

**[De Rossi, Giovanni Gherardo]**

1754 – 1827

**Cimelio tipografico-pittorico offerto agli Augustissimi Genitori del Re di Roma da Giambattista Bodoni.****Parma, ‘Co’ tipi Bodoniani’, 1811**

QUARTO (295 × 205 mm), (45)ff. letterpress, unsigned and unpaginated; plus engraved frontispiece and forty unnumbered engraved plates by Francesco Rosaspina. Printed on wove paper (*carta velina*).

CONTENTS engraved frontispiece, lettered *Scherzi Poetici e Pittorici* and signed F[rancesco] R[osaspina] sc[ulpisit]; title-page (transcribed above); dedication [by Vincenzo Jacobelli], *Alla Maestà Imperiale e Reale di Napoleone*; dedication [by Vincenzo Jacobelli], *Alla Maestà Imperiale e Reale di Maria Luigia*; address, *Giambattista Bodoni a chi vorrà leggere*; and series of forty unsigned line engravings (platemarks circa 135 × 75 mm), each followed by a leaf of letterpress (versos blank): *Amore navigatore, Amore e l’Innocenza, Amore vuol vigilanza, Amore che fugge dalla Vecchiaja, Amore ed Imeneo, L’Anticamera d’Amore, L’Inverno, La Primavera, L’Estate, L’Autunno, Amore avaro, Lesbina col figlio in seno, Le Bugie degli occhi, Amor pittore, A Nice che parla troppo, L’Orologio d’Amore, Amore senza benda, La Gelosia, Il Pianto, La Prefica, Amore muto, Amore filosofo, Amore in casa della Modestia, La Gioventù ed il Piacere, Il Libro dei Cori, La Bellezza sciolta dalle catene d’Amore, Il Giglio dell’Innocenza, Amore agricoltore, Il Nido, Il Figli di Dori, Amore che comanda ai Sogni, L’Ardire compagno d’amore, La Fucina d’Amore, La Lusinga, Amore e Diana, Amore Cavaliere, Amore incatena Cerbero, Amore artigliere, Amore accusato e difeso, Eufrosine ferita da Amore*, index (enumerating 40 plates, each identified by its legend).

Very occasional light foxing, otherwise a well-preserved copy.

BOUND in contemporary russia leather, decorated in blind and gilt, marbled page-edges, with an engraved ticket on free-endpaper *Gebunden bei Ph. Selenka in Wiesbaden*.

**O**NE OF THE LAST and least-known of Bodoni’s type specimen books, presenting forty *componimenti poetici* by De Rossi, director of the Reale Accademia Portoghese di Belle Arti in Rome, each poem set in a different Bodoni type opposite a ‘love emblem’ (Praz)<sup>1</sup> engraved by Francesco Rosaspina (1762–1841). ‘Un capolavoro tipografico

<sup>1</sup> Mario Praz, *Studies in seventeenth-century imagery* (Rome 1964–1974), pp.132, 479–480. ‘Here are some of the subjects: Love as a sailor, Love needs watchfulness, Love flees Old Age, Love the miser,

insuperato’ (Giani), it commemorates the birth in 1811 of Napoleon’s son, François Joseph Charles Bonaparte, the future Napoleon II, and is dedicated to the Emperor and to his second wife, Marie Louise.

De Rossi’s verses had been first printed as *Scherzi poetici e pittorici sopra Amore* in 1794, accompanied by a suite of illustrations designed and engraved by a Portuguese painter then travelling in Italy, José Teixeira Barreto (1763–1810), and dedicated to Alexandre de Souza e Holstein (1751–1803), Portuguese ambassador to the Holy See. In April 1795 Bodoni surreptitiously began work on a new edition, commissioning faithful copies of Teixeira Barreto’s plates from Rosaspina,<sup>2</sup> and woodcut frames to enclose the verses from Giacomo Mercoli (1745–1825). The new edition was published in Parma in 1795 in a bewildering number of states: in octavo format, with the plates printed in black, or red, or coloured ‘all’etrusco’ (in yellow and black); and in quarto format, with and without Mercoli’s frames (printed in black or in red), with the plates printed in black, or red, or coloured ‘all’etrusco’, or hand-coloured (*miniati*) by Antonio Pasini (1770–1845).<sup>3</sup>

In 1811 Bodoni reprinted the *Scherzi*, this time elaborating the typographical aspect, changing the title to *Cimelio tipografico-pittorico*, and supplying a new dedication. In his introduction, Bodoni writes ‘Il pregio singolarissimo del presente capo d’opera di Tipografia consiste nello aver sempre variato i caratteri in tutte le pagine e proporzionatigli alla brevità o lunghezza delle 40 poetiche composizioni...’. The technical name of the fount is given beneath each verse, and also ‘quello di una della città descritte nel vastissimo Manuale Tipografico Bodoniano [1788] e che trovasi impressa con quello stesso carattere’.<sup>4</sup>

Love as a painter, Love as a philosopher, Beauty freed from Love’s chains, Love as a ploughman, Love commands dreams, Boldness Love’s companion, Love’s smithy, Love as a rider, Love as a gunner’ (p.132).

<sup>2</sup> Annamaria Bernucci and Pier Giorgio Pasini, *Francesco Rosaspina “incisor celebre”* (Cinisello Balsamo [Milan] 1995), pp.96–97, 110. Teixeira Barreto’s original illustrations are recognisable by the date ‘Roma 1794’ on the frontispiece as well as by the numbers 1–40 on the plates. The two versions were exhibited in *Giambattista Bodoni nell’Europa neoclassica*, catalogue of an exhibition held at Biblioteca palatina, Parma, September–October 1990, edited by Corrado Mingardi and Leonardo Farinelli (Parma 1990), pp.105–106 nos. 71–72.

<sup>3</sup> For a list of states, see Giani, *op. cit.*, pp.54–55 no. 73; cf. Brooks, *op. cit.*, nos. 599–602. The printing history of the *Scherzi Poetici e Pittorici* is clarified by Corrado Mingardi, ‘Descrizione e storia di un “unicum” in Il ‘Cimelio’ di Bodoni. L’opera e il suo stampatore negli scritti di Angelo Ciavarella, Corrado Mingardi, James Mosley, Bernard Chevallier (Verona 1990), pp.15–38; see also, Anna Mavilla, ‘Bodoni e la produzione editoriale illustrata’ in *La Collezione Bodoniana della Biblioteca Civica di Saluzzo*, edited by Giancarla Bertero (Collegno [Turin] 1995), pp.81–82.

<sup>4</sup> A list of the founts utilised is supplied by Giani, *op. cit.*, pp.75–76 no. 196.

The revised work was likewise issued in a variety of forms: without the woodcut page borders, the engravings printed in black; and with Mercoli's frames enclosing the verses, the frames printed in red or black, the engravings printed in coloured inks, or coloured 'all'etrusco', or hand-coloured by Pasini. A unique copy, on large paper with the plates hand-coloured by Pasini, was presented to the imperial family.<sup>5</sup>

The size of the edition is variously estimated. According to the printer's friend and biographer, Giuseppe De Lama, writing in 1816, 100 copies were printed, of which 'non più di sei esemplari si tirarono coi contorni' and four copies coloured by Pasini.<sup>6</sup> Gian faults De Lama's arithmetic, maintaining there were 'sei esemplari coi contorni, quattro miniati da Antonio Pasini e quaranta normali... Preziosi edizione di 50 esemplari irreperibili'.<sup>7</sup>

Copies known to the writer include

- Cambridge, Harvard University, Houghton Library (multiple copies)<sup>8</sup>
- Chicago, Newberry Library, Wing folio ZP 835.B623 (without woodcut frames)
- Edinburgh, University Library, Bk.1.20
- London, British Library, 11436.k.20 (without woodcut frames)
- London, Victoria & Albert Museum, National Art Library, Clements Collection, CLE GG4 (with woodcut frames, the plates printed in red and brown inks)
- Milan, Biblioteca Braidense (with woodcut frames)<sup>9</sup>
- New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Baskerville +B1811r (without woodcut frames)
- Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Museo Bodoniano, 0248 1-2 (two copies, both without woodcut

<sup>5</sup> Rueil-Malmaison, Musée national des châteaux de Malmaison et de Bois-Préau, Inv. M.M. 40.47.6364 (392 × 276 mm). A facsimile with commentary was published in 1990 by the Stamperia Valdona; the copy was exhibited in *Maria Luigia, donna e sovrana: una corte europea a Parma, 1815-1847*, Palazzo ducale di Colorno, 10 May-26 July 1992 (Parma 1992), p.158 no. 745. Other coloured copies are cited by De Lama, *op. cit.*, I, pp.120, 181; see also, *Conoscere Bodoni: nel duecentocinquantesimo anniversario della nascita*, edited by Stefano Ajani and Luigi Cesare Maletto (Collegno [Torino] 1990), pp.193-194; and *Giambattista Bodoni nell'Europa neoclassica, op. cit.*, p.107 no. 73d: '...alcuni fogli sciolti di un bell'esemplare con i rami acquerellati, appartenuto forse ad Albertina Sanvitale, figlia di Maria Luigia' (in Museo Glauco Lombardi). Pasini's reluctance to produce coloured copies is mentioned in 'Memoranda respecting Bodoni, the Italian typographer' by Professor Morgenstern' in *New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register* 6 (July-December 1816), no. 35 (1 December 1816), pp.393-396.

<sup>6</sup> De Lama, *op. cit.*, I, p.120; II, p.195.

<sup>7</sup> Gian, *op. cit.*, p.76: 'Al de Lama a pag. 195, vol. 2°, sfuggì un errore di stampa ("100 copie" anziché "10 copie"); ce lo conferma de Lama stesso, a pag. 120, vol. 1°: "e di quelle, che non son senza (contorno) mediocrissimo fu il numero".'

<sup>8</sup> Harvard College Library, *A catalogue of an exhibition of the Philip Hofer Bequest in the Department of Printing and Graphic Arts* (Cambridge, MA 1988), pp.118-120 no. 59.

<sup>9</sup> Sergio Samek Ludovici, *Mostra antologica di G. B. Bodoni*, catalogue of an exhibition in the Biblioteca Braidense, 18-31 January 1973 (Milan 1972), pp.64, 66 no. 70.

frames)<sup>10</sup>

- Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, RES-YD-100 (lacking all plates)
- Parma, Museo Glauco Lombardi, Inv. 1809 (without woodcut frames)<sup>11</sup>
- Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, Bod. 295-296 (two copies)<sup>12</sup>
- Uppsala, University Library (Erik Kempe Collection), Sign. Bodoni 517<sup>13</sup>

The book was reprinted by Bodoni's widow, Paola Margherita dall'Aglio, with a new title-page, omitting the two dedication leaves, in 1819.

Our copy contains the engraved ticket of the bookbinder Philipp Selenka (1803-1850) of Wiesbaden, brother of Johann Jacob Selenka (1801-1871), Hofbuchbinder in Braunschweig.<sup>14</sup>

REFERENCES Giuseppe De Lama, *Vita del Cavaliere G.B. Bodoni* (Parma 1816), I, pp.119-120 and II, p.195; Hugh Cecil Brooks, *Compendiosa bibliografia di edizioni bodoniane* (Florence 1927), no. 1097; Giampiero Gian, *Catalogo delle autentiche edizioni bodoniane* (Milan 1948), pp.75-77 no. 196; *Il Cimelio tipografico pittorico di Giambattista Bodoni. Parma Maggio-Giugno 1983*, catalogue of an exhibition, edited by Vittorio Vaccaro, with text by Angelo Ciavarella (Parma 1983)

<sup>10</sup> Angelo Ciavarella, 'Catalogo della Mostra Bodoniana' in *Museo Bodoniano. Convegno e Mostra Bodoniana*, catalogue of an exhibition in the Biblioteca Palatina, Parma (Parma 1958), pp.68-69 no. 99; *Catalogo del Museo Bodoniano di Parma*, edited by Angelo Ciavarella (Parma 1968), p.24 no. 95; *Giambattista Bodoni nell'Europa neoclassica, op. cit.*, p.107 no. 73a (in the publisher's boards, 315 × 220 mm).

<sup>11</sup> Anna Mavilla, in *Maria Luigia e Napoleone. Testimonianze. Museo Glauco Lombardi*, edited by Francesca Sandrini (Milan: Touring Club Italiano, 2003), p.103 no. 26; Francesca Sandrini, 'Glauco Lombardi e il suo museo' in *Aurea Parma* 90 (2006), p. 317. The unbound copy is interleaved by a set of coloured plates, allegedly 'una replica variata in alcune parti o uno studio preparatorio' by Pasini.

<sup>12</sup> *La collezione Bodoniana: catalogo*, compiled by Annamaria Palaia and Loana Moscatelli (Roma 1987), pp.91-92 no. 348.

<sup>13</sup> Gösta, Johnsen, 'The Uppsala Bodoni collection: Concordance and checklist of Bodoni prints in Uppsala University Library' in *Giambattista Bodoni liv & verk: en utställning i Uppsala universitetsbibliotek 1 februari-30 maj 1991* (Uppsala 1991), pp.46, 49, 66.

<sup>14</sup> Two bindings by Philipp Selenka in the Fürstlich Waldecksche Hofbibliothek, Arolsen, are described by Rudolf-Alexander Schütte and Konrad Wiedemann, *Einbandkunst vom frühmittelalter bis Jugendstil aus den Bibliotheken in Kassel und Arolsen*, Universitätsbibliothek Kassel (Kassel 2002), p.54 no. 68 and Abb.51 (on R.W. Plumer, *Tremaine, or the man of refinement*, London 1835) and no. 70 (*Eduard und Kunigunde*, Frankfurt am Main: Frebs, c. 1840).