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WARSZAWA

Efforts to Recruit a New *Maestro di Cappella* for the Polish Royal Ensemble in Light of Sigismund III Vasa's Letters from 1623–24 (the cases of Stefano Landi, Claudio Monteverdi and Giovanni Francesco Anerio)

ABSTRACT This article examines the efforts of King Sigismund III of Poland to appoint a new *maestro di cappella* to the royal chapel during the final months of A. Pacelli's life and following his death on 4 May 1623. It considers the unsuccessful attempts to recruit S. Landi and, subsequently, C. Monteverdi to the Polish royal court, as well as the successful engagement of G.F. Anerio. Two letters from Sigismund III to his secretary R. Salomoni which have not previously been studied by musicologists, shed important new light on the negotiations with Monteverdi.

KEYWORDS Sigismund III Vasa, Polish royal chapel, Giovanni Francesco Anerio, Stefano Landi, Claudio Monteverdi, Asprilio Pacelli, Ruggiero Salomoni, Antonio Taroni

ABSTRAKT Starania o pozyskanie nowego *maestro di cappella* do polskiej kapeli królewskiej w świetle listów Zygmunta III Wazy z lat 1623–24 dotyczących Stefana Landiego, Claudia Monteverdiego i Giovanniego Francesca Aneria. W artykule przedstawione są zabiegi króla Polski Zygmunta III o powołanie nowego kapelmistrza w ostatnich miesiącach życia i po śmierci A. Pacellego (zm. 4 V 1623). Chodzi o bezowocne starania o sprowadzenie na polski dwór królewski S. Landiego, a następnie C. Monteverdiego oraz o pozyskanie G.F. Aneria. Nowe światło na negocjacje z Monteverdim rzucają dwa niewykorzystywane dotąd przez muzykologów listy Zygmunta III do R. Salomoniego.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE Zygmunt III Waza, polska kapela królewska, Giovanni Francesco Anerio, Stefano Landi, Claudio Monteverdi, Asprilio Pacelli, Ruggiero Salomoni, Antonio Taroni

In 1896, Giorgio Sommi Picenardi published a serialized article in the *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* entitled “Claudio Monteverdi a Cremona”, in which he included a report by Giuseppe Bresciani (1589/1599–1670), written while Monteverdi was serving as *maestro di cappella* in Venice. In it, he noted that the king of Poland and other prominent figures of the time wished to engage Monteverdi in their service, but the composer, already advanced in age, was unwilling to undertake such a long journey.¹ This first known printed source concerning efforts to recruit Monteverdi for the Polish royal court was highlighted by Paolo Fabbri. In his 1982 article, Fabbri edited the relevant passage based on a manuscript preserved in the Biblioteca Statale di Cremona, also reinstating the minor sections that Sommi Picenardi had arbitrarily omitted.² Fabbri dated the report within a fairly broad timeframe, between 1625 and 1638,³ thus encompassing the reign of Sigismund III Vasa in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (until 1632) and that of his son Władysław Zygmunt (as Ladislaus IV). He concluded that the efforts to engage Monteverdi were undertaken by Władysław Zygmunt, either as crown prince or as king (which would place the attempts after 1632), following direct contacts with the composer during the prince’s visit to Venice in March 1625.⁴ In doing so, Fabbri aligned with the view of Denis Stevens.⁵ Fabbri maintained this position in his subsequent publications, and it was a stance followed by Polish musicologists into

- 1 Giorgio Sommi Picenardi, “Claudio Monteverdi a Cremona”, *Gazzetta Musicale di Milano* 51 (1896) no. 2, p. 518.
- 2 Paolo Fabbri, “Il soggiorno veneziano di Ladislao principe di Polonia: Un incontro con Claudio Monteverdi”, *Subsidia Musica Veneta* 3 (1982), pp. 27–52; on pp. 37–38, edited text of the source (with added diacritics and punctuation): “Dopo la morte di essa Altezza Serenissima [Vincenzo Gonzaga, Monteverdi] fu dall’eccellentissima Repubblica di Venetia addimandato, dove là andato hebbe carico di Mastro di Capella della Signoria in santo Marco, dove al presente là vive con suo grandissimo honore, essendo per le sue virtuose attioni molto amato e riverito da tutti è statto dal Serenissimo Re di Polonia et altri Signori grandi addimandato al servitio loro, ma essendo egli in età, non ha volsuto allontanarsi”.
- 3 The basis for determining this range was the fact that Bresciani, in his report, listed only those madrigal books by Monteverdi that were known to him at the time – that is, those published before he wrote the account. The last of these was Book VII, published in 1619. Consequently, the upper limit of the range is the year of publication of Book VIII (1638), while Fabbri set the lower limit at 1625, the year in which Crown Prince Władysław Zygmunt met Monteverdi. Without taking this into account, the possible range would have covered the years 1619–38.
- 4 P. Fabbri, “Il soggiorno”, pp. 37–38; on p. 37, the explicit statement: “Ladislaò cercò di assicurarsi proprio Monteverdi, che rifiutò di trasferirsi alla corte polacca causa l’età ormai avanzata” (“Władysław sought to secure Monteverdi himself, who refused to move to the Polish court due to his advanced age”).
- 5 Denis Stevens writes that in March 1624 (!) the “Polish monarch” visited Venice, and mistakenly identifies him not as Władysław Zygmunt but as Sigismund III, “who tempted Monteverdi but failed to entice him to Warsaw”. See *The Letters of Claudio Monteverdi*, transl. and introd. Denis Stevens, revised edition, Oxford 1995, p. 288.

the early twenty-first century.⁶ Consequently, the information provided in the 1949 edition of Adolf Chybiński's *Słownik muzyków polskich* under the entry "Anerio, Giovanni Francesco" – namely, that Sigismund III had unsuccessfully sought Monteverdi's services in 1623, which led to Anerio's appointment as *maestro di cappella*⁷ – was largely overlooked. The only basis for this claim was a reference in Jan Józef Dunicz's study on Adam Jarzębski to a now-lost article by Kazimierz Tyszkowski, reportedly titled "Starania Zygmunta III o pozyskanie Cl. Monteverdiego i Giov. Fr. Aneria do kapeli król. w Warszawie (1623)" [Sigismund III's efforts to recruit C. Monteverdi and G.F. Anerio for the royal chapel in Warsaw (1623)].⁸ Following Chybiński, a similar notice was published in 1953 by Hellmut Federhofer,⁹ and, subsequently, in Liliana Pannella's entry in the third volume of the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (1961).¹⁰ For the next forty years, Sigismund III's efforts to recruit Monteverdi were not mentioned in either Polish or international dictionaries and encyclopaedias. Tyszkowski's non-extant article was cited only in 1997 by Anna and Zygmunt Szweykowski in their book *Włosi w kapeli królewskiej polskich Wazów* [Italians in the chapel royal of the Polish Vasa kings], where they discussed the Polish court's efforts to engage Monteverdi. While presenting Bresciani's report in the original Italian (following Paolo Fabbri) and in Polish translation, the authors generally accepted the Italian musicologist's conclusions.¹¹

6 As in Paolo Fabbri, *Monteverdi*, transl. Tim Carter, Cambridge 1994, p. 193; Paolo Fabbri, "Monteverdi (Monteverde), Claudio", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 76, Rome 2012, p. 187 (also online, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/claudio-gian-antonio-monteverdi_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/claudio-gian-antonio-monteverdi_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed 6 February 2026). In Polish literature: Zofia Dobrzańska-Fabiańska, "Monteverdi, Claudio", in: *Encyklopedia muzyczna PWM* [PWM Music Encyclopaedia], ed. Elżbieta Dziębowska, vol. 6, Kraków 2000, p. 348 (also online: <https://polskabibliotekamuzyczna.pl/encyklpedia/monteverdi-claudio/>, accessed 6 February 2026); Anna Szweyková and Zygmunt M. Szweykowski, *Włosi w kapeli królewskiej polskich Wazów* [Italians in the chapel royal of the Polish Vasa kings], Kraków 1997, pp. 80–82; Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarminińska, *Muzyczne dwory polskich Wazów* [Musical courts of the Polish Vasas], Warsaw 2007, pp. 55, 72.

7 "Anerio, Giovanni Francesco", in: Adolf Chybiński, *Słownik muzyków dawnej Polski do roku 1800* [Dictionary of musicians of Old Poland up to 1800], Kraków 1949, p. 3.

8 Jan Józef Dunicz, *Adam Jarzębski i jego "Canzoni e concerti" (1627)* [Adam Jarzębski and his *Canzoni e concerti* (1627)], Lviv 1938, p. 18. It can be added that, according to Dunicz's bibliographical description, Tyszkowski's article was intended for publication in the *Polski Rocznik Muzykologiczny* 3 (1937), though – as we know – that never happened. On the reasons for the delay in printing and the circumstances of the destruction of the typeset by the Bolsheviks, see Małgorzata Sieradz, *The Beginnings of Polish Musicology*, transl. Lindsay Davidson, Berlin 2020 (= Eastern European Studies in Musicology 20), pp. 341–46.

9 Hellmut Federhofer, "Nochmals zur Biographie von Giovanni Francesco Anerio", *Die Musikforschung* 6 (1953) no. 4, pp. 346–47.

10 Liliana Pannella, "Anerio, Giovanni Francesco", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 3, Rome 1961, p. 176 (also online, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-francesco-anerio_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-francesco-anerio_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed 26 February 2026).

11 A. Szweyková, Z.M. Szweykowski, *Włosi*, p. 82.

A new perspective was offered by Tim Carter in the 2001 edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* under the entry “Monteverdi, Claudio”, and by Silke Leopold in the 2004 volume of *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. In section 3, “Venice”, Carter wrote regarding Monteverdi’s situation in the early 1620s:

Although he sought to give the impression of being happy in Venice – moving swiftly to dispel rumours in 1620 of a return to Mantua on the death of Santi Orlandi – Monteverdi was tempted by offers elsewhere. Indeed, he may still have hankered after a court appointment, for all his difficulties in Mantua. In July 1623 Antonio Taroni, a former Mantuan musician now in the service of King Sigismund III of Poland, noted that Monteverdi had differences of opinion with his employers (and, it seems, his colleagues) and offered him a salary of 1000 scudi plus other emoluments to move to Poland; Monteverdi went as far as to have Taroni write to Duke Ferdinando Gonzaga for permission for him to leave Italy. The Polish offer may have been repeated on the visit to Venice of Crown Prince Władisław Sigismund in March 1625: Monteverdi wrote a mass for his visit to S Marco and was involved in private music-making for the prince.¹²

Leopold, on the other hand, provided a less detailed account, omitting any potential involvement of the crown prince: “der polnische König Sigismund III. versuchte 1623, Monteverdi als Hofkpm. zu verpflichten und mit einem exorbitanten Gehaltsangebot nach Polen zu locken. Doch dieser zog es vor, in Venedig zu bleiben und seine wachsende internationale Reputation von der sicheren Position des Markuskpm. aus wahrzunehmen”.¹³ The authors, without citing a specific article in their bibliography as the source of the information, relied on the research of the American musicologist Susan Parisi and a document she discovered in the Archivio di Stato di Mantova (I-MAa, Archivio Gonzaga, busta 2761). Parisi presented this document at a conference held in Mantua on 21–24 October 1993, and subsequently published it in an article five years later.¹⁴ The document is a letter from Antonio Taroni to Duke Ferdinando Gonzaga, written in Mantua on 25 July 1623, which demonstrates that King Sigismund III had already undertaken efforts to recruit Monteverdi at that time (see further discussion below).

12 Tim Carter, Geoffrey Chew (here Tim Carter), “Monteverdi [Monteverde], Claudio”, in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, London 2001, vol. 17, p. 33 (also in *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.44352>, published online 2001). A similar summary can be found in Susan Levis, Maria Virginia Acuña, *Claudio Monteverdi: A Research and Information Guide*, New York 2018, pp. xxvi–xxvii.

13 Silke Leopold, “Monteverdi, Claudio”, in: *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd edition, ed. Ludwig Finscher, *Personenteil*, vol. 12, Kassel 2004, cols. 393–94 (also in *MGG Online*, <https://www-1mkg-2online-1com-16dgawagp027d.emedia1.bsb-muenchen.de/mgg/stable/532527>, accessed 14 February 2026).

14 See Susan Parisi, “New Documents Concerning Monteverdi’s Relations with the Gonzagas”, in: *Claudio Monteverdi: Studi e prospettive*, eds. Paola Besutti et al., Florence 1998, pp. 503–11 and the document reproduced between pp. 488–89.

The year 2009 brought the publication of a monumental study on the court of King Sigismund III by Austrian historian Walter Leitsch, in which the author mentions a letter from Sigismund III to Ruggiero Salomoni written in Warsaw on 15 December 1623 and preserved in a manuscript held by the National Ossolineum Library in Wrocław.¹⁵ Up to the Second World War, this manuscript had been kept in Lwów (Lviv), which is probably where Kazimierz Tyszkowski consulted it before he wrote his unpublished article on the king's attempts to bring Monteverdi and G.F. Anerio to his chapel. Leitsch does not examine Sigismund III's recruitment efforts of 1623 in detail, but he notes that they were unsuccessful in the case of Monteverdi and successful in that of Anerio. He also mentions the king's attempts, at the beginning of 1623, to engage Stefano Landi for his chapel.¹⁶

Now, in addition to the two sources mentioned above documenting Sigismund III's efforts in 1623 to recruit a new *maestro di cappella*, a letter not previously used in scholarly research can be added. This letter, again addressed to Ruggiero Salomoni in Venice and dated Warsaw, 16 April 1624, sheds important new light on the circumstances surrounding the failure of the negotiations with Monteverdi and the subsequent appointment of Anerio.¹⁷

For a proper interpretation of these three letters, it is important to identify the sender of the first letter and the addressee of the other two. The sender of the letter that fundamentally changed the musicological understanding of when Monteverdi was invited to join the Polish royal ensemble was Antonio Taroni, who signed himself as a servant of Sigismund III. This is certainly the same person mentioned by Monteverdi in a letter to Alessandro Striggio dated 13 June 1627: "tal Tarroni che conduce musica in Polonia". It was he from whom the recruited musician from Bologna fled to Venice instead of travelling to Poland.¹⁸ Taroni, who was born in Parma,¹⁹ was an alto singer who probably joined Sigismund III's chapel around 1601. The earliest documented evidence of his service dates from 18 March 1602, when he returned to Warsaw²⁰ with a group of musicians from Vilnius, although it is known

15 Wrocław, Narodowa Biblioteka Ossolineum (hereafter PL-WRzno), ms. 6245/II, p. 83 (fol. 31) and its verso. See Walter Leitsch, *Das Leben am Hof König Sigismunds III. von Polen*, Vienna 2009, vol. 2, p. 929.

16 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 2, p. 929.

17 Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie, Metryka Koronna, Księgi Poselstw = Libri Legationum (Crown Metric, Libri Legationum; hereafter PL-Wagad, MK, LL) 30, fol. 135v.

18 Claudio Monteverdi, *Lettere, dediche, e prefazioni*, ed. Domenico De' Paoli, Rome 1973, p. 256. See also *The Letters*, p. 333.

19 Taroni himself, in a letter addressed to King Christian IV of Denmark on 22 April 1604, signed his name in the Latinized form "Antonius Tarenus Parmensis" (Władysław Czapliński, "Przyczyny do dziejów mecenatu artystycznego Zygmunta III" [Contributions to the history of Sigismund III's artistic patronage], in: *Sarmatia Artistica: Księga pamiątkowa ku czci Profesora Władysława Tomkiewicza* [Sarmatia Artistica: Festschrift in honour of Professor Władysław Tomkiewicz], Warsaw 1968, p. 96).

20 Anna Szweykowska, "Przeobrażenia w kapeli królewskiej na przełomie XVI i XVII wieku" [Transformations in the royal chapel around the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries], *Muzyka* 13 (1968) no. 2, pp. 14–15.

that the court had already travelled to the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in 1601. He remained in the royal chapel until 1607. Aware of Taroni's plans to return to Italy, the papal nuncio Francesco Simonetta entrusted him with a letter addressed to Ranuccio I Farnese, Duke of Parma, dated in Kraków 26 August 1607.²¹ Shortly afterward, Taroni left the Commonwealth, most likely accompanying Zygmunt Gonzaga Myszkowski, the Grand Crown Marshal, on his journey to Italy.²² Taroni's whereabouts and activities over the next decade remain unknown. From at least 1618 until his death in December 1628, however, he served as Sigismund III's agent on various diplomatic missions, including the recruitment of musicians for the royal chapel.²³ For similar purposes, Emperor Ferdinand II (after 1619²⁴) and the emperor's brother Karl, bishop of Wrocław and Brixen (in the early 1620s²⁵), the king's brothers-in-law, also made use of his services. It is important not to confuse this Antonio Taroni, the royal agent, with another musician of the same name known as "Mantovano",²⁶ a composer and canon at the Basilica of St Barbara in Mantua who served the Gonzaga family and whose activity there is documented between 1594 and 1616.²⁷

21 *Documenta Polonica ex Archivo Parmensi*, part 2, eds. Walerian Meysztowicz and Wanda Wyhowska De Andreis, Rome 1970 (= Elementa ad Fontium Editiones 23), p. 10 (no. 198).

22 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "The Beginnings of Opera in the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania (1628–48)", in: *The Beginnings of Opera in Europe: Origins, Adaptations, and Cultural Exchange*, eds. Nastasia Heckendorff, Michael Klaper, Turnhout 2025 (= Music History and Performance: Practice in Context (HPP) 4), p. 159; Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Contatti musicali tra l'area padana e la Polonia nel primo Seicento: Il caso del cantante e agente Antonio Taroni", in: *Una città nella cultura europea: Mantova e la musica sacra tra Rinascimento e Barocco*, eds. Licia Mari, Maurizio Padoan, Mantova, forthcoming (= Gaude Barbara beata – Studi e Ricerche).

23 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Sources on the History of Music at the Courts of the Polish Vasas Preserved in the Skokloster Castle (Sweden)", in: *Studies on the Reception of Italian Music in Central-Eastern Europe in the 16th and 17th Century*, ed. Marina Toffetti, Kraków 2018, p. 125; Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Taroni, Antonio", in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish biographical dictionary], vol. 51/4, issue 215, Kraków 2019, pp. 550–51.

24 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 1, p. 333.

25 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Starania biskupa wrocławskiego Karola Habsburga o pozyskanie włoskich śpiewaków (1621–1622)" [The efforts made by Charles of Habsburg, Bishop of Wrocław, to recruit Italian singers, 1621–1622], *Res Facta Nova* 6 (2003) no. 15, pp. 127–34.

26 Ottavio Pitoni, *Notitia de' contrapuntisti e compositori di musica* [1713], ed. Cesarino Ruini, Firenze 1988 (= Studi e testi per la storia della musica 6), p. 235.

27 The two musicians are identified as the same person in Susan Helen Parisi, "Ducal Patronage of Music in Mantua, 1587–1627: An Archival Study", University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 1989 (PhD dissertation), vol. 2, pp. 503–7; Susan Parisi, "New Documents", pp. 503–4; Iain Fenlon, "Taroni Antonio [Taroni, Tarone], Antonio", in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, London 2001, vol. 25, p. 105 (based on this also in "Taroni Antonio", in: *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd edition, ed. Ludwig Finscher, *Personenteil*, vol. 16, Kassel 2006, cols. 515–16 (in both entries Taroni's stay in Poland in 1627 is mentioned, although Monteverdi's letter, which forms the basis for this information, does not explicitly state it); B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Taroni, Antonio". This view is refuted, based on previously unused Mantuan sources, by Licia Mari, "Taroni, Antonio", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 95 (2019), [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-taroni_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-taroni_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed 21 February 2026, and consequently by comparing the known facts of the biographies of the two Taronis (from Mantua and from Parma), as well as their surviving autographs; see B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Contatti".

The addressee of the two letters by Sigismund III under discussion here was Father Ruggiero Salomoni of Udine. He had come to the Polish royal court from Graz in 1592 together with the king's first wife, Archduchess Anna of Austria, in whose service he acted as chaplain. After the queen's death, in 1598, he remained in the Commonwealth, initially as chaplain to the queen's household (*fraucymer*),²⁸ and, by 1600 at the latest, as royal chaplain.²⁹ In 1602 he was appointed a canon of Warsaw,³⁰ and in 1604 also of Sandomierz.³¹ According to Leitsch, he was also involved in painting, sculpture and goldsmithing, pursuits in which Sigismund III took a keen interest.³² Around 1608, or slightly earlier, he became royal secretary.³³ With the king's support, Pope Paul V granted him a canonry in Aquileia in 1608.³⁴ Throughout the Commonwealth, Salomoni travelled with the court. He was almost certainly in Vilnius in 1601/1602 and returned there in June 1609 in connection with the Polish–Muscovite War (while travelling from Kraków, he stopped with the king in Sandomierz and presented the collegiate chapter with an ornate cope³⁵). He remained in Vilnius, together with the entire court, until 1611, when, after the Commonwealth army had captured Smolensk (on 13 June that year) and the victors had been ceremoniously welcomed into Vilnius (24 July), the court returned to Warsaw.³⁶ He was in Sweden in 1593/94, but most notably he made several trips to Italy on behalf of the king: besides the journey in 1600, he visited Venice in 1612 and other years, Rome in 1613

28 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 3, p. 2088.

29 As presented by Sigismund III in a safe-conduct letter for travel to Italy, dated Warsaw, 11 September 1600, Jagiellonian Library, ms. 11623 III: "Venerabilis Ruggerius Salomonius, capellanus noster".

30 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 3, p. 2089.

31 See Jan Wiśniewski, *Katalog prałatów i kanoników sandomierskich od 1186 do 1926 r., tudzież sesje kapituły sandomierskiej od 1581 do 1866 r.* [Catalogue of prelates and canons of Sandomierz from 1186 to 1926, as well as sessions of the Sandomierz chapter from 1581 to 1866], Radom 1926, p. 268 (here also noting that he died in 1630 and was succeeded by Piasecki; this refers to Stefan Piasecki, installed on 27 May 1630, see *ibid.*, p. 232).

32 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 1, pp. 610–11; vol. 3, p. 2087.

33 *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 2085. He still held this position in the 1620s. As a canon of Warsaw and Sandomierz and royal secretary, he is listed on the address page of the letter from Sigismund III dated 15 December 1623, mentioned above.

34 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 3, pp. 2089–90.

35 J. Wiśniewski, *Katalog*, p. 268.

36 Salomoni's stay in Vilnius is confirmed by his letter to Valerio Montelupi dated there 31 January 1610, see *Res Polonicae ex Archivo Mediceo Florentino*, part 2, eds. Walerian Meysztowicz and Wanda Wyhowska De Andreis, Rome 1972 (= *Elementa ad Fontium Editiones* 27), p. 317 (no. 349). Undoubtedly referring to him is Giovanni Luna, who in a letter written from the camp near Smolensk on 17 June 1610 to Alessandro Cilli in Vilnius, sent his respects "al Signor Don Rugiero", *ibid.*, p. 347 (no. 377). In the summer of 1611, at the request of Queen Constance, Salomoni designed in Vilnius two triumphal arches, which were erected in front of the gate of the Palace of the Grand Dukes (the gate itself was also inscribed with several figures and dicta) to commemorate Sigismund III's victory in Smolensk, after which he produced a description of the arches and a detailed explanation of their ideological and iconographic program. See Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Mscr.Dresd.G.258: "Dies triumphi in faustissimum reditum Serenissimi ac Invictissimi Domini D. Sigismundi Tertii Poloniae et Sueciae Regis de Smolensco ab ipsius Maiestate expugnato, Vilnae XXIV Iulii celebrata A.D. MDCXI", fols. 31–39v.

and 1614, Florence in 1615,³⁷ and Naples in 1617 and 1620–22.³⁸ He probably left the Commonwealth permanently in 1616. By 1619, it was reportedly widely believed that he was residing in Venice.³⁹ In Italy, as Sigismund III's secretary, he handled financial matters (including the transfer of funds such as papal subsidies), various diplomatic assignments, contacts with artists, and the procurement of furnishings and artworks for royal residences (sculptures, fireplaces, mirrors, and the like).⁴⁰

It is likely that Salomoni's frequent and prolonged absences from the court led to the confusion found in Polish sources from the second and third decades of the seventeenth century concerning the correct name of the canon and royal secretary. The Sandomierz canon Kasper Cichocki, in a book which took the form of a religious-political polemic and caused an international scandal,⁴¹ included short biographies of many contemporary landowners and clerics connected with the Sandomierz region, listing them by given name and surname. He made only one exception: Salomoni appears in the book as "Rodgerius", although Cichocki clearly treated this as a surname.⁴² The same confusion appears in a handwritten instruction dated June 1625 for Tobiasz Małachowski, a scholastic from Płock and royal secretary, who was travelling to Rome. The final point instructed the envoy to obtain papal permission for certain royal clerical secretaries to retain their church benefices: "Joanni Lipski, Stanislao Grochowski [...], Salomonio Rudgerio et Martino Starczewski".⁴³ Here too, the author of the instruction evidently believed that the surname was Rudgerius (Italian Ruggieri) and the given name was Salomon (Italian Salomone).

The efforts to bring Claudio Monteverdi to the Polish royal court – attested by the three letters discussed above, which are clearly only remnants of a much larger correspondence – were directly connected with the vacancy in the royal chapel caused by the death on 4 May 1623 of Asprilio Pacelli, who had served as *maestro di cappella* since 1602. It should be noted, however, that Sigismund III had most likely already begun considering the recruitment of a new Italian chapelmaster even while Pacelli was still alive. The reason was probably the incumbent's plan to return to Italy. Evidence of those intentions appears in a letter from Fulgentius a Monte Georgio, prior general of the Augustinian order, to Andreas Simonides, provincial of the order's Polish province, written in Rome on 27 April 1623. In it, the prior general reports that

37 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 3, pp. 2055, 2086, 2088.

38 PL-WRzno, ms. 6245/II, pp. 59–80 (fols. 22r–30v).

39 W. Leitsch, *Das Leben*, vol. 3, p. 2089.

40 Kazimierz Tyszkowski, "Przyczynki do historii stosunków artystycznych Polski z Włochami za Zygmunta III" [Contributions to the history of artistic relations between Poland and Italy under Sigismund III], *Dawna Sztuka* 1 (1938) no. 1, pp. 65–67.

41 Kasper Cichocki, *Alloquiorum Osiecensium sive variorum familiarium sermonum libri quinque*, Kraków 1615.

42 Ibid., p. 347.

43 PL-Wagad, MK, LL 31, fols. 108v–112r, here fol. 112r.

Pacelli has not arrived in Rome for Easter.⁴⁴ Although the contents of the provincial's reply are unknown, it seems clear that it must have announced Pacelli's planned visit to Rome for the Easter celebrations of 1623. It seems likely that, after more than twenty years in the Commonwealth, the musician – then over fifty – appears to have intended not only to settle his financial affairs⁴⁵ in his homeland but also to remain there permanently. It is in this context that we would interpret the letter sent by Sigismund III from Warsaw on 22 January 1623 to Cosimo de Torres – former papal nuncio to the Commonwealth (1621–22) and, since 9 September 1622, a cardinal vice-protector of Poland. In it, the king requested that Stefano Landi be brought to Warsaw:

We have been recommended the musical skill of Stefano Landi, who is currently residing in Rome, and we would very much wish to have him in the service of our chapel. We therefore ask that, should he show any reluctance to accept this condition, Your Eminence kindly instruct one of your household members to persuade him accordingly. As for the matters necessary for his journey, the honourable Giovanni Carbone,⁴⁶ a benefice holder at St Peter's Basilica, will take care of them.⁴⁷

The letter does not explicitly state that Stefano Landi was to be engaged as *maestro di cappella* of the royal chapel. Given his already substantial compositional output by that time and the letter's strong emphasis on his musical expertise, however, such an appointment seems far more likely than the intention to hire him merely as a singer. It should be noted, though, that Landi was admitted to the Cappella Sistina as a contralto in 1629 and – despite his growing renown as a composer – remained in that position until his death, in 1639.⁴⁸ No reply to Sigismund III's letter is known to

44 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Informacje ze źródeł augustiańskich o życiu muzycznym w warszawskim kościele św. Marcina w XVII wieku oraz o działających w tym czasie muzykach królewskich" [Information from Augustinian sources on musical life at St Martin's church in Warsaw in the seventeenth century and on musicians active at the royal court], *Muzyka* 65 (2020) no. 2, p. 37, <https://doi.org/10.36744/m.446>.

45 This suggestion is found in B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Informacje", pp. 38–39.

46 Fr. Giovanni Carbone, who was then residing in Rome as a benefice holder at St Peter's, participated in financial operations connected with the king of Poland's activities, including setting the salaries and paying the musicians recruited for the royal chapel. See B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Informacje", pp. 38–39; B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Sources", pp. 128–30.

47 Kraków, Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich – Oddział Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie, ms. 114 IV: Teka Naruszewicza [Naruszewicz Portfolio], vol. 114, fol. 1: Sigismundus III cardinali Cosimo de Torres, Varsaviae 22 I 1623: "Commendatur nobis peritia artis musicae Stephani Landi isthic Romae degentis, et cuperemus ipsum habere in servitiis capellae nostrae. Optamus itaque, ut si difficilior fuerit in acceptanda conditione ista, Ill^{ma} D^{tio} V^{ra} per aliquem ex suis domesticis hoc ipsi persuaderi faciat. Ea autem quibus pro hoc suo itinere indiguerit, honorabilis Ioannes Carbone, beneficiatus apud S. Petrum, providebit".

48 Tibor Tallián, "Archivdokumente über die Tätigkeit Stefano Landis in Rom in den Jahren 1624 bis 1639", *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 19 (1977) nos. 1–4, pp. 272, 276, 280; Arnaldo Morelli, "Landi, Stefano", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 63, Rome 2004, p. 408

survive, but it is clear that Landi never travelled to the Commonwealth. The king may have known that the musician's association with the household of Paolo Savelli, Prince of Albano, a general of the papal army and imperial ambassador in Rome, where he served as *maestro di cappella*,⁴⁹ was coming to an end in 1622, and therefore assumed that he might be looking for a new patron.⁵⁰ The offer from the Commonwealth, however, reached Rome at a moment when Landi's career was clearly on the rise and his position – both professional and financial – appeared secure. This was especially true after he entered the patronage of Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi, nephew of Pope Gregory XV. Although the exact date when this relationship began is unknown, it must have already been in place before Sigismund III's letter to Cosimo de Torres could have reached Rome (correspondence from Warsaw to Rome normally took over a month). Indeed, on 12 February 1623, Landi is recorded in the *Diari* of the Sistine Chapel as being in Ludovisi's service.⁵¹

The question of appointing a new *maestro di cappella* for the royal ensemble became urgent after Pacelli's death. News of the event reached Rome as early as June 1623,⁵² and it is likely that around the same time Sigismund III sent letters to his agents and to those who regularly handled Polish affairs in Italy, instructing them to search for a new chapelmaster. A now-lost letter on this matter was probably also dispatched to Cardinal de Torres in Rome, in keeping with established practice. The cardinal's possible involvement may explain why Giovanni Francesco Anerio was among the candidates. On this occasion, however, the king also used alternative channels in his search. He certainly turned to Venice, where his secretary, Canon Ruggiero Salomoni, was then residing, as confirmed by the two royal letters mentioned above. Judging from the letter of Antonio Taroni to Duke Ferdinando Gonzaga of Mantua, dated 25 July 1623 – the earliest known trace of these efforts – Sigismund III also enlisted the help of this former court musician and frequently employed agent. The surviving document does not allow us to determine conclusively whether Taroni was acting on behalf of the Polish king or of Monteverdi himself.

(online version, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/stefano-landi_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/stefano-landi_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed 21 February 2026).

49 Irene Fosi, "Savelli, Paolo", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 90, Rome 2017, pp. 784–85 (online version, [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/paolo-savelli_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/paolo-savelli_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed 21 February 2026).

50 Paolo Savelli was involved in the search for musicians for Bishop Karl Habsburg in 1621–22 and remained in contact with the agent Antonio Taroni (see B. Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Starania", pp. 131–32). Taroni may have passed information about Savelli's musicians on to Sigismund III.

51 T. Tallián, "Archivdokumente", p. 280.

52 This information was already known at a chapter meeting of St Peter's in the Vatican on 18 June 1623. See Giancarlo Rostirolla, "Musicisti Umbri nella Cappella Giulia di San Pietro in Vaticano dalle origini agli inizi del Seicento: Con nota sul magistro padovano di fra Rufino Cecchi Bartolucci di Assisi", in: *Arte e Musica in Umbria tra Cinquecento e Seicento: Atti del XII Convegno di Studi Umbri. Gubbio-Gualdo Tadino. 30 novembre – 2 dicembre 1979*, ed. Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università degli Studi di Perugia, Gubbio 1981, p. 141.

It should be recalled that the negotiations with Monteverdi took place in the context of the well-known anonymous accusation against him, showing his conflict with at least some of the musicians of St Mark's Basilica, and, if we believe the circumstances mentioned there regarding the feast of Saints Vitus and Modestus, 15 June 1623,⁵³ also with the authorities of the Republic, which may well have prompted the composer to consider leaving Venice. In the letter⁵⁴ discovered by Susan Parisi, Taroni informs Duke Gonzaga that, following the death of the previous chapelmaster, the king of Poland had instructed him to find a new *maestro di cappella*; that, while in Venice, he had met with Monteverdi and offered him, should he agree to enter royal service, a salary of 1,000 scudi per year plus additional benefits, and Monteverdi, who due to disagreements with the officials of the basilica did not care about remaining in the Republic's service, was inclined to accept the offer provided the duke granted him permission, which Taroni therefore humbly requests.

The content of the letter seems rather implausible and raises the suspicion of intrigue. It is not clear why Taroni would ask the duke of Mantua for permission for Monteverdi to leave, since the Gonzaga family had held no authority over their former *maestro di cappella* since the death of Vincenzo I Gonzaga, Ferdinand's father, more than a decade earlier. Susan Parisi's interpretation therefore appears plausible: Monteverdi was not seriously considering a move to the Polish court. Instead, following the humiliating negotiations with the Mantuan ruler of 1619–20 – when he had been offered a salary lower than the income he could expect in Venice and significantly lower than that offered to the singers⁵⁵ – the composer may simply have wanted to show the duke how highly he was valued by other rulers.⁵⁶ One may, however, take the interpretation a step further. Given Monteverdi's difficult situation in the Republic of St Mark at the time, as well as the recent improvement in his relations with the Duke of Mantua and his wife Caterina de' Medici (who were visiting Venice in April and May 1623⁵⁷), it is possible that the composer was indeed contemplating a return to Mantua. In this light, Taroni's letter could be seen as an attempt to flatter the duke's vanity and encourage him to offer Monteverdi a substantially higher salary should he agree to resume leadership of the Mantuan chapel. The duke's reply is unknown, but – as is well established – Monteverdi did not return to Mantua. A letter from Sigismund III to Ruggiero Salomoni, dated Warsaw, 15 December 1623, shows that, according to information available at the Polish court (most likely from about a month earlier, that is, early November 1623),

53 See Jonathan Glixon, "Was Monteverdi a Traitor?", *Music and Letters* 72 (1991) no. 3, pp. 404–6.

54 Edited in the Italian original, with English translation, in S. Parisi, "New Documents", pp. 504–5.

55 See the letter from Claudio Monteverdi to Ferdinando Striggio, dated Venice, 13 March 1620, in: Domenico De' Paoli, *Monteverdi*, Milano 1979, pp. 345–50; also in English translation in *The Letters*, pp. 190–94.

56 S. Parisi, "New Documents", pp. 506–7.

57 See, for example, D. De' Paoli, *Monteverdi*, pp. 370–71.

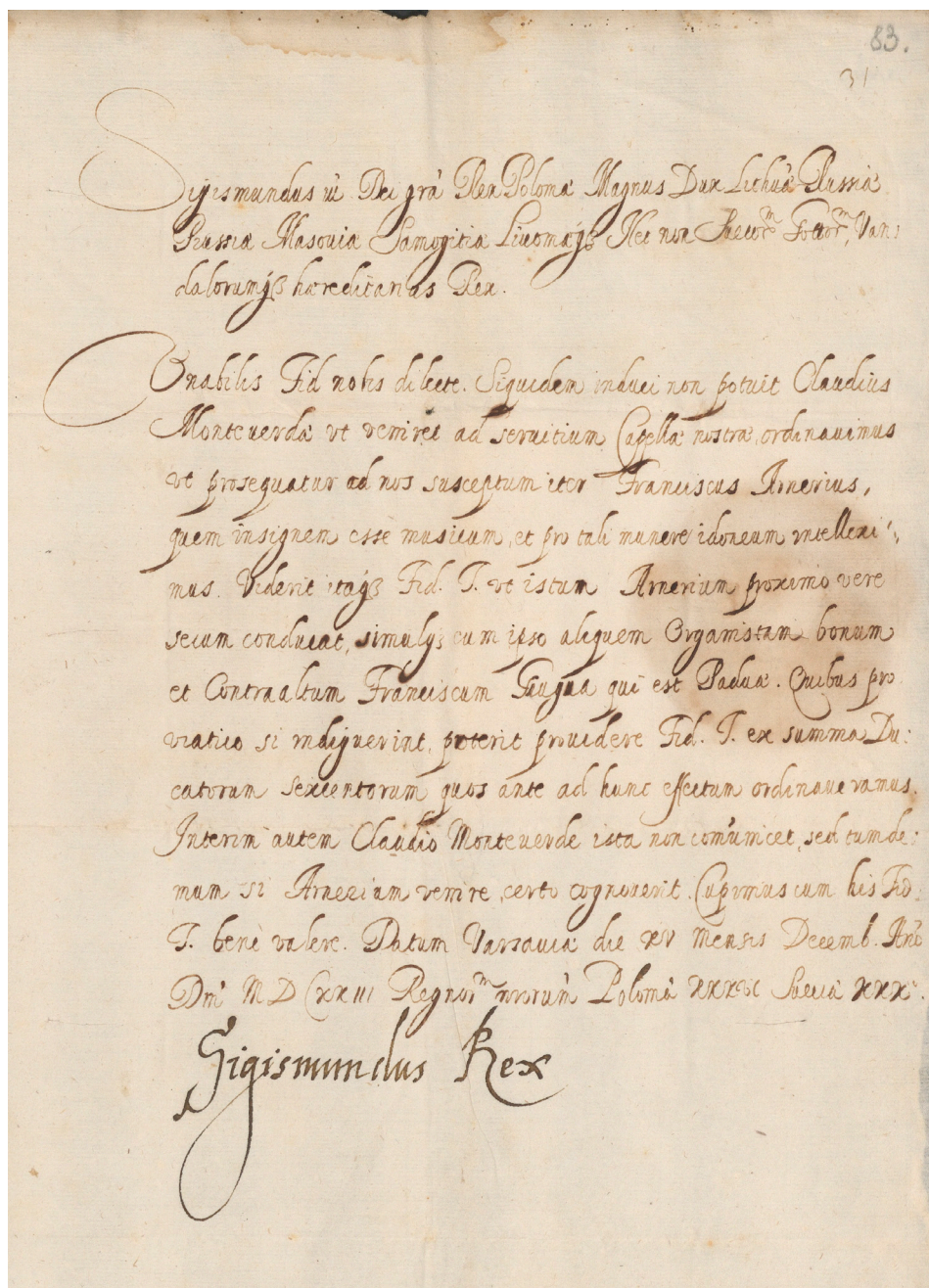


Fig. 1. Letter of Sigismund III to Ruggiero Salomoni, Warsaw, 15 December 1623; Wrocław, Narodowa Biblioteka Ossolineum, ms. 6245/II, p. 83/fol. 31



Fig. 1. *Cont.* (address on the back of the letter)

the negotiations with Monteverdi regarding his relocation to the Commonwealth had already failed. The letter, sent in the name of Sigismund III to Venice and addressed to “The Reverend Rugiero Salomoni, canon of Warsaw and Sandomierz, our faithful and dear secretary”,⁵⁸ reads as follows:

Reverend, faithful, and dear to us. Since it has not been possible to persuade Claudio Monteverdi to enter the service of our chapel, we have ordered that Francesco Anerio, of whom we have learned that he is an outstanding musician and well suited to this position, should continue the journey he has already begun toward us. Your Reverence should therefore endeavour to bring this Anerio here next spring, together with a good organist and the contralto Francesco Gnugna, who is currently in Padua. Should they require funds for the journey, Your Reverence may allocate them from the sum of six hundred ducats that we had previously designated for this purpose. For the time being, however, Your Reverence should not inform Claudio Monteverdi of these matters, but only do so once Anerio’s arrival is considered certain. Meanwhile, we wish Your Reverence good health.

58 PL-WRzno, ms. 6245/II, p. 83 (fol. 31): “Venerabilis, fidelis, nobis dilecte. Siquidem induci non potuit Claudius Monteverdae [s], ut veniret ad servitium capellae nostrae, ordinavimus, ut prosequatur ad nos susceptum iter Franciscus Arnerius [s], quem insignem esse musicum et pro tali munere idoneum intelleximus. Viderit itaque Fid[elitas] T[ua], ut istum Arnerium proximo vere secum conducatur simulque cum ipso aliquem organistam bonum et contraaltum Franciscum Gnugna, qui est Paduae. Quibus pro viatico, si indigerint, poterit providere Fid[elitas] T[ua] ex summa ducatorum sexcentorum, quos ante ad hunc effectum ordinaveramus. Interim autem Claudio Monteverde ista non communicet, sed tum demum si Arnerium venire certo cognoverit. Cupimus cum his Fid[elitate] T[ua] bene valere”. On the back: “Venerabili Rugiero Salomoni, canonico Varsaviensi et Sendomiriensi, secretario nostro fideli, nobis dilecto. Venetia”.

The letter thus provides clear evidence not only of the unsuccessful attempt to recruit Claudio Monteverdi to Sigismund III's chapel, but also of prior arrangements made with Giovanni Francesco Anerio. Anerio appears to have been kept in reserve and had probably already completed part of the journey through northern Italy.⁵⁹ In the event that negotiations with Monteverdi failed, Anerio was to assume the position of royal *maestro di cappella* and continue onward to the Commonwealth the following spring. The king, however, does not seem to have entirely abandoned hope that Monteverdi might still reconsider. He explicitly instructed Salomoni not to inform the composer – for the time being and pending further developments – of the decision to engage Anerio. Clearly, Sigismund III was not certain whether Anerio would ultimately agree to travel north of the Alps and wished to keep open the possibility of resuming negotiations with Monteverdi if necessary. In addition to Anerio, other musicians were also expected to make the journey to the Commonwealth in accordance with the king's wishes. It remains unclear whether an organist was successfully recruited. The very poor state of preservation of Polish sources makes it impossible to determine whether any new organist joined the royal chapel in 1624. Apart from Tarquinio Merula, who was already a member of the ensemble, the first documented mention of an Italian organist active at the court in the 1620s appears only in 1628 and refers to Angelo Simonelli.⁶⁰ The Franciscan contralto Pietro Francesco Gnugna (more commonly spelled Gnugno in Italian sources), a native of Novara, was a highly regarded and well-paid singer at the Basilica of St Anthony in Padua. He had been admitted to the ensemble on 31 December 1622, and received a salary from February 15 until the end of December 1623.⁶¹ Since he does not appear in the lists of musicians employed at the basilica in 1624 or in subsequent years, and

59 Anerio's whereabouts between 29 September 1621 (when he signed the dedication to the printed collection *Lieti scherzi*, suggesting that he was then residing in Rome) and 9 June 1624 (when he is known to have played the organ at the monastery of St Teonisto in Treviso) remain unknown. See Klaus Fischer, "Anerio, Giovanni Francesco", in: *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Personenteil*, vol. 1, Kassel 1999, col. 699 (also online: Klaus Fischer, "Anerio, Giovanni Francesco", in: *Grove Music Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.00914>, published online 2001, accessed 21 February 2026).

60 Barbara Przybyszewska-Jarmińska, "Muzyka i finanse: Nieznane źródła do dziejów życia muzycznego na dworze królewskim polskich Wazów" [Music and finances: Unknown sources on musical life at the royal court of the Polish Vasas], *Muzyka* 44 (1999) no. 1, p. 94.

61 Antonio Sartori, *Documenti per la storia della musica al Santo e nel Veneto*, ed. Elisa Grossato, Vicenza 1977 (= *Fonti e studi per la storia del Santo a Padova* VI/4), pp. 23, 206; Ugo Berto, "Contributo alla biografia e alle opere di Giovanni Ghizzolo da Brescia (1580 c. – a. 1624)", *Rassegna veneta di studi musicali* 2–3 (1986–87), p. 97; Antonio Sartori, *Archivio Sartori: Documenti di storia e arte francescana*, vol. 4, *Guida della Basilica del Santo, varie, artisti e musici al Santo e nel Veneto*, ed. Giovanni M. Luisetto, Padua 1989, p. 416; Maurizio Padoan, "Musici al Santo di Padova nel primo Barocco", in: *Florilegium musicae: Studi in onore di Carolyn Gianturco*, eds. Patrizia Radicchi, Michael Burden, Pisa 2004, p. 784. We are grateful to Prof. Maurizio Padoan for kindly providing access to his article and for sharing valuable details – not included in this publication – about the years the singer spent in the music ensemble of the Basilica of St Anthony in Padua.

his whereabouts during that period remain unknown,⁶² it cannot be ruled out that he travelled to the Commonwealth. Nevertheless, his presence at the court of Sigismund III has not yet been confirmed.

Turning again to Monteverdi, it seems that Salomoni, having received the royal letter around mid-January 1624, did not follow the king's instructions concerning Anerio. Instead, he continued negotiations with Monteverdi. This is confirmed by the next – and so far the last known – letter regarding the efforts to recruit Monteverdi for the royal chapel. Written by Sigismund III to Ruggiero Salomoni (referred to as Rudgerus) and dated in Warsaw on 16 April 1624, the letter is markedly sharp in tone:⁶³

To Reverend Rudgerus, royal chaplain.⁶⁴ Reverend, faithful, and dear to us. From your Reverence's letter, we have learned that you offered and promised on our behalf to Claudio Monteverdi, chapelmaster of the Venetian Republic, a yearly income of one thousand scudi. Since you had no authorization from us to offer such a salary, we are astonished that Your Reverence acted contrary to our will. For we had directed that a letter be written to Your Reverence stating that we intended to grant him only two hundred florins – the same salary previously paid to Asprilio Pacelli. We therefore in no way recognize the agreement Your Reverence made with him for such a sum, and indeed, we demand that Your Reverence reduce it according to the instructions previously sent on our behalf by our secretary, the Reverend Paweł Piasecki. For we do not wish to pay our chapelmasters so high a salary. We wish Your Reverence good health.

The king accuses Salomoni of offering Monteverdi 1,000 scudi without authorization, even though he had been informed of the conditions set by Sigismund III in a letter from the royal secretary Paweł Piasecki, which must have reached Venice

62 It is known that in later years, at least from 1649 to 1651, he sang at the Basilica of St Gaudentius in Novara. See Danilo Costantini and Ausilia Magauda, "La cappella musicale novarese di S. Gaudenzio (1650–1700)", in: *Barocco padano 5: Atti del XIII convegno internazionale sulla musica italiana nei secoli XVII-XVIII (Brescia, luglio 2005)*, eds. Alberto Colzani et al., Como 2008 (= Contributi musicologici del centro ricerche dell'A.M.I.S. 17), pp. 358, 367, 369, 370.

63 PL-Wagad, MK, LL 30, fol. 135v: "Ad Venerabilem Rudgerum, capellanum regium. Venerabilis, devote, nobis dilecte. Ex litteris Dev[otionis] V[estrae] intelleximus Dev[otionem] T[uam] Claudio Monteverdo, magistro capellae Reipub[licae] Venetae, mille scutatos annui solarii nostro nomine obtulisse et promississe. Cuius salarii offerendi cum nullam a nobis habueris facultatem, miramur id Dev[otionem] T[uam] praeter voluntatem nostram fecisse. Scribi enim Dev[otioni] T[uae] iusseramus nos ducenis solummodo florenis ipsi solarium dare velle, quod antea Aspirillius [s] Pacciellus haberet. Itaque id Dev[otionis] T[uae] pactum de eiusmodi salario cum illo initum minime probamus, quin potius a Dev[otione] T[u]a requirimus, ut illud pro eo ac ipsi antea iussu nostro Venerabilis Paulus Piasecki, secretarius noster, scripserat, moderetur. Neque enim tam amplum solarium capellae nostrae magistris dare volumus. De caetero Dev[otionem] T[uam] bene valere cupimus".

64 In the summary of the letter published in *Sumariusz Książę Poselstwo Metryki Koronnej* [Summary of the diplomatic books of the Crown Metrica], vol. 2, *Królowie elekcyjni* [Elective kings], eds. Irena Sułkowska-Kurasiowa and Janina Wejchertowa, Warsaw 2020, p. 125 (no. 5439), the sender and addressee are identified as "Zygmunt III do Rutgera [s], kapelmistrza [s] królewskiego" ("Sigismund III to Rutger, royal chapelmaster").

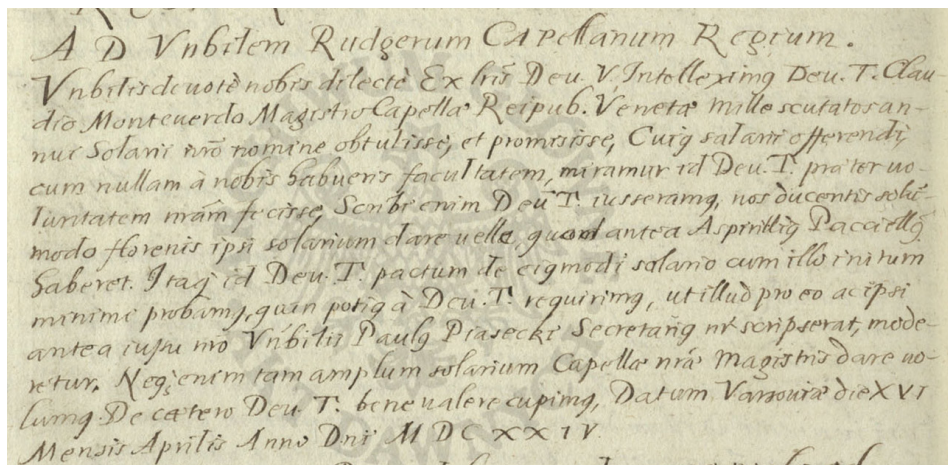


Fig. 2. Letter of Sigismund III to Ruggiero Salomoni, Warsaw, 16 April 1624; Warsaw, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, ms. MK, LL 30, fol. 135v

no later than the autumn of 1623. Salomoni had been authorized to offer only 200 florins – a sum that, given the inflation then affecting the Commonwealth, amounted to far less than ten percent of the proposed 1,000 scudi. According to the king, this was the same salary previously received by Asprilio Pacelli.⁶⁵ It should be noted, however, that this was only the base salary and did not include the weekly allowance for board and lodging (*vitto*), horse fodder, clothing allowance, or additional payments granted at the king's discretion. Sigismund III clearly insisted that the contract should explicitly state the exact amount he had dictated, rather than a figure open to negotiation if he were pleased with the musician's performance. He therefore firmly refused to accept the agreement concluded by Salomoni and demanded that the salary be reduced to the amount specified by Piasecki.

The subsequent course of negotiations with Monteverdi remains unknown. One can easily imagine, however, the reaction of the proud composer – who had already made the king's generous offer public – if Salomoni had then attempted to reduce the agreed sum. The fact that Anerio arrived at Sigismund III's court later in 1624 proves that no agreement with Monteverdi had been reached. It is likely that the reason cited by Bresciani for the failure of the royal efforts – the composer's reluctance to travel to a distant country at an advanced age – was provided by Monteverdi himself. In reality, however, the dispute came down to money – as is so often the case.

Translated by Paweł Wróbel

⁶⁵ This is valuable information, as the royal accounts, which would have recorded the salary received by Pacelli, have not survived.

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STARANIA O POZYSKANIE NOWEGO MAESTRO DI CAPPELLA DO POLSKIEJ KAPELI
KRÓLEWSKIEJ W ŚWIETLE LISTÓW ZYGMUNTA III WAZY Z LAT 1623–24 DOTYCZĄCYCH
STEFANA LANDIEGO, CLAUDIA MONTEVERDIEGO I GIOVANNIEGO FRANCESCO ANERIA

U schyłku XIX w. Giorgio Sommi Picenardi upowszechnił pochodzącą od Giuseppe Brescianiego (1589/1599–1670) informację, według której król Polski zabiegał o pozyskanie do swojej kapeli Claudia Monteverdiego, ale starania te zakończyły się niepowodzeniem z uwagi na zaawansowany wiek kompozytora. W polskim i światowym piśmiennictwie aż do początków XXI w. dominowało przekonanie, że inicjatywa zaproszenia Monteverdiego do Rzeczypospolitej wyszła od Władysława Zygmunta, w czasie gdy był jeszcze królewiczem lub gdy już panował jako Władysław IV (zgodnie z datowaniem Paola Fabbriego z jego artykułu z roku 1981, nastąpiło to między 1625 i 1638 r.). Miała ona być pokłosiem wizyty Władysława Zygmunta w Wenecji i spotkania z kapelmistrzem bazyliki św. Marka w marcu 1625 roku. Tym samym ignorowana była informacja podana przez Adolfa Chybińskiego w jego *Słowniku muzyków dawnej Polski* (1949), zgodnie z którą o Monteverdiego bezskutecznie zabiegał w 1623 r. król Zygmunt III. Jej jedyną podstawę stanowił podany w pracy Jana Józefa Dunicza z 1938 r. tytuł nigdy nieopublikowanego komunikatu Kazimierza Tyszkowskiego, który miał brzmieć: *Starania Zygmunta III o pozyskanie Cl. Monteverdiego i Giov. Fr. Aneria do kapeli król. w Warszawie (1623)*. Za Chybińskim informację o zbliżonej treści podał w opublikowanym

w 1953 r. komunikacie Hellmut Federhofer, a w 1961 r. w *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* Liliana Pannella. Po czterdziestoletniej przerwie, od przełomu XX i XXI w., w światowym piśmiennictwie podaje się, że o zatrudnienie Monteverdiego zabiegał jednak, w 1623 r., Zygmunt III, czego dowodzi odnaleziony przez Susan Parisi w Archivio di Stato w Mantui list Antonia Taroniego do księcia Ferdinanda Gonzagi z 25 VII 1623.

W artykule staramy się ukazać okoliczności starań o nowego kapelmistrza podjętych przez Zygmunta III w ostatnich miesiącach życia kierującego królewską kapelą od 1602 r. Asprilia Pacellego (zm. 4 V 1623), kiedy król chciał zatrudnić Stefana Landiego, a następnie już po śmierci Pacellego. Jeżeli chodzi o zabiegi o pozyskanie Monteverdiego, uwzględniamy list Taroniego z 25 VII 1623 r. odnaleziony przez Parisi oraz dwa listy Zygmunta III do jego rezydującego w Wenecji sekretarza, kanonika Ruggiera Salomoniego, z 15 XII 1623 i 16 IV 1624 roku. List z grudnia 1623 r. z wszelką pewnością miał być edytowany w komunikacie Tyszkowskiego, list z kwietnia 1624 r. nie był dotąd uwzględniany w badaniach. Ukazują one przebieg negocjacji i okoliczności, w jakich do Rzeczypospolitej pojechał Giovanni Francesco Anerio, oraz pozwalają widzieć inny powód, dla którego Monteverdi nie został kapelmistrzem króla Polski, niż ten, jaki podał w swojej relacji Bresciani.

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