A CONTROVERSIAL MUSICIAN: THE VIOLINIST, COMPOSER, AND THEORIST FRANCESCO GEMINIANI (1687-1762)

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The present thesis is divided into three main sections: the first consists of three chapters dealing with Geminiani's life; the second comprises a chapter on his critical reception from his lifetime onwards and six chapters discussing his musical compositions and treatises; the third contains footnotes to the chapters, a thematic catalogue of Geminiani's works, two appendices, and a bibliography.

The opening, biographical section, which is in large part based on documents discovered by the author in the course of his research, is divided into chapters corresponding to the three main phases of Geminiani's life. The first (1687-1714) discusses the period that Geminiani spent in Italy (Lucca, Rome, and Naples), his musical apprenticeship with Arcangelo Corelli and Alessandro Scarlatti, and the possible factors that induced him to seek his fortune abroad. The second (1714-1732) covers the first period of Geminiani's residence in London, which saw him achieve his greatest success both as a composer and a violinist, culminating with the publication of his celebrated Op. III concertos (1732). The third (1732-1762) opens with his first sojourn in Paris, an event that marks the beginning of an unsettled period in his life that persisted up to his death.

The main portion of the second section is devoted to a descriptive analysis of Geminiani's works, which comprise three sets of concertos (Opp. II, III, and VII), three sets of sonatas (Opp. I, IV, and V), *The Inchanted Forrest*, the numerous reworkings and transcriptions of earlier works, six treatises, and a small amount of vocal music. The analysis is preceded by a chapter discussing Geminiani's controversial reputation among his contemporaries and his chequered critical fortunes from that time up to the present day. This chapter includes a review of existing scholarly literature on Geminiani and an assessment of his current position in the performing repertory. The analysis of the music pays close regard to the

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historical circumstances in which each work or collection was written and performed. The author has considered it important to avoid the misinterpretations of much previous criticism, which has taken insufficient account of the chronology of the works and their relation to a wider pattern of stylistic change. The importance of a historical context for the understanding of the music is particularly marked in the case of *The Inchanted Forrest*, which can now be viewed in an entirely new light thanks to documents discovered by the author in Parisian libraries.

The thematic catalogue, which forms the main part of the third section, contains a full list of original and modern sources of Geminiani's works. It represents the first serious attempt to bring order and comprehensiveness to a previously very confused matter - for although the musical output of Geminiani may at first sight appear rather small, the great number of transcriptions, reworkings, and "corrected" reprintings swells the corpus of works considerably and introduces many complexities. The first appendix (A) contains a complete transcription of the reviews of *La Forest Enchantée* that were written shortly after the work's first performance in 1754; these documents are crucial to our new understanding of Geminiani's last orchestral composition. The second appendix (B) contains a transcription of the part of the correspondence between Thomas Twining (1735-1804) and Charles Burney in which the two musical connoisseurs discuss Geminiani and Corelli: their letters, from which the thesis quotes frequently, reveal to us their opinions about two composers who, together with Handel, were "the only divinities" of their youth.

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FOREWORD

Although Francesco Geminiani is a relatively well known composer whose name is frequently cited in studies of baroque music, his biography and works have been relatively little researched. When I began my investigations, I soon found how limited the existing knowledge of the composer and his music was: his biography remained largely in the state in which it had been inherited from Hawkins and Burney, his music had been examined only fragmentarily and often very superficially, and nothing resembling a complete catalogue of his works existed. Part of the reason for this unsatisfactory situation was the wide dispersal of the relevant biographical and musical sources - a result of Geminiani's activity in four different countries: Italy, England, France, and Ireland. This dispersal encouraged a corresponding fragmentation of research on the part of scholars, who were rarely in a practical position to undertake primary research *in situ* in more than one or two of those countries. This meant that Geminiani's music was often analysed without due reference to the biographical and historical background, and that his multifarious activities as violinist, composer, theorist, and small-scale entrepreneur were never considered in their full interrelationship.

This thesis represents a first attempt to provide a comprehensive account of a composer who in the first half of the eighteenth century dominated the English musical scene alongside Handel. The first stage of my work was naturally to co-ordinate, synthesize, and sometimes correct existing information in secondary literature. I then proceeded to seek out new primary sources in the four countries mentioned. The results of

my research have enabled me to produce a biography of the composer, a critical-analytical study of his music and theoretical writings, and a thematic catalogue; collectively, these form the basis for a future "standard work" on Geminiani.

Given the mass of material to discuss and the limitations of space, my analysis of Geminiani's music and writings is descriptive rather than highly theoretical in character. I have tended more to search for valid general observations, which can then be discussed in the light of individual works and placed in context through a comparison with the practice of his contemporaries, rather than to produce bar-by-bar analyses of a few selected compositions. I would not claim that such close analysis of movements by Geminiani (for example, on Schenkerian principles) would not yield interesting results; but I think that at the present stage of research into Geminiani the broader issues deserve priority.

To a certain extent, the thesis "rehabilitates" Geminiani, showing how some of the criticisms levelled at him and his music were - and are still - due to an insufficient appreciation of his independent spirit. However, I have attempted to assess his strengths and weaknesses objectively and to distinguish carefully between his more successful and less successful compositions and theoretical writings. Geminiani emerges as a figure who is never less than interesting and whose oeuvre contains many attractive and illuminating pages.

Most of the musical examples are photographic reproductions taken from original or modern sources. These reproductions are not only often clearer than handwritten examples would be but also communicate useful information about the sources themselves through their appearance. Where the *editio princeps* has been reproduced, the source is not specifically identified;

but when later editions, contemporary or modern, have been used, the source is identified by the appropriate catalogue reference..

For greater ease of reading, all quotations of substantial passages originally in Italian, French, or German are given in English translation (the author's own, unless stated otherwise) in the main text. In all such cases the original text is given for comparison in the corresponding footnote. I have used my discretion in deciding whether or not to translate shorter pieces of text in languages other than English; where these are readily intelligible to readers of English, they are normally left in their original form.

In making my acknowledgements, I should like first to thank the University of Liverpool for awarding me a Martha Vidor Research Studentship, which enabled me to pursue for three years the full-time research that led to the present thesis.

I gratefully record here the help of Brian Boydell, Owain Edwards, Kenneth Edward James, Lowell Lindgren, Jean Lionnet, Andrea Luppi, Rosamund McGuinness, Carole Taylor, and Kees Vlaardingerbroek, all of whom provided information enabling me to track down documents essential for my research.

I wish to thank my Supervisor, Professor Michael Talbot, for inviting me to carry out my work in the Department of Music at the University of Liverpool, and for his specialist advice, encouragement, help with linguistic problems, and general guidance.

Finally, I owe a debt of gratitude to the many friends who offered me hospitality while I was following the trail of Geminiani in English, Irish, French, and Italian archives: Ilaria Maffei, Marita Kaiser, Francesca Cassano, Giovanni and Elizabeth Careri, Gerald Barry, Daniela Costa, Isabella Pezzini, and Giovanni and Barbara Panizon.

ABBREVIATIONS

Journals

AM	*Acta Musicologica*
AMC	*Accademia Musicale Chigiana*
C	*The Consort*
EM	*Early Music*
F	*Il Fronimo*
JAMS	*Journal of the American Musicological Society*
MA	*The Musical Antiquary*
MAn	*Musica Antiqua*
ML	*Music and Letters*
MQ	*The Musical Quarterly*
MR	*The Music Review*
NA	*Note d'Archivio (nuova serie)*
PRMA	*Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*
RIM	*Rivista Italiana di Musicologia*
RM	*Revue Musicale SIM*
SIMG	*Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft*
SM	*Studi Musicali*
SMN	*Studia Musicologica Norvegica*

Geminiani's Works

AA	*The Art of Accompaniament*
APGC	*The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra*
APV	*The Art of Playing on the Violin*
F	*Flute sonatas*
GA	*Guida Armonica*
HM	*The Harmonical Miscellany*
IF	*The Inchanted Forrest*
M	*Minuets with variations*
PC 1	*Pièces de Clavecin* (first collection)
PC 2	*Pièces de Clavecin* (second collection)
SH	*Select Harmony* (third collection)
Taste 1	*Rules for playing in a true Taste*
Taste 2	*A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick*
TC	*Two Concertos*

The abbreviation of the works with opus number (except the treatises) will follow this system: the first number (large Roman) refers to the opus, the second (Arabic) to the work, and the third (small Roman) to the movement: e. g. I/2/iii = Op. I, second sonata, third movement.

Chapter One

LUCCA, ROME, NAPLES (1687-1714)

The few known facts about the life of Francesco Geminiani are generally taken from the writings of Hawkins and Burney, which, although they hold a particular interest as sources since both historians knew the composer personally, do not always prove reliable.[1] The sole attempt in modern times to shed further light on Geminiani's biography was made by Adolfo Betti in 1934.[2] However, Betti's researches were limited to the archives of Lucca, the composer's native city, and resulted in little more than the discovery, important though that was, of Geminiani's date of baptism. It seems that after Betti no researcher felt the urge to take the investigation further, perhaps because of the objective difficulty in keeping track of Geminiani's movements between London, Paris, and Dublin, the three cities where he spent most of his life.[3] The lack of any established tradition of Geminiani studies (despite the fact that this composer was considered by many of his contemporaries the equal of Handel and Corelli) weighs heavily on the present state of research and accounts for the persistence, even after the present investigations, of many lacunae in his biography.

Francesco Geminiani was born in Lucca in December 1687. The *Bacchetta de' Battezzati nell'Insigne, Parrocchiale, e Battesimale Chiesa de' SS: Gio: e Reparata di Lucca*, which today is preserved in the parochial archive

of San Martino, gives, in addition to the date of baptism, the names of Geminiani's parents and the parish to which his family belonged:

"5 December 1687

Francesco Xaverio, the child of Signor Giuliano Geminiani, son of Michele Geminiani, and of his wife Signora Angela, living in the parish of Santa Maria Corteorlandini, was baptized on 5 December 1687. His godfather was *Spettabile* [a non-noble title connoting higher status than 'Signor'] Silvestro Mansi, and his godmother the Most Illustrious Marchioness Maria Vittoria, wife of the Most Illustrious Marquis Francesco Grilli of Genoa, and on her behalf Signora Maddalena, wife of *Spettabile* Silvestro Mansi."[4]

The day of Geminiani's birth is not known for certain. However, it was common practice in Italy to include among a child's given names that of the saint whose feast fell on the day of birth. In this fashion Antonio Vivaldi, born on 4 March 1678, derived his second given name (Lucio) from Lucius I, Pope and Martyr. The feast of St. Francis Xavier is assigned to 3 December, two days before that of Geminiani's baptism. One would not be surprised, therefore, if the child named Francesco Saverio was born exactly then.

Every year each of Lucca's parishes drew up a list of its residents. Betti overlooked the fact that Geminiani's family, which belonged to the parish of Santa Maria Corteorlandini, was required to appear annually in its *Registro delle Anime* (literally, "Register of Souls"). In addition to revealing some important biographical information, this register allows us

to establish quite precisely which years the composer spent in Lucca.

Francesco Saverio (Xaverio, Zaverio) Geminiani (Gemignani, Giomignani) was the fourth son of Angela and Giuliano Antonio Geminiani. From their marriage, celebrated in 1683, eleven children were born: Maria Margarita, Giovanni Agostino, Anna Maria Caterina Saveria, Francesco Saverio, Cristina Alessandra, Domenico, Michele, Anna, Teresa, Rosa Maria, and Andrea.[5] Geminiani's father was engaged in 1681 as a violinist at the Cappella Palatina of Lucca (i.e., the musical establishment of the 'palace' that was the seat of the Lucchese government); there he earned the monthly salary of 3 scudi, increased to 4 scudi in 1690.[6] During this period the Cappella Palatina comprised three *musici* (one soprano, one contralto, and one bass), four violinists, and one oboist, all of whom, on appointment, were taken onto the palatine (civic) payroll.[7] This body was the only musical institution in the city, and it is therefore not surprising that many Lucchese musicians sought employment elsewhere, especially in Rome, which during this period offered much greater opportunities. Giuliano himself probably spent some years there before his appointment to the Cappella Palatina, for his name appears in the minutes of the Roman *Congregazione dei Musici di Santa Cecilia* for 3 July 1674.[8]

It seems that Francesco Saverio was the only son of Giuliano to follow the profession of his father, who was almost certainly his first violin teacher. (The relationship between father and son echoes that between Giovanni Battista and Antonio Vivaldi and similar "dynastic" traditions of violin-playing in the Vitali, Somis, and Laurenti families.) According to the *Mandatorie* of the "famiglia di sopra", the section of the household staff to which the palatine musicians belonged, Giuliano remained a member until 1707; his last payment was made on 6 August 1707; on 27 August of the

same year Francesco Saverio took his father's place, receiving the monthly salary of 2.45 scudi.[9] After 1707 the Geminiani family no longer appears in the *Registro delle anime* of the parish of Santa Maria Corteorlandini; it moved elsewhere, possibly because of the death of Giuliano. It is only thanks to the *Mandatorie* that it is possible to confirm Francesco Geminiani's continued presence in Lucca. Unlike his father, who served the government of Lucca for twenty-six years, Francesco remained on the palatine payroll for only two years. Although his salary was increased on 13 May 1709 to 4 scudi, perhaps in order to persuade him to remain in Lucca, he remained in post only until the following September. One month later he was "raff[erma]to senza stip[en]dio" - i.e., reconfirmed without pay, in the hope that he would return.[10] On 14 March 1710, after more than five months of absence, his successor, Pier Francesco Lombardi, was finally appointed.[11]

It is hard to guess at the reasons that led Geminiani to leave a secure job, which was relatively well paid and kept him in his native city, but it is possible at least to advance a hypothesis. Whereas his father Giuliano had to wait almost ten years to see his pay increased from 3 to 4 scudi, Francesco needed hardly two for his salary almost to double; a rapid glance at the *Mandatorie* is enough to show that this was an exceptional achievement. His ability on the violin must certainly have been above the average, and Lucca may have represented a "dead end" for him, as far as the career of a virtuoso was concerned. So one could understand if he felt attracted to large cities and decided to seek his fortune elsewhere. Even if this was the main reason for his departure, it need not have been the only one. Throughout his life, as we shall see, Geminiani carefully avoided becoming subservient to a patron or a religious institution - so

much so that on several occasions he suffered financial hardship. In the light of his subsequent experiences his action does not seem in any way surprising; rather, it can be viewed as a foretaste of what was to take place later.

In the *Registro delle anime* Geminiani's presence in Lucca is documented in continuous fashion from 1691 to 1704; from that year until 27 August 1707, when his name once again appears in the *Mandatorie*, we lose track of him. The register was drawn up each year around the time of March; thus the period during which Geminiani may have been away from Lucca is one of about three years: from April 1704 to August 1707. After only two more years - around October 1709 - he departed from his native city once more: the last documentary evidence relating to the period he spent in Italy dates from September 1709, when he received his final salary payment from the bursar (*camerlengo*) of the *famiglia palatina*. These dates may help to clarify one of the least clear aspects of his life: the periods and places of his musical training. On this subject it is useful briefly to recall Burney and Hawkins:

> "He received his first instructions on the violin of Carlo Ambrogio Lonati, of Milan, commonly called *Il Gobbo* (the Hunchback), a celebrated performer on that instrument [...]. After this, he studied counterpoint under Ales. Scarlatti at Rome, where he became a disciple of Corelli on the violin; and having finished his studies there, he went to Naples, where from the reputation of his performance at Rome, he was placed at the head of the orchestra; but, according to the elder Barbella, he was soon discovered to be so wild and unsteady a timist, that instead of regulating and conducting the band, he threw it into confusion; as none of the performers were able to follow him in his *tempo rubato*, and other unexpected accelerations and relaxations of measure. After this discovery, the younger Barbella assured me, that

> his father, who well remembered his arrival at Naples, said he was never trusted with a better part than the tenor, during his residence in that city."[12]

> "He received his first instructions in music from Alessandro Scarlatti, and after that became a pupil of Carlo Ambrosio Lunati, surnamed Il Gobbo, a most celebrated performer on the violin; after which he became a disciple of Corelli, and under him finished his studies on that instrument."[13]

Further confirmation of his sojourn in Rome, during which he was taught counterpoint by Alessandro Scarlatti and violin by Arcangelo Corelli, is provided again by Burney:

> "Geminiani used to relate, that *Franceschilli* [Francesco Alborea], a celebrated performer on the violoncello at the beginning of this century, accompanied one of these cantatas at Rome so admirably, while Scarlatti was at the harpsichord, that the company, being good Catholics and living in a country where miraculous powers have not yet ceased, were firmly persuaded it was not Franceschelli who had played the violoncello, but an angel that had descended and assumed his shape."[14]

The presence at the harpsichord of Alessandro Scarlatti, who, as is well known, remained in Rome until the end of 1708, suggests that this anecdote refers to the period of Geminiani's first absence from Lucca, which occurred between April 1704 and August 1707. During those years he could well have been a pupil of Corelli and Scarlatti, to whom he was perhaps introduced by his father, who as a member of the *Congregazione dei Musici di Santa Cecilia* must have been fully integrated into Roman musical life.

If this was the final period of his musical training, it could account for both his subsequent rejection of Lucca, which would indeed have seemed a totally inadequate theatre of operations for a virtuoso raised in the school of the famous Corelli, and the sudden increase in his salary as a musician in the palatine orchestra. Nevertheless, a doubt remains: between 1704 and 1707 Geminiani does not seem (from the extant records that have been studied) to have taken part in any private or public performances, and this would be somewhat unusual for a pupil of Corelli. His name appears in none of the numerous documents recently discovered in various Roman archives that shed light on musical activities in the city during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries; nor is it found in the records of the *Congregazione dei Musici di Santa Cecilia*, the corporation to which all professional musicians in Rome had to belong.[15] The case of Giuseppe Valentini shows how unlikely it is that Geminiani spent three whole years in Rome without leaving any traces. Valentini was born in Florence in 1681 and moved to Rome around 1692 for reasons similar to Geminiani's, becoming a pupil of Giovanni Bononcini. In 1694, when he was just thirteen years old, his name appears for the first time in a list of violinists active in the city. From 1695 to 1698 Valentini was secretary to the *Congregazione dei Musici di Santa Cecilia*, to which he had belonged since 1692.[16] So if Geminiani did visit Rome during these years, he is unlikely to have remained there for very long. He may indeed have been dissuaded from doing so by the presence there of so many violinists of high repute besides Corelli (e.g., Giuseppe Valentini, Matteo Fornari, Domenico Ghilarducci, Giuseppe Mellini, and Antonio Montanari), a factor which may have convinced him that it was best to seek his fortune elsewhere.

Whatever the truth of this, Geminiani does seem to have known Corelli personally. In the preface of his *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick*, published in London in 1749, Geminiani writes that he had the pleasure of conversing with the latter about his celebrated *Follia* (Op. V, no. 12), "and heard him acknowledge the Satisfaction he took in composing it, and the Value he set upon it."[17] By 1749, as we shall see, he had no need any longer to proclaim himself to be Corelli's pupil (as he had done when he first arrived in London in 1714), so the account is very likely based on fact. Another source of information on this question is the correspondence between Charles Burney and Thomas Twining, of which part is quoted in Appendix B. There we learn of a conversation between Geminiani and Twining that took place around 1757. In the course of this the composer related some anecdotes about Corelli that Burney was later to include in his *General History of Music*. The short passage quoted below, which implies a close - but not necessarily first-hand - acquaintance with the Roman composer, is taken from a letter that Twining sent Burney on 22 July 1773:

> "[...] Geminiani asserted that Corelli availed himself much of the compositions of other masters, particularly of the Masses in which he played at Rome; that he got much from Lulli (particularly the method of modulating in legatura) & from [Giovanni] Bononcini's famous Camilla. His notion of Corelli, (which upon the whole seems a very just one) was, that his merit was not depth of learning (like that of A. Scarlatti) nor great fancy, or rich invention either in melody or harmony; but nice ear, & most delicate taste, which led him to select the most pleasing harmonies & melodies, & to construct the parts so as to produce the most delightful effect upon the ear. At the time of Corelli's highest reputation, Geminiani asked Scarlatti what he thought of him; who answered that he found nothing greatly to admire in his

FIG. 1

Portrait of Geminiani attributed to Thomas Hudson. In the possession of the Royal Society of Musicians. Reproduced by courtesy of the Royal College of Music.

composition, but was prodigiously struck with his manner of playing his concertos, & his nice management of his band, the uncommon accuracy of whose performance gave the Concerto an amazing effect; & that to the eye as well as to the ear, for Corelli looked upon it as essential to the ensemble of a band, that their bow should all move exactly together, all up, or all down; insomuch that at his rehearsals (which constantly preceded every public performance of his concertos) he would immediately stop short, if he spied out one irregular bow [...]".[18]

In his *Storia della musica in Lucca* (1880) Luigi Nerici claims that Geminiani made his debut in Naples at the *Accademia dei Nobili* when he was eighteen years old.[19] The composer's visit to Naples is not yet adequately documented. The only evidence for it is the above-quoted anecdote reported to Burney by Emanuele Barbella. This relates Geminiani's poor showing as leader of a Neapolitan orchestra and his resulting demotion to the rank of a viola-player. According to Flood, who unfortunately seldom quotes his sources of information, this occurred in 1711.[20] The anecdote seems quite credible, particularly since the mortifications that Gemininani suffered in Naples could had been one of the reasons why he went to try his luck in England. However, it is very possible that if the composer had managed to find a position in Italy comparable to those of Corelli or Valentini in Rome, he would even so have taken the decision to go abroad. As we have already remarked and will show in detail later, Geminiani insisted above all on his independence; he preferred to sacrifice the economic stability that service in the household of a rich patron or at a church could guarantee rather than find himself subject to the constraints of routine-bound activity. Essentially, leading violinists of his time had a choice of three types of career: to live under the patronage of a rich nobleman, as Corelli did with Cardinal

Ottoboni; to become a musical director (*maestro di cappella*) attached to one or more religious institutions, in the manner of Giuseppe Valentini at the Roman churches of Santa Maria Maddalena and San Giovanni dei Fiorentini; or - most risky of all - to follow the path of an itinerant virtuoso after the fashion of Veracini and Locatelli. Geminiani opted for the third course, the one that promised him greatest freedom: in 1714, aged twenty-seven, he left Italy, perhaps never to return.

Chapter Two

THE FIRST LONDON PERIOD (1714-1732)

"The year 1714 [recounts Burney] was rendered an important period to the progress of the violin in this country, by the arrival of Geminiani and Veracini; as the abilities of these masters confirmed the sovereignty of that instrument over all others, in our theatres and concerts."[1] According to Hawkins, Geminiani came to London in the company of another Lucchese musician, Francesco Barsanti (1690-1772), who was also to spend most of his remaining life in Britain.[2] The choice of England was particularly happy: even allowing that Italian music as a whole was well known and appreciated throughout Europe, in England there was a particularly vigorous and enthusiastic cultivation of the music of Arcangelo Corelli, which conferred a great advantage on any violinist who could claim to belong to his school.[3] But England offered other advantages besides. First, violin technique was much less well developed than in Italy, so that it was all the easier for a pupil of Corelli to make a name as a virtuoso. Second, there were many noblemen, rendered Italophiles by their experience of the Grand Tour, who were ready to offer their patronage to an Italian artist (though Geminiani took advantage of this only during the first years of his residence in London and in a few other scattered periods of his life). Third, there existed some lucrative sources of income that enabled a musician to avoid dependence on patronage or salaried employment altogether, particularly benefit concerts and private teaching. Unlike Pietro Castrucci, Francesco Maria Veracini, and Giovanni Stefano Carbonelli, all of whom gave frequent performances in

London, Geminiani was rarely heard in public as a violinist, from which one infers that his main activity in the first years of his sojourn was teaching.

A short time before Geminiani's arrival in England Johann Mattheson wrote: "Whoever wishes to achieve something in music these days makes for England. Italy and France are good for listening and learning; England is good for earning; Germany is good only for wasting away".[4] What Mattheson observed about England was confirmed by Roger North in the following words:

> "Anciently musick was in some sort pastorall, that is plain, practicable and good. Now it is set up drest in superlatives brought from I know not whence, at imense charges in profuse salarys, pensions, subscriptions, and promiscuous courtship and flatterys into the bargain. These farr fetcht and dear bought gentlemen returne home rich, buy fine houses and gardens, and live in admiration of the English wealth and profusion; unless, having in pleasures profused what they got here, they yeild to strong and noble importunitys to come againe to get more".[5]

According to Hawkins, Geminiani did not take long to win the favour of London musical circles:

> "In the year 1714 he came to England, where in a short time he so recommended himself by his exquisite performance, that all who professed to understand or love music, were captivated at the hearing him; and among the nobility were many who severally laid claim to the honour of being his patrons; but the persòn to whom he seemed the most closely to attach himself was the Baron Kilmansegge, chamberlain to king George I as elector of Hanover, and a favourite of that prince".[6]

In the preface to his *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick* (1749) Geminiani describes his impressions on his first arrival in the capital:

> "When I came first to *London*, which was Thirty-four Years ago, I found Musick in so thriving a State, that I had all the Reason imaginable to suppose the Growth would be suitable to the Excellency of the Soil.
>
> But I have lived to be most miserably disappointed; for tho' it cannot be said that there was any want of Encouragement, that Encouragement was ill bestow'd.
>
> The Hand was more considered than the Head; the Performance than the Composition; and hence it followed, that instead of labouring to cultivate a Taste, which seem'd to be all that was wanting, the Publick was content to nourish Insipidity."

Here the composer seems to complain of a lack of "encouragement", yet Hawkins' account implies rather the opposite. To Baron Johann Adolf Kielmansegg (1668-1717), his first patron in England, Geminiani dedicated his first set of violin sonatas. Kielmansegg, as we read on the title-page of Op. I (1716), was "Cavallerizzo Maggiore e Ciamberlano di Sua Maestà Britanica e Elettore di Brunswick e Lunebourg"; Hawkins tells us that in order to further his protégé's cause Kielmansegg organized a performance in the presence of the king at which Geminiani was accompanied on the harpsichord by Handel:

> "The publication of this work had such an effect, that men were at a loss to determine which was the greatest excellence of Geminiani, his performance or his skill and fine style in composition; and, with a due attention to his interest, there is no saying to what degree he might have availed himself of that favour, which his merits had found in this country: this at least is certain, that the publication of his book

impressed his patron with such a sense of his abilities, as moved him to endeavour to procure for him a more beneficial patronage than his own; to this end he mentioned Geminiani to the king as an exquisite performer, and the author of a work, which at the same time he produced, and the king had no sooner looked over, than he expressed a desire to hear some of the compositions contained in it performed by the author. The Baron immediately communicated the king's pleasure to Geminiani, who, though he was gladly disposed to obey such a command, intimated to the Baron a wish that he might be accompanied on the harpsichord by Mr. Handel, which being signified to the king, both masters had notice to attend at St. James's, and Geminiani acquitted himself in a manner worthy of the expectations that had been formed of him."[7]

This private concert seems to have had the additional result of reconciling Handel and George I; after relating the well-known anecdote of the *Water Music*, Hawkins writes in reference to the same episode:

"From this time the baron waited with impatience for an intimation from the king of his desire to see Handel; at length an opportunity offered, which he with the utmost eagerness embraced; Geminiani had been in England a short time, during which he had published and dedicated to baron Kilmansegge his Opera prima, consisting of those twelve Solos for the violin, which will be admired as long as the love of melody shall exist, and the king was desirous of hearing them performed by the author, who was the greatest master of the instrument then living; Geminiani was extremely pleased with the thought of being heard, but was fearful of being accompanied on the harpsichord by some performer, who might fail to do justice both to the compositions and the performance of them: in short, he suggested to the baron a wish that Mr. Handel might be the person appointed to meet him in the king's apartment; and upon mentioning it to his majesty, the baron was told that Handel would be admitted for the purpose, and he attended accordingly; and upon expressing his desire to atone for his former

misbehaviour, by the utmost efforts of duty and gratitude, he was reinstated in the king's favour."[8]

Geminiani was of course not the only Italian violinist resident in London at that time, but initially he had few rivals. Foremost among these were Veracini, who paid a brief visit in 1714, returning only in 1733, and Castrucci, another pupil of Corelli, who settled there in 1715 and enjoyed some success (for 22 years he led the orchestra in Handel's operas). Besides Barsanti and Castrucci, the circle of Italian artists with whom Geminiani was associated during that period included Nicola Haym, Giacomo Rossi, Antonio Conti, Paolo Rolli, Giovanni Bononcini, Nicola Grimaldi (called "Nicolino"), Antonio Maria Bernacchi, and Gaetano Berenstadt; some of these he must already have met in Rome.[9] In fact, it was precisely the close relationship of all these figures to the cultural life of Rome that constituted the main reason for their success in London. As pupils of Corelli, Geminiani and Castrucci were both authentic products of the Roman school, while the poet and librettist Paolo Rolli could make the same claim as a pupil of the celebrated Gian Vincenzo Gravina and a member of the Arcadian Academy. The life of Paolo Rolli bears many similarities to that of Geminiani: their age was the same, and they spent their apprentice years in Rome under the two most famous teachers of their respective arts then living there; they settled in London around the same time (Rolli in 1715) and remained there most of their lives, devoting themselves mostly to teaching and publishing; they both embraced the role of educators of English taste, regarding themselves as continuers of what they considered the true classical tradition. Their authority in London rested primarily on the fact that they were both viewed as representatives

FR. GEMINIANI

Né en 1680, Mort en 1762.

Gravé par Lambert Jeune

FIG. 2

Portrait of Geminiani by James Lambert the Younger. In *Galerie des violons et luthiers célèbres morts à vivants*, Paris, 1818 [F-Pn, Rés. 462].

of the most genuine form of Italian culture: that revived in Rome at the end of the seventeenth century by the Arcadian Academy. Their self-imposed mission as "defenders of good taste", which comes out many times in their works, bears an unmistakable Arcadian imprint. Geminiani did not himself belong to the Arcadian Academy, but his mentors Corelli and Scarlatti were among the few musicians admitted to membership.

The relationship between Geminiani and the other Italian artists and literati resident in London is still very inadequately documented. However, it is not difficult to imagine that the composer became part of the intellectual circle in which Paolo Rolli was the leading figure. The only evidence that bears directly on this question is a letter that the castrato Gaetano Berenstadt wrote to the Florentine trader and diplomat Giovanni Giacomo Zamboni on 3 December 1717; this contains a brief mention of the composer.[10] Writing from Dresden, Berenstadt merely asks his London correspondent to convey his compliments to Geminiani; yet this reference suffices to show that the three men belonged to the same "set".[11] As Lowell Lindgren has recently pointed out, Berenstadt's circle included all the people to whom he used to send his regards or who were mentioned in his correspondence; among these were Paolo Rolli, Pietro Castrucci, Nicola Haym, Giovanni Bononcini, Attilio Ariosti, and Pier Giuseppe Sandoni.[12]

On 8 August 1718 the *Daily Courant* announced the publication of the Meares edition of the violin sonatas Op. I:

> "This day [7/8/1718] is Published By Richard Meares, Musical Instrument-maker and Musick-Printer, at the Golden Viol and Hautboy in St. Paul's Church Yard, Twelve Sonato's, Composed by the Celebrated Signor Francisco Geminiani, shewing a marvelous Composition and curious

Passages throughout the whole Work. To oblige the Ingenious, all engraved upon Copper Plate, and to render it more acceptable, corrected by his own Hand-Printed upon Royal Paper, Price 8s. NB A large Incouragement given to those that take a Dozen Books."

This edition is preserved at the British Library in two different issues: one is certainly related to the quoted advertisement (see Catalogue, A 1b); the other was most likely published earlier and includes a dedication dated 28 November 1716 (see Catalogue, A 1a):

"Most Illustrious and Excellent Sir [Kielmansegg]: the gracious approval with which Your Excellency deigned not long ago to honour one of my sonatas emboldens me to publish with the addition of your most esteemed name a few musical diversions composed by me for the violin that are intended for the studious delight of those who are not contented by the harmonious sound of that instrument alone. Thus, in my effort to gratify Your Excellency's wish to hear more of my compositions, I now humbly dedicate them most respectfully to you in the hope that they will entertain you during those moments when you are free from more serious occupations and are able to devote yourself, as is your custom, to the enjoyment of the most refined arts: however little I deem them to be worthy of the consummate understanding of music shown by Your Excellency (which is but the least of the noble accomplishments of your mind), I flatter myself, knowing how great has been your generosity in graciously accepting the offerings of other talents, that these will gain from you no less favourable a reception than my first work, after which I will be able to look forward with confidence to the more general approval that I seek for them. Meanwhile, sheltering under your patronage, I declare myself with all due reverence to be Your Excellency's most humble, devoted, and obliging servant. Francesco Geminiani, London, 28 November 1716".[13]

With these sonatas, whose Corellian lineage is very evident, Geminiani

12

SONATE

A VIOLINO, VIOLONE, E CEMBALO,

DEDICATE

Al Illustrissimo et Excellentissimo Signore

IL SIG^R. BARONE DI KILMANSEGGE

Cavallerizzo Maggiore e Ciamberlano

Di sua MAESTÀ BRITANICA

E ELETTORE DI BRUNSWICK E LUNEBOURG

DA FRANCESCO GEMINIANI

London Printed for & Sold by Richard Meares Musical Instrument Maker and Musick Printer at the Golden Viol & Hautboy in S^t. Pauls Church yard.

Tho: Cross Sculpsit.

F: G:

FIG. 3

Title-page of the Meares edition of Op. I [A 1b]

introduced himself to the English public as the pupil of the celebrated *Maestro di Fusignano*. Considering the number of editions and reprints following that by Meares, they must have enjoyed considerable success, though Burney commented that few people were capable of performing them.[14] They were very likely part of Geminiani's repertory as a virtuoso after his arrival in London, even if some - possibly all - of them were composed before he left Italy. His success stemmed equally from the performance of certain concertos that only many years later were published as his Opp. II and III (1732). On 4 March 1719 the *Daily Courant* announced:

> "For the Benefit of Mr Rouse Hawley/ At Mr Hickford's Great Room in James Street near the Hay-market, on Friday next, being the 6th of March, will be perform'd a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Musick; with several Concerto's and Solo's of Mr Jeminiani [sic], to be perform'd by Mr Rouse Hawley; particularly a new Concerto by Mr Kitch upon the Hautboy, and Singing by Mrs Obert. Tickets may be had at the Door, at 5 s. each. To begin at Seven."

These concertos had probably been performed on previous occasions, for otherwise the advertisement would have drawn attention to their novelty, as in the case of the oboe concerto by Jean Christian Kytch. The reason for the delay in the publication of Opp. II and III is unknown. Perhaps it was Geminiani's intention to follow in this respect as well the example of Corelli, who liked to test out and polish his works for several years before committing them to print. In fact, this mania for correcting, improving, reworking, and making alterations would later become one of the Lucchese master's salient characteristics. The advertisement quoted above calls into question Burney's observation, repeated by later critics,

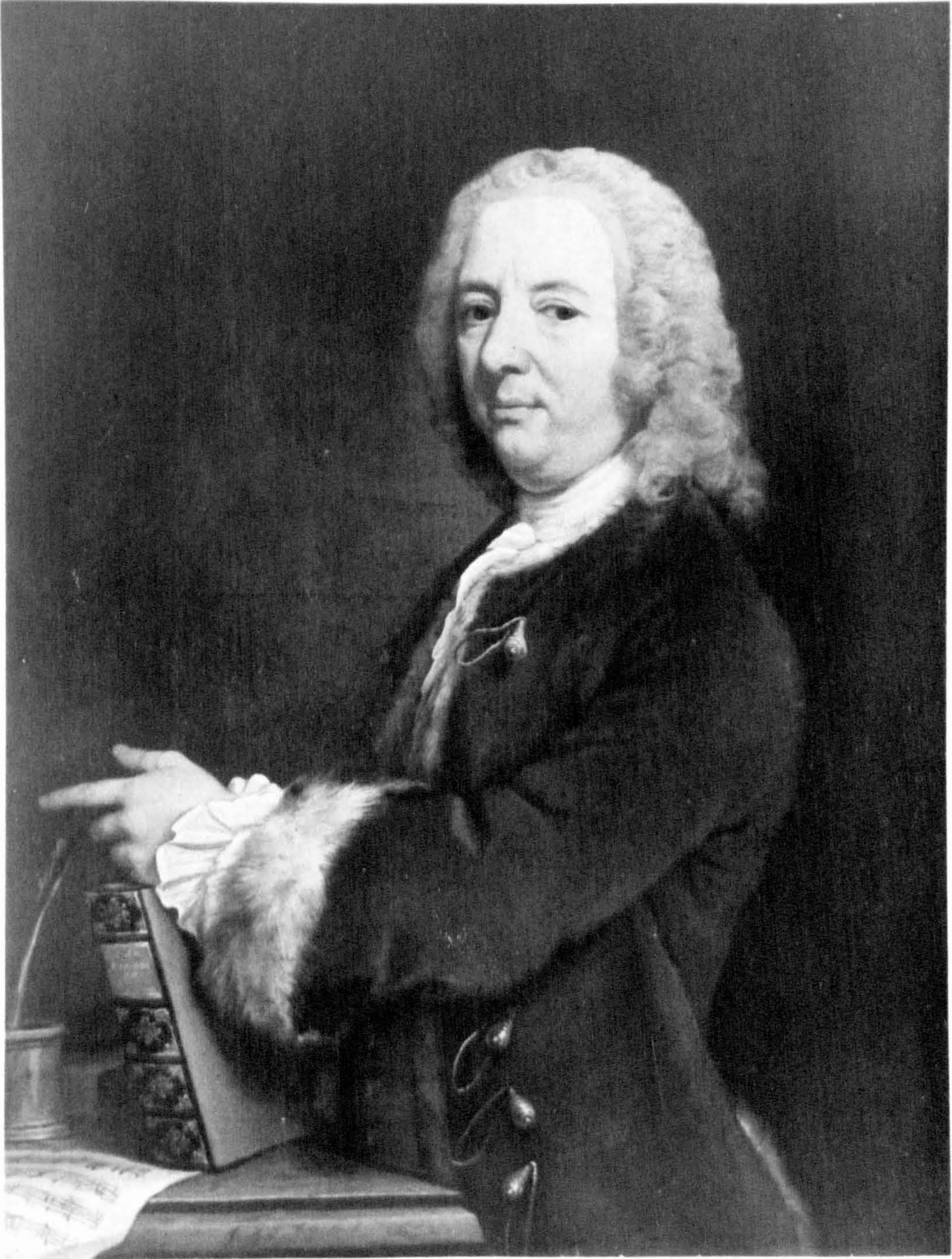


FIG. 4

Portrait of Geminiani by William Hoare, c. 1735. Present location unknown. Reproduced in Betti, op. cit.

concerning Geminiani's alleged lack of facility for composition; the year of publication must not be confused with that of composition, not least because Geminiani himself often had to finance the publication of his works, a factor that could cause much delay. Subscriptions to his *Guida Armonica* (Op. X), for example, were invited in the *Dublin Newsletter* of 26 April 1740, but the treatise had to wait twelve more years for publication since the number of subscribers did not suffice to cover the costs of printing. Further evidence that Geminiani wrote his concertos many years before they were published comes from a letter in the correspondence of Lord Egmont (1683-1748) dated 25 April 1721:

> "Mr Mathews as you conjecture went imediatly to the Bath, & it was not till his return to London that he gave me your Concerto. I have not yet had the pleasure to hear it at our Concert, becouse we had not hands enough to perform it. I gave it Mr Needler who thanks you for it and has given me one in return which I will send you as I find opportunity, but this not of his own composition. He declin'd a great while out of modesty to send you any thing of his own, but at length promist me he wou'd. There is a Concerto in D* of Geminiani which if you have not, he will procure, and he told me of some pieces lately printed in Holland viz. Vivaldis 7th Op. Jaccomo Facco 1. Op. and dal'Abaco 5. Op. If you have none of these, I will look 'em out."[15]

So in the first ten years of his residence in London Geminiani's fame rested not only on Op. I but also on his future Opp. II and III. He was certainly admired most of all for his abilities as a violinist, though his public performances were very rare. "Geminiani [writes Burney] was seldom heard in public during his long residence in England. His compositions, scholars, and the presents he received from the great, whenever he could be

prevailed upon to play at their houses, were his chief support."[16] The first documented testimony to his gifts as a virtuoso is found in the diary of the physician Claver Morris (entries for 6 and 7 October 1721):

[6/10/1721] "Capt. Farewell, Mr. Perry, & I went to Bath, to Hear Senior Geminiani, the best Player on a Violin in Europe. We dined at the Lamb; & not having a better way of coming into his Company than by the mediation of Mr. Harrington we went to Kelston where Mr. Ash happening to be, he was so kind to undertake we should heare this admir'd Performer. We had a long Consort at Mr. Harrington's."

[7/10/1721] "Mr. Ash went with us to Bath, & introduc'd us into the Company of Geminiani, (at Mr. Stagg's House), & he entertain'd us with the utmost Civility as well as his wonderful Hand on the Violin."[17]

Further testimony is provided by Avison and by Hawkins:

"And, as we have distinguished this Master, as a Pattern of Excellence in his Compositions, so we must allow him to have been equally excellent in his Performance; for in this Respect, he was also peculiarly happy in his various Expression, as well of the tender, the serene, the solemn, as of the joyous and rapid; and, with a ready and proper Execution, always entered into a true Feeling of the Spirit, or Softness suitable to each of these Styles."[18]

"Of his performance it is very difficult to convey an idea, there being no master of the violin at this day living with whom he can with any propriety be compared, Jackson excepted, who possesses many of his excellencies, but never came near him in point of tone. It must therefore suffice to say that he had none of the fire and spirit of the modern violinists, but that all the graces and elegancies of melody, all the powers that can engage attention, or that render the passions

of the hearer subservient to the will of the artist, were united in his performances."[19]

In May 1724 the *Session of Musicians* dedicated to the violinist the following verses:

"Next him *Ge*[mi]*n*[ia]*ni* did appear,
With Bow in Hand and much a sob'rer air;
He simper'd at the God, as who would say,
You can't deny me, if you hear me play.
Quickly his meaning *Phoebus* understood,
Allowing what he did was very good;
And since his Fame all Fiddlers else surpasses,
He set him down first Treble at *Parnassus*."[20]

The following year (1725) Geminiani became one of the eight founding members of the *Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas Apollini*, a masonic lodge better known by the name of the tavern where its members used to meet, *The Queen's Head*.[21] This lodge was founded on 18 February 1725. Shortly before, those prospective members who were not already freemasons, Geminiani among them, were initiated into the craft:

"M.r Papillon Ball Merch.t and Seig.r Francesco Xaverio Geminiani were made Masons the 1.st of February 1724 [N.S. 1725]."[22]

As confirmation of the celebrity the composer had acquired during his approximately ten years in London, he was awarded a special rank:

> "That our most deserving and Justly Applauded Brother Seign.r Francesco Xaverio Geminiani be the Solo Director and perpetual Dictator of all our Musical Performances and in his Absence the President for the time being; but in case of his death or leaving the Society his Token of Distinction shall ever be worn by the President who shall by that Authority act or depute some other to perform that Office for the night."[23]

On the day of the foundation of the lodge and the election of its "Perpetual Dictator" the society took its first initative:

> "That the First Six Solo's of Corelli and made into Concerti Grossi by our Dictator Sig.re Francesco Xaverio Geminiani be Subscrib'd for in the Name of the Society. To be paid for out of the Publick Treasury of this Society."[24]

The prime object of the lodge is not precisely known, but it is likely that it was essentially a musical society with a masonic form of ritual rather than a corporation concerned with mutual assistance like the *Congregazione dei Musici di Santa Cecilia* of Rome. The fact that the first decision of the lodge was to organize subscriptions to the publication of Geminiani's concertos based on the first six violin sonatas from Corelli's Op. V might mean that it aimed to become a sort of guiding spirit for English music taste. Whether or not this was so, to undertake these transcriptions (or rather, elaborations) was certainly a very astute move to make in a country where Corelli was still considered unquestionably the best composer in the instrumental genre. These new concertos, dedicated to the "Sacra Maestà di Giorgio, Re della Gran Brettagna, Francia

CONCERTI GROSSI

Con due Violini, Viola e Violoncello
di Concertino Obligati, e due altri Violini
e Basso di Concerto Grosso.

Dedicati

ALLA SACRA MAESTA DI

GIORGIO

Re della gran Bretagna. Francia &c. [illegible] &c. &c. &c.

DA

FRANCESCO GEMINIANI.

Composti delli Sei Soli della Prima Parte del

Opera Quinta

D'. ARCANGELO CORELLI

AMSTERDAM.

a

Spesa di MICHELE CARLO LE CENE

FIG. 5

Title-page of the Le Cène edition of the reworking of Corelli's Op. V [A 15c].

ed Ibernia" and subscribed to by some of the most distinguished names among the English peerage, were advertised on 10 August 1726 by the *Daily Post*:

"The Six Solos of Corelli turn'd into Concertos, in seven Parts, by Mr. Geminiani, are now printed, and ready to deliver to the Subscribers this Day; all those Gentlemen who have subscribed to this Work may, upon bringing their Receipts and making their second Payment, have their Books deliver'd to them by William Smith, Printer of the said Book, at Corelli's Head against Norfolk-street near St. Clement's Church in the Strand, and John Barret at the Harp and Crown in Coventry-street, near Piccadilly."

The number of editions and reissues that this publication enjoyed was really extraordinary. On 21 September 1726, just one month after the *editio princeps* came out, the *Daily Courant* advertised the first Walsh edition, which was followed by numerous reprints, although on 28 September 1726 an advertisement in the *Daily Post* challenged its authenticity:

"To all Lovers of Musick/ There being lately printed two false and spurious Editions of the Solo's of Corelli, turn'd into Concertos by Mr. Geminiani, and sold at half a Guinea a Set; These are to give Notice, that the true original Copies corrected and publish'd by the Author's own Hand, are to be sold at the same Price by William Smith (Printer of the said Books) at Corelli's Head against Norfolk-street in the Strand, and J. Barret at the Harp and Crown in Coventry-street, near Piccadilly.

N.B. The other Editions are very false and incorrect."

The success of this publication, whose profits were only in small part enjoyed by Geminiani himself, persuaded the composer to rework the second half of Corelli's Op. V. This time it was the publisher, William Smith,

himself who canvassed subscriptions, placing an advertisement in the *Daily Journal* of 17 August 1727:

> "This is to give Notice/ To all Lovers of Musick/ That there is now Printing by Subscription, at One Guinea per Set, the Second Part of the Solos of Corelli, turn'd into Concertos, in Seven Parts, by Mr. Geminiani, and will be ready to deliver to the Subscribers by Michaelmas next [29/9/1727]. Subscriptions are taken in, and Receipts given by William Smith, Printer of the said Book, at Corelli's Head against Norfolk-street in the Strand."

The subscriptions for the second part were disappointingly few, and it was Walsh who eventually published the concertos two years later. It is likely that this stemmed from the fact that Geminiani no longer had the support of the lodge, which terminated its activity in March 1727, but which during its brief existence had been able to win subscriptions in aristocratic circles and even from members of the royal family itself, such as the Prince of Wales and the Princesses Anne, Amelia, and Carolina Charlotte.

From the records of the *Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas Apollini*, today preserved in the British Library, it emerges that the main occupation of the lodge was precisely the publication of Geminiani's transcription of Corelli's Op. V. Its meetings, chaired by a certain William Gulston, were probably not so very different from those of the numerous music societies active at the time, except that the music perhaps acquired a masonic symbolism. On 10 June 1725 the lodge charged its "Perpetual Dictator" with the task of choosing four musicians to "assist"

its musical performances; shortly afterwards Geminiani selected Francesco Barsanti, Charles Pardini, Gaetano Scarpottini, and D. Boswillibald.[25] One would infer from their small number that their repertory was to consist of chamber music (as the term is understood today), although it is quite possible that this broad category embraced concertos without ripieno instruments, i.e. quartets. The practice of performing concertos *senza ripieni* was not at all unusual, and was sometimes foreseen without disapproval by the composer himself (Corelli's Op. VI is a prime example). Not only the concerto (with reduced forces) but also the solo sonata (with augmented forces) and the trio sonata (with either augmented or reduced forces) could easily be adapted for different instrumental ensembles; one demonstration of this flexibility is the reworking that Geminiani himself made of his own Op. I (nos. 1-6), which can be performed either as trios or as concertos by using the additional ripieno parts provided. The appointment of Barsanti as one of the musical "assistants" seems to suggest that the two Lucchese composers remained in touch after their arrival in London. Barsanti played flute and oboe in the orchestra of the Italian opera; a short time before his appointment in the lodge he had published a set of flute sonatas that were moderately successful. Around 1730, perhaps in order to pay tribute to his more distinguished fellow citizen, Barsanti published his own reworking for the trio sonata medium of the last six violin sonatas of Geminiani's Op. I.[26] One thing that the two composers had in common was a liking for Scottish music: in 1742 Barsanti published a set of "Old Scots Tunes", while in 1749 Geminiani based a whole treatise on the Scottish melodies of David Rizzio.

On 19 November 1725, as we learn from *Read's Weekly Journal*, Geminiani

acted as one of the examiners in the competition for the appointment of an organist at St. George's church:

> "Friday [...] came on the Election of an Organist of St. George, Hanover-Square, and the Salary being settled at 45 l. per Annum, there were seven Candidates [...]. The Vestry, which consists of above thirty Lords and seventy Gentlemen, having appointed Dr. Crofts, Dr. Pepush, Mr. Bononcini and Mr. Giminiani, to be Judges which of the Candidates perform'd best; each of them composed a Subject to be carry'd on by the said Candidates in the Way of Fugeing [...]. In the Conclusion the Judges gave it for the famous Mr. Rosengrave [...]."[27]

According to Hawkins, however, the examiners were Geminiani and Handel:

> "About the year 1725, an organ having been erected in the new church of St. George, Hanover-square, Roseingrave offered himself for the place. The parish being determined to choose the person best qualified, required that each of the candidates should give a specimen of his abilities by a performance, of which Mr. Handel and Geminiani were requested to be judges; the test of which was by them to be a point or subject of a fugue, which the performer was to conduct at his pleasure: this kind of trial was so suited to the talents of Roseingrave, that he far exceeded his competitors, and obtained the place, with a salary of fifty pounds a year."[28]

The identity of Geminiani's fellow examiners need not concern us here: what is more important is that in London musical circles Geminiani was considered an authority on a par with such figures as Handel and Bononcini even before the publication of his Opp. II and III concertos. His reputation was of course based also on his activity as a teacher, which must have been one of his main occupations, to judge merely from the number

of his pupils. Many of them became renowned musicians, such as the violinist Matthew Dubourg (1703-1767),[29] the composers Charles Avison (1709-1770),[30] Michael Christian Festing (?-1752),[31] and Henry Carey (c.1689-1743),[32] the organists and composers Joseph Kelway (c. 1702-1782)[33] and John Worgan (1724-1790),[34] the singer Cecilia Young (1711-1789),[35] and the music publisher Robert Bremner (c. 1713-1789).[36]

The *Philo Musicae et Architecturae Societas Apollini* was not the only society with which Geminiani was associated. His name appears together with those of Giovanni Bononcini and Nicola Haym in the lists of subscribers of the *Academy of Vocal Musick* dated 1 March 1726.[37] On this academy Hawkins writes:

> "As an institution designed for the improvement of music, the Academy was generally visited by foreigners of the greatest eminence in the faculty. Many of the opera singers and celebrated masters on particular instruments, by the performance of favourite airs in the operas, and solos calculated to display their various excellencies, contributed to the variety of the evening's entertainment. Tosi frequently sang here; and Bononcini, who was a member, played solos on the violoncello, on which he ever chose to be accompanied by Waber on the lute. Geminiani was a frequent visitor of the Academy, and would often honour it with the performance of his own compositions previous to their publication."[38]

The Academy's first meeting, held on 7 January 1726, was attended by many distinguished musicians including the composers Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667-1752), Johann Ernst Galliard (c. 1687-1749), Maurice Green (1696-1755), William Croft (1678-1727), and the singers Sampson Estwick (c. 1656-1739), Francis Hughes (c. 1666-1744), John Freeman (1666-1736), and

Bernard Gates (c. 1685-1773). The members used to meet at the *Crown and Anchor Tavern* in the Strand, and Geminiani took part in their activities until 26 January 1727, shortly before Agostino Steffani's appointment as president of the Academy.[illegible] In 1731 Bononcini was accused, in a notorious scandal, of having plagiarized a madrigal by Antonio Lotti, *In una siepe ombrosa*. As a result, the academy split into two bickering factions: the supporters of Bononcini led by Maurice Green, and their opponents. Out of this heated controversy there would eventually emerge two separate musical societies: respectively *The Apollo Society Concerts* and *The Academy of Ancient Music*. To the latter Geminiani dedicated his third set of concertos, Op. VII (1746), from which one may infer on which side his sympathies lay in 1731 and subsequently.

In 1728 Lord Essex (William Capel, 1697-1743), a former pupil and patron of Geminiani, offered the composer the chance to obtain a post that, according to Hawkins, would have secured his economic future:

> "The place of master and composer of the state music in Ireland had been occupied for several years by John Sigismund Cousser, a German musician of great eminence [...]. This person died in the year 1727; and notice of his decease coming to the earl of Essex, he, by means of lord Percival, obtained of the minister, Sir Robert Walpole, a promise of the place; which he had no sooner got, than lord Essex immediately sent for Geminiani, and told him that his difficulties were now at an end, for that he had provided for him an honourable employment, suited to his profession and abilities, and which would afford him an ample provision for life; but upon enquiry into the conditions of the office, Geminiani found that it was not tenable by one of the Romish communion, he therefore declined accepting it, assigning as a reason that he was a member of the catholic church; and that though he had never made great pretensions to religion, the thought of renouncing that faith in which

> he had been baptized, for the sake of wordly advantage, was what he could in no way answer to his conscience. Upon this refusal on the part of Geminiani, the place was bestowed on Mr. Matthew Dubourg, a young man who had been one of his pupils, and was a celebrated performer on the violin."[40]

Leaving aside the reason advanced by Hawkins - that the post was not compatible with Geminiani's Catholic beliefs - the composer's refusal of it seems to be consistent with his wish, described earlier, to avoid the limitations that regular service might have imposed. By default, but very possibly through his recommendation, the post passed to his pupil Matthew Dubourg, who went on to spend most of his life in Dublin and some years later introduced his teacher to the musical circles of that city.

One cannot discount the possibility that Geminiani still smarted from the recollection of his humiliation in Naples, when he was reduced to playing the viola because of his alleged inability to maintain a steady beat, or that he simply did not relish the idea of writing music according to schedules and conditions imposed from without. Whatever the reason, his refusal of the Dublin post occurred at a critical point in his life. A period of relative stability spent entirely in London, where the composer enjoyed the highest esteem, was drawing to a close and giving way to a much more difficult period characterized by frequent travelling between London, Paris, and Dublin, commercial and publishing acti"ities of a frequently risky nature, and a more intense activity as a composer in the wake of the success of his Opp. II and III concertos - a success that, alas, would not be repeated.

At the end of 1731 Geminiani organized a series of twenty concerts given

in Hickford's Room. The concerts were advertised on 15 November 1731 in the *Daily Post*:

> "At Hickford's Great Room in Panton-street,/ A Weekly Consort of Musick to be carry'd on by Subscription, for the ensuing Season, by Mr. Francis Geminiani, the 1st Consort to begin on the 1st Thursday in December next [2 december 1731], and so to continue every succeeding Thursday (beginning at Seven o'Clock) till twenty Consorts shall be compleated. Mr. Young, Mr. Arrigoni, Mr. Monter and Mr. Hull are to sing; Mr. Geminiani himself is to play, and the rest of the Instrumental Musick will be perform'd by the best Masters. Each Subscriber on paying four Guineas is to have a Silver Ticket, by Virtue of which any other Gentleman or Lady will be admitted in the Absence of the Subscriber; and each Lady that subscribes may take in another Lady with her, paying a Crown at the Door; but no Gentleman will be admitted without a Ticket.
>
> N.B. Mr. Hickford, at Mr. Geminiani's Request, hath consented to take on him the Trouble of giving out the Tickets, and receiving the whole Subscription Money, with whom the same, or so much thereof as shall not be by him from time to time apply'd in defraying the Charge of carrying on the Consort, is to remain till the Number of Consorts proposed shall be perform'd; and who will be accountable to the Subscribers respectively for so much as he shall give his Receipts for, in case the Consorts do not begin; or for a proportionable Part thereof in case the Conserts begin and shall not be compleated, first deducting all necessary Charges."[41]

This was a full concert season on the modern pattern, continuing for five months and financed by subscriptions. The profits from the concerts were perhaps used by Geminiani to publish his concertos one year later. These works were certainly performed regularly there; so, too, were the transcriptions of Corelli's Op. V, of which the second set was published,

as we saw, in November 1729.[42] There is considerable evidence for the success of Geminiani's enterprise, notably an advertisement that appeared on 11 December 1731 in the *Daily Post*:

> "We hear that several Persons of Distinction and Gentry were at Mr. Geminiani's Consort in Panton-Street near the Haymarket, which was received with great Applause, to the intire Satisfaction of all the Audience."

In the first half of the eighteenth century it was not at all unusual for a composer to prepare the ground for the publication by subscription of a new work or collection through its public performance. If its first concert took place on 2 December 1731 and there was one performance per week, the season we are considering must have ended around the end of April 1732. Precisely on 22 April 1732 the *Daily Journal* advertised Walsh's first edition of Op. III:

> "New Musick,/ This Day Published,/ Concerti Grossi con due Violini Viola e Violoncello di Concertino Obligati e Due Altri Violini e Basso Di Concerto Grosso Da Francesco Geminiani: Or, Six New Concerto's for Violins, &c. in 7 Parts, composed by Francesco Geminiani, Opera terza. Engraven in a fair Character, and carefully corrected.
>
> Printed for and sold by John Walsh, Musick Printer and Instrument-Maker to his Majesty, at the Harp and Hautboy in Catherine-street in the Strand."

Two months later, on 8 June 1732, the *Daily Post* announced the publication of the Op. II concertos:

> "This Day is published,/ Six Concertos in Seven Parts. Composed by Mr. Francis Geminiani, (three of which are for the German Flute) and are to be had at Mr. Hickford's in Panton-street (where Subscriptions for his Concerts next Year are taken in) and at the Musick Shops, at 12 s. 6 d. per Set.
>
> N.B. These are not the Concertos published by Mr. Walsh; but are those which were perform'd at Mr. Geminiani's Concerts last Winter, and were never before printed."

These two advertisements seem to indicate that the publication of Op. III preceded by a few months that of Op. II, and that only the latter was performed at Hickford's Room. According to Hawkins, the publication of Op. II, dedicated to "Sua Eccellenza Henrietta, Duchessa di Marlborough" (1681-1733), caused Geminiani some problems:

> "In the year 1732 he published what he styled his Opera seconda [...]. The publication of this work was soon followed by another of the same kind, that is to say, his Opera terza, consisting of six Concertos for violins, the last whereof is looked upon as one of the finest compositions of the kind in the world.
>
> Geminiani was now in the highest degree of estimation as a composer for instruments; for, to say the truth, he was in this branch of music without a rival; but his circumstances were very little mended by the profits that resulted from these several publications. The manuscript of his Opera seconda had been surreptitiously obtained by Walsh, who was about to print it, but thinking it would be the better for the corrections of the author, he gave him the alternative of correcting it, or submitting it to appear in the world with such faults as would have reflected indelible disgrace on the author.
>
> An offer of this kind was nothing less than an insult, and as such Geminiani received it. He therefore not only rejected it with scorn, but instituted a process in the court of chancery for an injunction against the sale of the book, but Walsh compounded the matter, and the

> work was published under the inspection of the author.
>
> The Opera terza he parted with for a sum of money to Walsh, who printed it, and in an advertisement has given the lovers of music to understand that he came honestly by the copy."[43]

This anecdote shows how hard it was for a composer to make a profit from the publication of his music. Geminiani certainly learned from this unpleasant experience that since it was impossible to guard against unauthorised editions in the absence of legally enforceable rights of authorship, the only hope of making a profit was to take personal charge of the publication of his own music, which meant sinking his own money into the enterprise. Naturally, such a venture into publishing was not without risk, given the unpredictable taste of the public. After the appearance of Opp. II and III Geminiani began to issue a stream of transcriptions, reworkings, and elaborations of his earlier compositions, attending in person to their engraving, printing, and sale; this new form of activity is one of the reasons why, at the end of 1732, he visited Paris, where the technique of engraving was much more advanced than in England.

With the publication of his first two sets of concertos, which remained until his death (and right up to modern times) those of his works most often performed and most highly regarded, Geminiani's first long period in London came to an end. He had reached the pinnacle of his career, following which a gradual and irreversible decline was to set in. If his fame in Britain and Europe held up until his death, this was largely because his Op. III concertos became a "classic" text in the manner of Corelli's Op. V or Handel's Op. VI. Except for his treatise on violin playing, none of his succeeding compositions and treatises achieved a

comparable success, being regarded, rather, as "laboured, difficult, and fantastical", as Burney described Op. VII.[44]

Chapter Three

LONDON, PARIS, DUBLIN (1732-1762)

Although they were composed and performed for many years before they were eventually published, the concertos of Opp. II and III achieved a wide dissemination only after the series of public performances organized by Geminiani at *Hickford's Room* between December 1731 and April 1732. Following their publication in 1732 they were performed everywhere in England, not only at public concerts or at meetings of music societies, but also between the acts of stage works. The last-mentioned context proves their popularity beyond question, for only music that was known to be in fashion was chosen for the entr'actes. Typical examples besides Geminiani's concertos were the overtures of Handel's operas, the same composer's celebrated *Water Music*, and Vivaldi's *Cuckoo* Concerto (RV 335). To give some specific instances: the intervals of *The Careless Husband* (Haymarket, 20 October 1733) were filled by the first concerto of Geminiani's Op. II, the overture to Handel's *Alessandro*, and the *Cuckoo*; for *The Constant Couple* (Haymarket, 27 October 1733) the same service was provided by the fourth concerto of Geminiani's Op. III and the overture to *Tamerlano*; in *The Relapse* (Haymarket, 1 December 1733) it was the turn of the sixth concerto of Geminiani's Op. II, the overture to *Admeto*, and a concerto for two oboes by Pepusch; *Love for Love* (Haymarket, 4 February 1734) featured the third concerto of Geminiani's Op. II, the overture to *Tolomeo*, and the *Water Music*; *The Country Wife* (Drury Lane, 4 February 1735) had the first concerto of Geminiani's Op. III, the overture to *Esther*, and an unidentified concerto for oboe by Geminiani. These Op. II

VI:

CONCERTI GROSSI

Hirsch III. 214. a

CON

Due Violini. Violoncello, e Viola di Concertino
. Obligati, e due altri Violini, e Bass di Con=
=certo Grosso ad arbitrio;

i IV. V. VI. si potranno suonare con due Flauti traversieri.
o Violini due con Violoncello

Dedicati

A SUA ECCELLENZA

HE. NRIETTA

Duchessa di Marlborough &c. &c.

DA

FRANCESCO GEMINIANI

Opera Seconda

FIG. 6

Title-page of the manuscript version of Geminiani's Op. II preserved in GB-Lbl [Hirsch, III. 214. a].

and Op. III concertos remained in the British orchestral repertory until the death of the composer and were reprinted repeatedly up to the end of the century. It is important to bear this fact in mind, for otherwise it would be quite difficult to explain why Geminiani's standing with the public remained high even though almost all his subsequent compositions met with failure.

If 1714 was a decisive year in the life of the composer, since it marked his definitive emigration, the year 1732 can be seen as a similar watershed, since it marked both the pinnacle of his career and the beginning of his decline. In this connection it is interesting to read what Hawkins says:

> "In a life so unsettled as that of Geminiani was, spent in different countries, and employed in pursuits that had no connections with his art, and only served to divert his attention from it, we must suppose the number of his friends to be very great, and that they were equally possessed of inclination and abilities to assist him, to account for the means of his support. That in the former part of his life he experienced the liberality of some persons of distinction is a fact pretty well ascertained; but he was not possessed of the art of forming beneficial connections, on the contrary, he would sometimes decline them; so that as he advanced in years he had the mortification to experience the increase of his wants, and a diminution in the means of supplying them. In general his publications did, in respect of pecuniary advantage, in no degree compensate for his many years' labour and study employed in them."[1]

The instability mentioned by Hawkins, clearly linked to the lack of a regular source of income, obliged Geminiani to think of widening his public. His first step in this direction was a visit to Paris. The

earliest mention of his presence there arrives in November 1732, a few months after Opp. II and III came out. The mention occurs in a letter from the correspondence of Lord Essex (William Capel), during the period when Capel was ambassador in Turin (1732-1736); the letter was sent to him from London on 3 November 1732 by his friend Charles Stanhope (1673-1760):

> "[...] y^r Lordship may perhaps have read Geminiani dead in the news papers, but I left him at paris alive, and well, and I beleive he will be here in a day or two [...]."[2]

It has not proved possible so far to identify the newspapers that mistakenly announced the death of the composer, and it is unclear how the misunderstanding arose. At all events, he was certainly in Paris, where he stayed until about 20 September 1733, as we read in two letters to Lord Essex from Thomas Pelham (1693-1768):

> "My Lord, London Jan.^ry 29 1733
>
> I am quite ashamed of having neglected to acknowledge one or two letters which your Lord.^p honoured me with before I left Paris, the last of which M. Lanzetti brought me who I thought fully answer'd the description you gave of him; We are in daily expectation of him & Geminiani here, but they will come too late to establish any Concert this year, for Arrigoni & Martini make one in the same manner Geminiani did the last year, tho' I dont find with the same Success. All publick Diversions are at a very low ebb, especially the operas; we have just now one of Handel which is more likely to succeed than any has done this winter [...]."[3]

"My Lord, Paris Octr 1.st 1733

[...] Geminiani went from hence about ten days ago with L.^d Tullamore for England. I believe he got just money enough here, with the help of some Pictures, to defray his Expences. After the P. of Orange's wedding is over, they are to go to pass the winter in Ireland."[4]

These letters allow us to follow the movements of Geminiani from Paris to London, and thence to Ireland; they indicate as well the name of his Irish patron, Baron Charles Moore of Tullamore (1712-1764). We also find mention, for the first time in any known source, of Geminiani's activity as a dealer in paintings - an occupation that some years later assumed a very important place in his life. According to Hawkins, the art business, besides causing him many problems in its own right, distracted him from music:

"The relation between the arts of music and painting is so near, that in numberless instances, those who have excelled in one have been admirers of the other. Geminiani was an enthusiast in painting, and the versatility of his temper was such, that, to gratify this passion, he not only suspended his studies, and neglected the exercise of his talents, but involved himself in straits and difficulties, which a small degree of prudence would have taught him to avoid. To gratify his taste, he bought pictures; and, to supply his wants, he sold them; the necessary consequence of this kind of traffic was loss, and its concomitant, necessity.

In the distress, which by this imprudent conduct he had brought on himself, Geminiani was necessitated, for the security of his person, to avail himself of that protection which the nobility of this country have power to extend in favour of their servants. The late earl of Essex was a lover of music, and had been taught the violin by

FIG. 7

Portrait of Geminiani by T. Jenkins, engraved by C. Grignion after McArdell. In Hawkins, op. cit., II, p. 846.

Geminiani, who at times had been resident in his lordship's family; upon this ground the earl was prevailed on to inroll the name of Geminiani in the list of those servants of his whom he meant to screen from the process of the law.

The nofication of the security which Geminiani had thus obtained was not so general as to answer the design of it. A creditor for a small sum of money arrested him, and threw him into the prison of the Marshalsea, from whence, upon an application to his protector, he was, however, in a very short time discharged."[5]

Concerning Geminiani's passion for painting, which he shared with many other composers of his day, including Handel, Corelli, Valentini, Locatelli, Haym, and G. L. Somis, Hawkins tells the following anecdote:

"A person who had the curiosity to see him, and went thither to purchase the book, gives this account of him: 'I found him in a room at the top of the house half filled with pictures, and in his waistcoat. Upon my telling him that I wanted the score and parts of both operas of his concertos, he asked me if I loved pictures; and upon my answering in the affirmative, he said that he loved painting better than music, and with great labour drew from among the many that stood upon the floor round the room, two, the one the story of Tobit cured of his blindness, by Michael Angelo Caravaggio; the other a Venus, by Correggio. These pictures, said Geminiani, I bought at Paris, the latter was in the collection of the duke of Orleans; they are inestimable, and I mean to leave them to my relations: many men are able to bequeath to their relations great sums of money, I shall leave to mine what is more valuable than money, two pictures that are scarcely to be matched in the world'. After some farther conversation, in which it was very difficult to get him to say any thing on the subject of music, the visitor withdrew, leaving Geminiani to enjoy that pleasure which seemed to be the result of frenzy."[6]

For Geminiani this commerce was doubtless an economic necessity, but it was looked on unfavourably by his contemporaries, as if he were thereby desecrating the art of music. One example of this attitude is shown by Burney:

"It is well known how much he preferred the character of a picture-dealer, without the necessary knowledge or taste in painting, as very good judges asserted, to that of a composer of Music, by which he had subsisted and acquired all his fame and importance. It is to be feared that a propensity towards chicane and cunning, which gratified some dispositions more by outwitting mankind, than excelling them in virtue and talents, operated a little upon Geminiani; whose musical decisions ceasing to be irrevocable in England, determined him to try his hand at buying cheap and selling dear; imposing upon grosser ignorance with false names, and passing off copies for originals."[7]

On 6 December 1733 Geminiani arrived in Dublin in the retinue of Charles Moore. The fact was announced two days later in the *Dublin Evening Post*:

"Last Thursday the Right Hon. Lord Tullamore arrived here from his Travels. It is expected, that his Lordship will speedily take his Seat in the House of Peers.

Signor Geminiani, a Native of Italy, and a most famous Musician arrived here with his Lordship."

On 15 December the same newspaper advertised Geminiani's first public concert in Dublin:

"By their Graces the Duke and Dutchess of Dorset's Special Command. By Subscription.

For the Benefit of Signior Geminiani. At the Great Room in Crow-street. On Monday the 17th of this Instant December, will be perform'd, A Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, In which Signior Geminiani will perform several Solo's and Concerto's of His own Composition. The vocal Part by Mrs. Davis.

Subscriptions are taken in at *Luca's*, the *Globe*, and the *House of Commons Coffee-House*, at one Guinea for Three Tickets, half a Guinea each. To begin at the usual Hour."

According to Flood, the composer opened a concert room in Dame Street (Spring Gardens), known some years later as "Geminiani's Great Room"; the composer used the same room for selling paintings.[8] Graham informs us that it was located in "a court off the College end of Dame Street".[9] Neither of these authorities quotes his source; nevertheless, there are many confirmations of the accuracy of their statements. One of them is a short passage from the *Recollections of the Life of John O'Keeffe written by Himself*, published in London in 1826, which also describes Geminiani's physical appearance:

"I often saw Geminiani, the musical composer, and greatly admired the minuet named after him; he had a concert-room in Dublin, in a court the college end of Dame-street: this was afterwards Chapman's picture auction-room. Geminiani was a little man, sallow complexion, black eye-brows, pleasing face; his dress blue velvet, richly embroidered with gold."[10]

It is quite likely that Geminiani spent some time in the household of his Irish patron Charles Moore, but the opening of a concert room and an art gallery implies, rather, that the composer soon made himself independent. Flood writes that he gave two concerts in Dublin in the

spring of 1734, subsequently returning to London, "where he occasionally performed, in 1735, at Hickford's Room". The same writer adds that in 1737 Geminiani was once again in Dublin, where he remained until 1740: "In 1737, at the urgent request of his pupil Dubourg, he paid a second visit to Ireland, and again captured the music-loving people of Dublin. So phenomenal was his success that he was induced to re-open his Academy in Spring Gardens, off Dame St., again known as 'Geminiani's Great Room', where he gave concerts as well as lessons. He continued in Dublin for over three years and returned to London in November 1740."[11] An advertisement appeared on 26 April 1740 in the *Dublin Newsletter*, confirming Geminiani's second sojourn in Dublin. This is a proposal to publish by subscription his *Guida Armonica*:

> "The Harmonical Guide, containing the true grounds of harmonical composition laid down in a method entirely new and upon so easy and natural a foundation as to enable a person absolutely unskilled in Musick to write at pleasure, the most perfect harmony with an infinite variety.
>
> The whole secret of Harmonical composition is herein unveiled; the nature of the several transitions from Concord to Discord and a contra with the forming of all sorts of cadences as practised by the great Masters is taught and explained.
>
> The whole conducted upon such plain and obvious principles as carry the face of demonstration at the first view and offer themselves with facility to the meanest capacity. Subscriptions taken at Bacon's Coffee House in Essex Street by Mr. Francis Geminiani and by Mr. Manwaring at Corelli's Head on College Green."

It was therefore Geminiani himself who had the task of collecting in the subscriptions - apparently without success, since the treatise was not

published until twelve years later. The same poor response greeted his second set of violin sonatas, Op. IV, for which advertisements inviting subscriptions appeared in London and Dublin newspapers in February and March 1737.[12] Op. IV was published only in April 1739, when Geminiani was still in Dublin.[13] It was probably during these years that there occurred the incident preserved in an anecdote related by Walker concerning the Irish harpist Turlough O'Carolan (died 1738), whose musical abilities were put to the test by Geminiani:

> "And it is a fact well ascertained, that the fame of Carolan having reached the ears of an eminent Italian music-master in Dublin, he put his abilities to a severe test, and the issue of the trial convinced him, how well founded every thing had been, which was advanced in favour of our Irish Bard. The method he made use of was as follows: He singled out an excellent piece of music, and highly in the style of the country which gave him birth; here and there he either altered or mutilated the piece, but in such a manner, as that no one but a real judge could make a discovery. Carolan bestowed the deepest attention upon the performer while he played it, not knowing however that it was intended as a trial of his skill; and that the critical moment was at hand, which was to determine his reputation for ever. He declared it was an admirable piece of musick; but, to the astonishment of all present, said, very humourously, in his own language, *tá sé air chois air bacaighe*, that is, here and there it limps and stumbles. He was prayed to rectify the errors, which he accordingly did. In this state the piece was sent from Connaught to Dublin; and the Italian no sooner saw the amendments, than he pronounced Carolan to be a true musical genius."[14]

Dublin was in those days an important musical centre and attracted many musicians from every part of Europe. Italian music was as highly regarded

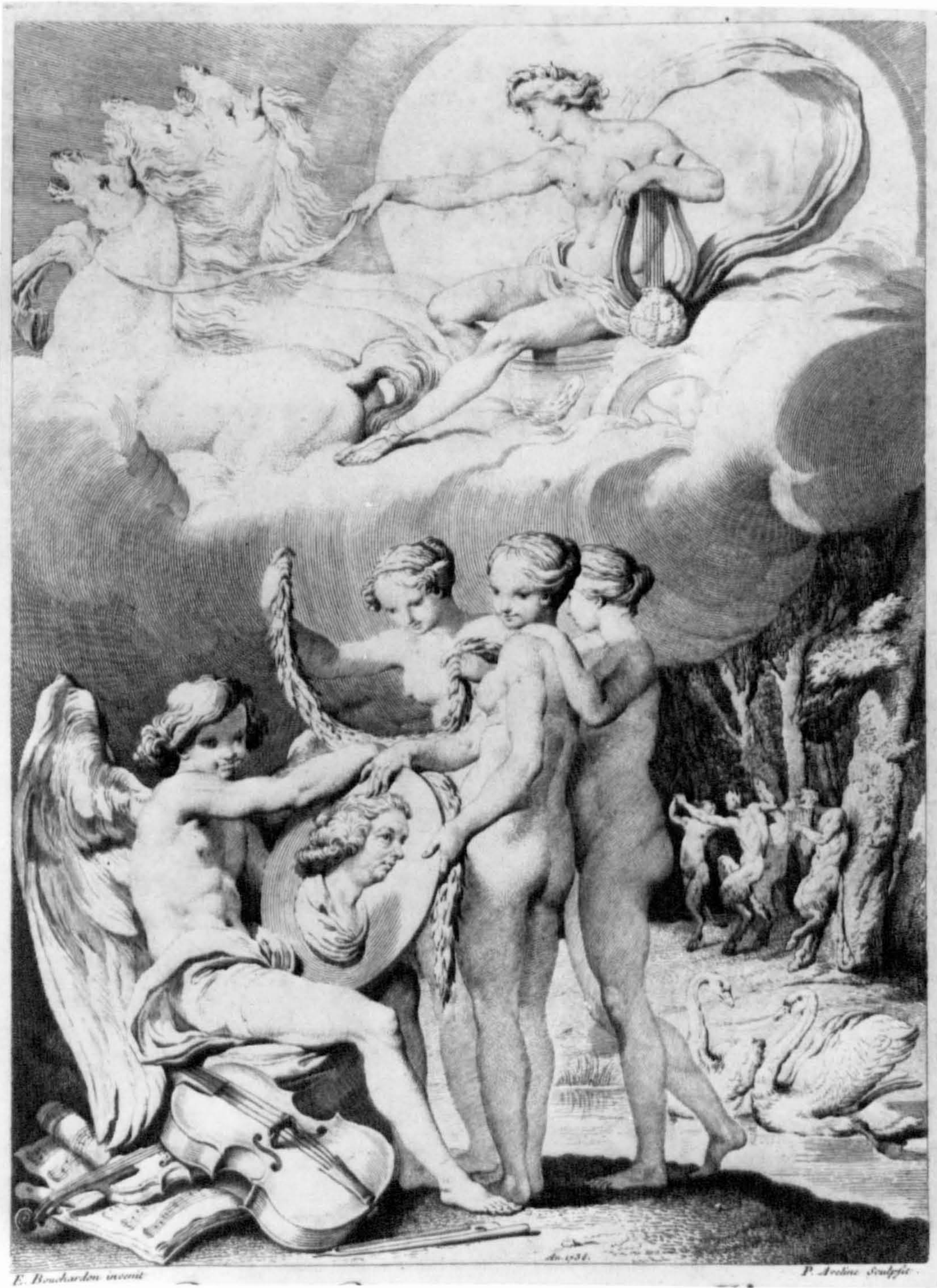


FIG. 8

Medallion depicting Geminiani, supported by the Genius of Music and the three Graces, with Apollo above. Engraving by P. Aveline, after E. Bouchardon. In I/1739 [A 1f].

as well as in England, and the cult of Corelli was equally strong.[15] So Geminiani had no difficulty in gaining access to the leading musical circles of the city, perhaps through his friend and former pupil Matthew Dubourg, who had settled there in 1728. The fact that Geminiani owned a concert room (also used for selling paintings) appears to show that his financial state was not so bad. "Geminiani's Great Room" remained open and kept its name even after the composer's departure; on 7 February 1741, when Geminiani was certainly in Paris, it accommodated a concert "for the Benefit of Signior Scarlotti [Francesco Scarlatti] who, thro' a long Confinement by Sickness, is reduced to very distressfull Circumstances",[16] and as late as 1782 it appears that a show with 'Chinese shadows' was presented in it.[17] The reason why Geminiani left Dublin a second time and returned to Paris, where his presence is documented from November 1740, probably relates to his publishing activity. The first document confirming his second Parisian sojourn is the request for a printing privilege made in person by the composer on 17 November 1740; he was granted the privilege on 31 December of the same year.[18] Shortly afterwards, his first two sets of concertos and the first collection of *Pièces de Clavecin*, dedicated to the "Mademoiselle de Saint Sulpix", were published in France.[19] While in Paris, Geminiani took part in the musical gatherings in the house of Duhallay, where "des musiciens des plus célèbres d'Italie" used to play, and where the composer met Rameau; the following extract is taken from the chapter of the *Parnasse François* by Titon du Tillet that is dedicated to poets and musicians:

> "It is with the same pleasure that I have continued frequently to hear it [Italian music] for the past seven years at the home of Mme and

Mlle Duhallay, two persons among the most beautiful and knowledgeable of their sex, and two great *virtuose* on the harpsichord; it is in this house, where they and M. Duhallay extend such generous hospitality, that the most famous Italian musicians meet - men such as the violinists Guignon, Geminiani, and Canavas the Younger, and Canavas the Elder on the cello - and where even His Excellency the Principe D'Ardore, the ambassador to France of the King of the Two Sicilies, who is known for the distinction with which he carries out the highest affairs of state and for his knowledgeable and admirable way of playing the harpsichord, sometimes takes pleasure in performing on that instrument, which the remarkable Alessandro also plays: at these concerts, too, one hears eminent French musicians perform - men no less capable than the Italians who have been mentioned, such as the violinists Batiste, Quentin, Mangeon, and Petit, the flautists Blavet and Taillard, the viol-players Roland Marais and De Caix, the harpsichordists Rameau, Daquin, and Du Flitz, etc. In these fine concerts, too, the ladies Vanloo, De La Milette, Duhallay, Canavas, Miss Barberini and M. Jelyot sometimes sing choice Italian arias with the most perfect taste."[20]

To the same "Principe D'Ardore" (Giacomo Francesco Milano), ambassador of the king of the Two Sicilies at the French court from 1741 to 1753, Geminiani was to dedicate, a few years later, his cello sonatas, Op. V. Very little is known of Geminiani's second period in Paris. Apart from the printing privilege, he left little trace of his presence in the city: on 30 March 1741 the violinist Pierre Miroglio (c.1715-c.1763), who had settled in Paris in 1738, obtained a printing privilege for the publication of a set of violin sonatas (Op. I) dedicated to Geminiani - perhaps a sign that Miroglio was his pupil during that time;[21] that same year the thirteen-year-old Pierre Gaviniès made his debut in Paris with Geminiani's concertos "dont l'auteur ne vouloit confier l'exécution qu'à lui seul,

malgré sa grande jeunesse."[22] Geminiani spent about one year in Paris - just enough time to attend to the engraving of his music and perhaps to buy some pictures for selling in London. On 31 October 1741 Giovanni Giacomo Zamboni sent, from London, a letter to a certain Michael Mattaire; a passing remark in it gives the impression that Geminiani had returned to England: "[...] Mr. Geminiani has received your fine distick & most humbly thanks you for it [...]".[23] On 19 March 1742 the composer was certainly in London to give a concert "by command of their Royal Highnesses the late Prince and Princess of Wales" at the Haymarket Theatre.[24] To the "Altezza Reale di Federico Prencipe di Vallia", i.e. the Prince of Wales, the composer dedicated shortly afterwards the transcriptions in the form of concertos of his second set of violin sonatas, Op. IV (1743). During these years, besides publishing reworkings and new editions of his previous compositions, such as the transcription of Op. IV and the English edition of the *Pièces de Clavecin*, Geminiani worked on his cello sonatas, Op. V, and his new set of concertos, Op. VII.

On 8 February 1745 the *General Advertiser* announced the following:

> "Mr. Geminiani proposing to have a Pastoral Opera, call'd L'Incostanza Delusa, Perform'd at the New Theatre in the Haymarket, the 9th Instant, and having neither spared Pains nor Expence to render it an agreable Entertainment, he hopes his Endeavours will merit the Approbation and Encouragement of the Publick."

According to Burney, who was present at a rehearsal, this opera-pasticcio was not a success:

CONCERTI GROSSI

a due Violini, due Viole e Violoncello obligati
con due altri Violini, e Baſso di Ripieno

Compoſti e dedicati

ALL' ALTEZZA REALE

DI FEDERICO PRENCIPE DI VALLIA

DA

Francesco Geminiani

LONDRA MDCCXLIII.
a ſpeſe dell' Autore

Questi Concerti sono composti dalle Sonate a Violino e Baſso dell OPERA IV.

FIG. 9

Title-page of the reworking of Op. IV [A 4e]

"The great Opera-house being shut up this year [1745] on account of the rebellion, and popular prejudice against the performers, who being foreigners, were chiefly Roman Catholics; an opera was attempted April 7th, at the little theatre in the Hay-market, under the direction of Geminiani. Prince Lobkowitz, who was at this time in London, and fond of Music, with the celebrated and mysterious Count Saint Germain, attended all the rehearsals. [Niccolò] Pasquali led; and I remember, at a rehearsal, Geminiani taking the violin out of his hands, to give him the style and expression of the symphony to a song, which had been mistaken, when first led off. And this was the first time I ever saw or heard Geminiani. The opera was a pasticcio, and called *L'Incostanza delusa.* But Count St. Germain composed several new songs, particularly *Per pietà bell'idol mio*, which was sung by Frasi, first woman, and encored every night. The rest of his airs, and two by Brivio, Frasi's master, which Walsh printed, were only remarkable for insipidity. The first man's part was performed by Galli. The success of this enterprize was inconsiderable, and the performances did not continue more than nine or ten nights."[25]

On 2 March 1745 Geminiani decided to attract the audience to his performance with an advertisement appearing in the *General Advertiser*, in which he informed the readers that between the acts of *L'incostanza delusa* he was going to play one of his new concertos:

"At the New Theatre in the Haymarket, this Day, will be perform'd a Pastoral Opera, call'd L'Incostanza Delusa.

Pit and Boxes to be put together at Half a Guinea. Gallery 5 s. The Gallery will be open'd at Five o'Clock. Pit and Boxes at six. To begin at Half an Hour after Six. No person to be admitted behind the Scenes. Boxes to be taken at the said Theatre; and at Mr. Geminiani's in Dufour's Court, Broad-street, Soho.

Mr. Geminiani being desir'd by some particular Friends to play one of his New Concertos, intends to perform one of them between the Acts."

Hard on the heels of the advertisement came this epigram, dedicated to Geminiani by an anonymous admirer:

> "On hearing that Mr. Geminiani was desir'd to play One of his Own Concerto's, this Evening, at the New-Theatre in the Haymarket,
> An Epigram
>
> When *Orpheus*, dying, sought his Native Skies,
> Snatching his Bow, he thus, in transport, cries:
> 'This Bow, long lost, extinct its Power of Sound;
> Shall, by an Artist, be in *Albion* found:
> Touch'd by his Hand, new Joys it shall inspire,
> And wond'ring Britons think they hear my Lyre'."

The first performance took place on 9 February 1745 at the New Haymarket and was followed by seven more, the last of which took place on 6 April.[26] According to Burney, the principal parts were sung by the soprano Giulia Frasi and the mezzosoprano Caterina Galli; the libretto (dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz) was written by Francesco Vanneschi, and some of the music was composed by Count Saint Germain and Giuseppe Ferdinando Brivio.[27] We do not know for certain whether Geminiani himself contributed arias or instrumental movements, but it is highly likely that he inserted into this pasticcio some music of his own already known to the audience.

From an advertisement that appeared on 16 March 1745 in the *General Advertisement* we learn that the new concertos by Geminiani performed between the acts of *L'incostanza delusa* were soon going to be published: "By particular Desire, Mr. Geminiani will perform between the Acts, one of his New Concertos, that he is going to publish by Subscription." The engraving of these concertos was executed in Holland, where Geminiani

travelled in 1746, and from where on 20 January 1747 he wrote a letter to his friend and former pupil Joseph Kelway. This letter is a very important document, not only because it is his sole extant autograph, but also because it clearly shows the difficulties Geminiani encountered in his publishing ventures; it also contains some interesting particulars concerning the production and circulation of published music:

"My Most Esteemed Friend and Patron

I hope that you will not think unkindly of the inconvenience I am causing you with the present letter, whose purpose is not solely to inform you that the volumes containing my cello sonatas [Op. V], which I have no doubt will be found by the public to be not inferior to any of my previous publications, are ready to be sent to you in London, but also to tell you of the problem I have in not knowing to whom to send them in London for the purpose of sale. A long time ago I wrote on this matter to Mr Lawrence, asking him to have the aforesaid work announced in the news for September, and with the conditions that seemed to me to be usual, but I was never favoured with an answer from him. I hope that in this case you will be so kind as to let me know your opinion on this matter, which is very important to me, and if you were to allow me to send you, or some other person of your acquaintance, the aforesaid volumes in order to sell them on my behalf, I would be very grateful, for it now looks to me too late to think of September.

My grand concertos [op. VII] are already engraved but not yet printed, since the number of subscribers is not known; if possible, I would like to bring them out before winter is over. If at any time you think that while in this country I can be of service to you for anything, please let me know; in the hope of a swift answer from you, I declare myself most cordially to be

LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

at the Hague, 10 January 1747

Your
Sincere Friend and Servant
F. Geminiani

After writing the above, I discovered that I have been robbed by my engraver of four volumes of new solo [sonatas], and I have been told that one of them has been sold to an Englishman, which makes me very afraid that it has got into the hands of Walsh. If this is true, it could be very prejudicial to my interests, so I therefore ask you to give me any information about this that you are able to learn; I forgot to tell you that I have arranged these same cello sonatas for the violin, in which form they have already been engraved and printed."[28]

Geminiani's concern that one example of the Op. V cello sonatas had ended up in Walsh's hands was perhaps well-founded: on 3 September 1747 the *General Advertiser* announced that they were on sale "at Mr. Walsh's". However, it is also possible that once again, as had happened with Op. II, Geminiani came to an agreement with the English publisher. The new set of concertos, engraved in Holland in 1746, were published only two years later, as we learn from an advertisement that appeared on 3 September 1747, again in the *General Advertiser*:

"In January next will absolutely be published, Six Grand Concertos, Compos'd by Mr. Geminiani.

The price to Subscribers will be Two Guineas for those on large Paper, and One Guinea for those on small, Half of each to be paid at the Time Subscribing, and the Remainder on Delivery of compleat Books.

No more will be printed on large Paper than are subscribed for; and when the Subscription shall be closed, the Price for small Paper will be 25 s.

Mio Stimatiss.^mo Amico, è Padrone

Spero che lei non Sdegnierà l'incomodo
che li porgo con la presente, la quale
(non solamente è p informarla d'auer
pronto li libri delle sonate di Violon-
cello p inuiarle à Londra, le quali non
dubito che saranno conosciute dal
Publico non inferiore a nessuna al-
tra mia produzione) ma dirle la
confusione nella quale mi trouo p
non sapere a chi inuiarli a Londra
p esser uenduti. Molto tempo fa scrif-
si sopra questo particolare à M.r
Lawrence pregandolo di fare annun-
ziare detta Opera nelle Nuoue p sott.
è con gl'articoli che pareuami esser
segondo l'uso solito, ma dal medemo
non fui mai tanto fortunato d'otte-
nere tal fauore. Spero che in questo
caso lei non Sdegnierà di fauorirmi

FIG. 10

Autograph letter by Geminiani [GB-Lbl, Add. Ms. 21520]

in farmi sapere il suo parere sopra
questo particolare, essendo per me di gran
consequensa, et in caso che volesse per-
mettere d'inviare a lei detti libbri, ò
vero à qualunque altra persona di sua
conoscensa per procurarmene la vendita
ciò farò con gran piacere, mentre mi pa-
re esser troppo tardi di parlar di sottore.
Li miei gran Concerti sono digià intaglia-
ti ma non stampati, non sapendo il nu-
mero de sottri che vi sono, desidererei poter-
li dar fuora se fusse possibile, avanti l'in-
verno sia passato. Se mai lei mi conos-
cesse capace in questo Paese di poterla
servire in qualunque cosa, la prego
comandarmi, è pregandola di favorirmi
subbito d'una pronta risposta, cordial-
mente mi rassegnio

Di V.S.

à La Haye li 10. Gen.o 1747

Suo
Sincero Amico, è Servitore
F. Geminiani

Doppo avere scritto la presente, ò scoperto d'essere stato rubbato dal mio intagliatore quattro libri de nuovi soli, è mi vien detto che uno di essi è stato venduto ad un Inglese, et ò gran timore che sia capitato in mano di Walsh, la qual cosa, se ciò fusse, mi potrebbe esser di gran pregiudizio, è per ciò la prego di darmi avviso di questo, se li fosse possibile di saperlo. M'ero scordato di dirle che le medesime sonate di Violoncello le ò trasportate per il violino, è di già sono intagliate, ed stampate

To
Mr. Kalloway
the upper end of Little
grovenors street near
Hidey Park gate
London

> Subscriptions will be taken in, and Receipts delivered, at Mr. Walsh's in Catherine-street in the Strand; Mrs. Walmsley in Piccadilly; Mr. Johnson in Cheapside; and at Mr. Simpson's in Sweetings-Alley, opposite the East-Door of the Royal-Exchange."

Neither the concertos nor the cello sonatas enjoyed much public favour, and Geminiani's high expectations were certainly disappointed. Their failure perhaps convinced him that his style was no longer fashionable. Consequently, from 1748 onwards, Geminiani worked mainly on his treatises; if we exclude the reworkings of earlier works and *The Inchanted Forrest* his activity as a composer could be said to have reached its end.

We do not know how much time Geminiani spent in Holland, but by April 1750 he was again in London, where he conducted a *Concerto Spirituale* at Drury Lane. The concert was initially advertised for 6 April 1750, but Geminiani subsequently decided to postpone it to 11 April, because on 6 April it competed with a performance of Handel's *Samson* at Covent Garden, which would most probably have lured away a good part of his audience. The following two advertisements are taken from the *General Advertiser* of 16 and 30 March 1750:

> "Sir, Having read an Advertisement of a Performance call'd Concerto Spirituale, for the Benefit of Mr. Geminiani, on Friday the 6th of April next, I could not avoid making a few Remarks to the Publick on the Occasion, which, if you will favour with a Place in your Paper, it may perhaps be of Service to his Undertaking, and will greatly oblige.
>
> Sir, Your humble Servant J. B.
>
> When Mr. Geminiani came first over here, the great Excellence of the Violin was unknown in this Kingdom, and the great Improvement our Countrymen have made on that Instrument is entirely owing to him. The

valuable Works he has produc'd in the Instrumental Way, are greater Indications of his Merit, as an Author, than any I can offer in his Behalf; this is the only Benefit he ever made, therefore I persuade myself that the Public (who are justly famous for their Generosity on such laudable Occasions) will give him the encouragement his Merit deserves."

"For the Benefit of Mr. Geminiani.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, Wednesday April 11, will be presented a Grand Entertainment of Sacred Musick, call'd Concerto Spirituali, consisting of Songs and Chorusses.

To conclude with *Magnificat*, compos'd by Signor Canuti.

Mr. Geminiani will conduct the Orchestra, and perform a Concerto and a Solo of his own Composition. Pit and Boxes laid together at Half a Guinea, First Gallery 5 s. Upper Gallery 3 s. 6 d.

Tickets and Places to be had of Mr. Geminiani, at Mr. Palmer's, a Button-Shop in King-street, Covent Garden; at Mr. Walsh's Music Shop in Catherine-street; at Mr. Young's in St. Paul's Church-yard; and at Mrs. Simpson's near Change-Alley, Cornhill.

Mr. Geminiani has alter'd his Day from Friday April 6 to the Wednesday following, on Account of the Oratorio, Mr. Handel having agreed to have no Oratorio on Wednesday April 11.

Tickets delivered out for the 6th of April will be taken the 11th."

Concerning this concert we have the recollections of Hawkins and Burney, who were both in the audience:

"Geminiani was an utter stranger to the business of an orchestra, and had no idea of the labour and pains that were necessary in the instruction of singers for the performance of music to which they were strangers, nor of the frequent practices which are required previous to an exhibition of this kind. The consequence whereof was, that the

singers whom he had engaged for the Concerto Spirituale not being perfect in their parts, the performance miscarried. The particular circumstances that attended this undertaking were these; the advertisements had drawn together a number of persons, sufficient to make what is called a very good house; the curtain drew up, and discovered a numerous band, with Geminiani at their head: by way of overture was performed a concerto of his in a key of D with the minor third, printed in a collection of Concertos published by Walsh, with the title of Select Harmony, in which is a fugue in triple time, perhaps one of the finest compositions of the kind ever heard; then followed a very grand chorus, which, being performed by persons accustomed to sing in Mr. Handel's oratorios, had justice done to it; but when the women, to whom were given the solo airs and duets, rose to sing, they were not able to go on, and the whole band, after a few bars, were necessitated to stop. The audience, instead of expressing resentment in the usual way, seemed to compassionate the distress of Geminiani, and to consider him as a man who had almost survived his faculties, but whose merits were too great to justify their slight of even an endeavour to entertain them: they sat very silent till the books were changed, when the performance was continued with compositions of the author's own, that is to say, sundry of the concertos in his second and third operas, and a solo or two, which notwithstanding his advanced age, he performed in a manner that yet lives in the remembrance of many of the auditors."[29]

"[...] he led the band, and played a concerto, from the fifth solo of his fourth opera, and the tenth solo of the same set. The unsteady manner in which he led seemed to confirm the Neapolitan account of his being a bad mental arithmetician, or calculator of time." In a footnote Burney adds: "I was present at this performance, but remember nothing of the band being obliged to stop in the middle of a piece, as has been said. There was part of a very fine mass, by Negri, performed; which, with all the inaccuracy of execution, which the want of more rehearsing occasioned, was much applauded."[30]

According to Hawkins, the profits of the concert gave Geminiani the opportunity to satisfy his zest for travel and pay a new visit to Paris, where he saw to the engraving of the edition in score of the Op. II and III concertos:

> "The profits which arose from this entertainment enabled Geminiani to gratify that inclination for rambling which he had ever been a slave to; he went to France, and took up his residence at Paris. He had formerly experienced the neatness and accuracy of the French artists in the engraving of music; and reflecting that his concertos had never been printed in a manner agreeable to his wishes, he determined to publish them himself, and also to give to the world what had long been earnestly wished for, a score of them [...]. He stayed long enough at Paris to get engraven the plates both for the score and the parts of the two operas of concertos; and about the year 1755 returned to England, and took lodgings at the Grange-Inn, in Carey-street, and advertised them for sale."[31]

In order to make this new edition of the concertos Geminiani apparently used the score that Burney had written out in his youth: "This edition was prepared from a score which I [Burney] had made for my own improvement, and of which, upon Geminiani complaining, in 1750, that he had lost his *original*, I was much flattered by his acceptance."[32] More than twenty years after Opp. II and III had first come out, Geminiani published them in score in order to exploit their popularity to the full. However, the reason for this new publishing venture, which unlike many others of Geminiani had good prospects of success, was not merely to make money. An edition in score had in those days a didactic rather than practical function. This rendered the medium of score particularly well suited to

the early concertos of Geminiani, which, like those of Corelli, had attained the status of "classics" and were therefore seen as worthy objects of study. This is confirmed by the case of Burney, who, having from his boyhood admired Geminiani greatly, put them into score for his own instruction. The idea of an edition in score of Geminiani's Opp. II and III had been promoted a short time earlier by Charles Avison in his *Essay on Musical Expression* (1752):

> "I have heard the first Publisher of Corelli's Works in Score, very frankly acknowledge, that the Profits received from the Sale of these Books, were greater than could have been expected: And, as the Public has had almost twenty Years Trial of the Advantages that have accrued from such an intimate Acquaintance with this classical Composer; it cannot, I think, be doubted but a like good Effect might also attend a Publication in Score of Geminiani's Concertos."[33]

According to Hawkins, Geminiani visited Paris again after his *Concerto Spirituale*, that is to say after April 1750. However, from 1749 his concertos were often performed in Paris to open the *Concert Spirituel*. This does not mean that the composer was necessarily present, although that possibility should not be excluded. On 1 November 1749, as we read in the *Mercure de France*, "le Concert Spirituel, exécuté au Château des Thuilleries, sous la direction de M. Royer, Maître de Musique de Monseigneur le Dauphin, commença par un beau concerto de Geminiani, terminé par un Menuet des plus gracieux & des plus variés [...]";[34] on 8 December 1750 the concert "commença par une Sonate du cinquième oeuvre de Corelly, mise en grand concert par Geminiani";[35] at Christmas that same year a "grande symphonie" by Geminiani was heard "avec quelque distraction, parce

qu'elle retardoit l'exécution du petit Motet Italien *Laudate pueri Dominum*, que devoit chanter Mlle Fel".[36] Until December 1758 Geminiani's concertos remained in the repertory of the *Concert Spirituel*; from 1749 to 1758 there were as many as 14 performances of his works.[37]

The first of the known surviving documents referring to Geminiani's last visit to Paris is a new request for a privilege to print "plusieurs genres de musique instrumentale sans paroles" made in person by the composer on 7 October 1751.[38] That same year Geminiani published at his own expense his best-known treatise, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (Op. IX), which today is one of his best appreciated and most studied works. This treatise, like his first two sets of concertos, was published in many editions, appearing in a French translation in 1752. To the treatises, as we have said, Geminiani devoted the last years of his life. In 1748 and 1749 he published the *Rules for playing in a true Taste* (op. VIII) and *A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick*. The treatise on violin playing was followed by the *Guida Armonica* (op. X), *The Art of Accompaniament* (op. XI), and finally *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra*.

Geminiani's third sojourn in Paris was longer than the previous two. He was certainly still there on 31 March 1754, when the *Théâtre des Tuileries* was the setting for *La Forest Enchantée*, a pantomime for which he wrote the music. On 10 April 1754 there appeared a review of it in *Annonces, affiches, et avis divers*:

> "M. *Servandoni*, painter and architect in ordinary to the King and the Royal Academy of Painting, presented for the first time on 31 March, at the great Theatre of the Tuileries, a spectacle of his own invention entitled *The Enchanted Forest*, on a subject drawn from Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*. This dumb-show is a kind of mobile

tableau supplemented by machines, enlivened by miming actors, and accompanied by expressive music composed by M. *Geminiani*. It is divided into five acts, which represent the same number of different episodes that remain, however, subordinate to the main story, which relates the triumph of Rinaldo over the sorcery of Ismeno. The noblest and most surprising effects that the arts of painting, perspective, and mechanical contrivance can produce are deployed in this spectacle [...]." (see Appendix A 3)

La Forest Enchantèe will be discussed at length in Chapter VII, but it is necessary here to mention in advance the fact that the performances did not encounter public favour, and also that in another review dated 15 April 1754 Friedrich Melchior von Grimm commented on the "mauvaise musique de la composition de M. Geminiani" and the "mauvaise exécution de ce spectacle". When Geminiani returned to London, he published a concert version of that work under the title of *The Inchanted Forrest* ("an Instrumental Composition Expressive of the same Ideas as the Poem of Tasso of that Title", as we read on the title-page); this too proved a failure, perhaps because programme music had never "caught on" in England. Hawkins commented:

"About the same time [1755] he published what he called the Enchanted Forest, an instrumental composition, grounded on a very singular notion, which he had long entertained, namely, that between music and the discursive faculty there is a near and natural resemblance; and this he was used to illustrate by a comparison between those musical compositions in which a certain point is assumed in one part, and answered in the other with frequent iterations, and the form and manner of oral conversation. With a view to reduce this notion to practice, Geminiani has endeavoured to represent to the imagination of his hearers the succession of events in that beautiful episode contained in the thirteenth canto of Tasso's Jerusalem, where, by the

arts of Ismeno, a pagan magician, a forest is enchanted, and each tree informed with a living spirit, to prevent its being cut down for the purpose of making battering-rams and other engines for carrying on the siege of Jerusalem."[39]

Geminiani spent only a few years back in London. According to Flood, in the spring of 1759 the aging composer travelled again to Ireland, settling in Coothill as music master of Charles Coote, later Count of Bellomont. "In November [Flood adds] his pupil went a tour, and Geminiani settled in Dublin, on the invitation of Dubourg."[40] His last public performance was advertised in the *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* from 22 December 1759 onwards:

"By the special Command of their Graces the Duke and Dutchess of Bedford.

For the Benefit of Mr Geminiani

On Monday the 4th of February, at the Great Musick Hall in Fishamble Street, will be a Grand Concerto Spirituale. Tickets at Half a Guinea each. Mr Geminiani will perform a Solo and Concert on the Violin. After the Concert will be a Ball, with Tea, Coffee, Lemonade, Cards & c., and the whole Performance will be conducted in the gentelest Manner. The Room will be illuminated with Wax. Tickets to be had of Mr Geminiani, at Mr Dubson's Frame Maker, in Abby street"

On 29 January 1760 the same newspaper informed its readers that the concert had been put back to 3 March:

"By the special Command of their Graces the Duke and Dutchess of Bedford.

Mr Geminiani will have his Concerto Spirituale on Monday the 3d of March. After the Concert will be a Ball, with Tea, Coffee, Lemonade,

Cards, &c. Mr Geminiani hopes to be excused for deferring his Concert, as he was under an absolute Necessity of doing so. By particular Desire, he will perform a Concerto and Solo on the Violin, as he would endeavour by every Method in his Power to express the Sensibility he has of the Favour and generous Regards he has met with in this Kingdom. The Tickets printed for Monday the 4th of February, will be taken the above Night."

The same newspaper advertised two auctions of paintings in "Geminiani's Great Room in Dame Street" to be held on 22 January and 28 February without confirming that the initiative stemmed from Geminiani himself. The concert achieved a modest success, although the composer was obliged to end it prematurely, as we read in a letter written the day after by Mary Delany:

"I put on my mourning when I go into the *grande monde*, which I did yesterday to Geminiani's Concert: it was pretty full, I went at the head of ten. The Duchess of Bedford and Lady Car. Russell were there. The music began a half an hour after seven; I was extremely pleased with it: there is a spirit of harmony and prettiness of fancy which no other music (beside our dear Handel's) has. He played one of his own solos most wonderfully well for a man of eighty-six years of age [sic], and one of his fingers hurt; but the sweetness and melody of the tone of his fiddle, his fine and elegant taste, and the perfection of *time and tune* make full amends for some failures in his play occasioned by the weakness of his hand; and his clever management of passages too difficult for him to execute with the spirit he used to do was very surprising. On the whole I was greatly entertained, though it is the fashion to shrug up the shoulders and say: «*Poor old man!* Did you ever hear such a close? *No shake at all!*» with impertinent etceteras. I felt *quite peevish* at their remarks. The great ladies and their attendant peers were so impatient to get to *their cards* and to their dancing, that a message was sent to Geminiani to "*shorten the musical*

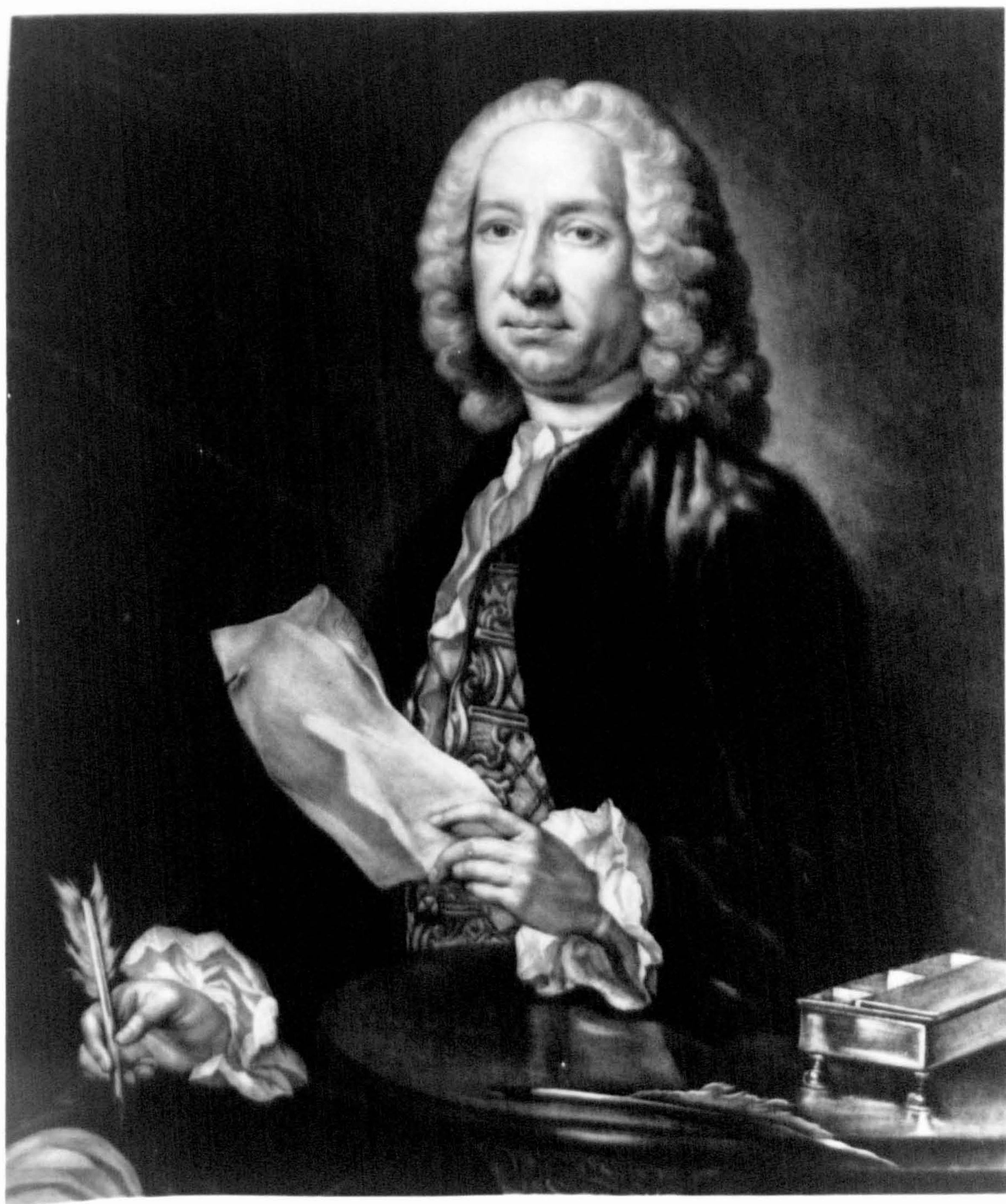


FIG. 11

Portrait of Geminiani by T. Jenkins, engraved by T. McArdell. In the collection of the Earl of Wemyss. Reproduced by courtesy of the Royal College of Music.

entertainment". I was quite provoked the concert was not above one hour; I could have sat three hours more with pleasure to have heard it. I have invited Geminiani to come and see me, and hope to hear this music again some way or other."[41]

In 1760 Geminiani published at his own expense his last treatise, *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra*, which was printed in Edinburgh by his ex-pupil Robert Bremner. According to Hawkins, a further treatise, which was apparently the result of many years of work, was stolen him from his servant:

> "It seems that Geminiani had spent many years in compiling an elaborate treatise on music, which he intended for publication; but, soon after his arrival at Dublin, by the treachery of a female servant, who it is said was recommended to him for no other purpose than that she might steal it, it was conveyed out of his chamber, and could never after be recovered. The greatness of this loss, and his inability to repair it, made a deep impression on his mind, and, as it is conjectured, precipitated his end; at least he survived it but a short time, the seventeenth of September, 1762, being the last day of his life, *which had been prolonged to the age of 96* [sic]".[42]

This is of course just an anecdote, neither more nor less plausible than the one related by Burney about Corelli's death. In his statement of the age of the composer Hawkins was probably deceived by the obituaries that appeared in Dublin newspapers the day after Geminiani's death:

> "Deaths
> [...]
> At his Lodgings on College-Green, aged 96, Signior Francesco

> Geminiani, well known by the Lovers of Harmony, for his capital Performance on the Violin."[43]

According to Flood the composer was buried on 19 September 1762 "in the Churchyard of the Irish Parliament."[44] No one has yet discovered his will (assuming that he left one), so we have no information on his economic circumstances in his last years of life. What we do know, at least, is that Gemininani remained active right up to his death; in 1762, when he was seventy-four years old, he was still active enough to publish at his own expense his second collection of *Pièces de Clavecin* (see Catalogue, A 9a).

Taken as a whole, Geminiani's life is not so different in many ways from those of the countless Italian composers who in the first half of the eighteenth century sought their fortune abroad, but in a few respects it evinces some original features that seem to look forward to later generations of musicians. The most striking of these is Geminiani's constant refusal of a permanent post, which Hawkins describes as his "inclination for rambling which he had ever been a slave to", a natural consequence of his desire to be as independent as possible. From his patrons, many of them his pupils, he did not spurn support and friendship, but he always kept such indebtedness within limits, trying to find his main source of sustenance elsewhere. Unlike Handel or Vivaldi, he derived his income almost exclusively from the instrumental sphere, so it was harder for him to achieve the relatively privileged condition enjoyed by his two more illustrious colleagues, who, thanks mainly to their operatic activity, were able to break through some of the constraints that contemporary society imposed on musicians, becoming in a sense "impresarios" of their

own careers. Geminiani did not possess Handel's ability to write music quickly and would have found it difficult to maintain the rhythm of composition necessary when composing for the stage (or perhaps he was simply not interested in the business of clothing words in music). So it was thanks alone to his commercial activity in publishing his own music and selling the paintings of others that Geminiani was able to avoid financial dependence.

That his life was in this respect quite different from that of the vast majority of contemporary musicians is confirmed by the criticism he received on account of his dealing in paintings, which was considered by some an outrage to music. His frequent "rifriggiture" (reheatings), as Veracini called them, of old works in order to make money were regarded by his contemporaries with almost as much suspicion; this stigma may have been one of the reasons why Geminiani was forced on so many occasions to publish his works at his own expense, having earlier failed to win enough subscriptions. The great delay in the publication of the *Guida Armonica* is clear evidence of the mistrust surrounding him: "Some [Hawkins writes] suspected that the author's chief view in the publication of it was the getting money to supply his necessities."[45] Nevertheless, this was the price that Geminiani had perforce to pay in a period when the musician, although he was beginning to be considered as an artist in the modern sense, still did not enjoy the social regard that was to come to him later. Geminiani's effort to improve his social and economic status through activities unrelated to music in order to avoid the need for private or institutional patronage is certainly the strangest and most interesting theme to emerge from his biography.

Chapter Four

CRITICAL RECEPTION: CONTEMPORARY AND MODERN

With the publication of his Opp. II and III concertos Geminiani's fame in England reached its summit. His abilities as a violinist, composer, and teacher were beyond dispute. Contemporary criticism, with just a few exceptions, is generally very positive - not only on account of the qualities of the music itself but also because Geminiani is credited with guiding English musical taste in the right direction by encouraging the study and performance of Corelli's music and making a decisive contribution to the foundation of a native English school of violinists and composers. The tones are often enthusiastic, as we find in the writings of Charles Avison, John Potter, and Adam Serre:

> "To this illustrious Example in *vocal* [Avison writes after praising Benedetto Marcello] I shall add another, the greatest in *instrumental Music*; I mean the admirable Geminiani; whose Elegance and Spirit of Composition ought to have been much more our Pattern; and from whom the public Taste might have received the highest Improvement, had we thought proper to lay hold those Opportunities which his long Residence in this Kingdom has given us. The Public is greatly indebted to this Gentleman, not only for his many excellent Compositions, but for having as yet parted with none that are not extremely correct and fine. There is such a Genteelness and Delicacy in the Turn of his musical Phrase, (if I may so call it) and such a natural Connection in his expressive and sweet Modulation throughout all his Works, which are every where supported with so perfect a Harmony, that we can never too often hear, or too much admire them. There are no impertinent Digressions, no tiresome, unnecessary Repetitions; but from the Beginning to the Close of his Movement, all is natural and pleasing.

This is properly to discourse in Music, when our Attention is kept up from one Passage to another, so as the Ear and the Mind may be equally delighted."[1]

"Geminiani [Potter observes in 1762] was a composer of great taste and delicacy, his compositions may justly be reckon'd among the elegant. His taste is peculiar to himself, and we need not wonder at this, as he had a fine natural genius, and an acquir'd judgment equal to most; which raised him above the necessity of any borrow'd help from others. He is universally admir'd for his strict observance of rule, and his beautiful manner of joining parts together in composition. He has justly deserv'd the title bestow'd on him by a person who was himself a great master: *The Illustrious* Geminiani."[2]

"It is certain [Serre writes in 1763] that M. Geminiani has rightfully earned the reputation among connoisseurs of music of being one of the artists who, after Corelli, has had the best knowledge of the different paths of harmony and has observed its various rules the most correctly".[3]

In writings of the period, particularly English ones, the name of Geminiani is often mentioned in the same breath as those of Handel and Corelli. We recall that Burney himself, in a letter to Thomas Twining of 14 December 1781 wrote that Handel, Geminiani, and Corelli were the only "divinities" of his youth.[4] Thus the important question is why a composer considered by his contemporaries the equal of Handel and Corelli is so badly neglected today. In fact, if we exclude the articles on his treatises and the few biographical studies, modern critical literature on Geminiani becomes almost reduced to the Ph. D. dissertation of Marion McArtor, which appeared in 1951.[5] To find an answer we have to return to

the *Essay on Musical Expression* by Charles Avison, the most famous pupil of Geminiani and his main advocate in England. In this essay, published in London in 1752, Avison writes *inter alia* that the works of the best masters "are the only Schools where we may see, and from whence we may draw, Perfection" - such works being identified by Avison as those of Benedetto Marcello in the vocal sphere and those of Geminiani in the instrumental one. This was a highly partial choice that clearly offended by omission one of the greatest musical "divinities" of the time, George Frideric Handel. In the following year, 1753, William Hayes (1708-1777), Professor of Music at Oxford and a great admirer of Handel, published anonymously a pamphlet entitled *Remarks on Mr Avison's Essay on Musical Expression*, to which he appended the subtitle: "wherein the Characters of several great Masters, both Ancient and Modern, are rescued from the Misrepresentations of the above Author; and their real Merit asserted and vindicated". According to Hayes, the following is the reason why Avison underestimated Handel:

> "This brings me within sight of our Author's main Drift and Design, in depreciating and lowering the Characters of Handel and Corelli; which very clearly is to aggrandize two Masters, whom he boldly affirms to have *excelled all the Moderns; one in Vocal the other in Instrumental Music.* But his Spleen is more particularly vented against Handel, for no other Reason, but his being universally admired, on account of both these Excellencies being united in Him. We must not therefore be surprized, that his transcendent Merit, and the Applause he has met with as the natural Consequence of it, should create Envy, Jealousy, and Heart-burning in the Breasts of those who are less conspicuous; however excellent in a particular Branch: Nor if, failing to meet with a Share of public Acknowledgement equal to their Expectations, they descend to the mean Practice, of puffing one another

at the Expence of his Reputation. Perhaps Mr. Avison may think himself in Duty, or upon the Principle of Gratitude, bound to compliment Geminiani: But what can induce Geminiani to set Avison [*recte*, Avison to set Geminiani] in Competition with Handel? Surely nothing but to gratify *Pique*, and to magnify his own Performances; and that this has frequently been the Case, is too notorious to need an Instance.

You will ask probably, from whence this mighty Regard for our Author arose? The Answer to which is, that he received the principal Part of his Education from Geminiani; and on that Consideration, whenever the latter has affected to hold Mr. Handel's Compositions cheap, it has been usual with him to say, *Charles* (or the more familiar Name *Charley*) Avison shall make a better Piece of Music, in a Month's Time. Mr. Walsh, who keeps the Music-Shop in Catherine-Street, knows this to be Fact: And I suppose, in Justice to the Man by whose Compositions he hath made so ample a Fortune, will attest it."[6]

Then Hayes puts forward the hypothesis that the real author of the essay was Geminiani himself:

"Before we proceed any further, let us consider whether the Substance of the Essay may not have been drawn up by Geminiani himself, and given to his Pupil; wisely concluding, it would make its Appearance with a better Grace under his Name than his own, and at a Time when he was abroad, either in *France* or *Holland*. And whether it might not be thought the more seasonable at this Juncture, as it may pave the Way for the Reception of the grand Work he is gone thither to super-intend, in order to a Publication. To convince you of the Justness of this Conjecture, I need only recommend to you, the Perusal of Geminiani's Treatise on *good Taste in Music*, and the Dedication of his last Concertos to the Academy at the *Crown and Anchor*; in both which (I am persuaded) the same Pen hath been employed that writ the Essay; the Style very exactly corresponding, the same haughty and contemptuous Expressions abound in each, and they alike seem calculated more to

depreciate the Performances of other Men, and to magnify those of the supposed Author, than any thing beside. But the Opinion which prevails most with me, is, that the Essay is neither Avison's nor Geminiani's; but the Product of a *Junto*: And that poor Avison is merely the *Cat's Paw*."[7]

But Hayes's charges against Geminiani go even further, and it is precisely in this pamphlet that we encounter the first signs of a critical attitude that, beginning with Burney, became a *Leitmotiv* in subsequent evaluative writing: the first component of this attitude concerns Geminiani's mercantile activities, the second his musical style:

"For many years he was wavering between *Music* and a kind of *Merchandize*, by which he hoped to have made his Fortune, independent of it; namely, buying and selling Pictures. So long as this Frenzy continued (for such it may justly be called) he disdained the Thought of being regarded on the Footing of a Musician, and never condescended to embrace the Means which Providence had reached out so visibly for his Support, except when he was broken down, and incapacitated for pursuing his other Trade. It is true, he frequently employed himself in composing for his Amusement, and his Concertos got abroad, but rather by Stealth than his Permission: Which seems to evince an eager Disposition in the Public, to catch at any Productions of his, rather than to manifest the least Slight, Contempt, or Disregard. On the contrary, he has been courted and solicited to apply himself wholly to Music; to make it his Profession; in order that the Public might reap some Advantage from his Instruction and Example; but such was the Capriciousness and Inconstancy of his Temper, that he was seldom prevailed upon, unless to gratify some favourite Whim or Conceit of his own, or perhaps to supply his unbounded Extravagance; a very prevailing Argument."[8]

"My Opinion of him as a Composer, is, that he is extremely unequal. The Excursions he hath made to *Paris*, have not a little contributed to this Inequality: For although this may have given a new Turn to his Melodies, and his manner of variegating the Parts in his full Compositions, yet the Minuteness of the one, and the want of Perspicuity in the other, render some of his most laboured, complicated Strains, a mere *Hodge Podge*; an unintelligible Mass of Learning. Correct nevertheless it may, and ought to be; because it cannot be denied that he takes infinite Pains to make it so: Nor can it be denied, that, of late, he hath taken great Pains likewise, in dressing up Tristes; particularly the *Scotch Songs*: The most we are indebted to him on this Account, is, for putting good *Basses* to the *original Tunes*; for in Truth, all beyond this, is such mungrel Stuff, that, it is not probable, it will obtain that Degree of general Approbation, which he might expect".[9]

It is very likely that the ultimate sources of the harsh criticisms that Burney levelled against Geminiani in his *General History of Music* (1776-1789) lie precisely in the two passages just quoted. We find the first traces of them in a letter that Burney wrote to Twining on 30 August 1773: although conceding that "the advancement of the Violin, & its Family, towards perfection in this Country, for the 1st 40 or 50 years of this Century, in short, till the arrival of Giardini, was in great Measure the Work of Geminiani", Burney is moved to write:

"As a player, he was always deficient in *Time*; as a composer, *Laboured*; & as a Critic, *jamais de bonne Foi* changing his opinions according to his Interest, as often as Caprice. One day he w.d set up French Music against all other, the next English, Scots, Irish, anything but the best Compositions of Handel & Italy. You know, I dare say, how much he preferred the character of a picture dealer, without the least knowledge or Taste in Painting, to that of a

> Musician, by which he had acquired his reputation & importance. I am afraid there is such a *penchant* in the generality of Italian artists towards Chicane, that they w.d rather trick a Man out of a Guinea than get it fairly, in a John-Trot way. & when Geminiani's Musical decisions ceased to be irrevocable, he tried his Hand at Painting."[10]

In Burney's correspondence with Twining there occur other important anticipations of material that he later published in his History: "Indeed [Twining wrote on 16 October 1773] one of his greatest faults, I think, is that he wants that *prima intenzione* which Rousseau has so well explained.[11] His movements (especially in his solos) are wild, 'décousu', & without symmetry; & this, joined to another great fault I have observed in him, a deficiency in *clear* well *measured accent*, produces great confusion sometimes & *bother* in his Allegros."[12] On 21 January 1774 Burney replied: "I have long found out that, as Geminiani was a bad Timist in playing, he but ill attended to Rhythm in writing: his movements are not *phrased*, as Rousseau well expresses it,[13] and that merit of measured periods, of accenting melody, & rendering it more poetical than formerly (if I may so say) is, to my apprehension, the chief characteristic of modern music, & what it most excels the old music in."[14] So the following are the main planks of Burney's criticism: rhythmic and melodic irregularity, asymmetry of musical phrasing, and above all "a confusion in the effect of the whole, from the too great business and dissimilitude of the several parts."[15]

Before we see how much Burney's criticism influenced subsequent critical literature, it is necessary quote briefly from the writings of Charles Henri Blainville, Francesco Maria Veracini, and John Hawkins. From the first writer we have taken a passage in *L'Esprit de l'art musical* (1754),

which contains an interesting comparison between Tartini, Locatelli, and Geminiani:

"Truth in music is a song so natural in tone that it leaves nothing to be desired in the way of expression, or whose simple, child-like cast gives pleasure through this simplicity alone.

There are also pieces of purely instrumental music imbued with so much truth that they seem to suggest words or to convey feelings, images, or pictorial effects: such seems to me to be the music of Tartini, a true language of sounds with musical phrases based on the purest melody and on the art of making the violin sing. Indeed, his concertos are truly the triumph of that instrument, which seems in them to declaim a fine speech, with which the other parts appear associated only in order to maintain the key and the connection of the ideas. If their *tuttis* were more varied, either by having more lively repetitions, or more varied features, or more striking harmonies, these concertos would not fail to please more generally: but all things considered, the music of this composer is no less precious on that account to those who cherish the truth of the instrument enough to do without things that merely add to their beauties.

Locatelli is less original, less rich in expression and imagination; but gayer and more smiling: he could please more; and despite his variety he retains a childlike character, which seems to be natural to him.

Geminiani, without being as original, seems to occupy the middle ground between the other two; for one finds both a man of taste in his sonatas and a great artist in his concertos."[16]

In his *Il trionfo della pratica musicale* (c. 1760), Veracini accuses Geminiani of plagiarism, of having "reheated" hundreds of times over the same compositions, and - worse - of having composed a "fuga mostruosa" (monstrous fugue). We will discuss this diatribe more thoroughly in the

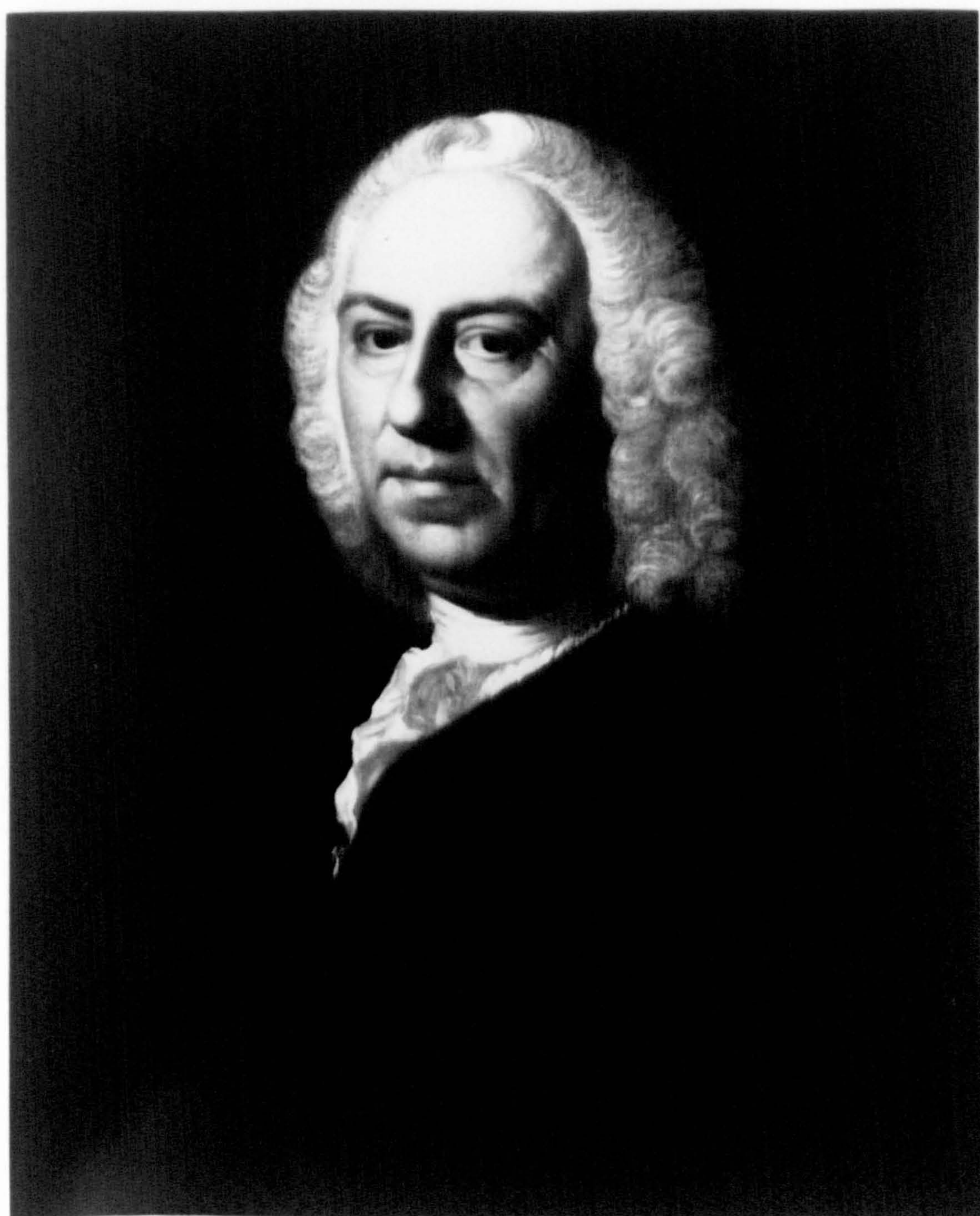


FIG. 12

Portrait of Geminiani by an unknown artist. Reproduced by courtesy of the owner, the Royal College of Music.

fifth and eighth chapters, but give here a foretaste of Veracini's style of writing, quoting a passage where Geminiani is accused even of purloining compositions by his teacher:

"What shall we say of the long imprisonment suffered for several years by the prince of violinists, Carlo Ambrogio Lainati, called Lonati of Milan, who was nicknamed by the world, through antonomasia, 'The Hunchback of the Queen of Sweden', since he was a virtuoso in the service of this monarch during her sojourn in Rome.

It cannot be disputed that the works of this most distinguished person served the most famous composers of solo sonatas and sonatas in three and four parts as models, for one finds in the compositions of others whole pages taken from them, either note for note or impudently paraphrased, by certain braggarts claiming to be composers, who then proceeded to circulate them and even to have them printed as their own work, appearing under their own names; even more outrageously, these false composers made bold to slander the originals by Carlo Ambrogio, disparaging them before professional musicians, music-lovers, and amateurs of music as very commonplace music redolent of the old style - in order to mask their thefts with jokes [...].

The works of the Ancients, which belong to the realm of the visual, survive and (by God's grace) will continue to survive as eternal models, but the works of our Carl'Ambrogio, which belong to the realm of the aural, have perished. And in what way? One part has been cunningly omitted, another part has been served up again, and yet another paraphrased: the latter, graced with the name of its paraphraser, and the former, perfected by the wiliness of its reheater (both having been engraved on copper plates with many mistakes, the result of ignorant plagiarism), have been scattered to the four ends of the earth."[17]

As we will see later, the reference to Geminiani is incontestable. It is difficult to say how well founded Veracini's charges were, since too few

of Lonati's compositions have survived.

In his *General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (1776), Hawkins devotes many pages to Geminiani, showing himself to be a great admirer of the composer: "His melodies [writes Hawkins] were to the last degree elegant, his modulation original and multifarious, and in their general cast his compositions were tender and pathetic"; nevertheless, the historian has to concede that Geminiani's musical imagination had its limits: "it is to the want of an active and teeming imagination that we are to attribute the publication of his works in various forms".[18]

At the end of the eighteenth century Geminiani's Op. II and Op. III concertos and his treatise on violin-playing still enjoyed a wide circulation. In 1788 there appeared a transcription of these concertos for harpsichord, organ, or pianoforte, "as Performed by Mr Cramer before their Majesties at the Antient Concert", while the treatise was translated into German in 1782 and into French in 1803 in a version "nouvellement Redigée, Augmentée, Expliquée et enrichie de nouveaux exemples, preludes, Airs et Duos gradués pour éclairer et faciliter l'instruction et mettre évidemment en pratique les principes de cet excellent maître". Shortly afterwards, Geminiani's compositions (and Geminiani himself) fell into oblivion and have never enjoyed even in our own century a "rediscovery" comparable to that of, say, Vivaldi and Albinoni. As has already been said, one of the reasons must be the negative influence of Burney's criticism on later investigations. One of the first signs of it is this assessment of Geminiani by Thomas Busby published in 1825:

> "It has been a subject of dispute, whether this ingenious musician was gifted with a creative genius, or only possessed ordinary abilities, cultivated to that degree to assume the character of originality, and give, by a *conceded* authority, the tone to the national taste. His productions, though generally scientific, ornate, and sometimes highly pathetic, do not, it must in candour be admitted, present evidencies of those extensive, variegated, and ductile powers, necessary to dramatic composition; nor did he make a single effort demonstrative of the talent of associating music with poetry, of painting sentiments by sounds. In a word, endowed with feeling, a respectable master of the laws of harmony, and acquainted with many of the secrets of fine composition, Geminiani was not less qualified to move the soul, than to gratify the sense: yet truth, after being just to his real deserts, will affirm, that his bass is not uniformly the most select; that his melody is frequently irregular in its phrase and measure; and that, on the whole, he is decidedly inferior to Corelli, to whom, by his admirers, he has been too frequently and too fondly compared".[13]

It is not difficult to see in the last lines the direct source from which Busby draws his conclusions: "there is frequently [Burney's words] an irregularity in his measures and phraseology". Busby merely varies Burney's syntax. The same undisguised indebtedness is found in many other evaluations that appeared during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; one receives the strong impression that Geminiani's scores were rarely, if ever, analysed independently. Irregularity, asymmetry, and confusion are the dominant motifs of a tradition of criticism little inclined to examine the topic under discussion at first hand. More recently, a new and scarcely less favourable epithet - "conservative" - has been applied to Geminiani. He is deemed "conservative" because he did not participate in the general renewal of instrumental forms, remaining attached to the

Corellian tradition; in other words, he did not contribute to the "progress of the musical language". This kind of criticism starts from the premise that a work, to be valid or at least worthy of a place in musical history, must of necessity be original and add something new. In reality, the adoption of a terminology that presupposes the idea of an "evolution" of the musical language often leads the critic to over-simplify something much more complex. That Geminiani's earliest compositions, like those of so many composers of his generation (Albinoni, Vivaldi, Valentini, and Locatelli, among others), drew inspiration from Corelli's music is undisputed. But Geminiani was also the creator of the Op. V cello sonatas, the Op. VII concertos, and *The Inchanted Forrest* - compositions that follow no clearly identifiable model. There is no "single" style of Geminiani that can convincingly be labelled as such, but rather a series of collections related by style to their differing respective historical circumstances. This does not mean that the hand of the composer is not recognizable in each of them, but it means that each of them possesses a stylistic peculiarity. One must remember that Geminiani's collections were sometimes published at an interval of about fifteen years from each other, and were composed over a period of about half a century.

Manfred Bukofzer, more than any other musicologist, emphasized Geminiani's conservative orientation:

> "Geminiani, a pupil of Corelli and Scarlatti, belonged to the conservative camp. He enlarged the traditional trio of the concertino to a full string quartet by the addition of the viola and arranged in this manner the trio sonatas of Corelli as concerti grossi - a clear indication that for the conservatives the trio still dominated the conception of the concerto grosso.".[20]

Bukofzer is here forgetting that Geminiani also transcribed as concertos Corelli's Op. V "solo" sonatas, an undertaking that gives the lie to the supposed domination of the "trio". Bukofzer's thesis betrays another simplification typical of modern critics: that the progress of the musical language in the period following the first two decades of the eighteenth century demanded an increased importance of the upper part at the expense of the lower ones, so that the persistence of contrapuntal and imitative writing is the distinctive mark of so-called "conservatives". This proposition is certainly true in very broad terms, but it has the great disadvantage of encouraging very questionable qualitative judgements that equate "progressive" with "imaginative", "conservative" with "unimaginative". Unfortunately but inevitably, simplifications of this kind are especially prevalent in works of synthesis, such as those by Bukofzer, Hutchings, Newman, and Schering. In these authors we read, for example, that "in spite of its contrapuntal complexity [...] his style seems pallid and lacks individual distinction";[21] that some concertos of Avison and Geminiani "were well composed only as an exercise is well composed";[22] that "although Geminiani ranks with such late Baroque masters as Tartini, Veracini, and Locatelli in his knowledge and use of the violin, his sonatas seem somewhat more conservative and less inspired than those of his important contemporaries";[23] and even that "sein Stil [ist] gleichmässig, um nicht zu sagen: einförmig" (his style is balanced, not to say uniform).[24] However, in our century there have also been some more positive evaluations:

"[Geminiani] [writes Edmund Van der Straeten] was undoubtedly one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, violinist of his time, who enlarged in many ways the resources of the instrument, as his concertos and sonatas clearly show. He also extended the sonata form, which is more developed and freer in form, even if that often lacks the clearness and beautiful symmetry of the work of his master Corelli. Burney and many great musicians have pointed out his want of originality and weakness in his harmonic treatment, but those who have the courage to judge for themselves will find many beautiful melodies in his slow movements and most delightful dance movements, while some of his allegros are likewise attractive, and he was a master of the instrumental fugue."[25]

"His melodies [Veinus observes] are characterized by a restless chromaticism, his harmonic structure by an experimental and progressive interest in modulation. There is in his music that curious and compelling mixture of austerity and passion which arises whenever a bold imagination labours within the confines of a rigorous polyphonic technique. His constant interest in extending the boundaries of instrumental music led him to publish revised editions of his work in which further intricacies of counterpoint and ornamentation were added to an already complex score. He had a frank interest in experimentation and sought to codify his findings in such theoretical works as his *Guida Armonica*, his *Art of Playing the Violin*, and his *Treatise on Good Taste*".[26]

The enthusiastic effusions characteristic of the first biographical articles on "newly discovered" composers tend to be as exaggerated as the sparse and dismissive comments in the works of synthesis. In the worst examples, hagiography oozes out of practically every word, leading to results that sometimes can be quite comic: "In the face of some of his inspirations [wrote Adolfo Betti in 1934] that seem suddenly to reveal to us horizons of unsuspected beauty, one is reduced to silent admiration ...,

or one may be content with the simple comment that d'Indy made about the opening theme of the sonata in C minor: *Belle phrase, presque digne de la plume d'un Bach*".[27]

For the first serious analytical study of Geminiani's compositions and treatises we are indebted to Marion E. McArtor, whose doctoral thesis appeared in 1951. The historical and biographical section of this dissertation does not add any information beyond what was already written about Geminiani in his own century, but McArtor's analysis still makes interesting reading today. Unfortunately, it proceeds in a rather mechanical manner and rarely leads to conclusions of any historical importance; Geminiani's music is described objectively but without reference to a historical context that could lend significance to the findings. So one encounters here exactly the opposite defect to the one observed in the hagiographic works: the desire to be "scientific" and the refusal to pass judgements based on general impressions (unavoidable if wide-ranging comparisons are to be made) impoverishes the analysis to a point where one has the impression that the author has deliberately avoided making historical and aesthetic judgements of any kind. Moreover, McArtor's analysis fails to take into account some very important compositions of Geminiani (including the entire Opp. II, V, and VII). This is a rather serious omission in an analytical study so dependent on statistical findings.

Notwithstanding their defects, Betti's pioneering article and McArtor's analytical dissertation have formed the basis for subsequent investigations, few though these have been. In fact, until very recently biographical research into Gemininani remained at the point where it was left by Betti, who had in his turn added hardly more than the date of the

composer's baptism to what was already known from Burney and Hawkins.[28] Studies of the music have been restricted to a few compositions: the Op. III concertos and *The Inchanted Forrest.*[29] The most noteworthy recent research has focused on Geminiani's treatises, particularly *The Art of Playing the Violin* (Op. IX), originally published in 1751 and latterly published in facsimile with a commentary by David Boyden.[30] The fact that interest has been concentrated on the treatises is quite significant, although certainly not surprising when one considers that the "authentic" performance of baroque music is today almost mandatory in our concert halls and that Geminiani's treatises offer exceptionally valuable information on performance practice. This special case apart, one cannot avoid the suspicion that Burney's comments, imbibed at first or second hand, continue even today to work for the neglect of Geminiani and his music.

The relative lack of interest in Geminiani hitherto shown by musicologists is paralleled by the paucity of critical or facsimile editions of his music, and equally of recordings and concert performances. Since the critical reception of a composer depends not only on what has been written about him but also on the circulation and performance of his music (factors that are of course closely connected), some remarks on the practical cultivation of Geminiani's music today can be revealing. Critical editions in the full sense of the word are almost non-existent, because the few modern editions of Geminiani's music fail to take into account the manuscript versions, the reprintings "corrected" by the author, the reworkings, which can solve many problems of interpretation, and above all the treatises, which are absolutely essential to the understanding of the embellishments and marks of expression as well as to the realization of the continuo. Only Opp. I, III, and V, the transcriptions of Corelli's

Opp. I, III and V, and some sonatas included in Geminiani's treatise on the cittern are available in modern editions. As confirmation of what has already been said, the treatises have fared better: the one on violin playing and the *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick* are both available in facsimile editions, with perceptive introductions by David Boyden and Robert Donington respectively. As for recordings, the picture at the time of writing (mid-1990) is even more disappointing: there has been one recording of Op. III (*The Academy of Ancient Music*), two of *The Inchanted Forrest* (*I Solisti Veneti, London Handel Orchestra*), one of the Op. V cello sonatas (Simpson, Giardelli, Spieth), and two recordings of miscellaneous works (*La Petite Bande, The Purcell Quartet*).

"Among the many distinguished musicians of the eighteenth century Geminiani occupies a curious and almost paradoxical position: he is simultaneously one of the most eminent and one of the least well known."[31] With these words, on 18 September 1932, Adolfo Betti inaugurated the commemoration of Francesco Geminiani at the *Reale Accademia Lucchese di Scienza, Lettere ed Arti* on the 170th anniversary of the composer's death. More than half a century later they still ring remarkably true.

Chapter Five

THE CONCERTOS

"Geminiani with all his harmonical abilities [writes Burney], was so circumscribed in his invention, that he was obliged to have recourse to all the arts of musical cookery, not to call it quackery, for materials to publish."[1] The charge that Burney levels against the composer refers to his alleged lack of imagination, which caused him to recycle the same compositions several times over. Indeed, if we exclude all his numerous elaborations and transcriptions, the musical output of Geminiani seems rather exiguous: two sets of violin sonatas (Opp. I and IV), one of cello sonatas (Op.V), three of *concerti grossi* (Opp. II, III, and VII), *The Inchanted Forrest*, and the compositions published in his treatises. Nevertheless, the same reproof could be addressed to Corelli and several other contemporary composers of note. Burney's irritation probably stemmed from the disproportion between the success of Geminiani in England, where he had no rivals in the instrumental domain and was considered the equal of Handel, and the reason for this same success, which was almost entirely connected with his Op. III concertos. His other compositions, with few exceptions, were rarely performed and little appreciated; in contrast, his Op. III enjoyed an extraordinarily wide circulation, which even rivalled that of the celebrated works of Corelli. "Handel, Geminiani & Corelli [Burney notes elsewhere] were the sole Divinities of my Youth, but I was drawn off from their exclusive worship before I was 20, by keeping company with travelled & heterodox gentlemen, who were partial to the Music of more modern composers whom they had heard in Italy."[2] The

open-mindedness of the young Burney was an exception in contemporary English musical circles, which in the years around the middle of the eighteenth century remained faithful to Corelli and Geminiani and showed little interest in what was going on beyond the English Channel. The reason for this conservatism was that the music of Corelli, at the beginning of the century, had revitalized a musical tradition that was going through a deep crisis of identity. "At present [Addison writes in 1711] our Notions of Musick are so very uncertain that we do not know what it is we like; only, in general, we are transported with anything that is not English."[3] The arrival of Geminiani in 1714 helped to consolidate the reputation of the "Roman school" and gave a very important boost to the emergence of a new generation of violinists possessing an advanced technique, whose repertory was founded on Corelli's works.[4] Geminiani turned to his own advantage this English musical "backwardness" and insularity, having himself accepted in London as the direct musical descendant of the *Maestro di Fusignano*. In evaluating his first two collections of concertos one must take account of these historical circumstances.

Geminiani composed 47 concertos:[5] the elaborations of Corelli's violin sonatas Op. V, published in 1726 (nos. 1-6) and 1729 (nos. 7-12); his own Opp. II and III, both from 1732; the elaborations of trio sonatas from Corelli's Op. I (no. 9) and Op. III (nos. 1, 3, 4, 9, and 10), published in 1735; three concertos published in 1736 in the third collection of *Select Harmony*; the elaborations of his own violin sonatas in Op. IV, published in 1743 (nos. 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, and 11); his own Op. VII, from 1746; the *Two Concertos* brought out by Johnson around 1760. If we exclude the

reworkings, the transcriptions, and the elaborations, which will be examined in the eighth chapter, the number of his original concertos becomes reduced to a mere twenty-three. Of these, we will consider in this chapter only the three principal sets: first, Opp. II and III (taken together); second, Op. VII. Sixteen years elapsed between the publication of the first two sets and the last one; the style of Geminiani had in the mean time undergone some important transformations, which resulted in part from the influence of French music.

The Opp. II and III concertos were both published in 1732, within a few months of one another, but had been composed and performed several years earlier. Although they are relatively homogeneous in style, the two collections show some significant differences that seem to suggest that they were composed at different times. Their circulation began with the series of performances organized by Geminiani at Hickford's Room, London, in December 1731. They subsequently entered the repertory of music societies and were often performed in public concerts, as well as during the intervals of operas and other theatrical performances. Teachers of composition recommended their study, and Burney himself scored them up "for improvement in Counterpoint".[6] Even as late as 1773 Thomas Twining could write to his friend Burney: "From the beginning of my musical education I had been taught to reverence him, as the top of all the instrumental composers; & I confess I still play, & hear, some of his concertos, with great relish".[7]

The twelve concertos are all in four movements following the traditional plan of the "sonata da chiesa": an opening slow movement generally of brief duration, an allegro, an adagio or andante often more interesting and

extended than the first one, and a final quick movement. His choice of the "SFSF" plan has caused most modern critics to regard Geminiani as a "conservative" (as if this sufficed as a historical and aesthetic judgement and was not merely a legacy of his Roman training).

Three quarters of the movements in Op. II are in one section without any da capo, and about one quarter (four allegros and one andante) are in binary form. Four of the movements in binary form have no kind of reprise in the second section; only one features the A:BA: plan that we encounter more often in Geminiani's violin sonatas and in his later compositions generally.[8] In Op. III the situation changes noticeably. Half of the movements are in a single section without a da capo, plus two more with a da capo and two repeated after the following movement. One third are in binary form; these include two first movements and all the final allegros (among which III/5/iv is the only example to possess a reprise).[9] In his last set of concertos (Op. VII) and his cello sonatas (Op. V) Geminiani will show greater variety in his choice of musical forms.

All the fugues, fugal movements, and canons in Opp. II and III, III/2/iv alone excepted, appear as the first fast movement, while the finales are more commonly homophonic in character. Two first allegro movements, both in Op. III, are cast in ritornello form (III/1/ii and III/5/ii) and bear witness to the influence of Vivaldi on the Lucchese master. In 1753 William Hayes, one of the few contemporary critics to draw attention to Vivaldi's contrapuntal capability (more often the object of censure), wrote that "for the generality [...] he piques himself upon a certain Brilliance of Fancy and Execution, in which he excelled all who went before him, and in which even Geminiani has not thought him unworthy to be imitated", citing as an example the second movement of the first concerto of the

latter's Op. III.[10] This allegro constitutes an exception in Geminiani's style and for that reason deserves our attention. The following table shows its formal design (in the fourth column capital letters stand for elements of the ritornello, "x" for episodes of an improvisatory nature).

number of bars	tonal centre	form of scoring	thematic derivation
17	D major	tutti	AB
15	A major	solo	x
7	A major	tutti	A
8	E major A major	solo	x
9	D major B minor	tutti	A'
3		solo	x
12	B minor	tutti	C
12	F sharp minor E minor A major	solo	[A]
15	A major	tutti	AB
10	A major D major	solo	x

4	D major	tutti	A
16	D major	solo	x
4	D major	tutti	A (cadence)

Ex. 1: III/1/ii, 1-32 [A 3h]

Solo

Solo

It is interesting to observe that on the one occasion when the solo violin takes up, or rather paraphrases, the ritornello theme (AB), the episode in question follows immediately after the only ritornello in which the tutti depart from it (C). In the first allegro of the fifth concerto, likewise in ritornello form, the solo episodes are more closely linked to the refrain and derive more clearly from it; in this movement there is also greater variety in the patterns of scoring.

But ritornello form does not win Geminiani over. In his homophonic movements he remains faithful to a principle of spontaneous germination in which the opening phrase does not possess a thematic or "punctuating" function (as in III/6/ii), but is simply the antecedent of the following phrase that in turn becomes the starting point of the next one. This type of construction could be considered a distinctive mark of Geminiani's first creative period; already in his violin sonatas of Op. IV (1739), the frequent use of rounded or repetitive forms (rondo, binary form with reprise) evidences a greater attention to the structural value of the theme. In his fugues we can detect something quite similar: after the initial exposition the subject appears rarely in complete but rather in "decimated" form, as Veracini put it: that is, severely abridged - often reduced to its first bar. Despite this, Geminiani's homophonic movements and fugues are not lacking in unity; although their phrases are often asymmetrical, the effect of the whole is anything but chaotic. From Burney onwards, critics have always considered this asymmetry a grave defect: "there is frequently [in Burney's words] an irregularity in his measures and phraseology, and a confusion in the effect of the *whole*, from the too great business and dissimilitude of the several parts, which gives to each of his compositions the effect of a rhapsody or extemporaneous

flight, rather than a polished and regular production".[11] In reality, the irregularity of the phrases and the consequent rhapsodic effect are mitigated by their rhythmic and melodic homogeneity. Even if antecedent and consequent are of different length, they preserve the same type of rhythmic movement and the same melodic elements, differently combined. It would sometimes even be possible to reverse the order of the phrases without weakening the force of attraction between antecedent and consequent. The more the phrases are irregular and asymmetrical, the more Geminiani seeks to maintain rhythmic and melodic uniformity. (An analogous balance between unity and diversity can be seen in contemporary Italian poetic texts for da capo arias: when the metre is mixed and lines of various lengths are included, the rhyme scheme and the number of lines in the two semistrophes tend to be the same; conversely, when the metre is unvaried, the rhyme scheme and the number of lines are more likely to differ.) In Geminiani's concertos unity is also achieved by means of the "punctation" arising from the exploitation of different instrumental combinations and through the variations of dynamic level and timbre inherent in the concertino-ripieno relationship (see, for example, III/6/iv).

The most important contribution to unity in fast homophonic movements comes from the frequent use of a relatively small number of rhythmic and melodic figures that are often derived from the initial motto. It is rarely a theme or phrase that generates the movement but rather one or more melodic fragments: in III/3/iv the opening repeated notes and the semiquaver scale; in III/4/iv the triplets and the dotted rhythm; in II/2/iv a chain of brief fragments.

The principal subject of a Geminiani fugue is treated by the composer

very much in the same way as the initial phrase of a homophonic movement: after its first statement the subject often becomes reduced to a few brief quotations. Sometimes Geminiani introduces little homophonic passages momentarily interrupting the contrapuntal discourse in order to make its resumption more interesting. Similarly, in III/4/ii the fugue breaks off when the Largo movement arrives - but is then repeated and this time leads into the final Vivace. Despite these licences, some fugues or fugal movements are written in accordance with the rules of "good and ancient music". A good example is III/3/ii, where the principal subject, based on a descending chromatic tetrachord (the *passus duriusculus*) that we will meet again in VII/2/ii and in IF/xvi, retains to the end its full status as a subject. In general, however, Geminiani rarely fulfils the initial promise of his fugues, and this is the underlying reason for Veracini's severe censure of the "Fuga mostruosa" (VII/1/ii), to which we will return later on.

The number of "cyclic" forms and binary forms with reprise is quite small. II/1/iv is a minuet in rondo form (its plan is A:BACAA); the theme of this movement was the object of numerous transcriptions and elaborations, both manuscript and published, that included some for solo harpsichord (PC 1/xiii) and for voice ("Know Madam I never was born", "If ever a fond inclination", and "Oui, vous en feriez la folie"). "His favourite Minuet [Burney informed Twining] is very like one in the same key, among old Scarlatti's concertos, in Melody & Conduct";[12] Twining seems not to have disputed Geminiani's plagiarism: "I am sorry [he replied] the minuet is not quite his own."[13] Alessandro Scarlatti's six concertos published by Cooke in 1740 actually contain a movement that greatly

resembles Geminiani's Minuet, but it is perhaps an exaggeration to describe the latter as a plagiarism:

Ex.2: II/1/iv, 1-8 [A 2e]

Ex.3: A. Scarlatti, 1740/2/iii, 1-8 [Cooke]

Minuet

In Geminiani's first two sets of concertos there are only two examples of binary form with reprise: II/6/iv and III/5/iv. The composer seems to prefer to use this form in his sonatas, particularly in his Op. IV, where there are no fewer than ten movements on this plan. The reason for the difference was perhaps that the instrumental and dynamic resources of the concerto gave him greater freedom in matters of formal organization and allowed him to avoid giving prominence to just one theme.

The opening slow movements do not always function merely as an introduction to the following allegro. As is the case in most sonatas and concertos of the time, they have the important task of establishing the harmonic co-ordinates for the whole work and accordingly enjoy a tonal stability that one rarely finds in internal slow movements. They often fix definitively the overall character of the concerto, as seen in III/3/i, an Adagio of merely six bars that provides a fleeting foretaste of the pungent chromaticism of the fugue that follows it:

Ex.4: III/3/i [A 3h]

Adagio

Violino I Solo

Violino II Solo

Viola Solo

Violoncello Solo

Violino I

Violino II

Basso

Ex.5: III/3/ii, 1-6 [A 3h]

The similarity between this Adagio and the Allemanda of Corelli's eighth sonata from Op. V seems this time to point to plagiarism:

Ex.6: Corelli/V/8/ii, 1-10 [Joachim-Chrysander]

In Geminiani's Op. III three opening slow movements are based on dotted rhythms (III/2/i, III/4/i, III/5/i). According to Hernried, this is evidence of a straight line of development from Corelli, via Geminiani, to Handel (cf. Corelli/VI/3/i and VI/9/i, and Handel/VI/2/i).[14] Certainly it seems probable that the great and immediate success of Geminiani's first

collections of concertos stimulated Handel to publish his Op. III (1734) and Op. VI (1739) concertos. Handel was very competitive by nature and aspired to excellence in all branches of musical composition; he would not have needed to regard Geminiani as an actual rival in order to wish to surpass his achievement. Nevertheless, there is remarkably little evidence of a direct influence of Geminiani on Handel: what the two men have in common, rather, is a common Corellian heritage modified by an awareness of progressive (Vivaldian) trends in the concerto genre. Geminiani's use of dotted rhythm here is a conscious gesture affirming his musical descent from Corelli.

The internal slow movements generally betray a certain harmonic instability; they often have a modulatory character and normally mark the furthest distance away from the home key. This is easy to understand, for the first movement establishes the tonality, the second confirms it (since it is too early in the work to deviate from it), and the third introduces some variety while at the same time preparing for the reassertion of the home key. Of course, this scheme is not peculiar to Geminiani's concertos but is absolutely typical of composers of his time. Geminiani seems to have had no particular predilection in regard to the choice of the second, contrasting key: II/1/iii goes from the submediant to the tonic, thence to the main related keys; II/2/iii is in the dominant; II/3/ii is in the tonic major; II/4/iii and II/5/iii are in the respective relative keys; II/6/iii has a continuously modulating character. Half of these movements close on the dominant chord of the home key, two on the mediant (something we find quite often in Geminiani's music), and one on the tonic chord of the tonic major.

In the slow movements of Geminiani's concertos, whether introductory or

internal, there are no significant constants in the choice of musical forms. One third of them are mere preludes or interludes, one third have a contrapuntal character, and the remaining third proceed homophonically. In Op. II there is a perceptible liking for ternary organization within a single section (aba). In its original version of 1732, II/1/iii was a slow movement of just 9 bars; Geminiani later extended it, producing a Corellian composite movement with four changes of tempo: Grave, Andante, Prestissimo, and the reprise of the Andante. This is the most radical transformation seen in the "corrected and enlarged" edition of the concertos in score published by Johnson (see Catalogue, A 3e). The insertion of the Prestissimo creates a rhapsodic effect that we also find in some compositions written by Geminiani in the period just before the edition in score of Opp. II and III - works such as the sixth concerto of Op. VII and the second part of *The Inchanted Forrest*.

One of the achievements generally conceded to Geminiani is the introduction of the viola to the concertino ensemble and the consequent achievement of a true string quartet texture. In Sheila Nelson's words: "Possibly Geminiani's unusual interest in the viola was stimulated by his stay in Naples, where according to Burney he was found to be 'so wild and unsteady a timist' that he was restricted to playing viola parts."[15] As a matter of fact, Giuseppe Valentini had already published in 1710 a set of concertos (Op. VII) "a due & quattro Violini, Alto Viola, e Violoncello, con due Violini e Basso di Ripieno", and Locatelli similarly in 1721 (Op. I). Both in Valentini's and Geminiani's concertos the viola not only augments the harmonic resources of the concertino and enriches its timbre but also acquires from time to time a not insignificant melodic role:

Ex. 7: II/2/1 [A 2e]

Nevertheless, unlike in much instrumental music belonging to the German tradition represented by such masters as Biber, Albicastro, and Bach, Geminiani's viola parts can be omitted without depriving the harmony of essential notes. The main reason for the inclusion of the viola in the concertino section was the need to have a middle part between soprano and bass in contrapuntal and fugal movements. Corelli had already used the ripieno viola part in expositions of the principal subject played by the solo instruments (see, for example, Corelli/VI/1/iii). Perhaps following his example, Valentini, whose Op. VII, though published before Corelli's Op. VI (1712) was probably composed several years later, accorded the viola the status of a solo instrument (though it is difficult to know for certain which of the two men was the first to treat the viola in this manner on the basis only of published music). In fugues and all movements based on imitation and counterpoint, which were generally played by the whole orchestra, the concertino could thus gain greater autonomy; additionally, the light-and-shade effects previously characteristic only of homophonic movements were now facilitated. Geminiani's fugues in the fourth and fifth concertos of Op. II furnish good examples of this kind of treatment.

In the first concerto of Op. III the solo violin plays a leading role; in both the fast movements the compass is surprisingly wide, and the technique that is required is quite remarkable for the time (the highest note is *a* ''', while in Handel's Op. VI it is only *e*''', which in fact occurs only once, in VI/10/v); this high tessitura and the presence of this kind of passage-work is actually one of the main differences between Geminiani's concertos and those of Handel and Corelli. The solo passages in the first allegro of Op. III are made possible through the adoption of

ritornello form: after each restatement of the ritornello the solo responds with rapid improvisatory figurations accompanied by harpsichord and cello. In the second allegro, in binary form, the solo violin passages arise from the progressive "thinning" of the concertino group: in the first section the "tutti" are initially interrupted by a trio (first violin, second violin, and viola), then by two violins, and only finally by the first violin alone with a brief cadenza-like passage; in the second section, following eight bars played by the orchestra, the first concertino violin once again assumes the dominant role:

Ex.8: III/1/iv, 34-44 [A 3h]

Violino I Solo
Violino II Solo
Viola Solo
Violoncello Solo

Virtuosic passages of this kind are wholly absent in Op. II and relatively scarce in the other concertos of Op. III; we find them in III/2/ii, III/3/iv, and III/5/ii, but mostly on a smaller scale. In Op. II contrasts of timbre and dynamics are effected primarily through the concertino-tutti relationship, and there is less variability in patterns of scoring.

McArtor divides the movements of Op. III into two different categories: those which emphasize the solo-tutti contrast (solo and ripieno, two violins and ripieno, concertino and ripieno) and those in which this contrast is mostly absent (solo and accompaniment, orchestra alone, movements containing imitative writing).[16] Solo-tutti contrast predominates in the first concerto and in a few other places. The alternation of two solo violins with ripieno is virtually absent: a mere trace of it (two bars) occurs in III/1/iv; McArtor cites as the sole extant instance III/2/ii, where in fact two solo violins do not appear, though there are two brief passages for the first violin supported on one occasion by continuo, on the other by viola. The concertino-tutti relation is by far the most frequently encountered - it is because of this that Geminiani has always been considered a "conservative". The historical reasons for Geminiani's retention of the stylistic characteristics of the Roman school have already been suggested, but it would perhaps be too facile to explain an aesthetic choice solely by reference to the audience to whom the concertos were addressed. In the first concerto of Op. III Geminiani demonstrates his knowledge of the "modern style" introduced by the Venetian school; in the remainder he proclaims his stronger adherence to the Corellian model. It is interesting to observe in this connection that in Handel's concertos "Venetian" movements are equally rare (cf.

Handel/VI/3/iii and VI/9/ii).

In three slow internal movements of Op. III (III/4/iii, III/5/iii, and III/6/iii) the first violin is accompanied by the full orchestra, while in III/5/iii the orchestra is content merely to "harmonize" the continuo:

Ex.9: III/5/iii, 1-10 [A 3h]

Adagio

Violino I Solo

Violino II Solo

Viola Solo

Violoncello Solo

Violino I

Violino II

Basso

The movements performed by orchestra alone, or in which solo-tutti contrast is negligible, are often adagios and allegros in imitative style. One third of the 24 movements making up Op. III belong to this category - slightly fewer than those exploiting concertino-tutti contrast. In Op. II the movements entrusted to the orchestra alone number only two, II/1/iii and II/2/ii, but in six others the concertino has no independent function.

In Op. II and Op. III alike two concertos are in a major key, four in a minor one. It is difficult to be precise about what keys Geminiani prefers, because the number of concertos is relatively small. Geminiani's concertos are characterized by a prevalence of harmonic stability, with the exception only of some internal slow movements. The home key often persists right through the movement. Modulations are frequent but mostly transitory in character; they never challenge the central role of the tonic. Notwithstanding this, they were perceived in their day as quite bold: "It is observable [writes Hawkins] upon the works of Geminiani, that his modulations are not only original, but that his harmonies consist of such combinations as were never introduced into music till his time: the rules of transition from one key to another, which are laid down by those who have written on the composition of music, he not only disregarded, but objected to as an unnecessary restraint on the powers of invention. He has been frequently heard to say, that the cadences in the fifth, the third, and the sixth of the key which occur in the works of Corelli, were rendered too familiar to the ear by the frequent repetition of them: and it seems to have been the study of his life, by a liberal use of the semitonic intervals, to increase the number of harmonic combinations".[17] Of course, what surprised Hawkins was the variety of the transitory modulations, not the overall organization of the movements, which was in no way original.

The novelty he perceived did not lie even in the choice of the foreign keys visited, but rather in the method of approaching them and preparing the modulation.

On 10 January 1747 Geminiani wrote to his friend and pupil Joseph Kelway that some concertos of his were "already engraved but not printed, not knowing the number of the subscribers".[18] On 3 September of the same year the *General Advertiser* announced their imminent publication: "In January next [1748] will absolutely be published Six Gran [sic] Concertos compos'd by Mr. Geminiani". Sixteen years after the appearance of Opp. II and III this new set of concertos, his Op. VII, finally came out. During the intervening years his style had not only become transformed, but the way in which he presented himself to his audience had also changed. Now he had no more need to set himself up as the pupil of Corelli: he was *Geminiani*, an undisputed authority in the instrumental domain. This new attitude emerges in the style of the dedication ("alla celebre Accademia della buona ed antica musica"), which William Hayes considered arrogant and disdainful,[19] in the grandiloquent title of the second movement of the first concerto, "L'Arte della Fuga a 4 parte Reale" [sic], and in the music itself.

Op. VII was a failure and was performed very rarely - as it still is today. "This work [notes Hawkins] carries with it the evidence of great labour and study, but it is greatly inferior to his former works of the like kind".[20] Burney condemned it as "laboured, difficult, and fantastical, as never to be played [...] in either public place or private concert".[21] Those who were expecting a new Op. III from Geminiani must have been bitterly disappointed. The new set of concertos was difficult

CONCERTI GROSSI

Composti a 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Parti Reali, per essere eseguiti da due Violini, Viola *e* Violoncello *di* Concertino, *e due altri* Violini, Viola, *e* Basso *di* Ripieno, *à quali vi sono annessi due* Flauti Traversieri, *e* Bassone.

da

F. Geminiani

Dedicati alla Celebre Accademia della buona ed antica Musica

Op.ª VII.

Stampate a spese dell' Autore con Privilegio di S. M. B.

LONDRA MDCCXLVIII

FIG. 13

Title-page of Op. VII [GB-Lbl, g. 38. b. (3)]

and harboured manifest pretensions to originality; it was "bizarre", while claiming at the same time to be a model for future generations. Only the second concerto continued the style of Op. III; it is worth noting that this is the only work in the set to be performed today.

"Geminiani's last concertos [observes Arthur Hutchings] are his finest achievements. [...] They include compact few-movement works like No. 5 in C minor on a French overture plan, and spreading canzona-style works like No. 6 with thirteen changes of speed. Perhaps the best is No. 3, 'composto di tre stili differenti', yet one would salute the modern connoisseur of eighteenth-century connoisseurship who could allocate the movements to Geminiani's national labels. The *tempo giusto* ('Francese') is not a French overture but a fast march with two points of parody - the saccadé rhythm and the 'soli a tre'; the *andante con due flauti* ('Inglese') might be Danish or Sardinian if Danes or Sardinians were as fond as British amateurs of the flutes which Geminiani here employs as a concertino; the *allegro assai* ('Italiano') is also a fine movement, quite as Italian as a thousand others composed in England, Germany and the Low Countries".[22] It is difficult to agree that these six last concertos are his finest achievements; nevertheless, Hutchings's words convey very well the bizarre, experimental character of Op. VII.

The new set is the result of two opposed tendencies: on one hand, Geminiani had in mind a novel, original music free of ties to the past; on the other hand, he intended to provide a model such as Corelli's Op. VI had been during the first half of the century. This contradictory nature was perhaps the main reason for the failure of Op. VII. The first tendency is seen particularly in the third, fourth, and sixth concertos, while the

second is represented by the fugue of the first concerto and the dedication. A work with such classical pretensions had almost of necessity to be dedicated to the "Academy of Ancient Musick" and thereby lay claim to being the final, extraordinary achievement of a tradition rooted in the past; further, this work had, in Geminiani's eyes, to stand as a moral example, having no other purpose than that of serving Art: "A Dedication [he writes] resulting purely from Regard and Affection, is perhaps as much a Rarity in *England*, as in other Countries: To the Disgrace of Arts and Science, or at least, of their Professors, almost all Dedications from such, have in all Countries alike, arisen from the same Mercenary Motives".

Where Geminiani reveals with greatest clarity his attempt to offer a model of classical perfection - perhaps in order to defend a primacy that "modern music" was putting to a severe test - is in his choice of title for the fugue of the first concerto.[23] "L'Arte della Fuga a 4 Parte Reale" provoked Veracini to indignation on account of its presumptuous title and became the main butt of his treatise *Il trionfo della pratica musicale*. Veracini's criticism is not directed openly at Geminiani, but rather at his anagrammatized name, *Sgranfione Miniacci*. The solution of the anagram, which disfigures the name of Amphion (Anfione) and maliciously evokes the idea of theft ("sgraffignare"), was unravelled by Mario Fabbri, who discussed the treatise in the light of its reference to Geminiani.[24] According to Fabbri, Veracini's analysis of the "Fuga mostruosa" (which the critic also terms "fuga da fuggirsi" - literally, fugue from which to flee) was merely didactic in intention, aiming to show the reader all the mistakes to avoid when writing this kind of composition.[25] However, it is difficult to believe that Veracini was not motivated, contrary to Fabbri's

belief, by a deep-seated grudge against Geminiani: Fabbri even seems to contradict his own thesis when he suggests that the death of Geminiani (1762) contributed to the weakening of Veracini's intention to have his treatise published.[26]

In his monograph on Veracini John Walter Hill summarizes the criticisms of the "Fuga mostruosa" as follows: "1. Veracini objects to the inconsistency of using partial quotations of the subjects, alterations in them, or improper answers; 2. he finds fault with passages which seem to modulate to new keys, only to return to the starting point without a cadence in the new key; 3. Veracini finds many errors in Geminiani's voice-leading, including some flagrant parallelism, both exposed and hidden".[27] What makes Geminiani's fugue "monstrous" is the aberrant treatment of the main subject:

> "One notes especially that in the course of this fugue (which runs to 197 bars) the afore-mentioned main subject given out at the beginning never appears subsequently in its entirety, being neither restated nor answered by any of the four parts; but in place of this it merely peeps over the parapet at the fugue on twenty-two or twenty-three occasions, becoming shorter and shorter until it is finally reduced to one and a half bars; the result is that, having scattered its remains here and there, lacking any real plan, and having no why or wherefore, this ill-treated subject can be likened to a badly swept room in which the dust still bears the all too evident marks of the broom, which have remained to grace the space of that floor. And it really does seem that these scraps of fugue mean to suggest that in those places there ought to be an answer or a restatement of the subject, but that the composer has put this event off for another, more opportune time. An error of this kind is permitted by no school, since the rules made by those men who know about writing fugues (and have good taste) teach us to introduce the subjects in their entirety

into all the parts, and certainly not to lop them in half or cut them into shreds, or even change them from what they originally were as regards note-values."[28]

Fabbri describes Geminiani's fugue as a showcase of blunders ("una vetrina di spropositi") in respect of form, harmony, and counterpoint.[29] Certainly, there is no lack of consecutive fifths and octaves,[30] or of modulations that might be considered hazardous[31] - though these are such as occur frequently in works by Geminiani's contemporaries; in reality, these "mistakes" deserve special censure only because of the claim of the fugue to be a model of its kind, and because of its sonorous title. In the other fugues of Op. VII as well as those of Opp. II and III the subjects are most of the time just as "decimated", "mutilated", "lopped in half", or "cut into shreds" as they are in this example; but it would be incorrect to call these others "monstrous", since they are merely fugues written by Francesco Geminiani in his own, personal style, which is founded essentially on the technique of "quotation". In the first bar of *The Inchanted Forrest* there occurs a false relation that would be regarded as a mistake in any harmony textbook; but it was precisely Geminiani's intention to create an effect of harmonic uncertainty in order to conjure up for the audience the murky, lugubrious environment of the Forest of Saron. In this connection it is instructive to recall what Hawkins says about Giuseppe Sammartini: "Those who ascribe his deviations from known and established rules to the want of musical erudition, are grossly mistaken; he was thoroughly skilled in the principles of harmony; and his singularities can therefore only be ascribed to that boldness and self-possession which are ever the concomitants of genius; and in most of

the licences he has taken, it may be observed that he is in great measure warranted by the precepts, and indeed by the example, of Geminiani".[32]

That Veracini's attacks may have been motivated by a personal grudge against Geminiani is ultimately an issue of little importance: his charges against the "fuga da fuggirsi" are justified, because this movement, which opens a set of concertos dedicated to the "Accademia della buona ed antica musica", manages perversely also to be a store house of "deviations from known and established rules".

The new concertos, as one reads on the title-page, are "Composti a 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 Parti Reali, per essere eseguiti da due Violini, Viola e Violoncello di Concertino, e due altri Violini, Viola, e Basso di Ripieno, a' quali vi sono annessi due Flauti Traversieri, e Bassone".[33] Already in the orchestral layout we find some noteworthy novelties: the addition of a *viola di ripieno* (as in the edition in score of Opp. II and III, published some years later), two flutes, and one bassoon. The pair of flutes is used in some concertos only to double the first and second solo violins, which produces a particular timbre that also characterizes *The Inchanted Forrest*. The bassoon is employed only in the sixth concerto, where it in fact acquires quite an important function. "The Bassoon [Avison observes in 1752] [...] may be admitted as a *Principal* in the *Solo*, or *Rinforzo* in the *Chorus*, but never in the latter without a sufficient Number of other Basses to qualify and support it"; in a footnote Avison adds: "See the Sixth of Geminiani's Concertos, *Opera Settima*, where there is one Movement composed expressly for the Bassoon, the agreable Effect of which, may be sufficient to evince how much better this Method is of introducing Wind-Instruments, than admitting them throughout the Concerto".[34] In the sixth concerto the bassoon is used exclusively in the internal movements, most of

the time as a simple support for the continuo. But in the Allegro Moderato in D minor, the movement to which Avison refers, the bassoon takes an active part in the melodic development.

One cannot rule out the possibility that the six concertos comprising Op. VII were written at different times. While three of them remain loyal to the "SFSF" plan adopted in Opp. II and III, the rest are structured quite differently.

The third concerto, in C minor, is "composed in three different styles, French, English and Italian", as we read in the score. It is difficult to know for certain which characteristics in each movement were recognized at that time as typical of the respective national styles. The opening Presto, which according to Barblan recalls the decorative and rational bias of French taste in the age of Rameau,[35] is perhaps "French" on account of its homorhythmic character and dotted rhythms; the ensuing Andante in 12/8, which moves to the parallel minor key, is "English" only in a paradoxical sense, being a *Siciliana*, a musical form much in vogue in eighteenth-century England; the final Allegro assai, purportedly "Italian", can be said to exhibit certain features found in the comic operas of Leo, Vinci, and Porpora. But on the whole the different national features do not seem to be imprinted strongly enough on this concerto: as in his "Arte della Fuga", Geminiani was too presumptuous.

The fourth concerto, in D minor, evinces some variety of musical form. As before, it is laid out in only three movements: two marked andante and one allegro. The opening Andante is in pure ternary form (ABA); its first two sections are assigned to the concertino without the viola, while in the section containing the reprise the orchestra makes its appearance. What is unusual in this movement is that the only difference between the initial

statement and its reprise lies in the instrumentation, for Geminiani's reprises more commonly take the form of a variant of only a small part of the statement (the exceptions being the rondos and a few of the "composite" movements). This Andante is followed by another Andante, in binary form, which is of scant interest. An Adagio lasting only a few bars and closing on the dominant chord of the home key prepares for the last movement. The Allegro finale is unquestionably the most interesting movement in the concerto. It is a "composite" movement, but not in the Corellian manner: we encounter first an Allegro in 3/8 cast in binary form (A:B:); then come a rondo in 6/8 (CCDCEC), a slow pastorale, and, to end the movement, a reprise of the opening Allegro. In this reprise the two sections are repeated in identical form each time except for changes in dynamics. Each movement and each constituent section, regardless of musical form, adopts an identical canonic style.

The experimental character of Op. VII becomes particularly evident in the sixth concerto, "a 5, 6, 7, 8 Parti reali", as does Geminiani's intention to impress the audience with something new. This concerto is formed from 14 movements (but this term is perhaps not really appropriate) differing in length, tonality, rhythm, form, and instrumentation; most of the time these units are not separated by double bars:

tempo	number of bars	tonality	scoring
Allegro moderato C	22	B flat major	tutti
Adagio 3/2	3	B flat major	tutti

Andante C	15	G minor	tutti
Andante C	22	E flat major	soli-tutti
Grave C	5	B flat major	soli-tutti
Presto 3/8	75	B flat major	tutti
Affettuoso 3/4	28	B flat minor	soli
Adagio C	2	F minor	tutti
Allegro moderato C	33	D minor	tutti
Andante 3/4	50	F major	soli-tutti
Adagio C	6	C minor	tutti
Allegro assai ¢	16	E flat major	tutti
Adagio C	2	B flat minor	tutti
Presto 3/4	68	B flat major	soli-tutti

The rhapsodic effect arises chiefly from the rapid succession of different rhythms and tonalities. Something similar happens in the second part of *The Inchanted Forrest*, composed by Geminiani not long afterwards, of which this concerto provides an interesting anticipation. But there, as we shall see later, the rhapsodic structure is linked to the quick succession of scenes featured in the original pantomime. Indeed,

Geminiani could hardly proceed otherwise if his music were truly to express "the same Ideas as the Poem of Tasso of that Title", as we read on the title-page of the published edition. What one finds surprising in *The Inchanted Forrest* is that this rapid alternation of movements, rhythms, and tonalities constitutes an exception, being present only in the last part of the work. In contrast, the sixth concerto of Op. VII has no "programme" (for otherwise one would surely have been suggested by an appropriate title), so in this instance the choice of a "rhapsodic" form acquires more significance.

Burney's description of Op. VII as "laboured, difficult and fantastical" was therefore amply justified, although the various negative connotations of that statement are not necessarily ones that we would wish to share today. The same observation could have been made with equal justice about the cello sonatas, Op. V, which were composed and published during the same period - and are every bit as "difficult" and "fantastical" as Op. VII. At this late stage in his life, when his interest was turning increasingly towards treatises, Geminiani was able to give free rein to his imagination, while at the same time preserving the stylistic severity and "serious" demeanour inherited from Corelli. But the result was rather far from what public taste would have liked. After the publication of Op. VII, conscious of the gulf that now separated him from contemporary fashion, Gemininani devoted himself mainly to the writing of treatises and the preparation of reworkings of his earlier works.

Chapter Six

THE SONATAS

The three main sets of sonatas composed by Francesco Geminiani suffered the same fate as his concertos: they were elaborated, transcribed for different instruments, and "nuovamente ristampate e con diligenza corrette". Op. I alone was published in five different versions: the original version for violin (1716), the trio sonatas (performable as concertos by adding the ripieno parts provided), the edition of 1739, the harpsichord transcriptions, and the transcriptions for flute. The second set of violin sonatas, Op. IV (1739), of which a version for concerto grosso also exists, were transcribed almost in their entirety for harpsichord. The cello sonatas, Op. V (1746), were published simultaneously with their transcription for violin. The remaining sonatas, with few exceptions, are drawn from earlier compositions: the two sets of *Pièces de Clavecin* (1743, 1762) from Opp. I, II, IV, V, VII, and the treatises for violin and cittern.

In the present chapter we will consider in detail only the original editions - that is to say, the two sets of violin sonatas, Op. I and Op. IV, and the cello sonatas, Op. V.[1] The number of compositions is therefore reduced to a mere thirty sonatas: twenty-four for violin and six for cello. The time that elapsed between the publication of these three sets (23 years between Opp. I and IV, 7 years between Opp. IV and V) is so considerable as to require each collection to be studied separately. The earliest violin sonatas, or some of them, were probably composed in Italy; they attest the strong influence of Corelli's Op. V (1700). In his second

set Geminiani breaks loose from the Corellian tradition and seems to draw inspiration from contemporary French music. The cello sonatas are a completely original conception that is hard to connect with a particular style or model.

"His career [Hill writes of Veracini] and the careers of other violinist-composers such as Tartini, Geminiani, Locatelli, Somis, Tessarini, Valentini, etc. were predicated upon the popularity of the solo sonata and constantly required additions to the sonata repertoire."[2] At the time of his arrival in London, in 1714, Geminiani most probably had in his repertory, in addition to the inevitable Op. V of Corelli, a certain number of violin sonatas composed by himself in Rome or Naples, which he published shortly afterwards as his Op. I. In his dedication Geminiani calls them "musical diversions composed by me for the violin that are intended for the studious delight of those who are not contented by the harmonious sound of that instrument alone".[3] The general tone of contemporary dedications, in particular those of first works, is most often apologetic: "Young as I am [writes, for example, Giuseppe Valentini], being merely twenty years of age, I cannot give you more: talent follows knowledge, and knowledge follows age; and everyone knows the famous axiom *nemo repente fit summus.* Wait for me to gain more experience if you wish me to please you more, and so farewell".[4] From his very first dedication, however, Geminiani evidences a distinct lack of modesty: his music is aimed at those who are not satisfied with "superficial harmony" and desire something more. In fact, the composer had some justification for adopting that pose: in England his sonatas were far above the average in terms of both violinistic technique and formal or contrapuntal complexity. "In

1716 [writes Burney] he published in London his first work, dedicated to Baron Kilmansegge, consisting of Twelve Solos for the Violin, which though few could play, yet all the professors allowed them to be still more masterly and elaborate than those of Corelli".[5] Although they certainly demanded an advanced technique for their time and place, they enjoyed a wide circulation, as the remarkable number of published editions seems to confirm. Nowadays they are rarely performed: "Melodies [Newman observes] that are undistinguished although well laid out, insufficient dissonance interest, and a tendency to let the passages straggle to the point where the forms become too loose-jointed may be among the reasons violinists show little interest in playing Geminiani's sonatas today".[6]

The twelve sonatas follow the same plan as their model, Corelli's Op. V: the first six are "da chiesa", the second six "da camera". Thus in the first six contrapuntal writing predominates, in the remainder homophonic writing. Even so, Geminiani seems to prefer the four-movement plan of Corelli's trio sonatas ("da chiesa"), not directly following the example of his mentor's Op. V - a practice that we can observe also in some other contemporary composers such as Tomaso Albinoni (*Trattenimenti Armonici*, op. VI, c. 1711), Giuseppe Valentini (*Allettamenti per Camera*, Op. VIII, 1714), and Carlo Tessarini (Op. II, 1729).

This reduction in the number of movements, from the five of Corelli's Op. V to the three of many sets of sonatas after 1710, goes hand in hand with the expansion of musical forms, as one can easily see by comparing Veracini's earliest set of violin sonatas (1716) with his Op. I (1721). In his Opp. IV and V Geminiani adheres, with rare exceptions, to the four-movement plan, although sometimes the slow movements are mere preludes or interludes. By contrast, in Op. I a good four sonatas are in three

movements: two without the introductory slow movement (I/9 and I/11), one without the internal slow movement (I/12) following the favourite layout of Tartini, Locatelli, Quantz, and certain other composers, and, finally, one lacking the first allegro (I/6). The third sonata consists of only two movements, but in the first of these there are no fewer than seven tempo changes. The legacy of the *Maestro di Fusignano* is visible everywhere, and there is also a movement based on *ostinato* prompted by Corelli's *Follia* (see Ex. 10).

One third of the movements in Op. I are in binary form, one third in a single section without any reprise, slightly fewer than one quarter in a single section with a reprise, and, finally, two movements in a form following the example of Corelli's "composite" movements. The movements in binary form, I/1/iv excepted, all occur in the chamber sonatas comprising the second half of the set; these are mostly allegros. Six of them have a kind of reprise; this could be considered a significant feature both in relation to the later Op. IV sonatas, where the A:BA: plan is quite common, or in relation to the concertos, where, in contrast, this plan is virtually absent. Reprises are generally very brief, consisting of little more than a quotation of the opening phrase. In the jig in C minor ending the seventh sonata, the first four bars are assigned on their restatement to the continuo rather than the violin, perhaps because the pervading rhythmic uniformity makes a literal recapitulation unnecessary. By contrast, in the allemande in F major opening the ninth sonata the initial theme returns in the second section, slightly varied, with the full effect of a reprise; the same happens in the last movement of the same sonata. Unlike those of Corelli, Geminiani's jigs and allemandes do not possess actual dance titles, although in the harpsichord transcriptions of the same

Ex. 10: I/11/1 [A 1d]

SONATA XI

Vivace

movements the composer has recourse to them, presumably because the latter were directed towards a different kind of audience. In the fast movements of the twelfth sonata the reprise is not a recapitulation followed quickly by the final cadence, but the starting point for a further formal expansion. In the first Vivace in B minor of the eighth sonata, uniquely in Op. I, a short fragment treated in a descending sequence acquires a function similar to that of a rondo theme, lending this movement a kind of repetition-based structure that will frequently be encountered in Op. IV:

Ex. 11: I/8/11 [A ld]

Vivace

Two unisectional movements, the Affettuoso of the eighth sonata and the Grave of the fourth, show a vague ternary structure created by the reprise of the initial motto at the end of the final part:

Ex. 12: I/8/1 [A 1d]

These are some of the few examples in Op. I in which Geminiani shows a degree of attachment to the first melodic idea. About two thirds of the movements in binary form lack any kind of reprise and follow the same principle of spontaneous germination observed in the concertos - one that Bukofzer describes as "continuous expansion".[7] Much the same can be said of Vivaldi's Op. II (1709), Valentini's Op. VIII (1714), and Albinoni's Op.

VI (c. 1711), in all of which, however, the 'motto' often opens the second section of movements in binary form. Only in a few movements of Op. I does the second section open with the 'motto' and close with the same final cadential phrase as the first section; here again Geminiani follows the example of Corelli's Op. V. Unlike many contemporary solo sonatas, such as those of Vivaldi's Op. II, Bonporti's Op. X (1712), Valentini's Op. VIII, Handel's Op. I (1724), Albinoni's Op. VI and Tessarini's Op. II (1729), all of which treat as normal the repetition of the opening idea (sometimes of the entire initial phrase), those of Geminiani's Op. I reveal a composer decidedly reluctant to requote opening material either at the beginning of the second section (where it is usually in a foreign key) or later in the second section (where it signals the return to the home key). It is interesting to note that in Geminiani's two later sets of sonatas, where the A:BA: plan is much more frequent, the repetition of this 'motto' at the beginning of the second section is still very rare, perhaps in a conscious attempt by the composer to heighten the effect of the eventual reprise.

When Burney wrote that only a few virtuosi were able to play Geminiani's sonatas, he was probably referring to the first six church sonatas and particularly to their fugues. Nine of the fast movements of these sonatas are actually fugues or fugal movements, and even today require an advanced technique, not only because of their numerous multiple stops, but also because their polyphonic writing is sometimes interrupted by homophonic passage-work of an extemporaneous nature that is no less difficult. In the first allegro of the second sonata a series of rapid, virtuosic passages interspersed with occasional, brief statements of the subject gradually supersedes the complex polyphonic writing - a process that

results in a considerable increase in formal dimensions and produces a progressive intensification culminating in the final cadence:

Ex. 13: I/2/11 [A 1d]

This technique of gradually inserting an increasing number of homophonic passages as a fugue or fugal movement progresses is likewise derived from Corelli's Op. V (e.g. V/1/iii-iv). However, Geminiani does not follow his mentor in his treatment of the subject, which after the opening exposition appears in progressively more "decimated" form until it completely vanishes, whereas in Corelli (and some of his followers such as Albinoni and Vivaldi) the subject tends to be more diligently maintained, returning at least in a final stretto. One example of Geminiani's scant attention to the significance of the subject is the final fugue of the third sonata, in respect of which the charges brought by Veracini against the "Fuga

mostruosa" could be made equally validly. In violin sonatas as in concertos, in homophonic movements as in those constructed around one or more subjects, the composer rarely fulfils his initial promises.

Even leaving aside consideration of its passages in multiple-stopping (which include chains of thirds in semiquavers, as in I/2/iv), *perpetuum mobile* movements, wide leaps, complex embellishments, rapid arpeggios, and broken chords, Geminiani's Op. I was in its day probably regarded as difficult on account of its unusual wide compass, which extends from the open G string to the note *a'''* (seventh position on the E string). In reality, the highest note occurs only once (I/3/1, bar 43), but one must remember that in Corelli's Op. V, Vivaldi's Op. II, and Handel's Op. I the highest note is merely *e'''*; even in Valentini's Op. VIII, which in other respects is fairly advanced for its time, the compass does not venture above *d'''*. We find a wider compass in Albinoni's Op. VI and Bonporti's Op. X, which take the violin up to *f'''*, and in G. B. Somis's Op. II (1717), which attains *g'''*. However, it was only in the third decade of the eighteenth century that the note *a'''* became expected of a normal violin technique (G-*a'''* remains the standard compass in the treatises for violin of Geminiani and Leopold Mozart, published respectively in 1751 and 1756). In Geminiani's second set of violin sonatas (Op. IV, 1739) the compass remains the same but the tessitura employed is generally much higher, perhaps because of the increased importance of the treble part and the prevalence of homophonic writing. To qualify this statement, it should be noted that in Op. I the lowest notes very rarely possess a melodic function; in general, the register of the G string (in Geminiani's day often still unwound) seems to be shunned by the composer, following the practice of his teacher Corelli. Geminiani's most conspicuous use of the

low register occurs in certain fugal movements, where he introduces imitations or short statements of the subjects. More characteristic, however, is the employment of notes on the G string for a harmonic purpose: especially as pedals or as the lowest component of broken or multiple-stopped chords.

The movements in a single section without a reprise all occur in the first six sonatas and are mostly fugal; those with a reprise are also found in the second six and with only two exceptions (I/6/iii and I/11/i) are cast in a slow tempo. Almost half of the internal slow movements are simple interludes, while the introductory slow movements are often of much greater intrinsic interest. The second adagio of the second sonata consists of four bars of "recitative" and the following "aria":

Ex. 14: I/2/iii [A 1d]

The cantabile character of this adagio and its extreme simplicity stand in stark contrast to the fast movements preceding and following it; the same happens in the Grave of the fourth sonata, one of the rare examples of ternary form with a strict reprise (aba), and in the Adagio of the sixth sonata. In church sonatas the internal slow movements give the listener and the performer time to "draw breath" after the first fugue and prepare themselves for the next one. The Amoroso that opens the twelfth sonata is the only slow movement in binary form that features a reprise (although here only the second sub-phrase of the first section is repeated in the second section). According to Blainville, Geminiani had a very special technique for writing pathetic and moving adagios: "I heard it said [he writes in 1752] by the famous Geminiani, that when he had to compose an affecting and pathetic adagio, he began by concentrating his mind on imaginary catastrophes such as the death of his children, the desperation of his wife, the burning of his house, and the desertion of all his friends; and when he was thoroughly affected by all these cruel visions, he took up his violin and surrendered to the lugubrious images wandering about in his imagination."[8]

Unlike in Corelli's Op. V and Veracini's Op. I, the distinction between church and chamber sonatas observed in Geminiani's Op. I does not include the practice of casting the first type predominantly in major keys, the second in minor keys. The choice of tonalities follows no obvious principle; nor does Geminiani seem to have any general preferences. The succession of keys in the sonatas in four movements is the same that he follows in the concertos: it is in the third movement that the composer departs from the principal key. In the sonatas containing only three movements, with the sole exception of the last sonata of the set (whose

second movement, an allegro, remains in the original key), the change of key occurs in the internal slow movement. The last sonata, besides being the only one to have an opening slow movement followed by two quick ones and also the only one in which all the movements are cast in binary form with a reprise, is interesting for an additional reason: both the opening Amoroso and the first fast movement end on the tonic and are followed by an identical three-bar "Adagio" passage that cadences on the dominant and thus prepares for the succeeding movement. This is a good illustration of Geminiani's habit, typical of many contemporary composers, of binding together adjacent movements by exploiting the attractive force of the dominant chord. The same process can be observed in the concertos, and above all in the first part of *The Inchanted Forrest*. The only significant variant of this device, likewise present in many of Geminiani's works, is the Phrygian cadence on the third degree of the principal (major) key, which can be regarded in this context as the equivalent of a dominant.

Despite their relative tonal stability, the violin sonatas show greater harmonic complexity than the concertos that followed them. Their modulations are generally more frequent and more rapid; sometimes, they are decidedly bold. This is simultaneously the cause and the effect of a melodic design that often appears irregular and contorted. Many movements would lose their meaning altogether if deprived of their harmonic support; even if the same could be said of many other compositions from the early eighteenth century, this is especially true of Geminiani's Op. I. "I think [Twining writes to Burney] that he cannot so much be said absolutely to want melody, as to want a continuance of melody; he has bars of fine melody frequently, but few melodious movements".[9] A more regular melodic articulation necessarily implies a greater harmonic simplicity, and vice

versa. In the movements in binary form, both with and without reprise, the modulations are concentrated in the first part of the second section, while in the fugal movements they are distributed evenly; as in his concertos, Geminiani deliberately introduces tonal instability into the internal slow movements; in the other movements, despite the presence of numerous passing modulations, the tonic never passes out of view completely.

"Although [Newman observes] Geminiani ranks with such late Baroque masters as Tartini, Veracini and Locatelli in his knowledge and use of the violin, his sonatas seem somewhat more conservative and less inspired than those of his important contemporaries. The contrapuntal writing, multiple stops, wide shifts, embellishments, and passagework offered a very real challenge to the violinist of his day, especially when Op. 1 appeared [...]. But these problems are far less than in the sonatas of Tartini, Veracini and Locatelli. And the musical innovations are fewer, although tendencies toward slower harmonic rhythm, more sectionalized designs, and simpler, more homophonic texture are evident in a comparision of Opp. 1 and 4".[10] If we rate a composer according to his contribution to the progress of the musical language, Newman's criticism is "almost" justified: "almost", because, notwithstanding Geminiani's attachment to the Roman school, one still finds some traits of true originality, notably the variety of harmonic progressions. Nor should one forget that, as Hutchings points out, an aesthetic judgement based solely on the evolution of musical style or (even worse) on the fashion of the period might lead one to the conclusion that Telemann was better than Bach.[11] Newman's observation that when writing his violin sonatas Geminiani was "less

inspired" than Tartini, Veracini, and Locatelli has a curiously nineteenth-century ring.

"His second set of solos [writes Burney], commonly called his French solos, either from their style or their having been composed and engraved in France, was published in 1739. These were admired more than played; as about this time it became more than ever the fashion for public solo-players to perform only their own compositions, and others were unable to execute them".[12] There is insufficient evidence from documents that Geminiani actually composed his Op. IV in France; however, the sonatas were certainly published after his first sojourn in Paris and clearly show a strong French influence. After a gap of twenty-three years following the publication of his Op. I the composer brought out simultaneously a new set of twelve violin sonatas and a "corrected" edition of his previous one. The changes made in the new version of Op. I will be discussed later, but it will be useful to draw attention immediately to one of the most important novelties: the systematic addition of a large number of ornaments as well as dynamic and expressive markings. Geminiani now appears to be more interested in the expressive possibilities of the treble part than in contrapuntal intricacies; in the new collection there are no fugues and homophonic writing is clearly to the fore. One also notices a greater care with the internal organization of the movements and a marked predilection for repetition-based forms such as the *rondeau*.

Most of the sonatas are still in four movements; only three lack an internal slow movement. By this token Geminiani appears more "conservative" than in Op. I.[13] In reality, it is within the individual

SONATE

A

VIOLINO e BASSO,

COMPOSTE DA

FRANCESCO GEMINIANI

E DEDICATE

All' Illuſtriſſima ed Eccellentiſſima SIGNORA

MARGARITA

CONTESSA D'ORRERY.

OPERA IV.

LONDON, MDCCXXXIX.

FIG. 14

Title-page of Op. IV [A 4a]

movements that the composer reveals his different conception of the form. The movements in binary form account for less than one half of the total, and no fewer than three quarters of them feature a reprise. Then there are seven rondos, five in fast tempo and two in slow tempo. The foregoing observations already show not only that the opening theme has at last assumed the structural function that it lacked in Geminiani's first three collections, but also that his residence in France has profoundly influenced his style. One must remember that in Opp. I, II, and III there are altogether a mere eight movements in binary form (as compared with the fourteen of Op. IV) and only one rondo. The unisectional movements in Op. IV constitute one third of the total; all of them dispense with a reprise, and almost all are cast in slow tempo. Finally, there are two composite movements, the last vestige of Geminiani's youthful enthusiasm for Corelli, and two others in ternary form.

The choice of rondo form is not the only sign of the influence of contemporary French music on Geminiani's style. In many internal slow movements the composer quite clearly pays tribute to the French style through his espousal of the so-called *air tendre*, a very simple and cantabile movement (thus the very reverse of Geminiani's usual type of slow movement!) such as we find in many compositions by Jean-Marie Leclair "l'aîné" (e.g. in the latter's violin and flute sonatas); the best example in Geminiani's Op. IV is the Affettuoso in A minor of the third sonata (see Ex. 15).

Also typically French is the Trio of the last movement of the fifth sonata, not only because of Geminiani's move to the parallel key (which is quite common in his late compositions) but also because of the strict

Ex. 15 : IV/3/ii

contrary motion between the two upper parts in parallel thirds and the bass within a predominantly homorhythmic context:

Ex. 16: IV/5/iii, 58-73 (trio)

French influence can also be discerned in the choice of certain chords. A good example occurs in the Largo in D minor of the first sonata (an *air tendre* in the parallel key), where we find, two bars before the final cadence, a six-three (then six-four) chord on the fourth scale-degree resolving to a six-three chord on the third degree; the Italians (and Geminiani some years earlier) would have preferred for the asterisked bass note (see Ex. 17 below) a simple five-three chord on the fifth degree:

Ex. 17: IV/1/iii, 17-20

(Largo)

The use, in the minor mode, of the raised sixth degree to precede - but not immediately - the raised seventh degree is another typically Gallic trait that often appears in these sonatas. Take, for example, the following phrase from the Affettuoso of the third sonata (bars 17-20). Since *d''* intervenes between the *f#''* and *g#''* of the violin part, the sharpening of the *f''* is not an obligatory but rather a facultative feature designed for a particular effect. The French flavour is made stronger by

the presence of an appoggiatura to the *f#''* (*g''* natural, contrasting with the *g#''* a bar later):

Ex. 18: IV/3/iii, 17-20

The two most striking aspects of these sonatas are perhaps, first, the extraordinary abundance of ornaments and marks of expression and, second, the marked simplification of the bass part, which is the result of the adoption of a predominantly homophonic style of writing. In this connection it is interesting to note that in Vivaldi's Op. II (1709) the bass has a considerable melodic role, while in the same composer's later "Manchester" sonatas (c. 1725) it becomes a mere harmonic support. It is especially in the slow movements that Geminiani loads the upper part with every conceivable kind of embellishment, making the melodic line even more angular and contorted than in Op. I:

Ex. 19: IV/3/i

SONATA III

Adagio

Volti.

It is quite likely that in his first collection of sonatas Geminiani left the embellishments entirely to the performer to improvise; and perhaps these would not have been so different from those added by the composer in Op. IV. What is interesting, however, is the fact that Geminiani, like Bach, now found the need to write them out in full as if he wished to avoid "arbitrary" performances. However, in most of Bach's slow movements the melodic lines are in essence extremely simple and the ornaments themselves possess a "thematic" character (up to the point where "embellishment" seems an inadequate description), while in Geminiani's they

introduce further complications to the design.

In binary-form movements with a reprise it is no longer only the opening fragment or sub-phrase that is restated during the second section: now it is more often a longer unit that is so treated. Nevertheless, the reprise rarely has a real recapitulatory function. "In general [notes Eckersley] Geminiani is not content with simple restatement, but adopts a more creative attitude towards final sections, continuing to expand and elaborate rather than contract and summarise"; the same writer adds that a clear reprise of the material of the first section "is to be expected of works containing themes and motives of greater melodic individuality [...] distinct enough to permit their re-ordering to be significant".[13] This second point might be valid if we considered Geminiani's output as a whole without taking into account the peculiarities of each individual opus. In the present case, however, it is not a question of greater or lesser melodic distinctiveness but rather one of a general tendency shown by Geminiani in Op. IV to lengthen the initial idea and restate it at the end. The result is an heightened feeling of recapitulation, although the initial phrase still does not have a genuine "thematic" function, merely leading to the succeeding one in accordance with the principle of "continuous expansion" already described.

Nevertheless, reprises are certainly more in evidence than previously and serve to mitigate the rhapsodic character censured by Burney. In the first allegro of the first sonata the theme, well shaped and relatively regular, is briefly quoted in the dominant key at the beginning of the second section and later treated to an integral reprise in the tonic; however, it is difficult to talk here of a proper recapitulation since the

four bars constituting the reprise are followed by fourteen unrelated further bars that make up exactly one quarter of the entire movement. On the other hand, each section is marked to be repeated, so the theme has an opportunity despite all to stamp its character on the movement. In the first allegro of the fourth sonata the restatement of the theme takes place first in abridged form in the submediant before it appears complete in the tonic; a similar brief anticipation of the reprise, this time in the bass part, occurs in the final allegro. This technique of restating an initial 'motto' successively in two different keys is especially common in Albinoni; it brings about a certain ambiguity in the phrase-structure since on its second statement the 'motto' has to act both as the consequent of the preceding 'motto' and the antecedent to whatever follows. The second section of movements in binary form is almost always longer than the first one, sometimes by about one third, on occasion by as much again. An interesting case that evidences extreme asymmetry is the final allegro of the eighth sonata; this is formed from an eight-bar theme constituting the first section (which is repeated) and a second section of no fewer than fifty-eight bars ending with an almost complete reprise.

As has already been remarked, in the binary-form movements of Op. IV Geminiani almost never begins the second section with the 'motto' that opened the first; nor does he end the two sections with matching cadential phrases. In this respect his second set of violin sonatas differs from examples written around the same time by his Italian contemporaries. In Tartini's Opp. I (1734) and II (1743), and in Locatelli's Op. II (1732), the repetition of the 'motto' at the start of the second section often has a structural importance fully equal to that of the reprise; when the 'motto' is restated in a non-literal (e.g. inverted) form, as sometimes

occurs in Locatelli's Op. II, it at least remains recognizable. In contrast, Geminiani shows an almost perverse reluctance to reutilize material from the first section in the second section. The same observations could be made about Geminiani's Op. V, which is very similar in this respect to Op. IV, and totally different from Vivaldi's and Marcello's cello sonatas, in which the 'motto' is normally the launching pad for the second section.

An intention to give the form a regular structure becomes much more evident in Geminiani's many movements in rondo form. Some of these adopt a simple structure in which the refrain merely alternates with each 'couplet' in turn, while others are structured in a more complex way through the insertion of a 'trio' in the tonic major or minor after the French fashion (Jean-Marie Leclair provides excellent models such as the *Gracieusement sans lenteur* and the *Chaconne* in his Op. VI trio sonatas). One example of this second type is the final movement of the fifth sonata (see Ex. 20), which Geminiani also transcribed for harpsichord (PC 1/vi-vii).

The second, varied statement of the minuet refrain confirms something that will become much clearer in the *Pièces de Clavecin*: Geminiani's reluctance to restate a familiar theme without introducing variations. In the harpsichord transcription of the first Andante of the same sonata, likewise in rondo form, the reprises of the refrain are not simply indicated by means of the conventional symbol, as in the original version, but written out in full and elaborated in different ways (a comparable style of treatment occurs in the movement entitled "Rondeaux" in J. S. Bach's second *Partita* for harpsichord in C minor, BWV 826). It is very likely that Geminiani's fondness for the *rondeau varié*, popular in France

Ex. 20: IV/5/iii

Allegro aff.

Segue

Tasto Solo

Non tanto.

around 1720-40, dates from his first visit to Paris (1733); Rameau, whom Geminiani certainly met at the private musical entertainments organized by the harpsichord virtuosi Mme and Mlle Duhallay, possibly supplied him with a model in the shape of his *Pièces de Clavecin* published in 1724 (see the *Tambourin* and *La Villageoise* from the suite in E). Other French composers who could have influenced Geminiani in his choice of this form were Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (see especially the movements entitled *La Rustique* and *La Puce* from his *Quatre suites de pièces de clavecin*, Op. LIX)), and Jean-Marie Leclair.

This predilection for variation rather than repetition is of course equally evident in Geminiani's movements in binary form, where the theme rarely reappears exactly in its original guise. Geminiani is certainly attracted to repetition-based forms, but at the same time seems to rebel against the predominance of any single, unvaried theme. In the final movement of the first sonata, which also exists in two different harpsichord transcriptions, the rondo theme is stated six times, undergoing some variation on each of the last three occasions:

Ex. 21 a: IV/1/iv, 1-6

Ex. 21 b: IV/1/iv, 79-84

Ex. 21 c: IV/1/iv, 117-122

Ex. 21 d: IV/1/iv, 127-132

In the harpsichord transcriptions it is not the melody that is varied but the bass:

Ex. 22 a: PC 1/iii, 1-6

Ex. 22 b: PC 1/iii, 11-16

Ex. 22 c: PC 1/iii, 49-54

In the violin sonatas the reprises of the rondo refrain are rarely written out, but it is probable they were intended to be varied extempore by the performer. In the harpsichord transcriptions, however, they are written out in full, each time differently - perhaps because these versions were conceived for amateur musicians who could not be expected to improvise. The precise manner in which the different embellishments applied to each statement are indicated there may stem from the same didactic impulse that informs Geminiani's later compositions, especially Op. VII; in his treatises published shortly after the first set of *Pièces de Clavecin* (1743) Geminiani stresses many times that in order to perform "in good Taste" one must take care to choose the right ornaments and above all avoid repeating a passage exactly as before.

Although in Op. IV the phrases are still relatively asymmetrical (it is sometimes quite difficult to demarcate phrases because of frequent elisions, and the numerous embellishments create further complications), the new-found importance of the upper part makes the cadence points easier to identify. The modulations, too, occur less frequently than in Op. I and are noticeably less complex and "bizarre"; in general, a greater harmonic stability in comparison with the earlier works becomes evident. Whereas in Op. I the homophonic passages were often introduced in mainly contrapuntal contexts, the opposite is true of Op. IV: there the imitations create variety in mainly homophonic contexts. The bass line has lost the strong melodic profile that it enjoyed in the first set of sonatas and is broken up by frequent rests. Double stopping occurs much less often than in Op. I, in part because of the absence of fugues and fugal movements.

The general simplification of musical language noted in Op. IV is shared by many contemporary compositions; the same can be said of the

embellishments, which resemble those in works written around the same time by Locatelli, Tartini, and Leclair. In his second set of sonatas Geminiani is attempting to adapt his personal style to new trends and for the first time transcends his Roman heritage.

In the same letter of January 1747 in which he informed Joseph Kelway that his new concertos Op. VII were already engraved, Geminiani wrote that "the books of cello sonatas are ready to be sent in England" and that he had "no doubts that they will be known from the public to be not inferior to any other work by him", adding that "the same cello sonatas are already trancribed for violin, engraved, and printed."[14] Geminiani evidently considered his Op. V superior to his previous works and was confident of the success they would encounter in England. However, these cello sonatas met with great resistance there, being found "laboured, difficult and fantastical" in the manner of his Op. VII. "After the publication of his second set of solos [writes Burney] his productions seem to have been the offspring of whim, caprice, expedients, and an unprincipled change of style and taste, which neither pleased the public, nor contributed to his own honour or profit".[15] In fact, even if Op. VII did not enjoy the wide circulation of Geminiani's earlier concertos, the composer at least had the intention there of bowing to the new musical taste. But in Op. V, which otherwise follows the line of development started in Op. IV, the melody is made even more idiosyncratically tortuous and unpredictable.

In contrast to the treatment of the earlier collections, which were composed, transcribed, and elaborated at different times, the violin transcription of Op. V was published simultaneously with the original version for cello. If we were ignorant of Geminiani's letter to Kelway,

and if the title-page of the version for violin did not clearly state that the cello sonatas were "trasposte per il Violino con cambiamenti proprij allo Stromento" (see Catalogue, A 5d), it might perhaps have been difficult to establish with certainty which of the two scorings was the original one. The purpose of the transcription is only too clear; however, it raises a doubt whether Geminiani was genuinely inspired by the individual sound of the cello - or whether any kind of instrument might not have been equally good. This observation is strengthened by the subsequent transcription for harpsichord of seven movements of Op. V, which appeared in the second collection of *Pièces de Clavecin* (1762).

The six cello sonatas follow the usual four-movement plan, with the sole exception of the last work. All the slow movements except one are in a single section without reprise, and many of them are mere preludes or interludes lasting only a few bars. Most of the fast movements are in binary form with reprise; one of them has no reprise, another is in ternary form, and there are two rondos. The overall picture is not so different from that of the Op. IV violin sonatas. The form of reprise is more or less the same that we observed in Op. IV; the two rondos feature the familiar type of internal organization with a 'trio' in the parallel key. Once again we find the phrases freely articulated and ornamented copiously and variously. A comparison between Geminiani's Op. V and the better known cello sonatas by Vivaldi and Benedetto Marcello merely sets into relief what has already been pointed out in relation to the first-named composer's other works: the asymmetry of their phrases, their general lack of a cantabile character, the complexity of their harmony, the absence of literal repetitions, and their disdain for harmonic or melodic sequences spinning out a single phrase (notoriously common in Vivaldi). The sonatas

of Vivaldi and Marcello pursue an exactly opposite course: their phrases are four-square and cantabile, their harmonic structure is extremely simple, and the positioning of their cadences is very regular. The following examples, taken from Vivaldi's, Marcello's, and Geminiani's cello sonatas, clearly bring out the above-mentioned differences between the first two composers and the last one:

Ex. 23 a: Vivaldi, RV 45/iv [Malipiero]

Ex. 23 b: B. Marcello, II/2/ii [Schulz-Pritsche]

Allegro

Ex. 23 c: Geminiani, V/2/ii, 1-28 [A 5e]

Presto

In Op. IV we noted a simplification of the musical language and in particular an organisation of the form that was more regular than in earlier collections. The same observations could be made in regard to Op. V, provided that one is taking as a yardstick only the works of the same composer. A comparison between Opp. IV and V on one hand and Opp. I, II, and III on the other shows the extent of Geminiani's change of style, which followed a path trodden by many contemporary Italian composers (and Italian-influenced French composers). However, the slimming down and simplification of form practised in the compositions of these other masters stand in complete contrast to what one finds in Geminiani's late works. Although the opening theme now has greater prominence, the style of writing remains exactly the same: the phrases follow one another freely, and the rhythmic and melodic attraction between them does not usually extend beyond phrases that are immediately adjacent. Their irregularity and asymmetry do not arise simply from the number of bars comprising them but rather from the wholesale employment of elisions, contractions, offbeat patterns, and suspensions; all this is complicated further by embellishments and "diminutions". Of course, this does not necessarily mean, in Burney's unkind words, "a confusion in the effect of the whole", because Geminiani sets up alternative reference points, repeating again and again the same rhythmic figures and thematic fragments (see for example V/1/ii). Hence what was observed previously in connection with Geminiani's concertos remains valid: the more irregular and asymmetrical the phrases, the more the composer strives to maintain an underlying rhythmic and melodic uniformity. In slow movements and rondos the melodies acquire a more cantabile character, and the articulation of phrases and sub-phrases shows greater symmetry.

In contrast with Op. IV, the bass line in Op. V has a significant melodic profile despite the prevalence of homophonic writing. The continuo is particularly active at cadence points and also keeps the movement going during rests and long notes in the solo part. This sometimes results in a "perpetuum mobile" effect, which becomes all the more evident if the continuo is taken by a second cello.

The tessitura of the cello is generally quite high, and the lowest notes are rarely used for expressive melodic purposes; the only time this occurs is in the 'trio' of the last movement of the sixth sonata (see Ex. 24 b). In addition to creating contrasts of tone-colour and filling out the harmony, the lowest notes have a sort of punctuating function, as is also the case in Vivaldi's cello sonatas. The highest cello note encountered in Geminiani's set is *b'* - not unusual for the time, although neither Vivaldi nor Marcello ventures quite as high. However, in comparison with similar sets of cello sonatas by contemporaries Geminiani's Op. V demands a remarkably advanced technique, particularly in certain fast movements. It abounds in rapid movement across the strings, wide leaps, multiple stopping, diminutions, and intricate embellishments of all kinds.

The two rondos found in Op. V are very similar to the final movement of the eleventh sonata of Op. IV: in all three cases the 'trio' is cast in binary form with a reprise, becoming in effect a miniature movement within a larger movement. In the rondo concluding the third sonata of Op. V the 'trio' lacks a contrasting character and maintains the gavotte rhythm of the opening; it is noteworthy that the internal slow movement of this sonata, like the 'trio', moves to the parallel key. In contrast, the final allegro of the sixth sonata, likewise in rondo form, has a sharply

differentiated 'trio', distinguished both by its pastoral character and by the unusual register of its bass:

Ex. 24 a: V/6/iii, 1-8 (rondo theme) [A 5e]

Allegro

f (la seconda volta p)

Ex. 24 b: V/6/iii, 67-92 (trio) [A 5e]

mf (la seconda volta pp)

In the second section of the 'trio' the opening four-bar phrase seems at first to be answered by a symmetrically balancing phrase, but after only two bars the response is cut short by a varied repeat of the refrain, followed by a reprise of the opening section. This is, as we know, a fairly common procedure in Geminiani's music, but what is particularly significant here is the fact that the composer is prepared to introduce asymmetrical elements even in the ostensibly most regular and cantabile of forms. Geminiani used this 'trio' again in 1754 at the start of the fourth act of *The Inchanted Forrest* (IF/xii).

Although Geminiani's cello sonatas were not appreciated in the eighteenth century, they are among the few compositions by him admired and performed in modern times. Even more than the concertos of Op. VII, they demonstrate the composer's mature style. In a letter to Thomas Twining of 21 January 1774 Burney wrote: "I have long found out that, as Geminiani was a bad Timist in playing, he but ill attended to Rhythm in writing: his movements are not *phrased*, as Rousseau well expresses it,[16] and that merit of measured periods, of accenting melody, & rendering it more poetical than formerly (if I may so say) is, to my apprehension, the chief characteristic of modern music, & what it most excels the old music in".[17] Ironically, the object of Burney's criticism has become for us today the principal source of the interest and originality of Op. V.

Chapter Seven

THE INCHANTED FORREST

The Inchanted Forrest is the only composition by Francesco Geminiani of which both the autograph manuscript score and a series of documents concerning its first performance are extant. Unlike with the other works, however, it is difficult to establish with certainty the date of publication. According to Burney and Hawkins it was published in the years that followed his return from his last visit to Paris, around 1755-1756, while on the title-page of the autograph score we read: "The Gift of Francesco Geminiani the Author to James Mathias/ 7 dec.mr 1761/ La Selva Incantata del Tasso/ Composizione Istrumentale/ da F. G.". Dates quoted by Burney and Hawkins with regard to Geminiani are rarely reliable, while the one marked on the manuscript may refer only to the year in which the composer presented it to James Mathias and therefore serve merely as a *terminus ad quem*. What is certain is that *The Inchanted Forrest* was composed after the publication of Op. VII (1747), from which it takes the first movement of its second part (IF/12), and before 31 March 1754, the date of its first performance in Paris. The music was originally commissioned from Geminiani by the architect and theatrical 'director' Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni (1695-1766), who made use of it in his pantomime *La Forest Enchantée*, produced in Paris at the "grand Théâtre du Palais des Thuilleries".[1] The subject, taken from Cantos XIII and XVIII of Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, gave Servandoni the opportunity to create startling scenic effects: "Tout ce que l'Art de la Peinture, de la Perspective & des Méchaniques peut fournir de plus noble & de plus

surprenant, est deployé dans ce Spectacle", we read in the review that appeared on 10 April 1754 in *Annonces, Affiches, et Avis Divers.*[2]

The pantomime is in five acts: the first, third, and fifth are set in the forest of Saron, the second in a Jerusalem mosque, and the fourth in the camp of the Christians. The plot can be summarized as follows: the Christian army needs a new siege machine in order to resume its assault on Jerusalem, but the forest that could supply the wood for its construction has been enchanted by the magician Ismeno and is peopled by "innumerable, infinite spirits" that make it impenetrable; after several vain attempts, Godfrey of Bouillon asks Rinaldo to break the spell, and this time the hero prevails over the forces of evil. The story is therefore kept extremely simple in deference to the nature of a pantomime, which requires an elementary plot without distracting complications. Despite its simplicity, the story offered ample possibilities to the architect, scenographer, and painter Servandoni, who was one of the most interesting artists of the French late-baroque theatre, famous for the illusionistic effects of his stage productions. "What devil [writes a certain Marquis *** to the creator of the spectacle] prompts you to imitate this exaggerated, rambling nature: to depict it in the darkness of a night, in a splendid dawn, in broad daylight, in a drought, or in torrential rain; to show thunder and lightning, dark forests, dense woods, waterfalls, fair skies of all kinds, fading colours, or the greenery of trees [...]; there are women who are cross with you for frightening them with your artifical lightning, while others blush at having prepared to open their umbrellas for fear of being deluged by your rain".[3]

In the same theatre, known then as the *Salle des Machines*, Servandoni had produced between 1738 and 1742 a series of visual spectacles that

LA FOREST

ENCHANTEE,

Repréſentation tirée du Poëme Italien de la Jeruſalem délivrée.

SPECTACLE

Orné de Machines, animé d'Acteurs Pantomimes & accompagné d'une Muſique (de la Compoſition de M. GEMINIANI,) qui en exprime les différentes actions; exécuté ſur le grand Théâtre du Palais des Thuilleries pour la premiere fois le Dimanche 31 Mars 1754.

Le prix eſt de 12 ſols.

DE L'IMPRIMERIE

De BALLARD, ſeul Imprimeur du Roi pour la Muſique, & Noteur de la Chapelle de Sa Majeſté, rue Saint-Jean-de-Beauvais à Sainte Cecile.

M. DCC. LIV.

FIG. 15

Title-page of the programme of *La Forest Enchantée* [F-Po, C 2819 (c)]

consisted of a fantastic succession of scenic views accompanied by a little mimed action; these made great use of machines, scenic tranformations, and special effects of perspective, painting, and lighting.[4] With *La Forest Enchantée* Servandoni inaugurated a new series of performances that ended in 1758. An examination of the programmes, which are preserved in the Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra, reveals one interesting detail: starting with *La Forest Enchantée*, the name of the composer is given on the title-page or one of the opening pages, an innovation that seems to betoken an increasing concern for the music.

The choice of subject for the pantomime depended chiefly on the opportunity that it offered for the creation of startling scenic effects. Cantos XIII and XVIII of *Gerusalemme liberata*, as we will see later, were exactly right for the purpose. Nevertheless, the performance was a failure - so much so that the unidentified Parisian marquis was prompted to publish his critical letter, which is extremely ironical in tone, in an attempt, perhaps, to revive its fortunes. The opening of the letter clearly shows that the audience was far from satisfied: "I am *very disappointed*, Sir, at the lack of success that your show is enjoying and the public's unwillingness to go to it. Truly, I wish you well, but I cannot find it in me to blame the public, which is more enlightened than ever and is astonishingly refined in its taste; you have talents, from which it was expecting something quite different".

The letter unfortunately does not mention Geminiani's music, but in another review, dated 15 April 1754, from the pen of the leading critic Baron Friedrich Melchior von Grimm we read that the pantomime "is accompanied by bad music composed by Monsieur Geminiani that is supposed to express its different happenings".[5] It is difficult to say to what extent

Geminiani's "bad music" contributed to the failure of the performance. The composer was very highly regarded in Paris, and his concertos often opened performances at the *Concert Spirituel*. However, his success in France, as in England, stemmed mainly from his Op. III, none of his succeeding works having been well received or widely circulated. The music composed by Geminiani for *La Forest Enchantée* was thus for many an "unknown quantity". It must be added that the composer, now aged sixty-six, was grappling with the theatrical genre for the first time in his life. His music had to accompany the movements of the mimers and to follow the plot: all this was entirely new for him.

Some time after this performance Geminiani published the "concert" version of the music that he had composed for the pantomime (see Catalogue, A 7): "His composition called the *Enchanted Forest* [writes Burney], in which he endeavoured by mere sound to represent to the imagination of an audience all the events in the episode of the thirteenth book of Tasso's Jerusalem, was published about 1756; but Music has never had the power, without vocal articulation, to narrate, or instruct; it can excite, paint, and soothe our passions; but is utterly incapable of reasoning, or conversing, to any reasonable purpose".[6]

The first modern performance of *The Inchanted Forrest* took place in Siena on 1 September 1967 and was conducted by Newell Jenkins, who that year wrote an analytical article on the music. Jenkins pursued his investigation without reference to the original theatrical destination of the composition, the documents concerning its first performance in Paris, or Tasso's epic poem. The concert version is divided in two parts, the first in D minor and the second in D major; in this guise it certainly

appears an original or at least unusual conception: a kind of programme music on an abnormally large scale. However, to examine the score in isolation leads one astray. "*The Enchanted Forest* [Jenkins observes] is the last known large orchestral work Geminiani composed. It was designed as a ballet-pantomime of two parts, each of symphonic proportions, each of eleven movements. It is by far the largest form Geminiani ever attempted".[7] An examination of the programme, reviews, and letters concerning the performance in 1754 reveals a quite different reality. In fact, if we compare each movement with the corresponding scenes of the pantomime, we find that the music for the first four acts is supplied by nothing other than four separate *concerti grossi* of conventional type. The sole exception occurs in the final act, where the music is related more closely to the episode in the story (Rinaldo's heroic exploit) and cannot be reconciled with the traditional plan of the concerto. The conclusions arising from this different way of looking at the score are clear: *The Inchanted Forrest* must either be one of Geminiani's familiar reworkings of earlier music or (assuming that it was commissioned and composed especially for the pantomime) a work that betrays his difficulty in imagining a way of composing distinct from that proper to the concerto. The very evident stylistic unity of *The Inchanted Forrest* is a good reason for excluding the possibility that it was a reworking of compositions written at different times in the manner of, say, the *Pièces de Clavecin*.

The following table outlines the overall structure of *The Inchanted Forrest*, listing the number of the movement (for present purposes, "movements" are sections ending with double bar-lines), its tempo marking, the number of bars, its key (for movements in which an overall tonality is clear enough to be defined), its formal structure, and its scoring (the

abbreviation "cg" refers to "concerto grosso" scoring for strings, "fl" the German flute, and "tr" the trumpet). The table presents, of course, a simplified version of the work's characteristics whose sole purpose is to enable the reader to see at a glance the broad lines of its internal organization.

number	tempo	bars	tonality	form	scoring
		First Part (D minor)			
		(Act 1)			
1	Andante 3/2	23	D minor	a,b,a	cg
2	Allegro Moderato 3/8	63	D minor	A:B	cg,fl
3	Andante C	12	B flat major	a,b,c	cg,fl
4	Allegro Moderato 6/8	35	F major	A:BA:C:	cg, fl 1-2 horn 1-2
		(Act 2)			
5	Andante 3/4	7			cg
	Adagio C	3			cg
6	Allegro Moderato 3/8	50	C major	A:BA:	cg, fl
7	Andante Spiritoso 2/4	72	F major	A:A':	cg, fl 1-2, horn 1-2

(Act 3)

8	Adagio 3/4	9			cg
9	Allegro 2/4	50	D minor	A:A':	cg, fl 1-2
10	Grave C	4			cg
11	Allegro Moderato 2/4	92	D minor	rondo	cg, fl 1-2

Second Part (D major)

(Act 4)

12	Andante Affettuoso 3/8	26	D major	A:BA:	cg, fl
13	6/8	30	B minor	AAB	cg
14	Allegro Moderato ¢	40	D major	A:BA:	cg, fl 1-2 horn 1+tr, horn 2

(Act 5)

15					
a	Andante 3/8	14	G major		cg, fl 1-2
b	Allegro C	18	C major		cg
c	Andante C	9			cg
d	Adagio C	1			cg
e	Affett. C	24	A minor		cg, fl
f	Allegro 3/4	6			cg
g	Allegro Moderato ¢	20	D major	A:B:	cg, fl 1-2, tr, horn 1-2

16	Andante 3/2	58	B minor		cg
17	Allegro 2/4	112	D major		cg, fl 1-2, tr, horn 1-2
18	Affett. 3/4	24	D minor	A:B:	cg, fl

The division of the work into five acts is the result of a comparative reading of the score and the ballet scenario. Sometimes, as for example in the fifth act (nos. 15-18), the dependence of the score on the dramatic action is obvious, which makes it easy to match given music to a given dramatic and scenic context. In other parts of the work the correspondence is less clear; what we have here is not genuine programme music but an autonomous composition adapted to a programme (the possibility that the programme was formed around pre-existent music does not alter the substance of this argument). Before we proceed to examine each movement and its possible relationship to an episode in the pantomime, it will be helpful to point out an interesting detail: the fact that the first and second acts, and the second and third likewise, are linked to one another: the final cadence of movement no. 4 overlaps the first bar of no. 5, and the same occurs between nos. 7 and 8. Similar instances of "dovetailing" occur nowhere else in the entire score; so their presence at these points seems no accident but rather a case of modifications introduced by Geminiani in order to create greater continuity between sections that were originally separate. The analysis given below tends to confirm this hypothesis.

The documents to be quoted will be abbreviated for convenience as follows: A = *Annonces, Affiches, et Avis Divers*; L = *Lettre critique* (see footnote 3); P = programme (see footnote 1); G = Tasso's *Gerusalemme*

liberata in the English translation by Edward Fairfax.[6]

Preface

But scant dissolued into ashes cold
The smoking towre fell on the scorched grasse,
When new deuise found out th'enchanter old,
By which the towne besieg'd, secured was,
Of timber fit his foes depriue he wold:
Such terrour bred that late consumed masse,
So that the strength of Sions walles to shake,
They should no turrets, rammes, nor engins make.
[G, XIII, 1-8]

Act 1 [nos. 1-4]

"The first act opens on a forest situated in a lonely valley. It is night there, and the dense foliage lets in little moonlight" [A]. The first Andante conveys this dark, sinister atmosphere effectively and seems to draw inspiration from the following lines of Tasso:

From *Godfreyes* campe a groue a little way
Amid the vallies deepe growes out of sight,
Thicke with old trees whose horrid armes display
An ougly shade, like euerlasting night;
There when the sunne spreads forth his clearest ray,
Dim, thicke, vncertaine, gloomie seemes the light;
As when in eu'ning day and darknes striue,
Which should his foe from our horizon driue.

But when the sunne is chaire in seas doth steepe,
Night, horrour, darknes thicke, the place inuade,

Which vaile the mortall eies with blindnes deepe,
And with sad terrour make weake harts affraide,
Thither no groome driues forth his tender sheepe
To brouze, or ease their faint in cooling shade,
Nor trauellor, nor pilgrime there to enter
(So awfull seemes that forrest old) dare venter.
[G, XIII, 9-24].

The opening bars, according to Jenkins, probably produced on the audience of that time an effect comparable to the one aroused by the beginning of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* one century later.[9] One's recognition of the home key (D minor) is delayed slightly because of the false relation between violas and second violins:

Ex. 25: IF/1, 1-4.

Andante

The fact that homophonic writing predominates in *The Inchanted Forrest* is only to be expected, since it is the rhythm of the principal part that has to inform the actors' movements. The opening Andante is actually one of the rare contrapuntal movements contained in the score. The choice of a contrapuntal texture matches the gloomy atmosphere of the first act. The real action starts with the ensuing Allegro Moderato: "From all sides there come enchantresses, who are assembling to conduct some infernal ceremony" [A]. This is a movement in binary form characterized by an insistent dotted rhythm and a certain melodic uniformity. The following Andante, in B flat major, marks the entrance of Ismeno: "This sorcerer comes in order to put into effect his plan to make the forest inaccessible for ever to the Christians through his magic arts. Hardly has he begun his magic rites when the moon, which was pale, takes on the colour of blood" [A]. This is a brief movement of merely 12 bars which is less obviously related to the actions on stage than the previous ones. The following lines of Tasso were probably the ones that suggested the movements of the mime that it accompanied:

> Thither went *Ismen* old with tresses hore
> When night on all this earth spred forth her wing,
> And there in silence deafe and mirksome shade,
> His characters and circles vaine he made:
>
> He in the circle set one foot vnshod,
> And whispred dreadfull charmes in gastly wise,
> Three times (for witchcraft loueth numbers od)
> Toward the east he gaped, westward thrise,
> He stroke the earth thrise with his charmed rod,
> Wherewith dead bones he makes from graues to rise,
> And thrise the ground with naked foote he smote,

And thus he cried lowd, with thundring note.
[G, XIII, 37-48]

Ismeno asks the spirits to protect the forest ("as soules of men in bodies cloathed be, so euerie plant a sprite shall hide and hould, with trembling feare make all the Christians flee", G, XIII, 59-61); at this point we hear a jig, in binary form with reprise, which ends with a kind of epilogue.[10] This concludes the first act, as is confirmed by the pattern of scoring, which follows a cumulative principle that is very common in theatrical music: the first Andante is performed by strings alone; for the inner movements flutes are added; for the finale horns join the flutes and strings (the same build-up occurs in the second act). The homophonic character of the jig is particularly marked: the melody is played in unison by first flutes and violins, doubled at the lower octave by second flutes and violins, first horn, and sometimes second horn and violas.

"This act ends with the assembly of all the enchantresses dwelling in the forest; they congratulate Ismeno on the success of his spells and accompany him on his return to Jerusalem" [P].[11] "Ismeno retires, followed by his retinue; at the side of the stage he passes in front of a canvas that depicts realistically the edge of a beautiful forest" [L].

Act 2 (nos. 5-7)

The final part of the jig dovetails into the ensuing Andante (as described above) in order to lend greater continuity to the concert version. The second act (i.e., the corresponding concerto) is in F major with its internal slow movement placed in the dominant key. Unlike in the

first act, the action does not follow - or follows only vaguely - the poem by Tasso. What in the poem is accomplished in a single octave is here elaborated to give Servandoni the chance to show the audience his abilities as a scenographer: "Our eyes are dazzled by the splendour of a mosque" [L]. The reconstruction of the second act is possible only thanks to the programme, which is therefore quoted in full after the octave from the poem by which it was inspired:

> When thus his cursed worke performed was,
> The wisard to his king declar'd the feat,
> 'My Lord, let feare, let doubt and sorrow pas,
> Henceforth in safetie stands your regall seat,
> Your foe (as he suppos'd) no meane now has
> To build againe his rams and engins great:'
> And then he told at large from part to part,
> All what he late perform'd by wondrous art.
> [G, XIII, 89-96]

"This scene takes place at night; the theatre represents the interior of a lamplit mosque.

Ismeno, delighted by the success of his spells, gleefully goes to find the king ....

The author of the spectacle has imagined here that this prince called Aladdin is in the midst of deliberations with his advisers about what he should do to forestall the efforts that the Christians are expected to renew soon. This council-of-war is taking place in the main mosque. Here various chiefs stand up in turn and propose different courses of action: the first wants to place all trust in Mahomet, who has already begun to grant his protection to a people that reveres him, and to await from God alone the outcome of an event which his eternal providence has determined.

The second, less passive, wants to supplement this resignation with

everything that prudence can inspire in the way of methods for ensuring the defence of the city. He demands that the breaches be repaired, that entrenchments and fortifications be prepared: in short, that all possible measures be taken to bring about a stout resistance.

The third, who happens to be the leader of Mahomet's ministers, insists, interrupting the previous speaker, that the outcome be entrusted to him personally, that the people should fast, pray, and give him what he needs to dispense abundant alms; he will then take responsibility for the success of the war. But Argante, impatient, proposes to entrust the outcome to the strength of his arm alone; he will make ready, with Aladdin's permission, to challenge Godfrey to single combat. Confident that he will be the victor, he promises to quash all Aladdin's fears and dash the hopes of their enemies. At this point Ismeno arrives and tells Aladdin what he has just done; he cuts Argante short and calms the holy man. Aladdin gives thanks to Mahomet for the trap that he has allowed the demons to lay for his foes" [P].[12]

The short opening Andante (no. 5) has the same function as the first movement of the preceding act; rather than illustrating the action, it introduces the audience to the setting, "une superbe Mosquée" [A]. The music is less interesting than before, and less relevant to the situation on stage. In the concert version it becomes a mere interlude between two movements of greater weight (particularly the second). We need note only the brief appearances of a solo violin - one of the few instances in the score where a dynamic contrast between a soloist and the rest of the orchestra is created.

In Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, Ismeno, returning from the forest of Saron, simply tells the King of his successful exploit. Servandoni seems not to be concerned to reproduce the poem faithfully; he sets the second act in a Jerusalem mosque with the transparent intention of gratifying the contemporary public's taste for the exotic. In the Allegro Moderato (no.

6) in C major three "Ministres de Mahomet" each propose to Aladdin a different tactic for overcoming the Christian army. It is certainly one of the best movements in the score, particularly on account of its refined melodic line played in unison by first violin, second violin, and both flutes:

Ex. 26: IF/6, 1-12

The movement is in binary form with reprise; the return of the opening theme, slightly condensed but still recognizable, is prepared by a passage on the solo instruments. In the concert version this movement in C major represents the most distant point from the original key (D minor) so far reached, though in the context of the "concerto" (nos. 5-7) of which it forms the third movement it appears conventionally enough in the dominant.

The second act ends with the arrival of Argante, who wishes to resolve the fortunes of war by a duel with Godfrey, and the entrance of Ismeno, who tells Aladdin of the success of his exploit and the inability of the Franks to continue the siege. As in the first act, the final movement differs

from the previous ones by the use of horns, which in this case serve a mainly rhythmic function (whereas in no. 4 they doubled the melody, swelling the sound and adding tone-colour). The finale is an amply proportioned Andante Spiritoso in F major, each of whose two sections opens with the same four-bar theme (the second time slightly varied and in the dominant). This theme, restated once again, becomes the springboard for an extended further development. The "continuous expansion" technique is used here with greater attentiveness to proportions than in Opp. I, II, and III. If *The Inchanted Forrest* was in fact commissioned and composed especially for the pantomime, this greater degree of clarity could be accounted for by the need of the mimers to have an easily recognizable rhythmic and melodic structure to follow; or else it could merely signify a change in Geminiani's style (each explanation does not exclude the other).

As in all the movements in binary form in the score, the first section ends in the dominant, the key in which the second section opens. In unisectional movements, however, the choice of the final chord depends on the key of the following movement. In the first part of *The Inchanted Forrest* it is generally the progression V-I that connects movements to one another: the Andante in B flat major no. 3, for example, ends on the chord of C major, which is the dominant of the following Allegro in F major; the V-I relationship is thus as prominent between movements as it is within them.

In the present Andante Spiritoso there are also some striking "echo" effects on the strings. This device enables Geminiani to extend the form (other devices with the same aim are 'deceptive' cadences and pedal-points).

Act 3 (nos. 8-11)

"The third act returns to the enchanted forest, which this time appears different. Instead of being shrouded in the darkness that made it an object of fear, it is now shown bathed in sunlight." [A]. In this act the course of the poem is slightly modified for theatrical convenience. In the *Gerusalemme liberata* the expedition of the "fabri" (workmen) and that of Alcasto occur at different times:

But *Godfrey* would this while bring forth his powre
To giue assault against that fort in vaine,
Till he had builded new his dreadfull towre,
And reared high his downe-falne rammes againe:
His workmen therefore he dispatcht that howre,
To hew the trees out of the forrest maine,
They went, and scant the wood appear'd in sight,
When wonders new their fearfull harts affright:

As seely children dare not bend their eie
When they are told strange Bugbeares haunt the place,
Or as new monsters while in bed they lie,
They fearefull thoughts present before their face;
So feared they, and fled, yet wist not why,
Nor what pursu'd them in that fearefull chace,
Except their feare perchance while thus they fled,
New Chimeres, Sphinges, or like monsters bred;

Swift to the campe they turned backe dismai'd,
With words confus'd vncertaine tales they told,
That all which heard them scorned what they said,
And those reportes for lies and fables hold.
A chosen crew in shining armes arra'd
Duke *Godfrey* thither sent of soldiers bold,

To garde the men, and their faint armes prouoke
To cut the dreadfull trees with hardie stroke.
[G, XIII, 129-152]

The second attempt to fell the trees likewise ends in flight, and it is only at this point that Alcasto resolves to go to the forest; but also this brave knight ("who fear'd not losse of life, nor losse of lim") returns defeated and shamefaced to the Christian camp. Then it is the turn of Tancred, who is put to flight by the false image of Clorinda. So in the poem there are four quite separate expeditions, which in the pantomime are reduced to one in order to avoid spoiling through excessive repetition the effect of Rinaldo's exploit later on.

The third act begins like the previous ones with a brief slow movement entrusted to the strings alone (Adagio, no. 8): "Workmen from the Christian army, equipped with the tools for cutting down the trees from which the new machines for the siege of Jerusalem are to be made, are resting in the shade. But suddenly black vapours rise from the ground; these grow thicker and spread." [A]. This marks the start of the succeeding Allegro (no. 9): "the workmen are attacked by flame-belching monsters, one of which, distinguished by its enormous size and fearsome mouth, lifts one of those wretched workmen into the air; the rest run away" [L]. The new movement is in binary form; as in no. 7, the final "expansion" is developed in fairly regular phrases following on from a restatement of the opening motive. A rapid passage for the solo violin leads to a "tutti" (second section, in the dominant) that may well represent the sudden entrance of the monsters. The following Grave (no. 10), which lasts only four bars, is one of the rare exceptions to the practice of connecting movements by

means of a V-I progression. The preceding Allegro (no. 9) ended in D minor, i.e., the principal key of the first part of *The Inchanted Forrest*: the Grave now opens in C minor, producing a quite unusual effect. It marks, perhaps, the entrance of Alcasto and prepares us for the final scene of the third act: "Alcasto boldly advances; but a burning wall, defended by fiery towers, blocks his progress. Soon the wall crumbles, and out rush a pack of demons who force Alcasto's soldiers to flee in their turn; abandoned by his men, Alcasto himself retreats." [A]. This episode is clearly inspired by Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*:

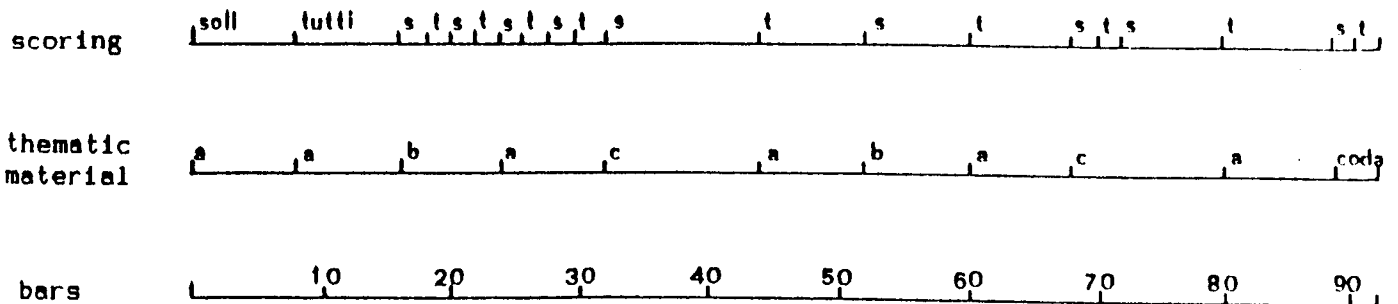
> The fire encreast, and built a stately wall
> Of burning coales, quicke sparkes, and embers hot,
> And with bright flames the wood enuiron'd all,
> That there no tree nor twist *Alcasto* got,
> The higher stretched flames seem'd bulwarkes tall,
> Castles and turrets full of firie shot,
> With slinges and engins strong of euerie sort,
> What mortall wight durst scale so strange a fort?
>
> O what strange monsters on the battlement
> In loathsome formes stood to defend the place?
> Their frowning lookes vpon the knight they bent,
> And threatned death with shot, with sword and mace:
> At last he fled, and though but slow he went,
> As lyons doe whom iolly hunters chace;
> Yet fled the man and with sad feare withdrew,
> Though feare till then he neuer felt nor knew.
> [G, XIII, 209-247]

It may be that these very lines, because of the spectacular possibilities that they suggest, influenced Servandoni in his choice of a

subject for the pantomime. It hardly needs saying that a work of this nature was meant first and foremost to be a visual spectacle, and only after that a pantomime accompanied by music: "This dumb-show is a kind of moving tableau adorned with machines, enlivened by miming actors, and accompanied by expressive music" [A]. The validity of this way of looking at the work is shown by the fact that without exception the documents concerned with the performance reserve their detailed comment for its scenic aspects, ignoring the music altogether.

Alcasto's sortie is accompanied by a rondo (Allegro Moderato, no. 11). This is based on the alternation of a refrain with various solo passages in which sometimes there are also some brief orchestral incursions. Dynamic contrast is very important here, as we can see in the following table:

Ex. 27: IF/11, the solo-tutti relationship.

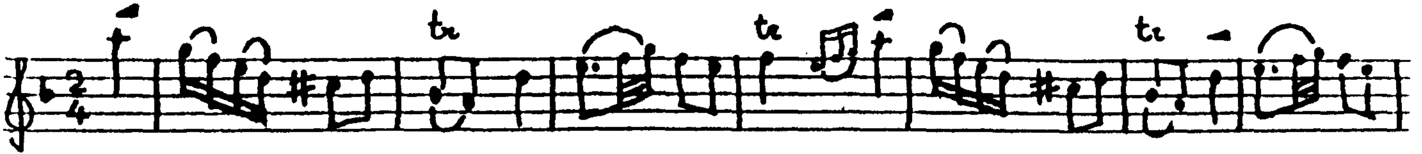


The main theme (a) is performed first by the "soli", then by the "tutti" (violins 1-2 and flutes 1-2 in unison, violas 1-2, and continuo), a third time by solo and tutti alternately, and the remaining times by the "tutti" once again. The intervening episodic passages (b, c) are entrusted mainly

to the first violin and first flute in unison, and to the second violin. They follow on from, rather than contrast with, the refrain:

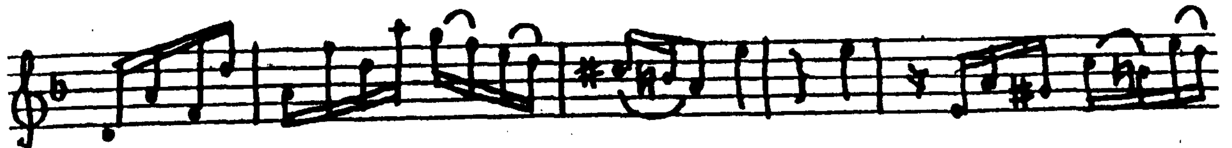
Ex. 28 a: IF/11, 1-8

Allegro Moderato



Ex. 28 b: IF/11, 16-24

Ex. 28 c: IF/11, 32-36



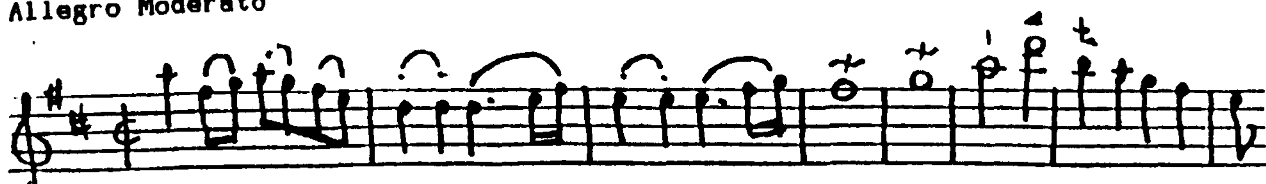
Act 4

"The theatre represents the camp of Godfrey of Bouillon. Godfrey, accompanied by the leaders of his army, ponders sadly how to overcome the obstacles to his plans and to end the afflictions that excessive heat and drought are causing in his camp; while he is suffering torments at the sight of his languishing soldiers, who are dying of thirst and weakness, Peter the Hermit, a holy man, appears before him, bringing young Rinaldo. This valiant knight, after killing the Prince of Norway, had fled to escape the rigours of the punishment that Godfrey had prepared for him; but the Hermit, who has foreseen that the spell over the forest can be broken only with Rinaldo's aid, has sent two warriors to search for him, and these have finally brought him back to the camp. The knight prostrates himself and seeks less to justify his crime than to ask for an opportunity to redeem himself: Godfrey pardons him, fits him out with the sword that an angel has given him for this purpose, and orders him to go and destroy the spells that the demons use to defend the approaches to the forest. While he is receiving this command, the Hermit, raising his hands to Heaven, prays fervently; his prayer is answered, for a thunderclap signals the start of a salutary rain that comes to fulfil the soldiers' wishes and alleviate their woes." [P].[13]

After relating Tancred's failure Tasso describes at length the terrible scorching heat that oppresses the Christian camp. A spirit of rebellion against Godfrey gathers momentum among the Christians and the first desertions occur. So Godfrey turns to the "King of the World" to ask for rain. His prayer is granted, and he is soon greeted by a very heavy rain that fills the Christian army with strength and enthusiasm. In this act the scorching heat and the rain furnish two good opportunities for Servandoni to "surprise" his audience - so much so, as we saw, that some female spectators "rougissent d'avoir préparé le mouvement du parassol, dans la crainte d'être inondés" [L]. Between the parching heat and the

storm Servandoni places the arrival of Rinaldo, which in the poem occurs at a different point. The first movement (Andante Affettuoso, no. 12) is in the usual slow tempo but differs from the other first movements by being in binary form with reprise. It is a pastorale transcribed more or less faithfully from the sixth cello sonata of Op. V (bars 67-92) and thus sheds an interesting light on Geminiani's procedure when preparing the original version of the work for the pantomime. In the concert version it becomes the first movement of the second part and introduces the new main key, D major. In the pantomime it accompanies Godfrey's actions: "All his movements portray the grief into which he has been plunged on account of the despair to which the Christians, tormented by thirst, have been reduced." [A]. There follows a movement in 6/8 in the relative minor key that lacks any tempo direction but seems to call for a very quick tempo. It is in unisectional form, although its main theme is stated twice (first by the "soli", later by the "tutti") as in the movements in binary form. The dynamic contrast between two different groups of instruments is again very important here; this time, it is effected by a traditional, Corellian alternation of concertino and ripieno. The ensuing Allegro Moderato (no. 14) has a triumphal character, emphasized by the presence among the wind instruments of a trumpet doubling the first horn. This movement is in the customary binary form with reprise and bears witness to Handel's influence on Geminiani:

Ex. 29: IF/14: 1-8



It is probable that the music here accompanies the entry of Rinaldo and the handing over to him of the magic sword that he will use to break Ismeno's spell. The first section is performed by the full orchestra and is dominated by the timbre of the brass instruments, which in the second section (the first few bars excepted) remain silent until their return after the passage for "soli". The second section begins in the dominant with the opening motive of the first section; this does not give rise to an "expansion" type of development but is merely a brief quotation that is immediately discarded.

Act 5

Before we proceed to an analytical description of the fifth act, a few words of introduction may be useful. As has already been said, Jenkins' analysis took no account of the original theatrical destination of the score. One of the consequences of this defect was that Jenkins claimed to find a symmetry in the number of movements (11) in each part, a conclusion that entailed regarding as "movements" sections that had no autonomous significance but were merely episodes in the rhapsodic flow of music linked to the continually changing succession of situations on stage. The seven pieces grouped together as no. 15 make sense only if they are performed without interruption (as indicated by the absence in the score of double bar-lines) in a kaleidoscopic succession of different tempos, rhythms, tonalities, and scorings matching different phases of Rinaldo's heroic exploit. This does not imply, however, that they should be considered as one "movement" on a par with all the others, for their structure largely fails to correspond to any standard principle of formal organization,

responding only to the scenic requirements.

"In the fifth and final act we see for the third time the enchanted forest, but now in another perspective, which is developed with consummate art. The dawn brings light to it, at first weakly and only gradually; then the light grows stronger and a fine day arrives" [A]. "With sure steps Rinaldo enters this forest, which is now lit up by bright daylight" [L].

> Thither he came whence shrinking backe, for dreed
> Of that strange desars sight, the first retir'de,
> But not to him fearefull or loatsome made
> The forrest was, but sweete with pleasant shade:
>
> Forward he past, and in the groue before
> He heard a sound that strange, sweete, pleasing was;
> There roll'd a christall brooke with gentle rore,
> There sigh'd the windes as through the leaues they pas,
> There did the Nightingale her wrongs deplore,
> There sung the swan, and singing dide (alas)
> There lute, harpe cittren, humaine voice he hard,
> And all these sounds one sound right well declard.
>
> A dreedfull thunderclap at last he hard,
> The aged trees and plants wel nie that rent;
> Yet heard he Nymphes and Sirens afterward,
> Birdes, windes, and waters sing, with sweete consent:
> Whereat amazd he staid, and well prepard
> For his defence, heedfull and slow foorthwent:
> Nor in his way his passage ought withstood,
> Except a quiet, still, transparent flood.
> [G, XVIII, 133-152]

The opening Andante in G major (no. 15a) is the first of a series of

short musical passages that accompany the different stages of Rinaldo's brave deed. It introduces the audience to the mild atmosphere described by Tasso in lines full of musical suggestiveness. Its "Arcadian" character is underscored by the parallel thirds of the melody (the upper line is performed by first violins and first flute, the lower one by second violins and second flute). The representation of the river, like the fire and rain in earlier acts, offers Servandoni a fine opportunity to surprise his spectators; but he does not imagine it "sweet and pleasing", for Rinaldo "is struck by the impetuosity of a torrent" [L]. Consequently, the music suddenly becomes agitated and represents graphically the rapid flow of the water, quick passages in dotted rhythm alternating with scales of semiquavers (Allegro, no. 15b).

> The Knight some way sought out the floud to pas,
> And as he sought a wondrous smilde and smeld,
> Which reaching out his stretched armes around,
> All the large desart in his bosome held.
> [G, XVIII, 161-164]

"He goes right into it [the river] and crosses it confidently. Once over it, he notices a myrtle tree that he is to cut down; a nymph with the face of Armida is enclosed within it. Rinaldo is astonished; other nymphs surround him with garlands of flowers. The knight does not allow himself to be seduced; he unmasks the magic and prepares to fight. The nymphs change into Cyclops, whom he attacks and puts to flight. Victorious, he cuts down the fatal tree and destroys its magic power." [L]. The quickfire succession of events in this description is reflected perfectly in the music. In a few bars we have the entry of the Nymphs (Andante, no.

15c), their attempt to seduce Rinaldo (Affettuoso, no. 15e), the final battle (Allegro, no. 15f), and Rinaldo's victory (Allegro Moderato, no. 15g). The unidentified Parisian critic did not welcome this rapid denouement; he would have preferred Servandoni to have taken advantage of Armida's appearance: "what was needed at this point was a bit of love-making, something to evoke this tragic romance" [L]. The Andante (no. 15c) and the Affettuoso (no. 15e) are inspired by the following lines:

> He lookte, he listned, yet his thoughts denide
> To thinke that true which he both heard and see,
> A Mirtle in an ample plaine he spide,
> And thither by a beaten path went hee:
> The Mirtle spred her mightie branches wide,
> Higher than Pine, or Palme, or Cipresse tree:
> And farre aboue all other plants was seene,
> That forrests Ladie, and that desarts queene.
>
> Vpon the tree his eies *Rinaldo* bent,
> And there a maruell great and strange began;
> An aged Oake beside him cleft and rent,
> And from his fertill hollow wombe forth ran,
> (Clad in rare weedes and strange habiliment)
> A Nymph, for age able to goe to man,
> An hundreth plants beside (euen in his sight)
> Childed an hundreth Nymphes, so great, so dight:
>
> Such on stages play, such as we see
> The Dryads painted, whom wilde Satires loue,
> Whose armes, halfe naked; lockes vntrussed bee,
> With buskins laced on their legs aboue
> And silken roabes tuckt short aboue their knee;
> Such seem'd the *Siluan* daughters of this groue,

Saue that in stead of shafts and boughes of tree,
She bore a lute, a harpe or cittern shee.

And wantonly they cast them in a ring,
And sung and danst to moue her weaker sense,
Rinaldo round about enuironing,
As centers are with their circumference;
[G, XVIII, 193-220]

In comparison with the first Andante (no. 15a), the Affettuoso (no. 15e) is more formally stuctured. In most cases, the individual pieces making up no. 15 flow directly into one another, leaving the listener to imagine how they might possibly have developed otherwise. For example, the Andante (no. 15a) is the promising beginning of what could have been an "expansion" movement; one awaits the cadence and the short restatement in the dominant key followed by development, but all this is brusquely cut short by the succeeding Allegro (no. 15b). The premature termination of the Affettuoso in A minor, another potential "expansion" movement, leaves behind a less strong sense of incompleteness, perhaps because this piece is conceived on a more generous scale. Solo-tutti contrast performs a vital function here: the ripieno instruments intervene with short phrases to supply a sort of punctation for the flowing melody heard on the "soli". This movement is followed by six bars of allegro (no. 15f), during which Armida is transformed into a huge Cyclops and Rinaldo breaks the spell:

Her bodie sweld, her face obscure was maid,
Vanisht her garments rich, and vestures strange,
A giantesse before him high she stands,
Like *Briareus* armd with an hundreth hands.

With fiftie swords, and fiftie targets bright,
She threatned death, she roared, cride and fought,
Each other nymph in armour likewise dight,
A Cyclops great became: he feard them nought,
But on the myrtle smote with all his might,
That groandlike liuing soules to death nie brought,
The skie seemd *Plutoes* court, the aire seemd hell,
Therein such monsters roare, such spirits yell.

Lightned the heau'n aboue, the earth below
Roared aloud, that thundred, and this shooke;
Blustred the tempests strong, the whirlwinds blow,
The bitter storme droue hailestones in his looke;
But yet his arme grew neither weake nor slow,
Nor of that furie heed or care he tooke,
Till low to earth, the wounded tree downe bended,
Then fled the spirits all, the charmes all ended.
[G, XVIII, 277-296]

The rapid semiquaver figurations of the Allegro (no. 15f) are cut short by a triumphal music that celebrates Rinaldo's victory. This takes the form of an Allegro Moderato (no. 15g) in D minor, which is in binary form without reprise. Like no. 14, it is very Handelian in character:

Ex. 30: IF/15 g, 1-8

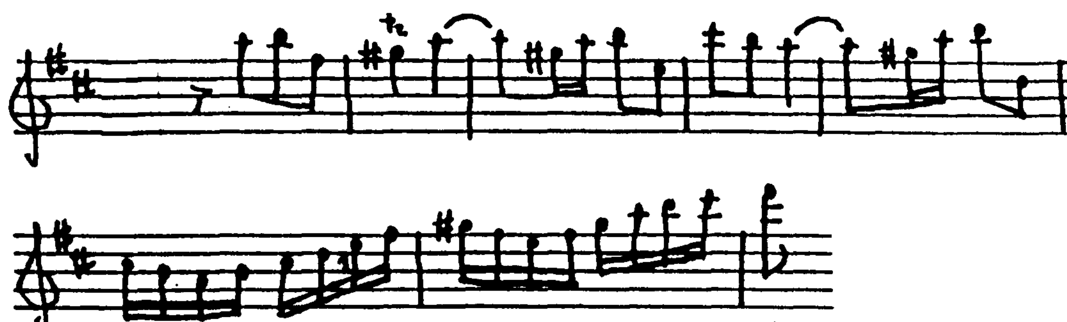
Allegro Moderato

The whole orchestra, including the trumpet, takes part in this movement, creating the impression that it is the grand finale. Indeed, the dramatic "knot" has now been untied, but Servandoni chooses to append an epilogue: "a page arrives and gives Rinaldo a horse with a magnificent harness. Three companies of smartly-dressed cavalry riding on real horses barded in the old style come to lead this warrior back to the Christian camp" [A]. Accordingly, Geminiani provides first an Andante in B minor (no. 16), in fugal style and based on a chromatic descending tetrachord (the *passus duriusculus*) that recalls the fugue of the third concerto of Op. III, then an Allegro in D major (no. 17) that could be considered the actual finale to *The Inchanted Forrest*, since it is to be played again after the last movement notated in the score (Affettuoso, no. 18). The festive, triumphal character of this Allegro is particularly marked, not only on account of the brass instruments, which here take a prominent part, but even more because of the opening tonic pedal preparing for the statement of the main theme, which creates expectancy by a gradual reduction of note-values. This first theme becomes the starting point for a "continuous expansion" development that eschews regular articulation in balanced musical phrases. The structural coherence of the movement relies heavily on solo passages performed mainly by the first violin and flute but also occasionally by the trumpet and other instrumental combinations. The main theme is initially presented in a sequential manner (see Ex. 31a), subsequently returning as the antecedent of a further "expansion" development typical of Geminiani's style (see Ex. 31b).

The technique adopted here by Geminiani - the use of a simple motive that periodically returns to become the starting point for further developments - is almost the only one that allows the composer to write

Ex. 31 a: IF/17, 17-22

Ex. 31 b: IF/17, 39-46



movements of any great length (no. 11, a rondo, is the exception). The Affettuoso in D minor (no. 18) seems to function merely as an interlude between the two statements of no. 17; the choice here of the parallel key, the simple melodic structure of the movement, and the omission of the horns create an effective contrast with the Allegro.

Obviously, the present "interpretation" of the score is very hypothetical. Only through the discovery of the version originally used for the pantomime would we be able to confirm its validity. Our analysis of the score with reference to its theatrical context appears to suggest that the second version was based closely on the first. The main

alterations probably arose as a result of its conversion from five acts to two tonally distinct "parts". It is also possible that in this process Geminiani reordered the movements, but the close relationship between the music of the second version and the scenario of the first makes this seem improbable.

The trend toward simplification observed in Op. IV is particularly marked in *The Inchanted Forrest*. Many traits that characterized Geminiani's previous orchestral works, and especially the predominance of contrapuntal writing, have now almost disappeared. Although it remains recognizable, the style of the composer has changed profoundly and in some respects can accurately be defined as 'galant'. The adoption of a simple, catchy homophonic mode of writing is related not only to the influence of French music; it arises quite separately from the stage requirements already mentioned (i.e., the rhythm of the upper part has to guide the movements of the mimers). Perhaps, too, the failure of the "laboured, difficult and fantastical" Op. VII convinced Geminiani that it was time to embrace the contemporary 'galant' fashion.

The mode of scoring, too, is slightly changed, although the addition of wind instruments does not really modify the traditional conception of the concerto grosso. The flutes, with few exceptions, merely double the violins, adding tone-colour and emphasizing the homophonic character of the score; however, their addition to the concertino ensemble (nos. 2, 11, 14, 15a, 15e, and 17) and to the solo violin (nos. 2, 4, and 11) produces a novel timbre that is one of the most striking features of the score. In the parts of the published edition the ornaments and marks of expression for the flutes (particularly slurs and staccato strokes), and sometimes the

actual rhythmic details, often differ from those of the violins that they are doubling; very likely, though, this is merely a result of inaccurate engraving, since in the autograph manuscript version (which is in score) violins and flutes share the same staves. The function of the brass instruments is simply to swell the sound and contribute to the tone-colour; they are restricted to the end of each act, which they announce by their presence. Like the flutes, they can be omitted without seriously affecting the harmony or melody. Briefly stated, the addition of wind instruments does not entail any increase in the number of real parts; this is confirmed by the fact that the manuscript version in score continues to be written on four staves. The orchestral writing is still firmly based on the relationship between concertino and ripieno, although in comparison with Opp. II, III, and VII there is a greater variety of solo combinations. The viola has a purely harmonic function, except where it provides continuity between the phrases of the upper parts; the second violin has greater mobility than the viola, although this rarely extends to an independent melodic function. In general, the inner parts clearly show the effect of the adoption of frankly homophonic writing; the complexity that characterized Geminiani's earliest concertos, in terms not only of their pervasive rhythmic and melodic irregularity but also of the high activity of their inner parts, has now almost entirely vanished. Simplification is also apparent in the technical demands made on the violin, whose parts are much easier than in any of the previous works. The highest violin note in the score is merely *d'''* (in Op. III it was *a'''*), and there are no instances of multiple-stopping, wide leaps, or any of the other technical difficulties so typical of Geminiani's violin writing; one reason for this may be that the violins are often doubled by

flutes.

The Inchanted Forrest, as has already been observed, is not programme music, but music adapted to a programme. The music does not try to describe or imitate, in the manner, say, of Vivaldi's *Le quattro stagioni*, but merely constitutes the musical background of the pantomime. What Servandoni did was probably not so different from what many choreographers are accustomed to do in modern times: first to choose the music and only then to create the ballet. The only part written by Geminiani with a precise descriptive point of reference is perhaps the last one, but even there one hesitates to speak of 'descriptive' writing because the music is content to accompany the action. For this reason, a direct comparison between *The Inchanted Forrest* and programme music of its period would be misleading.

Although the performance was a failure, Giovanni Niccolo Servandoni did not lose heart. In the following years he produced *Le triomphe de l'amour conjugal* (18 March 1755), *La conquète du Mogol par Thamas Kouli-kan* (4 April 1756), *La constance couronnée* (27 March 1757), and *La chute des anges rebelles* (12 March 1758). Comment on these productions appeared in the *Mercure de France*. The notices are generally positive, but one must remember that this French journal is not always a trustworthy guide to the public's reception of new works (it even rated *La Forest Enchantée* a success!). So it is difficult to know whether the public received these later pantomimes well - and in particular whether Servandoni tried to avoid the mistakes criticized by Grimm and the Marquis ***. The printed programmes of these pantomimes have been preserved, but not their music: *La*

Forest Enchantee is thus the sole creation of Servandoni that could (with some licence) be performed today.

Chapter Eight

REWORKINGS AND TRANSCRIPTIONS

> "The *rifriggitori*, or 'heaters-up' [writes Veracini], were so called because on every occasion when they had to produce new works they always 'reheated' the same works that they had heated up on other occasions; they started to do this while studying under their master (when they went to him in their youth for instruction), freely and frequently removing the good that was previously in them and inserting in its place new additions taken from the most popular music of others; they then proceeded to reheat this in the same way that they had done their own eternal stews. Then, going from country to country, with their Lenten sermons reheated (so to speak) two hundred thousand times, they peddle their merchandise, just like those who travel through different countries exhibiting the 'New World' or a 'tabernacle' and on such occasions sell jaspers [a kind of precious stone] to arrest nose-bleeds and a thousand other remedies for teeth, eyes, and ears [...]".[1]

That Veracini was referring specifically to Geminiani is difficult to doubt, not only because of the remarkable number of such "reheatings" published by our composer, but also because a good part of the treatise from which the quotation is taken is devoted to his "Fuga mostruosa" (VII/1/ii).[2] The same charge is levelled at the composer by Hawkins and Burney, although in a different way:

> "Notwithstanding [writes Hawkins] the fine talents which as a musician Geminiani possessed it must be remarked that the powers of his fancy seem to have been limited. His melodies were to the last degree elegant, his modulation original and multifarious, and in their general

> cast his compositions were tender and pathetic; and it is to the want of an active and teeming imagination that we are to attribute the publication of his works in various form. Perhaps it was this that moved him to compose his first opera of solos into sonatas for two violins and a bass, notwithstanding that the latter six of them had been made into Sonatas by Barsanti many years before;[3] and also to make into concertos sundry of the solos in his opera quarta. In the same spirit of improvement he employed the latter years of his life in varying and new moulding his former works, particularly he made two books of lessons for the harpsichord, consisting chiefly of airs from his solos; and it was not always that he altered them for the better".[4]

Although transcriptions and reworkings were at that time a normal practice, these criticisms seem to make the point that Geminiani went too far in this direction. Hawkins and Burney concur that the reason for Geminiani's "recycling" was his lack of imagination. However, while Burney writes with ironical contempt about "musical cookery, not to call it quackery", Hawkins, though conceding that Geminiani's imagination must have been limited, suggests more positively that his transcriptions and reworkings were the result of his "spirit of improvement". In fact, one must draw a careful distinction between Geminiani's motivations on different occasions, since money was not always his sole or overriding concern. The "corrected" edition of Op. I (1739) owed its origin primarily to this "spirit of improvement", the transcription of Corelli's Op. V to the composer's attempt to consolidate his position in England, the *Pièces de Clavecin* perhaps to a desire for his music to circulate among a wider public, the edition in score of the Op. II and Op. III concertos to his didactic aims. At the same time one must bear in mind that since an important part of his livelihood derived from published instrumental music,

these transcriptions, reworkings, and reprints, whatever the nature of their motivation, could provide him with a valuable source of supplementary income.

The compositions "reheated" by Geminiani may be divided into three categories: the transcriptions of his own works with different scoring, those made of music by others, and the works "nuovamente ristampate e con diligenza corrette". To the first group belong the trio sonatas arranged from Op. I (c. 1742), the two collections of *Pièces de Clavecin* (1743, 1762), which are mainly transcriptions from Opp. I, II, IV, V, VII, and from the violin and cittern treatises, the concertos arranged from the Op. IV violin sonatas (1743), and the violin transcriptions of the Op. V cello sonatas (1746). To the second belong the concertos after Corelli's Op. V (1726, 1729), Op. I, and Op. III (both 1735), and the transcriptions published in Geminiani's first two treatises. To the third belong the 1739 edition of Op. I and the edition in score of Opp. II and III (c. 1757).

It is interesting to note that a high proportion of the transcriptions belonging to the first category (which are the only ones properly qualifying for the epithet "reheatings") were made between 1742 and 1746 - during the years in which Geminiani was composing the cello sonatas and the last set of concertos. It is therefore difficult to endorse fully the view of Burney and Hawkins that his alleged lack of imagination was the reason for his making so many transcriptions.

In general, Geminiani remains faithful to the original editions, particularly if he is not obliged to add new parts, as in the concertos from Op. IV and the trio sonatas. However, there are some exceptions, particularly in the *Pièces de Clavecin*, where the composer does not always

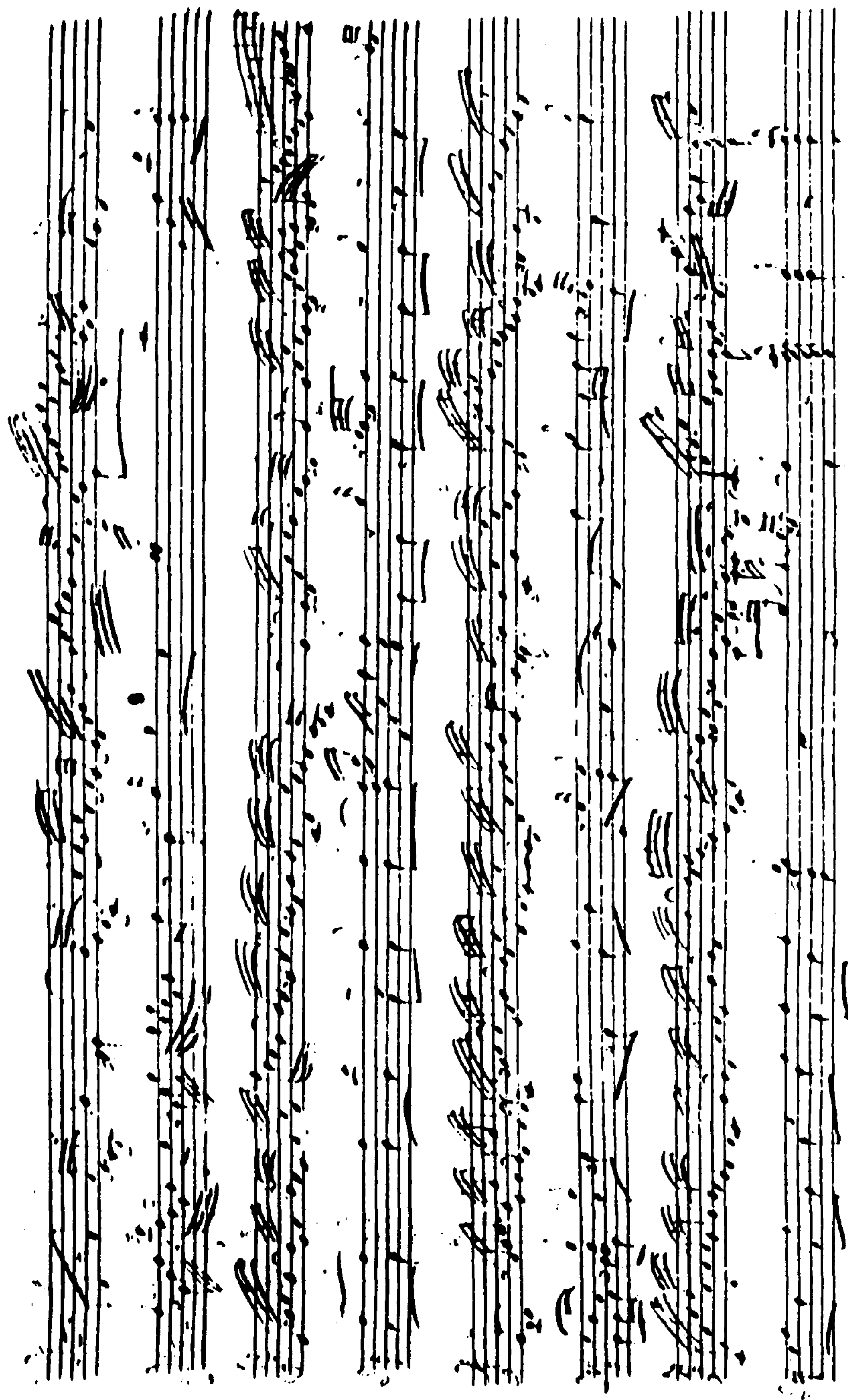


FIG. 16

Autograph of PC 1/i [GB-Lbl, Add. Ms. 32587]

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give the right hand the original upper part and the left hand the continuo part but sometimes introduces noteworthy variations. Of the transcriptions in the first category, i.e. those based on Geminiani's own works, the two collections of *Pièces de Clavecin* are without doubt the most interesting. In the following table the number of the piece in the respective collection, the page, the tempo marking, the number of bars, the key, and the source of each movement are given in successive columns:

no.	page	tempo	bars	key	source
		Pièces de Clavecin (I, 1743)			
1	[2]	Prelude Lentement C	19	D major	IV/1/i [Adagio]
2	[4]	Gayment C	56	D major	IV/1/ii [Allegro]
3	[6]	Vivement 3/4	142	D major	IV/1/iv [Allegro assai,3/8]
4	[8]	Tendrement 3/2	54	A minor	IV/5/i [Andante]
5	[10]	Vivement ¢	127	A major	IV/5/ii [Presto]
6	[12]	Gracieusement 3/8	72	A minor	IV/5/iii [Allegro aff.o]
7	[13]	Tendrement 3/4	32	A major	IV/5/iii [Non Tanto]
8	[14]	Amoureusement 3/8	132	D minor	IV/8/iv [Allegro]
9	[16]	Vivement 12/8	48	D minor	IV/4/iv [Allegro]
10	[18]	Moderement 2/4	149	D minor	IV/6/iii [Andante]
11	[22]	Tendrement 3/4	73	G minor	I/6/i [Affettuoso]
12	[24]	Vivement ¢	124	G minor	I/6/iii [Allegro]

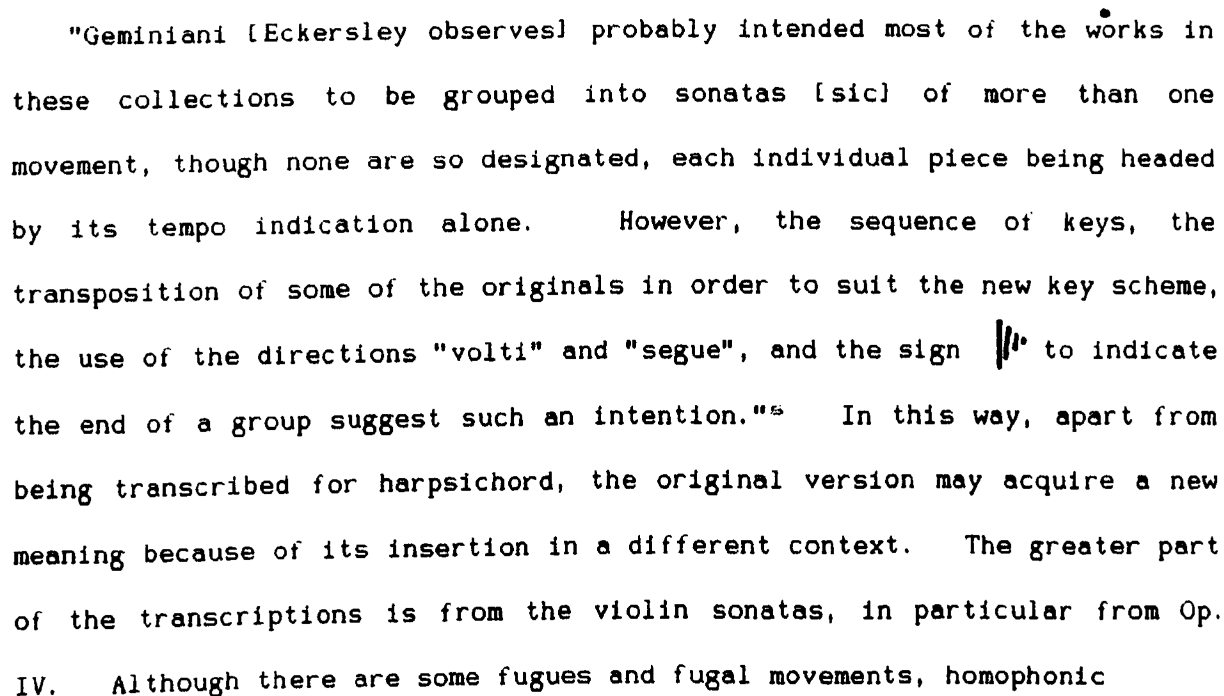
13	[28]	Minuet 3/8	208	C minor	II/1/iv [Allegro cantabile
14	[32]	Minuet 3/4	160	G minor	GB-Lbl, h. 48. h.

Pièces de Clavecin (II, 1762)

1	[2]	Allegro Moderato ¢	63	C minor	?
2	[3]	Allegro 3/4	90	C minor	II/3/iv [All.o assai, D minor]
3	[5]	Allegro Moderato 2/4	130	B flat major	V/4/ii [C]
		Andante 3/4	11		V/4/iii
4	[7]	Allegro 3/8	24	B flat major	?
5	[8]	Allegro Moderato ¢ [Per l'Organo]	60	C major	APGC/1/i
6	[9]	Allegro 3/8	32	C major	?
		Affettuoso 3/4	16	C minor	
		Allegro 3/8	24	C major	
7	[10]	Andante 3/4	20	A minor	?
		Presto 9/8	58	C major	APGC/1/iv [Giga]
8	[12]	Allegro C	53	B flat major	IV/3/ii [C major]
9	[14]	Allegro 3/8	88	B flat major	IV/6/ii [Re]
		Adagio C	5	G minor	?
10	[15]	Minuet Allegro 3/4	24	B flat major	V/4/iv [3/8]
11	[16]	Allegro C	46	A major	V/1/iv
12	[17]	Allegro moderato 2/4	129	A minor	IV/9/iv [Allegro]

13	[20]	Minuet Allegro 3/4	20	A major	IV/10/iii [Allegro]
14	[20]	Allegro 3/8	86	C minor	IV/2/iv [E minor]
15	[22]	Affettuoso 3/4	36	C minor	APGC/10/ii [G minor]
16	[22]	Allegro C	62	D minor	IV/8/ii
17	[25]	Affettuoso	36	C minor	V/3/iii
18	[25]	Allegro ¢	36	C major	V/3/iv'
19	[26]	Allegro moderato ¢	48	C minor	V/3/iv''
20	[27]	Allegro assai ¢	52	B flat major	APGC/7/ii [All. Mod^{to}, F major]
		Grave 3/2	4	(-V)	
21	[28]	Giga Allegro 6/8	85	B flat major	IV/6/iv [D major, 12/8]
22	[30]	Alemanda Allegro mod. ¢	47	F major	I/9/i [Vivace]
23	[31]	Andante C	16	D minor	?
24	[32]	Allegro assai 3/4	63	F major	I/9/iii
25	[34] 3/4	Affettuoso	94	G minor	GB-Lbl, Add. Ms. 34998
26	[36]	Giga Allegro assai 6/8	58	G major	IV/12/iii [Presto, A major]
27	[37]	Adagio 3/2	24	B minor	IV/11/i [Largo]
28	[38]	Allegro assai C	50	D major	IV/11/ii [Allegro]
29	[40]	Allegro 3/8	105	B minor	IV/11/iv
30	[42]	Allegro ¢	40	C minor	APGC/8/ii [All. Mod^{to}, F minor]
31	[42]	Allegro moderato 3/4	60	C minor	VII/5/iv

32	[44]	Allegro 3/8	115	G minor	APV/6 [Allegro assai, A min.]
33	[46]	Fuga per l'Organo Allegro ¢	51	A major	I/1/ii
34	[48]	Allegro C	38	A major	I/1/iv
35	[50]	Minuet Affettuoso 3/8	40	C minor	APGC/2/iii
36	[50]	Allegro 6/8	54	C minor	I/7/iv
37	[52]	Per l'Organo Allegro 3/8	122	D major	I/4/iv
38	[54]	Allegro moderato 2/4	92	E major	I/10/ii [Allegro]
		[Prestissimo C]			
39	[56]	Allegro 12/8	51	E major	I/10/iv
40	[58]	Affettuoso 3/4	16	E minor	?
41	[58]	Allegro 3/8	76	E major	?



"Geminiani [Eckersley observes] probably intended most of the works in these collections to be grouped into sonatas [sic] of more than one movement, though none are so designated, each individual piece being headed by its tempo indication alone. However, the sequence of keys, the transposition of some of the originals in order to suit the new key scheme, the use of the directions "volti" and "segue", and the sign 𝄂 to indicate the end of a group suggest such an intention."[5] In this way, apart from being transcribed for harpsichord, the original version may acquire a new meaning because of its insertion in a different context. The greater part of the transcriptions is from the violin sonatas, in particular from Op. IV. Although there are some fugues and fugal movements, homophonic

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FIG. 17

Title-page of the first collection of *Pièces de Clavecin* [A 8a]

writing predominates. It is interesting to see that Geminiani has transcribed all the rondos of Op. IV, perhaps because of the opportunity they afforded him to write variations on each return of the refrain (see PC 1/x) (not forgetting the obvious suitability of movements in this form for a collection whose title and internal organisation invite comparison with the collections of "Pièces de clavecin" by Rameau and other French composers). "It may appear surprising [Eckersley writes] to anyone acquainted with Burney's criticism of Geminiani's writing as being irregular and improvisatory, to find that the rondeau-based forms, by definition the most rigid, should be favoured by him. But repetitive structures are by no means incompatible with the most widely used form of improvisation - embellishment of given material, especially if it recurs. Perhaps Geminiani's undoubted penchant for the rondeau form [...] is owing to the opportunities it offered for the embellishment of either treble or bass, or both, in a manner which he could dictate".[5] In Rameau's or Couperin's rondos the refrain is rarely repeated in varied form; the same is ostensibly true of the original versions of the movements from which the *Pièces de Clavecin* were drawn, although in that instance one cannot discount the possibility that violinists, including the composer, followed common Italian practice by improvising variations. One can also make the point that Geminiani chose to write out the variations in the harpsichord transcriptions precisely because they were destined in the main for amateur musicians versed in the French style who had no experience of, or expertise in, improvisation. His frequent choice of repetition-based forms (i.e., the rondo and other forms structured around regular reprises) is certainly related to his particular bent for the principle of variation, already encountered in sonatas and concertos, but particularly marked in Op. IV.

In his transcription of the "menuet en rondeau" from the second set of concertos (II/1/iv), Geminiani adds to the original 52 bars three variations of similar length. Whereas in the transcriptions of movements from violin sonatas it is possible to limit change to the realization of the continuo and the addition of embellishments suited to the keyboard instrument, in those of concerto movements, where it is necessary to accommodate all the parts on two staves only and in addition take account of keyboard technique, inner parts are often suppressed or rewritten. The minuet mentioned above furnishes a good example:

Ex. 32 a: II/1/iv, 1-8 [A 2e]

Violini Tutti
Allegro Cantabile
Viola 1a
Viola 2a
Bassi Tutti

Ex. 32 b: PC 1/xiii, 1-8

Minuet

It is very likely that Geminiani decided to include this minuet because of its great popularity. Certainly, his perception of the success of his compositions and of individual movements within them must have influenced his choice of movements to transcribe for the harpsichord. The first set of *Pièces de Clavecin* ends with another minuet with variations (PC 1/xiv); in a separate printed edition of the two minuets we read that the second "è formato sopra un soggetto datogli" (is written on a subject given to him). These two movements were so successful that they were published together with a harpsichord transcription of Handel's *Water Music* (see Catalogue, A 11 c).

The changes (relative to the originals) introduced by Geminiani in his harpsichord transcriptions are often connected with the need to realize on the keyboard the sustained sound of strings. In his treatise *L'Art de bien accompagner du Clavecin*, published one year after the first collection of *Pièces de Clavecin*, Geminiani stresses the importance of producing a continuous flow of sound flow by means of arpeggios and diminutions of various kinds, and it is quite possible that he intended his harpsichord transcriptions to serve as examples of this technique. In his transcription of IV/1/i the composer modifies the original melody by the insertion of diminutions and embellishments and introduces a series of arpeggios in the bass in order to fill in the gaps between the long notes and during the rests of the upper part:

Ex. 33 a: IV/1/i, 1-3

Ex. 33 b: PC 1/1, 1-3

Prelude.

In the original version the final cadenza is suggested merely by a fermata (corona) and left to the improvisation of the player, whereas in the transcription it is written out in full with the result that the total number of bars increases from 16 to 19:

Ex. 34 a: IV/1/1, 14-16

(Adagio)

Ex. 34 b: PC 1/i, 114-19

(Lentement)

Sometimes the additions assume larger proportions, as in the *Moderement* in D minor (PC 1/x), derived from IV/6/iii. Here Geminiani adds to the original A:BACADA plan a varied restatement of the last episode (D) and a further variation of the refrain (A). Another example is the 'trio' of the 'gavotte en rondeau' of the third sonata of Op. V, which in the harpsichord transcription becomes a movement on its own but with the

addtion of a variation of the second episode (PC 2/xix).

"Geminiani [writes Eckersley] may well have intended his harpsichord collections for the keyboard player who could not manage them in their original form. But those who sought them as an easy alternative [...] would be disappointed".[7] That some of the transcriptions require a well developed keyboard technique is evident, yet many of the changes suggest strongly that it was the composer's intention to make them easier to perform than the originals. In his transcription of the two fugues of the sixth sonata of Op. I the composer writes the part for the left hand on two separate staves in order to facilitate its reading (PC 1/xi-xii). On other occasions he simplifies the melody by making its rhythm more regular, perhaps with the aim of lessening the rhapsodic character of the original, as occurs in the transcription of the Allegro Moderato of the fourth sonata of Op. V:

Ex. 35 a: V/4/ii, 11-12 [A 5e]

Ex. 35 b: PC 2/iii, 21-24

In his second collection of *Pièces de Clavecin* Geminiani is generally more faithful to the originals, limiting the changes to those demanded by performance on the keyboard and making most alterations to the embellishments and marks of expression.

"Among the various Productions of foreign Composers for the Harpsichord [Avison writes in the *Advertisement* of his *Six Sonatas for the Harpsichord* op. VIII (1764) - the Sonatas of Scarlatti, Rameau and Carlo Bach, have their *peculiar* Beauties. The *fine Fancy* of the Italian, *the spirited Science* of the Frenchman, and the German's *diffusive Expression* are the distinguishing Signatures of their Music. But if we examine the Lessons of Geminiani we shall find them fraught with every Beauty, and therefore, worthy of the Attention of those who would improve a true Taste, and acquire a graceful and fluent Execution". This is not the first time that Avison shows his devotion to his teacher, but what is really surprising is that he goes so far as to prefer Geminiani's transcriptions to the sonatas of D. Scarlatti, Rameau, and C. P. E. Bach. Some of the transcriptions

are certainly interesting and rank among the best compositions of the composer; nevertheless, they remain transcriptions, and one often becomes aware that they were not conceived originally for the harpsichord.

The trio sonatas based on Op. I and the concertos based on Op. IV undergo relatively small modifications, all things considered. In these transcriptions Geminiani does not always content himself with dividing the double stops of the original version between the two upper parts, but sometimes adds new lines, makes changes to the form (particularly in the trio sonatas), and alters the marks of expression and the ornamentation. Compared with the original "solo" versions, the trio sonatas are easier to perform, particularly since the complex polyphony of fugues and fugal movements now has an additional instrument at its disposal. In this respect, the transcription of Op. I, although it could be described as a "reheating" with greater justice than many of the other arrangements, seems to obey the same spirit of simplification observed in the *Pièces de Clavecin*: the author's intention is to make difficult pieces easier to perform. The changes introduced in the transcription of Op. IV are often related to the undesirability of making the *ripieno* first violins perform the original solo part. A comparison between the first violin part in the Adagio of the first sonata and its transcription will illustrate the point:

Ex. 36 a: IV/1/i, sonata

Adagio

Ex. 36 b: IV/1/i, concerto [A 4e]

CONCERTO I

Andante

Soli

Tutti

Soli

Tutti

The following table shows the changes introduced by Geminiani in the tempo indications:

Transcription		Original	
1	Andante C Allegro C Affettuoso 3/4 Allegro 3/8	IV/1	Adagio C Allegro C Largo 3/4 Allegro assai 3/8
2	Grave 3/2 Allegro C Grave 3/2 Allegro 3/8	IV/11	Largo 3/2 Allegro C Adagio 3/2 Allegro 3/8
3	Adagio C Allegro C Andante 3/4 Allegro 3/8	IV/2	[Adagio] C Allegro C Largo 3/4 Allegro 3/8
4	Andante 3/2 Presto ¢ Allegro 3/8	IV/5	Andante 3/2 Presto ¢ Allegro aff.o 3/8

5	Andante 6/8 Allegro C Andante 3/2 Allegro 3/4	IV/7	Andante 6/8 Allegro C Moderato 3/2 Allegro 3/4
6	Andante C Allegro C Affettuoso 3/4 Allegro 2/4	IV/9	Andante C Allegro C Andante 3/4 Allegro 2/4

In the "revised, corrected, and enlarged" editions of the Op. II and Op. III concertos, Geminiani replaces the indication *adagio* by *andante*; according to Walls, this "seems to go hand in hand with a reduction in the number of opportunities for extravagant and improvizatory embellishments".[18] In the transcription of Op. IV, published just four years after the original edition, the substitution of the faster tempo marking is less systematic but is nevertheless significant . From the Op. IV violin sonatas onwards, one notes a growing tendency to describe the tempo of slow movements as *andante*, *affettuoso*, or *grave*; this is particularly so in *The Inchanted Forrest*, the edition in score of Opp. II and III, and in the second set of *Pièces de Clavecin*.

"In his younger days, [writes Burney] when imagination is most fertile, sixteen years elapsed between the publication of his first book of solos [1716] and his first six concertos [1732]. Indeed, during that period, he achieved what a plodding contrapuntist of inferior abilities might have done as well: he transformed Corelli's solos and six of his sonatas into concertos, by multiplying notes, and loading, and deforming, I think, those melodies, that were more graceful and pleasing in their light original dress".[9] It was perhaps to these transcriptions that Veracini was referring when he caustically wrote: "The paraphrasers, paraphrasing the

works of others, gave the impression of composing, so that short-sighted people believed that these were creations of the author whose name was written at the head. These paraphrases were, most of the time, a badly assembled mosaic of small fragments lacking coherence, good taste and expression, and failed to develop and bring to a successful conclusion their initial promises. The main reasons for these musical misdeeds were different kinds of rheumatism that very often befall the works of those who compose without experience, or rather steal whatever they write".[10]

The transcriptions of the first six sonatas of Corelli's Op. V were published in 1726 and, as has already been said, enjoyed the same wide circulation as Op. III. In contrast, the transcription of the second six sonatas, published three years later, in Hawkins' words "having no fugues, and consisting altogether of airs, afforded him but little scope for the exercise of his skill, and met with but an indifferent reception".[11] Indeed, in the church sonatas Geminiani changes the original compositions to a greater extent than in the chamber sonatas, where he merely assigns to the second violin and the viola the parts suggested by the continuo harmonies, leaving the upper part intact. Whereas in the transcriptions of Corelli's chamber sonatas Geminiani is interested only in amplifying the sonority, in the fugues of the church sonatas he not only distributes the entries of the subjects among the various parts but also adds new phrases and inserts imitations in the inner voices.

As we have already seen, Bukofzer considered Geminiani's transcription of Corelli's Opp. I and III illustrative of the fact that for conservative composers the trio sonata still dominated the idea of the concerto. The transcription of Corelli's Op. V violin sonatas - particularly the "da camera" works but including the many homophonic movements present in the

church sonatas - seems to contradict this opinion. In many of them the upper part is supported in the simplest way by the lower parts: the only essential difference from the original version is that the continuo is now not performed by harpsichord and/or cello alone but by a full string ensemble. Thus the resulting effect is closer to that of a violin concerto than to that of a concerto grosso (to use the modern, perhaps unhistorical, meaning of that expression), as we can see from the jig ending the fifth sonata:

Ex. 37 a: Corelli, V/5/v, 1-9 [Joachim-Chrysander]

Ex. 37 b: Geminiani-Corelli, V/5/v, 1-9 [A 15o]

Allegro
155

Violino I. solo
piano

Violino II. solo
pizz.
piano

Viola sola
pizz.
piano

Violoncello solo
pizz.
piano

Allegro

Violini ripieno I.
pizz.
piano

II.
pizz.
piano

Viole ripieno
pizz.
piano

Violoncelli Contrabbassi ripieno
pizz.
piano

Organo (o'Cembalo)
piano

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

Whether the original was a trio sonata or a violin sonata makes little difference to Geminiani: in both cases it is a matter of reorganising parts and, if necessary, writing new lines in order to fill out the sound. The greater number of changes from the original observable in the *Pièces de Clavecin* results from the replacement of one or more stringed instruments by the harpsichord: the transcription becomes perforce an elaboration because in order to maintain the same continuity of sound the arranger has to insert scales, arpeggios, and diminutions, and on occasion to change the register of a part. Something similar happens in J. S. Bach's concerto transcriptions for solo keyboard, although in that instance the transcriber had a much more intimate understanding of the possibilities of the keyboard than Geminiani. In contrast, most of Geminiani's transcriptions for string ensemble of Corelli's music entail little more than the addition of unobtrusive accompanying parts: the obbligato parts remain substantially the same as they were before.

Comparing Handel and Geminiani, William Hayes writes: "as the Style of these two Masters is different, although each excellent in the Kind, so also is their Method of Study: The one [Geminiani] slow, cautious, and elaborate; the other [Handel], rapid, enterprizing, and expeditious. The one frequently revising, correcting, altering, and amending until his Piece be completely polished; the other having once committed his to Writing, resteth satisfied, and transmitteth it to his Copist".[12] Unlike Avison, Hayes was an impartial and balanced critic; in other passages of his *Remarks on Mr Avison's Essay on Musical Expression* (1753) he lays precise charges against Geminiani; so it is particularly noteworthy that in the passage just quoted he talks of the composer's mania for self-correction quite dispassionately. This "spirit of improvement" emerges for the first

LE PRIME SONATE

a Violino, e Baſso

di

F . GEMINIANI

nuovamente ristampate, e con diligenza corrette, aggiuntovi ancora per maggior facilità le grazie agli adagj, ed i numeri per la trasposizione della mano.

Dedicate

All'Illustriſſima ed Eccellentiſſima SIGNORA

DOROTEA

CONTESSA di BURLINGTON .

LONDRA , MDCCXXXIX .

FIG. 18

Title-page of the 1739 edition of Op. I [A 1f]

time in Geminiani's "Prime Sonate a Violino e Basso [...] nuovamente ristampate e con diligenza corrette" (1739). The most striking aspect of the new edition is the systematic addition of ornaments, diminutions, dynamic markings, and marks of expression. Moreover, Geminiani "corrects" the figuring of the continuo; he adds the "numeri per la trasposizione della mano"; he reduces in number or alters those embellishments no longer in fashion (see I-1739/3/i); sometimes, he even compresses or expands motives or phrases. In general, the observations made by Aldrich about Bach's concerto transcriptions are valid here too: the focal points of the original melody are emphasized both by inserting dissonant notes (appoggiaturas) and by enlivening the rhythm (trills, turns, mordents); the larger melodic intervals are filled in with arpeggios and scales of various kinds; repetitions of phrases or short fragments give rise to an even richer profusion of embellishments.[13]

It is probable that some of the changes made to the *Prime Sonate* reflect the influence of contemporary French music; significantly, the new edition came out in the same year that Geminiani issued his Op. IV violin sonatas, in which, as we have already observed, many clear marks of the French style are evident. What is most indisputably French about the new edition of Op. I is the form of notation, which is more attentive and more carefully nuanced in its marks of expression and ornamentation than the original "Italian" edition published in England. However, the addition of these ornaments and expressive marks is not merely an external change - one simply resulting from a different notational practice; rather, it is a considered stylistic modification. In other words, the new ornaments and other special effects are much more than simply the old ones made manifest and given an explicit form. In the twenty-three years that had elapsed

between the two versions, Geminiani's style had genuinely progressed. So the "corrections" made in 1739 reveal an attempt by the composer to update his sonatas, at the same time giving them a fashionable French veneer. Of Geminiani's sincere admiration for French music in the later part of his career there can be no doubt, since in the preface to his *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick* he pays special tribute to the melodic gifts of Lully, the *doyen* of French composers.

In the "corrected and enlarged" editions of the Op. II and Op. III concertos (c. 1757) Geminiani travels much further along the same path. "Reflecting [Hawkins writes] that his concertos had never been printed in a manner agreeable to his wishes, he determined to publish them himself, and also to give to the world what had long been earnestly wished for, a score of them. Accordingly he set himself to revise his second and third operas; but here the desire of making improvements, and a passion for refinement betrayed him into errors, for, besides the insertion of a variety of new passages, which did but ill sort with the general design of the several compositions into which they were engrafted, he entirely new modelled some of them, giving in many instances those passages to the second violin which had originally been composed for the tenor. Besides this he frequently made repeats of particular movements, and those so intricately ordered, as to render them very difficult of performance".[14] Eckersley speaks of "harmonical compression", which in its simplest form comes about by excising repetitions and reducing the number of virtuosic passages; the result, according to this writer, is an increase of weight and intensity characteristic of Geminiani's late compositions.[15] Despite all these changes, it seems that the composer's prime aim here was not "correction" for its own sake but rather the publication of the concertos

SIX

CONCERTOS,

COMPOSED BY

F. GEMINIANI.

OPERA SECONDA.

The SECOND EDITION,

Corrected and Enlarged, with some new Movements, by the Author;

And now first Published in SCORE.

LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR, by JOHN JOHNSON, in *Cheapside.*

Where may be had,

The same Work in PARTS; and also the Second Edition of Six Concertos, by the same Author, Op. 3, in SCORE and in PARTS.

FIG. 19

Title-page of the edition in score of Op. II [A 2e]

for the first time in the form of a score; in other words, his motivation was primarily didactic. This is not surprising when we consider that for many years Geminiani had been working mainly on his treatises and that his major preoccupation during this period was the education of the rising generation of musicians. Walls observes pertinently: "The decision to publish his revised Concerti Grossi in score can be seen as part of a desire to explain and to educate. The standard justification for publishing (or even copying) a score in the first half of the 18th century in England was that it would be instructive to see all the parts of a composition in relation to each other".[16] It is instructive in this connection to consider what Burney wrote to Twining on 14 December 1781: "Before I was 18 I scored Geminiani's 2 sets of Concertos, for improvement in Counterpoint, & I remember when he was about to print them in score, with new readings, he borrowed my MS which he never returned".[17]

Whatever Geminiani's precise intentions were in printing so many reworkings and transcriptions, a comparison with their respective original editions reveals a common trait that must always be taken into account: with very few exceptions, the composer simplifies and rationalises the original text in order to make it easier to perform (the "difficulty" of which Hawkins speaks is merely one of discerning the pattern of repeated movements and has nothing to do with technical demands on the players). This does not necessarily mean that the original version is watered down, because the simplification can in most instances be viewed as part and parcel of the process of "correction" through which Geminiani seeks to modernize his music.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the act of transcription fulfils for Geminiani a number of different purposes at the same time: a desire to

improve a composition *tout court*; a desire to bring it up to date in matters of taste and style; a desire to exemplify the composer's theoretical tenets; a desire to bring a work before a wider audience; a desire to remain in the public eye; a desire to make money. Naturally, the emphasis shifts in each case from one factor to another, but none of these considerations is entirely irrelevant to any of the transcriptions.

The originality of a work of art is considered today almost the *sine qua non* of its aesthetic worth. One is therefore easily tempted to agree with Veracini's harsh criticism and dismiss Geminiani's "reheatings" as redundant or even defective copies of their originals. However, many of them were very probably considered by the composer to be final, definitive versions of the works in question - the only ones which he would have wished to be studied and performed by posterity. This is certainly true of the reworkings of Opp. I, II, and III, where the "spirit of improvement" looms large; it arguably applies as well to the fairly large number of new versions in which Geminiani makes radical alterations to the formal structure, as in some of the *Pièces de Clavecin*. In the latter case the reworkings can lay claim on purely musical grounds to an importance at least equal to that of the originals.

Chapter Nine

THE TREATISES

After the publication of his Op. V cello sonatas and Op. VII concertos (1747), and perhaps disappointed for their cool reception by the public, Geminiani devoted himself mainly to the writing of treatises and to making reworkings and transcriptions of his previous compositions. In the last fifteen years of his life, between 1748 and 1762, he published as many as six treatises: the *Rules for playing in a true Taste* Op. VIII (c. 1748), *A Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick* (1749), *The Art of Playing on the Violin* Op. IX (1751), the *Guida Armonica* op. X (c. 1752), *The Art of Accompaniament* op. XI (1754), and *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra* (1760). According to Hawkins, a seventh treatise, which was apparently the work of many years, was stolen during his last period of residence in Dublin.[1]

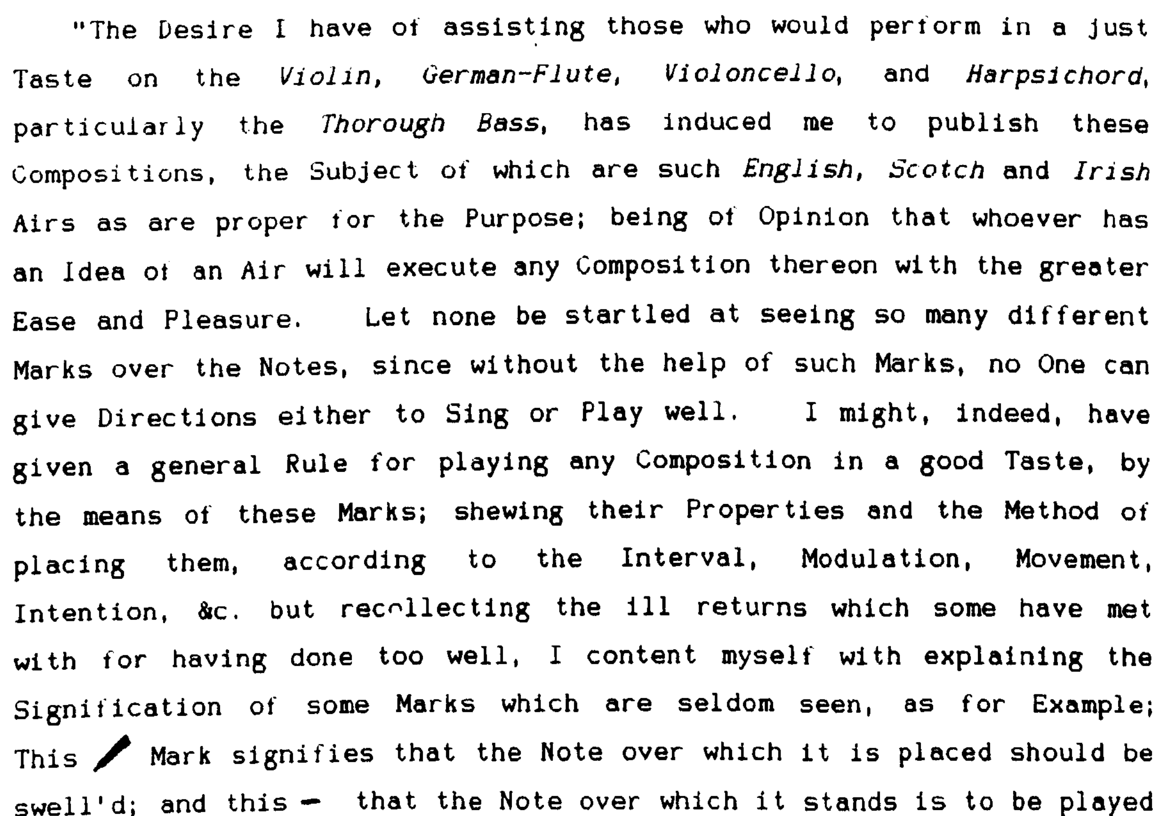
What these treatises have in common is the extreme brevity of their non-musical text, which is generally limited to a preface and sometimes consists merely of a few brief introductory rules. "It is clear [McArtor observes] that Geminiani does not attempt to teach by precepts. His simple intention is to provide material from which students can learn proper procedures by execution. In turn, practicing the examples will provide the habit of proper performance."[2] Lacking any systematic exposition of rules and precepts, Geminiani's works dignified by the name of treatises seem to be little more than practical manuals for musicians. They are sometimes hard to understand because of the absence of an explanatory text; this is particularly the case with the *Guida Armonica*,

which shortly after its publication in France and England was actually followed by a supplement in which the author attempted to clarify its meaning. Nevertheless, these works - whether or not they qualify as treatises in the normal sense of the word - are certainly sources of great interest, not only because they lead us to a better understanding of Geminiani's musical style, but also because they tackle some very important problems of interpretation such as the use of vibrato, the realization of the continuo and the significance of dynamic markings.

The *Rules for Playing in a true Taste* and the *Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Musick*, hereinafter referred to as *Taste 1* and *Taste 2* following McArtor's usage, were published within exactly one year of each other. In the first work the title-page cites the opus number (VIII) but not the year of publication; in the second work only the year, 1749, is given. However, in the preface to *Taste 2* Geminiani writes that *Taste 1* was "the last Work that I made public", so it must have been published after Op. VII (1747) and before *Taste 2* (1749): i.e., around 1748. Moreover, in the list of Geminiani's works printed and/or sold by Johnson appearing on the title-page of *The Art of Accompaniament* we read of "A Treatise on good Taste, being the second Part of the Rules" - which perhaps explains the lack of a separate opus number.

"'Good taste' [Donington writes in the introduction to the facsimile edition of *Taste 2*] was almost a technical term of the period. It was used not merely for a refined and cultured attitude toward music in general; it was used for a refined and cultured ability to invent more or less improvised ornamentation for melodies often notated in plain outline, but requiring such ornamentation in order to be given a complete

performance." Geminiani's aim in these two first treatises is to show the best places to perform trills, mordents, turns, crescendo, and diminuendo "for playing any Composition in a good Taste". The correct performance of ornaments is for Geminiani the necessary condition for being able to "move the audience" and give "the highest Degree of Pleasure". Not by accident, the main type of change introduced in the "corrected" edition of Op. I (1739) is the systematic addition of embellishments and marks of expression (which serves to reduce - though not entirely to remove - the opportunity to introduce arbitrary improvisation). In his treatises dedicated to the cultivation of "good taste" Geminiani goes still further in his attempt to limit performers' freedom regarding embellishment: he now seeks to guide even their unwritten improvisations along the correct path. The intentions of the author are clearly set out in the preface to *Taste I*:



"The Desire I have of assisting those who would perform in a just Taste on the *Violin*, *German-Flute*, *Violoncello*, and *Harpsichord*, particularly the *Thorough Bass*, has induced me to publish these Compositions, the Subject of which are such *English*, *Scotch* and *Irish* Airs as are proper for the Purpose; being of Opinion that whoever has an Idea of an Air will execute any Composition thereon with the greater Ease and Pleasure. Let none be startled at seeing so many different Marks over the Notes, since without the help of such Marks, no One can give Directions either to Sing or Play well. I might, indeed, have given a general Rule for playing any Composition in a good Taste, by the means of these Marks; shewing their Properties and the Method of placing them, according to the Interval, Modulation, Movement, Intention, &c. but recollecting the ill returns which some have met with for having done too well, I content myself with explaining the Signification of some Marks which are seldom seen, as for Example; This / Mark signifies that the Note over which it is placed should be swell'd; and this – that the Note over which it stands is to be played

plain. This *//* Mark expresses a Beat; and the following *|* a sudden taking off the Bow from the String. To avoid Confusion I have omitted the Mark to express the Diminution of Sound, which is done by coming gradually down from *Forte* to *Piano* with the same Bow; I have omitted also the Mark of the *Close Shake*, which may be made on any Note whatsoever. As to the other Signs, which may be met with, it is needless to mention them, as they are universally known."

The title of the treatise is thus misleading: in fact, it does not propound "rules" but merely presents four "favourite Airs" each followed by a few variations containing a profusion of marks of expression and ornaments of various kinds. The learner is supposed to infer through observation, intuition, and above all practice the "rules" of which Geminiani speaks, so that he is subsequently able to apply them to any other melody "with the greater Ease and Pleasure". The four melodies used by Geminiani in *Taste I* are a Scottish air by David Rizzio ("Ann thou were my ain Thing"), an air by Henry Purcell ("What shall I do to show how much I love her"), a popular Irish tune, and an English tune. The first two variations of the air by Purcell give a good idea of the treatise's nature (see Ex. 38).

It is noteworthy that a treatise on embellishment associates itself so closely with the technique of variation-writing, as if Geminiani wished to suggest a near-equivalence of the two practices; one might be forgiven for thinking that any melody, to be performed "in good taste", has to be turned quite literally into a thoroughgoing variation of itself.

In the quoted example Geminiani largely adopts French symbols for ornaments but does not entirely renounce his own Italian notational tradition; this results in a curious symbiosis. In fact, despite the

Ex. 38: *Taste 1*, pp. 6-7

Volti

prevalence of "French" ornaments, each indicated unequivocally by its designated symbol and applied only to a single note (a restriction that safeguards the integrity of the melodic line), there are also a surprising number of fully written out "Italian" embellishments that drastically modify the contour of whole phrases at a time. Regarding this important difference, it is useful to remember the distinction drawn by Quantz in his *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* (1752) between "wesentliche Manieren" and "willkürliche Manieren": between ornaments that can be expressed by simple symbols, such as trills, mordents, or appoggiaturas, and more complex rhythmic and melodic elaborations that cannot be shown by ready-made symbols. The second type of ornamention, favoured by the Italians, was generally left to the player's improvisation and only rarely written out in full in the score. We may see it, however, in the version of Corelli's violin sonata Op. V no. 9 "written as Geminiani used to play it" (see Catalogue, A 13), or the edition of Corelli's Op. V printed in 1710 by both Pierre Mortier and Estienne Roger with the addition of the *grazie agli adagi* "as he [Corelli] plays them". The reason for the unfamiliar juxtaposition of French and Italian ornaments in *Taste 1* is probably that for his didactic purposes and for the sake of completeness Geminiani needed to include practical examples of Italian-style embellishment alongside the simpler French ornaments. The suggestion that Geminiani, like Couperin or Leclair, wished to achieve a "réunion des goûts" probably overstates his ambitions.

In *Taste 2* Geminiani explains the meaning of each ornament and the sentiment that it is held to express, providing for good measure a table "of the elements of playing and singing in a good taste". Both the introduction and the table of embellishments were reprinted in the treatise

on violin playing published two years later. They represent for us today a cardinal point of reference for research into the interpretation of late baroque music, so a quotation of them in full is justified:

> "What is commonly call'd good Taste in singing and playing, has been thought for some Years past to destroy the true Melody, and the Intention of their Composers. It is supposed by many that a real good Taste cannot possibly be acquired by any Rules of Art; it being a peculiar Gift of Nature, indulged only to those who have naturally a good Ear: And as most flatter themselves to have this Perfection, hence it happens that he who sings or plays, thinks of nothing so much as to make continually some favourite Passages or Graces, believing that by this Means he shall be thought to be a good Performer, not perceiving that playing in good Taste doth not consist of frequent Passages, but in expressing with Strength and Delicacy the Intention of the Composer. This Expression is what every one should endeavour to acquire, and it may be easily obtained by any Person, who is not too fond on his own Opinion, and doth not obstinately resist the Force of true Evidence. I would not however have it supposed that I deny the powerful Effects of a good Ear; as I have found in several Instances how great its Force is: I only assert that certain Rules of Art are necessary for a moderate Genius, and may improve and perfect a good one. To the End therefore that those who are Lovers of Musick may with more Ease and Certainty arrive at Perfection, I recommend the Study and Practice of the following Ornaments of Expression, which are fourteen in Number; namely,
>
> 1st A plain Shake (tr), 2d A Turn'd Shake (~+), 3d A superior Apogiatura (♪), 4th An inferior Apogiatura (♪), 5th Holding the Note (-), 6th Staccato (I), 7th Swelling the Sound (◢), 8th Diminishing the Sound (◣), 9th Piano (p.), 10th Forte (f.), 11th Anticipation (♪), 12th Separation (♪), 13th A Beat (//), 14th A close Shake (~~). From the following Explanation we may comprehend the Nature of each Element in particular.

(First) Of the Plain Shake.

The plain Shake is proper for quick Movements; and it may be made upon any Note, observing after it to pass immediately to the ensuing Note.

(Second) Of the Turned Shake.

The turn'd Shake being made quick and long is fit to express Gaiety; but if you make it short, and continue the Length of the Note plain and soft, it may then express some of more tender Passions.

(Third) Of the Superior Apogiatura.

The Superior Apogiatura is supposed to express Love, Affection, Pleasure, &c. It should be made pretty long, giving it more than half the Length or Time of the Note it belongs to, observing to swell the Sound by Degrees, and towards the End to force the Bow a little: If it be made short, it will lose much of the aforesaid Qualities; but will always have a pleasing Effect, and it may be added to any Note you will.

(Fourth) Of the Inferior Apogiatura.

The Inferior Apogiatura has the same Qualities with the preceding, except that is much more confin'd, as it can only be made when the Melody rises the Interval of a second or third, observing to make a Beat on the following Note.

(Fifth) Of Holding a Note.

It is necessary to use this often; for were we to make Beats and Shakes continually without sometimes suffering the pure Note to be heard, the Melody would be too much diversify'd.

(Sixth) Of the Staccato.

This expresses Rest, taking Breath, or changing a Word; and for this Reason Singers should be careful to take Breath in a Place where it may not interrupt the Sense.

(7th and 8th) Of Swelling and Falling the Sound.

These two Elements may be used after each other; they produce great Beauty and Variety in the Melody, and employ'd alternately, they are proper for any Expression or Measure.

(9th and 10th) Of Piano and Forte.

They are both extremely necessary to express the Intention of the Melody; and as all good Musick should be composed in Imitation of a Discourse, these two Ornaments are designed to produce the same Effects that an Orator does by raising and falling his Voice.

(Eleventh) Of Anticipation.

Anticipation was invented, with a View to vary the Melody, without altering its Intention: When it is made with a Beat or a Shake, and swelling the Sound, it will have a greater Effect, especially if you observe to make use of it when the Melody rises or descends the Interval of a Second.

(Twelfth) Of the Separation.

The Separation is only designed to give a Variety to the Melody, and takes place most properly when the Note rises a second or third; as also when it descends a second, and then it will not be amiss to add a Beat, and to swell the Note, and then make the *Apogiatura* to the following Note. By this Tenderness is express'd.

(Thirteenth) Of the Beat.

This is proper to express several Passions; as for Example, if it be perform'd with Strength, and continued long, it expresses Fury, Anger, Resolution, &c. If it be play'd less strong and shorter, it expresses Mirth, Satisfaction, &c. But if you play it quite soft, and swell the Note, it may then denote Horror, Fear, Grief, Lamentation, &c. By making it short and swelling the Note gently, it may express Affection and Pleasure.

(Fourteenth) Of the Close Shake.

This cannot possibly be described by Notes as in former Examples.

To perform it, you must press the Finger strongly upon the String of the Instrument, and move the Wrist in and out slowly and equally, when it is long continued swelling the Sound by Degrees, drawing the Bow nearer to the Bridge, and ending it very strong it may express Majesty, Dignity, &c. But making it shorter, lower and softer, it may denote Affliction, Fear, &c., and when it is made on short Notes, it only contributes to make their Sound more agreable; and for this Reason it should be made use of as often as possible."

Ex. 39: *Taste 2*, table of ornaments

Examples

Of the Element of playing and singing in a good Taste.

Plain Shake · Turn'd Shake · Sup.r App.e · Inf.r App.e · Holding the Note

Ditto · Stac.d · Swelling & falling y.e Sound · Pia · F. · F · F · Anticip.n

Ditto · Sep.n · Beat

The following Examples shew how several of the Elements may be perform'd on one Crotchet.

On Geminiani's "Ornaments of Expression" Charles Avison writes:

> "We may here remark, that, were these Elements of playing in Taste, with their distinct Characters and Explanations, become the general Standard, as well for the Performance of Masters, as for the Instruction of their Pupils; the former, I believe, would not only find them capable of heightening the very best Compositions, but the latter would also, with great Facility, arrive at Perfection. But, instead of this, the Generality of our Masters, following each their own Method, have preferred a more loose and florid Manner of gracing, by which, the finest Harmonies are too often destroyed; and in their Explanation of these Graces, by so many different Marks, and Crowds of little Notes, impossible to be expressed, have rather perplexed the Learner, who, finding the same Art so variously taught, hath, therefore, been often discouraged in the Progress of his Study."[4]

In the preface to *Taste 1* Geminiani writes that he has omitted the sign for vibrato (the "close shake") "which may be made on any Note whatsoever"; in *Taste 2* he goes further, recommending its use "as often as possible". Vibrato was not a novelty in the eighteenth century, but it was still considered a type of ornament that one should not abuse by over-employment. "Though the application of it [writes Robert Bremner in 1777] may, for the sake of variety, be admitted, at times, on a long note in simple melody; yet, if it be introduced into harmony, where the beauty and energy of the performance depend upon the united effect of all the parts being exactly in tune with each other, it becomes hurtful."[5] In his edition of Geminiani's violin treatise Bremner, who had been taught music by Geminiani, pointedly "doctored" the original version by leaving out the very passage in which the author advocates the continuous use of vibrato.[6] The position of Geminiani, to judge from what other treatises of his time tell us, was

completely isolated; however, as Roger Hickman has recently pointed out,[7] those few works that do discuss the matter show clearly that the employment of continuous vibrato was not peculiar to Geminiani: "Now [writes Leopold Mozart] because the tremolo [vibrato] is not purely on one note but sounds undulating, so would it be an error if every note were played with the tremolo. Performers there are who tremble consistently on each note as if they had the palsy";[8] and Robert Bremner again: "Many gentlemen players on bow instruments are so exceeding fond of the *tremolo*, that they apply it wherever they possibly can".[9] Although Geminiani's "rules" do not clearly indicate the continuous vibrato ("as often as possible" does not mean "always"), we can agree with David Boyden, who considered them "prophetic of the future".[10]

Another interesting aspect of the treatise is that among the fourteen "Ornaments of Expression", as Geminiani called them, we find the "crescendo" and "diminuendo" marks. As we observed of the vibrato, increases and decreases of volume were not a novelty at that time; we can find many traces of them right from the beginning of the previous century in the works of Giulio Caccini, Claudio Monteverdi, Vincenzo Giustiniani, and others. However, unlike the marks for "piano", "forte", and their various gradations, which had become very widespread after the beginning of the eighteenth century, those for "crescendo" and "diminuendo" were still quite rare during the first half of that century. There were many ways of avoiding them, such as to write the signs "f" and "p" (or vice-versa) in close proximity to one another, but most of the time players relied on the same oral tradition that passed down the rules for the improvisation of embellishments for guidance where and when to swell or diminish the sound. Geminiani was among the first composers to notate by means of precise

symbols the devices of "crescendo" and "diminuendo" (the very first seems to have been Giovanni Antonio Piani in his Op. I of 1712); most likely, Geminiani was also the first person to explain their meaning in a treatise.[11] However, one must point out that these symbols, which the composer employs from the new edition of Op. I (1739) onwards, are applied only to single notes or, at most, small groups of notes - never to complete phrases (see Ex. 38).

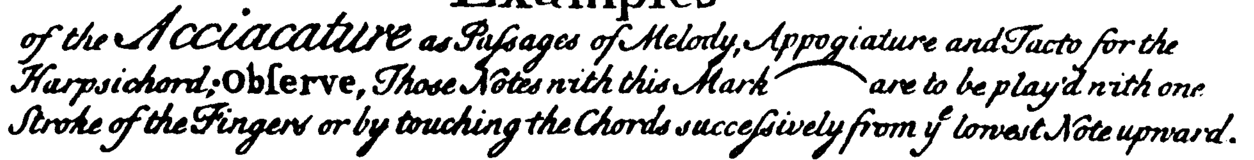
On the last page of the introduction to *Taste 2* Geminiani devotes some lines to an "Explanation of the *Acciaccature* for the *Harpsichord*":

> "The Acciaccatura is a Composition of such Chords as are dissonant with Respect to the fundamental Laws of Harmony; and yet when disposed in their proper Place produce that very Effect which it might be expected they would destroy.
>
> No Performer therefore should flatter himself that he is able to accompany well till he is Master of this delicate and admirable Secret which has been in use above a hundred Years: and of which a great many Examples may be found in the Book which I have compos'd for that Instrument [*Pièces de Clavecin*, 1743].
>
> The Example which follows, has however something in it peculiar, as it serves to specify a Signature called *Tatto*, which has a very great and singular Effect in Harmony, and which is perform'd by touching the Key, and quitting it with such a Spring as it was Fire" [see Ex. 40].

This particular passage of the treatise has likewise aroused interest recently, because for the first time in theoretical writings the two different kinds of acciaccatura are clearly distinguished from one another: "It is convenient [Donington observes] to classify these two kinds of acciaccatura as the simultaneous acciaccatura and the passing acciaccatura. Both kinds consist of notes foreign to the harmony, no sooner struck than

Ex. 40: *Taste 2, Examples of the Acciacature.*

Examples


of the Acciacature as Passages of Melody, Appogiature and Tacto for the Harpsichord; Observe, Those Notes with this Mark ⌒ are to be play'd with one Stroke of the Fingers or by touching the Chords successively from ye lowest Note upward.

R. Hand

L. Hand

Ground

Acc.

Comb. of Chords

App.

released; but the simultaneous acciaccatura is struck at the same time as the chord, which is not arpeggiated more than that slight amount which good harpsichord touch gives to all full chords, while the passing acciaccatura is struck as a passing note during the more prolonged arpeggiation of the chord".[12]

Although, in the preface to *Taste 2*, Geminiani claims that this treatise "is wholly unlike both in Style and Manner" the earlier *Taste 1*, its content proves not to be so different: as in *Taste 1*, Geminiani presents the learner with a series of compositions that he must practise in order to achieve "good taste" in the performance of embellishments. The only difference here is that both the scoring and the choice of musical forms are more varied. The treatise comprises three sections: the first contains four airs for voice, two violins, two flutes, viola, and continuo; the second contains three airs "made into Sonatas for two Violins & a Bass"; and the last has four themes with variations. The melodies used by Geminiani in *Taste 2* were composed by David Rizzio (c.1525-1566), an Italian composer who in 1561 settled in Edinburgh, where he had come in the retinue of the Ambassador of Savoy, and shortly afterwards entered the service of Mary, Queen of Scots; his Scottish songs enjoyed great popularity during the eighteenth century, thanks to the publication of the *Orpheus Caledonius*, brought out by William Thomson in 1725. "Two Composers of Musick [writes Geminiani in the preface] have appear'd in the World, who in their different Kinds of Melody, have rais'd my Admiration; namely *David Rizzio* and *Gio. Baptista Lulli*; of these which stands highest in Reputation, or deserves to stand highest, is none of my Business to pronounce: But when I consider, that *Rizzio* was foremost in point of Time, that till then Melody was intirely rude and barbarous, and that he found

Means at once to civilize and inspire it with all the native Gallantry of the Scotish Nation, I am inclinable to give him the Preference. But melody, tho' pleasing to All, seldom communicates the highest Degree of Pleasure; and it was owing to this Reflection, that I lately have undertaken to improve the Melody of *Rizzio* into Harmony, by converting some of his Airs into two, three, and four Parts; and by making such Additions and Accompanyments to others as should give them all the Variety and Fullness required in a Concert." The following table summarizes the content of the musical portion of the treatise:

Number	Tempo	Bars	Tonality	Incipit or derivations
[Songs] Accompany'd by two Violins two German Flutes Tenor and Through Bass.				
Song I	Andante C	51	D major	The Lass of Peaty's Mill
Song II	¢	51	E minor	The Night her silent sable wore
Song III	3/4	44	G major	When Phoebus bright
Song IV	6/8	42	D major	O Bessy Bell
Airs made into Sonatas for two Violins & a Bass.				
I	Grave C	16	F major	[The Broom of Cowdenknows]
	Andante C	32	F major	[Bonny Christy]
	Grave 3/4	6	D minor	
	Presto C	32	F major	
II	Andante C	48	D major	[Bush aboon Traquair]
III	C	16	F major	[The last Time I came o'er the Moor]
	Grave 3/4	8	D minor	

	Allegro C	24	F major	

4 Airs for a Violin or German Flute Violoncello & Harpsichord.

I	Affetuoso 3/4	16	G major	[Auld Bob Morrice]
	Allegro 3/4	16	G major	
II	Andante 3/4	32	D major	[The Country Lass]
	Allegro C	16	D major	
III	Affetuoso 3/4	16	G major	[Lady Ann Bothwet's Lament]
	Allegro 3/4	32	G major	
IV	Allegro moderato 6/8	16	G major	[Sleepy Body]
	6/8	32	G major	

"The most we are indebted to him [Hayes writes of Geminiani's first two treatises] is, for putting good *Basses* to the *original Tunes*; for in Truth, all beyond this, is such mungrel Stuff, that, it is not probable, it will obtain that Degree of general Approbation, which he might expect".[13] *Taste 1* and *Taste 2*, perhaps because of their lack of an adequate explanatory text, seem to have attained only a meagre circulation. "His *Treatise on Good Taste, and Rules for Playing in Good Taste*, [Burney comments loftily] did not appear till about 1747; but that was too soon for the present times. Indeed a treatise on good taste in dress, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, would now be as useful to a tailor or milliner, as the rules of taste in Music, forty years ago, to a modern musician".[14]

The Art of Playing on the Violin, published two years after *Taste 2*, was and is today, together with the Op. III concertos, Geminiani's most highly regarded work. Even Burney, normally a severe critic of the composer, conceded that the treatise "was a very useful work in its day; the shifts and examples of different difficulties, and uses of the bow, being infinitely superior to those in any other book of the kind, or indeed oral instruction, which the nation could boast, till the arrival of Giardini."[15] The treatise was favoured with several editions and reprints: it was translated and published in France in 1752, where a new, updated edition was also printed in 1803, and in Austria between 1785 and 1805; an abridged version was even published in the United States in 1769. Until recent times certain other violin treatises were ascribed to Geminiani, among them the many versions and editions of the fifth part of Peter Prelleur's *The Modern Musick-Master* (1731), which dealt with the violin and had the same title as Geminiani's treatise. In two articles published in 1959 and 1960 David Boyden ended all speculation on the matter by showing that *The Art of Playing on the Violin* was the only violin treatise written by Geminiani, and that the original source of the fifth part of Prelleur's treatise was *Nolens Volens*, published by Thomas Cross in 1695, when Geminiani was just eight years old.[16] Nevertheless, as Robert Donington has pointed out in an amusing article entitled "Geminiani and the Gremlins", dictionaries and catalogues continue to give incorrect information about both the date of publication of Geminiani's violin treatise and his authorship of treatises that in reality he never wrote.[17] A further cause of confusion arises from the existence of violin treatises published after his death in which he receives credit as the author - but which are for the most part reworkings of the fifth part of Prelleur's manual with the addition of

The Art of
Playing on the
VIOLIN
Containing
All the Rules necessary to attain to a Perfection on that Instrument, with great variety of Compositions, which will also be very useful to those who study the Violoncello, Harpsichord &c.
Compofed by
F. Geminiani
Opera. IX.
LONDON. MDCCLI.

FIG. 20

Title-page of *The Art of Playing on the Violin* [B 3a]

Geminiani's table of embellishments from *Taste 2.*[18]

In *The Art of Playing on the Violin* Geminiani condenses his long experience as a virtuoso and teacher into a relatively small number of precepts, communicating his knowledge of the violin more through music than through words. As in *Taste 1* and *Taste 2*, it is through the performance of the compositions contained in the treatise that the learner is supposed to improve his technique and refine his musical sensibility. Hence the treatise consists of a mere nine pages of non-musical text but fully fifty-one of exercises and compositions. In comparison with his other treatises, admittedly, the composer is almost generous with words, although these are still insufficient for their purpose. As if to justify the lop-sidedness, Geminiani writes in his preface that he has added to the exercises "twelve Pieces in different Stiles for a Violin and Violoncello with a thorough Bass for the Harpsichord" in which he has deliberately refrained from giving "Directions for the performing them, because I think the Learner will not need any, the foregoing Rules and Examples being sufficient to qualify him to perform any Musick whatsoever." In reality, the explanatory text does not explain in sufficient detail - and sometimes does not explain at all - how to overcome several problems of violin technique that arise both in the compositions and in the preceding exercises.[19] In this connection, there is significance in what we read in the *Avertissement* of the updated edition of the treatise published in Paris in 1803:

> "The basis of this Method is by the famous Geminiani, but several enlightened artists and music-lovers having rightly complained that the first edition was (1) badly put together, obscure, and beyond the capacity of young pupils to follow; that (2) the examples were for the

most part too severe in style and lacked clarity in their demonstrations; that (3) several of the examples were rather lessons in composition and counterpoint than genuine guides to violin-playing; and that (4) they were too lacking in that part of a course of lessons which aims to combine the useful with the agreeable in order to give encouragement to pupils and make their study more pleasant and less repugnant".[20]

The non-musical text consists of a short preface and twenty-four "examples" that illustrate the respective exercises.

"The Intention of Musick [Geminiani writes in the preface] is not only to please the Ear, but to express Sentiments, strike the Imagination, affect the Mind, and command the Passion. The Art of playing the Violin consists in giving that Instrument a Tone that shall in a Manner rival the most perfect human Voice; and in executing every Piece with Exactness, Propriety, and Delicacy of Expression according to the true Intention of Musick. But as the imitating the Cock, Cuckoo, Owl, and other Birds; or the Drum, French Horn, Tromba-Marina, and the like; and also sudden Shifts of the Hand from one Extremity of the Finger-board to the other, accompanied with Contortions of the Head and Body, and all other such Tricks rather belong to the Professors of Legerdemain and Posture-masters than to the Art of Musick, the Lovers of that Art are not to expect to find any thing of that Sort in this Book. But I flatter myself they will find in it whatsoever is Necessary for the Institution of a just and regular Performer on the Violin. This Book will also be of Use to Performers on the Violoncello, and in some sort to those who begin to study the Art of Composition [...]."

The idea that music has the task not only of pleasing the ear but also of expressing feelings and moving listeners was not original. What is

unexpected in the preface, however, is the force with which Geminiani attacks the practice of virtuosity for its own sake. His polemic seems to be addressed not only to performers who with their violins seek to imitate "the Cock, Cuckoo, Owl, and other Birds", but also to composers: i.e., to "modern music" in general. A contemporary violinist-composer like Vivaldi, with his "Cuckoo" and "Goldfinch" concertos, imitations on the violin of posthorns and trumpets marine, and fondness for the extreme high positions qualifies for Geminiani's scorn on both counts. Indeed, this composer, who although now dead, maintained a presence in English concerto life, may well have been a specific target. Relevant to this discussion is what Vincenzo Martinelli writes in his *Lettere familiari e critiche*, published in London in 1758:

> "Although the wisest masters of this art always give their students Corelli to learn so that they can acquire a model for the imitation of nature, the latter, as soon as they are capable of composing, soon give up the Corellian golden mean and not only abandon themselves to a continuous use of the most puerile and shrill high notes that their instrument can produce but also renounce the imitation of the human voice in favour of that of birds, dogs, or other creatures, calling this bravura. Ferrari, who could be termed the Apollo of such "bravura", and who in fact was an excellent player in all respects, wished at all costs to make himself heard by Geminiani, for whom he had a well-deserved respect. Having finished playing, he asked Geminiani to give an opinion of his style of performance. Geminiani replied with the words: "You are a very great player, but your performance has not moved me [...]."[21]

So music must "move" the listener: "I would besides advise [writes Geminiani in the preface to *Taste 2*] as well the Composer as the Performer,

who is ambitious to inspire his Audience to be first inspired himself, which he cannot fail to be if he chuses a Work of Genius, if he makes himself thoroughly acquainted with all its Beauties; and if while his Imagination is warm and glowing he pours the same exalted Spirit into his own Performance". According to Geminiani, it is above all the embellishments - the very elements today usually regarded as the most peripheral - that enable the performer to express and communicate subtly differentiated feelings. Thus, according to the context within the piece and the way in which it is performed, a simple mordent can express "Fury, Anger, Resolution", or "Mirth, Satisfaction", or even "Horror, Fear, Grief, Lamentation". The duty of the violinist is precisely to express this or that feeling "according to the intention of the composer". Ornaments (a category which includes vibrato and changes in dynamics) are for Geminiani the main vehicle for expressing feelings. The key to understanding the treatise lies in grasping this relationship between ornamentation and expression.

The twenty-fourth "Example" deserves particular attention:

> "[...] You must (above all Things) observe to draw the Bow down and up alternately. The Bow must always be drawn strait on the Strings and never be raised from them in playing Semi-quavers. This Practice of the Bow should be continued, without attempting any Thing else until the Learner is so far Master of it as to be out of all Danger of forgetting it.
>
> Before I conclude the Article of Bowing, I must caution the Learner against marking the Time with his Bow; for if he once accustoms himself to it, he will hardly ever leave it off. And it has a most disagreeable Effect, and frequently destroys the Design of the Composer. As for Example, when the last Note in one Bar is joined to the first Note of the next by a Ligature, those two Notes are to be

played exactly in the same Manner as if they were but one, and if you mark the beginning of the Bar with your Bow you destroy the Beauty of the Syncopation. So in playing Divisions, if by your Manner of Bowing you lay a particular Stress on the Note at the beginning of every Bar, so as to render it predominant over the rest, you alter and spoil the true Air of the Piece, and except where the Composer intended it, and where it is alwais marked, there very few Instances in which it is not very disagreeable".

Already in the eighth "Example" Geminiani counselled avoidance of "that wretched Rule of drawing the Bow down at the first Note of every Bar". The main disadvantage of this rule, first codified in France and associated with the need to keep strict time in dance music, was the inflexible alternation of down-bows and up-bows (relieved, it is true, by supplementary rules in cases of triple note-division or mixed note-values). A relatively large section (considering the brevity with which Geminiani usually makes his points in this treatise) is devoted to justifying his opposition to the "rule of down-bow". It seems that Geminiani practised what he preached, to judge from Burney's recollection of Geminiani that "as a player he was always deficient in *Time*",[22] and that in Naples, where he was called upon to conduct, "he was soon discovered to be so wild and unsteady a timist, that instead of regulating and conducting the band, he threw it into confusion; as none of the performers were able to follow him in his *tempo rubato*, and other unexpected accelerations and relaxations of measure."[23] Concerning the failure of Geminiani's *Concerto Spirituale* at Drury Lane in 1750, Burney writes that "the unsteady manner in which he led seemed to confirm the Neapolitan account of his being a bad mental arithmetician, or calculator of time."[24] So on one hand Geminiani takes

an independent stand against the almost universally accepted rule of down-bow; on the other hand he is stigmatized by contemporaries as "a bad mental arithmetician": i.e., he fails to maintain a steady beat. Since his music, too, was criticized on account of its rhythmic and melodic irregularity and its asymmetrical phrases, one forms the impression that Geminiani - as composer, performer, and theorist alike - had a concept of musical time and rhythm totally at variance with that of most of his contemporaries. (This does not mean that he was necessarily a "misunderstood" rather than a "bad" keeper of time, but the first possibility should be kept open.) His protest against metrical accentuation, his "tempo rubato", and the rhythmical complexities of his compositions are three different manifestations of the same fluid concept of rhythm. To the strict grammatical scansion of accents Geminiani opposes what Giulio Caccini earlier called "sprezzatura di canto" and Nicola Vicentino "quel certo ordine di procedere nelle composizioni che non si può scrivere"; [25] to the regular organization of phrases, a contorted rhythmic design.

In the first "Example" Geminiani describes the right way to hold the violin and bow:

"The Violin must be rested just below the Collar-bone, turning the right-hand Side of the Violin a little downwards, so that there may be no Necessity of raising the Bow very high, when the fourth String is to be struck.

Observe also, that the Head of the Violin must be nearly Horizontal with that Part which rests against the Breast, that the Hand may be shifted with Facility and without any Danger of dropping the Instrument.

The Tone of the Violin principally Depends upon the right Management

FIG. 21

Portrait of Geminiani in the French edition of APV [B 3b]

of the Bow. The Bow is to be held at a small Distance from the Nut, between the Thumb and Fingers, the Hair being turned inward against the Back or Outside of the Thumb, in which Position it is to be held free and easy, and not stiff [...]."

"Geminiani's manner of holding the violin [observes Boyden] is relatively old-fashioned. Although the French edition of 1752 shows a violinist (Geminiani?) holding the violin under his chin, approximately in the centre over the tail-piece (string holder), this manner of holding the instrument is not that described either in the French or in the English text both of which recommend holding the violin at the collar-bone. Neither text says anything about holding the violin under the chin at the left side of the tail-piece, as is often claimed."[26] Concerning Geminiani's way of holding the bow, known today as "Geminiani's grip", Boyden observes that it can be considered modern compared with the French one of the same time but is not as advanced as the one described in 1756 by Leopold Mozart in his *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*. However, the positions suggested by Geminiani form one of the few reference points for the interpretation of the post-Corellian instrumental repertory. More than that: *The Art of Playing the Violin* was the first-ever treatise for that instrument addressed to professional performers, being followed five years later by the *Violinschule* of Leopold Mozart; it is therefore the only source of any importance about the kind of violin technique used in Italy and England in the first half of the eighteenth century.

In the eighteenth "Example" Geminiani reproduces the text of the introduction to *Taste 2*, namely the description of the fourteen "Ornaments of Expression necessary to the playing in a good Taste". What is

generally considered to be the most original part of the treatise on account of its discussion of vibrato and dynamic markings is in fact another of Geminiani's familiar "reheatings", although in this case its presence is fully justified. However, on the subject of "crescendo" and "decrescendo" Geminiani adds something new in the first "Example":

> "One of the principal Beauties of the Violin is the swelling or encreasing and sostening the Sound; which is done by pressing the Bow upon the Strings with the Fore-finger more or less. In playing all long Notes the Sound should be begun soft, and gradually swelled till the Middle, and from thence gradually softened till the End."

Although this is not specified here, "crescendo" is supposed to be performed together with the "close shake", as we read elsewhere in the treatise. But on the subject of vibrato Geminiani is unfortunely very vague, as if he thought further explanation superfluous. In *Taste 1* he writes that he has omitted the symbol because it applies to every note; in *Taste 2* and in the treatise for violin it is considered as important as any of the other signs of embellishment but appears only in the first composition (see Ex. 41). The fact that it makes its sole appearance at the start of the reprise suggests that Geminiani uses vibrato in order to vary the theme, as if the device were a trill or a turn, and that the rest of the movement is to be performed without it. But this would clearly be at variance with the injunction to use vibrato "as often as possible", so it is possible that Geminiani's intention, in using the sign here, was to indicate a particularly marked vibrato distinguishable from the ordinary "background" level.

Ex. 41: APV/i [B 3g]

Compos.ne Ia

Adagio

The year of publication of the *Guida Armonica* that is generally given in catalogues and dictionaries is taken from the histories of Hawkins and Burney: 1742. This date seems to be confirmed by the engraving executed in 1742 and published in *Taste 2*, which shows among other things an example of the treatise, and also by the fact that on 26 April 1740 the *Dublin Newsletter* advertised the subscription for its publication. Nevertheless, various other factors suggest that it appeared only several years later, the subscriptions having failed to reach the necessary total: 1) the opus number (X) indicates a period between the violin treatise (Op. IX, 1751) and Johnson's edition of *The Art of Accompaniament* (Op. XI, c.1756); 2) the supplement to the treatise, as we read in its preface, came after Op. XI, and it is hard to imagine that it was published more than ten years after the *Guida Armonica*, whose meaning it was supposed to explain; 3) in Johnson's catalogue of Geminiani's works appearing on the title-page of *The Art of Accompaniament* the *Guida Armonica* is listed in final position after the treatise for violin, whereas the supplement appears only in the Johnson catalogue included in *The Harmonical Miscellany* (1758). The most likely explanation for the discrepancies is that Geminiani waited until after 1751 before deciding to take the risk of publishing it at his own expense. In his *Remarks on Mr Avison's Essay on Musical Expression* (1753) William Hayes seems to confirm this course of events, also providing a reason for the failure of the subscription:

> "[...] In the first Place, the Price was exorbitant; in the next, that no one cared to deposit the Money, beforehand. From the Opinion the World entertains of his m-------l H-------y [moral Honesty?], and lastly, from his promising more than could be expected, or perhaps performed; namely, to make any Man a Composer, at least to write good

GUIDA ARMONICA.

O

DIZIONARIO ARMONICO.

being

A Sure Guide

TO

HARMONY AND *MODULATION*.

In which are Exhibited,

The Various COMBINATIONS of SOUNDS, *Consonant*, and *Dissonant*, *PROGRESSIONS of HARMONY*; *LIGATURES* and *CADENCES*, *Real* and *Deceptive*.

By

F. GEMINIANI.

OPERA. X.

Artem alii involvunt multis Ambagibus: Artem
Absque labore Artis, *Geminiane* doces.

Maittaire

LONDON.

Printed for The Author, by John Johnson, in Cheapside:
Where may be had all the Author's Works.

FIG. 22

Title-page of the *Guida Armonica* [B 4a]

> Harmony, in a Mounth's Time. Now although that Work, by the Accounts I have heard of it, might bid the fairest to effect what is pretended, of any Method yet invented, still, it must be allowed by his most sanguine Friends, to be at best merely *Mechanical*: For, (if I am rightly informed,) it points out, by a Kind of Alphabetical Index, a Progression of Notes, and the harmonical Accompaniments to each Note in that Progression. This Method, I grant, might enable a Person quite unskilled, to write good Harmony; but would the Composition be his *own*, or Geminiani's? Or would he be able to walk, out of the Go-Cart and Leading Strings? I firmly believe no more at the Month's End, than he would the very first Day of making the Experiment."[28]

So it may be inferred that in 1753 Hayes had not yet read the treatise, but had heard it spoken of, which means that it was already on sale. "The Rules for Modulation [writes Geminiani in the preface] which have been received by many within these Forty Years, are extremely short and defective": according to McArtor, this passage indicates that the treatise was published in 1754, because Geminiani was referring to the 40 years since his arrival in England in 1714.[29] But it is much more logical to take as the point of reference the beginning of the century than the year of Geminiani's arrival, which the vast majority of his readers could hardly have known. So Geminiani probably wrote, and perhaps engraved, the preface in 1740, the year in which the subscription was advertised, using it some ten years later without any alteration. The mistake by Burney and Hawkins should not surprise us - not only because the two historians are quite often in error over dates but also because they could easily have been misled by the advertisement for subscriptions (a type of evidence of which, as is well known, they took great account) or by the engraving printed in *Taste 2*. One concludes, therefore, that the *Guida Armonica* was

written prior to 1740 but published only between 1751 and 1753: i.e., after the treatise for violin and before Hayes' *Remarks.*[20]

The *Guida Armonica* is both the most original treatise of Geminiani and the least well known. Its content is so incredibly odd that it is not surprising that after its publication it became the object of a sort of *querelle* between supporters and opponents (strangely, it seems not to have evoked similar interest in modern times). In the preface Geminiani explains to his readers the reason that impelled him publish the treatise:

> "Modulation is universally acknowledged to be one of the most important Branches of the Science of Musick, and to which it owes some of its greatest Beauties and principal Powers; and yet no Branch of that Science hath been more neglected. So that in the many Volumes which have been written upon the Subject of Musick, very little hath been said of Modulation; while Matters very well known, and of much less Importance have been largely insisted on.
>
> The ancient Composers however, perfectly understood the Art of Modulation, as is evident from their Works: But it must be confessed, their Method of modulating was not altogether proper for Instrumental Musick.
>
> *B. Lulli, A. Corelli,* and *F. Bononcini*, were the first Improvers of Instrumental Musick; and had Genius and natural Abilities sufficient to draw from the Ancients, such a Variety of Modulation, as they judged sufficient to render their Compositions delightful and spirituos. But they are greatly mistaken who imagine that the vast Foundations of universal Harmony can be established upon the narrow and confined Modulation of those Authors. If those Authors had introduced more of the Substance of the ancient Modulation into their Compositions, they would have had greater Variety in them, and consequently would have been more entertaining.
>
> The Rules for Modulation, which have been received by many within these Forty Years, are extremely short and defective; and, by leaving out the greatest Part of the Science, have reduced it within the

narrowest Limits; and render'd it poor, jejune, and steril, to the last Degree. It will not be expected that I should here enter into a formal Proof of this Assertion; were it necessary, I might refer, for Proof, to a Multitude of Compositions, which have appeared in different Parts of *Europe*, within these Forty Years, and which, though composed by different Persons, yet in Point of Modulation, are all exactly alike. But I shall only observe, that although there is not an ordinary Performer upon any Instrument, in any Part of *Europe*, who does not boast his having composed Sonatas, Concertos, Cantatas, &c. Yet there are but few modern Composers, even of a much higher Class, who can be truly said to have produced any thing new with respect to Melody, Harmony, and Modulation. What can this be owing to, but imperfect and defective Rules? Which instead of guiding the Students of Harmony, mislead them; instead of assisting, improving, and exalting natural Genius, confine and depress it.

These Considerations, and the Advantage I conceived a more just and extensive System of Modulation, would be to the Science of Musick, induced me to compile the following Work, a Work of no small Difficulty, the Labour of many Years, and not a few of them almost wholly spent therein. I have the Satisfaction however to think my Time well spent and my Labour well bestowed; I am persuaded this Work will be of the greatest Use to the Students of Harmony, by enlarging their Ideas, and giving them just and compleat Notions of Harmony and Modulation. I mean such of them as will not be wanting to themselves, but by a diligent Study and Application, endeavour to lay up in their Memories the Substance thereof. But as Memory cannot alwais be depended upon, the Work is so disposed, that the Student, whenever he has any Doubts or Difficulties in composing, with respect to Modulation or Harmony, may recur to it as a Dictionary.

I do not pretend that every thing which regards the general Combination of Sounds, and Modulation are contained in this Book. I declare that the Composition of the Tone Major, and the Modulation by the Scale ascending and descending, and by Imitation are not contained

> therein. These I intend to print in a short Time, by Way of Supplement thereto, if my Health permit."

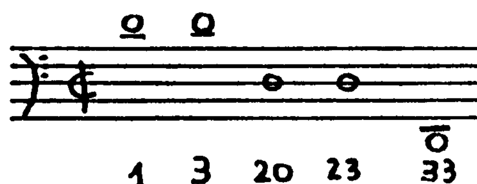
Geminiani's prime intentions are therefore clear: he wants to expand the narrow boundaries of traditional harmony with the aid of a kind of dictionary that offers the composer a wide range of possible harmonic combinations. The treatise works as follows:

> "When you have written the Mark of the Clef 𝄢 and the Mark of the Time 𝄵 and chosen indifferently any one of the five Notes represented in the Beginning of the first Page, and written the same down, and the figures over it, if any, You are to observe the Number under that Note, and turn to the Page marked with the same Number; there you will find several Passages beginning with the same Note, and with the same Figures over it, or without Figures over it, if there be no Figures over the Note you have chosen; choose any one of those Passages, and write it down with the Figures exactly, except the first Note, which must be omitted, being already written. When you have written one of those Passages, observe the Number at the End of it, and turn to the Page marked with the same Number; there you will find several Passages beginning with the same Note with which the last Passage you have written down endeth, and with the same Figures over it, or without Figures over it, if there be no Figures over the last Note of the Passage you have written down; choose any one of those Passages, and write it down as before, omitting the first Note. And thus proceed from Passage to Passage to what Length you please [...]"

On each of the thirty-four pages of the treatise (except the first and last) there are sixty-six short passages of figured bass that do not proceed beyond five notes. The final note is marked with a number referring to the page of the treatise where one can find the harmonic

passages beginning with that note. The initial possibilities are only five:

Ex. 42: GA, p. 1



If, for example, we choose to begin with the last note, we have next to go to page 33 to find the possible continuations (see Ex. 43). If we select the first passage, we have to return to page 16, and so on. In this way one can carry on "from Passage to Passage to what Length you please". On the last page, as if he wished to emphasize the originality of his discovery, Geminiani writes "Fine senza Fine" (end without end).

In the "Directions for the Use of the Book" Geminiani very briefly explains some elementary notions of musical grammar. It is precisely here that one becomes aware of a fundamental contradiction in the treatise: it stretches credibility to imagine that immediately after learning the difference between a quaver and a semiquaver the reader is in a position to understand the meaning of a figured bass. So the *Guida Armonica* responds ineffectively to the needs of beginners. But even to actual composers it would have little of value to offer, not only because of its arbitrary restriction to the minor mode but also (and more fundamentally) because of the very structure of the dictionary, which is organised entirely around an opening note, not those that follow it. In his other treatises, as we

Ex. 43: GA, p. 33

have observed, the composer leaves the essence of his teaching to the compositions themselves, showing in this a predominantly pragmatic attitude; in the *Guida Armonica* we notice something very similar and yet at the same time completely different: Geminiani's avowed purpose (consistent with his earlier treatises) is to facilitate the practical business of composition, but the way he goes about it is this time anything but practical.

In the final analysis, what is really interesting about this treatise is not its internal contradictions and virtual uselessness in practice - or even its sheer eccentricity - but rather the thought that drove Geminiani to write it. He starts from the not unreasonable premise that the harmonic resources that could be used by composers are much greater than those normally employed in practice, and that any chord can be followed by a huge variety of harmonic possibilities. But Geminiani's aim is not simply to enrich the language of harmony but also to offer the composer the opportunity to expand his work to infinite lengths. The greatest (however perverse) originality of the treatise lies precisely in the notion that the "collage" of harmonical passages is theoretically endless and can by itself determine the musical form. The composer merely has to make his choice, connecting together an unlimited number of units from among the 2236 at his disposal without thought of the upper parts or of the rhythm, as if once the bass has been completed his work could be said practically to be done. Once again, Geminiani's style in his own compositions and his theoretical outlook appear to be in conformity with one another: if in composing one follows the method suggested by the treatise - i.e., if the composition takes its origin from a figured bass - inevitably the melody and rhythm take second place. Not by accident was Geminiani's music valued precisely

for its rich and varied harmony - and censured on account of the irregularity and asymmetry of its melody and phrase-structure.

The treatise was translated into French and published in Amsterdam in 1756 under the title of *Dictionnaire harmonique, ou guide sûr pour la vraie modulation.* Both in England and France it aroused considerable curiosity in musical circles, not only on account of its undeniable originality but also because news had got around that the celebrated Geminiani had been working on it for over twenty years. But mixed with the curiosity there was a degree of suspicion and prejudice, as evidenced by the observation of Hayes. The very idea that every amateur, with the aid of the treatise, could write music without difficulty perturbed professional musicians: "When the great Geminiani publish'd his useful treatise [wrote John Potter in 1762] some musicians complain'd to him, that he had explain'd too much; and added, that such things ought to be kept secret for their advantage." Of particular interest is the anecdote that Hawkins relates in his *General History of the Science and Practice of Music*:

> "The publication of this book was attended with circumstances that seemed but little to favour its reception; some suspected that the author's chief view in the publication of it was the getting money to supply his necessities; many had been made to believe that the author professed by it no less than to teach the art of musical composition to persons totally ignorant of the science, and of consequence ridiculed the attempt; and there were very few that were able to comprehend the motives to, or the tendency of, the work.
>
> In one of those excursions which Geminiani was frequently making during his residence in England, that is to say, to Italy, France, Holland, and other countries, he visited at Paris a learned and ingenious Jesuit, Pere Castel, a man well skilled in music; to whom he shewed his manuscript, and explained the nature and design of it: and

with a view to obviate the prejudices that had been entertained against it, this person published in the Journal des Sçavans a dissertation on the Guida Armonica, which Geminiani upon his return hither got translated into English, and published in a pamphlet of about thirty pages.

The author of this dissertation says, that, upon a careful examination of the Guida Armonica, he found that any person able to read and write might by the help thereof become able to compose true, good, and well-modulated music, with proper figures to denote the accompaniment; and that the execution of this contrivance was as simple as infallible as the plan of it was wonderful; and that it is in reality a set of musical integers ready to be connected into a body.

The facility of this practice appearing at first suspicious, Pere Castel says he took the liberty of opposing it to the author as an objection to his scheme, comparing it to the German organ, which being turned by the most unskilful person, will nevertheless make excellent music. He also compared it in his own mind with an invention of Johannes Trithemius, abbot of Spanheim, who flourished about the year 1490, and wrote a treatise entitled Steganographia, the third book whereof professes to teach a man ignorant of letters, only knowing his mother-tongue, in the space of two hours to read, and understand Latin, and write it ornately and eloquently. But Castel says he thinks that in neither instance the comparison will hold; and finally recommends the Guida Armonica to the students in music in the following terms:

'Mr. Geminiani's book is then a useful work, and that even to the masters themselves, since it contains all the musical passages, whether regular, or of the class of licences and exceptions, that may be, or have already been employed by the greatest masters, with guides and references that serve to link them together in all the various manners in which they can be connected. In a word, it is a musical manual, a library, a repertory; a kind of dictionary, though not an alphabetical one, in which is always to be found a musical phrase or periphrasis fit to be adapted, even with elegance and variety, to any other already formed. By it we are enabled to determine whether a phrase, a passage, a succession of harmony, a certain progression of modulation, which the composer is desirous of taking, be regular and allowable or

not; whether it has its proper arithmetical figures, or is preceded by, and followed with, proper consonances; in short, what are the most eligible and elegant modes of passage from one series or compages of sounds to another, and of returning again to those from which the deviation was made'.

Castel's dissertation is throughout, an eulogium on the Guida Armonica; he was well skilled in music, but by no means a competent judge of musical composition. Such as had made it their study, were unanimously of opinion that it contains very little that was not known before, and is besides so very obscure as to be of small use to any one."[32]

In the treatise by Veracini mentioned earlier we find a fleeting, indirect allusion to the *Guida Armonica*:

"Many are those who claim that composing music is very easy. Not even we deny this; indeed, we give our pupils the opportunity to acquire this faculty in the most comfortable manner; but we will never allow our pen to write that it is within the ability of any bright lad, hardly initiated into music, to produce any kind of composition whatever, be it a fugue, a ricercar, or a capriccio, without any study and without any teacher."[33]

One must take into account that from the first half of the eighteenth century, parallel with the spread of amateur music-making, there appeared a large number of elementary "methods" for learning to play an instrument or to sing without the benefit of a teacher (in England, for example, primers such *The Self-Instructor on the Violin*, *The Compleat Tutor*, and *The Compleat Musick-Master* achieved a wide circulation). To this general type of publication the *Guida Armonica* clearly belongs. Its nature is stated unequivocally in an advertisement that appeared on 26 April 1740 in the

Dublin Newsletter: "The Harmonical Guide, containing the true grounds of harmonical composition laid down in a method entirely new and upon so easy and natural a foundation as to enable a person absolutely unskilled in Musick to write at pleasure, the most perfect harmony with an infinite variety [...]".

The third part of Serre's *Observations sur les principes de l'harmonie* (1763) is devoted in its entirety to the treatise. The author of the essay does not spare praise for the *Guida Armonica*, but he also criticizes many aspects of it, such as its failure to include several familiar harmonic progressions:

> "A dictionary that listed in alphabetical order only a third or a half of the most frequently used words of a language, while the remainder were found strewn about as if randomly in the various phrases appended to them, would certainly be considered with justice as a very imperfect work. This is very nearly the case with the *Guida Armonica*."[34]

Serre criticizes the fact that the treatise does not follow the same principle of organisation as dictionaries, since it takes account only of the first note of each group, not the succeeding notes; he also regrets the absence of the major mode. However, he ends his dissertation with an expression of his hope that his observations will be used at a future stage to correct and improve Geminiani's work, a sign that he considers it generally valid. The judgements of La Borde and Burney, however, are much more severe:

"This work, on which Geminiani laboured for twenty or so years, of which some were devoted entirely to its preparation, did not match up to what one had been led to expect from so able a harmonist. Doubtless, it is the outcome of the reflections of an entire lifetime; but what are the reflections of a single man when measured against the science of harmony itself, which is the outcome of the reflection of several men over a long period of years! If Geminiani, instead of working on so stubbornly for twenty years, had troubled to spend one or two years acquainting himself with the state of harmony since the writings of Rameau - in a word, since the age of the "fundamental bass" - his work would have been both more enlightened and more methodical, and would at the very least have encompassed as many things again as his unaided reflections were able to bring to his awareness. In addition, he would have viewed phenomena systematically, a safer way to proceed than by groping in the dark or following the routine of musicians."[35]

"It was a kind of mill, in which good Music was to be ground with little trouble and no genius; as good sense and science by the Laputan machine, in Gulliver's Travels."[36]

The main charge levelled against the treatise was that it says absolutely nothing about how to shape the upper parts. To remedy this deficiency Geminiani published at his own expense a supplement that had originally been intended to remedy that other glaring deficiency: the absence of the major mode. The author's own preface, defensive and strangely subdued in tone, reveals more clearly than any of his critics' attacks the reason for the failure of the *Guida Armonica*:

"Having been told frequently that my Guida Armonica is not commonly understood, and that it has been censured by some as being of little Use, because the Bass is there set down without Rules for composing the

other Parts; I have resolv'd to explane my Design more fully, and satisfy the Lovers of the Art, by Instructing them in the Method of making the intended Use of my Work.

I do indeed own, that my Book does not Teach the whole of the Art of Composition; but still I affirm, that the Notes of the Bass, to which numbers are annexed in the Guida Armonica include Harmony, Modulation and Melody; of all which the following Examples will be a sufficient Proof. By these, Students of the Art of Composition will see with great Evidence, that good Melody is implied in good Harmony, and good Modulation: And that they can never be at a Loss for good Harmony and Modulation, if they will be at the Pains to consult the Directions prefixed to the Examples, in which the Guida Armonica abounds.

Those who desire to improve their Notions of Harmony, and to join the Knowledge of the Tone Major or sharp Key, to that of the Tone Minor or flat Key; as also to acquire just Ideas of the Contrast of the Several Parts of Imitation, and other Particulars, will find great Assistance from the first and second Books of the Art of Accompanying with the Harpsichord published formerly by me.

As to the Motion that may be given to the Bass, according to the nature of its fundamental Harmony, there are no Examples given in this Supplement, because many are to be found in my two Books of Accompanying above mentioned."

The supplement consists of a mere thirteen pages, of which three refer directly to the examples in the treatise. In these the composer tries to explain the system of figured bass and to show how the upper parts of compositions in three or four parts may be invented. But matters of this complexity cannot be explained so rapidly, and it is not difficult to imagine that the readers who found the *Guida Armonica* difficult to follow fared no better when they sought advice from the supplement.

The original French edition of the treatise on harpsichord accompaniment, *L'Art de bien accompagnier du Clavecin*, dates from 1754 and lacks an opus number. An expanded, two-volume version was later published in London as Op. XI. The full title of the English edition is *The Art of Accompaniament or A new and well digested method to learn to perform the Thorough Bass on the Harpsichord, with Propriety and Elegance.*[37] In the preface Geminiani reverts to his usual self-confidence:

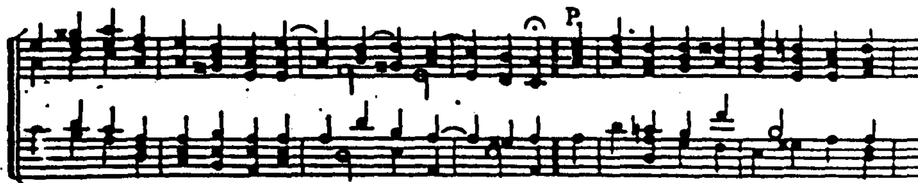
> "[...] Some perhaps will be surprized to find so little Resemblance between this Book, and those which have been published by others, upon the same Subject. Had any, or all of those Books together, contained compleat Directions for the just Performance of Thorough Bass, I should not have offered mine to the Publick. But I will take upon me to say, that it is impossible to arrive at the just Performance of Thorough Bass, by the Help of any, or all of the Books hitherto published.
>
> The Art of Accompagniament consists in displaying Harmony, disposing the Chords, in a just Distribution of the Sounds whereof they consist, and in ordering them after a Manner, that may the Ear the Pleasure of a continued and uninterrupted Melody. This Observation, or rather Principle, is the Ground of my Method, which teaches the Learner to draw from the Harmony, he holds under his Fingers, diversified and agreable Singings. This Work will also be useful in leading the Learner into the Method of Composing, for the Rules of Composition do not differ from those of Accompagniament: but the common Method of Accompagniament gives the Learner no Hint of the Course he is to take in Composing.
>
> I shall not in this Work speack of the Clefs, of Notes and Measures, or of Flats and Sharps; neither shall I enumerate the Concords and Discords. I suppose the Learner already acquainted with those Things: but if he is not, it is very easy to acquire that knowledge in a short time, by the Assistence of a Master. In short, I purpose in this Work, to treat of what hath not already been handled by others, and not to repeat what hath already been repeated an Hundred Times over [...]."

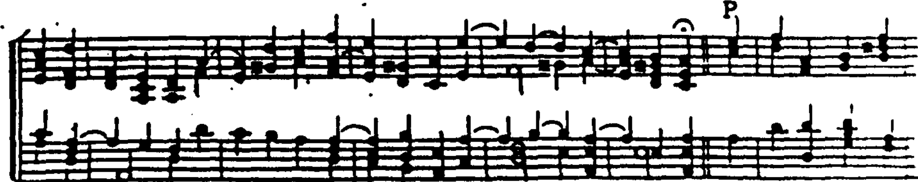
McArtor describes the treatise as "a manual for keyboard harmony", adding that "a more appropriate title would have been *The Art of Reading Figured Bass*, for the author is concerned only with showing numerous ways of realizing figured basses."[38] Indeed, the treatise consists of a series of short passages of figured bass, each followed by a considerable number of possible realizations. The same harmonic progressions are repeated many times following a pattern of variation similar to the one employed by Corelli in his *Follia* sonata (Op. V, no. 12), in order to give to the learner a wide choice of scales, arpeggios, broken chords, etc. to use when accompanying at the harpsichord. "The Art of Accompaniament [we read in the introduction to the second volume] consists principally in two things, which I call Position and Motion. By Position I mean the placing the proper Chord upon the Bass Note, and continuing the same during the whole Time of that Note; and this constitutes Harmony. By Motion I mean the passing from one Sound to another, either acute or grave; and this constitutes Melody." (see Ex. 44).

The main principle of the treatise is summarized by Arnold in these words: "economy of the evanescent tone of the Harpsichord."[39] In order to provide the instrument with the necessary continuity of sound it is important to avoid using up too soon the resources contained in each chord: i.e., one must administer these resources with economy. In reference to the first *Essempio* Geminiani clarifies a point already made in the preface:

> "The Art of Accompagniament chiefly consists in rendering the Sounds of the Harpsichord lasting, for frequent Interruptions of the Sound are inconsistent with true Melody. The Learner is therefore to observe not to exhaust the Harmony all at once, that is to say, never to lay down all his Fingers at once upon the keys, but to touch the several

Ex. 44: AA 2/xii [B 5c]





Notes whereof the Chords consist in Succession."

According to Burney, the treatise is comprehensible only to those "who no longer want such assistance; and if practised, would be intolerable to singers and solo-players, who wish to be heard through the tinkling of a harpsichord."[40] This seems to suggest that the realizations of a figured bass proposed by Geminiani are not truly representative of the performing practice of the time, being more elaborate and complex than the norm. In Geminiani's somewhat utopian view the ideal accompanist is as nimble at the keyboard as he is well versed in the art of composition and - above all - adept at the technique of variation. Not surprisingly, Geminiani writes in the preface that the treatise is useful not only to accompanists but also to aspiring composers, since the rules of composition and accompaniment, in his eyes, are more or less the same. "Geminiani's examples [observes Arnold] are characterized by singular freshness and

spontaneity [...]. His work differs from all others dealing with the same subject: in all the others (save only that of Quantz, who, however, gives no examples of a set-out accompaniment) we are taught by Accompanists to accompany, but Geminiani, the pupil of Corelli, speaks as a Soloist, telling us how he likes to be accompanied!"[4] We may add that it was precisely because he was himself a virtuoso, and possessed the typical mentality and outlook of one, that Geminiani required the harpsichord (which is normally asked by the theorists to provide a functional harmonic support without many frills) to compete for attention with the soloist. This partly justifies the above-mentioned criticism of Burney - a criticism that Geminiani had, incidentally, foreseen and done his best to rebut:

> "[...] It will perhaps be said, [we read in the introduction to the second volume of the treatise] that the following Examples are arbitrary Compositions upon the Bass; and it may be asked how this arbitrary Manner of accompanying can agree with the Intention and Stile of all sorts of Compositions. Moreover a fine Singer or Player, when he finds himself accompanied in this Manner, will perhaps complain that he is interrupted, and the Beauties of his Performance thereby obscured, and deprived of their Effect. To this I answer, that a good Accompanyer ought to possess the Faculty of playing all sorts of Basses, in different Manners; so as to be able, on proper Occasions, to enliven the Composition, and delight the Singer or Player. But he is to exercise this Faculty with Judgment, Taste, and Discretion, agreeable to the Stile of the Composition, and the Manner and Intention of the Performer. If the Accompanyer thinks of nothing else but the satisfying his own Whim and Caprice, he may perhaps be said to play well, but will certainly be said to accompany ill [...]".

We have finally to mention very briefly Geminiani's last treatise, *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra*, which was published in Edinburgh in 1760. This title is perhaps misleading in suggesting that the work is intended equally for the guitar and the cittern, but the preface removes any confusion:

> "The Use of the lesser Guitar or Citera, being lately revived amongst us, I thought it might be of general advantage to its admirers to compose some Lessons adapted to the compass and stile of that Instrument. And [I] have endeavour'd to improve it by adding more Harmony and Modulation to the usual manner of performing on it [...]".

Geminiani is thus referring to only one instrument: the cittern, popularly known in England as the "lesser guitar" or "English guitar".[42] This plucked instrument belongs to the guitar family; it has a circular sound box of rather small dimensions, and in the eighteenth century generally had ten strings organised in six courses tuned as follows: *c* - *e* - *gg* - *c'c'* - *e'e'* - *g'g'*. It was quite popular around the middle of the eighteenth century, and Felice Giardini published in the same year (1760) a set of trios for English guitar, violin, and cello.

The treatise consists of a short introduction followed by eleven sonatas performable on either "cittern" or violin, accompanied by continuo. The tablature for the former includes no indications of rhythm, embellishments, or marks of expression, all of which have to be deduced from the violin part. According to Bruno Tonazzi, who has edited a modern edition of some of the sonatas (nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 10) and published an article on the treatise, these compositions "deserve the same consideration as Geminiani's best sonatas."[43] But a sober examination leads one soon to conclude that,

The ART of Playing the GUITAR or CITTRA

Containing

Several Compositions with a BASS for the

VIOLONCELLO or HARPSICHORD

Most Humbly Dedicated to the

Countess of Charleville.

by

F. Geminiani.

N.B: These Compositions are contrived so as to make very proper Solos for the Violin: and as all the Shifts and Graces requisite to play in a good taste are distinctly mark'd it must be of great use to those who aspire to play that Instrument.

EDINBURGH. MDCCLX.

Printed for the Author by R Bremner at the Harp & Hautboy and sold at all the Music Shops in Great Britain and Ireland.

FIG. 23

Title-page of *The Art of Playing the Guitar or Cittra* [B 6]

unlike the compositions contained in the treatise for violin, they have no value beyond the purely didactic and are without a doubt inferior as music to any other known compositions by Geminiani. In fact, they are no more than elementary exercises for beginners, with extremely primitive harmony and using the simplest rhythmic and melodic elements. Useful they may have been to devotees of the English guitar, but they are totally devoid of any musical interest. The following example is taken from the sixth sonata:

Ex. 45: APGC/6/1 [B 6b]

Andante
Chitarra o Cetra
Violino
Cembalo [o Pianoforte]
[TUTTI]
Violoncello
[TUTTI]
5
10
15
20

25

30

Adagio

Chapter Ten

THE VOCAL MUSIC

A quick glance at the catalogue of Geminiani's music suffices to show that the composer had little interest in vocal music. With the sole exception of *L'incostanza delusa*, performed im 1745, he had no links with opera or with any other kind of large-scale vocal music. As was observed earlier, only a more rapid worker than Geminiani could hope to cope with the demands of operatic composition. Nevertheless, a few short vocal compositions by Geminiani enjoyed a wide circulation, as the remarkable number of manuscript and printed copies of them preserved today attests. It is therefore necessary to give them a brief mention in this chapter.

The degree of success enjoyed by an aria in the eighteenth century, besides being suggested by its circulation in manuscript or (more rarely) by the number of its printed editions, may also be shown by the existence of one or more parodies. This is the case with the most celebrated of Geminiani's airs, *Gently touch the warbling Lyre*, the verses of which, written by a certain Mr A. Bradley, were amusingly parodied in the following manner:

Gently touch the warbling Lyre,
Cloe seems inclin'd to Rest:
Fill her soul with fond desire,
softest notes will sooth her Breast:
Pleasing Dreams asist in Love
Let them all propitious prove.

Gently stir and blow the fire,
Lay the Mutton down to roast,
Dress it quickly I desire,
in the dripping put a Toast,
that I Hunger may remove,
Mutton is the meat I Love.

On the Mossy Bank she lyes,
(Natures verdant velvet Bed).
Beauteous Flowers meet her Eyes,
Forming Pillows for her Head,
Zephyrs waft their Odours round,
And indulging whispers sound.

Cytron Groves in fancy rise,
All thats charming all thats sweet,
Like some Bow'r of Paradise:
But let all seem uncomplete,
Wanting One those Ioys to share
Then o then let me appear.

On the Dresser see it lies,
Oh the Charming white and red.
Finer meat ne'er met my Eyes,
On the sweetest Grass it sed;
Let the Jack go swiftly round,
Let me have it nicely Brown'd.

On the Table spread the Cloath,
Let the knives be sharp and clean:
Pickles Get, and sallad both,
Let them each be fresh and Green;
With small beer, good Ale and Wine
Oh, ye Gods! how I shall Dine.

It is difficult to establish whether Geminiani wrote the music on Bradley's verses, or, as seems more likely, the text was merely fitted to pre-existing music. But the first hypothesis cannot altogether be rejected, because the air does not exist in a known instrumental version, as is the case with *If ever a fond inclination*, which is taken from the Minuet of the first concerto of Op. II. It was of course common practice to clothe a text in one of the most fashionable instrumental compositions of the day and publish it in an anthology or song-sheet. Geminiani's celebrated Minuet - the one that Burney and Twining considered not his own but Scarlatti's - besides being transcribed for harpsichord (PC 1/xiii) later became one of the airs in *Love in a Village*, a comic opera that enjoyed great success in London following its first performance at Covent Garden on 8 December 1762. The same Minuet was subjected to three other transcriptions: the aria for soprano *Know Madam I never was born*, on a text by a certain Mr Leveridge (perhaps to be identified with the celebrated

singer Richard Leveridge); the French parody *Oui, vous en feriez la folie*, which appeared in several manuscript and printed editions; and the canon for two sopranos, alto and baritone, the subject of which, as we read in the manuscript score preserved in the British Library, "is taken from Geminiani by Dr [William] Hayes who harmonized it". The other English airs ascribed to Geminiani - *The Poor Little Beggar Boy*, *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Billy Pringle's Pig*, *The Tender Lover*, and *The Sympathizing Hearth* - are most probably adaptations that the composer, notwithstanding his notorious partiality for reworkings, did not himself make. Geminiani's typical style is not easily recognized in these compositions, perhaps because the presence of a text demands a regular and simple manner of writing. The following two examples are cases in point:

Ex. 46: *Gently touch the warbling Lyre* [C 1a]

Gently touch the war-bling Lyre, Cloe seems inclin'd to Rest;
Fill her soul with fond desire, Soft-est notes will sooth her Breast;
Pleasing Dreams assist in Love, Let them all propitious prove.

Ex. 47: *The Sympathizing Heart* [C 3]

When young Mi- lan- da's Fin- gers move
The trem- bling Strings my Heart beats Love,
My Soul the mo- tion does o- bey I trem- ble
too,- as well as- they.

The only assuredly authentic surviving example of Geminiani's writing for the voice is a short cantata for soprano, *Nella stagione appunto*, which is preserved in only one manuscript example (I-Bc, DD. 45) in a copyist's hand. This work is contained in a volume of cantatas by numerous composers including Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, Porpora, Sarri, Lotti, and Cesarini, and was probably composed in Rome or Naples before Geminiani's departure for England in 1714. It consists of two arias each preceded by a recitative and is quite similar in style to the general run of Roman cantatas composed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. No one would claim for this work a quality greater than solid competence. However, it points clearly to the composer we know from the later

instrumental music by making both the voice part and - more significantly - the continuo very active in both melodic and rhythmic respects: Geminiani does not like to leave "voids" where for one or two beats nothing new happens. The second aria, *Se un giorno il Dio bambino*, illustrates this point:

Ex. 48: *Se un giorno il Dio bambino* [I-Bc, DD 45]

ò quanto goderò ò quanto goderò ò quanto gode-

rò ma se

prende il destin più forza e più vigor si si che piangerò che

piangerò ma se prende il destin più forza e più vi-

gor più forza e più vigor si si che piange-

rò, si si che piangerò che piangerò. Da capo.

Fine

CONCLUSION

As we have already said, the lack of any established tradition of Geminiani studies weighs heavily on the present state of research. Although the most outstanding features of his life and work are now sufficiently delineated, many questions remain still open. The main biographical lacuna concerns Geminiani's first Italian period. That he was taught by Arcangelo Corelli seems very likely, but the sources of information about his Roman sojourn are still very few, and the same can be said about his apprenticeship with Alessandro Scarlatti and Ambrogio Lonati. Future investigations will need to be addressed especially to the short periods which Geminiani appears to have spent away from Lucca: from April 1704 to August 1707, and from October 1709 to 1714, when he left Italy. It would also be desirable to find more evidence of his first visit to Paris, in 1733, which was relatively short but of great moment in the development of his musical style.

Another great lacuna, in the strict etymological sense of this word, exists in the catalogue of Geminiani's printed works: we still do not know what happened to his Op. VI. Although it is very unlikely that he published it, since it is not cited either in contemporary catalogues or in critical writings, we cannot exclude that the collection still survives somewhere in manuscript. In 1746 Geminiani's Op. V, its transcription for violin, and Op. VII were all engraved in Holland; one may surmise that the composer originally intended to designate as "Op. VI" the violin transcription of Op. V, but then changed his mind. As we know, Geminiani was certainly capable of doing this kind of thing, but the hypothesis is

not really convincing. If, on the other hand, Op. VI was in fact an original set of compositions and not a "reheating", it is very improbable that the composer did not publish it. So its rediscovery is possible in theory but highly unlikely.

The present work aspires to be an important step forward in our knowledge of Geminiani's life and work. The next step should be the production of a critical edition of his main compositions, which would certainly stimulate both their analysis and their performance. For this operation it will be absolutely necessary to take into account their reworkings, transcriptions, and manuscript versions (against the background of the treatises), and in particular to consider Geminiani's "corrections" in the right perspective. Our catalogue of Geminiani's printed and manuscript works, in which for the first time the original editions are listed together with their numerous derivations, may be a useful starting point for work towards a future critical edition.

Finally, future researchers should also be aware that the catalogue of manuscripts listed in the second volume is almost certainly incomplete, since for practical and understandable reasons, it takes into consideration only the main European collections and those sources which RISM is able at present to list - so many surprises may one day emerge from the rediscovery of manuscripts of previously unknown compositions.

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