

LUIGI BOCCHERINI

STABAT MATER

in F minor

G 532

for Soprano, 2 Violins, Viola,
Violoncello and Basso

Edited by

LUCA LÉVI SALA

LUIGI BOCCHERINI

OPERA OMNIA

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PREFACE

As is well known, the sacred *œuvre* of Luigi Boccherini (Lucca 1743 – Madrid 1805) is scanty. The most representative work is the *Stabat Mater* (G 532), certainly one of the most familiar vocal compositions even to non-specialized audiences. Two versions were written, in different periods and contexts: the first, for soprano and strings with cello obbligato, was composed in all probability in 1781 (on the basis of the available information), while Boccherini was in the service of the Spanish Infanta; twenty years later the composer arranged it in a new version for three voices, two sopranos and a tenor, that carries the opus number 61 (1801)¹, and of which the textual history is complex, in that it consists of 13 sources, both manuscripts and printed editions, which survive in as many as 59 examples. On the other hand, only a single source is known for the first version: **Wa1**, the manuscript *unicus et vetustissimus* M. 2103.3 B65, preserved in the Library of Congress in Washington (RISM A/II 142.105)².

Not mentioned in any of the early relevant autograph catalogues of Boccherini, nor in Baillot, nor in Boccherini y Calonje, the present manuscript belonged to the collection of Louis Piquot³, and was listed in the works-catalogue of Leo Liepmannsohn, from whom it was acquired in auction by the Library of Congress in 1922. Considered until now as autograph, recent studies⁴ refute its autography and its dating to 1781, hitherto assigned. Well preserved in condition and in the legibility of the text, M. 2103.3 B65 was transcribed between the years 1783 and 1786 by Antonio Lázaro y Moreno, a copyist in the House of Osuna-Benavente (in whose service Boccherini was engaged between 1786 and 1787), probably for a private performance, as the codex characteristics tend to indicate. Laid out in 6 separate parts (Voice, Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello and Bass), the text was written on Spanish Ramon Romaní paper (21.2 x 30.3 cm.). The frontispiece, carrying no opus number, and appearing only on the Bass part, reads as follows:

Año de 1781. | Baxo: | Stabat, Mater: | à solo | Con Viol.s Viola, i Violon, Obligado | Del | Sig.r d.n Luigi; Boccherini.

As is the case with numerous other works that Boccherini revised and rearranged towards the end of the 1790s, the *Stabat Mater* Op. 61 includes noteworthy changes to the first version here presented, owing to the requirements both of an emerging publishing market and of the patrons by whom he was employed. Other than the more obvious modifications — for example the insertion of an introductory instrumental movement, arranged from the third movement of the Symphony Op. 35 no. 4 (1782, G 512) —, the overall structure of the work, in comparison with the original version, was changed significantly with respect to tessitura, dynamics and rhythmic structure; and the «obbligato» function of the cello in the first version was changed to a ‘collective’ harmonization by the strings, altering the choral and orchestral texture of the work.

LUCA LÉVI SALA
Translation: Warwick Lister

¹ Cfr. SALA, Luca Lévi. ‘Le *Stabat Mater* Op. 61 (1801) de Luigi Boccherini: genèse et état des sources’, in: *Revue de Musicologie*, c/2 (2014), pp. 323–356.

² «Stabat Mater, e solo, con violi. viola e violon obbligado.» – cote: M. 2103.3 B65 (Case) <<http://lcn.loc.gov/unk85067095>>. See GÉRARD, Yves. *Thematic, Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini*, under the auspices of Germaine de Rothschild, translated by Andreas Mayor, London–New York, Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 611.

³ *Piquot, Louis. Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Luigi Boccherini, suivie du catalogue raisonné des toutes ses œuvres, tant publiées qu’inédites*, Paris, «Philipp» [=Camille Philipp], 1851.

⁴ See SALA, Luca Lévi. ‘Le *Stabat Mater* (1781) de Luigi Boccherini: nouveaux témoignages sur le manuscrit M. 2103.3 B 65 de la Bibliothèque du Congrès de Washington’, in: *Boccherini Studies: New Evidence*, edited by Christian Speck, Bologna, Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2014 (BS, 4), pp. 95–117.