Essays on Opera, 1750-1800

Edited by
John A. Rice

The Ashgate Library of Essays in Opera Studies

Essays on Opera, 1750–1800

The Ashgate Library of Essays in Opera Studies
Series Editor: Roberta Montemorra Marvin

Titles in the Series:

Studies in Seventeenth-Century Opera
Beth L. Glixon

Opera Remade, 1700–1750
Charles Dill

Essays on Opera, 1750–1800
John A. Rice

National Traditions in Nineteenth-Century Opera, Volume I
Italy, France, England and the Americas
Steven Huebner

National Traditions in Nineteenth-Century Opera, Volume II
Central and Eastern Europe
Michael C. Tusa

Opera After 1900
Margaret Notley

Essays on Opera, 1750–1800

Edited by

John A. Rice

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2010 by Ashgate Publishing

Published 2016 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Essays on opera, 1750-1800. -- (The Ashgate library of essays in opera studies)
1. Opera--18th century.
I. Series II. Rice, John A.
782.1'09033-dc22

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010925876

ISBN 9780754629047 (hbk)

Contents


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Acknowledgements

The editor and publishers wish to thank the following for permission to use copyright material.

Acta Musicologica for the essay: David J. Buch (2004), '*Die Zauberflöte*, Masonic Opera, and Other Fairy Tales', *Acta Musicologica*, **76**, pp. 193–219.

Cambridge University Press for the essays: James Webster (1990), 'Mozart's Operas and the Myth of Musical Unity', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **2**, pp. 197–218. Copyright © 1990 Cambridge University Press; Stefano Castelvecchi (1996), 'From *Nina* to *Nina*: Psychodrama, Absorption and Sentiment in the 1780s', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **8**, pp. 91–112. Copyright © 1996 Cambridge University Press; Edmund J. Goehring (1997), 'The Sentimental Muse of *Opera Buffa*', in Mary Hunter and James Webster (eds), *Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 115–45; Copyright © 1997 Cambridge University Press; Benjamin Perl (2000), 'Mozart in Turkey', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **12**, pp. 219–35. Copyright © 2000 Cambridge University Press; Pierpaolo Polzonetti (2007), 'Oriental Tyranny in the Extreme West: Reflections on *Amiti e Ontario* and *Le gare generose*', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, **4**, pp. 27–53. Copyright © 2007 Cambridge University Press; Estelle Joubert (2006), 'Songs to Shape a German Nation: Hiller's Comic Operas and the Public Sphere', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, **3**, pp. 213–30. Copyright © 2006 Cambridge University Press; Bruce Alan Brown and John A. Rice (1996), 'Salieri's *Così fan tutte*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **8**, pp. 17–43. Copyright © 1996 Cambridge University Press; Margaret R. Butler (2006), 'Producing the Operatic Chorus at Parma's Teatro Ducale, 1759–1769', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, **3**, pp. 231–51. Copyright © 2006 Cambridge University Press.

Current Musicology for the essay: Wye J.Allanbrook (1991), 'Human Nature in the Unnatural Garden: *Figaro* as Pastoral', *Current Musicology*, **51**, pp. 82–93. Copyright © 1993 Columbia University.

Editions de la MSH for the essay: Elizabeth C. Bartlet (1992), 'On the Freedom of the Theatre and Censorship: The *Adrien* Controversy (1792)', in Antoine Hennion (ed.), *1789–1989: Musique, Histoire, Démocratie*, 1, Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, pp. 15–30.

Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum for the essays: Sergio Durante (1991), '*La clemenza di Tito* and Other Two-Act Reductions of the Late 18th Century', *Mozart-Jahrbuch*, pp. 733–41.

Johns Hopkins University Press for the essay: Thomas Bauman (1977), 'Opera versus Drama: *Romeo and Juliet* in Eighteenth-Century Germany', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, **11**, pp. 186–203. Copyright © 1977 The American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

Leo S. Olschki for the essays: Dale E. Monson (1986), 'Galuppi, Tenducci, and *Motezuma*: A Commentary on the History and Musical Style of *Opera Seria* after 1750', in Maria Teresa Muraro and Franco Rossi (eds), *Galuppiana 1985: Studi e ricerche: Atti del convegno internazionale (Venezia, 28–30 ottobre 1985)*, Florence: Olschki, pp. 279–300; Marita P. McClymonds (1989), 'The Venetian Role in the Transformation of Italian *Opera Seria* during the 1790s', in Maria Teresa Muraro and David Bryant (eds), *I vicini di Mozart*, 1, Florence: Olschki, pp. 221–40; Scott L. Balthazar (1989), 'Mayr, Rossini, and the Development of the *Opera Seria* Duet: Some Preliminary Conclusions', in Maria Teresa Muraro and David Bryant (eds), *I vicini di Mozart*, 1, Florence: Olschki, pp. 377–98.

Mosaic for the essay: Mary Hunter (1985), '"Pamela": The Offspring of Richardson's Heroine in Eighteenth-Century Opera', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, **18**, pp. 61–76. Copyright © 1985 Mosaic.

Oxford University Press for the essays: Raymond Monelle (1978), 'Recitative and Dramaturgy in the *Dramma per Musica*', *Music & Letters*, **59**, pp. 245–67. Copyright © 1978 Music & Letters Ltd and Contributors; Daniel Heartz (1974), 'Raaff's Last Aria: A Mozartian Idyll in the Spirit of Hasse', *The Musical Quarterly*, **60**, pp. 517–43. Copyright © 1974 by G. Schirmer, Inc.; Patricia Lewy Gidwitz (1991), '"Ich bin die erste Sängerin": Vocal Profiles of Two Mozart Sopranos', *Early Music*, **19**, pp. 565–79; Dorothea Link (1996), '*L'arbore di Diana*: A Model for *Così fan tutte*', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *Wolfgang Amadè Mozart: Essays on his Life and his Music*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 362–73. John Platoff (1992), 'How Original was Mozart? Evidence from *Opera Buffa*', *Early Music*, **20**, pp. 105–17.

Paul Corneilson for the essay: Paul Corneilson (2001), 'Mozart's Ilia and Elettra: New Perspectives on *Idomeneo*', in Theodor Göllner and Stephan Hörner (eds), *Mozarts Idomeneo und die Musik in München zur Zeit Karl Theodors*, Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 97–113.

Princeton University Press for the essay: Martha Feldman (2000), 'The Absent Mother in *Opera Seria*', in Mary Ann Smart (ed.), *Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 29–46, 254–59. Copyright © 2000 Princeton University Press.

Taylor & Francis Ltd for the essays: Julian Rushton (1972), 'The Theory and Practice of Piccinnisme', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, **98**, pp. 31–46. Copyright © 1972 The Royal Musical Association and the Authors; Dexter Edge (1991), 'Mozart's Fee for *Così fan tutte*', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, **116**, pp. 211–35.

Every effort has been made to trace all the copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangement at the first opportunity.

Series Preface

The Ashgate Library of Essays in Opera Studies draws together articles and essays from a disparate group of scholarly journals and collected volumes, some now difficult to locate. This reprint series comprises an authoritative set of six volumes: one devoted to the seventeenth century, two to the eighteenth century, two to the nineteenth century, and one to the twentieth/twenty-first centuries. Each volume has been edited by a recognized authority in the area and offers a selection of the most important and influential English-language scholarship in opera studies.

Each volume editor provides a substantial, detailed introduction surveying the current state of the field, giving an overview of important issues and new discoveries, and explaining the significance of the texts in the collection. There is also a select bibliography of the sources cited in each introduction. Because of the nature of the scholarship and the operatic repertory for different times and places, volumes are organized in differing ways designed to serve readers' needs and to embrace various topics and approaches as appropriate to the repertory of diverse eras.

Recent years have witnessed an acute awareness of the nature of scholarship about opera; those who have reflected on the issues surrounding the genre's study have changed the course of scholarship in significant ways. The new perspectives on opera scholarship that writers (from various disciplines) have contributed bring together the best of both musical and non-musical criticism. The rich and varied selection of approaches represented in the collection – addressing sources, works, audiences, performers, creators, culture, and theory – deal with operatic works as historical and contemporary entities with aesthetic, theoretical, and ideological complexities.

No particular method or approach is favoured or excluded in these volumes; the series thus provides researchers, scholars, and graduate students throughout the world with fairly comprehensive coverage of currently important topics and approaches. Presented in a compact, easy-to-access format, this series is especially useful for scholars new to the area as well as for experienced scholars who may have overlooked an important essay published in a journal with limited circulation.

ROBERTA MONTEMORRA MARVIN
Series Editor


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Introduction

The study of opera in the second half of the eighteenth century has flourished during the last several decades, and our knowledge of the operas written during that period and of their aesthetic, social and political contexts has vastly increased. Much of what we have learned in these and other areas of scholarship has been recorded in the form of articles published in scholarly journals and in collections of essays. This volume will explore opera and operatic life in the years 1750–1800 through several English-language essays, in a selection intended to represent the last few decades of scholarship in all its excitement and variety.

This introduction provides some context for the essays that follow. It briefly discusses some of the institutional developments and intellectual trends that have informed scholarship in eighteenth-century opera and mentions some of the criteria that have guided my choice of the essays reprinted here.

National Traditions, Academic Institutions

Although scholars in all the English-speaking countries have been actively involved in research in opera of the second half of the eighteenth century, some countries seem to have developed particular specializations and strengths, thanks in part to the presence of especially productive and influential scholars. In England, for example, Julian Rushton's work on *tragédie lyrique* and David Charlton's on *opéra-comique* have helped the study of French opera thrive. In the United States, in contrast, research on Italian opera, both comic and serious, has prospered under the leadership of scholars such as Daniel Heartz and James Webster. Americans who have specialized in French opera, such as Elizabeth C. Bartlet and Karin Pendle, and Britons who have specialized in Italian opera, such as Michael Robinson, have led productive careers, but mostly on their own.

Certain graduate programmes have produced particularly large numbers of successful students of eighteenth-century opera. Cornell University, in Ithaca, New York, is remarkable in this respect. Although no member of its faculty claims eighteenth-century opera as his or her primary field of study, several Cornell students, including Caryl Clark, Paul Horsley, Mary Hunter, Pierpaolo Polzonetti, Ronald J. Rabin and Jessica Waldoff, have written dissertations in the field. Just as productive has been the University of California, Berkeley, where Heartz has directed the dissertations of several students who have gone on to make important contributions to the study of eighteenth-century opera, including Thomas Bauman, Bruce Alan Brown, Kathleen Hansell, Marita P. McClymonds and John A. Rice.

Cornell students have tended to devote their dissertations to the relatively familiar genre of *opera buffa* and to the works of Mozart (Waldoff, 1995; Rabin, 1996) and Haydn (Hunter, 1982; Clark, 1991). Horsley's dissertation on Dittersdorf's German operas (1988) and Polzonetti's on *opera buffa* and the American Revolution (2003) are exceptional in directing readers' attention away from Mozart and Haydn. Berkeley students, in contrast, have tended

to look farther afield: to composers such as Gluck (Brown, 1986) or Jommelli (McClymonds, 1978), to operatic centres such as Milan (Hansell, 1979) or Florence (Rice, 1987), and to genres such as *Singspiel* (Bauman, 1977), *opera seria* (McClymonds, 1978; Hansell, 1979; Rice, 1987) and *opéra-comique* (Brown, 1986). The intellectual ferment generated in 1994 by a conference at Cornell on *opera buffa* in Mozart's Vienna was partly a result of its having brought together the Berkeley and Cornell 'schools' in friendly collaboration (see Hunter and Webster, 1997).

Another important development over the last few decades has been the arrival of young Italian scholars in American graduate schools. Having taken advantage of both Italy's excellent system of elementary and secondary education and the professional training in which a few American graduate programmes still excel, scholars such as Polzonetti, Alessandra Campana, Stefano Castelvecchi and Sergio Durante have contributed a great deal to our understanding of eighteenth-century opera.

Aesthetics and Dramaturgy

Most opera lovers are familiar with only a few operas written during the second half of the eighteenth century. Even some of those who know and love the late operas of Mozart may not be thoroughly familiar with the aesthetic and dramaturgical systems that underlie these and other operas. Most if not all essays about opera in this period deal, at least implicitly, with problems of aesthetics and dramaturgy. But some confront those problems more openly than others, and this book opens with a sample of such essays.

In Chapter 1 Rushton elegantly and perceptively brings the abstractions of a Parisian pamphlet war of the 1770s into contact with the works by Niccolò Piccinni that were the subject of debate. Raymond Monelle, in Chapter 2, furthers our understanding of the function of recitative and the relationship between recitative and aria in *opera seria*. The happy ending so prevalent in eighteenth-century dramaturgy is one of the subjects explored by Bauman in Chapter 3, a stimulating study of German operatic treatments of the story of Romeo and Juliet. Chapter 4, Webster's typically thought-provoking essay on the problem of musical unity in Mozart's operas, calls attention to the difference between the way an opera is perceived when studied in a score and when heard and seen in performance.

Singers

One of the fields of research that has been cultivated with particular energy and originality (especially in the United States) is the study of singers and their role in operatic production. With the help of Claudio Sartori's catalogue of Italian librettos published before 1800 (1990–94), a new and immensely valuable research tool that appeared in seven volumes, scholars have reconstructed, with more detail and accuracy than previously possible, the careers of many of the period's greatest singers. From the music written for these singers historians have extracted vocal profiles that allow us to interpret the music they sang as the product of interaction between a composer's imagination and a singer's vocal abilities and artistic personality.

Here again Heartz has led the way, with his early essay on Anton Raaff, the tenor who created the title role in *Idomeneo* (Chapter 5). His student Patricia Lewy Gidwitz wrote an important dissertation (1991) and published some of her most valuable insights in two essays, one on Caterina Cavalieri and Aloysia Lange, reprinted here as Chapter 7, the other on Adriana Ferrarese del Bene (1996). Other historians have focused more attention on *opera seria* singers. Dennis Libby (1989) asserted the primacy of vocal improvisation in the production of serious opera in Naples and Venice. In Chapter 6 Dale Monson shows how the male soprano Ferdinando Tenducci contributed to the shaping of the music written for him. Paul Corneilson and Rice have followed the careers and analysed the vocal profiles of some of the women who created roles in Mozart's *Idomeneo* (Corneilson, Chapter 8, this volume) and *La clemenza di Tito* (Rice, 1995). Bauman (1991) has shown how a single singer, Valentin Adamberger, brought a distinct vocal profile to his work in a wide variety of vocal genres, from *Singspiel* to Italian oratorio. Dorothea Link has directed much of her interest in singers who created roles in Mozart's *opere buffe* into the production of editions of arias written for those singers by composers other than Mozart (beginning with Link, 2002 and Link, 2004; others are forthcoming). Among her essays on singers active in Vienna during the 1780s is a study of Anna Morichelli, who created roles in several operas by Vicente Martín y Soler (Link, 2010).

Arias and Ensembles

Another fruitful field of study has been the close analysis of arias both as musical form and as dramatic expression. Aria types such as the *buffo* aria, the two-tempo *rondò* and the *cavatina* are all more clearly understood now than they were thirty years ago, in terms not only of their musical and poetic structure but also of the way they contribute to characterization and the unfolding drama. Webster's encyclopedic survey of the types and forms of arias in Mozart's operas (1991) built on Hunter's work on Haydn's arias (1982, 1989) and John Platoff's on Mozart and his compositional contemporaries in 1780s Vienna (1990). Heartz's study of Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* as a product of a musical culture that Mozart shared with leading Italian composers of the 1780s and 1790s (1978–79) focused attention on the two-tempo *rondò* as an aria of particular importance to singers and audiences alike. The *rondò* was subsequently the object of a great deal of scholarly attention. Rice (1986) analysed an influential early example of the aria type, Giuseppe Sarti's 'Mia speranza io pur vorrei'. John Platoff (1991b) examined a poem that Lorenzo Da Ponte intended for Mozart to set as a two-tempo *rondò* for Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* ('Non tardar amato bene') but that ended up being composed not by Mozart but by Vincenzo Righini. Don Neville (1994) surveyed the two-tempo *rondò* in Mozart's late operas.

Equally productive has been the study of ensembles, from duets to finales. In Chapter 23 Scott Balthazar follows the development of the *opera seria* duet from the mid-eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century in one of several essays on ensembles in serious opera that also include Heartz (1980) on the quartet 'Andrò ramingo e solo' in Mozart's *Idomeneo* and McClymonds (1996) on the *Idomeneo* quartet viewed within the tradition of quartets in *opera seria*. Platoff (1989, 1991a, 1997) has increased our understanding of the ensembles in Mozart's comic operas in a rich series of essays. Elisabeth Cook (1992), a student of Charlton at the University of East Anglia, has shown that research on eighteenth-century

operatic ensembles is by no means limited to Italian opera in her study of ensembles in *opéra-comique.*

Sensibility, Sentiment and the Pastoral

A cult of sensibility spread through Europe during the second third of the eighteenth century, partly in reaction to the Enlightenment's emphasis on reason, partly in response to the Enlightenment's confidence in the innate goodness of human nature. Like so many eighteenth-century fashions, the cult of sensibility owed a great deal to England. Richardson's novels made sensibility – defined by Diderot's *Encyclopédie* as 'disposition tendre et delicate de l'âme, qui la rend facile à être émue, à être touchée' ('a tender, delicate disposition of the soul that makes it susceptible to being moved, to being touched') – an emotional state that was cultivated by sophisticated people all over Europe. Several historians have investigated the effect of the cult of sensibility on the creation and perception of opera. Rice (1986) called attention to the way in which the cult of sensibility shaped the reception of a great singer's performance in a serious opera in Milan, but another essay published the previous year, dealing with the role of sensibility in *opera buffa*, excited much more interest: Hunter's essay (Chapter 9) on Richardson's *Pamela* and how it and in particular the sensibility of his heroine influenced eighteenth-century opera initiated a remarkable series of studies during the following two decades, including Castelvecchi (Chapter 11) on Nina as sentimental heroine in operas by Dalayrac and Paisiello, Edmund Goehring (Chapter 13) on sensibility in Viennese *opera buffa* of the 1780s, Waldoff (1998) on Haydn's *La vera costanza* and Castelvecchi (2000) on Mozart's *Figaro*.

Closely related to eighteenth-century opera's adoption of the cult of sensibility was its exploitation of pastoral themes. An idealized natural world in which people live in harmony with nature and with each other – the mythical Arcadia of pastoral poets –served as the setting of many eighteenth-century operas and provided important thematic elements to others. Bartlet (1984–85) called attention to the importance of the pastoral in an opera written to celebrate the marriage of Marie Antoinette to the dauphin of France, Grétry's *La rosière de Salency*. Among Mozart's operas, pastoral elements of two in particular – *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Così fan tutte* – have attracted the attention of scholars, including Wye Jamison Allanbrook (Chapter 10), Goehring (1995) and Link (Chapter 12). Bauman (1995), in a more widely ranging exploration of the pastoral in eighteenth-century music, starts, unexpectedly, with a famous painting by the seventeenth-century artist Poussin.

Orientalism and Exoticism

In yet another productive area of study, historians have analysed the depiction of non-Western cultures in opera, exploring themes of orientalism and exoticism in works such as Haydn's *Lo speziale*, Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Salieri's *Axur re d'Ormus*. Interest in the way non-European culture is depicted in these and other operas is part of a wider scholarly interest in musical exoticism that has produced a collection of essays on the exotic in Western music (Bellman, 1998). Included in that book is an essay by Hunter (1998) (devoted only partly to opera), which concerns a kind of musical

exoticism – the attempt to convey some of the sonic qualities of Turkish janissary music – that was particularly characteristic of the second half of the eighteenth century. Other English-language analyses of exoticism in opera include Thomas Betzwieser (1994) on changes that Beaumarchais and Salieri made to their *Tarare* during the French Revolution, Margaret R. Butler (2006) on De Maio's *Motezuma* in Turin and two essays reprinted here – Chapter 14 by Benjamin Perl, on Mozart's Turkish style, and Chapter 15 by Polzonetti, on operas set in the New World.

Genre Studies

The differences between the operatic genres that flourished in the eighteenth century – *opera buffa*, *opera seria*, *Singspiel*, *opéra-comique*, *tragédie lyrique* – and the relations between these genres have inspired many important essays. Bertil van Boer (1988) analysed the influence of English ballad opera on the development of *Singspiel* in Germany in the middle of the century; Alfred R. Neumann (1963) followed the subsequent evolution of the genre. Robinson (1978–81) and Rice (2000) discussed a subgenre of Italian comic opera, the Roman *intermezzo*, that had not received much attention from scholars. Although most of Robinson's work has involved Italian opera, he has by no means limited his research to Italy; in an essay published in 1992 he showed how Italian comic opera contributed to the development of French opera. Stephen C. Willis's study of Luigi Cherubini's transition from *opera seria* to *opéra-comique* (1982) is yet another study of generic influence and transformation in Paris during the second half of the eighteenth century.

But perhaps the generic interaction that has proved most stimulating to writers on opera has been the interaction between *opera seria* and *opera buffa*, and especially *opera buffa*'s incorporation of elements of *opera seria*. To what extent does that incorporation involve parody? And what does the parody signify? Hunter (1986, 1991) has been particularly active in exploring relations between serious and comic in Italian opera. The interaction between serious and comic in Haydn's operas has been the subject of studies by Brown (1987), on *Orlando Paladino*, and Clark (1993), on *La fedeltà premiata*.

Opera and Politics

As with any theatrical performance involving an audience, no matter how small or select, the performance of an opera is a political act, with the potential for communicating political messages of many kinds and in many directions. Rarely are such messages completely clear and unambiguous, but that has not kept scholars from trying to elucidate the political implications of eighteenth-century opera.

One of the ways rulers manipulated opera's ability to communicate political meaning was through censorship. This is the subject of Chapter 16 by Bartlet, which examines the controversy surrounding an opera by Méhul that during the French Revolution was suspected of encouraging Royalist sympathies. Betzwieser (1994) also looked at an opera through the lens of French Revolutionary politics. Bauman (1986) showed how the early repertory of the Teatro la Fenice reflected the political situation in late eighteenth-century Venice, and this essay strongly influenced a later discussion of Venetian opera in the same period by Martha

Feldman (2007). Opera was no less powerful a conveyer of political meaning in the German-speaking part of Europe, as Estelle Joubert demonstrates in Chapter 17 on the political implications of Hiller's *Singspiele*.

Manuscript Studies

Another important development in the study of eighteenth-century opera – largely independent of the Cornell and Berkeley 'schools', neither of which has encouraged this kind of research – has been the study of music manuscripts. Alan Tyson, in a stimulating series of essays written during the 1970s and 1980s, shed new light on Mozart's autographs and the paper on which they are written. His catalogue of the watermarks in the paper that Mozart used constituted another monumental contribution to our knowledge of the autograph scores (Tyson, 1992). Dexter Edge's doctoral dissertation (2001) on Mozart's Viennese copyists did for manuscript copies (that is, the work of professional copyists) what Tyson had done for the autographs: it made available vast amounts of new information and important methodological insights whose influence will undoubtedly be felt for a long time – and not only by Mozart scholars. Corneilson and Eugene K. Wolf (1994) brought similar methodological rigour to their study of operatic sources from Mannheim, one of eighteenth-century Germany's most important courts. David J. Buch (1997) has subjected the manuscripts associated with the Theater auf der Wieden (the theatre for which Mozart wrote *Die Zauberflöte*) to intensive investigation, while Daniel Melamed (2003–2004) has extended Tyson's analytical techniques to Mozart's *Singspiel, Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.

Staging, Scenery, Orchestras, Theatres

In an age in which opera houses have largely abdicated the staging of opera to directors who seem neither to know nor to care how librettists and composers intended their works to be staged, historians have had little practical reason to elucidate the principles and practices of eighteenth-century stage design. Yet many of them have done so, perhaps with the hope of offering historically-informed alternatives to the often trashy *Regietheater* that predominates in so many prestigious theatres today, in grotesque contrast to the faithfulness to the score with which singers and orchestras are expected to perform the music.

Thanks to the work of several scholars we know more than ever about the theatres in which eighteenth-century operas were performed. Heartz (1982) has elucidated the construction and remodelling of Vienna's Burgtheater; Corneilson (1997) has done the same for a theatre that Charles Burney called 'one of the largest and most splendid theatres in Europe', the Mannheim Court Theatre. While Corneilson's reconstruction took place in his scholarly imagination, Curtis Price *et al*. (1991) examined the actual design and construction of the King's Theatre, Haymarket, in the period 1789–91.

Several essays have explored the size and composition of the orchestras and choruses that performed in these and other theatres: examples include Butler (Chapter 26) on the chorus at Parma that took part in the important series of French-inspired Italian serious operas during the 1760s, Charlton (1985) on the orchestra and chorus of one of Paris's leading theatres in

the second half of the eighteenth century, and Edge (1992) on the orchestras that accompanied Mozart's Viennese operas.

How operas were staged in the eighteenth century has been the subject of numerous studies. Sven Hansell (1974), Roger Savage (1998) and Nicholas Solomon (1989) have contributed to our knowledge of the positions, movements and gestures of the singers on the eighteenth-century stage. Betzwieser (2000) has shown how music and action corresponded in French opera, with each enhancing the effect of the other. Clark (2003) has identified a set of eighteenth-century costume designs as possibly intended for a production of Salieri's early opera, *Armida*. Such studies, valuable now, will be even more valuable when opera houses and audiences, having tired of the antics of *Regietheater*, discover that eighteenth-century operas can best be appreciated when presented in settings that respect the visual as well as the musical conventions within which they were conceived.

Archival Studies

Archival research has greatly enhanced our understanding of eighteenth-century opera's institutional history, allowing scholars to shed new light on the role of rulers, courts and impresarios in the production of opera. Among several historians who have profitably worked in Italian archives are Butler (2002, for Turin; Chapter 26, this volume, for Parma), Robinson (1990, for Naples) and Anthony DelDonna (2002, also for Naples). Edge has made many important discoveries in the archives of Vienna, including those presented and analysed in Chapter 18, his study of the fees that Mozart and other composers received for composing operas for the court theatres in the 1780s and early 1790s. Historians of opera in England have been just as willing to get their hands dirty, producing a large number of essays based largely on hitherto unknown archival documents (see, for example, Gibson, 1990; Milhous and Hume,1997). Several historians have intensively studied the origins of particular operas, and these studies have generally depended, in part, on archival research. Brown (1983, 2000) explored the origins of important Viennese operas of the 1760s; Durante (1999) clarified our understanding of how one of Mozart's last operas, *La clemenza di Tito*, came into being.

Mozart and his Viennese Contemporaries

It will be obvious to anyone who has read up to this point that Mozart's operas have been a focus of attention for many – probably most – of the historians who have studied opera of the second half of the eighteenth century.

One way of illustrating the wealth of scholarship on Mozart's operas published during the last quarter of a century is to mention some of the English-language essays about a single opera, *Le nozze di Figaro*. Some of these essays discuss the origins of *Figaro* (Tyson, 1981; Heartz, 1986b); some are concerned with its large-scale structure (Heartz, 1987; Waldoff and Webster, 1996); some focus our attention on sentiment and sensibility (Allanbrook, Chapter 10, this volume; Castelvecchi, 2000); some examine individual arias and ensembles (Heartz, 1991; Platoff, 1991a; Leeson, 2004; see also two pieces written in response to Leeson's essay: Woodfield, 2006 and Rumph, 2006); some direct attention to particular characters, such as Susanna (Tishkoff, 1990), the Countess (Hunter, 1997) or Figaro (Rabin, 1997). One could

easily draw up equally long lists, full of equally intriguing titles, of essays on *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* and *Die Zauberflöte*.

Mozart's operas have also played an important role in studies that compare them with the works of his contemporaries, or that study those works in order to understand the context of Mozart's operatic achievement. Most of the essays on Mozart's singers mentioned earlier in this introduction involve the analysis of music written for those singers by composers other than Mozart. Link (Chapter 12) examines Martín y Soler's *L'arbore di Diana* and proposes it as a possible model for *Così fan tutte*; in Chapter 19 and elsewhere Platoff has produced valuable studies of the musical techniques of *opera buffa* in Vienna during the 1780s (see also Platoff, 1989, 1990, 1991a, 1991b). Buch, in Chapter 21, shows how *Die Zauberflöte* took shape within and reflects the dramatic and musical values of Emanuel Schikaneder's troupe at the Theater auf der Wieden (see also Buch,1997). In Chapter 20 Brown and Rice discuss Salieri's aborted attempt to set to music the libretto that later became known, in Mozart's setting, as *Così fan tutte*.

Opera Seria

No operatic genre has enjoyed a more dramatic increase in the amount of scholarly attention it has received during the last thirty years than Italian serious opera, and this attention has produced not only valuable dissertations and books but also essays. As in so many other areas of research into eighteenth-century opera, Heartz (1970) set an example with a path-breaking publication that put *opera seria* at the forefront of musical life and stylistic change; he continued with a series of classic essays, including Chapter 5 in this volume, that followed the evolution of the genre from Hasse to Mozart and elucidated some of its most characteristic elements (Heartz, 1978–79, 1978–81, 1980, 1986a). Many of Heartz's students have contributed to our knowledge of *opera seria* and related genres – for example, Bauman (1986) on the building and the early repertory of the Teatro la Fenice in late eighteenth-century Venice, Brown (2000) on Hasse's *Alcide al Bivio* and Hansell (2000) on the operas that Mozart wrote for Milan in the early 1770s.

But easily the most prolific of Heartz's students in the area of *opera seria* has been McClymonds, whose essays if reprinted together would constitute an outstanding history of the genre. Chapter 22 is her 1989 essay on new trends in Venetian *opera seria* at the end of the eighteenth century. Among the finest of those that have not already been cited are her essays on Jommelli's late operas (McClymonds, 1980), on the increasing popularity of tragic endings in Venetian opera of the 1790s (McClymonds, 1990), on operas based on the story of Armida (McClymonds, 1993), comparing the musical styles of *opera seria* and *opera buffa* (McClymonds, 1997) and on the reform of *opera seria* in Italy (McClymonds, 2003).

The research on *opera seria* by Heartz and his students has inspired further work by many scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. But while members of the Berkeley 'school' have generally shown equal interest in the music of Mozart and his contemporaries, most others have focused on one or the other. Feldman's research on serious opera in Italy has resulted not only in a magisterial book (2007) but also in several important essays, including that reprinted here as Chapter 25 (see also Feldman, 1995). Other essays devoted mostly or entirely to opera in Italy include Butler's studies of repertory and production in Turin and Parma (in particular Chapter 26; see also Butler, 2002, 2006) and Balthazar's study of the evolution of the *opera*

seria duet (Chapter 23). Chapter 24 by Durante is among the essays that mainly concern Mozart's *opere serie* (see also Rushton, 1991, 1998, 2003; Durante, 1999). (Rushton is unusual in moving freely between *opera buffa*, *opera seria* and *tragédie lyrique*, and in demonstrating the same level of expertise in writing about all three genres.) Corneilson, though not a student of Heartz, has followed the Berkeley historian in studying the *opere serie* of Mozart (see Chapter 8) and others, such as J.C. Bach (Corneilson, 1994), with equal success.

Essay Selection

It will be obvious that I have not been able to include in this book all the essays mentioned in this introduction. Both to maximize the number of items in this volume and because I believe that brevity is a quality to be valued in essays, I have limited my selection to essays of thirty pages or less. This has meant omitting many of the important essays that I have mentioned already, such as those by Buch (1997), Durante (1999), Feldman (1995), Waldoff (1998), Waldoff and Webster (1996) and Webster (1991). A particularly influential and widely admired essay that I have not included because of its length is that by Libby (1989) on opera in Naples and Venice. I have chosen essays that have not already been republished, either in anthologies or in collections of papers by a single author. This has kept out some of the best essays by the field's busiest cultivators. Many of Heartz's essays on Mozart's opera have been collected in one volume (Heartz,1990); many others can be conveniently read together (Heartz, 2004). Most of Charlton's numerous essays on *opéra-comique* have been reprinted (Charlton, 2000) and most of Tyson's manuscript studies have been brought together (Tyson, 1987).

Finally, to maximize the variety of voices to be heard in this volume, each scholar is represented here by a single essay. This is, of course, grossly unfair to the several scholars who have written many essays that, if I were judging by quality and importance alone, should be included here. Limiting myself, for illustrative purposes, to just three prolific and original students of eighteenth-century opera, and citing only essays that I have not already mentioned in this introduction, it is with regret that I have omitted Bauman's essay on the conditions in Vienna in the mid-1780s that led to exceptional achievements in *opera buffa* (1993), Hunter's study of 'Gothic' settings in *opera buffa* of the 1770s (1993) and Platoff's analysis of tonal planning in Mozart's operas (1996). An anthology of essays by Bauman, Hunter and Platoff alone would make a fine, large book.

Selected Bibliography

Bartlet, Elizabeth C. (1984–85), 'Grétry, Marie Antoinette and *La rosière de Salency*', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, **111**, pp. 92–120.

Bauman, Thomas (1977), 'Music and Drama in Germany: The Repertory of a Traveling Company, 1767–1781', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Bauman, Thomas (1981), 'Benda, the Germans, and Simple Recitative', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **34**, pp. 119–31.

Bauman, Thomas (1986), 'The Society of La Fenice and its First Impresarios', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **39**, pp. 332–54.

Bauman, Thomas (1991), 'Mozart's Belmonte', *Early Music*, **19**, pp. 557–63.

Bauman, Thomas (1993), 'Salieri, Da Ponte and Mozart: The Renewal of Viennese *Opera Buffa* in the 1780s', in Ingrid Fuchs (ed.), *Internationaler Musikwissenschaftlicher Kongreß zum Mozartjahr 1991, Baden-Wien: Bericht*, Tutzing: Schneider, pp. 65–70.

Bauman, Thomas (1995), 'Moralizing at the Tomb: Poussin's Arcadian Shepherds in Eighteenth-Century England and Germany', in Thomas Bauman and Marita P. McClymonds (eds), *Opera and the Enlightenment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 23–42.

Bellman, Jonathan (ed.) (1998), *The Exotic in Western Music*, Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Betzwieser, Thomas (1994), 'Exoticism and Politics: Beaumarchais' and Salieri's *Le couronnement de Tarare*, 1790', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **6**, pp. 91–112.

Betzwieser, Thomas (2000), 'Musical Setting and Scenic Movement: Chorus and *Choeur dancé* in Eighteenth-Century Parisian Opera', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **12**, pp. 1–28.

Boer, Bertil van (1988), 'Coffey's *The Devil to Pay*, the Comic War, and the Emergence of the German Singspiel', *Journal of Musicological Research*, **8**, pp. 119–39.

Brown, Bruce Alan (1983), 'Gluck's *La Rencontre imprevue* and its Revisions', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **36**, pp. 498–515.

Brown, Bruce Alan (1986), 'Christoph Willibald Gluck and *Opéra comique* in Vienna, 1754–1764', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Brown, Bruce Alan (1987), '*Le pazzie d'Orlando*, *Orlando Paladino*, and the Uses of Parody', *Italica*, **64**, pp. 583–605.

Brown, Bruce Alan (2000), '"Mon opéra italien": Giacomo Durazzo and the Genesis of *Alcide al Bivio*', in Andrea Sommer-Mathis and Elisabeth Theresia Hilscher (eds), *Pietro Metastasio: Uomo universale (1698–1782)*, Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 115–42.

Buch, David J. (1997), 'Mozart and the Theater auf der Wieden: New Attributions and Perspectives', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **9**, pp. 195–232.

Butler, Margaret (2002), 'Administration and Innovation at Turin's Teatro Regio: Producing *Sofonisba* (1764) and *Oreste* (1766)', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **14**, pp. 243–62.

Butler, Margaret (2006), 'Exoticism in Eighteenth-Century Turinese Opera: *Motezuma* in context', in Mara E. Parker (ed.), *Music in Eighteenth-Century Cities, Courts, Churches*, Ann Arbor, MI: Steglein, pp. 105–124.

Castelvecchi, Stefano (2000), 'Sentimental and Anti-Sentimental in *Le nozze di Figaro*', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **53**, pp. 1–24.

Charlton, David (1985), 'Orchestra and Chorus at the Comédie Italienne, 1755–99', in Malcolm Brown and Roland Wiley (eds), *Slavonic and Western Music: Essays for Gerald Abraham*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 87–108.

Charlton, David (2000), *French Opera, 1730–1830: Meaning and Media*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Clark, Caryl (1991), 'The *Opera Buffa* Finales of Joseph Haydn', PhD diss., Cornell University.

Clark, Caryl (1993), 'Intertextual Play and Haydn's *La fedeltà premiata*', *Current Musicology*, **51**, pp. 59–81.

Clark, Caryl (2003), 'Fabricating Magic: Costuming Salieri's *Armida*', *Early Music*, **31**, pp. 451–62.

Cook, Elisabeth (1992), 'Developments in Vocal Ensemble Compositon in *Opéra-comique*', in Philippe Vendrix (ed.), *Grétry et l'Europe de l'opéra-comique*, Liège: Pierre Mardaga, pp. 113–92.

Corneilson, Paul (1994), 'The Case of J.C. Bach's *Lucio Silla*', *Journal of Musicology*, **12**, pp. 206–18.

Corneilson, Paul (1997), 'Reconstructing the Mannheim Court Theater', *Early Music*, **35**, pp. 63–68, 70–76, 79–81.

Corneilson, Paul and Wolf, Eugene K. (1994), 'Newly Identified Manuscripts of Operas and Related Works from Mannheim', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **47**, pp. 244–74.

DelDonna, Anthony (2002), 'Behind the Scenes: The Musical Life and Organizational Structure of the San Carlo Opera Orchestra in Late Eighteenth-Century Naples', in Paologiovanni Maione (ed.),

Le fonti d'archivio per la storia della musica a Napoli dal XVI al XVIII secolo, Naples: Editoriale Scientifica, pp. 427–48.

Durante, Sergio (1999), 'The Chronology of Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* Reconsidered', *Music & Letters*, **80**, pp. 560–94.

Edge, Dexter (1992), 'Mozart's Viennese Orchestras', *Early Music*, **20**, pp. 64–65, 67–69, 71–88.

Edge, Dexter (2001), 'Mozart's Viennese Copyists', PhD diss., University of Southern California.

Feldman, Martha (1995), 'Magic Mirrors and the *Seria* Stage: Thoughts Toward a Ritual View', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **48**, pp. 423–84.

Feldman, Martha (2007), *Opera and Sovereignty: Transforming Myths in Eighteenth-Century Italy*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gibson, Elizabeth (1990), 'Italian Opera in London, 1750–75: Management and Finances', *Early Music*, **18**, pp. 47–59.

Gidwitz, Patricia Lewy (1991), 'Vocal Profiles of Four Mozart's Sopranos', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Gidwitz, Patricia Lewy (1996), 'Mozart's Fiordiligi: Adriana Ferrarese del Bene', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **8**, pp. 199–214.

Goehring, Edmund (1995), 'Despina, Cupid, and the Pastoral Mode of *Così fan tutte*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **7**, pp. 107–33.

Hansell, Kathleen (1979), 'Opera and Ballet at the Regio Ducal Teatro of Milan, 1771–1776: A Musical and Social History', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Hansell, Kathleen (2000), 'Mozart's Milanese Theatrical Works', in Susan Parisi (ed.), *Music in the Theater, Church, and Villa: Essays in Honor of Robert Lamar Weaver and Norma Wright Weaver*, Warren, MI: Harmonie Park Press, pp. 195–212.

Hansell, Sven (1974), 'Stage Deportment and Scenographic Design in the Italian *Opera Seria* of the *Settecento*', in Henrik Glahn, Søren Sørensen and Peter Ryom (eds), *Report of the 11th Congress of the International Musicological Society, Copenhagen 1972*, Copenhagen: Hansen, I, pp. 415–24.

Heartz, Daniel (1970), 'Opera and the Periodization of Eighteenth-Century Music', in Dragotin Cvetko (ed.), *Report of the 10th Congress of the International Musicological Society, Ljubljana, 1967*, Kassel: Bärenreiter, pp. 160–68.

Heartz, Daniel (1978–79), 'Mozart and his Italian Contemporaries: *La clemenza di Tito*', *Mozart-Jahrbuch* , pp. 275–93. Rpt in Daniel Heartz (1990), *Mozart's Operas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 298–317.

Heartz, Daniel (1978–81), 'Hasse, Galuppi, and Metastasio', in Maria Teresa Muraro (ed.), *Venezia e il melodramma nel Settecento*, Florence: Olschki, I, pp. 309–40.

Heartz, Daniel (1980), 'The Great Quartet in *Idomeneo*', *Music Forum*, **5**, pp. 233–56.

Heartz, Daniel (1982), 'Nicolas Jadot and the Building of the Burgtheater', *The Musical Quarterly*, **68**, pp. 1–31.

Heartz, Daniel (1986a), 'Metastasio, "Maestro dei maestri di cappella dramatici"', in Maria Teresa Muraro (ed.), *Metastasio e il mondo musicale*, Florence: Olschki, pp. 315–38. Rpt in Daniel Heartz (2004), *From Garrick to Gluck: Essays on Opera in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. John A. Rice, Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon, pp. 69–83.

Heartz, Daniel (1986b) 'Setting the Stage for *Figaro*', *Musical Times*, **127**, pp. 256–60. Rpt in Daniel Heartz (1990), *Mozart's Operas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 122–31.

Heartz, Daniel (1987), 'Constructing *Le nozze di Figaro*', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, **112**, pp. 77–98. Rpt in Daniel Heartz (1990), *Mozart's Operas*, Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 132–55.

Heartz, Daniel (1990), *Mozart's Operas*, ed., with contributing essays, ed. Thomas Bauman, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Heartz, Daniel (1991), 'Susanna's Hat', *Early Music*, **19**, pp. 585–89.

Heartz, Daniel (2004), *From Garrick to Gluck: Essays on Opera in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. John A. Rice, Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon.
Horsley, Paul (1988), 'Dittersdorf and the Finale in Late-Eighteenth-Century German Comic Opera', PhD diss., Cornell University
Hunter, Mary (1982), 'Haydn's Aria Forms: A Study of the Arias in the Italian Operas Written at Eszterháza, 1766–1783', PhD diss., Cornell University.
Hunter, Mary (1986), 'The Fusion and Juxtaposition of Genres in *Opera Buffa*, 1770–1800: Anelli and Piccinni's *Griselda*', *Music & Letters*, **67**, pp. 363–80.
Hunter, Mary (1989), 'Text, Music, and Drama in Haydn's Italian Opera Arias: Four Case Studies', *Journal of Musicology*, **7**, pp. 29–57.
Hunter, Mary (1991), 'Some Representations of *Opera Seria* in *Opera Buffa*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **3**, pp. 89–108.
Hunter, Mary (1993), 'Landscapes, Gardens and Gothic Settings in the *Opere Buffe* of Mozart and his Italian Contemporaries', *Current Musicology*, **51**, pp. 94–104.
Hunter, Mary (1997), 'Rousseau, the Countess, and the Female Domain', in Cliff Eisen (ed.), *Mozart Studies 2*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–26.
Hunter, Mary (1998), 'The *Alla Turca* Style in the Late Eighteenth Century: Race and Gender in the Symphony and the Seraglio', in Jonathan Bellman (ed.), *The Exotic in Western Music*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, pp. 43–73.
Hunter, Mary and Webster, James (eds) (1997), *Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Leeson, Daniel (2004), 'Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*: A Hidden Dramatic Detail', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, **1**, pp. 301–304.
Libby, Dennis (1989), 'Italy: Two Opera Centres', in Neal Zaslaw (ed.), *The Classical Era: From the 1740s to the End of the 18th Century*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 15–60.
Link, Dorothea (2002), *Arias for Nancy Storace*, Middleton, WI: A-R Editions
Link, Dorothea (2004), *Arias for Francesco Benucci*, Middleton, WI: A-R Editions
Link, Dorothea (2010), 'La cantante Anna Morichelli, paladín de Vicente Martín y Soler', in Dorothea Link and Leonardo J. Waisman (eds.), *Los siete mundos de Vicente Martín y Soler*, Valencia: Institut Valencia de la Musica, pp. 328-62.
McClymonds, Marita P. (1978), 'Niccolò Jommelli: The Last Years', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.
McClymonds, Marita P. (1980), 'The Evolution of Jommelli's Operatic Style', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, **33**, pp. 326–55.
McClymonds, Marita P. (1990), '*La morte di Semiramide, ossia La vendetta di Nino* and the Restoration of Death and Tragedy to the Italian Operatic Stage in the 1780s and '90s'', in Angelo Pompilio *et al.* (eds), *Atti del XIV congresso della Società Internazionale di Musicologia, Bologna, 1987: Trasmissione e recezione delle forme di cultura musicale*, Turin: EDT, Part 3, pp. 285–92.
McClymonds, Marita P. (1993), 'Haydn and the *Opera Seria* Tradition: *Armida*', in Bianca Maria Antolini and Wolfgang Witzenmann (eds), *Napoli e il teatro musicale in Europa tra Sette e Ottocento: Studi in onore di Friedrich Lippmann*, Florence: Olschki, pp. 191–206.
McClymonds, Marita P. (1996), 'The Great Quartet in *Idomeneo* and the Italian *Opera Seria* Tradition', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *Wolfgang Amadè Mozart: Essays on his Life and his Music*, Oxford: Clarendon, pp. 449–76.
McClymonds, Marita P. (1997), '*Opera seria*? *Opera buffa*? Genre and Style as Sign', in Mary Hunter and James Webster (eds), *Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 197–231.

McClymonds, Marita P. (2003), 'Opera Reform in Italy, 1750–80', in Bianca Maria Antolini, Teresa M. Gialdroni and Annunziato Pugliese (eds), *'Et facciam dolci canti': Studi in onore di Agostino Ziino in occasione del suo 65° compleanno*, Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, II, pp. 895–912.

Melamed, Daniel (2003–2004), 'Evidence on the Genesis of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* from Mozart's Autograph Score', *Mozart-Jahrbuch*, pp. 25–42.

Milhous, Judith and Hume, Robert D. (1997), 'Librettist versus Composer: The Property Rights to Arne's *Henry and Emma* and *Don Saverio*', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, **122**, pp. 52–67.

Neumann, Alfred R. (1963), 'The Changing Concept of the Singspiel in the Eighteenth Century', in Carl Hammer (ed.), *Studies in German Literature*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, pp. 63–71.

Neville, Don (1994), 'The "Rondò" in Mozart's Late Operas', *Mozart-Jahrbuch*, pp. 141–55.

Platoff, John (1989), 'Musical and Dramatic Structure in the *Opera Buffa* Finale', *Journal of Musicology*, **7**, pp. 191–230.

Platoff, John (1990), 'The *Buffa* Aria in Mozart's Vienna', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **2**, pp. 99–120.

Platoff, John (1991a), 'Tonal Organization in *Buffo* Finales and the Act II Finale of *Le nozze di Figaro*', *Music & Letters*, **72**, pp. 387–403.

Platoff, John (1991b), '"Non tardar amato bene" Completed – but not by Mozart', *Musical Times*, **132**, pp. 557–60.

Platoff, John (1996), 'Myths and Realities about Tonal Planning in Mozart's Operas', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **8**, pp. 3–15.

Platoff, John (1997), 'Operatic Ensembles and the Problem of the *Don Giovanni* Sextet', in Mary Hunter and James Webster (eds), *Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 378–405.

Polzonetti, Pierpaolo (2003), '*Opera Buffa* and the American Revolution', Ph.D. diss., Cornell University.

Price, Curtis, Milhous, Judith and Hume, Robert D. (1991), 'The Rebuilding of the King's Theatre, Haymarket, 1789–1791', *Theatre Journal*, **43**, pp. 421–44.

Rabin, Ronald J. (1996), 'Mozart and the Dramaturgy of *Opera Buffa*: Italian Comic Opera in Vienna, 1783–1791', PhD diss., Cornell University.

Rabin, Ronald J. (1997), 'Figaro as Misogynist: On Aria Types and Aria Rhetoric', in Mary Hunter and James Webster (eds), *Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 232–60.

Rice, John A. (1986), 'Sense, Sensibility, and *Opera Seria*: An Epistolary Debate', *Studi musicali*, **15**, pp. 101–38.

Rice, John A. (1987), 'Emperor and Impresario: Leopold II and the Transformation of Viennese Musical Theater, 1790–1792', PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley.

Rice, John A. (1995), 'Mozart and his Singers: The Case of Maria Marchetti Fantozzi, the First Vitellia', *The Opera Quarterly*, **11**, pp. 31–52.

Rice, John A. (2000), 'The Roman *intermezzo* and Sacchini's *La contadina in corte*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **12**, pp. 91–107.

Robinson, Michael (1978–81), 'Three Versions of Goldoni's *Il filosofo di campagna*', in Maria Teresa Muraro (ed.) *Venezia e il melodramma nel Settecento*, Florence: Olschki, I, pp. 75–85.

Robinson, Michael (1990), 'A Late Eighteenth-Century Account Book of the San Carlo Theatre, Naples', *Early Music*, **18**, pp. 73–81.

Robinson, Michael (1992), '*Opera Buffa* into *Opéra Comique*', in Malcolm Boyd (ed.), *Music and the French Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 37–56.

Rumph, Stephen (2006), 'Unveiling Cherubino', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, **3**, pp. 131–40.

Rushton, Julian (1991), '"La vittima è Idamante": Did Mozart Have a Motive?', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, **3**, pp. 1–21.

Rushton, Julian (1998), 'Mozart's Art of Rhetoric: Understanding an *Opera Seria* Aria', *Contemporary Music Review*, **17**, pp. 15–29.

Rushton, Julian (2003), 'Mozart and *Opera Seria*', in Simon Keefe (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mozart*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 147–55.

Sartori, Claudio (1990–94), *I libretti italiani a stampa dalle origini al 1800*, 7 vols, Cuneo: Bertola & Locatelli.

Savage, Roger (1998), 'Staging an Opera: Letters from the Cesarian Poet', *Early Music*, **26**, pp. 583–95.

Solomon, Nicholas (1989), 'Signs of the Times: A Look at Late 18th-Century Gesturing', *Early Music*, **17**, pp. 551–64.

Tishkoff, Doris P. (1990), 'The Call to Revolution in the Boudoir: A New Look at Mozart's Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*', in Kinley Brauer and William E. Wright (eds), *Austria in the Age of the French Revolution, 1789–1815*, Minneapolis: Center for Austrian Studies, pp. 91–106.

Tyson, Alan (1981), '*Le nozze di Figaro*: Lessons from the Autograph Score', *Musical Times*, **122**, pp. 456–61. Rpt in Alan Tyson (1987), *Mozart: Studies of the Autograph Scores*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 114–24.

Tyson, Alan (1987), *Mozart: Studies of the Autograph Scores*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tyson, Alan (1992), *Wasserzeichen-Katalog*, Neue Mozart Ausgabe, X/33/Abteilung 2, Kassel: Bärenreiter.

Waldoff, Jessica (1995), 'The Music of Recognition on Mozart's Operas', PhD diss., Cornell University.

Waldoff, Jessica (1998), 'Sentiment and Sensibility in *La vera costanza*', in W. Dean Sutcliffe (ed.), *Haydn Studies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 70–119.

Waldoff, Jessica and Webster, James (1996), 'Operatic Plotting in *Le nozze di Figaro*', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *Wolfgang Amadé Mozart: Essays in his Life and his Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 250–95.

Webster, James (1991), 'The Analysis of Mozart's Arias', in Cliff Eisen (ed.), *Mozart Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 101–99.

Willis, Stephen C. (1982), 'Cherubini: From *Opera Seria* to *Opéra-Comique*', *Studies in Music from the University of Western Ontario*, **7**, pp. 155–82.

Woodfield, Ian (2006), 'Reflections on Mozart's 'Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio', *Eighteenth-Century Music*, **3**, pp. 133–39.

Part I
Aesthetics and Dramaturgy


Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

[1]

The Theory and Practice of Piccinnisme

JULIAN RUSHTON

THE OPERATIC reforms of Gluck and his subsequent conquest of Paris have received much critical attention, but discussion of his rival Piccinni tends to be anecdotal rather than analytical.[1] The term 'Piccinnisme' is also liable to misunderstanding. Terry, for example, setting the scene for J. C. Bach's French opera, refers to Gluck's 'heresies' against Lully and Rameau, and states that his opponents summoned Piccinni as a champion of orthodoxy.[2] Although the previous alternatives to Gluck, in the critics' eyes, were those representatives of a style since decayed, Piccinni was certainly not their champion and his supporters must be numbered among those who would gladly have buried the traditional French opera once for all.

To us it may seem that Gluck had buried it, despite the occasional revival of Lully and Rameau (much mutilated) at least until 1781, two years after Gluck had left Paris in disgust at the failure of *Echo et Narcisse*. But it probably did not escape the attention of those who disliked his music that Gluck's work was, as Alfred Einstein said, 'at once a blow to French opera and a renewal of it'.[3] Unfortunately we cannot simply reverse Terry's formulation to speak of Piccinni's heresies and the orthodoxy of Gluck; nor is it relevant of Einstein to suggest that the controversy would only have been resolved if Piccinni could have shown that '*opera seria* had not been dethroned by Gluck's reforms'.[4] The theatre of their rivalry was not Vienna or Italy but Paris, where *opera seria* had never reigned and where Gluck himself, particularly in the use of long arias often adapted from Italian texts (in *Alceste* and *Iphigénie en Tauride*) had in fact done much

[1] Eric Blom (*Stepchildren of Music*, London, 1925) is an honourable exception. A detailed discussion of Piccinni's French operas, from which this paper contains generalizations, is included in my unpublished thesis, *Music and Drama at the Académie Royale de Musique (Paris) 1774–1789*, Oxford University, 1969.

[2] C. S. Terry, *J. C. Bach*, London, 1929, p. 132.

[3] *Gluck*, London, 1936, p. 138.

[4] Ibid., p. 152.

to establish some elements of *opera seria*. Indeed a crucial aspect of Gluck's Paris career is his successful implementation of the policy of Philidor and Gossec: the Italianization of music at the Académie Royale, or Opéra, that bastion of conservatism upon which the controversies centred while the Opéra Comique went its own way. Thus while Gluck certainly seemed at first to be the executioner of traditional French opera, he came to it as a reformer, not a revolutionary, and in many respects was quite conservative (French opera had of course influenced his Italian 'reform'). Gluck's work and Piccinni's should be contrasted in the light of a general Italianization of French music, for Gluck's music is Italian in the way Mozart's is, and what his detractors chiefly objected to was the musical consequence of his rugged personality.

Piccinni had not the reforming mentality, and he left no manifesto to compare with the *Alceste* dedication, a French translation of which had preceded performance of Gluck's first French operas in 1774. It is possible, however, to deduce some sort of reasonably coherent aesthetic from the writings of the 'Piccinnistes', and the relation of that aesthetic to the relevant operas is not without problems. It might at least show if the term 'Piccinnisme' has any useful application. Piccinni's arrival was prepared by a broadside from his principal collaborator, Jean François Marmontel, the adaptor of Quinault for modern use, whose somewhat brutal surgical methods on the work of Lully's librettist suggested to Grimm the adjective 'marmontelisé'. His *Essai sur les révolutions de la musique en France*[5] appeared in 1777, the year of Gluck's *Armide*, and thus provided Piccinniste opera with a theoretical base some months before the performance of Piccinni's first French opera, *Roland*, in January 1778.

Marmontel's *Essai* is an attempt at brilliant polemic, which fails partly because its negative aspect, the abuse of Gluck, is so unpersuasive. Marmontel outlines the history of French and Italian music, to conclude that real music began with the early eighteenth-century Neapolitans and that France, the last citadel to resist this all-conquering style, would do better to yield at once than be side-tracked by a German who tries to disguise his lack of melodic invention by mere noise. He represents Gluckism as a conspiracy to keep true melody out of the Opéra:

[5] Reprinted in G. M. le Blond, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la révolution opérée dans la musique par M. le Chevalier Gluck*, Naples, 1781, pp. 153–90.

> All would be lost if the melodious singing which delights us in our concerts should by some mischance be accepted in our theatre; if our ears should grow accustomed to simple and natural modulations, to harmony as clear in its power as in its sweetness, to vocal music which is not a cry of physical anguish but the voice of the soul itself, to those pure and elegant curves of the musical period whose secret belongs to the Italians.[6]

Before discussing this 'musical period' ('la Période Musicale') it might be as well to clarify the area of conflict. Both sides are agreed in discontinuing the attempt to perpetuate the old French style, and on keeping nevertheless certain elements from French opera, particularly its relative freedom of structure; but both sides want Italianate music. Yet it is too simple to reduce the conflict to one of personalities—the clash between Piccinni and Gluck which Einstein compared to the collision of a sponge with an agate. Nor is the opposition one between a 'singers' opera' and 'dramatic opera'. Piccinni's French operas are just as dramatic in intention as Gluck's: *Atys*, *Didon*, *Iphigénie* and *Pénélope* in no way mitigate the seriousness of the subject-matter. Marmontel contended that Gluck was too crudely emotional; drama should move the spectator from a distance, so that tragedy gives a certain kind of pleasure:

> If one only wanted to be moved, one would go among the people to hear a mother who has lost her son, children who have lost their mother . . . there undoubtedly the expression of grief is artless, and there also it is very energetic. But what pleasure would one get from these heart-rending emotions? The pangs of sorrow should be accompanied by salve for the wound . . . The salve is the pleasure of the mind, or of the senses . . . and it is caused by the art of the musician . . .[7]

This consistent aesthetic, coupled with misunderstanding of Gluck, is inevitably reminiscent of Hanslick and Wagner.

The positive side of Marmontel's case is his plea for Italian melody. Like Burney, he says that Italian music in the days of Lully was as bad as French, but the Italians had sought true melody and

> . . . their real moment of glory was when *Vinci* for the first time plotted the curve of periodic song, that song which with its pure, elegant, and logical design, presents to the ear . . . the development of a fully matured thought. It was then that the great mystery of melody was revealed.[8]

[6] Le Blond, *Mémoires*, p. 163.
[7] Ibid., p. 167. Compare the effect of Voltaire's 'sensibilité': 'Audiences wept for Zaïre and for the impassioned Mérope . . . not to purge their emotions so much as to enjoy them' (Daniel Heartz, 'From Garrick to Gluck', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, xciv (1967/68), 114).
[8] Le Blond, *Mémoires*, p. 169.

A periodic phrase-structure based generally on two- and four-bar units is admittedly an important musical phenomenon, but this description seems unnecessarily grandiose. 'La Période', however, became the war-cry of Piccinnisme. It is found, still in 1777, in La Harpe's review of *Armide*;[9] and above all in the *Discours* of Framery on music and declamation which appeared after the heat of the controversy had died down, in 1802. For Framery—which is strange in a biographer of Haydn—musical periodicity, symmetry, regularity, were canon law, to be insisted upon in instrumental music as in dance music and setting of lyric verse:

> how should they not also be required in arias [*airs de scène*] . . . when the passions of the characters, heated by degrees, explode with a force which the poet and composer have produced by all the resources of their art? Would one seriously pretend that this symmetry is incompatible with disordered passions?[10]

His justification is by a parallel with verse drama:

> What could be more symmetrical or regular [*compassé*] than the Alexandrine verses with which RACINE, VOLTAIRE and others have so naturally depicted these tumults of passion? Would one want a host of sublime pieces . . . in order to be even truer, rewritten in prose?[11]

Marmontel had hurled the epithet 'prosateur' at Gluck, and suggested that Gluck was to Piccinni as Shakespeare to Racine[12]—which, in eighteenth-century France, was no compliment to Gluck. It is important to remember that Framery is speaking of measured music, of the aria; not of recitative, in which free tempo is normal. He seems to forget a crucial difference between verse and music. Verse when declaimed still allows a constant fluctuation of tempo not possible in musical polyphony. Racine is not to be declaimed rigidly, but with the metre stretched, emphasis being thereby placed on important words, just as Gluck picks out particular words for emphasis in recitative. The aria requires other means, and the expressive nuance given to verse by irregularity needs to be composed. Racine remains poetry partly by virtue of the rhyme; this acts like the tonal organisation of an articulated phrase-structure which does not have to be in four-bar phrases to achieve coherence. Foreground irregularity against

[9] Ibid., pp. 259–70.
[10] N. E. Framery, *Discours qui a remporté le prix de musique et déclamation proposé par l'Institut National de France* . . . , Paris, an X [1802], p. 20.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Le Blond, *Mémoires*, p. 180.

a background of implied regularity such as Haydn and Gluck often used is suggested by Framery's next remark: 'What the words gain in being versified, music also gains in periodic pieces, when the composer has the talent to dissimulate their regularity'.[13] Mozart was quite prepared to use regular phrases in the expression of emotional disorder, as is shown by Electra's 'Tutte nel cor vi sento' in *Idomeneo*; but he achieves it by an orchestral mastery and a harmonic daring beyond the resources of the Piccinnistes. It is not easy to see what Framery meant by dissimulation; regularity is generally quite apparent in Piccinni, and in Framery's collaborator Sacchini it is unashamedly, albeit elegantly, obvious.

Parallel to this insistence on the 'période' is the decided view the Piccinnistes take on 'dessin' (or 'dessein'), which became a Piccinniste watchword and the title of an article by Piccinni's biographer Ginguené in the *Encyclopédie méthodique*.[14] An aria should have one tempo, one metre, one basic affection, whatever contrasts are implied by the words. Piccinni reportedly

> . . . criticised the tendency to change the metre and motifs suddenly in the course of an aria . . . The composer who did not know how to bend the motif he had taken to the variety of expression demanded by the words . . . was in his eyes nothing but a botcher [*croque-notes*].[15]

Framery's expression of this is characteristically dogmatic:

> A periodic aria contains, or should contain, only one affection . . . if it contains several, they are in opposition, which forms a *rapport* between them, and still constitutes a single idea. The poetry will present it in several ways, the music repeats it in the same way.[16]

In effect, this invites the composer to set contradictory feelings to the same music. Gluck had developed a type of aria in different tempi, and had been criticised by Rousseau for this before he even reached Paris: 'Where is the unity of design? . . . what we have here is no aria, but a suite of several arias'.[17] Framery made the same criticism of 'Non, ce n'est point un sacrifice' from the French *Alceste*, in an article called 'Décousu' (unstitched).[18] This aria has a rondo

[13] *Discours*, p. 20.
[14] *Encylopédie méthodique: Musique*, 2 vols., Paris, 1791, and Liège, 1818.
[15] P. L. Ginguené, *Notice sur la vie et les oeuvres de N. Piccinni*, Paris, an IX [1801], p. 111.
[16] *Discours*, p. 50.
[17] J. J. Rousseau, 'Fragmens d'observations sur l'Alceste italien de M. le Chevalier Gluck', *Traités sur la musique*, Geneva, 1781, p. 420.
[18] *Encylopédie méthodique: Musique*, i. 411. See also the *Discours*, p. 17.

design, with modifications of tempo in the episodes; the main section expresses Alceste's willingness to die for her husband, the episodes her regret at being torn from him and from their children. The sectional form presents the situation from different angles; the total form expresses the resolution which overcomes her regrets. Thus, far from being disordered, as Framery asserted, it is an ordered expression of complex feelings.

Piccinniste aria was to display Italian music in its beautiful simplicity, without what Marmontel called its irrationalities, the long ritornelli and the coloratura; and contrasting affections were to be governed by one musical idea. Given an unambiguous text, a Piccinniste 'unité de dessin' is necessarily right and there are several Gluck arias to which no Piccinniste could take exception; but with complex feelings it is otherwise. Although Framery and Marmontel would have repudiated this interpretation, their method of dealing with complex feelings encourages emotional generalization; by allowing musical unity to ride roughshod over dramatic meaning, it can lead either to the reduction of emotional nuances to bland uniformity, or to complete neglect of the dramatic situation In one of Piccinni's best French operas, *Pénélope* (1785), Ulysse's return to Ithaca is the weakest part. His joy at homecoming is soured by the suitors in his palace, and he sings an aria (the text is by Marmontel):

> Quel malheur m'est prédit encore?
> N'ai-je donc pas assez souffert?
> Je te revois, isle chérie,
> Et ne puis te voir sans effroi.
> (II. 9)

Piccinni expresses only the peace for which Ulysse is longing, but which still eludes him; a placid 'andantino sostenuto' in C major which never leaves the tonic. When he sings 'J'échappe la mer en furie,/Le calme renaît pour moi,' the music, rooted to a pedal G, suggests only that calm; but the sense of the text is ironic and should have called forth some contradiction of the words, as in Gluck's 'Le calme rentre dans mon coeur'. According to Ginguené, Piccinni had firm ideas on key-change:

> Modulation . . . is not difficult in itself . . . What is difficult is to make a change of key, like all the other procedures of music, a means of just expression and proper variety.[19]

[19] Ginguené, *Notice*, p. 111.

Perhaps because he lacked verbal justification, Piccinni often does not change key in an aria, which is unusual in a period when stylistic expectations and formal principles alike are allied to key-change. The resultant monotony, one feels, can hardly have been the composer's intention. This criticism is applicable both to *cantabile* arias such as Atys' 'Brulé d'une flamme qui fait mon malheur' (*Atys*, I.1) and to vehement, blustering ones such as Oreste's 'Faites éclater la foudre' (*Iphigénie*, II.1), both in Piccinni's favourite key of E♭ major.

A good example of the latter type of aria, one very common with Piccinni despite his reputation for melodic sweetness, was singled out by Grimm from *Diane et Endymion* (1784) as 'the finest aria M. Piccinni has written in France'.[20] Gluck also used such ejaculatory voice parts with continuity provided by the orchestra, for example, Oreste's 'Dieux qui me poursuivez'; but he gives the orchestra material of some significance, whereas Piccinni confines it to a supporting role without building the vocal line into anything of comparable musical interest. Ginguené considered this aria to be a triumph, against difficult poetic odds, of good 'dessin':

> Almost every line contains a different affection, and would seem to require a new motif . . . I am not concerned with the right or wrong of the poet's provision of so many opposed ideas in the same aria. I merely say that this aria, as it stands, would seem absolutely to exclude unity of *design*.[21]

The offending verse, by De Liroux, reads:

> Diane: Cesse d'agiter mon âme,
> Vengeance, amour sans espoir.
> Faut-il éteindre ma flamme,
> Ou céder à ton pouvoir?
> Fuis, cruelle jalousie,
> Amour, rends-moi mon amant.
> (II. 2)

Gluck's habitual method in an extended aria is to start from a low level of emotional tension and build to a climax. Even in his most Piccinnian aria, 'Alceste, au nom des Dieux', this can be seen: the short phrases based on a steady ascent of pitch, and the normal, relatively relaxing, movement from C minor to E♭ quickly countered by a return to the tonic and a powerful and unusual move to D minor. Piccinni accepts

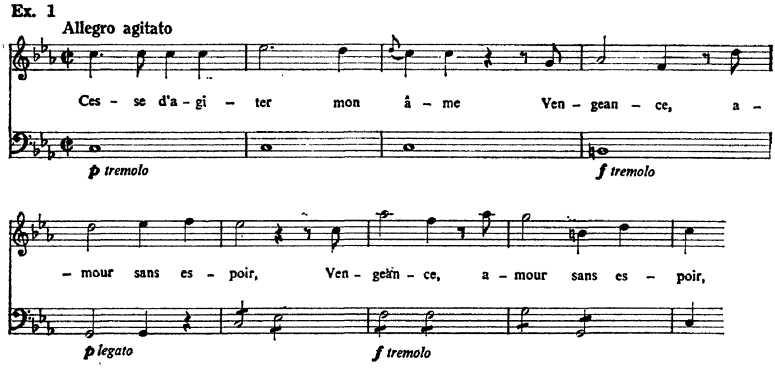
[20] F. M. von Grimm, *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique, et critique*, Paris, 1813, Part III, iii. 37.

[21] *Encylopédie méthodique: Musique*, i. 417 (art. 'Dessin').

the normal move from C minor to E♭. He splits up his vocal line into short phrases, and uses in his first few bars the whole vocal range, so that the intensity at the beginning is not exceeded later on (Ex. 1). The phrasing is not absolutely regular, but the expression is mainly in the harmony and dynamics—the opposition of 'vengeance', *f*, to 'amour', *p*. 'Amour' is then repeated *f* and in the drive to the first (C minor) cadence both words are absorbed into a generalized complaint; the dilemma, Diane's love for Endymion and her urge to annihilate him for loving Isménie, is barely suggested.

The couplets are neatly compartmentalized by the cadences, of a decisiveness Gluck would probably have avoided so early in an aria. The second couplet brings the modulation,

Ex. 1



which seems more easy to justify musically than by the words. If uncertainty of key reflects the uncertainty of the question ('faut-il'), it is quickly overridden by repeating the second line to establish E♭. The third couplet employs a new contrast, between major ('jalousie') and minor ('amour'); but the resumption of *tremolo*, *f*, quickly erases the contrast. The very regularity of the opposition and the continual rhythmic emphasis tend to generalize the feeling. The verse perhaps allowed little else, and Framery would have applauded; the opposed ideas are in 'rapport', constituting a single idea. But 'dessin' is achieved at the price, which Gluck would have refused to pay, of dramatic insight.

A far better aria, one of Piccinni's most successful, is Roland's 'Je me reconnais' (II.3; text by Marmontel). The hero deludes himself that he has overcome the fatal love for Angélique which has distracted him from his true *métier*, 'la gloire'. His aria is held together by its bold sweep—'dessin'—of continuous quavers, broken only for a few decisive

cadences. Although much of the material is conventional, a real contrast is made between the ejaculatory opening idea and the *cantabile* 'Je crois sortir d'un long délire', which takes the place of a 'second group' in a sort of sonata form.[a] Unfortunately the very length and firm structure of the aria militate against dramatic sense. Roland relapses at once: 'Malheureux, je me flatte, et ma colère est vaine'. He is in love as much as ever, but the admission is set to flimsy recitative, which cannot efface the powerful affirmation of freedom in the aria: the illusory self-control is given decisive musical form, while the moment of truth is barely noticed.

Other elements of Piccinniste opera are scarcely touched on by theorists, and there is no space to discuss them here. Of the overture, it must suffice to say that Piccinnisme takes little account of the precepts of Gluck's *Alceste* preface. The chorus is used freely, both in involvement with the action and in situations derived from traditional *divertissement*. The excellent choral lament near the end of *Atys*—the original version ended in E♭ minor in such Stygian gloom that it had to be changed—partakes of both functions, and is directly derived from Lully's practice (this was of course another Quinault libretto 'marmontelisé'). There is nothing to approach the vast choral tableaux of *Alceste*, but these were watered down for Paris.[22]

Recitative demands more consideration, since its importance matches that of the aria. It is all orchestrated, but a clear distinction is made between orchestral *secco* recitative, with short or sustained chords, and the true *accompagnato* type which was always orchestrated in Italian opera, and which Marmontel placed first among elements to be imitated therefrom.[23] The normal practice in such recitative is to interpolate orchestral material between vocal phrases, usually unaccompanied. Gluck had used it already in France, on a large scale (*Iphigénie en Aulide*, II. 7), and in this he had been anticipated by Philidor, Dauvergne (*Enée et Lavinie*, 1757), and Rameau himself, although the French tended to make both voice and orchestra more continuous (*Hippolyte et Aricie*, Act IV) and preserved the declamatory manner called by the Piccinnistes 'psalmodie'. In later French works, Gluck modified

[22] See F. W. Sternfeld, 'Expression and Revision in Gluck's "Orfeo" and "Alceste"', *Essays for Egon Wellesz*, ed. J. A. Westrup, London, 1966, pp. 114–29.

[23] Le Blond, *Mémoires*, p. 185: 'obbligato recitatives, where without the assistance of a clamorous orchestra, a voice, even a weak voice, upheld by a few chords, conveys to the soul all the feelings it expresses'.

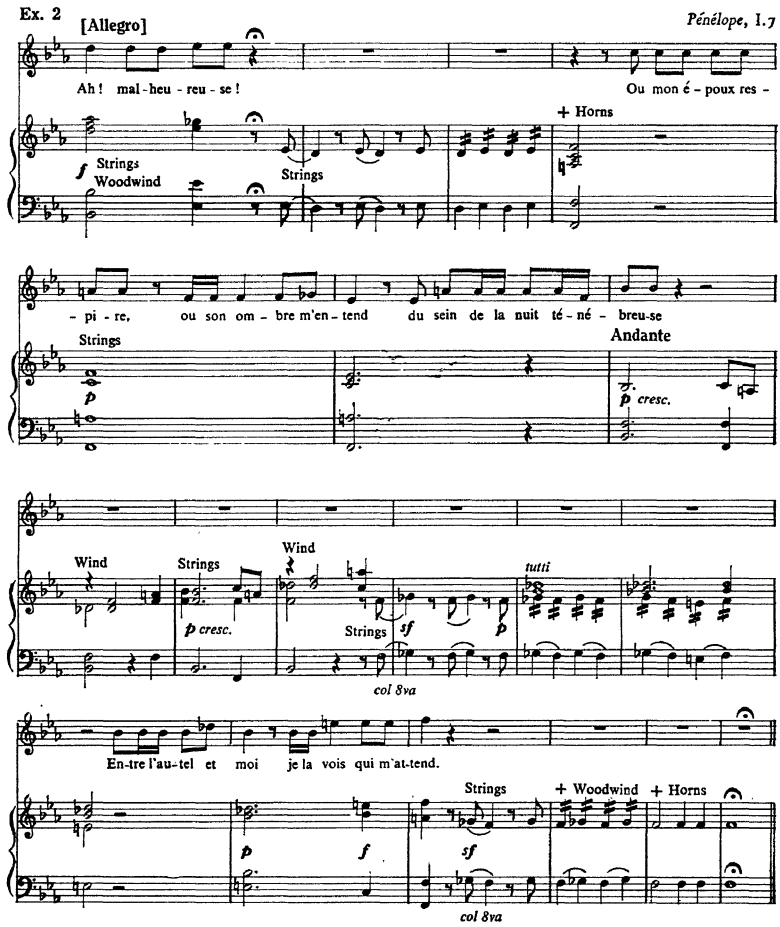
his practice away from the somewhat mechanical alternation of voice and orchestra, achieving admirable effects from expressive harmonic change without interrupting the flow of words. Grétry is said to have accused Gluck of putting the statue in the orchestra, the pedestal on the stage; but Gluck took great care to make his declamation not merely correct but expressive, and in his last operas threw more weight than before on to the vocal part, at the expense of the orchestra.

Apart from passages of arioso somewhat in the French tradition, Piccinniste recitative is modelled on Italian practice. In general, however, it scarcely fulfils Marmontel's prescription. Probably difficulties with the language account for the disappointing quality of the recitative in *Roland.* Peculiarly unsuccessful is the Oresteian frenzy in *Iphigénie en Tauride* (II.1), in which the massive chords, jerky dotted rhythms and rapid scales used to depict the Furies are rendered impotent by lack of harmonic interest, and are placed between unaccompanied vocal phrases of complete blankness.[24] Piccinni certainly tried to improve his recitative, but the improvement generally takes the form of more interesting orchestral music. In *Diane et Endymion,* with no discernible dramatic significance, he uses fragments of the overture in the second scene, and in parts of *Atys* he achieves a delicate effect by confiding the accompaniment to the lower strings, with divided violas. At moments of excitement he is inclined to be hysterical. He is not without imagination, but he is without control. It might be argued that some of his characters, like Orestes, are under stress and not in control of themselves, and thus should have uncontrolled music. Apart from the fact that this argument goes clean against the views of Framery and Marmontel expressed above, the continual exaggeration, the orchestral clamour and cries as of physical anguish which Marmontel complained of in Gluck and could have heard in Piccinni, lead only to monotony. Even in Piccinni's most affecting recitative the interest of the orchestral part far outweighs the vocal, a stark contradiction of Piccinniste theory (Ex. 2).

One aspect of Gluck's reforms is generally said to have been that he made opera more continuous. This reform was scarcely necessary in France, where short arias and arioso were normal. The Italian composers who followed Gluck

[24] See Julian Rushton, 'Iphigénie en Tauride: the Operas of Gluck and Piccinni', *Music & Letters,* liii (1972), 424–7.

adapted themselves readily to this aspect of French practice, and some of Piccinni's most dramatically effective music takes the form of arioso and short aria. The arioso is used most, and to excellent effect, in the title-role of *Roland*, and the scene in which he vainly awaits Angélique in the forest



(III. 2) rivals in eloquence Lully's setting of the same scene (IV. 2). Thereafter Piccinni used less arioso, so that *Roland* is, paradoxically, at once his most Italianate French opera (because of the recitative and the nature of the arias) and his closest approach to French tradition.

The Piccinnistes also cultivated open-ended and interrupted arias. The traditional French short air, like the short aria of Gluck, is self-contained and complete; the Piccinniste

short aria is usually like a long one truncated, sometimes ending in a subsidiary key. The phrasing has the feel of a full-length aria, not the terseness of Gluck. Thus while Marmontel complained 'why not finish a song once it is begun?' it was his party which adopted this technique, and only occasionally for the benefit of the drama. Sacchini, a specialist in melting arioso, was particularly addicted to the interrupted aria, and to link the final cadence of an aria to the next recitative became almost a mannerism with him. This is a form of continuity for which Gluck was not responsible and which may be termed Piccinniste. The method was adopted by Méhul, to lead not into recitative but into spoken dialogue.[25]

It is inevitable that operas of the fifteen years preceding the French Revolution should be measured against those of Gluck. Nevertheless, their style and dramatic approach are nearly always closer to Piccinni's. This is partly because Piccinni and Sacchini were members of the next generation, and they were followed by contemporaries of Mozart, whose idiom could not be expected to resemble that of a man born in 1714. Even Gluck's accredited successors, Salieri and J. C. Vogel, apart from a few echoes of Gluck, are closer to Piccinni; and most of these echoes are in *Les Danaïdes*, which passed muster for several performances as partly the work of Gluck himself.

The influence of Gluck was a general one, in that he confirmed a taste for vigorously dramatic opera with the basically Italianate musical idiom for which Marmontel pleaded. Marmontel almost admits this, but resorts to calling Gluck German and spreading the *canard* that he was despised in Italy. Piccinni could never have established such an operatic manner unaided where stronger talents than his had already failed. Even before Gluck, Philidor and Gossec, whose good qualities Gluck was happy to acknowledge, had tried unsuccessfully to establish the new musical idiom at the Opéra. Gossec's *Sabinus* (1774) was hampered by a ponderous libretto in five acts, but Philidor's *Ernelinde* (1767) is more streamlined and contains two arias that combine conflicting sentiments with impeccable 'unité de dessin'. This work has been said to anticipate Gluck, to whom it is certainly indebted, but really it is a Piccinniste opera *avant la lettre*, whose importance was acknowledged by Marmontel and

[25] See Winton Dean, 'Opera under the French Revolution', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, cxiv (1967/68), 93–95.

Ginguené.[26] Significantly it met with substantial success only in a revised version in 1777. It was Gluck, too, who restricted the use of ballet, although in his first French operas (*Iphigénie en Aulide* and *Orphée*) he was as much hampered by it as Gossec had been, or Piccinni was to be. *Iphigénie en Tauride*, however, points the way to its virtual exclusion, or its transmutation into part of the action in Salieri's *Les Horaces* (1786).

In these respects (as Tovey observed) Piccinni was himself something of a Gluckiste, and Grimm, who affected neutrality, noted that 'les zélateurs de Gluck . . . sont les plus grands partisans de Didon'.[27] It would probably be more true to say that whatever the Piccinnistes learnt from Gluck they misunderstood, and they never learnt the most important lesson, Gluck's iron control, the secret of his power: control in recitative, in placement of arias, and economy of orchestration. For one example, Gluck's use of trombones is invariably conscious of their particular tonal quality. In *Iphigénie en Tauride* (II. 3–4), when repeating essentially the same music, he uses them not as well as, but instead of, the horns; they are confined to the music of the supernatural (Furies) and mourning. Piccinnistes tend to apply trombones for the sake of volume, and in crude chordal daubs. What Gluck did for the Piccinnistes was to break down a barrier of conventions at the Opéra; in this respect he had an enormous heritage, but it remains true that he formed no school.

There were French Piccinnistes: Lemoyne (*Phèdre*, *Nephté*), Gossec (*Thésée*), Méreaux, even Philidor in parts of *Persée*. There were Italians: Salieri, Cherubini, Zingarelli, although the first two were closer to Gluck than most. There were even Germans, for J. C. Bach's one French opera (*Amadis*, 1779) is essentially a Piccinniste work by a superior composer,[28] with an interesting experiment in integration of the leitmotiv type.[29] Only Sacchini, who is still occasionally and quite falsely termed Gluck's successor, stands apart. He was so successful as to diminish Piccinni's popularity, and the Opéra in the late 1780s was divided between his highly successful

[26] Guingené calls it 'cet ouvrage, qui fait époque . . .' (*Encylopédie méthodique: Musique*, i. 620). See also Le Blond, *Mémoires*, p. 159.

[27] *Correspondance littéraire*, Part III, ii. 324.

[28] Thus I cannot accept the description of *Amadis* by Ernest Warburton ('J. C. Bach's Operas', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, xcii (1965/66), 104) as 'along outmoded lines'; the remnants of French tradition (more Quinault 'marmontelisé') are over-shadowed by Italianate music.

[29] Julian Rushton, 'An Early Essay in Leitmotiv: J. B. Lemoyne's *Electre*', *Music & Letters*, lii (1971), 398–400.

formula, which may be summarised as the evasion of dramatic responsibilities in the interests of abundant musical charm, and a tendency to cultivate the sensational and the exotic (Candeille, *Pizarre*; Salieri, *Tarare*); these last types are perhaps the true fathers of opera under the Empire and Restoration.

In practice, then, 'Piccinnisme' means opera of serious dramatic pretensions, giving free play to symmetrical musical development in arias. It differs from its Italian forbears by its freer structure, the simpler (usually mythological) plot, and the use of chorus; and from its French forbears by the musical style, the reduction of *divertissement*, and the use of long arias in contexts other than soliloquy, to which Gluck and French Baroque opera had confined them. The idea of continuity, but not the methods used, came from the French tradition and from Gluck. One can no more call such operas Gluckiste than one could term Gluck a Piccinniste. Piccinnisme is indebted to Gluck, among other influences; and within this general definition falls a wide variety of talent. In short Piccinnisme is the normal operatic practice in France (excluding opera with spoken dialogue) from about 1777 onwards; it produced no drama like *Alceste*—perhaps Gluck's most influential opera—but many like Piccinni's greatest success, *Didon*. Piccinnisme is a trend, an atmosphere; it is not a school, and to give it Piccinni's name is perhaps a convenient falsification, since at least two operas before Gluck, and Gluck himself, were aiming at the same sort of synthesis of French and Italian elements. But the failure of Philidor and Gossec, the uniqueness of Gluck, and the symbolical role of Piccinni as his rival, may justify the term.

Piccinnisme outlived the Académie Royale; as it became Nationale and Impériale, many of the pre-revolutionary operas were still played, and it contributed much to the *opéra comique* of the Revolution although by definition that was not Piccinniste. It may also be relevant, in assessing its influence, to recall Eric Blom's comment that '*Idomeneo* comes nearer in spirit to Piccinni than to Gluck'. Mozart saw *Roland* in Paris in 1778.[30] Had he been invited to write French operas, he would unquestionably have been 'Piccinniste'—influenced by Gluck and French opera, as is *Idomeneo* in places, but inclined to assert the supremacy of music over the

[30] The resemblance between the great quartet in *Idomeneo* and the quartet in *Atys* (performed 1780) is probably coincidental.

word and revelling in richly scored recitatives and expansive arias.

Piccinnisme was a perfectly satisfactory formula for musical drama, and it needed only a composer of substance at the Académie to exploit its possibilities. Circumstances which favoured *opéra comique* at other theatres prevented Cherubini or Méhul from being that composer, although in *Démophoön* (1788) the former showed his mastery of the idiom and a welcome excellence of orchestration. The composer who is the greatest Piccinniste is generally known by another title; Einstein[31] called him 'last of the Gluckians', Gerald Abraham[32] favours 'last of the Gluckists'. Of course, like all Piccinnistes but no more than most, Spontini was influenced by Gluck. But not only is he conspicuously Italian; his expansive, occasionally voluptuous musical manner is entirely free from Gluck's parsimony, while the continuous richness of his orchestration and the 'dessin' of his arias are Piccinniste. The Italian quality is obvious in *cantabile* writing, but his Piccinnisme is most striking in moments of great dramatic intensity. It has been well said that 'Gluck's highest pathos is in the major mode'.[33] Piccinnisme prefers to rely on the intrinsic expressiveness of the minor. Where Gluck's finest arias proceed by a steady growth in intensity to a climax ('O malheureuse Iphigénie' is perhaps the *locus classicus*), Piccinniste expression is concentrated into the main motif, and is at or near its maximum intensity from the start. Piccinniste phrasing tends to regularity, and if it has not Gluck's angular *ostinati*, it is frequently governed by an urgent rhythmic drive. Although the recitative before it is clearly indebted to *Alceste*, the Piccinniste aria *par excellence* is Julie's 'Impitoyables Dieux' from the second act of *La Vestale*.[b]

Piccinnisme appears in unexpected places, even in Gluck's most percipient nineteenth-century admirer, Berlioz. Much of the recitative in *Les Troyens* has a frenetic quality as unlike Gluck as it is unlike Wagner; it is of Piccinni that the recitatives in Cassandre's first monologue and the dialogue with Chorèbe (Act I) and Didon's monologue (Act V) may remind us, immeasurably superior in voice and orchestra though they are to any of his own. In both scenes, however, the placing and effect of the arias, especially 'Adieu, fière cité,' are Gluckian.

[31] *Gluck*, p. 42.
[32] 'The Best of Spontini', *Music & Letters*, xxiii (1942), 163–71.
[33] D. F. Tovey, 'Christopher Willibald Gluck', *The Heritage of Music*, ed. H. Foss, 2 vols., London, 1927 and 1934, ii. 110.

Thus although T. de Lajarte[34] called the period 1774–1807 'L'Epoque de Gluck' (followed by that of Spontini), the dominant style and method of the period are better exemplified by Piccinni, and it could be argued that *La Vestale* was not so much the inauguration of a new period as the culmination of the era of Piccinnisme.

The following musical illustrations were heard during the course of the lecture:

[a] Part of the aria 'Je me reconnais' from Piccinni's *Roland*, Act II, played by the author on the piano.

[b] A gramophone recording (HLP 20) of the aria 'Impitoyables Dieux', with some of the preceding recitative, from Spontini's *La Vestale*, Act II: Rita Gorr and the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Lawrence Collingwood.

[34] *Bibliothèque musicale du théâtre de l'Opéra*, Paris, 1878.

[2]

RECITATIVE AND DRAMATURGY IN THE DRAMMA PER MUSICA

By Raymond Monelle

It is assumed today that Neapolitan opera was inherently undramatic, a mere singing concert. This view is linked with an assessment of *recitativo semplice* that dismisses as empty and cynical a form highly esteemed by its contemporaries. Our modern writers tell of the 'barren wastes of *secco*' that separated the arias of eighteenth-century opera; it had 'descended to an unemotional, hasty, matter-of-fact *parlando* with a few routine chords on the harpsichord'. Now, if *recitativo semplice* were proved to be an expressive and dramatic medium, these operas might be reinstated as works of dramatic as well as musical interest.

There are several reasons for our insensitivity to Neapolitan recitative. First, we have inherited the tradition of the later eighteenth century, when accompanied recitative was favoured at the expense of *recitativo semplice* and the term 'dry'—*secco*—became current for the latter kind; according to Friedrich-Heinrich Neumann, Cramer introduced the term into Germany as late as 1785.[1] Secondly, it has not been thought necessary to take the texts of these operas seriously; the poetry of Metastasio, which has always enjoyed a good reputation with at least a section of Italian literary opinion, has been consistently misunderstood by

[1] *Die Ästhetik des Rezitativs*, Strasbourg & Baden-Baden, 1962, p. 37 and p. 97 n. 393.

non-Italians.[2] Thus the medium in which most of the text was delivered is considered as perfunctory as the text is ridiculous. Another reason for our insensitivity is the extreme subtlety of musical effect in *recitativo semplice*, which makes it seem conventional and plain to all but the most attentive ears. Furthermore scholars have not had easy access to any of the highest achievements in this form: Pergolesi remained an immature composer; Vinci and Porpora are still locked in manuscript; Hasse has been represented by an oratorio, a rather unsatisfactory *dramma* and some cantatas, the recent addition of *Larinda e Vanesio* (1726) and *Ruggiero* (1771) doing little to improve the coverage of Hasse's best periods.[3] The simple recitative of Gluck, Haydn and Mozart is decadent.

The proper approach would be to take a significant opera from the greatest period and apply to it criteria drawn from contemporary writers. The *dramma per musica* probably reached its high point in the 1730s, before the taste for accompanied recitative began to distort the aesthetic emphasis of the form. Quite clearly, it is to those operas which have been most ignored that we must turn if we wish to understand simple recitative; for these are the works with the minimum of purely musical effects. Not only has our preoccupation with arias, ensembles, choruses, sinfonias focussed our attention on the period after 1750; it has also tended to draw us to works written for non-Italian stages, since the emphasis on simple recitative continued much later in Italy. Hermann Abert, for example, gave more attention to Jommelli's Stuttgart operas than to his *Creso* and *Temistocle*, written in 1757 for Italian theatres.[4]

Contemporary writing on *recitativo semplice* is summarized by Neumann and Downes.[5] The most extensive account is Friedrich Wilhelm Marpurg's series of articles in the *Kritische Briefe*.[6] The greater part of this treatise is concerned with punctuation and its musical treatment; there is some consideration of key and modulation, but only with regard to what is possible and correct. That is to say, there is very little regard for the expressive qualities of recitative. Perhaps this is to be expected of a German in the 1760s: Marpurg's distrust of his readers' Italian is shown by the German translations that he furnishes for samples of Italian recitative, and by his taking a German sacred text for his own composed illustrations. Often he seems to state the obvious (for instance, when he warns against placing a full close on a final weak syllable),[7] so this essay must have

[2] See my article 'The Rehabilitation of Metastasio', *Music & Letters*, lvii (1976), 268–91.

[3] *La conversione di Sant' Agostino*, ed. A. Schering ('Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst', xx), Leipzig, 1905; *Arminio*, ed. R. Gerber ('Das Erbe deutscher Musik', xxvii–xxviii), Mainz, 1957 & 1966; four solo cantatas, ed. S. H. Hansell, in the series 'Le Pupitre', Paris, 1968; *Larinda e Vanesio*, ed. L. Bettarini, Milan, n.d.; *Ruggiero*, ed. K. Hortschansky ('Concentus musicus', i), Cologne, 1973.

[4] *Niccolo Jommelli als Opernkomponist*, Halle, 1908, pp. 346 ff.

[5] Neumann, op. cit.; E. O. Downes, 'Secco Recitative in Early Classical Opera', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, xiv (1961), 50–69.

[6] *Kritische Briefe über die Tonkunst*, ii (Berlin 1762–3), 253–416.

[7] p. 350.

been intended for the German amateur or apprentice, rather than the professional opera composer. It has, however, certain large virtues. It shows beyond doubt that recitative was scrupulously matched to the punctuation and sense of the text; the examples, taken from Hasse and Graun, are conclusive evidence of this. But Marpurg's principles can mostly be applied to any recitative by a major composer. He introduces terms for the types of musical punctuation, like 'schwebender' and 'periodischer Absatz', and shows how they fit textual punctuation, the real and unreal full-stop, colon, semi-colon, full and half comma, and the interrogatory and parenthetical marks. There are excellent words of general advice: modern taste, says Marpurg, does not favour realism in recitative, like the setting of 'Himmel' to a rising figure and 'Erde' to a falling one.[8] Harmonic freedoms and enharmony must not be multiplied, as operatic recitative has to be learnt by heart. Plenty of rests should be written; they deter the inexperienced singer from rushing senselessly onward.[9]

Nevertheless, when Marpurg comes to analyse his example, his chief concern is clearly the close following of the rhetorical details of the text, without regard for general expressiveness. Such a discussion is insufficient to counter the attacks of later opponents of the Italian tradition like Gluck and Wagner. However impresssive was the fidelity of an Italian composer to his text, it must also be shown that he had a regard for dramaturgy: dramatic rhythm, characterization, variety of diction and expression within an overall plan—these things must be discussed if the *dramma per musica* is to be compared with other great manifestations of operatic art. Here Marpurg is found wanting. For instance, he does not tell us that his example from Hasse's *Ezio* (beginning 'Signor, vincemmo') is the opening of Ezio's majestic speech in scene 2 of Act I, which follows a short and characteristically problematic first scene in which Massimo is revealed to be the secret enemy of the emperor. Scene 1 is a foil for the bellicose sinfonia that begins scene 2, and the flourish with which the victorious general Ezio enters the action. His heroic speech, describing the flight of the defeated Huns, is naturally full of varied emphasis and an ideal specimen for Marpurg to dissect.

In some degree, then, our desire to follow contemporary criticism in our examination of recitative is frustrated. The German writer is too concerned with the minutiae and rudiments of recitative composition; the Italians are silent on the matter. As Neumann found, they concern themselves with general issues—whether recitative is a 'singing speech' or a 'speaking song'—and they discuss practical problems, like the anticlimax after an aria and how it might be avoided, but they help very little with the question of

[8] p. 281.
[9] p. 267.

expressiveness.

If our investigation is to be empirical we may take two comments of Marpurg as starting-points. First, he assumes a distinction between 'historisches' and 'pathetisches Recitativ', saying for example that change of key depends in historic recitative on punctuation, in pathetic recitative on the rise and fall of *Affekt*.[10] Unfortunnately he does not explain how the types are distinguished, though it is clear that they are not synonyms for *semplice* and *stromentato*, or theatrical and chamber recitative, as these distinctions have already been made in the previous chapter.

Secondly Marpurg speaks of 'rhetorical accent', of which he gives several examples.[11] The stressing of a word is always accomplished with a high note, either higher than all its neighbours or higher than the following note. The difference in pitch need not be more than a semitone. His example is a setting of the text 'Ist das der Trost? sind das die Freuden?'. Although the word 'das' falls on a weak beat in both cases, it is each time sung to the highest note of the phrase. However, the note before the accent may be at the same pitch as the note bearing the accent, provided the following note is perceptibly lower. Sometimes the highest note comes on the syllable before that to be emphasized, giving a kind of reflected accent: in a setting of 'Sein Schicksal ist nicht grausam' the word 'nicht' is in fact sung to the highest note, but an accent on the appoggiatura of 'grausam' is intended, this word falling on a strong beat.

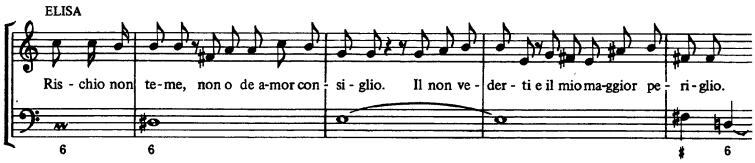
A style of word-setting which can be both historic and pathetic, which can exploit various kinds of accent or can be unaccented, this is already taking the shape of a true dramatic style. But what is meant by 'historic' and 'pathetic'? Much careful reading of recitative reveals that there are two basic styles which are usually, but by no means always, associated with certain kinds of action and feeling. The first of these is predominantly major and diatonic, venturing no further into dissonance than the dominant seventh, and often containing triadic figures. It is used for ordinary dialogue and narrative, and for the expression of noble and joyful sentiments. The other kind is typified by the diminished seventh both melodic and harmonic, both implicit and explicit. It is largely in minor keys, makes use of dissonant intervals including the diminished and augmented fourth both in melody and bass, and is often chromatic—though here one must be cautious, for there are certain chromatic effects which are normal in the first kind, like the rising chromatic bass for increasing excitement. This second style is associated with amorous sentiments and with paternal and filial tenderness. Both kinds can be accented or unaccented. Sometimes, of course, one or other of these types of setting is selected with no apparent justification in the

[10] p. 263.
[11] pp. 279–81.

text. But there are points where the swing from one style to the other is so obviously connected with the feeling of the text that one can justifiably adopt Marpurg's terminology and call the first style of setting 'historic', the second 'pathetic'.

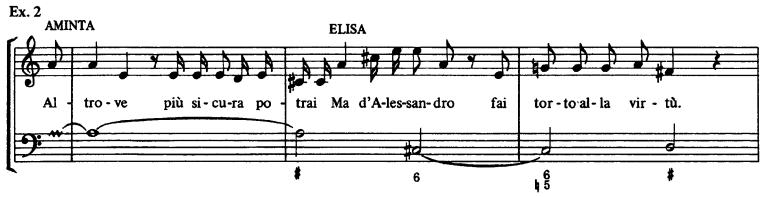
Often a single scene contains a mixture of historic and pathetic recitative according to the content and rhythm of the text. Such a scene is selected here as an example. Hasse's *Il re pastore* was almost contemporary with his *Ezio*. In the first scene Aminta and Elisa, who are ostensibly a shepherd and a shepherdess, and are in love, are speaking of the occupation of Sidon, their homeland, by the army of Alessandro. Although Aminta fears for Elisa's safety under war conditions, Elisa insists that Alessandro is a hero and therefore honourable. The two expository themes of this section—the lovers' feelings and Alessandro's power and honour—cause an alternation of styles in the recitative. 'Why do you expose yourself all alone', asks Aminta, 'to the insolent licence of the military?' 'My only fear', replies Elisa, 'is that I may not see you'. Into this tender and demure reply Metastasio writes a rhyme, and it causes an immediate shift into pathetic recitative (Ex. 1). Here every feature is pathetic. The two keys are minor. The initial move of the bass is an augmented second, and the resultant dominant chord becomes a diminished seventh almost at once. The last phrase, in leaping an augmented fourth, gives an implied diminished seventh, outlined by the g' and the $a'\sharp$.

Ex. 1



In the following lines Elisa expresses her 'felici speranze', which she wishes to share. But Aminta anxiously suggests that they find somewhere safer for their conversation, to which Elisa protests that his anxiety is a slight to Alessandro's virtue. These practical considerations and especially the mention of the heroic Alessandro, cause a return to historic style (Ex. 2). The shift from A minor to D major is adroitly managed.[12] But Aminta's common-sense interrup-

Ex. 2

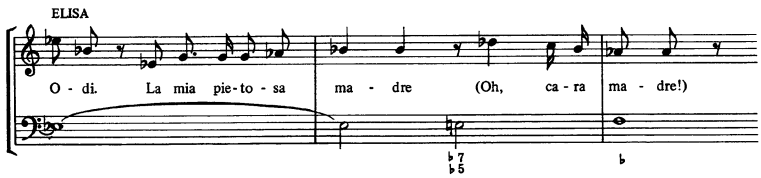


[12] The figuring is from the manuscript (in the Reid Library, University of Edinburgh), which is unusually rich in figures.

tion is already diatonic and triadic. Elisa's protest is a little fanfare on a major triad, aptly evoking the hero; it is also syncopated, beginning a quaver early—Elisa is 'of the noble line of Cadmus' and cannot bear an insult to a man of honour. The rest of her protest is quieter, more poised, a nice sequel to her impulsive burst. The whole passage is major-mode, diatonic, triadic, and ends with a typical cadence using a dominant seventh.

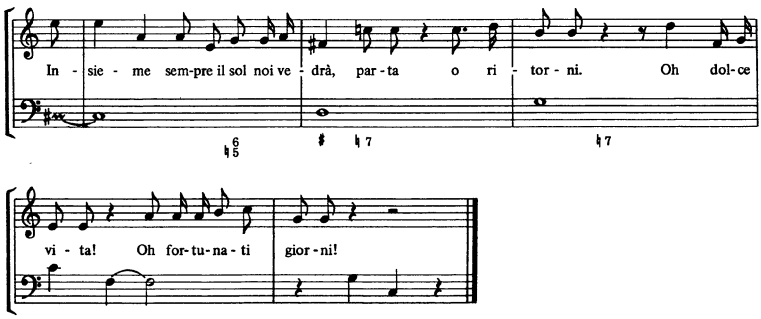
Two more examples may be given from the same scene. Metastasio's characters are often close to comic opera, and Elisa in this scene is a lightly-drawn character, young, impulsive, sentimental, typically Metastasian. When, in the middle of a narrative she mentions her mother, she cannot resist a little puerile rapture and Hasse switches at once to a pathetic effect which is almost ludicrous (Ex. 3).

Ex. 3



Historic recitative is not merely neutral and suitable only for perfunctory narratives and expository dialogue. It can be strongly accented and it can express joyful or loyal feelings. The end of this scene is an instance. Elisa is happy in their apparently fortunate love and anticipates marriage. 'Soon', she cries, 'I need never leave you again: the sun shall see us always together' (Ex. 4). 'Oh dolce vita' receives here a stronger accent than any we have seen and is syncopated like many of Elisa's exclamations. The tritone within the dominant seventh chord is regarded as diatonic and is freely used, even as a melodic interval, in passages that are not pathetic.

Ex. 4



Hasse's *Il re pastore*, a late work like *Ezio*, is less interesting to the student of *recitativo semplice* than many earlier operas. The 1730 version of *Artaserse* is of special interest for a number of reasons. It was Hasse's first Metastasio setting, and he set it simultaneously with Vinci, Vinci writing for Rome and Hasse for Venice. Certain parts of the text were specially altered for Hasse, by Metastasio himself according to Charles de Brosses.[13] Hasse often revived his *Artaserse*, never wholly abandoning the music of the first version. In 1734 he turned it into a pasticcio for the London stage; in 1740 and 1760 he adapted it radically for Dresden, scores of both these adaptations having survived. Sonneck in his article on the three versions pointed out that the score in the British Library (Add. MS 32582) represents the original 1730 opera, not the London pasticcio.[14] Only after 1760 did Hasse become Metastasio's regular collaborator, so this apparent early collaboration is of outstanding interest.

The text alone is considered important by sympathetic students of Metastasio. Walter Binni considers *Demofoonte* and *L'Olimpiade* the dual climax of Metastasio's career and *Artaserse* 'the most notable result of the phase of trials and experiments' before 1733.[15] In structure it is a remarkable example of Metastasio's dramatic rhythm. Binni comments: 'Already the external plot assumes its function as bearer of the internal plot of sentiments and their poetic expression'.[16] The purpose of action is to generate perplexity, elegiac sadness, dilemmas of the heart, and the dramatist begins each part of his structure with some action or peripeteia, usually expressed in recitative, then allows characters to react in different ways, naturally flowing into arias with different *Affekte*. In *Artaserse* this is as true of the whole opera as it is of the sections and acts; there is very little action in Act III except for the mechanical denouement of the final scene.

A synopsis of the plot is necessary to any further discussion. The acts are divided into sections according to the changes of scene.

ACT I SECTION i (scenes 1–7)

Arbace, the bosom friend of Prince Artaserse, is in love with Artaserse's sister Mandane. Their father King Serse has forbidden the lovers to meet as Arbace is a commoner. The opera begins with their last farewells in the palace garden.

But Arbace's father, Artabano, ambitious for his son, has assassinated the king (offstage) in the hope of getting the princes, Artaserse and his brother Dario, to destroy each other so that Arbace can usurp the throne. He changes swords with Arbace and urges him to flee with the bloody weapon. Artaserse, distracted, is easily persuaded that his brother was the murderer and hastily orders his execution.

Artaserse rushes away, leaving Semira, Arbace's sister, desolate,

[13] *Lettres historiques et critiques sur l'Italie*, Paris, [1799], iii. 278.

[14] O. G. Sonneck, 'Die drei Fassungen der Hasse'schen "Artaserse" ', *Sammelbände der internationalen Musikgesellschaft*, xiv (1912–13), 226–42.

[15] *L'Arcadia e il Metastasio*, Florence, 1963, p. 350.

[16] Ibid.

for she loves Artaserse. A conspirator called Megabise tries to make love to Semira. She spurns him, and left alone, she foresees that she must lose her beloved whether he wins or loses: for Artaserse, becoming king, must reject her commoner's hand.

SECTION ii (scenes 8–15)

Dario has been duly killed by Artabano, but Artaserse is horrified when the news arrives that Dario was not guilty as the real culprit has been caught. The malefactor is brought to him: it is his friend Arbace, who was taken while fleeing with the sword.

Each of the major characters reacts in an aria, Artaserse, Artabano, Semira. Mandane, refusing to credit her lover's innocence, is left to close the act.[17]

ACT II SECTION i (scenes 1–7)

Artabano speaks in private to his son: by a new plot the means of flight is offered to Arbace. Arbace rejects this and reproaches his father.

Artabano and Megabise decide to attack Artaserse at once; but Semira is promised to Megabise to secure his fidelity. She is told of this peremptorily. If Megabise really loves her, she says, he may prove it by refusing this marriage. Not likely! replies Megabise, somewhat coarsely.

Semira and Mandane express their conflicting feelings.

SECTION ii (scenes 8–15)

Mandane, before the assembled peers, demands her lover's death; Semira implores mercy, in an effective scene copied from Corneille's *Le Cid*. Artaserse cannot bear to judge his best friend, so in a typical *coup de théâtre* he consigns the judgement to Arbace's own father Artabano. Artabano condemns his son to conceal his own guilt. With feminine inconsistency Mandane turns on him angrily, and Semira reproaches Artaserse. Artaserse and Artabano compare their predicaments.

Artabano, left alone, is maddened with remorse, singing a very effective *recitativo stromentato* and aria.[18]

ACT III SECTION i (scenes 1–4)

Artaserse visits his friend in prison. He wishes Arbace to escape, and will put it out that he has been killed. Arbace refuses, so Artaserse makes it a royal command.

Artabano cannot find his son. Megabise, insolent and confident, tells him to pull himself together. Artaserse will be poisoned by the sacred cup with which he swears the royal oath.

SECTION ii (scenes 5–7)

Semira brings to Mandane false news of Arbace's death: mad with grief, she accuses Mandane of having caused it.

Arbace comes in time to prevent Mandane from killing herself. They sing a duet full of perplexity.

SECTION iii (scenes 8–10)

Artaserse delivers his coronation speech. As he goes to drink from the sacred cup, a rebellion is reported; then comes news that it has been quashed by Arbace, who is alive after all, and Megabise has been

[17] In Metastasio's original plan as set by Vinci and published in the Metastasio editions (Venice, 1733–58, and Paris, 1755–7) Mandane departs, leaving Arbace to finish the act. Hasse omits this closing scene of Arbace.

[18] De Brosses specifically mentions this scene as having been specially written for Hasse (see above, note 13).

killed.

Artaserse asks Arbace, who now enters, to swear innocence of his previous crimes by drinking of the sacred cup. Artabano cannot bear to see his son die and blurts out that the cup is poisoned.

Artabano shall die, orders Artaserse. Arbace will not allow this, asking to die with his father. Artaserse, impressed with the son's fidelity, changes the sentence to exile. At last Artaserse can marry Semira and Arbace Mandane.

Each of the first two acts begins with an expository passage in which certain offstage developments, plots or murders, are reported, and ends with a passage of sentimental drama, the situations being strikingly reversed: Artabano, source of all the action, is successful in Act I, full or remorse in Act II. Almost the whole of Act III is sentimental interreaction. The feelings of the friends, of the father, of the sister, of the lovers, are portrayed in turn. This is the technique called *sfaccettamento* (cutting into facets) by Claudio Varese in the definitive study of Metastasio's dramaturgy.[19] Only in the pantomimic *dénouement* of the *scena ultima* does any action occur.

Binni in fact finds the 'logical schematism' of this opera too clear for its artistic health.[20] Not only is the layout of the plot schematic; the characters also are parallelled and contrasted. For example Mandane and Smira are chiastically sister and beloved of Artaserse and Arbace, and their reactions can be matched nicely, as they are in the scene copied from Corneille. Artabano is balanced between his son's loyalty and Megabise's opportunism, being fatally susceptible to both. In Artabano Binni finds a really interesting malefactor; his remorse is caused not by abstract scruples as in other operas, but by his paternal feelings. Binni discerns an especially pure relation of recitative and aria in this piece. He gives as an example the conventional aria of Megabise in Act I, 'Sogna il guerrier le schiere', which would normally be a picturesque irrelevance, a trace of the opera's kinship with pastoral occasional works. Here, Megabise has just assailed Semira with his impudent offer of love, she being already deeply troubled. This aria is pure insolence. 'I can't help dreaming of you—it has become second nature'. Thus the aria echoes the close of the recitative.

Quando il costume
Si converta in natura,
L'alma quel che non ha sogna e figura.

Sogna il guerrier le schiere,
Le selve il cacciator,
E sogna il pescator
Le reti e l'amo.

[19] *Saggio sul Metastasio*, Florence, 1950. Unfortunately Varese does not discuss *Artaserse* at any length.

[20] Binni speaks of an 'eccesso di schematismo che è pure corrispettivo della tensione a sintetizzare l'analisi della situazione e del sentimento' (op. cit., p. 350 n. 1).

Sopito in dolce oblio,
Sogno pur io così
Colei, che tutto il dì
Sospiro e chiamo.

When its habits become its very nature, the soul pictures and dreams of that which it has not.

The warrior dreams of armies,
The hunter of woods,
The fisherman dreams
Of nets and hooks.
Thus soothed in sweet oblivion,
Even I dream
Of her whom all the day I sigh and call for.

Similar examples may be found in the arias which close Act I. Artabano's refusal of pity to his son is expressed in an aria:

ARBACE Senta pietà del figlio il padre almeno.
ARTABANO Non ti son padre,
Non mi sei figlio . . .

ARBACE At least my father must feel pity for his son.
ARTABANO I am not your father, You are not my son . . .

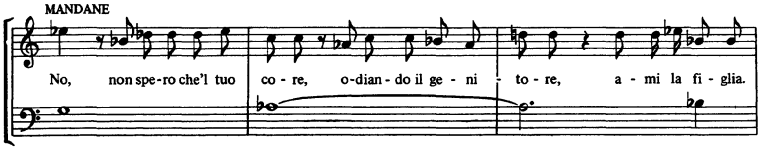
And so is Semira's rejection of her brother:

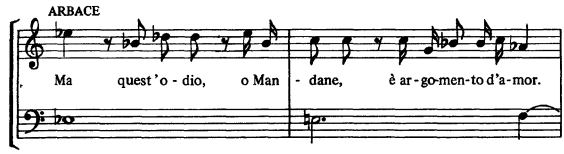
ARBACE M'ascolti, mi compianga almen Semira.
SEMIRA Torna innocente, e poi
T'ascolterò, se vuoi . . .

ARBACE At least Semira will listen to me and sympathize.
SEMIRA Be innocent again, and then
I will listen, if you wish . . .

In reviewing the music of this opera, certain features are apparent. First, the close integration of every theme and phrase, especially where this adds to coherence. In recitative a phrase may be echoed where the text discusses the same matter on two occasions. In the first scene Mandane and Arbace are discussing her father, Serse. Arbace hates Serse for prohibiting their meetings, of course. Contradicting Mandane neatly, he takes up her original phrase at the same pitch, but changing the harmony, leads it into another key (Ex. 5).

Ex. 5

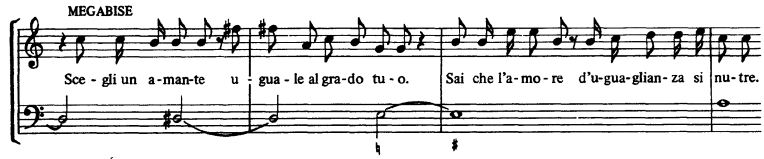




MANDANE No, I have no hopes that your heart, hating my father, can love his daughter.
ARBACE But this hatred, Mandane, is a proof of my love.

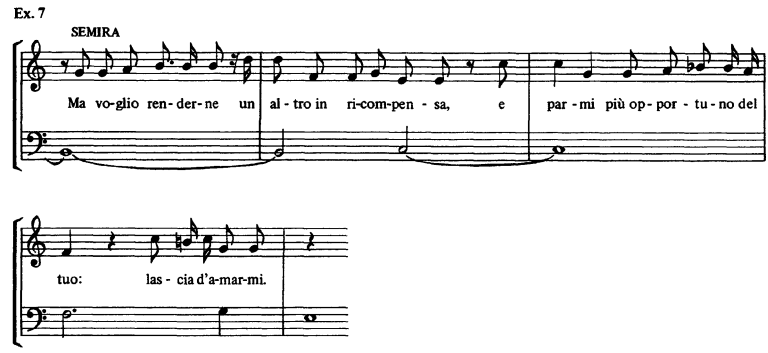
A more extensive example is to be found in scene 6 of the same act, where Megabise tries to win Semira over, and she demands that he forget her. He insolently advises: 'Choose a lover who is your social equal. You should know that love thrives on equality' (Ex. 6).

Ex. 6



Semira's reply matches this: 'But I wish to give you different advice in return, and it seems to me more apposite than yours: cease to love me' (Ex. 7). The second figure, Megabise's 'uguale al grado tuo', is clearly copied, and his following two figures are conflated in Semira's 'e parmi più opportuno del tuo', the falling fourth, originally a setting of 'l'amore', now being underlined by its ironic crotchets; when the fourth of the close comes on the same notes as a setting of 'lascia d'amarmi', the antithesis is plain.

Ex. 7



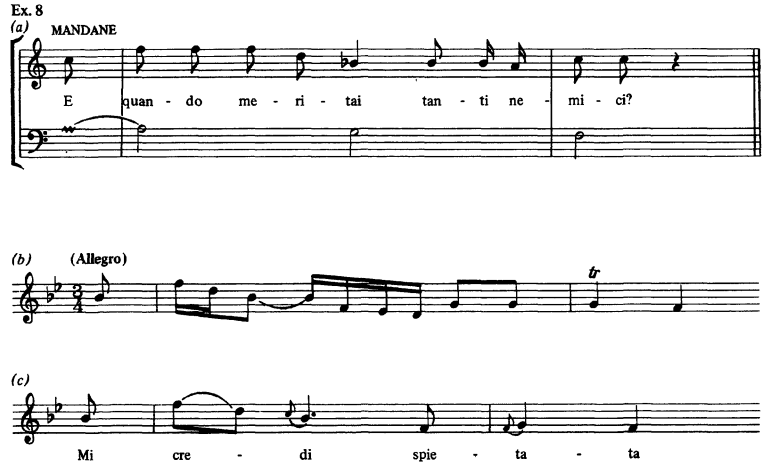
As for Binni's point about the unity of recitative and aria, there is some evidence that the composer aimed at a similar unity. For example, in Act III scene 5 Semira taunts the already distressed Mandane with having caused the death of Arbace, calling her 'crudel, inumana'. The momentum does not cease as recitative runs out into aria.

MANDANE Taci, parti da me.
SEMIRA Ch'io parta e taccia?
Fin che vita ti resta,
Sempre intorno m'avrai; sempre importuna
Rendere i giorni tuoi voglio infelici.
MANDANE E quando io meritai tanti nemici?
Mi credi spietata?
Mi chiami crudele?
Non tanto furore,
Non tante querele,
Ché basta il dolore
Per farmi morir.

MANDANE Be silent, leave me.
SEMIRA You ask me to go away and be silent? As long as you live I shall always be near you; I wish by constant nagging to make your life unpleasant.
MANDANE And when did I come to deserve so many enemies?
You think me pitiless?
You call me cruel?
Grief scarcely needs
So much fury,
So many complaints,
To kill me.

The last line of recitative (Ex. 8a) with its uncommon falling triad may be compared with the aria theme in its orchestral and vocal versions (Exx. 8b and 8c). The end of the recitative, a normal question formula, would be sung as an appoggiatura, and this reappears in the aria theme.

Ex. 8



The first act of this opera, with its neat pattern, merits a closer examination. The perfectly contrived rhythm of its two sections can be tabulated (Table I). The second section is perhaps a model of the Metastasian plan, all recitative at the start but with many arias later, the characters having been gradually massed on the stage so that each can depart with an aria. The earlier scenes in each

TABLE I

SECTION i			SECTION ii		
Scene	*Characters on stage*	*Whether aria*	*Scene*	*Characters on stage*	*Whether aria*
1	2	aria	8	2	
2	2	aria	9	3	
3	3	Metastasio's aria omitted	10	4	
			11	6	Metastasio's aria omitted
4	2				
5	3	aria	12	5	aria
6	2	aria	13	4	aria
7	1	aria	14	3	aria
			15	1	aria

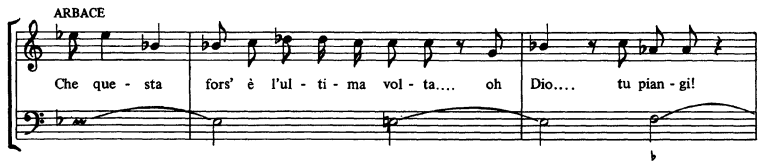
section are much longer than the later: scene 1 is extremely long, scene 7 has only eight lines. The last scene, Mandane's soliloquy, is mostly *stromentato*.

How does the musical setting enhance this rhythm? Section i exemplifies the process. It clearly has a dramatic accelerando in its midst, heightened by Hasse's omission of the aria in scene 3. Binni sees the whole process as flowing out of the tender but ominous first scene.

> The whole of the first act is already exemplary for the true Metastasian tone and the poetic possibilities of its language; the pathetic opening, with a long farewell for the two lovers Arbace and Mandane . . . leads aptly, in harmony with the dolorous atmosphere which suggests a night of horror and trouble, evoked by a dense and sober air . . . to a series of scenes, well conceived and convincing, which present all the characters in pathetic action and reaction.[21]

This opening is predictably a fine instance of 'pathetic recitative'. It is night; the lovers are meeting secretly in a moonlit garden. There is already an undertone of danger ('Questo real soggiorno periglioso è per te'), but Arbace and Mandane are shown as sincere and dignified. The slowish pace of the dialogue is betrayed by the variety of rhythmic values, especially the crotchets, and the frequent rests and strong accents. At the point where Mandane bursts into tears may be seen the musical counterpart of what Binni calls 'the sentimental exploration [*scavo*] that would fascinate Leopardi: "Perhaps I shall never see you again; maybe this is our last time together" ' (Ex. 9). As Mandane's head falls on to Arbace's shoulder

Ex. 9



[21] *L'Arcadia e il Metastasio*, pp. 351–2.