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THE (LOST) VIOLIN CONCERTO RV 316 BY VIVALDI: ITS RECONSTRUCTION AND DATING

In July 1708 the twenty-three-year-old Johann Sebastian Bach moved – together with his wife Maria Barbara (pregnant with their first daughter Catharina Dorothea) – from Weimar to Mühlhausen to enter the service of duke Wilhelm Ernst (1662-1728), from whom he obtained the posts of court organist and, later (from 2 March 1714), concertmaster. These duties afforded Bach the opportunity to collaborate with the instrumentalists of the ducal court orchestra and deepen his knowledge of the genre of the Italian instrumental concerto.

A nephew of this duke, the young prince Johann Ernst (1696-1715) – a good musician – returned to Weimar on 8 July 1713 after a long study sojourn in the Netherlands (Utrecht and Amsterdam), where he had the chance to buy musical prints and manuscripts of ‘modern’ concertos, composed primarily by leading Italian masters: Alessandro and Benedetto Marcello, Giuseppe Torelli and Antonio Vivaldi. These works immediately claimed the attention of Bach, who transcribed (at least) twenty-one for solo keyboard (pedaliter or manualiter): five for organ (BWV 592-596) and sixteen for harpsichord (or for organ without pedalboard, BWV 972-987), ten of which were by Vivaldi:¹

- the violin concerto in G major, Op. 3 no. 3, RV 310 (BWV 978, in F major);
- the concerto for two violins in A minor, Op. 3 no. 8, RV 522 (BWV 593);
- the violin concerto in D major, Op. 3 no. 9, RV 230 (BWV 972);
- the concerto for two violins and cello in D minor, Op. 3 no. 11, RV 565 (BWV 596);
- the violin concerto in E major, Op. 3 no. 12, RV 265 (BWV 976, in C major);
- the violin concerto in D major “Grosso Mogul”, RV 208 (BWV 594, in C major);
- the violin concerto in G major, RV 299 (BWV 973);²
- the violin concerto in G minor, RV 316 (BWV 975);

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¹ To the following list should be added the (later) transcription of the Concerto for four violins in B minor, Op. 3, no. 10, RV 580 (BWV 1065, in A minor, for four harpsichords and orchestra), made in Leipzig during the 1730s at a time when Bach was director of the *Collegium Musicum*.

² Later included in the collection containing twelve *Concerti à cinque stromenti*, Op. 7 (Amsterdam, Jeanne Roger, 1720), as the second composition of the “Libro secondo” (= no. 8).

- the concerto for two violins in B flat major, RV 528 (BWV 980, in G major);³
- the violin concerto in D minor, RV 813 (BWV 979, in B minor).⁴

In making these keyboard transcriptions, Bach clearly had at his disposal a copy of the recent Dutch print of *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3 (Amsterdam, Estienne Roger, 1711), as well as Vivaldi manuscripts that were circulating in Northern Europe as early as the first decade of the eighteenth century.⁵ Today we possess the text of all the Vivaldi concertos mentioned above, with the sole exception of the violin concerto in G minor, RV 316.

THE VIOLIN CONCERTO IN G MINOR, RV 316

The manuscript of the concerto RV 316 – known until the last century through a set of non-autograph separate parts preserved at Darmstadt in the Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek (shelf mark: Ms. 4443) – was destroyed by fire during the Second World War.

Thanks to the text transmitted by Bach's transcription BWV 975, it is known that the first two movements of RV 316 shared musical material with the violin concerto in G minor, RV 316a, Op. 4 no. 6 (Amsterdam, Estienne Roger, 1716):⁶ the opening movement (*Allegro* in RV 316a; without tempo direction in BWV 975) was almost identical, while the second movement (*Largo e cantabile* in 316a; *Largo* in BWV 975) exhibited some minor differences in the solo episodes, besides orchestral tutti that were totally different. The final movement of

³ The source used by Bach for the transcription of BWV 980 is not the one transmitting the concerto RV 381 (*D-Bds*, Ms. P 327, ex Thulemeier, Nr. 232), but that of RV 528 (*S-Uu*, Instr. mus. i hs. 61:7): see FABRIZIO AMMETTO, *Vivaldi "ricostruisce" Vivaldi: ipotesi di testo 'originale' dei Concerti RV 528, 774 e 775*, in Antonio Vivaldi. *Passato e Futuro*, eds. Francesco Fanna and Michael Talbot, Venice, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 2009, pp. 353-357, later revised and augmented, with the addition of musical examples, in FABRIZIO AMMETTO, *I concerti per due violini di Vivaldi* ("Quaderni vivaldiani", 18), Florence, Olschki, 2013, pp. 163-170 (Chap. III.7. *Un'opera dubbia? Il caso di RV 528*). A critical edition of the concerto RV 528 is available in FABRIZIO AMMETTO, *I concerti per due violini di Vivaldi (con edizione di RV 513, 521, 528, 764 e ricostruzione di RV 520, 526)*, doctoral dissertation, Università di Bologna, 2010, pp. 274-277 (critical commentary), 381-408 (score). A recording of RV 528 – performed by "L'Orfeo Ensemble di Spoleto", directed by Fabrizio Ammetto (Tactus, 2012, TC 672253) – is available online: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tzyo-kV2aMs>> (I movement: [*Allegro*]), <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrPaz-kq99I>> (II movement: *Largo*), <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smLzkYCnzKY>> (III movement: *Allegro*).

⁴ The concerto RV 813 (*olim* RV Anh. 10), formerly attributed to Torelli, has recently been claimed as a genuine composition of Vivaldi (see FEDERICO MARIA SARDELLI, *Aggiornamenti del catalogo vivaldiano*, «Studi vivaldiani», 9, 2009, pp. 105-113: 108).

⁵ The Concerto RV 299 exists in a manuscript (*D-Dl*, Mus. 2389-O-56) copied out by the violinist Johann Georg Pisendel (1687-1755) which is concordant with the printed version. Here, it is useful to recall that Bach made his first acquaintance with Pisendel precisely in Weimar in March 1709.

⁶ The collection of twelve concertos comprising Vivaldi's *La stravaganza*, Op. 4 – probably in existence by 1710/11 (see CESARE FERTONANI, *La musica strumentale di Antonio Vivaldi* ("Quaderni vivaldiani", 9), Firenze, Olschki, 1998, p. 292) – was published, according to Rudolf Rasch, in 1716 or perhaps at the end of 1715, but certainly no earlier (see RUDOLF RASCH, *La famosa mano di Monsieur Roger: Antonio Vivaldi and His Dutch Publishers*, "Informazioni e studi vivaldiani", 17, 1996, pp. 89-137: 98).

RV 316, however, was totally different from that of the concerto sent to the publisher.

On the grounds of the above-mentioned similarities, Jean-Pierre Demoulin, in an essay published in 2009, argued in favour of a reconstruction of the (lost) concerto RV 316,⁷ considering that "le rétablissement d'une partition à exécuter [...] serait aisé" ("the reconstruction of a score for performance [...] would be easy"), as there would be need only for a:

- reprise in *extenso*, sans modification, de l'Allegro initial du RV 316a, Opus IV n° 6 (restatement in *extenso*, without modification, of the opening *Allegro* of RV 316a, Op. 4 no. 6);
- reprise du Largo, sans modification de la mélodie du même Opus IV n° 6, mais en rétablissant les «tutti» en accord verticaux d'après la version de Bach; avec en plus le «tutti» supplémentaire après la huitième mesure de solo, comme chez Bach (restatement of the *Largo*, without change to the melody, of the same Op. 4 no. 6, but restoring the tutti in block chords in accordance with Bach's version; with, in addition, the extra tutti after the eighth bar of the solo, as in Bach);
- transposer textuellement le texte de Bach pour le finale «Presto» en prenant l'accompagnement comme au début par harmonies pleines. Le continuo pourrait aux reprises s'inspirer alors du développement de la basse de Bach"⁸ (making an arrangement of Bach's text for the *Presto* finale whereby the accompaniment, as at the start, would be fully harmonized. The continuo could then, in the repeats, draw inspiration from the development of the bass by Bach).

In fact, to make a convincing reconstruction of the concerto RV 316 turns out to be a little more complicated than Demoulin proposed, for the following reasons.

ASPECTS OF THE RECONSTRUCTION OF RV 316

FIRST MOVEMENT: without tempo direction (2/4). This is a typical movement in *ritornello* form, here with four solo episodes (TsTsTsTsT). The musical material of the tutti consists of five melodic motives, four of which are presented in the opening orchestral passage: *a* (bars 1-8 and 9-16); *b* (bars 17-22);⁹ *c* (bars 23-26); *d* (bars 27-32). The fifth melodic motive is heard only in the second tutti (bars 63-73). Comparing Bach's harpsichord transcription (BWV 975) with the published version (RV 316a) of this movement, one immediately notices some important differences of which account has to be taken when

⁷ See JEAN-PIERRE DEMOULIN, *Suggestions pour compléter quatre œuvres dont on ne possède pas l'intégralité des sources: RV 316, 562, 693, 431, et qui méritent une exécution qui rende dignement l'original. Questions parallèles à propos des concertos RV 432 et 438*, in Antonio Vivaldi. *Passato e Futuro*, cit., pp. 359-367: 359-360.

⁸ See JEAN-PIERRE DEMOULIN, *Suggestions pour compléter quatre œuvres*, cit., p. 360.

⁹ This motive does not appear again in the course of the movement.

reconstructing RV 316 (a fact that renders impossible a "reprise *in extenso*, sans modification" as Demoulin advocated):

(1) the descending melodic interval for the violins between the third and fourth bars of motive *a*, always a sixth in Bach (bars 3-4, 11-12, 58-59, 125-126), becomes instead a fifth in a pair of passages in RV 316a (bars 3-4, 58-59);¹⁰

EXAMPLE 1. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 1-8.



EXAMPLE 2. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 1-8.



(2) in the melodic-harmonic sequence making up motive *b*, the chord in bar 21 is one of E minor in Bach, but E flat major in Vivaldi;

EXAMPLE 3. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 17-22.



EXAMPLE 4. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 17-22.



¹⁰ In the following examples taken from RV 316a the bass figures are omitted.

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(3) the contrapuntal imitation of the melodic line of motive *c* (♭⁷♭⁶♭⁵) is 'literal' in Bach's transcription (bars 23-26 and 88-91), but not in RV 316a;

EXAMPLE 5. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 23-26.



EXAMPLE 6. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 23-26.



(4) the melodic profile of each module belonging to the sequence constituting motive *e* (similarly to the contrapuntal imitation at the lower fifth) is not entirely concordant in Bach's and Vivaldi's versions;

EXAMPLE 7. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 63-68.



EXAMPLE 8. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 63-68.



Were these changes introduced by Bach, or were they already present in the score of the (lost) concerto RV 316?

- 1 Bars 3-4 and 58-59 of the Vivaldian source must have featured a leap of a sixth (as shown in bars 11-12 and 125-126) for two reasons: firstly, on account of the presence of the same interval in the first solo episode (bars 35-36), matching the restatement (identical) of the orchestral opening and thereby strengthening the structural unity of the piece; secondly, at least in bars 3-4, for the additional technical-instrumental reason that the sixth *a''-c''* is much easier to execute on the violin than the fifth *a''-d''*.¹¹
- 2 More problematic, however, is to determine what the original chord in bar 21 was: perhaps the young Bach's intention was to 'smooth' the connection to the next chord, that of A major, by opting for E minor?
- 3 Conversely, the alterations to intervals in the imitations occurring in bars 23-26 and 88-91 would seem attributable to Bach, who was probably more concerned than Vivaldi to observe strict symmetry.
- 4 Finally, even the melodic differences in bars 64, 66, 68, 70 and 72 may have been introduced by Bach for purely technical-instrumental reasons (the two contrapuntal voices in imitation are both entrusted to the right hand), but there is no reason to suppose that Vivaldi himself did not wish the passage to take the same form on principle.

The solo episodes, too, reveal some significant differences between Bach's version (BWV 975) and Vivaldi's as published (RV 316a), both as regards the principal violin part (bars 51, 121) and the bass line (bars 49, 109): the readings encountered in the harpsichord transcription – when shorn of Bach's embellishments¹² – all seem attributable to Vivaldi's handiwork.

EXAMPLE 9. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 48-52.



¹¹ The intervals of a fifth found in the published version of RV 316a could, of course, be due to an engraving error by Roger.

¹² The embellishments specified by Bach, especially those in the second movement of this concerto, are extremely useful, not only for a knowledge of performance practice at this time, but also for the correction of certain inaccuracies in the published RV 316a, such as a trill in bar 8 that is incorrectly placed over the appoggiatura (*d''*) instead of the main note (*c''* sharp).

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EXAMPLE 10. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 48-52.



EXAMPLE 11. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 106-110.



EXAMPLE 12. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 106-110.



EXAMPLE 13. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 121-122.



EXAMPLE 14. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 121-122.



Finally, two solo passages with orchestral accompaniment merit special examination: these are bars 111-116 and 131-136.

EXAMPLE 15. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 111-116.



EXAMPLE 16. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 111-116.

EXAMPLE 17. Bach, BWV 975/I, bars 131-136.



EXAMPLE 18. Vivaldi, RV 316a/I, bars 131-136.

It is evident that in the Vivaldi score used by Bach for his transcription the viola part in bars 111-116 was in repeated quavers (and not in dotted rhythm) and that, moreover, the melodic line for the orchestral second violin in bars 131-137 was not envisaged.

At all events, for both passages it is not clear (from an inspection of BWV 975 alone) which section of the orchestral violins – together with the viola – accompanied the soloist in RV 316: the first violins (as prescribed in RV 316a) or the second violins?

In my study of Vivaldi's concertos for two violins I pointed out how these precise bars 111-121 occurring in this movement of RV 316a constitute a very special case within the entire Op. 4 collection in connection with a radical change of conception by the composer about the choice of orchestral violin section from which to extract (whenever necessary) a second soloist.¹³ My hypothesis that RV 316a was one of the last concertos composed or, more exactly, 'revised' with a view to publication and that it "potrebbe fotografare dunque il momento preciso in cui Vivaldi inizia a mutare la maniera di distribuire gli strumenti solisti"¹⁴ ("might accordingly provide a snapshot of the precise moment when Vivaldi began to change his manner of distributing the solo instruments") would gain further support: in fact, RV 316 comes across as a 'primitive' version of the concerto that Vivaldi later included as the sixth work in *La stravaganza*, with appropriate changes that also – and primarily – concerned the two following movements. In the light of the observations just made, the second soloist in bars 111-116 and 131-136 of RV 316 would have been drawn from the ranks of the orchestral second violins.

SECOND MOVEMENT: *Largo* (3/4). From an examination of Bach's transcription of this movement, the structure of Vivaldi's original appears clear: three solo episodes (bars 1-8, 12-25, 29-39) alternating with three orchestral interventions (bars 9-12/I, 26-29/I, 40-43). In the harpsichord version these sections are strongly delineated thanks to the use of extremely florid writing for the melodic line (accompanied by arpeggiated chords) in the solos, in contrast to the robust block chords (in 5 or 6 parts) for the tutti. Fortunately for us, the melodic material of (almost all) the solo episodes of RV 316 occurs in the slow movement of the concerto RV 316a: the first eight measures are identical; bars 12-25, 29-33 and 38-39 of RV 316 correspond (except for minor changes) to bars 9-22, 27-31 and 35-36 of RV 316a. In contrast, only bars 34-37 of RV 316 lack any counterpart in RV 316a: here, however, it seems that Bach has not made any alterations to Vivaldi's original melody (except for a few slurs).¹⁵

For a reconstruction of the accompaniment to solo episodes, however, it must be remembered that Bach, in addition to retaining Vivaldi's harmonies, also left a hint of what must have been the original motion of the bass: in fact,

¹³ See FABRIZIO AMMETTO, *I concerti per due violini di Vivaldi* ("Quaderni vivaldiani", 18), cit., pp. 53-66 (Chap. II. *Alle origini del concerto per due violini*).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

¹⁵ These are the slurs for notes 5-8 in bars 35, 36 and 37, which lie over groups of four notes in Bach's transcription but were certainly placed over paired notes in Vivaldi's original. Bach additionally changed other slurs typical of Vivaldi, such as those in bar 20 ("syncopated slurring", according to the description coined by Michael Talbot).

the position in every bar of the lowest note of the arpeggio marks the exact points where there was a change of note and/or harmony in the original source.

EXAMPLE 19. Vivaldi, RV 316/II, bars 1-8 – Bach, BWV 975/II, bars 1-8: bass part.

In addition, it should be borne in mind that Bach must always have respected the original rhythmic motion of Vivaldi's bass part: in this regard, the rest in bar 8 anticipates the acephalic rhythm of the following tutti (bar 9), creating structural unity. In bar 4/I, by contrast, the leap of a seventh, *a-f'*, present in the harpsichord transcription, appears attributable to Bach rather than to Vivaldi. Conversely, the motions of the bass line in the cadential formulas concluding solo episodes in bars 25 and 39 are ones typical of Vivaldi.

THIRD MOVEMENT: *Giga. Presto* (12/8). The finale of the concerto BWV 975 is completely different from that of RV 316a. From an examination of the harpsichord transcription it becomes clear that Vivaldi's original movement (RV 316) was in binary form with a reprise (A:BA') and sectional repeats (9+21 bars), although Bach wrote it out *in extenso* without repeat signs, varying the accompaniment in the repetition of each of the two sections (corresponding to bars 10-18 and 40-60).

EXAMPLE 20. Bach, BWV 975/III, bars 1-3.

EXAMPLE 21. Bach, BWV 975/III, bars 10-12.



Moreover, this was a movement devoid of solo episodes (a typical feature of Vivaldi's first creative period) in the manner of a concerto for strings, here reduced to three real parts with all the violins in unison: this form of scoring can be inferred from the fact that in the harpsichord transcription the harmonies of the left hand are often in two parts: thus for viola and bass.

The reconstruction of the violin part is obvious, since this has to follow literally the melodic line in quavers entrusted to the right hand in Bach's transcription. The only required change concerns the bowing marks: Vivaldi's original score must certainly have supplied slurs for the first two notes of each group of three, a typical and functional articulation in the violinistic idiom (but which Bach probably altered to make it more suitable for a keyboard instrument).

Similarly, the reconstruction of the bass part is not difficult: the graphical system used by Bach, which individualizes the stems of the notes in the accompanimental chords (directing downwards those for the lower line), shows what the original part was.¹⁶ In bars 9/III-IV and 30/III-IV the connective arpeggios – inserted into the keyboard transcription to fill the 'rhythmic void' of the violins as well as to make the harpsichord part smoother – should be replaced by a dotted crotchet followed by a rest (as in the melodic line). In addition, the arpeggios in bars 18/I (*c, e flat, g*) and 20/I (*d, f, a*) – idiomatic for the harpsichord – should be rendered by a simple dotted crotchet in the reconstruction.

However, the reconstruction of the viola part, which has to be extracted from the harmony notes placed over the bass line, deserves some prior reflection. Bach, faced with the difficulty of always having to free the right hand of the harpsichordist for the execution of the melody, often had to make octave transpositions in the original viola part¹⁷ with the aim of keeping chords for the left hand within the stretch of an octave. A tiny clue provides a proof of this: in bar 1/I-II Bach transposed to the lower octave the original notes *g'* and *a'* of the viola part to make them performable together with the notes *G* and *d* of the bass, whereas in bar 30/I-II (21/I-II in Vivaldi's score) – coincident with the restatement of the opening theme – this was rendered unnecessary on account of the slight change that Vivaldi made to the bass line (*b flat* and *a*).

¹⁶ For this reason, Demoulin's formulation "Le continuo pourrait aux reprises s'inspirer alors du développement de la basse de Bach" could be misleading.

¹⁷ In fact, fewer than half of the notes of Vivaldi's score remained in their original register.

EXAMPLE 22. Vivaldi, RV 316/III, bars 1 and 20-21 – Bach, BWV 975/III, bars 1 and 29-30.

Giga. Presto

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violino, Viola, Basso, and Clavicembalo (Bach, BWV 975). The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows bars 1 and 20-21 of Vivaldi's RV 316/III. The second system shows bars 1 and 29-30 of Bach's BWV 975/III. The tempo is marked 'Giga. Presto'. The key signature is G minor (three flats). The time signature is 12/8. The Violino part has a melodic line with many slurs and ties. The Viola and Basso parts have a more rhythmic, dotted pattern. The Clavicembalo part has a complex, multi-measure rest pattern in the first system, which is then filled in with a melodic line in the second system.

At the end of this article a complete reconstruction of the second and third movements of the violin concerto in G minor RV 316 is provided. To reconstruct the opening movement of the same work, however, reference should be made to the version RV 316a (Op. 4 no. 6), to which, however, the appropriate changes to bars and sections described earlier need to be made.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

A reconstruction of the concerto RV 316, over and above its practical usefulness to performers, who will gain a complete new text by Vivaldi, offers further points for reflection with regard to compositional 'second thoughts' in Vivaldi and, most especially, the dating of this work in relation to other concertos in his Op. 4.

According to Rudolf Rasch, the concerto "RV 316a (Op. 4 no. 6) represents a primitive version (sent – hypothetically – to Amsterdam in 1711) which antedates RV 316 (disseminated – hypothetically – from 1712 onwards in Germany)".¹⁸ Rasch based this hypothesis on the basis of the promise made by Vivaldi to the editor Roger – in the foreword («Alli Dilettanti di Musica») to *L'estro armonico* (1711) – according to which he would swiftly ("presto") deliver another set of concertos in four parts ("un[']altra Muta de Concerti à 4"), not counting the principal violin. But this assumption depends crucially on whether or not the promise was then faithfully kept without any delay: one cannot exclude that Vivaldi, introducing himself for the first time in his life to the most prestigious music publisher of the epoch with an ambitious collection of concertos (his Op. 3), was venting his unquestionable urge towards self-promotion!

¹⁸ See RUDOLF RASCH, *La famosa mano di Monsieur Roger: Antonio Vivaldi and His Dutch Publishers*, cit., p. 100.

Indeed, the differences encountered between the texts of RV 316 (based on Bach's harpsichord transcription realized between July 1713 and July 1714)¹⁹ and RV 316a (Op. 4 no. 6, 1716) serve, rather, to confirm the hypothesis – advanced by Demoulin, albeit without an adequate justification²⁰ – that the reading transmitted by the printed version was undoubtedly later for the following, more strictly musical, reasons:

- 1 most importantly, the presence in the opening movement of RV 316a of an episode featuring an accompaniment for a second soloist drawn from the ranks of the orchestral first violins (bars 111-121) moves to a later time the date of composition and/or revision of this work. In fact, among the concertos for two violins by Vivaldi the earliest known composition in which the second soloist is chosen from among the first violins is the concerto RV 521, dated after 1717, while the handful of other works belonging to this genre in which the second soloist is extracted from the second violins of the orchestra (RV 507, 519, 522 and 528) are all locatable chronologically around the 1710s.²¹
- 2 In the second movement, the opening chromatic descending tetrachord (passus duriusculus) in the bass line in RV 316 – *d, c sharp, c, b, b moll, a* (also in bars 12-15: *a, g sharp, g, f sharp, f, e*) – became transformed in RV 316a into a simple diatonic motion (with or without suspensions in the harmony), probably because Vivaldi considered it less 'fashionable' in the middle of the second decade of the eighteenth century²².

EXAMPLE 23. Vivaldi, RV 316-316a/II, bars 1-8.

¹⁹ See HANS-JOACHIM SCHULZE, *Studien zur Bach-Überlieferung im 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig-Dresden, Peters, 1984, p. 161.

²⁰ See JEAN-PIERRE DEMOULIN, *Suggestions pour compléter quatre œuvres*, cit., p. 360.

²¹ See FABRIZIO AMMETTO, *I concerti per due violini di Vivaldi* ("Quaderni vivaldiani", 18), cit., pp. 223-230 (Chap. III.9. *Proposte di datazione*).

²² Similar chromatic passages recur in certain concertos in *L'estro armonico* (1711): in the *Largo e*

EXAMPLE 24. Vivaldi, RV 316-316a/II, bars 12-25 (= bars 9-22).²³

The musical score for Vivaldi's RV 316 and RV 316a, measures 12-25, is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 12-14) includes a 'Solo' section for the violin (RV 316) and a 'Solo' section for the cello/bass (RV 316a). The second system (measures 14-18) continues the solo lines. The third system (measures 18-21) shows the continuation of the solo lines. Fingerings and bowings are indicated throughout. The score is labeled with measure numbers 12, 14, 18, 21, and 18 at the beginning of each system.

3 In the same movement some small differences in the melodic line of the soloist may be considered genuinely improving compositional 'second thoughts' aimed at eliminating over-predictable melodic or rhythmic

spiccato of Concerto no. 1 (*b, a sharp, a, g sharp, g, f sharp*); in the opening *Andante* of Concerto no. 4 (*e, d sharp, d, c sharp, c, b*); in the first *Adagio* of Concerto no. 7 (*d, c sharp, c, b, b moll, a*); in the concluding *Allegro* of Concerto no. 11 (*d, c sharp, c, b, b moll, a* and *a, g sharp, g, f sharp, f, e*).

²³ The two distinct bar numberings originate from the fact that the first orchestral tutti occurring in RV 316 (bars 9-12/I) is suppressed in RV 316a.

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patterns: *d'' sharp* in RV 316a instead of *d'' (natural)* in bar 11 (= bar 14); the introduction of *b''* in bar 15 (= bar 18); the change of *f'' (natural)* to *b''* in bar 16 (= bar 19); the elimination of the two four-semiquaver groups in bars 35-36 (= bars 38-39), evidently considered too repetitive at a later point in time.

EXAMPLE 25. Vivaldi, RV 316-316a/II, bars 29-39 (= bars 27-36).

The musical score for Example 25 is presented in two systems. The first system shows the solo part (RV 316a) and the orchestral part (RV 316) for bars 29-31. The solo part is marked 'Solo' and 'Op. IV n. 6'. The orchestral part is marked 'RV 316' and 'Op. IV n. 6'. The second system shows the solo part (RV 316a) and the orchestral part (RV 316) for bars 33-35. The solo part is marked 'RV 316a' and 'Op. IV n. 6'. The orchestral part is marked 'RV 316' and 'Op. IV n. 6'. The score includes treble and bass staves with various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals.

4 Still concerning the slow movement, the strict, mechanical alternation in RV 316 of three solo episodes with three orchestral interventions (the latter identical except in tonality: A minor, F major, D minor) was relieved through the elimination of the first tutti and the expansion of the last one via a full repetition 'in echo'. Moreover, Vivaldi completely changed the melodic material of these orchestral interventions: whereas in RV 316 the structural reference point of the tuttis was the rhythmic pattern of the bass accompaniment (repeated quavers), in RV 316a the new tutti passage – introduced for the first time in bar 23 and considerably more elaborate melodically – refers back to the rhythmic pattern initiated by the soloist in bar 19 (♩♩♩♩).²⁴

5 Last but not least, the complete replacement of the final *Giga (Presto)* of RV 316 with the new *Allegro* (in 3/4) seen in RV 316a was undoubtedly made by Vivaldi in view of the concerto's publication. A similar

²⁴ Vivaldi probably simplified the harmony of this last bar precisely in order to emphasize its rhythmic component foreshadowing the new melodic profile.

substitution occurred in the concerto RV 528/381, whose final movement – headed *Gigue* in the separate parts of the Violino Primo Concertato and the “Violino Repieno P^{mo}” of the source for RV 528 (*S-Uu*, Instr. mus. i hs., 61:7)²⁵ – was replaced (together with the second movement) by a totally different one in the concerto RV 383a (Op. 4 no. 1). It is reasonable to imagine that in the middle of the second decade of the eighteenth century the *Giga* as the final movement of a concerto was considered, at least by Vivaldi, as ‘old-fashioned’.²⁶

In conclusion. It is extremely likely that Vivaldi did not send to Roger the twelve works of Op. 4 in 1711, along with those of the Op. 3, but rather a few years later. The concerto RV 316a could have been reworked and sent to Amsterdam – along with the entire collection of *La stravaganza* – around 1715, while the concerto RV 316 may have been conceived around 1710.

²⁵ See FABRIZIO AMMETTO, *I concerti per due violini di Vivaldi* (“Quaderni vivaldiani”, 18), cit., p. 83, n. 56 (Chap. I.1. *Fonti*).

²⁶ In this connection, it is interesting to observe how movements in *Giga* style – albeit without mention of this dance type – are still present in *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3 (Concertos nos. 1 and 2), though absent from *La stravaganza*, Op. 4.

THE (LOST) VIOLIN CONCERTO RV 316 BY VIVALDI

Largo

Violino di concertino *Solo*

Basso

7 *Tutti* *Solo*

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

14

20

6 7 6 7 6 #4 2 6 #4 2

6 6 4 # b5 6 #4 6 #4 # 6 b5

#4 2 6 4 2 5 5 4 3 6 4 2 6

FABRIZIO AMMETTO

26 *Tutti* *Solo*

33

38 *Tutti*

THE (LOST) VIOLIN CONCERTO RV 316 BY VIVALDI

Giga. Presto

Violini

Viola

Basso

[segue]

4

8

12

5 b b 6 6 b 6 b b 7 b 7

FABRIZIO AMMETTO

16

20

24

28

6

Fabrizio Ammetto

IL CONCERTO PER VIOLINO (PERDUTO) RV 316 DI VIVALDI: RICOSTRUZIONE E DATAZIONE

Sommario

Com'è noto, tra luglio 1713 e luglio 1714 Johann Sebastian Bach trascrisse per strumento a tastiera solo – organo e clavicembalo – (perlomeno) ventun concerti 'moderni', composti soprattutto da noti maestri italiani: Alessandro e Benedetto Marcello, Giuseppe Torelli e Antonio Vivaldi. Di quest'ultimo, in particolare, ne rielaborò una decina, dei quali conserviamo il testo orchestrale originale, con la sola eccezione del Concerto per violino in Sol minore, RV 316, il cui unico manoscritto conosciuto (Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek, Ms. 4443) fu distrutto durante la seconda guerra mondiale.

Grazie al testo trasmesso dalla trascrizione bachiana (BWV 975), si sa che i primi due movimenti di RV 316 condividevano materiale musicale comune con il Concerto per violino in Sol minore, RV 316a, Op. IV n. 6 (Amsterdam, E. Roger, 1716): in virtù di tali similitudini, Jean-Pierre Demoulin incoraggiava – in un saggio del 2009 – una ricostruzione del Concerto (perduto) RV 316, considerandola un'operazione «semplice». In realtà, come viene dimostrato in quest'articolo, la situazione è ben più complessa, perché esistettero differenze significative – anche nei primi due movimenti – tra la versione utilizzata da Bach per la sua trascrizione clavicembalistica (RV 316) e il testo che Vivaldi consegnò alle stampe (RV 316a).

Nel presente saggio, oltre a fornire una ricostruzione 'critica' di questo concerto per violino perduto, vengono discussi aspetti relativi alla relazione cronologica tra RV 316 e RV 316a, sulla base dei ripensamenti compositivi vivaldiani riscontrati (che investono aspetti strutturali, melodici, armonici e di orchestrazione): RV 316 sembrerebbe essere stato concepito intorno al 1710, mentre RV 316a sarebbe stato rielaborato e inviato ad Amsterdam – insieme all'intera raccolta de *La stravaganza*, Op. IV – intorno al 1715, e non prima, come presumeva e annunciava lo stesso Vivaldi nella premessa («Alli Dilettanti di Musica») all'*Estro armonico*, Op. III (1711).

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STUDI VIVALDIANI

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