.

²⁴ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p 178.

Example 52: *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetiae*, m. 4, soprano and continuo²⁵



While Billoni’s ornament is a bit more florid, we see similar writing in Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco’s *Lamentación*, written much earlier, scored for double choir: the soprano in choir one has a written-out ornament on the word “lamentation” in measure 8.

Example 53: Torrejón y Velasco, *Lamentación*, tiple choir 1, m. 8-10²⁶



As fits the text, Billoni’s violin writing is rather plain, supporting the harmony during the vocal lines with repeated eighth notes, and with small ritornello sections with relatively simple sixteenth-note passages in the first violin (relative compared to the rest of Billoni’s writing). This is primarily written for solo soprano, with tutti entrances on the words “*omnes amici ejus spreverunt eam*” (“all her friends have dealt treacherously with her”), and “*omnes persecutores ejus, apprehenderunt eam inter angustais*” (“her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress”). Here Billoni uses something completely unique from his other works: after the word “distress”, he writes four instrumental quarter notes with dots, silence with a fermata, and three more before “*DALETH*” begins. This is an extremely striking moment:

²⁵ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 192.

²⁶ Tomás de, Torrejón y Velasco. *Lamentación*. Samuel Claro, ed. (Santiago: Ediciones de la Universidad de Chile, 1974), p. 165.

Example 54: *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetiae*, m. 423-47²⁷

Though throughout much of the work, Billoni's violin writing is unobtrusive and relatively simple, he does include one marvelous ritornello at the end of the opening *Grave* section with a kind-of weeping rhythm or written-out *Schleifer*. (Example 55 taken from the violin part shows the textural change where the ritornello begins in measure 57; the voice re-enters in measure 60 with "HE".)

Example 55: *Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetiae*, violin I, m. 55-60²⁸

This type of ornament was certainly a well-known compositional device, described as early as in 1659 by Christopher Simpson²⁹, when rising from the third below as "elevation", and falling from the third above

²⁷ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p 196-197.

²⁸ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), violin I, p. 47.

²⁹ Table of graces written by Charles Coleman, found in Christopher Simpson's *Division Violist*.

a “double-backfall”³⁰ seen here notated with ornamentation symbol then written out (“exp:”) at the end of the first line and at the beginning of the second.

Example 56: Simpson: “Elevation” and “Double-backfall” ornaments³¹



Billoni follows this with a *Subito Allegro* section, with fugal voice entries and back to the more simple violin writing for a very short section, immediately returning to the *Grave* feel with the words “*quia Dominus locuras est*” (“for the Lord has made her [Jerusalem] suffer”). The work closes in the same character, with homophonic choral writing and simple violin chordal arpeggiation in eighth notes.

Billoni sets Psalm 50, *Miserere mei, Deus*, a Psalm of the lament of David after having sinned, in a series of contrasting sections, interspersed with chant. This work is uniquely scored for two violins, three solo voices: soprano, alto, and tenor, and two ripieno voices: soprano and tenor, plus basso continuo. As fits the opening text of this Psalm, Billoni marks “*despacio*” through the words “against you only I have sinned, and I have done evil before your eyes. And so, you are justified in your words...”, but just before the words having to do with judgment, Billoni launches into an *Allegro* section with a flurry of first violin notes:

³⁰ Simpson, Christopher. *The Division Violist, or An Introduction to the Playing upon a Ground*. (London: William Godbid, 1659), p. 9.

³¹ *ibid*, p. 9.

Example 58: *Misereri mei, Deus*, m. 106-112³³

Finally, Billoni's last surviving work for Holy Week is *Veni sancte spiritus*. He repeatedly uses a triplet rhythmic motif, uncharacteristically doubled in the voice and with both violin parts, violins in unison, an octave above the voice.

Example 59: *Veni sancte spiritus*, violin and soprano lines, m. 1-2³⁴

Billoni repeats this motive over twenty times in the piece in this type of doubling, either with the violins an octave above, or in direct unison. He also expands this rhythmic motive in the ritornello sections too. Perhaps this doubling was necessary to support a particularly weak soprano, or perhaps it was simply a texture choice which offers variety from the other types of his writings, but it certainly gives cohesion to the work.

³³ Davies, Drew Edward, ed. *Complete Works of Santiago Billoni*. (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2011), p. 214-215.

³⁴ *ibid*, p. 216.

This concludes Billoni's surviving works outside of his four complete Mass settings. Each "*Et Resurrexit*" moment analyzed at the beginning of this section highlights some of the differences between each Mass setting, and within the two scored for violins plus voices (Mass in B-flat Major and Mass in C Minor), this pivotal moment in the text is some of the most striking writing in each work. Billoni's other two masses: Mass in F Major and Mass in G Major are both scored for soprano, alto, tenor, and basso continuo, without violins, so they are best addressed in another setting.

Chapter V: *Al final: Concluding Thoughts*

Santiago Billoni's music left a significant impact on the musical landscape of the Durango Cathedral. We have seen that he was a composer well-steeped in the Italianate musical tradition, showing both the utilization of violin compositional devices put forth by Corelli, Vivaldi and contemporaries, especially in moments of heightened drama, and expanding these devices to unique virtuosity. Whereas other contemporary composers (such as Corelli) were less specific about their ornamentation, Billoni's specific and complete notation gives us remarkably florid violin lines. Billoni's twenty surviving works show "the transference of a serious, violin-dominated, Roman style of composition to Durango"¹ and remarkably creative, uniquely demanding violin lines throughout.

My biggest lament in discovering Billoni's works is that of his compositional output, only twenty manuscripts remain. That these twenty survive is largely thanks to Billoni's widow: in 1763, she wrote the chapel offering to sell his manuscripts, calling him as one "of the most intelligent musicians"², with which the cathedral seems to have agreed, as they purchased Billoni's music.³ Additionally, we can be thankful that the Durango cathedral invested in copying Billoni's music in 1753 onto better paper, when Joseph Nieto copied a large quantity of the "most exquisite music", as some of the original manuscripts were damaged or mistreated.⁴ Billoni's sole surviving instrumental-only work are the *Fabordones* discussed beginning on page 48. As mentioned on page 23, Don Miguel de Berrio y Zaldivar's collection of musical scores which included multiple solos and divertimenti by Billoni is, sadly, now lost.

Davies' publication of Billoni's complete works in 2011 is an invaluable resource and makes this music accessible for performers, with beautiful clear notation, texts, and translations. It is my hope that this document helps further the interest in Billoni's music, not just from the perspective of performing the

¹ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 486.

² *ibid*, p. 40.

³ "El Señor chantre propusiese la compra de unos papeles de música que vendía la mujer de Don Santiago Billoni, maestro de capilla, que fue de esta santa iglesia sobre que resolvió, se reconociera por los músicos más inteligentes, y si estaba buena, se comprase."

⁴ Davies, Drew Edward. *The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 2006), p. 147.

uniquely virtuosic first violin part, but especially to bring this music to new ears. I believe that this music deserves to be included in the “canon” of baroque masterworks, as it is not only of specific interest within Latin American repertoire, but across baroque repertoire at large. His use of the first violin line specifically for text painting, *affect*, special effects, and to create texture in through a wide variety of writing is exciting not just for the performing violinist, but also his compositions are unique among his contemporaries, European or otherwise, and an incredible discovery.

Although, as we have seen, Billoni writes from a well-rounded understanding of Italian aesthetics and founded in Italian violin pedagogy, based on my time spent studying and now performing this music, I argue that his music brings a unique sense of the possibilities for text painting, especially through the violin lines. Billoni’s meticulous detail in writing out specific ornamental figures, his technical demands of the first violinist (and at times in the second part), and his varied use of violinistic techniques, such as flying staccato, pizzicato, running arpeggios, double stops, and extreme choices of key signature, all make his music richly expressive. Although I have primarily focused on Billoni’s violin writing, in his surviving works we see music that is deeply related to the text *affect* and music that explores all possibilities for expression. It is interesting to contemplate whether Billoni would have written in a similar manner if he had been in Europe surrounded by his peers, rather than in the more remote Durango Cathedral. I think perhaps the sense of musical independence found in New Spain allowed Billoni to explore musical freedom to greater extremes. Especially since he was playing the first violin part himself, in the works scored for two violins and singers, we see a unique use of the first violin part to drive the music forward, either to react to or preempt the upcoming text, or to richly paint *affect* with the singers.

The recent rediscovery of Billoni’s music paints a more complex picture of cathedral music in New Spain, and not only adds to the richness of the repertoire from this region, but I argue that he adds a unique voice to the baroque music repertory as a whole. I look forward to his music being explored more fully, both through performance and research, and I am eager to continue to program and explore Billoni’s music, bringing these sounds from the northern frontier of New Spain some 260 years ago to contemporary ears.

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