3.
Dramatic Duet

3. 1.
DEFINITIONS, TYPOLOGIES AND METHODOLOGY

This third chapter (at the same time also the second main part of this study) devotes itself to the dramatic duets by Handel and his Italian contemporaries in the period 1706–1724, with occasional excursions into earlier years all the way back to 1690 for comparative purposes, in order to see how the way some of these composers wrote duets developed up to the main period in question. As such it will concentrate on duets in the various Italian vocal dramatic genres already outlined in Chapter 1.2, but the focus will be on opera duets. The reasons for this are not only that they are usually the most numerous dramatic duets in the opuses of the composers under question due to the status of opera as a genre, but also their public nature, which facilitates the investigation of context. It is also impossible to avoid certain key issues in the development of opera seria, the genre to which most of the duets examined in this chapter belong. Reference sources repeat these slightly commonplace but nonetheless true topoi on ensembles in opera of the first half of the 18th century:

> Reforms to the *opera seria* in the early 18th century (reducing the number of characters) […] made ensembles rarer in serious genres, but they remained important in comic works and it is there that they attracted the richest and most varied treatment. During the first half of the 18th century the duet was the most common ensemble in all types of opera, typically for the main lovers in strong emotional situations. Indeed, in many *opere serie* the lovers' duet was both the dramatic highpoint and the sole concerted number. (Cook 2001)

> Ensembles are relatively rare in Handel's operas. The most common, often at the end of acts, are duets in which the protagonists of the tragedy give expression to their emotions of bliss or total despair.[117] (Marx 2002, 586)

117 **Ensemblesätze sind in den Opern Händels relativ selten. Am häufigsten kommen (meistens am Aktschluss) Duette vor, in denen die Hauptpersonen der Tragödie im Moment der Glückseligkeit oder der völligen Verzweiflung ihren Emotionen Ausdruck verleihen.**

While it will never be an aim of this study to contest the truthfulness of these claims, they leave us with the seemingly ungrateful task of studying a phenomenon that is seemingly rare and somewhat typified. The so-called reforms of the end of the 17th century, introduced by a circle of poets around Apostolo Zeno, strove to ennoble libretto writing with features of Aristotelian aesthetics, such as his famous category of dramatic verisimilitude. It was this tendency that Pietro Metastasio later imposed as a norm, holding ground for the remainder of the century.[118] Calella (2000, 125) is only one of many authors who explain that this novel operatic dramaturgy considered the simultaneous musical speech of multiple *dramatis personae* unverisimilar (cf. also Rousseau 2008 as quoted by Saville 1958, 134), and, therefore better avoided, which in turn led to a comparable paucity of ensembles when compared to earlier operatic history of the 17th century. As a result, the diversity of Handel's dramatic duets (and ensembles in general) should not be "regarded in opposition to Metastasian dramaturgy or even as a pre-reform, but as a sign of a dramaturgic freedom that was characteristic of the early 18th century"[119] (Calella 2000, 126). Handel must have been aware that the tide was turning because two out of his three settings of Metastasian libretti (*Siroe* and *Ezio*) contain no ensembles whatsoever, but he continued to display his original affinity for duets, since "the examination of around 250 opera seria libretti in the period 1710–1745 nevertheless shows unequivocally that the number of ensembles in Handel's *opere serie* lies above the average, especially in the twenties and the thirties"[120] (Calella 2000, 128).

The examination of the vast repertory of dramatic duets by Handel and his already mentioned Italian contemporaries should revoke the impression of scarcity and uniformity conveyed by the reference books quoted above. However, it is necessary to forewarn that in part of the older literature on the subject the pejorative tone partly stems from a misunderstanding of the dramaturgy of opera seria. Heinz Becker, writing as late as 1980, remarks on a "lack of dramatic tension" (Becker 1980, 85) that is inherent in the binary, linear interchange of (*secco*) recitatives and arias, which is a typical imposition of classical dramaturgy on a genre that does

118 From a vast variety of literature on the subject, a monograph by R. Freeman (1981) and the numerous writings of R. Strohm (1979, 1997, and 2008 in particular) deserve to be singled out.

119 Im Gegensatz zur metastasianischen Dramaturgie oder sogar als 'Vorreform' angesehen werden, sondern als Zeichen einer dramaturgischen Freiheit, die für das frühe Settecento charakteristisch war.

120 Eine Überprüfung von ca. 250 Libretti von *Opere serie* im Zeitraum 1710–1745 zeigt jedoch eindeutig, daß die Anzahl von Ensembles in Händels *Opere serie* besonders in den späten zwanziger und in den dreißiger Jahren über dem Durchschnitt lag.

not conform to it. The concept of dramatic action as a sequence of events mediated by dialogue is often not suited to the affect-laden exchanges of arias at the musical heart of opera seria. "Opera depends on action, and action commands dialogue. The actual problem of opera was, not so much musical speech, as much as 'dialogicism' [Dialogizität, A/N], dialogue in the sense of a verbal exchange of two partners on stage, and not in the sense of two people singing together."[121] (Becker 1980, 82)

This singling out of the principle of dialogue as crucial to dramatic development in opera, and of the duet as its ideal musical embodiment seems to suggest that duets which affirm dialogue are superior to the ones that do not. That Handel's age did not see it that way does not need further explication. For Schläder (Schläder 1995), the constitution of the 19th-century opera duet according to the so-called *la solita forma*, that is, the multi-movement structure interchanging "dramatic" movements such as *tempo d'attacco* or *tempo di mezzo* with "lyric" ones such as the *cantabile* and the *cabaletta*, is a sign of the increased role of the duet in opera's dialogic development. Counterpoint featured prominently in duets written between 1650 and 1750, but for Schläder it remained a means of differentiating the vocal parts in the texture without contributing in the least to the evolution of dramatic dialogue. Although Schläder goes to great lengths to name the numerous exceptions in Handel's works that either break the *da capo* mould or are integrated into a sequence of numbers, he objects to them for conforming too much to the structural model of the aria without a tendency to develop its own norms. Robinson, too, speaks of ensembles in 18th-century Neapolitan opera as the "extension or enlargement of the solo aria rather than a development or evolution of earlier ensemble types like the madrigal" (Robinson 1972, 151), whereas Dent (1910a, 547) is even more restrictive when he maintains that "the Da Capo form was incompatible with dramatic progress". Calella (2000, 123) rightfully warned against the risks of such a teleological approach that sees ensembles of the 17th and the 18th centuries as a mere preliminary stage to the opera buffa ensembles of Mozart, in comparison with which they seem thoroughly undramatic. Schläder's claims about Handel's duets could be applied to the duets of many of his contemporaries, for they, too, would be considered by him as no more than brief moments of textural culmination (in the simultaneity of two voices singing together) that neither illustrate nor contribute to the dramatic development of the opera.

121 **Die Oper lebt jedoch von der Aktion, Aktion aber erheischt den Dialog. Das eigentliche Problem der Oper war somit weniger das musikalische Sprechen als vielmehr die Dialogizität, Dialogizität im Sinne von Wechselrede zweier Bühnenpartner verstanden, nicht von Zwiegesang.**

Similarly, the following remarks by Robinson (1972, 156) were meant with opera seria and opera buffa of the second half of the 18th century in mind, although the same risk persists:

> So long as composers desired subtlety through the understatement of characters' differences, where these were expressed simultaneously, the conventional ensemble gave them the chances they sought. What the mode of the period prevented was any musical exploitation or exaggeration of the conflicts where characters disagreed. Ill-mannered retorts, interruptions, words uttered out of turn, were the requisite of the comic rather than of the serious ensemble. […] It is correct to say that characters in the serious ensemble were more united in the way they musically expressed their thoughts, more prepared to let one remark follow on in orderly fashion from the last and let the melody and harmony of their parts cohere, than those in other. What was disappointing was that more touches of realism could not be introduced when characters felt themselves opposed to each other. (Robinson 1972, 156)

Even when their own or the well-being of their loved ones is at stake, the characters preserve the all-pervasive *countenance* (cf. Strohm 1997, 210), which does not allow for an unseemly expression of conflict in a duet. On the contrary, composers were attracted by the possibility to unite two characters so that "the melody and harmony of their parts cohere". Handel and his Italian contemporaries would probably not have understood Robinson's disappointment "that more touches of realism could not be introduced", which is why we need to make sure we avoid his and other similar approaches. Typologies which derived from the later history of opera such as ensembles of action, reflection and contemplation (cf. Cook 2001; Rienäcker 1997, 101) should be used with caution, too since they are inappropriate for 18th-century opera seria. Dent's approach to the quartet "Bella!/Taci!" from A. Scarlatti's opera *Il trionfo dell'onore* can serve to exemplify this. Although he found it of considerable interest musically, Dent was disappointed by the "stately formality" (1910a, 546) and the lack of dramatic verve in the quartet. The essence of his reproach is in the aforementioned lack of dialogue and the irrefutable fact that, instead of an ensemble of action, we are dealing with an ensemble of reflection, albeit full of lively interaction between the four characters. However, "ensembles of action" did not exist in opera seria of the period because they were not considered appropriate to the genre.

The somewhat abstract category of the dramatic duet can be understood as a conflation of different types of duets in dramatic vocal genres in

the course of the 17th century. With time, the duet as a number in genres such as the cantata, the serenata and the Italian oratorio began to resemble the opera duet, becoming standardised in the course of the 18th century. But before this happened, the term *aria a due* was frequently used as a synonym for the dramatic duet, causing terminological problems. Dechant (1993) and Robinson (1972, 151) define it as an aria which distributes a single melody onto two voices that are always in a relationship of successiveness and never of simultaneity, i. e. the only structural procedure they use in the vocal parts is alternation, and never parallelism or counterpoint. On the other hand, Olga Termini (1978, 116) adopts the term *aria in duetto* from Francesco Caffi's manuscript *Storia della musica teatrale in Venezia* (c. 1850) for a successive duet in which respective stanzas are in turn sung by different characters. Although opposing, these definitions share the view that the *aria a due* is either a subcategory or a lesser variant of the duet, and Calella may have a point when he criticizes this conception of the *aria a due* as a not entirely formed duet, an "aria in disguise"[122] (Calella 2000, 124), especially when it is pitted against the "duetto" as its terminological opposite. Regardless of whether we accept Calella's opinion that "the sources show that the term 'duetto' was used [as, A/N] often and that the two terms were interchangeable" (Calella 2000, 124) or not, it is counterproductive to insist on a precise distinction between the duet and the *aria a due* (or *aria in duetto*).

Irrespectively of the above outlined Aristotelian precepts, J. J. Rousseau insisted on the incongruity of duets to certain dramatic situations except for "lively and moving situations"[123] (quoted in Saville 1958, 134). In dramatic genres of a larger scale, the dramaturgic placement of duets is indeed an important issue. Rienäcker (1997, 104) singles out their position "on the periphery, at the beginning or end of an act", and indeed, Italian operatic duets in the first half of the 18th century usually occupy nodal dramaturgic points at the end of the first act, the beginning or the end of the second or near the end of the third act. Since opera duets in this age usually confirm the dramatic unity of two characters (usually the main female and male protagonists, the *prima donna* and the *primo uomo*, although there are many exceptions), what could be more dramatically appropriate than a duet of unity at a point in the dramatic action where their future seems highly uncertain? Together with the amorous duet uniting the characters at the prospect of a happy dénouement, these are indeed the most common duet types of the period, but by no means the only ones. Calella, for instance, claims that around 1700 there were

122 **Verkappte Arien.**
123 **Situations vives et touchantes.**

not only more ensembles in opera seria than is usually thought, but they showed considerable dramaturgic diversity, and this might be the tradition that Handel followed (cf. Calella 2000, 129). In some duets examined in this chapter older librettistic traditions were still strong, placing a closed operatic number (whether aria or duet) at the beginning or the middle of a scene, and not only at the end as began to be the norm with the introduction of *da capo* form.

In my former research, the highlighting of the category of dialogue as crucial to the development of the duet led me to focus on the idea of dramatic conflict as decisive for Handel's love duets (cf. Ćurković 2009). This stems from the quintessential importance of the dramaturgic category of conflict in drama and theatre studies. In hindsight, it became clear that a certain duet occurring in a dramatic situation of conflict does not always have distinguishing traits when compared to duets that do not play out any kind of conflict at all. In other words—and the duets analysed in Chapter 3 will also confirm this—a duet of unity and a duet of conflict could be different in terms of the structural procedures they apply, but they could also be similar. It is therefore not advisable to limit ourselves to certain fixed dramaturgic categories.

Although duets from cantatas, serenatas and Italian oratorios are to be examined together with opera duets in this chapter, the fact that the latter are enmeshed in an essentially public (especially in an urban centre like London) theatrical entertainment will significantly broaden the predominantly analytical approach taken in Chapter 2. Aspects of performance practice, whether musical or theatrical, will play a part in the consideration of compositional techniques and stylistic traits. Since dramatic duets are clearly assigned to two *dramatis personae*, and in the case of the serenata, Italian oratorio and opera also embedded in larger dramatic units such as scenes, parts or acts, questions of dramaturgy will be of prime importance, too.

My goal is to compare Handel and the Italian contemporaries he had some sort of contact with, and the public, representational genres to be examined here show that this contact consciously took on traits such as imitation, difference, competition and even rivalry. Composers who were active or whose works were performed, i. e. whose works served as a (musical) starting point for operatic performance in London in Handel's age will be at the centre of the comparative analysis. The time frame under investigation (1706–1724) is is not only the period when Italian opera was established in London but also a time when the music of Handel's Italian contemporaries who are of the greatest importance to this study such as Bononcini and Gasparini flourished in London's musical life alongside Handel's. Handel's operatic undertakings in London in the 1730s and beyond are marked by an increased stylistic differentiation in relation to younger Italian contemporaries (Porpora, Vinci, Hasse and the like) and he

himself will proceed along different stylistic lines in his English oratorios, gradually abandoning opera and Italian vocal music altogether. Although his duet output began to show some distinguishing traits in the 1730s (cf. Zauft 1990; Calella 2000 and 2009; Ćurković 2009), these cannot be brought into relation with the Italian contemporaries at the heart of this study: their specificity could be elucidated only by taking a different approach, which is why this study will leave out this later period in Handel's activity as a composer out of consideration. However, it will not limit itself to London in purely spatial terms. The output of the Italian composers in question written for different Italian cities, as well as Berlin and Vienna in the case of Bononcini will also be taken into consideration in order to explain their overall development and to be able to compare whether and to what extent they wrote (or their works were adapted) for London in a different way. One must also bear in mind that the limited accessibility of sources[124] encouraged the inclusion of some works that were written well before the affirmation of these musicians as operatic composers in London. Therefore, thanks to the availability of facsimile editions and microfilms, Bononcini's works from the 1690s and 1700s also found their way into the comparison. With Handel, limits were drawn with works written in Italy on the one hand (because I am interested in duets in Italian vocal genres) and the year 1724 (Bononcini's departure from London) on the other hand, since the importance of their rivalry diminished from that point on.

Often we do not have access to sources documenting the music of all the duets in a given work. For instance, some of them to be discussed in the subsequent subchapters have been drawn from manuscript collections of arias, with the occasional duet included, since I either did not have access to the whole score or—no less frequently—it has not been preserved at all. This brings us to a philological aspect critical to the study of 17th and 18th century dramatic vocal music. Large-scale secular vocal works, especially operas, were comparatively rarely printed, and if so, usually only under special circumstances. Apart from manuscripts of the works in their entirety, a lot of numbers, especially arias that achieved some popularity, circulated in manuscript collections.[125] London as one the first metropolises of modern Europe that had a considerable music market forming a

124 This study benefited greatly from the interlibrary loan services of the Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg in the acquisition of microfilms of manuscripts from the British Library and other European libraries, as well as several research trips to London, where I consulted various manuscripts in the British Library and the Gerald Coke Handel Collection, housed at the Foundling Museum.

125 This is why if the manuscript score of a certain opera has been lost (especially if it was not revived but only had a single run in the theatre where it was originally premiered), we can sometimes reconstruct the numbers that circulated independently of the opera in various collections of copies.

vital part of public musical life, also relied on the publishing of various "selected" or "favourite songs" from popular operas. These printed collections found their way not only into the private homes of a musical public that could sing and play some of the numbers but also into the playhouses and other kinds of entertainment venues where they could be channelled into different, more popular forms of music making. This is precisely why the orchestral accompaniment of the original arias was often streamlined to facilitate accompaniment on the harpsichord or some other continuo instrument. In contrast to Italy, where the most successful, challenging and spectacular arias could be "transported" into other contexts, in London it was often the simpler, less demanding and popular-sounding numbers that were incorporated into these anthologies, although individual collections vary greatly in this respect. However, with the exception of Handel's, whole autographs or manuscript copies of operas performed in London at the time are rarely preserved in their entirety and we have to rely to a great extent on these "selected" or "favourite songs" for the analysis of duets, although they are sometimes not even included in the selections.

Much more reliable indicators of the presence of duets are the printed libretti, providing an overview of the overall numbers contained in an opera. Following continental practice, the libretti were not only published so that the audience could follow the plot (in London in both the original Italian and its English translation), they were also the main means of documenting a performance, containing not only information about the cast often unavailable elsewhere but dedications as well. If manuscript scores or other types of musical sources are unavailable, a libretto can tell us how many duets a certain opera contained, as well as display their texts, although there are occasional discrepancies between libretti and musical sources. The libretti provide invaluable contextual information on the duets even if their setting is not preserved. A certain type of text can require an equivalent type of setting, which enables us to make plausible assumptions. Comparative analyses in this chapter will show that in the same way as arias, duets were also subject to the most direct form of parody, that is, the transposition of a duet with a certain text to another opera, whether leaving the text unchanged or minimally modified. This makes it rather plausible that the music was also transferred from one work to the other, for the composer would not have reached for a text he had already set in place of an original had he wanted to compose new music for it. Another aspect where libretto analysis is of crucial importance is the adaptation of libretti, which is often highlighted as a specificity of Handel's opus, but is actually characteristic of a wide array of operatic practices all over Europe. Some of the operas by Handel's Italian contemporaries under inspection have also been adapted from libretti set much earlier, either by the same or a different composer and are often extensively revised. The possible availability of sources documenting earlier

settings can be valuable in the analysis of transformation or replacement of duet texts. Even though one would expect that duets, requiring more rehearsal time, would be more difficult to replace as well as the fact that two opera singers would be less likely to agree on the choice of older duets to transfer, it will be shown that this kind of parody occurred frequently in the case of duets.[126] In any case, a broad comparison of different versions of libretti and their settings can shed a light on the development of duets in the opus of a certain contemporary of Handel's, as well as on the interrelationships of these composers.

Handel's cooperation with librettists and his methods of working with existing libretti, many of which he collected himself during his journeys is well researched in publications of different kinds, from a philological display of libretti and their sources that enables in-depth comparison (Bianconi 1992), to chronological overviews (Strohm 2008; Gier 2009) as well as individual studies on Nicola Francesco Haym (Lindgren 1987) and the influence of composers of the Royal Academy of Music on the choice of libretti (Clausen 1994; Dean 1995). As pointed out by Gier (2009, 196–197), although there was always a great deal of cooperation between composer and librettist in the first decades of operatic life in London, the fact that the names of librettists who adapted libretti for Handel after the dissolution of the Royal Academy of Music are often unknown suggests that henceforth he had even more independence in adapting the libretti.[127] Nevertheless, it is evident that there is a strong element of teamwork in the choice and placing of duets into London operas in the first third of the 18th century, which will make it both easier and more difficult to assess the intentions, reasons and motivations behind these choices.

Handel's relationship to the so-called operatic reform at the beginning and the first third of the 18th century has also been debated in a vast array of literature, and a clear consensus has been reached that he was not particularly interested in consciously implementing ideas of librettists such as Zeno[128] and Metastasio.[129] However, as has already been stated, the issue

126 It remains difficult to say if suitcase duets existed the same way "suitcase arias" did, since at least in the cases of the works examined in this study we do not have any contextual information of this kind on the singers involved.

127 The death of Haym, one of Handel's closest associates, in 1729, might have had a hand in this emancipation.

128 The librettist Pietro Pariati (1665–1733), with whom Zeno collaborated on a range of libretti to the extent that it is impossible to distinguish between the two men's creative share in their mutual projects, usually does not get the mention he deserves.

129 Even when he did set them, the libretti were often heavily revised, for instance Metastasio's *Siroe* (1728), *Poro, re dell'Indie* (1731) and *Ezio* (1732), Zeno's *Faramondo* (1737) as well as different *pasticci* based on Zeno's libretti. The latter are compiled from either works by Handel or from works by a younger generation of Italian contemporaries and are therefore excluded from this study.

is more complex. Firstly, Zeno and Metastasio were not the only librettists interested in imbuing the libretto with more serious, tragic elements along Aristotelian principles. As outlined in detail in Freeman 1981 and Ketterer 2010, Zeno was just one of many men of letters who displayed some of these tendencies in the period between 1690 and 1710, and all of them did so with varying degrees of consistency. Librettists such as Domenico David (d. 1698), Matteo Noris (d. 1714), Girolamo Frigimelica Roberti (1653–1732), Antonio Salvi (1664–1724) and Agostino Piovene (1671–1721), all active in Venice at the turn of the century, strived for a greater influence of French classical tragedy on libretti, the excision of comic characters and the concentration and unification of the plot. Although ensembles were to a certain degree considered incompatible with the Aristotelian ideal of dramatic verisimilitude, duets still hold a strong presence in their libretti as well as their revised versions. A comparative study like this could have taken the libretti as their point of departure, too. Many of the libretti that were set (in a revised form or not) in the first third or half of the 18th century by composers including Handel and the Italian contemporaries of his who are at the centre of this study belong to the distinguished librettists listed above.

However, I eventually decided against this approach. For one thing, some of the comparative work had already been done, e. g. in G. Cummings's (1982 and 1998) studies on settings of Metastasio's *Alessandro nell'Indie* by Vinci (1730), Handel (1731, as *Poro, rè dell'Indie*) and Hasse (1731, as *Cleofide*), including a detailed comparison of the settings of the famous "modern", dialogic duet "Se mai turbo il tuo riposo". Secondly, in most cases a comprehensive comparison would require tracking down sources that have a varying degree of philological accessibility, some of them in localities (such as the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek or different Italian archives) that were not within the financial means of foreseen field research.[130] Finally, as some of the examples discussed in the course of this chapter will show, the connection between a source libretto and its subsequent adaptations can become increasingly blurred. For example, Antonio Salvi, who is generally important for providing many libretti that Handel and his adaptors took as a starting point for their London productions, placed a duet of conflict in his libretto *Adelaide,* and this duet was set by Torri in the first production of the opera in 1722. Orlandini's setting for London (1729) contains, however, no ensembles whatsoever, and Rolli revised Salvi's libretto for Handel in the same year as *Lotario*, replacing the above mentioned duet of conflict with a duet of amorous unity. It would, therefore, be problematic to talk about fidelity to a librettist's conception

130 **The above mentioned case of *Griselda* was perhaps the most feasible, but it is best approached in a monographic study of a shorter scope.**

of a duet within a certain opera, and it seems likely that the criteria for omission and replacement could seem dramatically and musically arbitrary, depending on reasons that are difficult to account for, maybe having more to do with performance practice.

In spite of the methodological specificities just described, the musico-analytical approach to the dramatic duets will not be very different from the one in the first part of this study. In spite of all the contextual information crucial for their understanding, dramatic duets still share some structural traits with the chamber duets examined in Chapter 2. A special emphasis will be placed on the application of contrapuntal techniques, for while counterpoint in a chamber duet is a necessity as the stylistic tide was beginning to turn, it became a matter of choice in opera. This will perhaps be a more appropriate axis for comparison than some of the other elements outlined in this introduction. As we shall see, the duets examined in this study display some variety when it comes to contrapuntal shaping, varying not just from composer to composer but also from work to work. Highly imitative duets coexist with entirely homophonic ones.

However, it is important to consider one last typology crucial for this chapter in spite of its possible flaws. It was devised by Charles Burney (1935, 769) and considered in detail by Calella (2000; 2009). Burney came up with a binary opposition of opera duets according to the temporal relationship between the voices (simultaneous or successive) and the type of texture (homophonic or polyphonic) they create. A duet of the "modern plan" would thus favour a successive relationship of the vocal parts in a predominantly homophonic texture, whereas a duet of the "old plan" is more simultaneous and often contrapuntal. To Burney's dismay, the duet of the "modern plan" had, in Handel's heyday in the 1730s, grown into the most common type of duet, gradually superseding the duet of the "old plan". This mirrors Mattheson's complaint about the "lack of invention" in the modern dialogue duet, although the examples the composer from Hamburg gives are from the operas by Reinhard Keiser, which leaves a big generational and stylistic gap between what Burney might have considered "modern". Calella (2000, 126–127) disagrees with Burney on this, although he admits that if not the most common, the "old plan" duet was the most admired type at the turn of the century, much earlier than the stylistic change began to take place. Clearly, Burney's opposition is slightly ahistorical and to a certain extent merely theoretical, leaving numerous borderline cases between the two extremes, but it has remained influential even though the implicit knowledge of Burney's contemporaries on text setting had long forsaken us.

The examples Burney gives are duets from Handel's contribution to the London pasticcio *Muzio Scevola*. A detailed analysis of the opera's

duets in Chapter 3.4 might question this clear dichotomy, but there is no doubt that "Notte cara" (II. 12; Gismonda, Matilda) is a remnant of the tradition of the chamber duet in an opera duet (cf. Calella 2000, 129) and therefore possibly valid as an example of Burney's "old plan". Definitely more representative of the "modern plan" is "Se mai turbo il tuo riposo" (I. 11; Cleofide, Poro), the only typical Metastasian duet in Handel's operas. Described by Calella (cf. 2009, 341) as the lyrical heightening of dramatic conflict, it rests on a librettistic progression from polytextuality to monotextuality, consisting of a dialogic exchange of a longer span leading up to stichomythia and culminating in the characters singing the same text. Musically, the build-up (in the A section of the *da capo* form these duets mostly adopt) moves from long to short successive statements, and (mostly parallel) simultaneity is achieved only as the conclusion of the dramatic dialogue, usually taking place in a situation of conflict. There are numerous intermediary stages between monotextuality and polytextuality, but even if a duet clearly belongs to one of the two opposites, it is not always a clear indication for the composer to set a monotextual duet text on the "old" and a polytextual one on the "modern plan". Handel defied expectations in this respect, often setting monotextual duet texts with a high degree of successiveness in the treatment of voices. Likewise, a duet text containing different morphological and syntactical versions of the same content does not necessarily have to be dialogic, but can be conceived as the parallel unfolding of two monologues, which gives the composer freedom to use different techniques of simultaneity and succession. Therefore, the principle of differentiation of parts in a dramatic duet is never applied consistently and usually gives way at some point to successive treatment. In the duets of G. F. Handel and his Italian contemporaries, this differentiation is often a nod to 17th-century traditions or it occurs in comical duets. It is more common in Handel's operas written in the 1730s.

Finally, let me briefly outline the course of this chapter. Chapter 3.2 is devoted to the beginnings of Italian opera in London, from 1706 (the year of the first performance of *Camilla*) to 1710, the period just before Handel's arrival in London and the premiere of *Rinaldo*. It places stress on the British public's developing acquaintance with Italian opera in general and duets as their integral part in particular. As a large share of performed operas belongs to the category of the *pasticcio*, i. e. operas assembled from arias (and duets) from different works whose origin cannot always be traced, this part of the research will not be able to deal with questions of authorial specificities in the composing of duets to the extent the following chapters might. Rather than as in the 1720s and 1730s when it was often Handel himself who assembled pasticcios either from his own works or from works by other composers (most commonly Vinci's and Hasse's),

in this early stage of the development of Italian opera in London when no professional foreign composers were active in the British capital, the pasticcios were produced by the organisers and managers of the theatres and such polyvalent artistic personalities as Nicola Haym, basing them on existing libretti and/or scores. Duets in *Camilla, Thomyris, Pyrrhus and Demetrius* and *Almahide* composed by Bononcini are considered in this chapter rather than in Chapter 3.4 because their music formed an integral part of the pasticcio musical culture of London at this early stage and they were among the first Italian duets the British public got to know, so they need to be considered together with the other examples from this period.

While investigating the next period in the performance of Italian opera (1711–1719), chapter 3.3 examines the duet outputs of individual composers such as Gasparini and Handel in parallel with the continued production of pasticcios containintg duets whose authorship is very hard to establish with certainty. A separate chapter (3.3.1) is devoted to Gasparini, in which the analysis of the duets in the two London operas associated with his name (*Antioco* and *Ambleto*) are supplemented with an examination of duets in some of his dramatic cantatas and operas written for other centres around the same time or later.[131] An examination of pasticcios from the period 1712–1717 (Chapter 3.3.2) will show how not only different composers' duets were tested on the London audience compared to the previous period but that structural and stylistic expectations from a duet were changing. Handel's Italian dramatic duets written during his time in Italy (1706–1710), delegated to this chapter rather than 3.2 in order to highlight the continuity in his evolving structural and stylistic traits, as well as the duets from his early London years (1711–1715) are pitted against the duets examined up to that point to see if and to what extent Handel was developing his own ideas about what a dramatic duet should be like.

Finally, Chapter 3.4 devotes itself to one of the most significant periods for Italian opera in London in the 18th century, the activity of the Royal Academy of Music (1720–1729). With a few exceptions, it was marked by the clear outlining of two authorial operatic poetics, Handel's and Bononcini's. This is why the focus is on the first five seasons (1720–1724), after which Bononcini departed from London and only wrote one more opera for the Royal Academy of Music, *Astianatte* in 1727. Although works by other composers were occasionally performed, including a significant contribution by Ariosti, whose works are going to be excluded from consideration in this study for reasons already outlined in Chapter 1.1, the customary reception of this period is through Bononcini's and Handel's

131 **Gasparini is, naturally, of special interest because comparisons with his chamber duets (examined in Chapter 2.4) impose themselves.**

growing rivalry. Initially the more successful of the two, Bononcini appears to have been ousted as Handel fashioned the taste of the London audience in his own favour. Although I am going to be critical of this topos (along with many that characterise the evaluation of Bononcini's music), a focused structural, stylistic and dramaturgic analytical confrontation between the duets of these two composers who worked with the same librettists (Rolli and Haym), can be seen as the culmination of the comparative methodology.

3. 2.
BEGINNINGS OF ITALIAN OPERA IN LONDON BEFORE THE ADVENT OF HANDEL (1706–1711)

In order to understand the relationship between Handel and his Italian contemporaries in the realm of dramatic duets, one needs to look into the beginnings of the performance tradition of Italian opera in London.[132] Britain resisted the introduction of Italian opera as a pan-European form of musical theatre even longer than France . Emulating French models at first, but developing its own forms of musical theatre on the foundations of the domicile tradition of spoken drama with musical interpolations, the so-called "dramatic opera" evolved, gaining increasing popularity in London's theatres at the end of the 17th century. In the first decade of the 18th century, conditions were ripe for a continuous production of dramatic texts (in fact, libretti) set to music in their entirety. The fact that some of these first fully-fledged London operas "in the Italian manner" were performed in English or a combination of Italian and English forms a bridge to the evolving tradition of musical theatre mostly in Italian from about 1710 to 1728, the year of the first performance of *The Beggar's Opera*, which although not a long-term threat, nevertheless indirectly contributed to the downfall of the Royal Academy of Music and anticipated Handel's invention of the English oratorio, gradually assuming the place of Italian opera in his output. Therefore, although operas such as *Camilla, Thomyris* and *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* were sung (mostly) in English, they will be considered as part of the tradition of Italian opera in London since their music was Italian.

At the beginning of the century, three London theatres in the city mounted productions with a significant share of music in them: the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane and the Queen's Theatre (built in 1705, but renamed King's Theatre at the succession of George I in 1714) in the Haymarket. After some fluctuation, the latter theatre eventually specialised in Italian opera, housing both the Royal Academy of Music and Handel's Second Academy. Mainly because there were no composers of Italian opera active in London at the time, most of these early operas (19 out of the 30 performed works between 1705 and 1717, cf. Lindgren 1995, 155) were pasticcios assembled from works by different (Italian) composers, many of them at the centre of this study. Talbot (2008) distinguishes between two types of pasticcios: those based on an available score, from which recitatives, arias and duets could be retained but they could also

132 **Fassini (1914), W. J. Lawrence (1921), L. Lindgren (1977, 1980, 1987, 1995), J. Merrill Knapp (1984) and Dean and Knapp (1987) describe the social and cultural context of the introduction of Italian opera to London in detail and this study is greatly indebted to them.**

be replaced by new ones, and those based on an available libretto, where numbers had to be newly composed or numbers with different texts were introduced in their place.

Interestingly enough, one of the crucial people in the establishing of this foreign genre was one of Handel's close associates, active in London as early as in 1700. Nicola Francesco Haym (1678–1729), a Roman musician of German descent, was probably the person with the best knowledge of Italian opera in London at the time, a fact hardly surprising since he received his musical training at the time when Rome was an important operatic centre. In addition to being a "composer, librettist and theatre manager" (Lindgren 2001), Haym was equally active as a cellist and scholar, but the most important aspect of his profesional life for this study are his operatic adaptations. Adaptation is a better word than compilation or arangement to describe Haym's role, as especially at the beginning of the period considered in this chapter he was often responsible not only for providing a libretto (often an adaptation of a previously existing text), but also the music. "The poetic virtues of an Italian libretto were of little concern to Londoners, so an adaptor of texts worked mainly to combine the wishes of patrons, singers and composers into a coherent 'dramatic skeleton' that he could direct upon the stage." (Lindgren 1987, 313) The physical presence of Handel as well as Bononcini and Ariosti in the following decades gradually reduced the need for pasticcios. Hence today, Haym is better known as librettist to Handel, Bononcini and Ariosti, although he was as important because of his adaptations.

Table 23 shows a selective list of operatic works performed in London in the period between 1706 and 1710, most of them being pasticcios. This chapter devotes further attention to the ones that sources have been preserved for, mostly collections of "favourite songs" that vary in comprehensiveness and do not always reflect the presence and the importance of duets in the respective operas. The five operas (*Camilla; Thomyris, Queen of Scythia*; *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*; *Almahide*; *Idaspe fedele*) selected for analysis are also the more successful ones with the London audiences, although to a different extent. At first the two theatres in Drury Lane and Haymarket participated in a competition to stage musico-dramatic works so fiercely that in 1708 Lord Chamberlain "consigned all the actors to Drury Lane and all the musicians and dancers to Haymarket. English dramatic opera, requiring both actors and musicians, was thus banned from the stage" (Lindgren, 1980, 51). Italian opera was henceforth presented only at the Haymarket, although a certain number of seasons still intermixed with drama. This does not include later revivals of *Camilla*, *Thomyris* and *Pyrrhus and Demetrius,* also considered in this study and performed elsewhere, for they were conceived of as an Enlish alternative to Italian opera although they consisted of Italian music.

YEAR	WORK	LANGUAGE	COMPOSER /ARRANGER	LIBRETTIST /ARRANGER	DUETS*
1705	*Arsinoë*	English	T. Clayton, Italian composers, N. Haym?	J. Addison, T. Stanzani	7
1705	*The Loves of Ergasto*	Italian	J. Greber (not preserved)	A. Amalteo, anonym. adapt.	2
1706	*Camilla*	English, 1708–1710: English & Italian	G. Bononcini, N. Haym	S. Stampiglia, N. Haym, transl. Northman**	8
1707	*Rosamond*	English	T. Clayton	J. Addison	9
1707	*Thomyris, Queen of Scythia*	English, 1708–1710: English & Italian	J. C. Pepusch, A. Scarlatti, G. Bononcini, A. Steffani, N. Haym?, Ch. Dieupart?	P. A. Motteux (newly written to suit the arias)	9
1708	*Love's Triumph*	English?	G. Bononcini, C. F. Cesarini, F. Gasparini, V. Urbani?	P. A. Motteux, Ch. Dieupart	10
1708	*Pyrrhus and Demetrius*	English & Italian	Haym, A. Scarlatti, G. Bononcini, et al.	A. Morselli, Haym?, transl. O. Swiney	5
1709	*Clotilde*	English & Italian	F. Conti, G. Bononcini, A. Scarlatti	D. David, anonym. adapt.	?
1710	*Almahide*	Italian, comic scenes in English	G. Bononcini, A. Ariosti, J. J. Heidegger	P. A. Bernardoni	5
1710	*Idaspe fedele*	Italian	F. Mancini, J. C. Pepusch, N. Grimaldi?	G. P. Candi, S. Stampiglia	4

TABLE 23.
Selective list of pasticcios of Italian opera performed in London 1706–1710

* In the case of the operas receiving closer analytical attention in the subsequent subchapters, the listed number of duets reflects their overall number in different versions of the opera (and libretto) and not the actual number performed either at the premiere or in the course of the run, since we often cannot know this information and all versions are to be considered.

** Lindgren (1972) alludes to the possibility that Motteux and O. Swiney "aided with the translation or revision of the text".

The gradual transition to performance in Italian was accompanied by the equally gradual domination of Italian singers as compared to English. The debut of the castrato Valentino Urbani aka Valentini in *Camilla* in 1707 or in late 1706 introduced London audiences to this—for them—exotic type of voice[133], but also began the tendency of intermixing singing in English and Italian, depending on who was singing the role. This drew a lot of contemporary criticism and encouraged J. J. Heidegger to advertise *Almahide* as the first opera sung entirely in Italian although this was not the case, since the comic scenes were still in English. In December 1708 Londoners were acquianted with a much finer castrato voice in the person of Nicolo Grimaldi (also known as Nicolini), a bigger Italian (and international) operatic star. According to Lindgren (Lindgren 1995, 151), from 1708 to 1717 "he—rather than any score, libretto or scene design—was the featured attraction whenever he was on stage." Gradually, Italian singers prevailed in entirety, laying the foundation to the formation of a permanent operatic ensemble at the Royal Academy of Music in the 1720s. As we can see in the table, Haym definitely played a key role in the creation of *Camilla* and *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, but might have also collaborated in mounting *Arsinoë* and *Thomyris* on stage. The anonymous author of the preface to "A Critical Discourse on Opera's and Musick in England" (1709, published alongside a translation of F. Raguenet's *A Comparison between the French and Italian Musick and Opera's*) heavily criticised *Arsinoë*, *The Loves of Ergasto*, *The Temple of Love*, *Rosamond* and *Love's Triumph*, largely because the music of these works was entirely unlike the Italian operatic idiom of the time, whereas *Camilla* personified this ideal, at least to London audiences of the time (cf. Lindgren 1980, 46–47). He was especially scathing in his views on *Arsinoë* as filled with "antiquated Italian airs", which made it resemble "the Hospital of the old Decrepit Italian Operas" (quoted in Lindgren 1987, 261).[134] The three operas performed before *Camilla* (*Arsinoë*, *The Loves of Ergasto*, *The Temple of Love*) were also rather short, numbering 18 to 37 arias compared to *Camilla's* 56, and the antiquated style of the arias meant that they were often irregular, rarely in *da capo* form and also short, so that the performances had to be supplemented with extra music

133 It is possible that a castrato already performed in the *Loves of Ergasto* (cf. Lindgren 1995, 151), but one cannot identify him.

134 A superficial look at the scores of *Arsinoë* (Clayton MS) and *Rosamond* (Clayton 1707) reveals that Clayton's duets, although numerous, are mostly of a shorter span, written in a simple style that gives favour either to an exchange of shorter alternative statements by the voices, or to parallel movement, less frequently both. Lindgren's (1987, 297) opinion that Haym might have helped Clayton in the composition of *Arsinoë* could have some plausibility, since the duets in *Rosamond* seem even simpler in comparison.

during the interval (cf. Lindgren 1997, 174). After Londoners acquainted themselves with the genre in *Arsinoë,* the brevity and "mangled" nature of the next two operas was not sufficient to satisfy them.

3. 2. 1.
Camilla (1706)

As shall be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.4.1, Giovanni Bononcini's impact on the development of a turn-of-the-century operatic style, although mostly contested in older literature, is recognised as a strong influence on opera in Britain in general and Handel's opus in particular. Interestingly enough, Wolff (1975a, 75) finds that one of the first works Bononcini wrote in a "Handelian" style was *Il trionfo di Camilla* (1696). It remains to be seen whether these and other, occasionally contradictory comparisons indeed link Bononcini with Handel in a convincing manner or are mere generalised traits. While comparing Bononcini's music for *Camilla* with an opera by Carlo Francesco Pollarolo, Strohm (1979, 56–62) concludes that Bononcini's arias are "longer and more fully orchestrated", even though the orchestral accompaniment often comes down to ritornellos framing arias scored for voice and continuo only (cf. 1974, 108). Nevertheless, the overall expansion of an aria is often achieved by the growth of the first part of the *da capo* form through repetition, the use of multiple, sometimes even contrasting motifs and a harmonic trajectory articulating it into a bipartite whole in itself (cf. Strohm 1979, 56–57). The duets in the London *Camilla* show few sings of this interplay between voices and instrumental accompaniment (the only exception being "Happy/ Hopeless I Love"), since most of them are written for continuo only with the possibility of an orchestral ritornello added at the end.

Il trionfo di Camilla was one of the most important operatic libretti of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. It was written by Silvio Stampiglia and first set by his regular collaborator Giovanni Bononcini for Naples in 1696. In terms of dramaturgy and content, with its lack of an "enlightened" idealisation of characters and the comic servants Linco and Tullia, Stampiglia is hardly a reform librettist like Apostolo Zeno (cf. Strohm 1979, 51–55). On the other hand, according to Lindgren (1972), Stampiglia was following trends such as the domination of *da capo* form, two thirds of which are exit arias, which shows a tendency for implementing continuity after the model of the *liaison des scènes* known from French classical tragedy. The libretto "received thirty-seven documented productions in seventy years. Bononcini's [...] score may have been the basis for as many as twenty-six productions in twenty cities during a thirty-year span. The co-creators were certainly in charge of the production at Naples in 1696, and perhaps

of that in Rome in 1698; but they seemingly had nothing to do with later versions of their work. Every city had its own—usually anonymous—adaptors, who altered texts and music to accord with their personal ideals, the exigencies of the season, and the tastes of town." (Lindgren 1977, 89) We cannot always know if and to what extent Bononcini's music was retained in these subsequent settings or adaptations. From the original seven duets (three of which were written for the comic servants), one can trace down only the modification of a duet for Turno and Lavinia in 1698, whereas in later settings of the increasingly modified libretto a new duet was added occasionally. This, among other things, makes the London version of this opera highly remarkable.

Not many settings were based on the original score to the extent that the London *Camilla* (1706) was. The composer's music had already been performed in London since 1700, which might have played a part in its choice for performance. Haym, who could have become acquainted with the opera while playing in the orchestra for its first revival (*La rinovata Camilla*) in Rome in 1698[135], displayed an exceptional fidelity to Bononcini's score by composing only the (English) recitatives afresh and retaining 53 of the original 56 arias (cf. Lindgren 1980, 47). This is fairly uncommon not only for London but also for the tradition of performance of Italian opera in the 18th century in general. Bononcini's music must have left a strong mark on London audiences, since only a few arias were replaced in *Camilla*'s revivals in 1709, 1717 and 1726 (cf. Lindgren 1977, 114). The opera was performed in the British capital as many as 111 times from 1706 to 1728 (Lindgren 1980, 46), out of which 66 took place during its long first run (1706–1709). Both the Theatre Royal and the Queen's Theatre in Haymaket competed to stage it. Bononcini even received an invitation to come to London in 1707, although he refused, reluctant to leave his prestigious court position in Vienna. "By 1710 Bononcini's arias were so popular in London that they were inserted into other operas, and several of his later arias became popular songs." (Wolff 1975a, 78) All in all, as the second most performed musico-dramatic work in the United Kingdom in the 18th century after *The Beggar's Opera*, the importance of *Camilla* for the establishment of Italian opera and the formation of the taste of London audiences cannot be stressed strongly enough.

The fact that the manuscript copy of the 1696 Neapolitan original version of *Il trionfo di Camilla* is available in a facsimile edition (Bononcini 1978) enables a close comparison between Haym's adaptation (Bononcini

135 **Haym must have known Bononcini from his Roman years, since both being cellists, they may have played together in orchestral performances under Corelli.**

and Haym 1707)[136] and its model. As Dean and Knapp (1987, 148) had put it somewhat sharply, the numbers in these early London operas were "printed in mutilated form, generally voice and bass, with truncated or missing ritornellos, no inner parts, and minimal figuring." Along with the translation into English, the types of voices used for certain roles were modified by transposition. Pitches varied minimally in the case of the two (high) male serious roles of Turno and Prenesto, originally written for soprani: the countertenor Francis Hughes as well as the alto castrato Valentino Urbani performed the former part, whereas the soprano Margherita de L'Epine, the boy soprano Henry Holcomb and eventually, in 1709, also the castrato Nicolini sung Prenesto. More significant were the changes in the comic roles. The servant Tullia, a "vecchia" (older woman) sung according to Venetian conventions by a tenor in female attire, was transposed an octave higher and assigned to a soprano in London in 1706. The fact that in 1717 and 1726 the role of Turno was sung by the contralto Jane Barbier does not present a significant change in the evident flexibility in terms of gender (introduced to London audiences early on), but the performances of the tenor Thomas Salway (in 1726) and George Pack (in 1717, possibly also a tenor) in Tullia's role seem to imply that eventually, the "vecchia" convention of travesty was adopted as well (cf. Lindgren 1997, 744–745).

Table 24 displays the duets in the original 1696 and the 1706 version of the opera. Column 1706 is based on a collation of two sources: the aforementioned printed collection of songs (Bononcini and Haym 1707) and a manuscript score in the Royal College of Music in London that was obviously copied in London in the early 18th century and is not precisely datable (Bononcini 1990), but reflects the Neapolitan version of the opera. Thus, the duets from the 1696 version that did not make it into the printed colletion of 1706 could be identified and compared. A comparison shows that there are no significat musical discrepancies between the duets in the two versions, which is in accordance with Haym's already described fidelity to Bononcini's score. He merely dropped the comic duet "Se ben mi sprezzi" from Act 2 and added the simpler duet of unity for Turno and Prenesto ("Care is fled") to the last secne of Act 3, just before the final *coro*.[137]

136 Cullen's 1707 print and the first, 1706 print by Walsh (Bononcini and Haym 1706) are identical in terms of musical content.

137 The fact that in both manuscript sources the duets "Languisco" and "Non disprezzar" end with an orchestral ritornello that is omitted from the printed selection of songs can be easily explained with the fact that selections of songs from early London opera aimed at a market of private music-making and therefore reduced the instrumental accompaniments of the songs to the simplest.

ACT/ SCENE	ITALIAN INCIPIT	ENGLISH INCIPIT*	SERI-OUS / COMIC	CHAR-ACTERS	1696	1706
I. 4	Dal suo bell'arco	One day cupid wantonly	s	Lavinia, Turno	S&S	S&MS**
I. 12	Languisco / Per chi?	I languish / For whom?	c	Tullia, Linco	T&B	S&B
II. 7	Se ben mi sprezzi	%	c	Tullia, Linco	T&B	%
III. 1	Con la / senza speme di farmi	Happy /Hopeless I love	s	Turno, Prenesto	S&S	MS&S***
III. 3	Caro bello / cara bella, tu sei quello/quella	Thour are he/she	c?	Tullia, Linco	T&B	S&B
III. 5	Vorebbe il cuor	My heart to act is	s	Camilla, Turno	S&S	S&MS
III. 11	Non disprezzar / Più non tradir	Cease cruel to deceive me / tyrannizing	s	Turno, Lavinia	S&S	MS&S
III. 15	%	Care is fled, despair no more	s	Prenesto, Turno	%	S&MS

TABLE 24.
List of duets in the 1696 and 1706 versions of *Camilla*

* Incipits are listed in English and do not reflect changes in the direction of bilingual performance that came later.

** The flexibility of voices, especially in the higher ranges (e. g. the difference between a soprano and a mezzosoprano / contralto not being pronounced at the time) meant that the role of Turno could be sung by a female soprano in 1696, a countertenor (Hughes) and an alto castrato (Valentini) in 1706–1709 and a female contralto (Barbier) in 1717 and 1726. The duets fit the range of all these voices.

*** The diversity of performers in the role of Prenesto highlights the above mentioned flexibility, too.

I am going to begin by explaining which kind of duets, although accorded some attention here, will not receive a more detailed account in similar cases to be dealt with later on. "Dal suo bell'arco" (Bononcini 1990, 15'–16; Bononcini recording, *Il trionfo di Camilla*) is an example of an arioso *a due*, a short two-voice outburst merely a few bars long and a remnant of the librettistic traditions of the 17th century, the likes of which will disappear from 18th century libretti with its domination of exit arias and the abandonment of shorter arias situated at the beginning or the middle of a scene. The duets

for the comic characters are of only a limited interest to this study. Although Tullia and Linco appear in other scenes separately and are integrated into the main dramatic action as episodic characters, their mutual scenes are on the verge of becoming emancipated from the principal dramatic action since they form independent units interrupting the main action and greatly differ from the scenes and numbers of the serious characters:

> Repetitive rhythms and syllabic treatment, often bordering on comic patter, are typical of Bononcini's buffo style, as of his predecessors and successors. Widely varied motifs are used in some duets so that the characters at any one moment can be strongly differentiated, although it is usual for them to exchange material. In duets the buffi often quarrel, whereas serious duets are usually concerned with love. When comic characters have love duets, everything in them tends to be exaggerated [… in, A/N] splendid parodies of the serious duet. (Ford 1974, 117–118)

This study will shy away from the analysis of comic duets precisely for reasons outlined in the quote above. In the 1711 adaptation of Bonocini's *Etearco*, containing as many as four duets for the comic servants in its original 1707 Vienna setting, Haym dropped all of these along with the only remaining duet for the *primo uomo* and the *prima donna*. This suggests that a more unified and serious conception of opera under the indirect influence of reform tendencies was gaining ground in London. However, the duet "I languish / For whom?" (Bononcini and Haym 1707, 16; Bononcini 1990, 42'–43; Bononcini recording, Il trionfo di Camilla) was retained in the printed collection of *Camilla* in 1710, 1715 and 1717. In it, "the two comic characters mock the favourite type of love-scene found in seventeenth-century *opera seria* in which a lover addresses a distant beloved who does not appear on the stage." (Wolff 1975b, 71–72). Linco, who feigns love for the elderly and unattractive Tullia only out of material interests, is mocking not only Tullia's character on the diegetic plane but also the convention of serious opera by constantly interrupting her and forcing Tullia to break character in a faster tempo, trying to suppress Linco's unwelcome interventions into her "aria", so that the duet is a duel of contrasting alternating vocal statements. "Throughout, *adagio* (for her languishing) alternates with *allegro* ('I'm not talking to you!', etc.), a comic contrast which is seldom found in the set forms of even the later *opera buffa*." (ibid., 72) Changes of tempo within a single vocal number in reformed opera seria of the first half of the 18th century are not in line with the unity of *affect* that lies at its heart, so it goes without saying that we are not going to be encountering many duets of the sort in the remaining part of this study.

In comparison, the two remaining comic duets are more typical. "Se ben mi sprezzi" (Bononcini 1990, 74–75; Bononcini recording, Il trionfo di Camilla), present in the original 1696 version of the opera but not in its London adaptation, is conceived like an *aria con pertichini* for Tullia, in which Linco pokes fun at her by contradicting and interrupting her with brief interjections "che nò" (to her "che si") in complementary rhythm. The same procedure is repeated in the B section of this regularly written out *da capo* design with an even more overtly comical allusion to Tullia's moustache. Haym (and/or his translator Northman) must have felt the need to drop this duet from the adaptation, perhaps increasing the share of serious duets by the addition of the aforementioned "Care is fled" instead. The performances of the opera in 1717 and 1726, on the other hand, reinstated male performers in the role of Tullia.

"Thou are he/she" (Tullia, Linco) or "Caro bello / cara bella, tu sei quello/quella" in the original Italian (Bononcini 1990, 113'–115; Bononcini recording, Il trionfo di Camilla) is the only remaining comical duet in the London version of the opera and somewhat borderline between the serious and the comical dramatic plane. Whereas the first (A) section of the duet displays traits of a serious duet of amorous unity, in its second (B) section the composer reverts to a comical alternation of the vocal parts in short comic replicas as in his asides ("dreadful features") in section B Linco is breaking the illusion of a happily reunited couple. The humour of the Italian version of the opera was augmented by the fact that both roles were sung by lower male voices, and a soprano Tullia, however good an actress Mrs Lindsey might have been, cannot compete with the effect of a bass and tenor tandem, the latter voice aided by a performance in drag. It is also significant that, contrary to the logic of the *da capo* aria, order is not reinstated after a contrasting second section with a repetition of the first one. The contrast is manifold: section B is in C minor, it contrasts the parts by alternating them and reserves simultaneity for the passage in which Tullia and Linco cadence together, although not in a smooth parallel texture, but in typical *buffo* syllabic declamation (Bononcini and Haym 1707, 39). In section A, on the other hand, the voices start out in a simultaneous, but not parallel texture, soon engaging in a texture of free counterpoint against held notes written in inverted counterpoint (and repeated with reversed parts in b. 9), a technique very well-known from Bononcini's chamber duets. The voices at one point (b. 6–9) even engage in brief imitation, absent from most of the other duets in this opera, almost as if this duet was a more proper love duet than the only one for serious characters, "Cease cruel tyrannizing / to deceive me". This duet was retained in the selections of songs published in 1710, 1715 and 1717, which proves that it continued to have audience appeal.

Rather than occupying dramaturgic nodal points at the end of the first act, the beginning or the end of the second acts, in both versions of the opera after the short arioso *a due* and the comic duets in the course of the first and the second acts, the majority of the serious duets (as many as four of them in the London version) are reserved for the last act. Perhaps the most remarkable in dramaturgic (and affective terms) is the first number in the act, "Happy/hopeless I love" (Bononcini and Haym 1707, 33), "Con la / senza speme di farmi contento" in the original Italian (Bononcini 1990, 105–107; Bononcini recording, Il trionfo di Camilla). Turno is pleased that the king Latino's hostility towards him has been transformed into an alliance, which will reflect positively on his relationship with the king's daughter Lavinia, whereas Prenesto is desperate because he is convinced that Camilla, disguised as the shepherdess Dorinda, does not return his love. Two characters who are in a relationship of friendship are, therefore, united in a duet as they find themselves in completely opposing dramatic situations, and consequently also contrasting affects, Turno's joy as opposed to Prenesto's sorrow. The string ritornello, not contained in the 1706 London printed collection, brings two motifs that will serve as a starting point for the material of the vocal parts. The opening onset of Prenesto and Turno in parallel thirds is based on the first motif (a) of the ritornello (b. 1–4, Bononcini 1990, 105r), as well as the following two passages in which the voices interchange between a development of this motif and a held note in inverted counterpoint. After this, the voices unfold the second motif (b) from the ritornello (b. 4–14) in parallel, well suited to a virtuoso display of coloratura. The first, A section, thus articulates a regular song-form, likewise well-known from Bononcini's chamber duets analysed in Chapter 2.4.

A SECTION	RITORNELLO		DUET PROPER			
Motif	a	b	a	a_1	a_1	b
Bar	1–4	4–14	15–22	23–31	32–40	41–56

TABLE 25.
Formal plan of A section in the duet "Con la / senza speme"[138] from *Camilla* (1706)

The upbeat nature of this section with its tilting ternary metre seems more suited to Turno's state of mind and it is almost at odds with the affect expressed by Prenesto ("Hopeless I love and ne'er must enjoy her"), but in the original Italian text ("Senza speme di farmi contento son amante di vaga

138 **Naturally, bar numbers refer to the manuscript copy of the score (Bononcini 1990, 105r-107r).**

beltà") this change is carried out merely by replacing the preposition "con" with "senza". It seems almost as if even the inability to find satisfaction in being the lover of a "fair beauty" cannot spoil the joy of loving for Prenesto. The B section of the duet provides harmonic contrast and lets the vocal parts alternate at first, but proceeds to entangle them in a *contrapunctus ligatus*, leading them in parallel thirds to a unison cadence. Bononcini had borrowed this duet from the 1696 Naples score with minimal intervention for a duet of two female characters in similarly contrasting dramatic situations in his 1707 opera *Turno Aricino*, to be discussed in Chapter 3.4.1.1. The duet was also retained in the selections of songs published in 1710, 1715 and 1717. However, a bilingual performance in English and Italian after 1707 (when Valentini joined the cast) was apparently not recognised as ideal by contemporaries in London, so that it was dropped during the first run of the 1706/1707 season and reinstated only after the performances of *Camilla* reverted to the original English. In 1717, the text (but not the music) was modified to "Never/ever shall I be blest in possessing" (Lindgren 1997, 711), perhaps a more fitting translation of the original Italian text.

The duet "Vorebbe il cuor" (Bononcini 1990, 121'–122'; Bononcini recording, Il trionfo di Camilla) for Camilla and Turno transforms the unfolding of two parallel monologues into a comic dramaturgic device. Camilla's and Turno's soliloquies are voiced to be overheard by Tullia, who draws false conclusions from the chance encounter of the two characters, interspersing their alternating statements with recitative aside remarks, thereby almost turning this duet into a trio, although it is consistently written in two staves and only Camilla and Turno's voices are ever heard simultaneously. Camilla likewise expresses her awareness of Turno's presence in an aside recitative, but proceeds to alternate melodically with him, eventually being united with the man in parallel as Tullia continues to rant against them. This type of extradiegetic duet, a clear nod to the tradition of libretto of the 17th century, will disappear from 18th-century opera, and it was certainly neither new nor unknown to Bononcini and Stampiglia, for they had already used the type in *Xerse* (1694). It is interesting how Handel went back to this tradition in the 1730s, most notably in the borrowings from Bononcini in his own opera *Serse* (1738). With its recitative asides, it was hardly appropriate for music-making in London's parlours so it is no wonder that this atypical duet was not included in the printed collection of songs in 1706.

If we were to consider the *aria a due* as the type of duet with little or no simultaneity of the vocal parts whatsoever (but we will not, taking Calella's aforementioned opinion to heart), the duet "Cease cruel tyrannizing / to deceive me" (Lavinia, Turno), "Più non tradir, crudele / Non disprezzar chi t'ama" (Bononcini 1990, 140–143; Bononcini recording, Il

trionfo di Camilla) in the original Italian would belong to it. Lavinia, who is convinced that Turno is betraying her with Camilla, is gradually won back by him and they reaffirm their mutual affections. In the printed collection, the whole duet scene is reduced to its closing section, A2 (Bononcini and Haym 1707, 44). The overall design is in varied *da capo* form: its first (A1) section is a full-fledged, albeit songlike aria in *da capo* form (a b a) for Turno (Bononcini 1990, 140'–141') alone, in the main key of G major, followed by Lavinia singing a brief recitative and the first section of Turno's aria transposed to C major (ibid., 141'–142). On the plane of overall form, Lavinia's "aria" forms the middle, B section of the overall design, and what follows is the only real duet section of the duet (A2), Turno's and Lavinia's combined rendition of subsection a (ibid., 142–143). As they proceed to repeat the same phrase in alternation, each voice is accompanied—in his/her own stave—with its own *basso* continuo, coming together only in the repetition of the final cadential phrase on the text "Ah! Ch'io moro" in parallel thirds (ibid., 143r). Bononcini stayed faithful to this conception of a duet consisting of two soloists singing the same aria first successively and then simultaneously in the manner of a patchwork as late as his London operas (e. g. *Astarto*). The simplicity and the dramatic effectiveness of this type of duet seem indebted to the tradition of the strophic duet of the 17th century. Handel makes innovative use of this model in duets such as "Dite spera e son contento" (Lurcanio, Dalinda) in his opera *Ariodante* or in the duet "Se mai turbo il tuo riposo" from *Poro*, where two different arias are combined together (cf. Cummings 1982), but these are operas from the 1730s that are not to be considered in this study.

The last duet in the London *Camilla*, "Care is fled / Give my heart" (Bononcini and Haym 1706, 16; Prenesto, Turno) is simultaneous in vocal terms in its entirety, but not consequently parallel since it also contains moments of free contrary motion. The two heroes express their joy at the happy outcome of the action in two complementary, almost periodical phrases of eight bars each before the onset of the final *coro*. Reasons why Haym might have felt the need to compose this duet have already been speculated on. Given the frequency of *Camilla's* revivals, Lindgren (cf. 1980, 54) made the hypothesis that the success of *The Beggar's Opera* owes more to it than to the Italian operas of the Royal Academy of Music that it seemed to be parodying. The last one was held in 1726, shortly before the premiere of the ballad opera. Bononcini's by now somewhat old-fashioned arias or "songs" may have been akin to the simpler style of J. C. Pepusch rather than the contemporary operatic production of Handel, Bononcini and Ariosti. The two collections of songs published after the original 1706 and 1707 collections in 1710 (Bononcini and Haym 1710) and 1717 (Bononcini and Haym 1717) contain the same duets as in the original edition with the

exception of "Care is fled" which was dropped, probably because it was found too short even for the new ideal of simpler and more popular musical theatre as embodied in the *Beggar's Opera*, or perhaps because it was known that it had not been composed by Bononcini but Haym instead. The remaining sources (mostly printed libretti, as no collection of songs was published for the 1726 revival) do not indicate any other changes to the duets as compared to the original version, so it is highly probable that they were retained throughout. Whatever the case, the first revival of *Camilla* in the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in 1717 coincided with the suspension of performances of Italian opera, so that instead of it, revivals of *Camilla* and *Thomyris* (in a somewhat revised form) dominated the seasons 1717/1718 and 1718/1719 as "English" theatre.

3. 2. 2.
Thomyris, Queen of Scythia (1707)

In *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* (1707), the impresario J. J. Heidegger followed Haym's recipe for *Camilla*, compiling the opera from 56 Italian airs by Scarlatti, Bononcini (the overture and 8 arias), Steffani and other Italian composers[139]. Although with its 44 performances spanning from 1707 and 1728 the opera was a success, Heidegger was not as skilled in compiling pasticcios, as witnessed by the failure of *Clotilde*, the ninth opera "in the Italian manner" performed in London. Although *Thomyris* "slavishly imitated *Camilla*" (Lindgren 1997, 208) to the extent that contemporaries noticed and even ridiculed the similarities, the differences to *Camilla* will be examined here in detail. In *Camilla* a distinguished Italian libretto was translated and adapted to local needs, and here Motteux who wrote the recitatives probably not based on any previous Italian libretto to suit pre-existing arias. Contrary to conventions to be established in London later on, in the first, original edition of the libretto (Motteux 1707) aria and duet texts are not highlighted in terms of layout with an indent. The three acts of *Thomyris* contain a low number of scenes since they do not change with the arrival and departure of characters but only with the set. Due to the bilingual performance, Valentini's and later Italian additions' lines are printed in both English and Italian without the later consistency of an interchange of Italian and English pages, which leaves a somewhat muddled impression. There is evidence that Haym was involved with the first run of the opera from April 1708 onwards (cf. Lindgren 1987, 339–340), and he must have been responsible for musical changes in the score, probably in

139 **According to Price (1987, 132), *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* includes arias by Albinoni and Gasparini as well, but the stylistic profile of the duets does not suggest their authorship.**

relation to the cast changes[140], but there are no extant sources, musical or textual, to record them. The only remaining source that documents the first run of this opera, obviously considered as a work in progress, is the 1709 libretto (Motteux 1709), which reflects some of the changes. Table 26 lists the duets in the different versions of the opera on the basis of the available sources: the three versions of the libretto (Motteux 1707; Motteux 1709; Motteux 1719) and the original 1707 printed collection of songs (Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707).

YEAR*	SCENE	TEXT	CHARACTERS	VOICES	COMPOSER
1707	I. 2	Prithee leave me / Pray relieve me	Media, Baldo	S&B	Steffani
1709	II. 1	Fye! This rudeness will undo you / No! No more in vain will I pursue you	Media, Baldo	S&B	no music
1707	II. 2	Oh! In pity cease to grieve me	Cleora, Tigrane	S&T	?
1707	II. 3	Say, must I then despair? / Oh! Leave me to despair	Oronte, Cleora	A&S	Bononcini**
1707	III. 1	When duty's requiring / Your virtues admiring	Thomyris, Cleora	S&S	?
1707	III. 2	I no hopes can discover / I despair, yet I love her	Orontes, Tigranes	A&T	no music
1707***	III. 5	Lost in pleasure / Oh my treasure	Cleora, Orontes	S&A	no music

TABLE 26.
List of duets in the different versions of the pasticcio *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* (1707)

* With one exception that will be duly noted, the duets from the 1707 version of the opera have been preserved in the 1709 edition of the libretto. Entries marked with 1709 concern additions.

** None of the other duets in the opera are by Bononcini, as confirmed by Lindgren 1997, 986.

*** Due to the dramaturgic intervention in the denouement described below, this duet was dropped from the 1709 as well as the 1719 version of the opera.

No musical sources for the version of the opera performed in 1709 have been preserved, so we cannot know what the added duet for Media and

140 Most notably, Margereta de L'Epine, who formerly sung Thomyris, was cast as Tigranes, a role previously sung by the tenor Lawrence.

Baldo might have sounded like. Their original 1707 duet "Prethee, leave me / Pray, relieve me" has been identified as being composed by Steffani (Hawkins 1776, 289). According to Hawkins, the only remaining Steffani number borrowed from *Thomyris* was an aria for Baldo, and it is interesting how the compiler(s) found his music appropriate for comic and not for tragic scenes. This study never sought to investigate Steffani's dramatic duets, but this duet paints a different picture of the Italian master active in Germany to his chamber duets. It is also quite different from the comic duets in *Camilla*, for it neither concentrates on a comic alternation of the vocal parts along with some typical *buffo* effects, nor does it feign and parody a serious love duet like "Thou art he/she". It implies that the voices are going to sing longer alternating phrases, but subverts these expectations already in b.14 (Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707, 12) when it seems that the voices might engage in imitation. What starts to dominate the texture in b. 17 onwards instead is a comical interplay in complementary rhythm highlighting the textual opposition "you so fire me" / "you so tire me". Not reminiscent of the oncoming *intermezzo*, but not comparable to serious Italian duets of the time either, it would not come as a surprise if the duet had been taken from one of Steffani's Hanover operas. The only significant changes in the casting in terms of timbre between the first run starting in 1707 and the second run as documented in the 1719 libretto concerns the transferral of Media's role to a man, the British singer George Pack who may have been a tenor, which points to the possibility that the comic scenes in *Thomyris*, like the ones in *Camilla*, are based on Venetian dramaturgic models. Although archaic by then, the practice of travesty may have been introduced to approximate the performance tradition of Italian opera even more to the country of its origin.

A section		B section	
Cleora	Oh! In pity cease to grieve me! Do but live, fate will relieve me. Joy and pleasure may return.	both	I alone may be lamenting.
		Cleora	Your despair is too tormenting.
		Tigranes	Oh! Your sorrow's too tormenting.
Tigranes	Oh! In pity cease to grieve me! Do but smile, fate will relieve me! Joy and pleasure will return.	both	Grief redoubles, when you mourn.
		A section *da capo?*	
		Oh! In pity, etc.	

TABLE 27.
Text of the duet "Oh! In pity cease to grieve me" (II. 2) from *Thomyris* (1707)

The remaining four, serious duets—in all three versions of the opera—reflect a need to include most of the characters and their voices into differing duet combinations, a tendency that was to change by the development of Italian libretto in the course of the 18th century, favouring the principal female and male protagonists for this type of dual display. However, the opera relies on a hierarchy between the two heroic male protagonists, two princes who are rivals for the hand of the Persian princess Cleora. The claims of these two *uomini*, out of which the Scythian prince Orontes (A), sung by Valentini is definitely the *primo*, and the Armenian king Tigranes (T), sung by the British singer Lawrence, the *secondo*, have almost equal legitimacy. Although betrothed to Tigranes, who was captured in his efforts to free her, Cleora falls in love with her captor (Thomyris's son Orontes), and the man returns her affections with equal zeal. With its dignified character, the first duet plays out Cleora's almost tragic conflict in the most effective manner. Ridden with guilt about her indebtedness to Tigranes, she is moved to tears at the sight of him in chains. Both are distressed at the evident pain of the other although Tigranes is unaware of Cleora's conflicted loyalties, and they attempt to console each other. Interestingly, the only preserved source for the duet "Oh! In pity cease to grieve me!" (Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707, 20) is in textual concordance not with the original 1707 edition of the libretto but with its 1709 counterpart (Motteux 1709). Table 27 displays the text of this duet in the 1707 edition.

Although the duets in *Camilla*, especially the comic ones, showed some flexibility in the treatment of form, so that regular *da capo* coexisted with monopartite, bipartite or varied tripartite forms, it was nevertheless the most common. Judging by the preserved sources, all the duets in *Thomyris* including Pepusch's 1719 additions are in *da capo* form. The only exception could be "Oh! In pity cease to grieve me!", since in the 1707 collection of songs the duet ends with what we could describe as the first column of Table 27, since it does not contain any of the lines starting from "I alone may be lamenting" and consequently, no repetition of "Oh in pity cease to grieve me", contained in the original libretto. On the other hand, the 1709 libretto (Motteux 1709) does not contain this presupposed B section and corresponds better to the musical content of the 1707 collection. We are left with three options to account for this discrepancy. It is possible that the composer did not set the duet in its entirety in the first place, but this is less probable since the (Italian) source libretto had obviously been translated to English in its entirety in the 1707 libretto. Comparable examples in the performance tradition of *Camilla* allow for the possibility that the duet was performed in London in its entirety, but that only its initial section was included in the 1707 printed collection. Lastly, the duet may have been abridged (with sections B and A' dropped) for performance on

the initiative of the producer(s), which in turn could have left a mark on the 1709 libretto by the cutting of the presupposed B section.

This last possibility is the most plausible since it is in a way supported by the musical setting. The text of the B section highlights the tragic nature of the relationship between Cleora and Tigranes: although she can struggle with whatever sense of duty she feels towards him, his love will remain unreturned. The textual repeat of the A section cannot change this, for it is a mere vain attempt of the characters to console each other. This semantic layer is lost when the B section is dropped: isolated in this way, the first three lines ring of an optimism that will prove unfounded by the action eventually uniting Orontes and Cleora in the 1707 version of the opera. The 1709 libretto is another matter, its denouement being slightly more confusing and unconvincing. Like in the 1707 version of the story, upon hearing the false news of Orontes's death, Cleora is on the verge of being sacrificed by Scythians were it not for Thomyris's intervention. The fate of Tigranes, who is wounded in battle, is left unresolved. However, the last scene (III. 6) in the 1709 version of the libretto alters the fate of the protagonists significantly with an abrupt plot twist. As a deus ex machina of sorts, Orontes himself happily (!) reveals to the despairing and wounded Tigranes that Cleora, who fell into captivity as a baby and was brought up by Cyrus as his own daughter, is in fact Thomyris's daughter and Orontes's sister. This annuls the reasons for the military conflict between Scythia and Persia and turns the marriage between Cleora and Tigranes into a genuine *lieto fine*. Although this dramaturgic device is frequent in 17th- and 18th-century libretti, its gratuitous use here discloses it as a last-minute intervention. As we shall also see in the duet "Say I must then despair", which has pride of place in the early opus of Giovanni Bononcini, in the course of the opera it does not seem likely that Cleora and Tigranes would be united in a happy ending. Nevertheless, the preserved setting of "Oh! In pity cease to grieve me!", whether abridged or not, seems to prepare and to a certain extent justify the final abrupt unification of its two characters.

The duet is a markedly major-mode piece of music, as if the composer was guided only by the key words "joy" and "pleasure", and one could claim that this foreshadows the 1709 *lieto fine* to a certain degree. The duet (or its first section, if it was originally tripartite) is clearly articulated into three units, the first two being Cleora's (b. 1–9) and Tigranes's (b. 9–15) alternating statements of a simple joyous melody ending in virtuoso coloratura flourishes. Tigranes's rendition of it is conveniently placed a fourth below Cleora's (Tigrane's role being in the mezzosoprano or alto range) and slightly modified to modulate back to G major from D major. The last section (b. 15–21) is the only one that allows for simultaneous singing. The only difference between Cleora's and Tigranes's lines is her "live" as

opposed to his "smile" in the second line. Although in b. 15–16 it seems at first that the voices are going to be led imitatively, they are soon united in a parallel texture that allows for another virtuosic display. Lapidary duets of this kind were to become rare in the operas performed in London (and in Europe in general) in the first decades of the 18th century. In my opinion, it is more likely that in its original form, this duet consisted of a contrasting middle section and a *da capo* repeat. Although the 1709 libretto lists the original Italian text[141], searches in RISM have not helped to identify the original composer.

The advent of Orontes in the next scene produces another duet, this time for him and Cleora. "Say must I then despair / Oh leave me to despair" has slightly more musical substance than the previous one. It was a result of multiple borrowings, which testifies to its popularity, possibly enticing both Bononcini and later arrangers of opera to "recycle" it in different contexts. As the object of parody, Lindgren (1972, 986) identifies the aria "Si, che vorrei morir" (III. 1 Arsamene) from the opera *Il Xerse* (1694) (Bononcini 1986, 231–236). However, the duet has an even earlier source in Tirsi's aria "Pur ti riveggio ancor" (Bononcini 1985, 228–233) from the 1693 serenata *La nemica d'amore fatta amante* (Bononcini 1985; Bononcini recording, La nemica d'amore fatta amante). In this original context, the aria is an unusually melancholic recollection of the days when Clori was severe ("Clori severa") towards the enamoured shepherd, as if a Petrarchan amorous subject was mourning the fact that his suffering is over. In spite of the machinations of the jealous Fileno, in the course of the serenata the formerly scornful nymph Clori manages to convince the faithful Tirsi that she genuinely returns his feelings and even promises him her hand, leaving him almost incredulous at this unexpected reversal of fortune. As pointed out by Lindgren (1972, 34ff), the series of serenatas Bononcini wrote every August from 1692 to 1695 often served as a testing ground for arias later introduced into his operas as public works. The plaintive air, inserted without any intervention or transposition into *Il Xerse*, seems much better fitted to the dramatic situation: believing that Romilda is unfaithful to him, Arsamene despairs and craves death.

Regardless of how and why Heidegger might have selected this duet for *Thomyris*, it is an interesting choice for the dramatic situation. Orontes sets Tigranes free and informs him that he will not yield Cleora to him, but in the last recitative line preceding the duet Cleora, whose feelings for Tigranes have by now become clear not only to the audience but to

141 **Vieni e spera o caro/cara / Che la sorte cangerà / Tanti affanni ch'hai nell'cor' / lo già sento che mi dice / Che vivrai un di felice / E cangiato al fin'sarà / L'astro perfido d'amor**.

Tigranes himself, hides behind the authority of her father who engaged her to the Armenian king. The conception of sectional, often strophic alternation of soloists who are then united for the first time in simultaneity in the third section of the duet, encountered in "Cease cruel to deceive me" from *Camilla*, also prevails in "Say must I then despair / Oh leave me to despair". Its section A1 is modelled on the A section of "Pur ti riveggio ancor"[142], its B section on the respective middle section in the aria and its section A2, the only one that features a vocal contribution by Cleora, somewhat more freely on section A, in the place of its *da capo* repetition in the aria. Thus, the dramaturgic design of the duet could be described as an aria by Orontes, in which he eventually manages to reach out to the predominantly silent Cleora. Although making an effort to stay true to her recitative remark of subjugating herself to the will of the father all through sections A1 and B, in section A2 Cleora eventually gives in to the need to engage in a dialogue with Orontes after all.

SECTION	A_1	B	A_2	
Character	Orontes	Orontes	Cleora	Orontes
Text	Say, must I then despair? Will you, my cruel fair, No more regard me?	Oh! Grant me love again! Or let me ne'er complain: With death reward me.	Oh! Leave me to despair! From hope, and all that's dear, My fate debarr'd me.	Say, must I, etc.
Borrowing	"Pur ti riveggio ancor", section A	"Pur ti riveggio ancor", section B	based on "Pur ti riveggio ancor", section A	

TABLE 28.
Formal outline of Bononcini's duet "Say, must I then despair? / Oh! Leave me to despair" from the London pasticcio *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* (1707)

The biggest difference between "Pur che ti riveggio ancor" and this duet, at least in the form handed down to us in the 1707 collection of songs (Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707, 27), is the absence of the prominent part of violoncello *obbligato*, serving not only as an instrumental introduction (b. 1–4 in the original aria; Bononcini 1985, 228) but as harmonic and contrapuntal support throughout, so that one has the impression that instead of one, the aria is written for two soloists. If the duet was performed in London with the violoncello part after all, without this being reflected

142 Or "Si che vorrei morir", but I am going to refer to the earlier source in the remainder of this analysis.

in the reductionist printed selection of songs (and the dry character of the continuo opening in b. 1–4 seems to speak in favour of this possibility), it is possible that Haym himself played it, and even though it was probably Heidegger who selected it originally, the ability to shine in a soloist role would have made it attractive in the eyes of Haym, too. Section A2 opens (b. 26, beginning of last stave in Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707, 27) with Cleora's rendition of the main thematic idea of the duet (and the aria), first heard in b. 5–8 in Orontes's part an octave lower. However, in b. 30–34 Orontes takes it up again at its original pitch, while Cleora provides a counterpoint not unlike the violoncello's accompaniment of the main thematic idea in the aria (b. 5–8, Bononcini 1985, 228), which leads us to believe that the violoncello part might have been replaced by the addition of the other voice. The remainder of section A2 is constructed on either a predominantly parallel texture (b. 34–36, 41–44) or contrapuntal passages, giving an opportunity to Cleora to shine briefly on the background of Orontes's held notes (b. 37–39) and leading the two voices in free counterpoint (b. 40, all in Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707, 28). The construction of this duet is indebted to the way Bononcini normally conceives an aria, and not only because this duet is a parody of two arias. After the opening of section A2, Cleora's part is merely superimposed on Orontes's, and the only duet proper section of the duet grows almost spontaneously out of the A1 section. The choice of material and structure from a highly effective aria that has proven successful in two previous contexts, and its introduction and reworking in *Thomyris* display considerable dramatic and musical sensibility. Who knows, maybe the process of parody extends to another, hitherto unidentified dramatic work in which the two arias were also turned into a duet and it is from this source that Heidegger and/or Haym have taken it over?

Not only have the harmonic and melodic contours of the parodied aria been preserved but its exact keys as well. With its plaintively melodious and at the same time pathetic character, the duet makes the most of the affective contrast between the tonic C minor and its relative E-flat major, and at the same time resorts to touches of related tonal areas through section B (b. 19–21), strategically placed on the key word "death". As a result, in the predominantly major-mode section B, seemingly showing a more joyous side of Orontes' appeal in its first two lines, this musical optimism is momentarily tarnished. The resumption of the minor-mode, pathetic character in section A2 is Cleora's real cue, for in textual terms her lament ("Oh! Leave me to despair! / From Hope, and all that's dear, / My fate debarr'd") is even more emphasised. Unlike Orontes, who can complain only of Cleora's rejection, she can blame the cruel fate that put her in this position of a prisoner in love with her enemy. Although

their voices display a musical unity and serve to sustain each other in a mellifluous texture, the characters and the texts they are singing are at odds with each other since they are not communicating with each other in dialogic terms. As already shown by the duet "Happy/hopeless I love", Bononcini does not appear to have a problem with composing a duet in which music and dramaturgy work on entirely different levels, whereas Handel's duets usually strive for balance between the characters on the librettistic and the musical plane.

The last duet in the opera, "When Duty's requiring / Your virtues admiring" (III. 1 Thomyris, Cleora) is an opportunity to musically unite the two leading ladies who are in a position of heightened tension, both politically (Thomyris seems more aware of the strength of holding her enemy's daughter captive than her son) and personally (Orontes's love for Cleora leaves Thomyris feeling somewhat ambivalent). However, the two women come to terms with each other in the above mentioned scene when Thomyris comes to the rescue as her people are about to sacrifice Cleora, and the 1709/1719 alternative deus ex machina ending turns this dynamic around by the revelation that they are in fact mother and daughter. However, their only duet at the beginning of Act 3 does not excel particularly in terms of melodic or harmonic invention. It is different from the other duets in the opera in that it places the two voices in a slight position of rivalry, although this is not surprising given the fact that they share the same soprano range. It begins with as many as four attempts at pseudo-imitation (b. 1–3, 3–9, 11–14 and very briefly in b. 23–26[143]) in which Thomyris leads the way and Cleora answers, but for the remainder of the duet the two voices excel in parallelisms in thirds, with the occasional voice-crossing (b. 31–34, 40–46, 53–54) that jeopardises Thomyris's domination in terms of higher pitch. The middle, B section (b. 38–58) of this *da capo* form (concise to the point of uneventfulness) shows no contrast in terms of structure, texture and material apart from the almost obligatory modulation into the mediant B minor.

We can now briefly summarize some of the traits of the first two 18th century London pasticcios. *Camilla* presented London audiences with a variety of duets of the comical and the serious type, the two bearing almost the same musical weight within the opera. Different shares of successiveness and simultaneity as well as formal conceptions were outlined and, in a way, tested, but this will gradually be replaced with more uniformity. *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* gives a certain advantage to serious duets, and although some of them are still characterised by a high share

143 **All bar numbers refer to the 1707 edition of songs (Scarlatti, Bononcini, and Steffani 1707, 41).**

of successive rather than simultaneous singing, by their adoption of *da capo* form and somewhat larger scope they were differentiated from their comic counterparts.

3. 2. 3.
Pyrrhus and Demetrius (1708)

Pyrrhus and Demetrius (premiered in 1708) was based on *Pirro e Demetrio* (1694), an opera composed by A. Scarlatti to a libretto by Adriano Morselli, for Scarlatti "one of his earliest successes" (Knapp 1984, 100). Owen Swiney translated the libretto into English, while Nicola Haym was definitely the arranger of the music and probably composed the new recitatives. Out of the 56 "songs" in the opera, the overture and 17 numbers were written by Haym himself, presumably because it was thought "that he might better fit the Taste of the English" (contemporary source quoted in Lindgren 1980, 47–48) and please the singers in the cast with music fitting their capabilities. This has misled most scholars into thinking that all the remaining numbers in the opera, a duet borrowed from Bononcini's *Muzio Scevola* excepted, were original numbers by Scarlatti from his *Pirro e Demetrio*. For although A. Scarlatti, Haym and Bononcini are definitely represented in the music of the pasticcio, music by (many) other composers may have been included, but unfortunately often unable to identify. To mention only one of these misunderstandings, Knapp (1984, 100) concluded that "Haym's arias are competent but dull; some of Scarlatti's are first-rate with a drive and energy that matches the best of the time. He was fond of slow sicilianas and fast 3/8 pieces with frequent changes of tempo within either the A part or the B part of the aria." Thus he gave the credit for what he perceived as qualities in some of the numbers to Scarlatti, although they might have in fact stemmed from someone else.[144]

The author of the preface to "A Critical Discourse on Opera's and Musick in England" lauded Haym's contribution as compiler and arranger to *Camilla* and *Pyrrhus* as opposed to *Arsinoë* and *Love's Triumph*, produced by others (Lindgren 1987, 293). Opinions on the quality of Haym's contribution as a composer vary. Lindgren (1987, 297) thinks that since Haym was so faithful to Bononcini's score in his adaptation of Camilla, "he may have envisioned a similar fidelity to Scarlatti's score for *Pirro e Demetrio*". However, the premiere was delayed and the arrival of new singers necessitated the changes described above, as a result of which "the final

144 **Dean's example of siciliana arias is not an argument for Scarlatti's authorship, since it was far from being exclusive to him although he was the first one to make abundant use of it (Little 2001).**

product was a somewhat motley pasticcio". The London debut of Nicolo Grimaldi aka Nicolini in the role of Pyrrhus on 14 December 1708 as *primo uomo* was an important event. The casting of such a world-class singer in London (compared to the more modest accomplishments of Valentini) led the way to the success of Italian opera and for Handel, who was to rely on singers of the same rank, too (cf. Dean and Knapp 1987, 146). Whether it was Haym, Valentini or perhaps even Nicolini who had the biggest say in the selection of musical numbers in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, the opera was a success, with an overall of 58 performances in the period between 1708 and 1717, including the 1716–1717 revival.

In place of the authorial conception behind *Camilla, Thomyris* and *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* affirm the concept of the pasticcio only loosely modelled on a previous Italian setting of the model libretto, and this is the pasticcio tradition that both Handel and his Italian rivals were to continue in London in the 1710s and 1730s. Along with two editions of selected songs (Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709a; Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b) and the printed London libretto (Haym, Morselli, and Swiney 1709), additional sources have been consulted to investigate the relationship of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* to Scarlatti's *Pirro e Demetrio.* The original 1690 libretto by Morselli as first set by Giuseppe Felice Tosi (Morselli 1690), the 1694 Naples libretto as set by A. Scarlatti (Morselli 1694) as well as the revision of Scarlatti's setting for a performance in Florence in 1711–1712 under the title *La forza della fedeltà* (Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà) have been considered. Although Scarlatti's was the second and by far the most popular setting of Morselli's libretto, no musical source for the original 1694 performance has survived, so that this revision, created three to four years after the performance of the London pasticcio and therefore impossible to have left any mark, is the only other (Italian) version that we can compare it to. Consequently, little can be concluded about Scarlatti's authorial share in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* because we do not know what his original setting sounded like, but can only compare it to something that is another, later pasticcio, regardless of whether Scarlatti had a hand in it or not.

Unlike all the early London operas examined so far, the libretto(s) of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* does not clearly distinguish between the serious and comic plane. Although in the 1690 Italian and the 1708 English version of the libretto there is the character of Deidamia's servant Breno/Brennus, he is integrated into the second main plot involving Deidamia's illicit love for Mario, and neither this, nor the main plot based on the love triangle between Pyrrhus, Demetrius and Climene are lacking in comic overtones in themselves. Pyrrhus, king of Epire (Nicolini) has successfully proposed to

Climene (C. Tofts), the daughter of the king of Thrace on behalf of his friend Demetrius, king of Macedonia (Valentini) and is supposed to cede her to him. He is conflicted between his friendship for Demetrius and the newly awoken love for Climene. This conflict is brought to the point of absurdity, culminating in some overtly comic scenes. Pyrrhus's sister Deidamia (Linchenham) on the other hand, although courted by Prince Cleartes (Ramondon) to the approval of her brother, is in love with a youth of lower social rank, Marius (De L'Epine), and although this subplot seems even more suitable for comic treatment no differentiation of the sort was made.

SCENE	TEXT*	CHARACTERS	VOICES	COMPOSER	
I. 2	Embrace me / I dare not	Climene, Pyrrhus	S&MS	?	no music
I. 12	Kindly Cupid, oh! Exert thy power	Deidamia, Climene	S&S	?	unity, parallelism, little invention
II. 1	Her lovely face enchants me / Resist enchanting beauty	Demetrius, Pyrrhus	MS&MS	Haym	
II. 9	Charmer, if faithful thou'lt believe me	Climene, Pyrrhus	S&MS	Bononcini	alternation, parallelism, but variety
II. 13	May I tell you that I'm dying / May I ever hope to move ye	Marius, Deidamia	S&S	? not Scarlatti	two strophic da capo arias
III. 2	I'm contented, ne'er tormented / And I'm delighted	Pyrrhus, Demetrius	MS&MS	Scarlatti?	alternation, CP ligatus
III. 17	Love, no longer we'll accuse	Climene, Deidamia	S&S	?	no music

TABLE 29.
List of duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* (1708)

* Textual incipits refer to the 1709 score (Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b) and will be in English for the sake of consistency. Discrepancies with the 1709 London libretto will be discussed individually.

Table 29 displays the list of duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* and some of their main characteristics. The relationships with their counterparts in the 1690 and 1694 libretti and the 1711–1712 score (*La forza della fedeltà*) will

be subjected to scrutiny, too. It is no wonder that the brief arioso *a due* "Embrace me / I dare not" (I. 2 Climene, Pyrrhus) was not included into the London selection of songs. As a dialogue in short replicas it seems to have been conceived for successive exchanges without vocal simultaneity like many comic duets of the age, and this is proven by the 1690 libretto and the 1711–1712 score. In all the available sources we are dealing with a *da capo* duet (cf. Morselli 1690, 17; Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà, f. 8–8'), although with some variation in the text of the B section, whereas in the London libretto (Haym, Morselli, and Swiney 1709) the duet is monopartite, that is, the middle section had presumably been dropped from it.[145] This shows that despite the aforementioned deviation, there is some continuity between the 1690 and 1711–1712 versions of the libretto. Its 1711–1712 setting could have been the same, but was probably different than the one stemming from 1694. However, the number of syllables in Pirro's reply to Climene in the part of the B section that differs in the two sources is the same, so it could have been sung to the same music, too, although if the adaptors in Florence went through trouble to adapt the text, they probably wanted to adapt the music as well. We cannot know what kind of music this duet was sung to in London, but there is even less knowledge of the last duet in the 1708 version of the opera, "Love, no longer we'll accuse thee" (III. 17 Climene, Deidamia; Morselli, Swiney, and Haym 1709, 52), the last number in the opera that takes up the role of a *coro* epitomising the obligatory *lieto fine* of the opera. No Italian equivalent of its English text is present in the otherwise bilingual libretto, which hints at the possibility that it was a later addition instigated either by Haym or the singers performing it.

Lindgren (1987, 290) clearly identified which numbers from Walsh's edition of selected songs (Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709a)[146] can be traced back to Scarlatti: the author of "Kindly Cupid, oh! Exert thy power" (I. 12 Climene, Deidamia; Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b, 16–17) cannot be identified. It unites the two female protagonists shortly after they had just met. At this point in the action, they are neither friends nor enemies, and the audience is unaware of the lengths to which Deidamia's ambition to rule together with Marius will go in the second and third act. They are united, though, in their unhappiness in love: Climene because she thinks that Pyrrhus does not return her love and Deidamia because

145 As similar cases in *Camilla* show, it could have been performed nevertheless.

146 This study will mostly be referencing Cullen's edition (Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b) Although Walsh's edition includes some numbers that are absent from the Cullen collection, in terms of duet content there is no difference between them.

she cannot be with Marius. Both the 1708[147] and the 1711–1712 version of the duet ("Sovra l'ali de teneri amor"[148]) make them react to these unfavourable circumstances in optimistic overtones. Swiney did not translate an Italian duet text known from any of the sources, so it was probably newly inserted for the singers, since the 1690 and the 1694 libretti have no duet of this kind at the end of the first act.

Although they are both monotextual, the two dramatically equivalent duets in the 1708 and the 1711–1712 versions of the opera are musically very different. "Kindly Cupid" is in B minor and is dominated by parallelisms in the vocal texture, "Sovra l'ali de teneri amori" in A major and more contrapuntal. The duet performed in London starts off the voices with a passage in parallel thirds (b. 7–14) after a bouncy string ritornello (b. 1–6). Motifs from the ritornello (b. 14–17) prepare the second and much lengthier vocal passage in the duet (b. 17–48), extending to the end of section A. Brief pseudo-imitation leads into parallelism and the quasi-invertible kind of counterpoint consisting of a held note and melismatic passages (b. 26–30 and 32–36). The middle section limits itself to the thematic material from A and to mostly parallel voice-leading, with only a couple of brief alternating statements thrown in in between (b. 66–67, 70–71). This is definitely not among the more original or the more imaginative duets audiences of Italian opera in London might have heard so far, but it acquainted them even better with a duet prototype, most probably stemming from the 17th century that has no trouble uniting the voices into a predominantly homorhythmic and parallel texture even if they are in no particular dramaturgic relationship with each other. The duet "Sovra l'ali de teneri amori vieni" (Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà, 37–39) bears the exact same function in *La forza della fedeltà,* but does so with entirely different means, a much more playful character (attributed to its major-mode key, binary metre and string *tremolos*) and a structure consisting of imitative beginnings that end in free counterpoint. This is repeated in several cycles starting off with the same material. A proclivity for counterpoint is no indication of Scarlatti's authorship, but the imbalance resulting from the absence of Deidamia from the second section (B) of this duet contributes to a stylistic differentiation with the duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, too.

147 **Climene & Deidamia: "Kindly Cupid, Oh! Exert thy power, / Let not virgins too justly complain. / Hope appears with joy this hour to bless us, / Then/Next succeeds fierce despair to oppress us, / Joy and Sorrow alternately Reign."**

148 **Climene & Deidamia: Sovra l'ali de teneri amor / vieni dolce soave contento. Climene. Vieni vola diletto de cori / e discaccia l'antico tormento.**

	CHAR.	1690 LIBRETTO, I. 13	1709 SCORE, II. 1	1712. SCORE, II. 1
A_1	Dem:	Se fra momenti al sen Non stringo il caro ben, Languir tu mi vedrai.	Her lovely face enchants me from her my heart can't move.	Se fra momenti al sen non stringo il caro ben, languir tu mi vedrai.
	Pirr:	Un cor del tuo piu tenere, Amor non feri mai.	Resist enchanting beauty, resist the god of love.	Resisti alla bellezza armati di fierezza cosi non languirai.
B	Dem.	Troppo scaltri, e troppo neri Son quei lumi lusinghieri, che m'astringono ad amar.	Her look to me is pleasing, / she charms me without ceasing, / nor fear I pain to prove.	%
	Pirr:	E quel bel, che ti consuma; brieve lampo e fragil spuma, che per poco ondeggia in mar.	Her look to thee is teizing thy torment still increasing I fear great pain thoul't prove.	%
A_2	D&P	Se fra momenti al sen…	da capo (A B A' form)	%
C	D&P	Ardo/peno al fulgor de due brillanti rai.	%	Ardo/peno al vago fulgor di due bei rai.

TABLE 30.
Comparison of duet texts for Pyrrhus and Demetrius at beginning of Act 2

The next duet in the opera displays an even bigger contrast in the two different settings. The fact that "Her lovely face enchants me / Resist enchanting beauty" (II. 1 Demetrius, Pyrrhus; Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709a, 20) was composed by Haym does not reduce the stylistic proximity that most duets from *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* display, it merely shows him as a composer of somewhat more modest means. However, before a more detailed outline of this duet's and its 1711–1712 counterpart's musical structure, we need to look into the complex background and the provenance of the text in its different versions. Table 30 shows the textual correspondences. The dramatic situation is somewhat ambivalent: after having attempted to see if Demetrius really still loves Climene, Pyrrhus tries to suppress his affections for her in favour of his friend. Not only the text the two characters sing but also their emotions are in stark contrast, since Demetrius expresses only infatuation with Climene and Pyrrhus, in asides, both a desire to resist his love for Climene and fear of how Demetrius might react were he to find out the truth. Both the 1708 and the 1711–1712 version of

the text have things in common with the 1690 libretto. By 1694, a duet for Pirro and Demetrio was moved from its original 1690 position at the end of Act 1 to the beginning of Act 2, and this duet text[149] was translated almost literally in the 1709 libretto's English text, thus serving as the starting point for both the London and the Florence version of the opera. The duet was textually at is most elaborate in 1690 with an irregular tripartite form plus added coda (C), since Morselli probably envisaged it as a culmination to Act 1. The binary logic of polytextuality in sections A1 and B as opposed to a monotextual section A2 was maintained in the 1708 London version of the opera, implying that the librettist foresaw the first two sections for a predominantly successive and sections A2 for a predominantly simultaneous vocal structuring. However, Haym and/or Swiney, who translated the 1694 duet text to English almost word-for-word, opted for regularity instead of the 1690 complexity by replacing A2 with a *da capo* repetition of A1. The compilers of the 1711–1712 reworking were even more radical in the restructuring of the original design, dropping section B altogether, although they kept the coda (C), retaining the original tripartite irregularity, but in a heavily modified and abridged form. The 1711–1712 version of the libretto clearly seems to be a conflation of elements from both the 1690 (Demetrio's first three lines and coda) and the 1694 libretto (Pirro's first three lines).

It is once again highly interesting how the two preserved settings reflect these intertextual connections, especially since both of them belong to the aforementioned type of duet that puts dramatically and/or affectively opposed characters into a position of musical unity, something that occurs comparatively rarely in Handel's duets. Musically, "Her lovely face enchants me" consists of interplay between alternation and parallelism. It opens with a continuo passage that will continue to feature prominently in the course of the duet with its motifs in octave displacement and lends itself well to performance on the violoncello (b. 1–7), thereby reflecting Haym's background as a cellist. After this, Demetrius and Pyrrhus bring forth a periodic structure of syntactic regularity that is seldom encountered in opera duets of the first half of the 18th century. A periodic structure (b. 7–26) unfolds from four alternating statements by the two voices, Demetrius's always followed by Pyrrhus's and a brief continuo interjection added between the clauses. After this, the voices are united in a simultaneous texture, followed by a semiquaver display of coloraturas in parallel

149 **Demetrio: Un viso m'incatena / E m'hà legato il cor. Pirro: Resisti alla bellezza, Resisti al Dio d'amor. Demetrio: Un guardo che m'alletta / Il seno mi saetta / Né sento alcun dolor. Pirro: Un guardo, che t'alletta / Il sento ti saetta / Ti dà pena, e dolor. Un viso, etc.**

thirds and a cadence (b. 26–38). The continuo motif leads into section B, exploring D and C minor with two brief alternating statements and the same cadential phrases. An impression of simplicity and monotony does nothing to suggest the drama of the situation. "Se fra momenti al sen / Resisti alla bellezza" (II. 1 Demetrio, Pirro; Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà, 42–44), on the other hand, differs from the equivalent London duet in terms of a swifter tempo, a playful texture, the differentiation of voices in terms of contrasting thematic material and a lack of formal balance. After Demetrio's longer statement that modulates to E-flat major and back to the G minor tonic, Pirro takes the duet to entirely new territory with his repetitive melody and the exploration of related tonal centres such as C minor and D minor, but this change is of a moderately short span and the lapidary duet is rounded off somewhat abruptly. The stylistic contrast between the duets in the two pasticcios is therefore additionally enhanced and will prove to be a general trait.

The background of the duet for Pyrrhus and Climene "Charmer, if faithful thou'lt believe me" (II. 9; Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b, 30–31), the only duet in the pasticcio whose author can be clearly identified (as Giovanni Bononcini, cf. Lindgren 1997, 985; Knapp 1982) is even more complex, as shown in Table 31. It was clearly borrowed from his opera *Muzio Scevola* (1695), but the numerous textual differences between the 1709 score as well as the English and Italian version of the text show an even more complex web of interrelationships than with "Her lovely face enchants me". The text is different in all five versions of this duet, but the strongest concordance is between the 1690 libretto, the 1709 English version of the libretto and the 1711–12 score on the one hand and the 1695 *Muzio Scevola* libretto, the 1694 libretto, the 1709 Italian version of the libretto and the 1709 score on the other. The simplest possible explanation for the first concordance would be that libretto was translated to English from the 1690 original rather than Scarlatti's 1694 setting, and that it was also this 1690 version of the duet that served as the point of departure for the 1712 score, which was not the case with some of the other duet texts examined so far. The differences between Stampiglia's original text of the duet in *Muzio Scevola* and the 1694 libretto as well as the Italian version of the text in the London 1709 libretto, subtle in the A section but substantial in the B section, could be explained by the adaptation of the duet from one dramatic situation in *Muzio Scevola* into a rather different one in *Pyrrhus.* In Act 3 of *Muzio*, the relationship between the main protagonist and his betrothed Valeria is shaken by the fact that he had left her in the Etruscan camp as a hostage to Porsenna, who also harbours a passion for her, so that both characters are questioning the other one's devotion. On the other hand, the duet at the end of the second act of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* is

a moment of weakness for the protagonist. He promised Demetrius that he would tell Climene of the plan to cede her hand in marriage to him, but once they are left alone, Pyrrhus cannot resist Climene and they are united in an amorous embrace. The fact that this situation is not treated in entirely tragic overtones but has comic potential instead is suggested by the abundant erotic innuendo in the preceding recitative. It goes without saying that the extensive, dialogic B section of the 1690 duet that develops the conflict between the characters was deemed inappropriate for the sensual dramatic situation in *Pyrrhus*.

How all of this was reflected on the borrowing in musical terms is difficult to account for with certainty because of a lack of access to primary sources. That the borrowing was on a musical level, as well, is confirmed by a comparison of the incipits in the London selection of songs (Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b, 30) with incipits of the duet from *Muzio Scevola* preserved in a collection of duets by different composers in the *Santini Collection* in Münster.[150] The incipits of the continuo, Soprano 1 (Climene) and Soprano 2 (Pirro) are identical with the incipits of the equivalent parts in "Charmer, if faithful thou'lt believe me". It is possible and highly plausible that Haym reached for Bononcini's duet instigated either by his own preference for the composer (as witnessed in *Camilla*) or at the behest of the singers, but realised that the text of section B is not appropriate, choosing to replace it with something else. Whether the musical setting of section B was revised or replaced with a new one is difficult to determine without an insight into the aforementioned *Santini* manuscript. It is possible that Haym wrote the new text of the B section himself, making it shorter and simpler, had it translated into English by Swiney and then set it either to his own music or modified Bononcini's setting to suit the purpose.

Once again, the 1709 (Bononcini's) and the 1711–1712 duets have little in common. Out of the duets encountered in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* so far, this one exerts the highest degree of playfulness. After a rocking continuo opening in triplets, the sensuality is heightened by a change of tempo from *Allegro* to *Adagio* as the voices are introduced with appoggiaturas but are gradually united in parallel motion (b. 7–10). This latter type of texture dominates for the remainder of section A, returning to the *Allegro* tempo and the bouncy, rocking continuo above which the voices repeat sequentially a short descending motif in parallel sixths (b. 10–13). A brief passage of alternation (b. 15–18) in which the soloists are united in terms of the text ("I'll adore thee") but only slightly differentiated in terms of their rhythmically complimentary melodies modulates to the

150 Shelfmark SANT Hs 3899 (No. 4), RISM entry no. 451023065.

	1690 LIBRETTO, II. 8	1695 LIBRETTO MUZIO SCEVOLA, III.5	1694 LIBRETTO, II. 7 & 1709 LIBRETTO, II. 9: ITALIAN TEXT	1709 LIBRETTO, II. 9: ENGLISH TEXT	1709 SCORE	1712 SCORE
A	Climene: Compagno diletto Pirro: Consorte adorata A 2: Finisca il penar.	Muzio: Cara infido tu mi credi / Valeria: Caro ad' altri tu mi cedi A 2: E t'adora l'alma mia.*	A 2: Caro/a se fido/a tu mi credi / Si t'adora l'alma mia.	Climene: My hope and ambition / Pyrrhus: My joy and my treasure A 2: No more let us fear.	A 2: Charmer, if faithfull thou'lt believe me / I'll adore thee, from my soul I'll still adore thee.	Climene: Consorte diletto Pirro: Mia sposa adorata / A 2: finisca il martir diletto.
B	A 2: Reciproco affetto Fra'l riso e l'diletto Ci guidi a scherzar.	Val: Ma se m'ami / Perche brami / Che sia mio, chi mio non chieggio? Muz: Cosi deggio Val: Questa dunque e fedeltà? Muz: Cosi deggio, e cosi va a 2: Altro fato piu spietato Non si trona, e non si da / D'una sorte cosi ria.	A 2: E se tuo/a al fin mi brami, Qual lo te convien che m'ami Che sparisce allor che riedi Fuor dal sen la doglia ria.	A 2: Haste, haste to Fruition, And banish suspicion, Disquiet and care.	A 2: As I'm thine never deceive me, / for my love return me love. Thy approach my greifs remove, / Love me ever I emplore thee.	A2: Reciproco affetto Fra il riso el diletto Ci guidi a gioir.
A	Compagno…	Cara/Caro…	Caro…	My hope…	Charmer…	Consorte…

TABLE 31.
Concordances between different sources for the text of Bononcini's duet "Charmer, if faithful thou'lt believe me" in the pasticcio *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* (1708)

* It is difficult to establish where the librettist signalled to the composer the beginning of the middle section in this duet text, obviously meant to be set in da capo form.

relative minor and gives way to more parallelism (b. 19–21), but this time declamatory and repetitive. Section B offers sufficient harmonic contrast, exploring the tonal centres of G minor, C minor and D minor without any significant changes to the texture or the material, making recourse to the same cadential passages and alternating statements. As opposed to this duet's homogeneity of form and material, in the 1711–1712 version of the opera the duet is particularly brief, especially since it is in *da capo* form. In "Consorte diletto / Sposa adorata" (Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà, 69'–70) the voices begin by taking up each other's melodic cues in alternating sequences (b. 1–4) before they are intertwined in a playful, partly freely contrapuntal, partly parallel texture (b. 5–10). In scope, character, form and vocal standards, the London duet for Pyrrhus and Climene is a more typical love duet written for the *primo uomo* (Nicolini) and the *prima donna* (Tofts). It displays more liveliness and less monotony than the previous two duets. With the formulaic nature of the thematic material and by its avoidance of anything contrapuntal it is still similar to the other duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, to the extent that we could even claim that Haym as the compiler of the opera provided a sense of musical unity, either by choosing duets from the 1694 setting, composing his own music or selecting duets from other operas.

The composers of the remaining two duets in the opera cannot be identified with certainty. However, the closest we can get to claiming that the music of a duet performed in London is based on one of the previous settings of the original Italian libretto by Morselli is "May I tell you that I'm dying / May I ever hope to move ye" (II. 13 Marius, Deidamia; Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b, 34). Labelled a "dialogue" rather than a duet in the original 1709 source, the number is indeed a dialogic strophic duet in which each character sings a stanza to the same music in *da capo* form, to the extent that in the "selected songs" it was enough to publish the music for Marius's stanza only, merely adding the text of Deidamia's part below. The melodic simplicity, again in line with the overall style of the duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* is somewhat enlivened by modulations that have nothing to do with the interpretation of either Marius's or Deidamia's text. Nothing reflects the fact that this flirty, gracious pseudo-duet plots Pyrrhus's murder. The strophic duet is definitely a remnant of the mid-17th century operatic style. In this sense it can be compared to the 1690 equivalent to "Kindly Cupid", another strophic *da capo* duet with subsequent exits. The 1690 libretto contains a duet for Deidamia and Mario with the incipit "Poss'io dirvi" (Morselli 1690, 48) and confirms that the English translation in the 1709 libretto and the score was based on the 1690 libretto. So was the 1711–1712 duet, although only the first two lines are an exact match while the rest had been modified. However, musically, the 1711–1712

duet "Poss'io dirvi che vi adoro / Poss'io dirvi che languisco" (Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà, 23'–24) is completely identical with "May I tell you that I'm dying", which serves to prove that the duet text might have been changed since 1690. This certainly did not happen in 1694 since this version of the libretto does not contain a duet for Deidamia and Mario at this point in the act (II. 10) at all. As the text could obviously stem only from the 1690 libretto, we need to ask ourselves if the same music for the 1709 London version of the opera and its 1711–1712 Italian revised revival (which is rare, as we have seen so far) means that they stem from the same musical source. Is there any chance that it could stem from Giuseppe Felice Tosi, the composer who first set the libretto in 1690? It is probably highly unlikely that a duet by a composer of that generation could have made it to a work produced in 1711–1712. Maybe it stems from a later, unidentified setting of Morselli's libretto, unless it was a last-moment addition by Scarlatti to the 1694 setting.

"I'm contented ne'er tormented / And I'm delighted never slighted" (III. 2 Pyrrhus, Demetrius; Scarlatti, Haym, and Bononcini 1709b, 36), a duet whose authorship cannot be established with certainty either is more elaborate than the previous one and belongs to the same structural type as Haym's duet "Her lovely face enchants me" and Bononcini's "Charmer, if faithful thou'lt believe me", consisting predominantly of playful alternation and parallelism. Unlike the first duet for Pyrrhus and Demetrius, this is an unequivocal duet of friendship for the main protagonists, who are reconciled after having had two comic confrontations. The first one occurred at the end of the second act when both Marius and Demetrius attempted to murder Pyrrhus. The third act opens with Demetrius chasing Pyrrhus, but Climene intervenes by thrusting herself between them, so that they are reconciled as each tries to renounce Climene in favour of the other, evoking her fury. Potentially tragic dramatic situations are sometimes treated comically, but this rarely reflects on the duets, maybe with the exception of "Charmer, if faithful thou'lt believe me" and "Embrace me". In this last duet the two friends are dissembling in front of each other, although neither has any intention of renouncing Climene. The 1694 libretto and the Italian version of the text of the 1709 libretto as well as the selection of songs suggest a seemingly carefree reconciliation, whereas in the English version of the libretto[151] (Morselli, Swiney, and Haym 1709, 39) and the 1690 libretto (Morselli 1690, 55), the two men pledge to renounce the fickle god of Love. The 1711–1712 version of the duet, "Vuo pria morir che cedere

151 **Great Pyrrhus / Demetrius ne'ver will tamley bow / To Love's delusive Charms, / The Pains poor Lovers feel / Are sharp as pointed Steel / 'Tis Folly to be Woing, / When Honour calls to Arms / Great.. (da capo)**

a un guardo lusinghier" (III. 2 Pirro, Demetrio, Scarlatti MS, La forza della fedeltà, f. 93'–94') is equivalent to the 1690 libretto and the 1709 libretto's English translation in its A section, which probably means that in both London and Florence the libretto was translated from the 1690 libretto, but Haym and/or Swiney decided to insert a different, albeit similar duet from either Scarlatti's 1694 or a later setting of this version of the libretto, which means that the music could even possibly be by Scarlatti.[152] Dean and Knapp (1987, 149) share this opinion when they ascribe the duet to Scarlatti, calling it "excellent". Although *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* derives from Scarlatti's opera, of the four duets for which music has been preserved for, this is the only one that could have in any likelihood been performed in London to Scarlatti's music.

In spite of the affective content of the duet (happiness at reconciliation), "I'm contented / And I'm delighted" is in the minor mode. Compositional techniques that characterise the other duets in the 1709 version of the opera abound here as well, although this one escapes monotony to a certain extent. Its short alternating phrases leave the impression of repetition, but at the same time produce an effect of liveliness. This effect may have been enhanced by the fact that the London audiences were hearing two castrato voices together for the first time, learning to distinguish them in terms of their slightly differing ranges and timbres (Nicolini having a somewhat higher tessitura than Valentini). Interestingly enough, parallelism is perhaps the least represented technique here, and short-breath alternation and *contrapunctus ligatus* dominate instead. It is to this duet that "Vuo pria morir", the 1712 version of "I'm contented / And I'm delighted" is most related to in that it is also a strophic duet in which each protagonist sings a stanza. Obviously it was important for Haym to provide London audiences in 1708 with a more substantial duet in the form of "I'm contented / And I'm delighted". As we shall see in Chapter 3.2.5, it left an impression vivid enough to be remembered ten years later and introduced into the opera parody *Harlequin Hydaspes* (1719).

The great contrast between the duets in the 1708 and 1711–1712 versions of the opera (if it is justified to speak of versions), along with the discrepancies between the different versions of the libretto, suggest that Haym probably inserted duets from other works into the opera, as well as composing one himself. Scarlatti's importance for the 1709 but perhaps

152 This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by an MS source in the Hans Sommer Archiv, Berlin (shelf mark Mus.pr. Scarlatti A.1) that contains this duet under the authorship of the Italian master (RISM ID no.: 452517418), although it can also stem from the incorrect assumption that all numbers not marked as Haym's in the Walsh edition of the score are by Scarlatti.

also for the 1711–1712 version of the opera may be minimal. While working with models, Haym seems to have gone to great effort to smoothen out the conflict in dramaturgic and the imbalance in formal-structural terms. Compared to the shorter, lapidary duets in the 1711–1712 version of the opera, he often consciously avoided contrapuntal techniques, especially imitation, even more than this was the case in the duets of other early London operas. In the examination of pasticcios in the remainder of this study, it will be next to impossible to keep track of the changes between the original and the pasticcio, so that the comparative approach taken with *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* will have serious limitations. As we follow the process of the gradual Italianisation of operatic culture in London, pasticcios will cease to bear resemblance to their model, serving as a vehicle for new music and even more often new singers, in the same way as in contemporary Italy.

3. 2. 4.
Almahide (1710)

The next pasticcio performed in London, still at the Queen's Theatre in Drury Lane, was *Almahide* (1710). It showed continuity with some traits of previous operatic pasticcios in London, but also abandoned some of them. It did not break away entirely from singing in English since the comic scenes were performed in the native language. These were, however, by now separated from the main action to the extent that they functioned as intermezzi, placed at the end of the first two acts so that its protagonists did not feature in any other scenes, which also eliminated the "absurdity" of bilingual performance of opera in London since 1707, recognised by some contemporaries. Out of the eight numbers in these two *intermezzos*, five were by Bononcini, which must have been recognised by the audience. When these comic scenes were used for the performance of spoken drama, they were advertised as being sung to music by Bononcini, who had since *Camilla* already built himself a reputation in London (cf. Lindgren 1997, 241).

No composers besides Bononcini were identified in the dedication of the libretto (ibid., 231). Out of the five duets, three can be identified as his. The libretto was based on Ariosti's Vienna opera *Amor tra nemici* (1708), but less than the majority of numbers in *Almahide* was actually drawn from this score since the chance to replace any number from the score or libretto that served as a starting point was taken advantage of whenever deemed suitable. The purpose of *Almahide* was to showcase "music from the recent Vienna operas of Bononcini and Ariosti" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 149) and the key figure in the supply of scores was Johann Wenzel, Count Gallas, Viennese ambassador in London from 1705 to 1711,

subsequently Bononcini's patron in Rome from 1714 to 1719. Gallas may have provided Bononcini's scores for different operas at the Haymarket theatre, not only *Almahide*. Moreover, some of the music of *Almahide* was possibly heard in private performances at his residence before it was introduced to the London stage. Besides Bononcini and Ariosti's, other, hitherto unidentified composers' music must have been included in the pasticcio as well. It was successful enough to stay in repertory for three seasons. Knapp (1984, 101) finds that "the music is decidedly more Italianate than that of some of the previous operas" and although Dean and him thought that the arias were "more elaborate in coloratura but still weak in dramatic profile", and that "even when the music is attractive in itself, it seems to exist outside the plot" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 150), this does not necessarily apply to the duets.

SCENE	TEXT	CHARACTERS	VOICES	COMPOSER	EQUIVALENCE
I. u	Good buy t'ye, good night t'ye	Blesa, Floro	S, T	Bononcini	Addio ben mio (*Mario fuggitivo*)
II. 4	Che affanno, tiranno alato bendato	Almiro, Almansorre	MS, MS	Bononcini	ibid. (*Turno Aricino*), Che cara la pena (*Polifemo*)
II. 8	Se t'abborro e la tua morte / Se t'abborro ancor la morte	Almahide, Almiro	S, MS	?	%
II. u	Oh happy choice, how I rejoyce	Eliza, Floro	S, T	?	%
III. 9	Sospira, pena e geme il cor	Almahide, Almiro	S, MS	Bononcini	Sospira, pena e geme (*Mario fuggitivo*)

TABLE 32.
List of duets in the pasticcio *Almahide* (1710)

Table 32 lists the duets in the pasticcio. We devote only limited attention to the comic duets. They were written for three characters, Floro (Mr. Dogget, tenor), Blesa (Mrs Lindsey, soprano) and Eliza (Mrs. Crofs, soprano). The officer Floro courts the elderly Blesa only for her money, and in Act 2 leaves her for the younger Eliza. After she witnesses Floro's infidelity, Blesa angrily confronts them and a series of comic insults ensue before Blesa rushes off. Given this final outcome, it is not surprising that the farewell duet for Blesa and Floro before Floro goes off to war, "Good

buy t'ye, good night t'ye" (Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 24)[153] is a parody of serious duets for departing lovers. Although not to the extent as "I languish / For whom?" from *Camilla*, it does include some alternating exchanges of a semiquaver motif resembling a trill (b. 4–5, 8–16) that make the lines "my lovely Madam" (Floro) and "my dearest joy" (Blesa) sound almost ironic. The voices are otherwise kept mainly parallel and there is less to indicate irony in the conventionally contrasting B section of the duet. A contrast in musical technique is evident in the only other comic duet of the pasticcio, "Oh happy choice, how I rejoyce" (II. u Eliza, Floro; Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 45), since here the voices of the young lovers are led in a simultaneous texture throughout, most of the time in perfect consonances with the occasional contrary motion. Their amorous unity is, thus, more harmonious than the feigned one between Floro and Blesa, but the simplicity of style in melodic, harmonic and formal terms, perhaps even greater when compared to the comic scenes in *Camilla* with its more intricate duet designs, distinguishes these numbers from the serious duets of the opera.

There are three of them in the pasticcio, two out of which were composed by Bononcini. Like the comic ones, the serious duets are mostly monotextual, with only the slightest variation in "Se t'abborro e la tua morte / Se t'abborro ancor la morte". As we have seen in the early London operas examined so far, polytextuality used to be more frequent. The selection of the two Bononcini duets was most probably influenced by their popularity, for both had already been the objects of parody by Bononcini himself. The duet "Che affanno, tiranno alato" (II. 4 Almiro, Almansorre; Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 29–30) has its origins in the one-act opera *Polifemo* (1702) as "Che cara la pena" (Aci, Galatea) and in the 1707 Vienna opera *Turno Aricino* (II. 4 Livia, Egeria) with the same incipit as in *Almahide*. The same music was used, with only slight modification, for duets in three different dramatic situations: in Polifemo, as shall be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.4.1, it was a love duet, in *Turno Aricino* it was given to two princesses who, although friends, are also political rivals, while in *Almahide* it was shared by characters who are in overt conflict with each other. In this last case, we are dealing with a parallel unfolding of two inner monologues of the same content (an appeal to love). The king Almansorre (Valentini) wants Celinda, the bride of his general Almiro (Nicolini) for himself, and by the end of the scene the two men are to come into conflict. The duet opens the scene, which is first and foremost

153 **The duet was taken over with minimal intervention (mostly compression from the opera *Mario Fuggitivo* (I. 6 „Addio ben mio"; Bononcini MS, Mario Fuggitivo, p. 66–72) for the same typical characters.**

a 17th century librettistic technique. Although this would suggest a duet of a smaller scope, this is certainly not the case. Unlike the remainder of Bononcini duets in London pasticcios borrowed from his operas composed earlier, this duet is going to be analysed now rather than in Chapter 3.4.1.2. One of the reasons for this is that in terms of dramaturgy the duet is at its most interesting in *Almahide*. However, the insight into the MS score of *Turno Aricino* (Bononcini MS, Turno Aricino, 39'–41') enabled a comparison between this second version and the version of the duet from *Almahide*. The scale of intervention was even smaller than in the borrowing of the duet "Good buy t'ye": instead of the inverted counterpoint in b. 31–49 and 49–67 (Bononcini MS, Turno Aricino, 40–40'), where the voices alternate in the display of coloratura in one voice as opposed to a held note in the other one, in the *Almahide* duet it is only Almiro (sung by Nicolini, the primo uomo) who has an opportunity to shine in this way, whereas Valentini as the secondo uomo mostly provides support with his varied held note (b. 39–45, third stave; Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 29). The second important transformation concerns vocal range: whereas the earlier two duets were scored for two sopranos, the transposition from the original key of B-flat major into F Major suits the lower mezzosoprano tessitura of the two London castrati. However, let us examine the duet more closely (see Table 33).

SECTION	SUBSECTION	BAR	KEY	TEXT	DESCRIPTION
A	ritornello	1–14	F	%	main thematic material
	a_1	15–31		Che affanno tiranno alato ben dato ti chiedo merce.	alternating sequential exchanges
	a_2	32–51			free counterpoint, voice-crossing
	coda	51–60			parallelism
B	b_1	60–77	d, g, a	Non rida d'amore che libero ha il core ma impari da me.	alternating sequential exchanges
	interjection	78–79			emphatic alternation ("ma")
	b_2	79–95			alternating sequential exchanges
A	*da capo*				

TABLE 33.
Formal plan of the duet "Che affanno, tiranno alato" from the pasticcio *Almahide* (1710)

	1708 SCORE		1710 SCORE		1710 LIBRETTO
Pub.	Sospira pena e geme Il Cor e sol per te.	Alm.	Sospira pena e geme Il Cor e sol per te.	Alm. & Orc.	Sospira pena e geme Il Cor e sol per te.
Dal.	Sospira pena e geme Il Cor ma non per te.	Orc.	Sospira pena e geme Il Cor ma non per te.		
Pub.	T'amo mia bella speme	Alm.	T'amo mia bella speme	Alm.	T'amo mia bella speme,
Dal.	T'amo cosi non è.	Orc.	T'amo cosi non è.		
Pub.	Arde per te il mio cor	Alm.	Arde per te il mio cor	Orc.	Ardo d'amore anch'io.
Dal.	Ardo d'amore anch'io	Orc.	Ardo d'amore anch'io		
Pub.	E tu sei la cara face.	Alm.	E tu sei / non sei* la cara face.	A 2	E tu sei la cara face.
Dal.	Tu non sei la cara face.	Orc.	Tu non sei la cara face.		
Pub.	Mi piacque il tuo sembiante	Alm.	Mi piacque il tuo sembiante	Alm.	Mi piacque il tuo sembiante
Dal.	Del tuo divenni amante	Orc.	Del tuo divenni amante	Orc.	Del tuo divenni amante
Pub.	Or più mi piace.	Alm.	Or più mi piace.	A 2	Or più mi piace.
Dal.	Or non mi piace.	Orc.	Or non mi piace.		

TABLE 34.
Comparisons of texts of Bononcini's "Sospira pena e geme" from *Mario fuggitivo* and *Almahide*

* The two variants in Almiro's lines are further proof that the text was badly copied into the score.

The main motif (first occurrence in b. 1–3 in the violoncello, b. 15–18 in Almiro's part) is exchanged between the vocal soloists in alternation, sequentially repeated a major second higher (b. 21–27) and at its original pitch (b. 27–32). A brief moment of simultaneity is followed by the aforementioned passage where Almansorre's held note provides support for Almiro's scalar flourishes. It abounds in voice-crossing, questioning Almiro's supremacy in terms of pitch, and eventually culminating in exchanges of characteristic neighbour note movements (b. 45–47) before leading up to a cadence in parallel (b. 48–50). After some playful parallel movement varying the main

motif (b. 51–55), a final cadence on the tonic rounds off section A. The modulatory section B (b. 60–95, Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 30) continues to work on the dynamic of sequential exchanges of the main motif (b. 60–71) by extending it with even more voice-crossing (b. 71–74). It must have been the euphonious nature of Bononcini's style, as strong here as in his chamber duets, that made this music appropriate for differing dramaturgic contexts. The voices are not opposed in the texture by contrasting thematic material or a predominantly successive treatment, but they are at the same time highlighted enough for the audience to be able to distinguish and compare them to each other even if they are of a similar tessitura. Since both Almiro and Almansorre are complaining of the god of Love, there is no reason why the duet should not be monotextual and why they should not be united in a simultaneous, occasionally parallel texture like in the duets of unity in *Polifemo* and *Turno Aricino*. However, the alternating sequential treatment and the voice-crossing renders this duet fitting for their ensuing conflict, Almiro gaining somewhat more of a vocal prominence while the two soloists remain each other's equals nevertheless.

The duet "Sospira, pena e geme il cor" (III. 9 Almahide, Almiro; Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 59–60), another object of multiple borrowings, is a duet of unity for characters who were in antagonistic relations for the most part of the opera. Almahide was brought up as a man under the name Orcane in order to exact revenge on Almiro's family, but she eventually fell in love with him and became conflicted by her actions. In the third act Almiro frees "Orcane" and admits that he no longer hates "him", which in turn finally prompts Almahide to uncover her true identity as well as her feelings for Almiro. After the initial shock, Almiro reciprocates her love. This duet follows the recognition, and the comparison between the versions of the text printed in the London libretto (Bernardoni and Heidegger 1710, 57), the London selection of songs and the original Bononcini opera it was borrowed from, as stated in Table 34, shows that the text was obviously misprinted in the selection of songs. Similarly to "Che affanno, tiranno alato", there is a parody link between the Berlin and the Vienna opera and the London pasticcio. This way, London audiences were acquainted with Bononcini's development without necessarily being aware of it. Whereas Camilla was a rather faithful rendition of the composer's 1696 score and *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* resorted to numbers from works of his written in the nineties of the 17th century, *Almahide* gave an insight into Bononcini's output from the first decade of the new century. First encountered in *Cefalo e Procride* (1702) as a duet of unity for the two main protagonists with an entirely different text ("Non vien per nuocer"; Bononcini MS, Cefalo e Procride, 117–124), the duet eventually found its way into *Mario fuggitivo* (II. 13 Dalinda, Publio; Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, p. 136–151)

with an identical incipit as in *Almahide*. Although this suggests that the duets in *Mario fuggitivo* and *Almahide* share the same texts, this is only partly true, for unlike the duet in *Almahide*, the duet in *Mario fuggitivo* uses semantically opposed polytextual line variants for the two soloists in order to express not unity as in *Cefalo e Procride*, but the opposite, a sharp contrast of affective content between Dalinda and Publio. Just like in the case of "Che affanno, tiranno alato", the Vienna operas were the original sources for Heidegger rather than the Berlin ones, which makes perfect sense since it was Gallas who provided them.

As we shall see in Chapter 3.4.1.1, in *Cefalo e Procride* the duet re-establishes the amorous unity between the protagonists after numerous tests to their fidelity, while in *Mario fuggitivo*, Dalinda is contradicting Publio's amorous declaration by negating the reciprocation of his love in asides (cf. Stampiglia, 1708). Although the duet in *Almahide* serves the confirmation of a newly consolidated love between Almahide and Almiro, the editor of the 1710 print of selected songs copied the duet text directly from *Mario fuggitivo*, making errors. Judging by the 1710 score, Almiro professes his love for Almahide[154], whereas she rejects him for someone else. The text is at odds with the dramatic situations and cannot be what Nicolini and De l'Epine sang on the Haymarket stage. The adaptor of the libretto for Heidegger knew better and assigned what were originally Publio's lines in section A to both Nicolini and De l'Epine, while the lines of section B (starting with "Mi piacque il tuo sembiante") needed less intervention, for Dalinda's variant "e non mi piace" was simply dropped and Almahide adopted Almiro's final line.

Changes as simple and as far-reaching as this one (basically, the abolishment of the elaborate negation of Publio's lines by Dalinda) could gear a certain duet to an entirely different dramatic situation without making any changes to its musical structure. True, some of the dialogic traits of the *Mario fuggitivo* setting may have been lost in *Almahide* due to its text of unity, but it is doubtful whether this would catch the analytical eye had it not been known from before. Therefore, the dramatic situation in which a certain duet was used did not have a bearing on the musical structure or even the character of a duet. The question of whether a certain duet befits a certain dramatic situation, whether it was unity, conflict or parallelism between the characters could be much easier to answer than it seems at first. For Bononcini at least, maybe the dramatic situation was not that important at all? The appropriation of a certain piece of music to the most different dramaturgic contexts, as witnessed by typified aria

154 **Funnily enough, the libretto and the score consistently refer to Almahide under her male identity Orcane.**

texts that began to increasingly dominate the libretto of the 18th century, was evidently not considered a problem even in the case of duets, being slightly more specific because rather than one, they engage two characters in some sort of (dialogic) relationship. Apart from the dropping of the viola part, "Sospira, pena e geme il cor" from *Mario fuggitivo* is an almost exact musical contrafactum of the duet "Non vien per nuocer", since it had not even been transposed, but the key of F Major was retained instead. It seems that Heidegger (and any musical collaborators he might have had) intervened more when they borrowed from Bononcini than Bononcini when he borrowed from himself, since in *Almahide* the duet was transposed to G major. This was not principally influenced by changes of cast, for the duet in *Mario fuggitivo* was also written for voices of a similar tessitura. Regardless of questions of parody, the duet "Sospira, piange e geme il cor" displays some of the techniques already encountered in "Che affanno, tiranno alato", but still retains its specificity. It resorts to imitative entries of the voices, and although it makes use of alternation, parallelism and some free counterpoint between the vocal parts in almost equal terms, with its recognisable and almost fugal head motifs, the imitative passages leave a strong mark on the duet. Likewise, it is of a more extended scope, more thoroughly worked out and less songlike than the regularly unfolding phrases in "Che affanno, tiranno alato", pointing to what was to become the prototype of the substantial showpiece duet for the *primo uomo* and *prima donna*. However, since the earlier versions of this duet (from *Cefalo e Procride* and *Mario fuggitivo*) are to be analysed in more detail in Chapter 3.4.1.1, let us now turn our attention to the only remaining and the only serious duet in the opera for which no author can be determined.

"Se t'abborro e la tua / anche la morte" (II. 8 Almahide, Orcane; Bononcini and Ariosti 1710, 37) occurs at the moment when the tension between Almahide ("Orcane") and Almiro has reached its highpoint. Conflicted by her emotions for Almiro, Almahide nevertheless attempts to save him from King Almansorre's death sentence. Since she cannot reveal her true identity, she invents a story about a relative of hers who is in love with him, but this is ignored by Almiro because he only harbours hatred for "Orcane". As a result, both characters break out in a rage in this duet, justifying the explanation that an aria (or a duet) in opera seria is an affective outburst triggered by recitative (cf. Smith 1971). In this duet of wrath in which Almahide reacts impulsively to Orcane's hatred with some piled up anger of her own, the characters are actually in a state of affective unity and the monotextuality makes perfect sense. The text speaks in military metaphors about the attainment of glory on the battlefield: whereas in the preceding recitative Almahide was being herself, in the duet she is Orcane again, turning it into a duel of two operatic heroes, of two *castrati* if one

wishes, although only Orcane's part was sung by a castrato, Nicolini. We have seen that Margherita de L'Epine (Almahide) performed male roles in all the early London Italian opera analysed so far, so that not only her (male) stage attire and acting but also her voice was deemed equivalent to the voice of a castrato.

SECTION	SUB-SECTION	BAR	KEY	TEXT	DESCRIPTION
A	a_1	1–25	G, D	Se t'abborro e la tua morte me un bel campo a trionfar	alternating statements of theme, held note CP, parallel cadence
	a_2	25–43	D, G	[Sarò in] campo a trionfar.	held note VS. semiquaver passage framing a long parallel flourish
B	b_1	43–51	e, mod.	Ire eterne con mia gloria vuò serpar.	alternating exchanges ("ire eterne"), parallelism, free CP, voice-crossing
	b_2	56–60	h		alternating exchanges, cadence
A	*da capo*				

TABLE 35.
Formal plan of the duet "Se t'abborro e la tua morte" from *Almahide* (1710)

Similar to "Sospira, pena e geme", following in the third act, this duet is written in broader strokes and in a highly *concertante* idiom removed from the tradition of short opera duets characteristic of late 17th-century Italian opera that still dominated the London *Camilla*. After a typical string ritornello with a rhythmically distinctive head motif, reappearing in the violin interjections in the course of the first section, Almahide, whose anger triggers the duet, opens with a lengthy presentation of a vocal variant of the ritornello material (b. 7–12). Orcane replies by repeating this theme in the lower fourth, but instead of providing a countersubject, Almahide counterpoints with a held note (b. 12–17). This texture, well known from the duets of Bononcini and others, continues to dominate in b. 17–20 as the voices exchange roles. A modulation to the dominant is underlined by a passage in parallel movement (b. 21–25), but instead of closure, the voices proceed seamlessly to the next subsection with a texture combining held notes and semiquaver passages (b. 25–29), eventually culminating in what seemingly starts off as imitation, but due to the sequential nature of the aforementioned semiquaver passage soon ends up in an extensive

parallel flourish for both voices on the key word "a trionfar" (b. 30–35). Section B contributes to the sense of dialogic competition as the words engage in alternating exchanges of downward triads (fittingly, on the word "ire eterne") and thus briefly resembling a *Streitduett* (b. 43–45 and later, b. 56–57), but soon enough they are united in a simultaneous texture combining parallel movement (b. 46–48), sequential free counterpoint (b. 49–51) and extensive voice-crossing (b. 52–54). The latter contributes to the sense of a skirmish between two virtuosos, presenting a very effective close to Act 2 as a whole. The duet definitely shows many similarities to the duets of Bononcini in its use of compositional techniques, and in his London opera *Astarto* (1720) Bononcini employed a dramatically similarly effective duet ("Innamorar e poi mancar / abbandonar", to be discussed in Chapter 3.4.1.2) to round off the second act at the height of tension between the characters. Before we begin to speculate if "Se t'abborro" could be ascribed to Bononcini, the fact that Lindgren (1972) did not identify it as a borrowing from Bononcini speaks against this. One can say that a certain, more extensive and also more virtuosic type of duet had gained foothold in *Almahide*, and it will be interesting to see if this tendency developed further.

3. 2. 5.
Idaspe fedele (1710)

Unlike *Almahide*, we can more clearly identify the sources for the opera[155] *Idaspe fedele*, although the degree of fidelity to the original score, the 1705 opera *Gli amanti generosi* by F. Mancini (Mancini 1978, a facsimile edition of the main MS source) cannot be compared to the minimal interventions that Haym made to *Il trionfo di Camilla* when he was adapting it in 1706. The performance of the opera in the form specific to London seems to have been instigated by Nicolini, who probably brought the score with him to London, whereas the adaptor of the opera for performance was most likely J. C. Pepusch (cf. Burrrows 2012, 85). Nicolini, who had by now acquired the status of principal star on London's operatic scene, had an important say in the selection and maybe also adaptation of the music. Lindgren (1972, 239) had established that in contrast to Almahide only two arias stem from Bononcini's works, both from *Regina creduta re* (Venice 1706). The dynamic between Mancini's original music and the borrowings must have been important for this opera, although it is hard to determine exactly how.

155 ***Idaspe fedele*** **stands between the extremes of an authorial opera and a pasticcio compiled from a wide variety of sources, but to avoid terminological confusion, I will call it an opera nevertheless.**

Labelling *Idaspe fedele* as the first opera in London to be sung entirely in Italian is fully justified, and there were also no comic scenes whatsoever, which marked a trend for serious opera and brought the tradition of opera performance in London closer to continental fashion, probably because "literary sensibilities objected to the mixture of light-heartedness and tragedy." (Mancini 1978, Preface).[156] Dean and Knapp were favourable to the musical merits of the preserved music for this opera, claiming that "the songs in *Idaspe*, mostly by Mancini, are a pleasant surprise, with a feeling for contrast and mood that contrives to bring the characters to at least momentary life." (1987, 150) The 1710 London libretto (Candi, Ginlio, and Grimaldi 1710), the selection of songs (Mancini and Bononcini 1710) and the 1705 score (Mancini 1978), whose libretto is itself an object of multiple adaptations[157], served as the basis for the comparison of duets as outlined in Table 36.

PROVENANCE	AUTHOR	SCENE	TEXT	CHARACTERS	VOICES
1705 & 1710	Mancini	II. 10 / II. 12	Voglio morir ferita / O dolce uscir di vita	Berenice, Idaspe	S, MS
1710	?	III. 1	Vado a morir o cara / Ti lascio idolo mio	Idaspe, Berenice	MS, S
1705	Mancini	III. 2	Che forza / che ardore	Dario, Mandane	MS, S
1710	?	III. 12	La costanza del mio core / Il valore delle tue braccia	Idaspe, Mandane	MS, S

TABLE 36.
List of duets in *Idaspe fedele* (1710) and *Gli amanti generosi* (1705)

Mancini, the author of at least two duets in the London opera, is definitely not among the well-researched composers of the early 18th century since his name often appears only alongside Handel's due to the reasons outlined in Chapter 1.1. Stylistically, he is placed among the precursors of the Neapolitan school, but "his work has its roots in the theatrical world of the late 17th century and reflects the salient features of late Baroque *melodramma* in its evolution towards the Classical style" (Cafiero and Selfridge-Field 2001). Angela Romagnoli (1993, 50) came to the following conclusion about the two composers' treatment of duets: "In general, Bononcini uses alternation and parallel movement between the voices more than contrapuntal

156 From now on I will leave any possible comic duets entirely out of consideration.
157 *Gli amanti generosi* is the only libretto by G. P. Candi. G. Convò and S. Stampiglia revised it for Mancini's 1705 setting (cf. Saunders 2001).

combination, whereas Mancini willingly adopts it alongside other ways of composing."[158] It will be interesting to observe how the duets in *Idaspe fedele* and *Gli amanti generosi* relate to these claims.

The first duet comes at the end of the second act, which is also in line with the developing new conception on appropriate places for duets midway and at nodal points of the main dramatic action. "Voglio morir ferita" / "O dolce uscir di vita" (II. 10 Berenice, Idaspe; Mancini and Bononcini 1710, 38) dramatizes a situation that will become a prototype for duets in 18th-century opera seria. King Artaserse has captured and sentenced his nephew Idaspe (Nicolini) to death, and his betrothed Berenice (De L'Epine), whom the king desires for himself, decides to die together with him rather than fall prey to Artaserse. In the original 1705 version the duet is prepared with a lengthy recitative (Mancini 1978, 72–73) in which after the initial refusal Idaspe comes to respect Berenice's decision to share his tragic fate, so that the duet is a musical codification of this newly attained unity in adversity. The comparison of the 1705 MS source and the 1710 print shows no differences in terms of structure and form, only the usual simplification of the orchestration. What distinguishes this duet from the prototype which, among others, Handel was to develop in his London operas, is the absolute absence of counterpoint in the vocal parts. However, its tragic character is painted rather convincingly with the use of the key of F-sharp minor. Although the vocal parts are combined only in succession or in parallel, the strong rhythmic continuity corresponds to the determination of the characters to stoically accept their fate. It is no surprise that this duet is not an addition to the score by Bononcini, for he was uninclined to duets of this sort.

However, let us take a closer look at the duet's structure: it opens with a string ritornello in a jerky, punctuated semiquaver rhythm (b. 1–3) that will have a limited *concertante* function, reappearing only twice. Its rhythmic unrest unsettles the steady pace of the vocal parts in b. 9–15 with repeated brief interjections containing the characteristic punctuated rhythm and an octave leap, but otherwise the relationship between voices and accompaniment is fairly simple, the continuo providing the quaver pulse that the voices follow for most of the time. After Berenice and Idaspe have divided a simple tune between themselves into complimentary phrases in alternating statements (b. 3–5) and the ensuing ritornello, they will repeat these two phrases again (b. 7–8) with an added passage in B minor in parallel, following the unexpected chromatic modulation in b.

158 **In generale, Bononcini usa piu l'alternanza o l'andamento parallelo tra le voci che la combinazione contrappuntistica, adottata invece volentieri da Mancini accanto agli altri due tipi di scrittura.**

9. After this the alternation resumes with melodic variants of the initial vocal material (b. 11–15) before the voices are united again in a texture of parallel sixths and thirds to cadence back to the tonic F-sharp minor and round off section A of the duet. It goes without saying that Mancini's setting was conditioned by the dialogic structuring of the text so that the two characters' common line ("per chi fedel mi fù") is almost always, with the exception of Berenice's solo in b. 13–14), set in parallel. The B section is structurally identical, but explores the related keys of A major, B minor and C-sharp minor, although the dialogic relationship of the voices is enhanced because the text adds another topos often encountered in this type of duet. Berenice's "Ti lascio idolo mio" (b. 20–21) is answered by Idaspe with „Addio mio bene" (b. 21), Berenice joining him for an emphatic "addio" (b. 21–22, 22–23) before they are united in the utterance of the last line ("Non posso dir di più"), indicating that the suffering is too great to say anything more, although this is contradicted by the *da capo* repeat.

Before we move on to the exploration of the remaining duets in the two versions of operas about Hydaspes, it needs to be said that the opera, although not nearly as successful as *Camilla*, *Thomyris* and *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, did have an extended life on London's stage in the ensuing decade, reaching 46 performances by 1716 (cf. Knapp 1984, 103) and thus also forming a bridge of sorts with the period examined chiefly in Chapter 3.3. As Knapp (1986, 165–166) had pointed out, besides the revivals for Nicolini, a lot of music from *Idaspe fedele* was heard in the "mock opera" *Harlequin Hydaspes*, a *commedia dell'arte* style parody of not only *Idaspe fedele*, but Italian opera in general, performed at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in 1719. No score for the work survives, but along with the sung English texts the libretto (Aubert 1719) lists the Italian counterparts when the number stems from a work that was originally sung in Italian in London, as well as its provenance, so that it was possible to identify most of these "songs" as arias from not only *Idaspe fedele,* but also *Pyrrhus and Demetrius, Almahide,* Handel's *Rinaldo* and *Amadigi* and the pasticcio *Clearte* (1716). Two out of three duets in the libretto stem from *Idaspe fedele*. The first one was "Voglio morir ferita / O dolce uscir di vita", known under the English text "Then may we both together die / The pain be mutual, and the joy" (III. 1 Harlequin, Colombine; Aubert 1719, 39) and it was prepared by a dialogue rivalling the original Italian recitative in seriousness of tone. Obviously, a parody of operatic seriousness did not shy away from relishing in its tragic overtones.

The second was "With thee, my life! / Death opens, dearest" (III. 11 Harlequin, Colombine), originally the duet "Vado a morir, o cara / Ti lascio idolo mio) (III. 1 Idaspe, Berenice; Mancini and Bononcini 1710, 48) in *Idaspe fedele*. In the 1710 opera as well as its 1719 parody, this duet comes

shortly before the scene that made the opera famous by probably one of the wittiest writings on opera in general, Joseph Addison's satirical account of Nicolini's onstage fight with a lion on 14 March 1711 in *The Spectator* (Addison 1711). Idaspe is thrown into an arena with a lion, and Addison cleverly mocked the lack of "common sense" in the fact that a castrato pretends to be a larger-than-life hero who single-handedly defeats an actor in a lion's costume and even sings an aria ("Mostro crudele") beforehand. Whatever the reception of this scene might have been, it was certainly the most celebrated one in the opera, so that Nicolini and/or Pepusch initiated the introduction of another duet of departure for the hero and his beloved immediately before it, presumably to give it more emphasis. "Vado a morir o cara / Ti lascio idolo mio" is absent from the original MS source. It is hard to determine its provenance (RISM searches yield no results), but it could be that it was from an opera Nicolini had already sung in Italy. It is of the same dramaturgic and affective type like "Voglio morir ferita", but of a far shorter span. The minor mode and the shorter alternating statements in the vocal part enhance this sense of similarity, but the lack of any kind of motivic identity apart from the first four bars (with the continuo narrowed down to a pulsating quaver movement) points to the fact that his duet is rather different from any that we have encountered so far. "Vado a morir o cara" fascinatingly manages to pack a lot of harmonic content into a mere twelve bars. The sense of uncertainty in Idaspe's ensuing confrontation with a life-threatening danger is conveyed with an ongoing modulatory trajectory, leading away from the tonic G minor via sequential progressions into a series of related keys and eventually back to the tonic. This is punctuated in the final cadence with a simultaneous "Addio" in both voices (b. 11–12), the only moment of vocal simultaneity and yet another goodbye between the *primo uomo* and the *prima donna*. The introduction into *Harlequin Hydaspes* is even more surprising, since the setting is far from being comical in any way.

Given the unconventional nature of the duet, it is next to impossible to guess who its author might be. It is nevertheless significant that this duet was a replacement for a duet for the *secondo uomo* and *seconda donna* "Che forza / che ardore, che raro valore" (III. 2 Dario, Mandane; Mancini 1978, 232–234). In *Gli amanti generosi*, it was originally positioned after "Mostro crudele", the recitative following it and "All'ombre alle catene" (another aria for Idaspe), which were all part of the London version of the opera, so it might come as a surprise that Pepusch and/or Nicolini deprived these characters of an opportunity to praise the titular hero's "strength", "ardour" and "valour" for it not only does not form part of the 1710 selection of songs but is also absent from the libretto. Mandane (Isabella Girardeau) and Dario (Valentini) are in no dramatic rivalry with

the principal couple on the dramaturgic plane and serve them merely as friends and allies, so that this duet enhances Idaspe as a dramatic agent. Maybe Nicolini thought that sharing the spotlight with anybody at this highpoint of the dramatic action would eclipse his glory? Whatever the case, the original 1705 duet could not be more different than "Vado a morir, o cara". It is far more regular, with its *da capo* design, but also structurally and motivically. It also shows a considerable lack of distinctiveness since the motivic content is rather formulaic, imbuing section A with a sense of predictability and, consequently, monotony. Although slightly more virtuoso in its coloratura display than both duets for Idaspe and Berenice, Nicolini's primacy at the beginning of Act 3 would not have necessarily been jeopardised if "Che forza / che ardore" had been performed in London.

Although the soloists had plenty of occasions to display their technical skills in arias, Nicolini's lack of ability to do so in the existing duet "Vado a morir, o cara" may have prompted the insertion of another duet into the last scene of the opera, when the happy outcome of the action has already been decided. "La costanza del mio core / Il valor delle tue braccia" (III. 12 Idaspe, Mandane; Mancini and Bononcini 1710, 70) is absent from the 1705 MS and its authorship is unknown. The likelihood that it was taken over from another opera, presumably one that both soloists sung in together is heightened by the fact that its constellation of soloists, the *primo uomo* (Nicolini) and the *secondo donna* (Girardeau), if not entirely impossible, is certainly misplaced for the moment in the dramatic action when the principal couple should be celebrating the happy outcome of their common fate. Since so little is known about Girardeau's career apart from her London performances, it is not possible to investigate whether Nicolini and Girardeau had sung in an opera together and thus identify from which work this duet had been borrowed. Maybe Nicolini just wanted to sing another duet, and since he had already sung two with Margherita de L'Epine, it felt fitting to introduce a duet with the *seconda donna* for a change, although Girardeau does not seem to have been famous for her technical bravura (cf. Dean 2001a). However, this certainly does not account for the odd dramaturgic placement, since it would have been possible to introduce a duet for Nicolini and Girardeau earlier in the action and move a celebratory duet for the principal couple to the end of the opera instead. This duet is distinguished from the others in the opera by a slightly higher share of coloratura display, although still not too taxing and rather modest compared to the flashier duets in *Almahide*, written for some of the same soloists (Nicolini, Valentini, De L'Epine). It continues the tendency for a more imitative treatment of the voices already begun in *Almahide*. The violins introduce the initial motif of the voices (b. 1–4) and the downward semiquaver movement in punctuated rhythm (b. 5–9) that

are going to be used for vocal figuration later. After a stretto imitation of the main motif and its continuation in the form of cascading downward semiquavers, first heard in Idaspe's part (b. 9–14) and then in Mandane's a fifth higher (b. 10–15), the voices are united in parallel coloraturas for the remainder of section A of the duet. The much shorter middle section (b. 60–83) has more changes of texture, progressing two times from alternating statements to free counterpoint and parallel cadencing (b. 60–70 and 71–78). This is definitely a duet that unites rather than contrasts or sets its musical protagonists apart.

Finally, I need to repeat that the third and final duet in *Harlequin Hydaspes* is "For a blessing / Past expressing" (III. 13 Harlequin, Colombine; Aubert 1719, 55), a borrowing of "I'm contented, ne'er tormented / And I'm delighted", the final duet for Pyrrhus and Demetrius from the eponymous opera. Since in that context it functioned as a duet of friendship disguising supressed rivalry for Climene, the compilers of *Harlequin Hydaspes* changed the English version of the text so that they could give it to the lovers Harlequin and Colombine, but admitted its provenance by displaying the original Italian version of the text. The fact that it was remembered for an operatic parody in 1719 suggests that it probably made quite an impression, adding to the multi-faceted picture of the somewhat confusing period in the performance tradition of Italian opera in London discussed in Chapter 3.3. At least four of the early Italian operas performed in London in the period 1706–1710 (*Camilla, Thomyris, Pyrrhus and Demetrius* and *Idaspe fedele*) were kept alive in Londoners' memory in the following decade in various forms of revivals on the different stages of the capital. Whereas *Camilla* and *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* became champions of English opera at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields (1717–1719), *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* turned away from its English (bilingual) roots when it was revived in Italian in 1716. *Hydaspes* performed both functions, being revived both in the original Italian for Nicolini at the Haymarket theatre in 1715–1716 and—heavily modified—as *Harlequin Hydaspes* in 1719. These early London works, borderline between proper operas and pasticcios, had obviously laid some firm foundations.

3. 3.
Differing Conceptions of Italian Opera (1711–1717)

> What is clear is a connection through adherence to a school, an affinity of attitude and general artistic approach. It is astonishing to see how far Handel is from his fellow-composers of opera in 1737. […] Nor had Gasparini been in complete agreement with the operatic composers of 1720 when he wrote his almost metallic melodies, so different from the turgid "bel canto" style of Porpora or the abundant élan of the young Hasse. One thinks rather of the Giovanni Bononcini of the last years of the seventeenth century, with his *Xerse* or his *Trionfo di Camilla* (1696). Some trace of that Roman operatic style seems to have survived both in Gasparini's later work at Rome and in Handel's London. (Strohm 2008, 91–92)

Although significant since it draws the three composers central to this study (Handel, Gasparini and Bononcini) under the common denominator of a Roman style of composition at the beginning of the 18th century as opposed to the nascent Neapolitan school, the quote above conceals the complexity of the second decade of the 18th century as a period when operatic duets of these three composers were performed alongside each other on the London stages. This stage in the development of Italian opera in the British capital is even more multi-layered than the initial period examined in Chapter 3.2. Although Handel debuted in London in 1711 with an Italian opera (*Rinaldo*), a work summarising his achievements in Italy and a significant success with the audience, the Halle master's career was taking a different turn with the exploration of royal and aristocratic patronage and the according interest in English genres. As a result of this, but also due to other processes that shaped the musico-theatrical scene in London, "there was no resident composer before 1720: the theatres preferred to rely almost exclusively on doctored imports and pasticcios" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 155) The distinction between authorial operas such as Gasparini's and Handel's on the one hand and the continuing production of Italian pasticcios in the manner established by the end of the first decade of the century is nevertheless important. This period is also marked by the influx of many exceptional singers and the extension and improvement of the Haymarket theatre, all laying foundation for future successes.

There is one aspect of musico-theatrical life in London in this decade that will not be considered in detail in this study. The efforts "to establish a so-called English opera or opera in English 'after the Italian manner'" (Knapp 1986, 155), centred around renewed activities at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane as well as the newly opened theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields,

included revivals of works performed in 1706–1710 (dealt with in detail in Chapter 3.2), but none of these revivals introduced any significant novelty in the realm of duets, with the exception of Pepusch's two additional duets for the 1719 revival of *Thomyris*. Therefore, we cannot say that this particular English-language reception of Italian operatic music changed in any significant way during the decade following its original introduction to the London scene. New productions of English opera "after the Italian manner" manifested themselves firstly in a work such as *Calypso and Telemachus* (libretto by John Hughes, music by John Ernst Galliard) in 1712 at—surprisingly—the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, 1712. The opening of the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in 1714 instigated the Theatre Royal Drury Lane to revive the tradition of the masque, its first representative being *Venus* and *Adonis* (libretto by Colley Cibber, music by J. C. Pepusch; Drury Lane, 1715). This and other masques staged at Drury Lane and Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in the period 1715–1719 were not a full evening's entertainment and often functioned as "afterpieces" to plays, with the exception of *Calypso and Telemachus* (Galliard 1712)[159]. Masques were especially popular in the 1715/1716 season when Italian opera performances were suspended in the aftermath of the Jacobite rebellion. In 1716/1717 the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields revived *Camilla*, *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* and also *Calypso and Telemachus*, and for a whole season it kept up with Italian opera at the Haymarket as worthy competition. The competition between Drury Lane and Lincoln's-Inn-Fields in the two seasons when no Italian opera was performed (1717/1718 and 1718/1719) was not that fierce, the latter theatre gaining the upper hand by mounting new and old masques, revivals of *Camilla*, *Thomyris* and *Harlequin Hydaspes*. Knapp (1986, 168) concludes that "a genuine English alternative to Italian opera, then, faded during the late years of the 1710s when nothing substantial was forthcoming from the two English theatres, even though they both had the musical and theatrical field entirely to themselves". When royal and aristocratic support gathered around the Royal Academy of Music, musical theatre in English was pushed into the background until the appearance of *The Beggar's Opera*. Unlike the ones from 1706–1710, these English language works had no influence on the development of a tradition of Italian opera in London nor was Handel in any way involved in their production. Handel did not take part in the production of Italian pasticcios at the time, either, remaining associated with composing and producing his own operas until 1725, when the pasticcio *Elpidia* was performed by the Royal Academy of Music under his auspices.

159 **This work contains three polytextual duets in the tradition of early London operas (Chapter 3.2). They are distinguished by partially contrasting material in the voices, the avoidance of imitation and free counterpoint.**

YEAR	WORK	MUSIC: COMPOSER, ARRANGER	LIBRETTIST: POET, ARRANGER	DUET*
1711	*Etearco*	Bononcini, Handel, Haym et al.	Stampiglia, Haym	0
1711	*Rinaldo*	Handel	A. Hill, G. Rossi	4
1711	*Antioco*	Gasparini et al.	F. Silvani	3
1712	*Ambleto*	Gasparini et al., Nicolini?	P. Pariati, A. Zeno	2
1712	*Il pastor fido*	Handel	G. Rossi	1
1712	*Dorinda*	C. F. Pollarolo et al., Haym	B. Pasqualigo	?
1713	*Teseo*	Handel	Quinault, Haym	4
1713	*Ernelinda*	Gasparini, Bononcini, Mancini, Orlandini, Telemann? et al., Haym?	F. Silvani	1?
1713	*Silla*	Handel	G. Rossi	3
1714	*Creso*	Albinoni, Caldara, Mancini, Gasparini, Lotti, G. Polani, Vivaldi, Haym	A. Aurelli, Haym	4
1714	*Arminio*	Lotti, Orlandini, Ristori, Vivaldi et al.	F. Silvani	2
1715	*Lucio Vero*	Albinoni, Vivaldi et al., Haym	A. Zeno	3
1715	*Amadigi di Gaula*	Handel	A. H. de la Motte, Haym?	2
1716	*Clearte*	A. Scarlati et al., Nicolini	G. D. Pioli	3
1717	*Vincislao*	C. F. Pollarolo, Mancini, Haym	A. Zeno, Haym?	?
1717	*Tito Manlio*	Ariosti	Haym?	5

TABLE 37.
Selective list of operas (pasticcios and authorial) staged in London 1711–1719[160]

* Duet numbers are given taking the revivals of the respective operas into consideration up to the end of the period examined in this study (1724).

Some of the works listed in Table 37 will be closely examined in the remainder of this chapter, their duets subject to detailed analysis. The subchapter devoted to the dramatic duets of Gasparini (3.3.1) will be followed by subchapters on pasticcios (3.3.2) and Handel's dramatic duets (3.3.) The

160 The main sources of information in this table are Sasse 1959, Dean and Knapp 1987 and Lindgren 1987.

former will exceed the examination of duets in the pasticcios firmly based on Gasparini's operas *Antioco* and *Ambleto* in 1711 and 1712 and explore some operas and dramatic cantatas of his written in the second decade of the 18th century. The reason for this is Gasparini's importance in the realm of the chamber duet. In order to establish if and how compositional activity in this genre influenced the composing of dramatic duets and vice versa, Gasparini's dramatic duets not performed in London will be drawn into the comparison. On the other hand, Bononcini's presence on the London stage seems to have subsided in this period. Apart from the already mentioned revivals of works premiered in London in the previous decade and the inclusion of arias from *Camilla* in the pasticcios *Dorinda* and *Arminio* in 1713 and 1714, the available sources for other pasticcios produced between 1712 and 1720 bear no witness to additional music by Bononcini. (Lindgren 1997, 242–243). Haym had displayed considerable partiality to Bononcini's music as adaptor and compiler before, but his role in the production of Italian opera in London underwent a significant change in this period, the bulk of his contribution consisting of tasks such as adapting opera arias imported by singers from elsewhere to suit the libretto they were introduced to, e. g. in *Etearco* in 1711. This constituted "Haym's periodic role at the Haymarket theatre from 1711 until his death in 1729. Hayms's editing of the text is assumed whenever he signed dedications of libretti." (ibid., 243) Thus he became more comparable to a producer, director or a dramaturg in the modern sense.

3. 3. 1.
Gasparini's Dramatic Duets

Gasparini spent the largest part of his professional career in Rome, with the significant Venetian period in between, when he was often the first to set new, Arcadian libretti of Apostolo Zeno and Pietro Pariati, although his early and late Roman operatic output was equally important for his development (cf. Strohm 2008, 80). By the end of the second decade of the 18th century, his operas had been performed outside Italy, in German-dominated centres as well as London. He was respected as a theorist, with his *L'armonico pratico al cimbalo* (1708), a practically oriented *basso continuo* manual reaching many editions and as a teacher, counting Benedetto Marcello, Domenico Scarlatti and Giovanni Porta among his pupils. Interestingly, his early Roman years were evidently rather formative for him since in *L'armonico pratico* only contemporaries such as Corelli, Bernardo Pasquini and Giovanni Bononcini receive praise as composers, all of whom he had met and worked with in Rome back then (Lindgren 1981b, 178). As a composer of an older generation, (he was born in 1661), Gasparini

made a reputation of a learned master in his church music and his cantatas (cf. Libby and Lepore 2001). He obviously knew how to reconcile the tradition of polyphonic music with novel stylistic tendencies early on in his career, showing a proclivity for the *da capo* form in works written in Rome as early as 1689 (cf. Lindgren 1981b, 176). However, Gasparini was a strong enemy of the modern school that his friend, the singing teacher and theorist Pier Francesco Tosi turned against in *Opinioni de cantori antichi e moderni* (1723). This may have to do with his role as a singing teacher, since Nicola Porpora's new school of singing with Farinelli as chief representative was posing a certain threat, too.

Although "there can be little doubt that Gasparini was one of Handel's models in developing his Italian style" (Roberts 2003, 285), like many other composers parodied by him, Gasparini is considered first and foremost for what had been borrowed from him. The most famous examples are his operas *Il Bajazet* (1719) and *Il Faramondo* (1720) since Handel not only drew material from them but the scores influenced Handel's settings of the same source libretti, *Tamerlano* (1724) and *Faramondo* (1738), on a more general level. However, they either contain no duets (*Il Bajazet*) or served Handel as a source of inspiration in a time that falls out of the scope of this study. The borrowings extended long into Handel's career, including some of his English oratorios, but a duet is rarely the object of parody, with the exception of the borrowing from a duet from *Ambleto* to be discussed later on. In other words, by focusing on parody we cannot find out if the unexpected rapport between the chamber duets of the two composers extends to their dramatic duets as well.

Despite the fact that he was labelled "one of the most celebrated of the Venetian opera composers after 1700" (Wolff 1975a, 93), not much has been written on Gasparini's duets. The duets listed in Table 38 will be considered in chronological order, which does not imply a developmental curve in such a short period. Chapter 3.3.1.1 examines the four duets in the two London pasticcios based on his operas. A stylistic difference between these duets and the ones analysed in the next subchapter will be evident since they are often shorter and differently structured. In hindsight, we shall see if the detailed analysis of each duet can be brought into connection with their dating and/or authorship, depending on the degree of fidelity to Gasparini's original scores maintained by the adaptor(s). Chapter 3.3.1.2 opens with the discussion of duets in two of Gasparini's *cantate a due*. The composer wrote ten dramatic cantatas, all of them for two soloists, which shows an interest in the genre comparable to the chamber duets analysed in Chapter 2.4.3. The availability of printed editions of *Dimmi, gentil Daliso* and *Qui di natura in scorno* conveniently coincided with their creation (Rome, 1716 and 1717) in the period of interest to this chapter. Each

of these cantatas closes with duets that commence with lengthy alternating statements by the voices that are eventually combined in a predominantly parallel or a freely contrapuntal texture. Like the opera duets examined next, they are written in a developed *da capo* form, but with a somewhat lower degree of simultaneity. The two opera duets from *Astianatte* and *Eumene* share their major-mode and playful character, but they excel in a more virtuoso treatment of the voices resulting in abundant parallel semiquaver coloratura, which is to be expected in the realm of opera. They are also polytextual duets of conflict and therefore emphasise the textual and/or affective contrast by setting their first lines with shorter alternating statements, gradually interweaving the parts in imitation, free counterpoint and/or parallelism, thereby making them more comparable to some of Handel's own duets.

YEAR	AUTHOR	WORK	SCENE	INCIPIT	CHAR.	VOICES
1711	pasticcio, ?	*Antioco*	I. 3	Vivrò a te fedele	Arsinoe, Leonildo	S&MS
1711	pasticcio, ?	*Antioco*	I. 13	Per tè bell'idol mio / caro mio bene	Antioco, Arsinoe	S&S
1712	pasticcio, Gasparini	*Ambleto*	II. 14	Godi o cara / Godo o caro	Ambleto, Veremonda	MS&S
1712	pasticcio, Gasparini	*Ambleto*	II. 16	Sempre in cielo Giove irato / averso il fato	Veremonda, Ambleto	S&MS
1715	Gasparini	*Eumene*	II. 18a	Se non temi il mio furore / Io non temo il tuo furore	Laodicea, Eumene	S&S
1716	Gasparini	*Dimmi gentil Daliso*	no. 11	Saprò / Se sai sperar costante	Daliso, Dori	S&A
1717	Gasparini	*Qui di natura a scorno*	no. 10	Già riede nel petto la gioia	Clori, Daliso	S&A
1722	Gasparini	*Astianatte*	II. 15	Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano	Ermione, Andromaca	S&MS

TABLE 38.
Selection of dramatic duets by Gasparini or associated with Gasparini for analysis

3. 3. 1. 1.
London Pasticcios Antioco (1711) and Ambleto (1712)

There is a link between the two London pasticcios based on operas by Gasparini that does not have much to do with the composer, but the selection of *Antioco* (Vienna, 1705) and *Ambleto* (Venice, 1706) may reflect a certain preference on part of London producers and the audience. Zeno and Pariati, the authors of the original libretto of *Ambleto,* were relying on a 16th-century Danish chronicle and probably had no knowledge whatsoever of Shakespeare, but Heidegger may have. In *Antioco* the heroine Arsinoe feigns madness in the face of political vicissitude because of the tyrant Tolomeo, and the fact that the next Italian opera on the repertory of the Queen's Theatre bears even more resemblance to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* cannot have been a coincidence. These two operas must have been selected consciously, possibly to accommodate a specifically British tradition or taste. The source libretto, namely, was not among the more popular ones by Zeno and Pariati, and the London setting may have been the second one. Most characters in *Ambleto* have their equivalent in Shakespeare: Ambleto (A) is naturally Hamlet, Veremonda (S), a foreign princess in the opera, corresponds to Ophelia, the tyrant Fengone (B) to Claudius, whereas Ambleto's mother is not Gertrud but Gerilda (S). Like in Shakespeare, Fengone usurps the throne and marries Gerilda, whereas Ambleto feigns madness. As was the custom in opera seria, Fengone's villainy is exaggerated and his lustfulness finds a new victim in Veremonda, whom he intends to ravish. As many a *prima donna* before her, this is far from Veremonda's only trouble, since Valdemaro (S), a general loyal to Fengone also has pretensions for Veremonda and will not shun violence as a means to obtain her, but is eventually won over to change his allegiances from Fengone to Ambleto. Fengone will be harder to reckon with, threatening Veremonda to kill Ambleto if she does not give in to him, but luckily the obligatory *lieto fine* will result in his death only, leaving Ambleto to happily ascend the throne with Veremonda.

The London *Ambleto* (1712) is a pasticcio, not to the extent *Almahide* and maybe *Antioco* were, but comparable to *Idaspe fedele*. This is where the thin line between a pasticcio and a reworking of an opera can be found. Similar to the way *Idaspe fedele* was based on Mancini's *Gli amanti generosi*, the compilers of the London *Ambleto* definitely had access to the score of the 1706 Venice *Ambleto* and this score served as a solid musical starting point. Another thing connects these two pasticcios: Lindgren (1987, 301) and Dean and Knapp (1987, 157) believe that Nicolini was more actively involved in the compilation of these operas since he probably brought the scores with him to London. He sang the title role in both the original

1706 opera and in this production, so we may conclude that the opera was staged on his initiative and that together with Heidegger, Nicolini might be behind the inclusion of music by other composers. According to Dean and Knapp (1987), only 22 of 42 numbers from the Walsh collection of songs, the most important and most comprehensive musical source for the London version of the opera (reprinted as Gasparini and Porta 1986, Ambleto), come from the original score.[161] The fact that the duets are confirmed as original compositions by Gasparini makes our work here much easier than in some of the other examined pasticcios.

VERSIONS	AMBLETO	VEREMONDA
1705 libretto, II. 14	Godi, o cara, ma di un diletto Che misura sia de l'amor. Quell'affetto, che ben non gode Quand'è in braccio del dolce oggetto, E'un'affetto di debol cor. Godi, etc.	Godo, o caro, quanto so amarti, E fin godo nel tuo goder. L'alma amante che in me respira, In te passa per abbracciarti, E là s'empie del suo piacer. Godo, etc.
1712 libretto, II. 14 1712 score	Godi, o cara, ma di un diletto Che misura sia de l'amor.	Godo, o caro, quanto so amarti E fin godo nel tuo goder.

TABLE 39.
Different versions of the text of Gasparini's duet "Godi, o cara / Godo, o caro" from *Ambleto* (1712)

Handel was not able to hear the opera in London because he was not present in the city at the time of the performance, but he reached for the score much later, partly because by then the 1712 opera would have faded from his audience's memory and they would not be able to identify the borrowings any more. The numbers he borrowed from *Ambleto* include a duet, "Godi, o cara / Godo, o caro" (II. 14 Ambleto, Veremonda; Gasparini and Porta 1986, Ambleto, 51).[162] This is a duet of amorous unity which comes after Ambleto had freed Veremonda from Valdemaro and it is followed by the usurper's arrival in the next scene. It is very different from the other dramatic duets by Gasparini examined here and bears similarities to the strophic duets by Scarlatti or Bononcini. In the score and the 1712

161 Arias from Pollarolo's *Vincislao* and one each by Caldara and Handel ("Tu ben degno" from *Agrippina*).

162 Handel parodied it in a duet of his own in the oratorio *Alexander Balus* (1748), "Hail wedded love" (II. 4 Alexander Balus, Cleopatra, Handel 1870, 148–154), considerably transforming and expanding its melody.

libretto (Zeno 1712, 57) the duet is monopartite, a concise setting of two lines for each soloist in which they express joy at being united. Musically, it consists of a note-to-note repetition of Ambleto's melody in G major (b. 1–10) by Veremonda a fourth lower (in C major, b. 10–20), after which a brief continuo passage (b. 20–24) rounds off the short piece. The unexpected arrival of Fengone leaves the impression that what could have been a longer duet had been cut short. This was, however, not the case in Zeno's original libretto (Zeno 1705, 49) where the duet is of standard length and in conventional *da capo* form, the four mentioned lines belonging to section A. As can be seen in Table 39, the adaptors of the opera for the London performance clearly wanted to shorten and simplify the duet by dropping its middle section. It is ungrateful to speculate what the original 1706 setting might have been like. It is possible that in section B the voices were again in a relationship of successiveness, while the third section could have been both a musical, literal *da capo* repeat or merely a textual one, with the last section (A2) combining the voices into simultaneity. Whatever the case, this duet confirms a tendency to supply London pasticcios based on Gasparini operas with shorter and simpler duets. Moreover, it recalls the cutting of originally tripartite (often *da capo*) duets to short monopartite ones in the collections of songs from earlier London operas (e. g. "Cease cruel tyrannizing / to deceive me" in *Camilla* or possibly "Oh! In pity cease to grieve me!" in *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia*).

Dean and Knapp (1987, 157–158) identified "a lax feeling for character" and the "unsuitability of the music to the emotion it is supposed to convey" in *Ambleto*. "The score is full of catchy tunes, based on dance rhythms, with many sicilianas and jolly gigues and occasional touches of expressive Neapolitan harmony." (ibid.) It is difficult to say if this applies to the second duet in the opera, "Sempre in cielo Giove irato / averso il fato" (Veremonda, Ambleto; Gasparini and Porta 1986, Ambleto, 52–54). It is positioned at a rather unusual place in dramaturgic terms, after Fengone had announced that Veremonda is going to be his, so it comes as a surprise that rather than despairing, the principal pair is singing about finding solace in heaven. Table 40 displays the three versions of the text of this duet: the Italian version as printed in both versions of the libretto (Zeno 1705, 51; Zeno 1712, 59), the English translation in the London libretto (Zeno 1712, 58) and the words actually printed in the collection of songs (Gasparini and Porta 1986, 52–54). The 1705 and 1712 Italian libretto differ in the presence of "Non sara, etc." after the last line. Although the 1705 libretto is otherwise consistent in indicating *da capo* repeats, it could be that the indication of the second line is a purely typographic error. The score contradicts this with the clearly written out indication "D. C.". However, the text in the score diverges from both versions of the libretto for it tones down the

polytextuality of section B by assigning what was originally Ambleto's first line to Veremonda as well, and it also adds "credi a me" to section A without fitting in with the metrical structure of the original text. Whatever the reason for these discrepancies, it probably did not influence the music that Isabella Girardeau (Veremonda) and Nicolini (Ambleto) sang.

Libretto 1705 Libretto 1712 Italian text	**Amb/Ver: Sempre in Cielo Giove irato / Averso il fato / a 2: Non sara / Per te, mio bene; / Amb/Ver: Dal mio pianto / Dal mio duolo un di placato / Si che havra / Qualche pieta / Delle tue pene. (Non sara, etc.)**
Libretto 1712 English text	**Ver & Ham: Jove shall not always angry be / Heaven shall once declare for thee / Shall put a Period to my Grief, / And my sad Tears shall find Relief.**
Score 1712 Italian text	**Ver/Ham: Sempre in cielo Giove irato / averso il fato, / a 2: Credi a me, non sara, per te, mio bene; Dal mio pianto / Un di placato / Si che havra / Qualche pieta / Delle tue pene. *Da capo***

TABLE 40.
Different versions of the text of Gasparini's duet "Sempre in cielo Giove irato / averso il fato" from *Ambleto* (1712)

The variants "Giove irato" / "Averso il fato" at the beginning of the first section of the duet are actually semantic equivalents. This seems like another case of polytextuality for its own sake, mostly to differentiate the soloists in the setting by successive alternating statements. However, this is not confirmed by Gasparini's actual setting of the duet. It opens with a three-part string ritornello conceived in imitative terms, the second violin opening the duet with a typical fugue head motif (x, b. 1), and although it is taken up in the first violins (b. 1–2) and later by the viola (b. 2–3) and the continuo (b. 3–4) in modified or truncated form, we are not dealing with a *fugato* but a free contrapuntal texture building mostly on the interplay of sequential semiquaver passages in some parts as opposed to quaver repetitions in the other(s). This type of texture is characteristic of the treatment of the vocal parts, as well, before they are joined in a parallel passage cadencing in D major (b. 11–13). In the next and at the same time closing section of the duet (b. 16–27, Gasparini and Porta 1986, Ambleto, 53–54), the composer does away with the head motif altogether, joining the voices in a variant of the free contrapuntal section (b. 16–18) before another, this time more extended and emphatic parallel passage highlights the added words "credi a me, non sarà per te, mio bene". This is justified in dramaturgic terms since the protagonists are addressing each other with words of comfort, which explains the surprising optimism of this light-hearted major-mode duet. In the metrically contrasting section B (b.

28–39, Gasparini and Porta, 1986, Ambleto, 54) the contrapuntal-rhythmic vivacity of section A is abandoned for lulling crotchet-quaver rhythms and after the initial alternation the soloists are led in a homorhythmic simultaneous texture.

The duets in *Ambleto* are not among the most varied and ingenuous duets by Gasparini. With their brevity and formal conciseness they remind us of the duets from early London operas discussed in Chapter 3.2 and they are at odds with the increasing complexity of Handel's duets performed in London in this period. Although the duets in the earlier *Antioco* (1711), the first opera after *Rinaldo* to be premiered in London and another pasticcio based on an earlier opera by Gasparini, are somewhat different, the provenance of the music is even more complex than in the case of *Ambleto* and the authorship of the duets cannot be established. "None of the London libretto's 38 aria texts are among those set by Francesco Gasparini for the first production given of the libretto–Francesco Silvani's *Il più fedel tra i vassalli* at Venice in 1703." (Lindgren 1997, 239–240) Dean and Knapp (1987, 157) identify the additions as stemming "from three Gasparini operas: *Il più fedel tra i vasalli, La fede tradita e vendicata* and *Antioco*[163] and one by Bononcini." All three Gasparini operas were written in the period 1703–1705, which suggests that they reflect Gasparini's early style. A detailed comparison for the sake of identification of the two duets in the London pasticcio was impossible as the only sources available to me are the 1703 libretto (Silvani 1703), the 1711 libretto (Silvani 1711) and the 1711 collection of songs (Gasparini et al. 1711). The plot revolves around the legitimate Egyptian princess Arsinoe (Elisabetta Pilotti Schiavonetti = S) and her efforts to marry her love Antioco (Nicolini = MS), whom the currently reigning king Tolomeo wants to depose. In her efforts she is aided by Leonildo (Jane Barbier = MS[164]), her ally who loves and is loved by Antioco's sister Oronta, desired on her part by Tolomeo. Arsinoe is an active dramatic force who resorts to cunning such as the aforementioned dissembling of madness as a way out of her predicaments. None of the above mentioned sources contain any duets in the second and third act of the opera. Thus the number of duets reflects librettistic reform, but their placement does

163 Premiered in Venice in 1705. Not much music from these operas has been handed down to us, but Kantner 1981, 65 claims that the score of *Antioco* contains one duet, so that in theory it is possible that it was borrowed for the London pasticcio.

164 In the absence of tables listing all the duets in a given opera, the voice range of the role is to be given next to the first mention of the singer who was singing it. The range does not refer to the singers' overall tessitura or to the overall range of a role but to the range in the duets in a given opera.

not. The compilers of the London pasticcio chose to respect this and did not feel the need to insert any duets into Acts 2 and 3.[165]

1703 libretto	A 2: A te sarò fedele / Leo: Sin che avrò cor nel petto. / Ars: Sin che alma havrò nel cor. Jan: Contro il barbaro infedele / Gonsia d'ira, e di dispetto / Spirerò sdegno, e furor. Ars & Leo: A te…
1711 libretto	A 2: A te sarò fedele / Leo: Sin ch'avrò core in petto / Ars: Sin ch'alma avrò nel sen. Jan: O morir o vendicarmi (*da capo* Aria)
1711 score	A 2: Vivrò a te fedele / sin che l'alma havrò nel sen. E si grande il mio contento / Ch'ogni tormento dal mio seno / Già volo.

TABLE 41.
Different versions of the text of the duet "Vivrò a te fedele" from Antioco (1711)

The duet "Vivrò a te fedele" (I. 3 Arsinoe, Leonildo; Gasparini et al. 1711, 11–12) has an intricate background as well. There is a strong continuity with the original 1703 libretto (Silvani 1703, 17), but the changes to the conception of the duet were considerable. Reminiscent of the innovative ensemble designs by Zeno, Silvani originally conceived a *da capo* form with the framing section occupied by a duet for Arsinoe and Leonildo and its middle section by a solo for Janisbe. Since this scene establishes the alliance between these three characters against Tolomeo, it made sense to unite them musically. The 1711 libretto modifies this conception by staying true to the duet text (section A in the 1703 libretto) with a few minimal modifications, but it replaces Janisbe's solo with an entirely new text. The libretti for London pasticcios were often printed prior to the rehearsal process by the direct translation of the source libretto, so that sometimes they did not include the changes introduced during the preparation of the production, often instigated by the singers. This duet proves that it was not always like this for either it was compiled from a later setting of the libretto, which is unlikely, or some changes were known in advance. The 1711 score confirms this since besides the duet (whose text contains some changes), it also contains Janisbe's aria with the same text, but without the *da capo* repeat indicated in the libretto. Instead, the duet text was

165 In Act 1 of the 1711 libretto there is an additional duet of unity for the secondary pair of lovers, "Abbraccia questo petto / Che se immense" (I. 7 Leonildo, Oronta). The absence of this duet from the printed selection of songs does not mean that it could not have formed part of the London pasticcio. Its absence from the 1703 libretto suggests that it was inserted from another opera, but we cannot know which composer's.

modified with the elimination of the initial polytextuality and the addition of two new lines for the soloists, set as the duet's middle section. There are basically two ways to interpret this: either Janisbe's solo was entirely emancipated from Silvani's original trio design into a short aria of its own sung after a fully-fledged duet, or the duet was repeated after it, the second option being less likely. Whatever the case, the modification and the addition of the text (especially the two lines of section B) are direct proof that we are dealing with a number inserted into the opera. Nothing speaks against Gasparini's authorship since "Vivrò a te fedele" displays common structural traits with "Sempre in cielo Giove irato / averso il fato" from *Ambleto*, but it could stem from a different composer, too.

The first duet in the opera is written for the *prima donna* (Pilotti Schiavonetti) and the *secondo uomo* (Barbier), which is the legacy of the libretto, but the fact that it was kept and not replaced by a duet from another work confirms that the new conventions about who should sing a duet together and when have not yet been established in London's operatic life. Both duets in *Antioco*, especially "Vivrò a te fedele" with its opening jerky violin tune, replete with octave leaps (b. 1–7) confirm Dean and Knapp's description of "catchy tunes" and "jolly gigues" quoted above. The ritornello has almost nothing to with the material of the vocal parts in thematic terms, since their movement is more gradual and on the whole rather dependent on one another. In the A section (1–22) of the duet there is only a brief moment of initial successive treatment (b. 7), when Leonildo takes up the motif of triplets followed by a downward fourth leap from Arsinoe, transposed a fourth lower. After this, the voices are led partly in contrary motion, partly parallel in a songlike structure building complimentary melodic units in a way comparable to the duets "Voglio morir ferita / O dolce uscir di vita" and "La costanza del mio core / Il valore delle tue braccia" from *Idaspe fedele*. After an abridged ritornello, the much shorter section B (b. 22–30) brings no surprises by leading the voices in parallel, separated by a brief moment of alternation (b. 24–26) that has no particular justification in the text. The modulations are not at all conditioned by the text or the dramaturgy and therefore feel somewhat rushed and forced, a mere convention of the middle section of a *da capo* form. However, the overall absence of imitation will make this duet akin to the aesthetically much more successful "Per tè bell'idol mio / caro mio bene".

At the end of Act 1 Antioco, banished by Tolomeo, meets Arsinoe who reveals to him that she is not mad, and the couple take their departure from each other in a duet. It is somewhat odd that the opportunity for Nicolini and Pilotti-Schiavonetti to sing a pathetic duet of departure, the prototype of which we encountered for the first time in *Idaspe fedele*, was missed in London. The 1703 libretto contains the duet "Dolce mia vita,

addio / Ah che morir mi sento" (I. 11 Antioco, Arsinoe; Silvani 1703, 32), but it was dropped from the 1711 libretto and the score, being replaced by "Per tè bell'idol mio / Per te caro mio ben" (I. 11 Antioco, Arsinoe; Gasparini et al. 1711, 29–30). The reasons for this were probably musical or related to performance practice since although its text does not directly refer to the departure, it still has the same dramaturgic function. Interestingly enough, here it is the score that displays additional polytextual traits rather than the libretto[166], adding a polytextual alternation to the beginning of section B: Arsinoe adds "Il ciel le stelle i numi" to the line "Le selve i sassi i numi", sung by Antioco and printed in the libretto. Structurally, the duet rests on alternating statements only in the settings of these two opening lines in section A and in section B, relying on simultaneity not unlike the one in "Vivrò a te fedele" for the remaining two lines of both sections. "Per tè bell'idol mio / Per te caro mio ben" is similar to the earlier duet in scope and the ratio between the two sections, as well, but these similarities are far less significant than the specific differences. As Table 42 shows, each of its two sections is built identically, of two subsections with the unfolding of the vocal parts in brief alternation followed by the type of simultaneous voice-leading just described.

SECTION		BAR	KEY	LINES	DESCRIPTION
A	a_1	1–10	a, e	1/2, 3–4	continuo ritornello, alternation, simultaneity (parallelism, contrary motion), continuo ritornello
	a_2	10–22	e, d?, a	1/2, 3–4	alternation, simultaneity (parallelism, contrary motion, continuo ritornello
B	b_1	23–29	C, c, d	5/6, 7–8	alternation, simultaneity (parallelism, contrary motion)
	b_2	29–35	d, C, a?, e	5/6, 7–8	alternation, simultaneity (parallelism, contrary motion)
A'	*da capo*				

TABLE 42.
Formal outline of the duet "Per tè bell'idol mio / Per te caro mio ben" from the pasticcio *Antioco* (1711)

166 A section. An: Per tè bell'idol mio / Ar: caro mio bene / a 2: l'alma spirar desio / per non mancar di fe. / B section. Le selve i sassi i fiumi / Sapranno che fra pene / Io moro sol per te. English translation: For thee my idol I desire / rather than to be false t'expire; / The forests, rocks and rivers see / That my last pains are all for thee.

This duet also shares with "Vivrò a te fedele" a songlike quality of the melodic build-up, both the instrumental and the vocal parts unfolding in regular two-bar phrases. In spite of this and unlike "Vivrò a te fedele", this does not result in monotony due to a sense of harmonic piquancy of Neapolitan harmony (b. 5, 17, and 34). The sense of melodic variety and vivacity in spite of the repetition of the structural design in all subsections is achieved by a sense of motivic freedom. The voices—Antioco always taking the lead—do not repeat or vary each other's material but display a certain motivic kinship. Albeit somewhat different, the successive treatment of voices in section B also displays motivic unity and a seamless melodic flow. Variety is achieved with minimal means, especially since the range of the melody is sequential and somewhat limited, but a sense of direction is attained with harmonic means. The modulations have a sense of roundedness thanks to the repeated cadential passages. It is evident that the duet was inserted into the opera, but once again we cannot know if it was composed by Gasparini or someone else. There is no clear answer to the question why this duet displays more substance and diversity in its mere 35 bars than most of the duets examined in this subchapter.

Stylistically, the duets in *Antioco* seem more akin to the duets in *Idaspe fedele* than any of Gasparini's duet analysed so far. Perhaps the explanation lies in the persons of the compilers that these operas shared. Haym did not take part, and apart from Heidegger (who had only limited adapting and composing skills) and Nicolini, someone else may have been involved, too. Unlike in *Idaspe fedele*, where Nicolini's persona may have been the master mind behind the inclusion and exclusion of duets, this was probably not the case in *Antioco* as one of the inserted duets was for Pilotti Schiavonetti and Barbier. The unknown authorship of the duets in *Antioco* cannot be brought into relation with any of the preceding London pasticcios, but in the avoidance of overt virtuosity and a somewhat smaller scope as well as a more concise treatment of structure and form the contrast with Gasparini's Italian dramatic duets to be discussed in Chapter 3.3.1.2 is obvious.

3. 3. 1. 2.
Later Italian Cantatas and Operas

Let us now turn to a brief examination of some dramatic duets by Gasparini written after the performance of the two pasticcios based on his earlier operas in London (1711–1712). They have been selected to highlight some traits that Gasparini had developed in the course of the first three decades of the century and thus form a contrast with the stylistic profile London may have gotten to know. The selection is meant to showcase

genre diversity and thus includes cantatas and operas written in the period 1715–1722 and—at least in the case of the operas—performed in Italy.

Most dramatic cantatas draw their plots from pastoral poetry, especially since the foundation of the *Accademia dell'Arcadia*, whose member Gasparini became in 1718. The *cantata a due Dimmi gentil Daliso* (Gasparini 2010, 36–66; Gasparini recording Dori & Daliso – Mirena & Floro), known under the names of its characters as *Dori e Daliso*, is a typical amorous debate between a shepherd and a nymph. The naïve Daliso (A) courts the bashful Dori (S), who, taunting Daliso, delays the approval of his love. The cantata consists of *secco* recitative interspersed with two arias per character and ends, as was often the case with *cantate a due*, with its only duet, "Saprò / se sai sperar costante" (no. 11 Daliso, Dori; Gasparini 2010, 60–66) in which Daliso asks for recompense for his fidelity while Dori encourages him to hope. The duet opens with lengthy alternating statements of the same subject by Daliso (b. 1–16) and Dori (b. 16–32, in the upper fifth), highlighting the textual differences in the two voices to the maximum. Dori agrees with a promise ("Se sai sperar costante, non sia senza mercè / la tua speranza.") to Daliso's condition of being hopeful (or patient) if there are prospects of her being merciful in the future ("Saprò sperar costante / ma voglio la mercè / della speranza"). After a string ritornello (b. 32–38, an abridged version of the subject presented by the voices), for the remainder of section A (b. 38–88) the voices are in a relationship of simultaneity and mostly led in parallel thirds and sixths. During the initial statements of the subject, the dominant key of D major was only touched upon in b. 17, but it is eventually attained and confirmed when the two voices take up the subject together (b. 46–62). However, the second, more melismatic part of the subject (b. 6–16 in its first occurrence) is used to modulate back into the tonic G major (b. 62–72) before a final ritornello with the subject ornamented.

After this regular, straightforward and homophonic framing section, the middle section (b. 88–146) brings more variety and drama into the duet, at the same time remaining entrenched in a fully worked out *da capo* design. This can be seen in the playful transformation of the thematic material: with their alternating presentation (of variants) of the subject, the voices are replicating the opening of section A, although their statements are shorter. To Daliso's question ("Ma quando vien l'istante / che premio è della fe' / della costanza?" Dori replies (b. 97–104) with "Presto verrà l'istante / che premio è della fe' / della costanza". Daliso "interrupts" Dori before she had finished in b. 103–104 with a brief statement of the head motif, but the voices are then led in free counterpoint (b. 104–108) before they are united in a parallel statement of the melismatic second part of the subject (b. 108–116). Rather than by harmonic means, a sense of dynamism

before the final parallel flourish (b. 124–130) is accomplished by a free contrapuntal passage with heightened dialogic traits (b. 116–124). Motivic derivations of the subject are sequentially combined with each other in the voices, emphatically highlighting the words "verrà" and "presto" in Dori's and "ma quando" in Daliso's part, suggesting the hurried manner in which the nymph is trying to calm and reassure the shepherd. The latent dramaturgy is not unlike cases encountered in Steffani's and Gasparini's chamber duets. All in all, section B is slightly more freely conceived than section A, but they both outline a similar structural trajectory opening with a ritornello and alternating statements by the voices that present the thematic material before they are entangled in a freely contrapuntal or parallel texture of varying degrees of complexity, usually derived from the main material in motivic terms. The composer occasionally imbues this structural plan with elements of imitation and he stays faithful to it in all the dramatic duets analysed in this chapter.

In section of A "Saprò / se sai sperar costante" Gasparini is the most removed we will see him (in this study) from his predominantly contrapuntal chamber duets. If we are to conceive of this structural and stylistic contrast in terms of genre, we could also say that this is Gasparini at his most "operatic" in a dramatic duet. However, the difference between the two genres is not always as straightforward as that. The 1717 cantata *Qui di natura a scorno* (Gasparini 2008) displays many parallels with *Dimmi gentil Daliso*. It also consists of a few arias for each character interspersed with recitative *secco* and ending in a duet, "Già riede nel petto la gioia" (Gasparini 2008, 36–44). It also shares typically pastoral characters who manage to overcome the differences in their opposing stances to love, but this time it is the nymph Clori (S) who is mistrustful of the shepherd Daliso (A), so that he has to persist in his intention to persuade her of his fidelity. The duet, however, is a unanimous, monotextual expression of "gioia" and "diletto" and a celebration of the banishment of "affanno" and "dolore" from their relationship so that unlike in "Saprò / se sai sperar costante" (its B section in particular), the setting does not contain dialogic exchanges expressive of the tension between the characters. Structurally, there is more diversity and less of a contrast between sections A and B than was the case in the duet from *Dimmi gentil Daliso*, but both duets share the build-up in extensive alternating exchanges between the voices and the lack of imitation.

Unlike the duet from *Dimmi gentil Daliso*, "Già riede nel petto la gioia" opens with an imposing string ritornello (b. 1–13). With its trill flourishes (b. 8–13) it is much longer than the 'subject proper' (x, b. 1–8), presented in a somewhat abridged form first in the soprano (b. 14–20, "Già riede nel petto / la gioia e'l diletto") and then, its head slightly modified, in the alto (b. 20–26, same text). Rather than using new material, lines 3 & 4 ("e'l fiero tormento / lontano sen va") are set to a variant of the head

motif (x1, first occurrence b. 26–28 in the soprano, imitated in the prime in the alto, b. 28–30). The imitation is continued for another two bars, but from b. 32 the voices are combined in a specific *contrapunctus ligatus* texture with the continuo part. After the statement of the subject in the ritornello, the voices engage in a second imitative passage, with another variant of the head motif (x2, first occurrence in the soprano b. 46–48, a fifth lower in the alto, b. 48–50), ending in brief parallelism (b. 51–52) and confirming the tonic. Although it seems that the vacillation between the tonic and dominant will continue for the remainder of the section, the last imitative passage stays within the confines of C major and wraps up the vocal part of the section by another, somewhat varied repetition of the free *contrapunctus ligatus* section (b. 52–63) before the voices cadence and give way to the final ritornello (b. 69–83), enriched with suspensions of its own.

Section B of the duet (b. 84–110) is somewhat shorter and in that sense more typical of *da capo* form than that of "Saprò / Se sai sperar costante". As in the former duet, it opens with alternating statements, which is the customary way to open a dramatic duet in most of Gasparini's dramatic duets. The melodic content is treated less motivically since it consists of arpeggiations prone to *Fortspinnung* (b. 84–87 in the soprano, b. 87–91 in the alto). The remainder of the section is conceived mostly in free contrapuntal terms. The sense of harmonic searching is perhaps inspired by the mention of "l'affanno e'l dolore" in the text, but otherwise there are no significant attempts by the setting to interpret the text: in its unanimous expression of joy it is definitely not among the most inspiring dramatic duet texts we have encountered. In all the numerous alternating statements of the voices (unlike in "Saprò / Se sai sperar costante", containing only two), it is always the soprano Clori who takes the lead. This would have been unimaginable in chamber duets, especially Steffani's, Bononcini's and Gasparini's, where attention is given to a balanced relationship of equality. In the undramatic nature of the text and its treatment, "Già riede nel petto la gioia" could have easily been a movement of a chamber duet, but Gasparini made sure to indicate that it is a dramatic duet after all, mostly in its free treatment of the text and the operatic expansion, although he also distinguished it from his opera duets to be examined later on with lower demands on vocal virtuosity. Finally, the main difference between the two duets is that unlike "Saprò / Se sai sperar costante", "Già riede nel petto la gioia" cuts down the use of parallel voice-leading (associated with opera duets) to the minimum in spite of the affective unity of the duet's dramaturgy and text.

Next to be examined are Gasparini's two mature operas, *Eumene* (1715) and *Astianatte* (1722). Antonio Salvi's original libretto *Astianatte* will have an important place in this study because it also served as a starting point for Bononcini's last London opera of the same title (1727),

made infamous because of the unrests between clans of fans of the two "rival queens", Francesca Cuzzoni and Faustina Bordoni. "Salvi's libretto of 1701, which is his earliest identifiable work, is an arrangement of Jean Racine's *Andromaque* (1667). […] The plot of *Andromaque* goes back to Euripides and is one of the most tragic, even among Racine's works." (Strohm 2008, 117). The story revolves around the predicaments of Hector's widow Andromache. Held captive with her son Astyanax, she must suffer the unwanted advances of King Pyrrhus, the hatred of Orestes, who demands Astyanax be killed to prevent future vengeance and the jealousy of Pyrrhus' betrothed Hermione, who eventualy manipulates Orestes into assassinating Pyrrhus. Gasparini met Salvi in 1713 and he not only set the opera for Rome in 1719 but also supervised its revision for Milan, which indicates his ties to reform tendencies. But since the Milanese version of Gasparini's *Astianatte* (1722) has nothing to do with the London setting and we are concerned only with its single duet for the sake of comparison with the composer's duets possibly heard in London, we shall refrain from going further into questions of the adaptation of Salvi's libretto as a whole. It is worth adding, though, that Strohm (2008, 117) described the 1722 version of *Astianatte* to be discussed below in the following words: "Here, as in all his scores, we find skilful and pleasing melodies, dance rhythms, well-balanced proportions and thin, sketchy textures."

The original libretto, whose first setting by Giacomo Antonio Perti has not been preserved, contained only one duet in the first act of the opera, the duet of feigned amorous unity, "Begli occhi, alfin poss'io" (I. 13 Ermione, Oreste) (cf. Giuntini's 1984, 143). This duet did not make it into either of Gasparini's 1719 and 1722 settings of the same libretto (which were obviously revised), nor into Haym's reworking for Bononcini (1727). Instead, it was replaced by duets for entirely different characters and placed into different acts. For a comparative analysis, I had the libretto for Gasparini's 1719 setting (Salvi 1719) and the incomplete 1722 score (Gasparini MS, Astianatte) at my disposal. Both contain only a duet for Andromaca and Ermione at the end of the second act (II. 15; Salvi 1719, 55), with minimal textual alterations (cf. Strohm 2008, 110). Whoever was in charge of the revision of the opera for Milan (Strohm suspects if was Gasparini himself, did not compose nor insert new numbers into the opera as was the custom at the time[167]), but modified them by compositional reworking and transposition, since the tessitura of most of the roles was different when compared to the original Roman cast. However, the duet

167 **In Italy but also in early London opera in the period 1707–1717 it is hard to distinguish between a pasticcio and a revival of an authorial opera, especially when the original composer was not present, since it was considered desirable to cater to to audience taste and to the needs of singers for self-representation.**

did not undergo any changes (cf. Strohm 2008, 111), which I can explain by the fact that in the 1719 version the role of Andromaca was sung by a mezzosoprano and Ermione by a soprano (both castrati), whereas in 1722 the tessituras were reversed, Andromaca a soprano and Ermione a contralto.

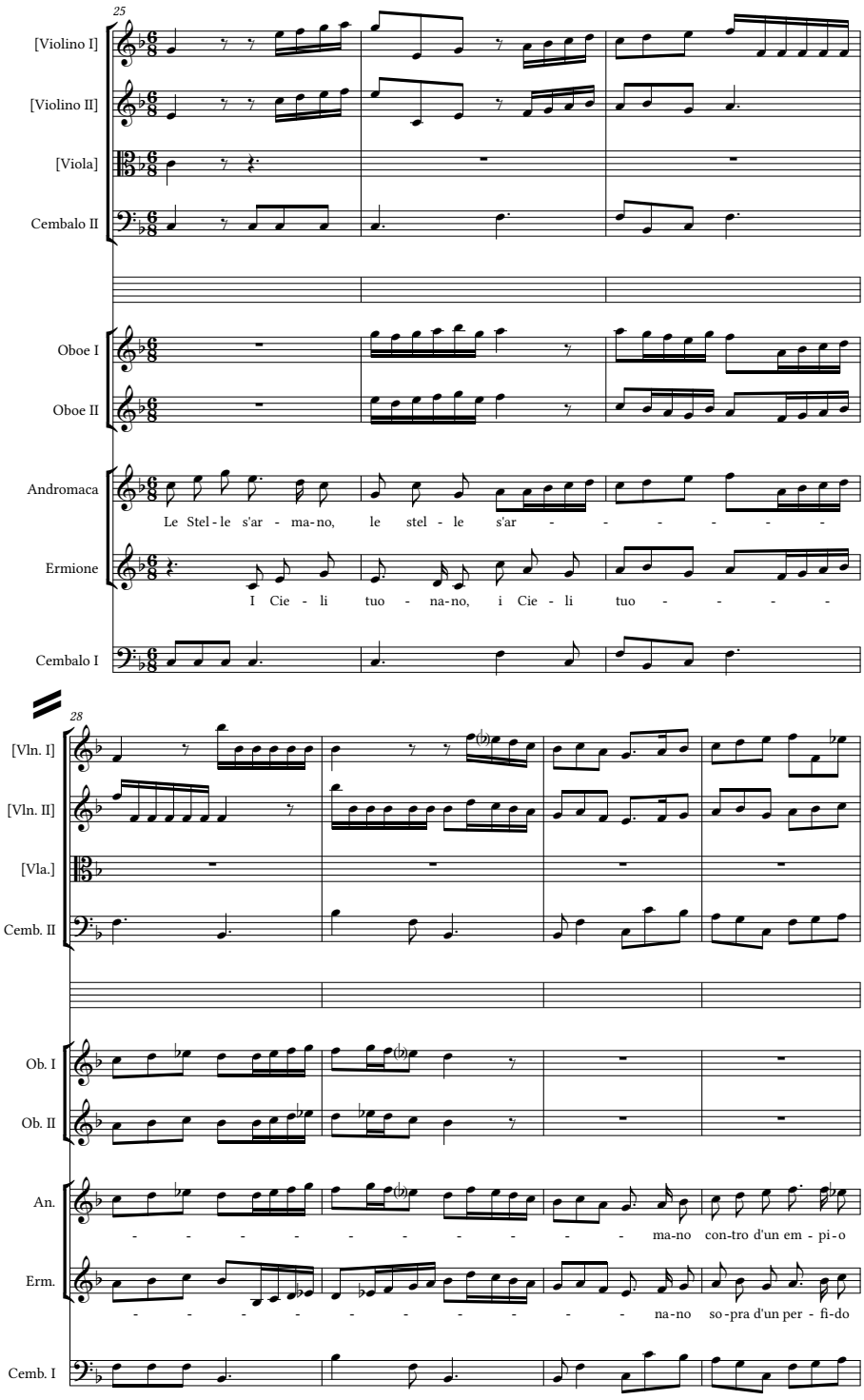
"Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano" (II. 15 Ermione, Andromaca; Gasparini MS, Astianatte, 106–110') is placed at the end of the act after tensions between the characters have culminated in Oreste's attempt on Pirro's life. Ermione is triumphant because her plan had succeeded (although as it turns out in Act 3, Pirro was only wounded), whereas Andromaca receives this unexpected turn of events with mixed feelings. Earlier in the act she had unwillingly agreed to marry Pirro because of his threat on Astianatte's life. Although she could hardly be grieving for him, the mutual animosity between her and Ermione (leading the partisan audience of Bononcini's *Astianatte* to such extreme behaviour) as well as Andromaca's dignified, heroic characterisation make her meet the stabbing of a defenseless king in the midst of a temple, however much her enemy, as highly contemptuous and she and Astianatte would also face an uncertain fate without Pirro's protection. Nevertheless, the duet is hardly a duet of conflict but a parallel unfolding of the two ladies' reaction to the assassination attempt.[168] Whereas Ermione's words refer to Pirro and identify death as the right retribution for his crime against "fedeltà" (his faith to her as his betrothed), Andromaca refers to Oreste and the sacrilegious deed against Pirro's "majesty".[169] The duet nevertheless exploits the tension between the heroines, which is what Haym chose not to do, introducing a duet for Andromaca and Pirro in the third act instead (as shall be seen in Chapter 3.4.1.2).

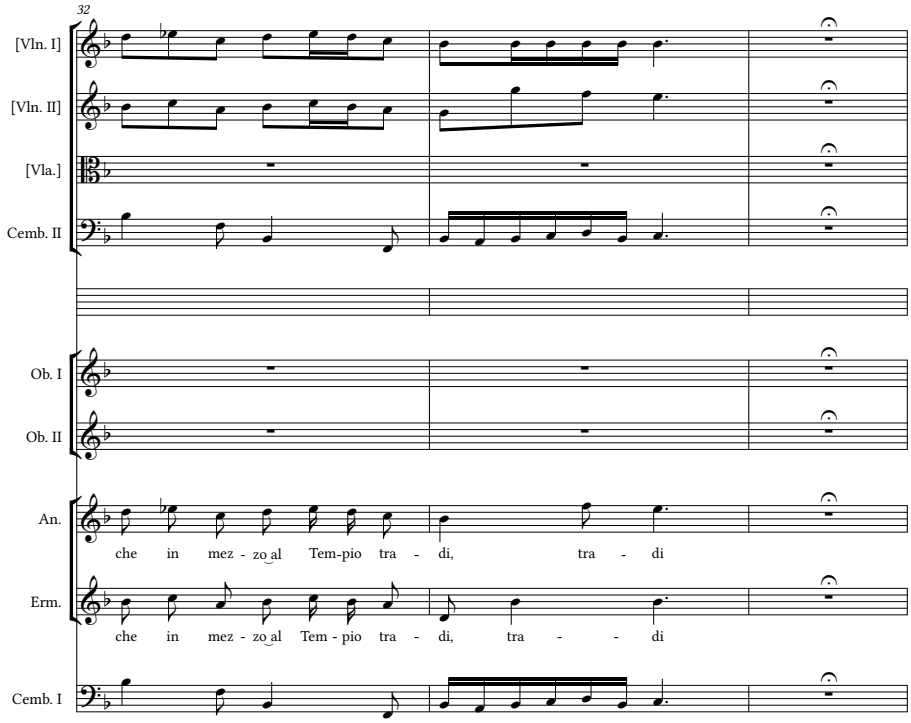
For two characters strongly opposed in dramaturgic terms, the duet displays an unusual amount of parallelism which is often interpreted semantically as a sign of unity, but should apparently not be, as witnessed by many duets analysed in this study that unite persons who are in no relationship of unity or expressing a unified affect. It could be argued that the latter is the case here, the affect in question being wrath, Ermione's aimed at Pirro and Andromaca's at Oreste. The duet opens with a long string ritornello (b. 1–9; Gasparini MS, Astianatte, 106–106') that has little

168 **An: Le Stelle s'armano / Er: I Cieli tuonano / An: Contro d'un Empio / Er: Sopra d'un Perfido / a 2: Che in mezzo al Tempio / An/Er: tradi sacrilego la Maestà/la Fedeltà. An: Già lo circondano / Strette ritorte / Er: Già lotta il misero / Con la sua morte / An: E frà momenti / Su'l capo il fulmine gli piomberà. ER: E fra tormenti / L'anima barbara spirando va. An/Er: Le Stelle / I Cieli, etc.**

169 **If we look at the score, we shall see that the names of the characters are later additions to the left of the staves (Gasparini MS, Astianatte, 106). This and the disparities between the first four lines of the text in the two versions of the opera can be explained by the aforementioned revisions concerning changes in tessitura.**

Gasparini MS, Astianatte, “Le stelle s’amano / I cieli tuonano”
(II. 15 Ermione, Andromaca), 107’-108’, b. 25-33




32
[Vln. I]
[Vln. II]
[Vla.]
Cemb. II
Ob. I
Ob. II
An.
che in mez - zo al Tem-pio tra - di, tra - di
Erm.
che in mez - zo al Tem - pio tra - di, tra - - di
Cemb. I

EXAMPLE 7

motivic significance for the material of the vocal parts. These set in with short alternating statements of a motif (x, b. 10–11 in the soprano; b. 12.13 in the alto in the lower fourth) on the text of the first two lines of the duet, thereby making them perfectly comprehensible. Comprehensibility, usually an important criterion in the setting of polytextual duets, will be abandoned in the subsequent course of section A (b. 1–59), for none of the remaining four lines in this section are set in succession or in a simultaneous texture that highlights at least the crucial binary opposition "maestà"-"fedeltà" (b. 19, 35, and 39). Instead we are presented with several short imitative passages that lead into some not entirely consistent parallelism. These brief subsections (see Table 43) usually take as their starting point a predominantly rhythmic figure distinguished by a flow of quavers with the penultimate being dotted, resulting in variation forms of the main motivic idea (x1, x2, x', etc.). The share of parallelism in the second of these imitative sections (a2) increases, and although most of the section stays within the confines of the tonic F major, a momentary inclination towards B-flat major is halted with a *fermata* on the dominant of F major in b. 33 (Example 7). Maybe a virtuoso parallel display of the voices can be interpreted as a musico-semantic embodiment of the rivalry and competition between the two characters? In that case the *fermata*, introduced again in b. 37 in the same harmonic role, can be expressive of the tension of the moment. Whether this is the case or not, this kind of structuring of the relationship between the vocal parts certainly pushes the text and the polytextual differences somewhat into the background.

SECTION	SUBSECTION	BAR	KEY	DESCRIPTION
A	a_1	1–13	F	ritornello, alternating statements (x)
	a_2	14–23	F	imitative passage (x_1), parallelism, brief ritornello
	a_3	25–33	F, B♭?	imitative passage (x_2), extensive parallelism, *fermata*
	a_4	34–49	F	extensive parallelism, *fermata*, cadence, ritornello
B	b_1	50–59	d, g	string of alternating statements (x')
	b_2	59–67	F, a	imitative passage (x''), extensive parallelism, *fermata*, cadence
A'	da capo			

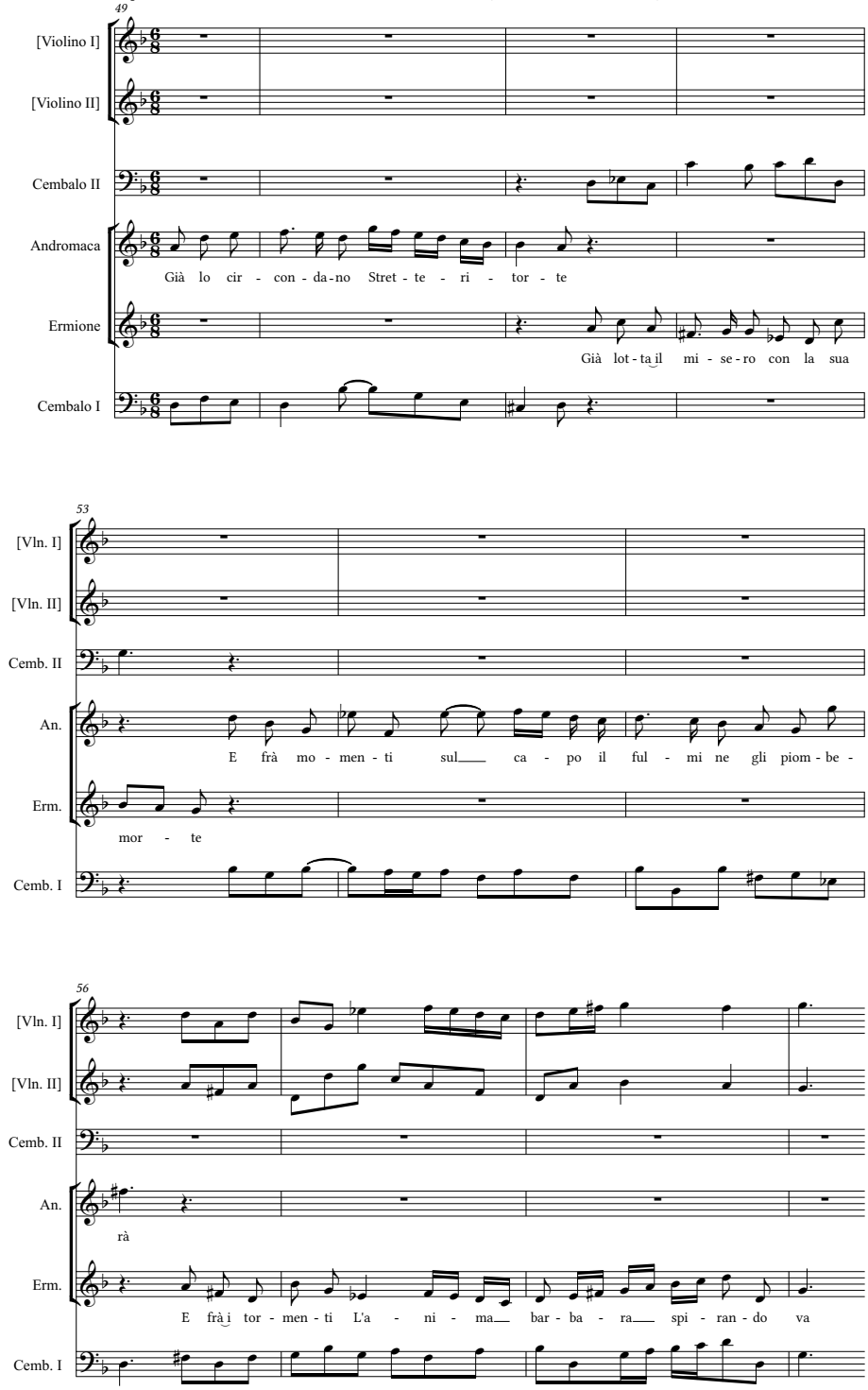
TABLE 43.
Formal outline of the duet "Le stelle s'armano / I cieli tuonano" (Andromaca, Ermione) from Gasparini's *Astianatte* (1722)

The harmonically exploratory section B seems to be more dialogic in musical terms since it opens with a string of alternating statements by the voices that sing all the remaining eight lines in groups of two, thus being perfectly audible and understandable to the audience. (Example 8) Nevertheless, the question arises if this has any semantic significance when the A section failed to make a clear distinction about whom the two characters were singing with the incomprehensibility of the key words "maestà"-"fedeltà". Gasparini's decision to adopt a different approach than in section A was probably more motivated by a wish to enhance the musical contrast between the sections, the same way he chose to structure section B of "Già riede nel petto la gioia" in motivically freer terms than section A. Structurally, the second subsection (b2) is identical to the subsections of section A, an imitative passage of a short span giving way to culminating parallelism halted by a *fermata* (b. 65), the difference being that the harmonic tension is greater since instead of resolving into a C major chord, b. 66 resorts to a chromatic modulation to A minor. I hope to have shown in this analysis some of the similarities between Gasparini's cantata and opera duets, like the comparatively equal musical weight placed on both sections of a worked out *da capo* design, the dialectic of duet techniques of alternation, contrapuntal treatment and parallelism as well as the free derivation of material from the motivic kernel, but also the differences, such as the heightened vocal virtuosity in parallel passages.

In his already mentioned investigation of secondary stagings of Gasparini's late operas, Strohm (2008, 81) does not mention the Naples reworking of *Eumene* (1715), originally written for Reggio Emilia in 1714. This means that Gasparini himself was probably not behind the revision for Naples. A catalogue entry in the British Library's Archives and Manuscripts[170] confirms this, identifying Gasparini, Leonardo Leo and others as the authors of the music in the only preserved source for the Naples version of Gasparini's *Eumene* (Gasparini MS, Eumene). No musical sources for the original 1714 version have been preserved, but I was able to access not only the libretto of Gasparini's original 1714 setting (Zeno 1714) but also the libretto of the overall first setting by Marc'Antonio Ziani (Zeno 1697). Eumene, successor to Alexander the Great, wants to restore his betrothed Artemisia, the lawful heir of Cappadocia to the throne. The ruling queen, Laodicea, is secretly in love with Eumene and schemes to

170 http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=detailsTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=IAMS040-002036664&indx=1&recIds=IAMS040-002036664&recIdxs=0&elementId=0&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&dscnt=0&frbg=&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BL%29&tab=local&dstmp=1471446853796&srt=rank&mode=Basic&&dum=true&vl(freeTexto)=gasparini%20eumene&vid=IAMS_VU2, accessed September 12, 2016.

Gasparini MS, Astianatte, "Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano" (II. 15 Ermione, Andromaca), 109'-110, b. 49-59



EXAMPLE 8

prevent this with the help of Leonato, who is in love with her. Zeno often inserted innovative duets into his libretti, so that it is slightly surprising that in the 1697 libretto we find only one duet for Leonato and Laodicea, albeit a dialogic one. In this duet he wants reassurance from the queen to return his feelings rather than just manipulate him. In terms of ensembles, only the quartet in the last scene of Act 3 was taken over in 1714. The 1697 duet was replaced with a duet of conflict for Laodicea and Eumene nearer the end of the act (II. 19 "Se non temi il mio furore / Io non temo il tuo furore"; Zeno 1714, 54). It made its way into the 1715 Naples reworking, too, and by analogy with the case of Gasparini's *Astianatte*, we can make the assumption that this means Gasparini's setting for these was retained as well.[171]

At first sight the duet "Se non temi il mio furore / Io non temo il tuo furore" (Gasparini MS, Eumene, 91'–94) displays many similarities with the duet from *Astianatte*. It is also built from a series of imitative passages that end in parallelism, and these sections usually take the initial material, (presented here not only in the initial statements of the vocal parts but also in the ritornello), as their starting point, subjecting it to free derivation. In the first of these sections immediately after the ritornello (b. 1–11, Gasparini MS, Eumene, 91'), the imitation of the motif from the ritornello (x, first occurrence in the voices b. 11–13 in Laodicea's part) is of a longer span than was ever the case in "Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano", and the ensuing parallelism is used to modulate into the dominant F major in b. 20–21 (Example 9). The next section (b. 24–39, Gasparini MS, Eumene, 92–92') imitates a new motif based on an arpeggio and the ornamental figures used earlier for vocal parallelism (y, first occurrence b. 24–29 in Laodicea's part), confirming the new key after a passage conceived as a combination of free counterpoint and parallelism. Unlike the duets in the cantatas with their more or less consistent parallelism, in this duet the voices are led in parallel much more freely, with occasional contrary movement changing the interval between the voices. There is more free counterpoint in the subsequent sections as well, each with its own motif somehow derived from motifs x and y (b. 40–56, 57–66; Gasparini MS, Eumene, 92'–93. Section B (b. 80–98, Gasparini MS, Eumene, 93'–94) treats its material in even freer terms, occasionally giving up imitation altogether and diverging from the material of section A so that we cannot say if we are dealing with mere motivic topoi or if the material is derived in such a

171 **These do not include Leo's *intermezzos* which contain three duets for the comic characters Neso and Rosinda, the third of which is a parody of pastoral amatory poetry comparing separated lovers to birds, with the voices mimicking birdsong by somewhat exaggerated tonal repetition.**

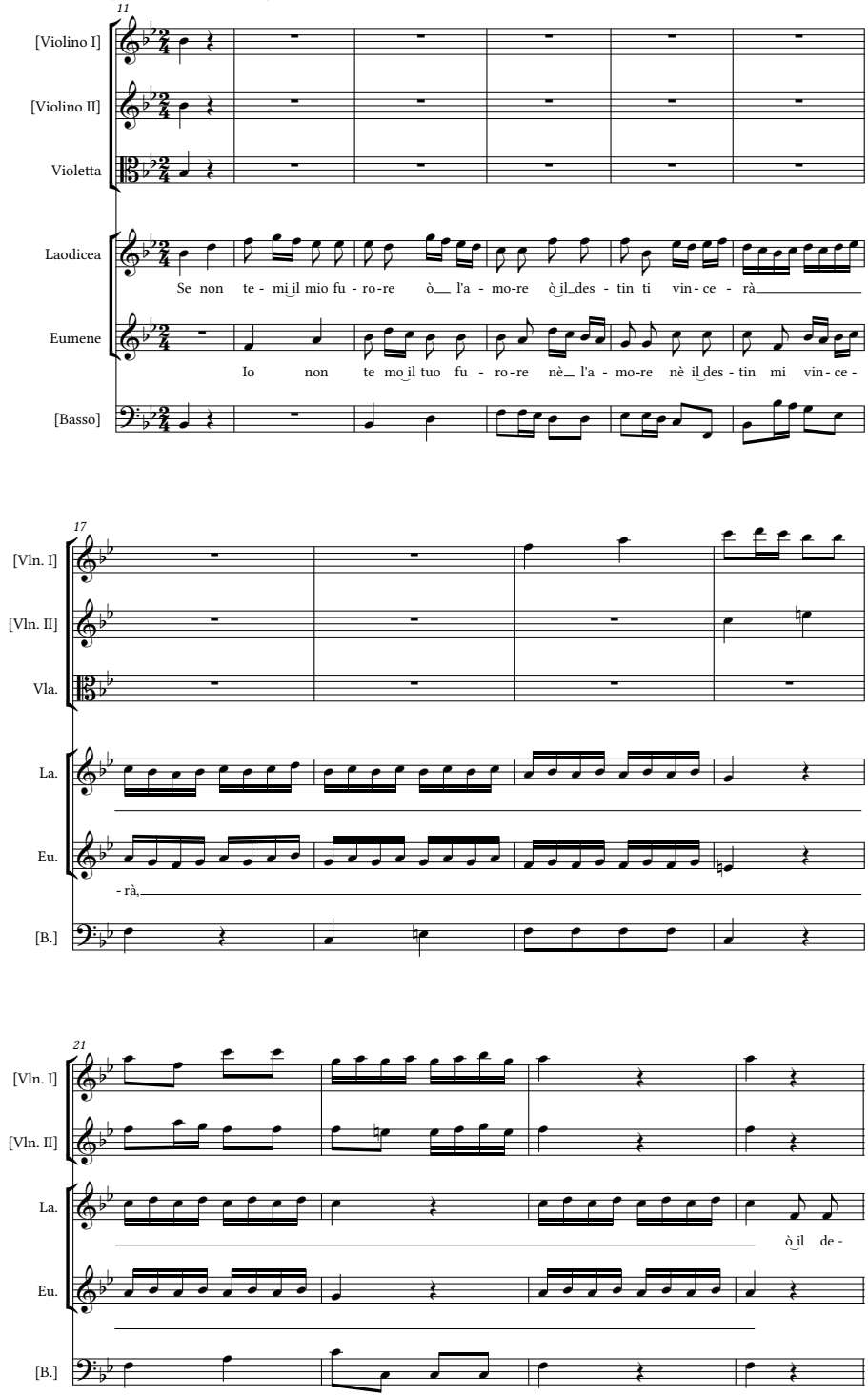
far-reaching way that its origins are obscured. The main function of this section is, naturally, to explore related keys.

The findings stated above do not do justice to the overall differences between "Se non temi il mio furore / Io non temo il tuo furore" and "Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano". The MS source is not as carefully corrected as the *Astianatte* MS; many accidentals are missing, and this only supports the claim that Gasparini probably did not supervise the performance. It also displays less melodic invention than the Gasparini duets analysed so far. However, one should not overlook the greater role of the orchestral accompaniment in this duet. Besides in the ritornellos, the strings gain in stature at certain points in the unfolding of section A (section B being more sparsely accompanied), occasionally pushing the voices into the background while the two violins establish an imitative relationship not unlike the one between the two sopranos (e. g. in b. 19–23, Gasparini MS, Eumene, 92). The above mentioned freedom in the derivation and invention of material almost leads to it losing its distinguishableness, but luckily, there is no monotony or lack of direction. Since it is written for two sopranos, we can speculate if this is partly because of the frequent voice-crossing. Even if there is the slightest chance that Gasparini is not the author of this duet, it was certainly composed (or inserted) in a way not to clash stylistically with the features of his dramatic duets written around that time, at least the ones analysed here.

3. 3. 2.
Pasticcios (1712–1717)

Upon Handel's return from Germany, the performances of the Gasparini pasticcios analysed in the previous chapters together with his operas *Il pastor fido* and *Teseo* established operatic life in London along dual lines. On the one side were pasticcios drawing on distinguished Italian composers' music, on the other hand the operatic ambitions of a young German composer. However, Owen Swiney's reckless management of the Haymarket theatre resulted in his abrupt flight from London in January 1713, leaving the singers and the set designer of *Teseo* unpaid, putting the operatic undertaking on shaky ground. Although the experienced Heidegger took over Swiney's position, the following season (1713/1714) was slightly unsuccessful. A decline in the interest in Italian operas is evident in the fact that "of the eleven new productions during the five seasons 1712–1717, including three by Handel, Walsh printed songs from only two, *Creso* and *Arminio*" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 159). These two works were also the new pasticcios of this season. The reasons may have been a company of singers of somewhat weaker capabilities or the musico-dramatic shortcomings of

Gasparini MS, Eumene, "Se non temi il mio furore / Io non temo il tuo furore"
(II. 19 Laodicea, Eumene), 91'-92, b. 11-24



EXAMPLE 9

the repertory. Luckily, the tide was about to change in season 1714/1715 with the arrival of the new royal family from Hanover who became patrons of Italian opera (cf. Knapp 1986, 164).

The revival of *Arminio* moved the start of the season to an earlier date (October 1714) with the Prince and Princess of Wales in the audience, and a revival of *Ernelinda* later in the autumn continued the success of this pasticcio into its third season. A second reason was Nicolini's renewed presence in London from spring 1715 till 1717, for whom *Idaspe fedele* was revived and the title role of *Amadigi* written by Handel. There has been some debate on the influence of the Jacobite rebellion in July 1715 on the capital's cultural life. Although the other two theatres mentioned continued their activity (cf. Knapp 1986, 164), Italian opera performances resumed only in 1716 with revivals of *Lucio Vero*, *Amadigi* and *Pirro e Demetrio* (revived for Nicolini, but also showcasing the London debut of Antonio Bernacchi as Demetrio), the only new opera mounted that season being *Clearte*. Finally, although the last season examined in this period (1716/1717) saw revivals of *Amadigi* and *Rinaldo* with a stellar cast (Nicolini, Bernacchi, Anastasia Robinson, and in *Rinaldo* also Gaetano Berenstadt), its new productions *Vincislao* and *Tito Manlio* proved relatively unsuccessful and possibly as a result "Italian opera faded out for the time being" (Knapp 1986, 165). It is in this context that we need to examine the few duets preserved from the London pasticcios performed in the period.

In many cases, it is fiendishly hard to reconstruct what duet or duets a certain pasticcio contained. No musical sources whatsoever for *Dorinda* (1712), *Lucio Vero* (1715) and *Vincislao* (1717) survive, and the libretti of *Dorinda* and *Vincislao* were not printed either. *Ernelinda* (1713, revived in the next two seasons) is especially intricate. On the basis of Victor Schoelcher's assumption, it was long thought that a manuscript housed in the Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg (D-Hs MA/1014) documented the London version of the opera. However, it actually represents the version of the opera revised by Gasparini himself for Turin in 1719 (cf. Strohm 2008, 283), while no musical sources for the London version of the opera survive. A collation of the few available sources for the different versions of the opera handed down to us, stemming from 1704 (the original libretto and MS score, Gasparini MS, La fede tradita e vendicata, that served as a starting point for *Ernelinda*), 1715 (the second edition of the London pasticcio) and 1719 (the Hamburg MS of 11 numbers from the 1719 reworking) as undertaken by Roberts (2003, 301) shows that "if this pasticcio took Gasparini's 1704 setting of *La fede tradita e vendicata* as its point of departure, it certainly did not retain many of the original arias—at most two arias and an arioso, to judge from the 1713 libretto." The availability of the MS of Gasparini's original 1704 setting enables the comparison of the text

of the duet "Lacia ch'io mora sì / Nò morrai solo" (III. 4 Ernelinda, Vitige) with its equivalent in the 1713 London libretto (Haym and Silvani 1713):

	1704	1713
A	Ern: Lascia ch'io mora sì. Vit: Nò, morrai solo a 2: volto adorato.	Vit.: Lascia mia bella sì, / che solo io mora. Ern: Taci crudele nò, / O voglio anch'io morir.
B	Ern: Lascia ch'in questo sen / Con tutto il suo furor / Si stanchi il fato. Vit: Senza me caro ben / Nò sia ch'il suo vigor / adempia il fato.	Ern / Vit: Ferma / Vivi mio ben. a 2: A che nol vuole amor / Che mostra all'alma in sen / Dolce la morte ogn'hor / per chi s'adora.
A'	*da capo*	*da capo*

TABLE 44.
Comparison of duet texts in III. 4 of
La fede tradita e vendicata (1704) and *Ernelinda* (1713)

Clearly, the two duet texts are compatible and were derived from the same source although similar to the Gasparini pasticcios examined in Chapter 3.3.1.3, the initial polytextuality was toned down in favour of more unity between the texts sung by the two soloists. Lindgren (1987, 300–301) pointed out that the treatment of operas in revivals was particularly free, as seen in the settings of libretti derived from Salvi's libretto in Italy and in London, among others. According to the selective lists of settings of *Le fede tradita e vendicata* (Saunders 1992; Libby and Lepore 2001), there were probably several settings (in 1707, 1709 and/or 1712) that used Gasparini's original as a starting point or perhaps even involved Gasparini himself in the reworking process. I can only conclude that the original duet setting was at some point replaced by a new one, and the candidates for its author could include Orlandini, Giuseppe Vignola, Gasparini himself or anybody else popular in Italy at the time. In London, the presence of the new version of the duet, "Lascia mia bella sì" was steady. Not only is it among the thirteen retained numbers Lindgren mentions, the 1715 London libretto contains the same duet text irrespective of changes in the cast[172], which implies that the duet was "favoured by both singers and audience". Unfortunately, no musical sources—from London or elsewhere—for this new duet have been handed down to us, but we can conclude that it was most definitely different from the 1704 one since there does not seem to have been any apparent reason to modify its text if the music was left

172 The singers were of a similar tessitura, so no interventions in the duet were required.

unchanged. Besides, the 1713 text contains more lines, which means that it must have been sung to different music. The score of Gasparini's *La fede tradita a vendicata* was used for the pasticcio *Antioco* (1711), so it was possibly available to Haym at the time when he was assembling *Ernelinda.* Unless new sources are discovered, we will never know what music the duet was sung to in London, let alone its composer.

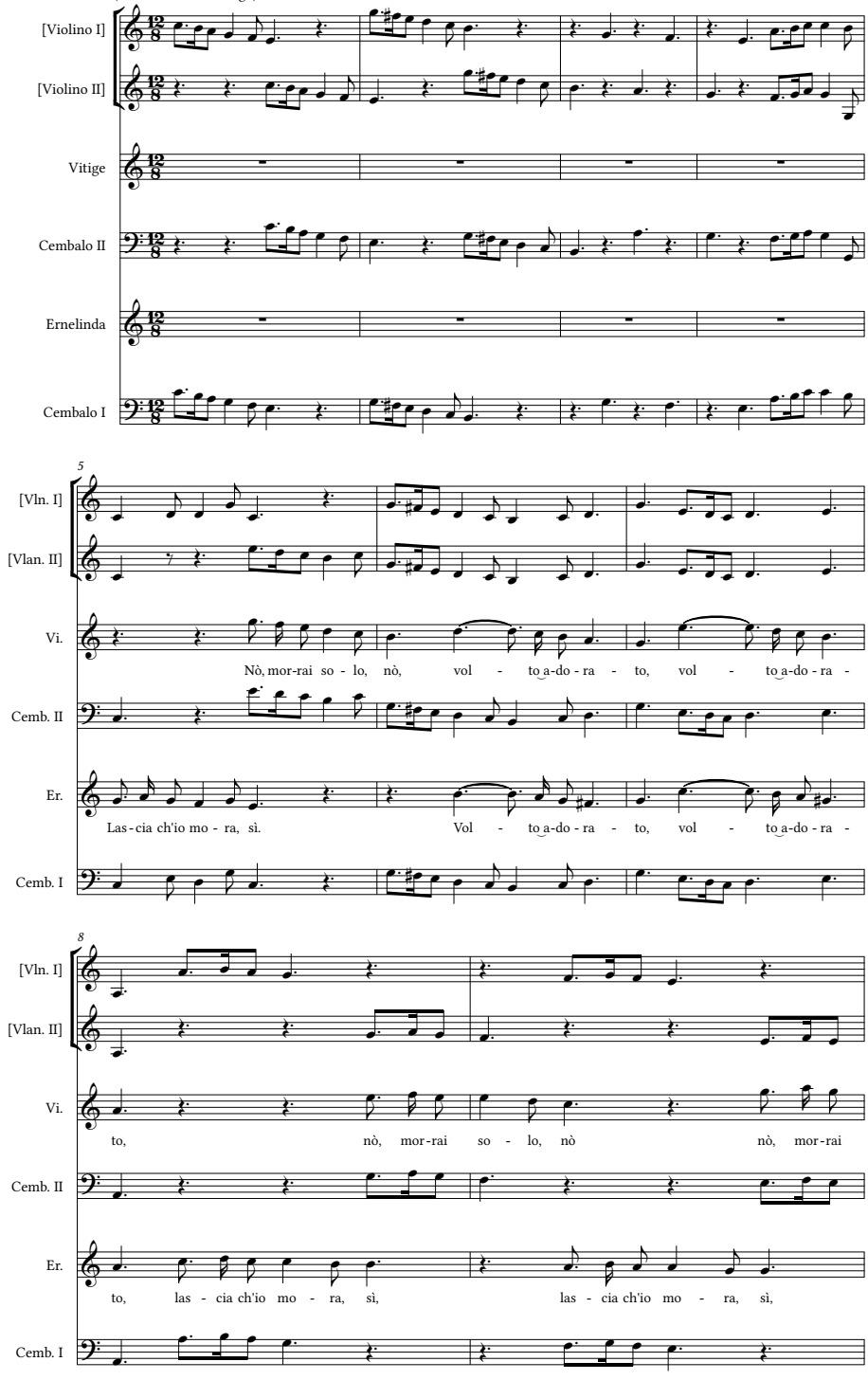
Since the 1704 duet "Lascia ch'io mora sì / Nò morrai solo" (Gasparini ms, La fede tradita e vendicata, 75'–77) is the only version of the duet available to me, I will engage in a brief analysis of its structure and dramaturgic function. Since this duet was replaced in later Italian reworkings of the opera, maybe it was not considered compatible with the latest duet fashions. It is impossible to answer with certainty if similar arguments were behind the fact that not this but a more up-to-date duet was sung in London as well or this stems from the fact that one of the later sources for *La fede tradita e vendicata* was used for the compilation of *Ernelinda.* Its dramaturgic placement is highly dramatic: in the preceding recitative, Vitige had disarmed his betrothed Ernelinda, preventing her from committing suicide. He wants her to live, whereas she wants to die with him, mainly because earlier in the action she had the choice of saving her father or Vitige as prisoners and she chose her father. Already a departure duet, the setting of a dungeon—common to operas at the time, cf. Romagnoli 1995—imbues the situation with more tragic patina. However, this did not result in a minor-mode pathetic setting, for the duet is the musical embodiment of bliss and serenity. Although the stoic acceptance of death by a pair of lovers who thus overcome their travails and join souls in eternity is very characteristic of the idealisation of operatic heroes and heroines of the time, in this case Gasparini's setting almost goes against the dialogic nature of the text.

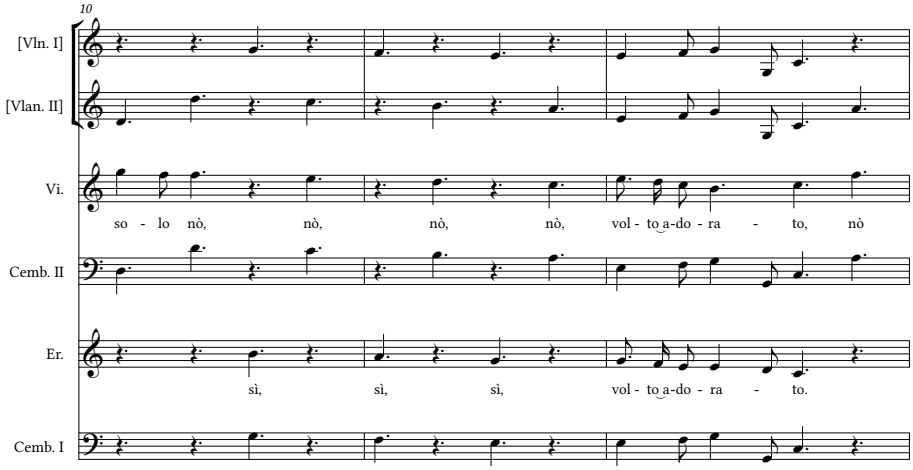
The duet, with its 12/8 metre, lulling melodies, overall musical character and a moderate or slower tempo seems close to a siciliana. Moreover, it could serve as an example of contrasting uses of the siciliana type of aria by Gasparini on the one hand and Handel on the other. Handel reserved the use of this type of dance rhythm for harmonically expressive, minor-mode evocations of musical despair (cf. Leopold 2009, 78–80). The string introduction (b. 1–5, Gasparini ms, La fede tradita e vendicata, 75') to the onset of the voices in b. 5 cannot be called a ritornello since apart from the motif of downward movement beginning with a dotted quaver in the violins (y, first occurrence b. 1 in the first violin), it does not present any other kind of thematic material that the subsequent course of the duet would be working with. Ernelinda's emphatic plea to Vitige ("Lascia!" in the imperative mood) to let her die with him opens the duet in vocal terms, and this is the only semantic content of the text of the A section,

whereas section B merely elaborates on it a bit further. The voices are contrasted in motivic terms to highlight the two opening lines, Ernelinda's with a conjunct melody characterised by multiple ornamental notes (x, b. 5), Vitige's with the aforementioned descending motif (y, b. 5–6). The two motifs share the same rhythmical patterning, which contributes to a sense of rhythmic and metric continuity (not to say monotony) throughout the duet. In the next few bars, the voices are joined in a predominantly parallel simultaneous texture that uses motif y for the words "volto adorato", cadencing in G major and A minor. The only imitation in the duet (x, b. 8 in Ernelinda's part repeated a third higher in Vitige's , b. 8–9) and its sequential repetition are followed by a brief section (b. 10–11) that explores the dialogic elements in the exchange between Ernelinda and Vitige by juxtaposing the words "sì" and "no" on a downward sequence of chordal progressions that additionally confirm the tonic C major (Example 10). The remainder of section A (b. 12–18) shows nothing new: after a parallel cadence on the words "volto adorato", another series of "sì" and "no" juxtapositions is followed by a final statement of Ernelinda's plea (b. 13–14), a cadence and the varied and abridged introduction.

Section B (b. 18–25) is less effective in dramaturgic terms, its main function the exploration of related keys. It does this in a somewhat rushed manner on the scope of a mere seven bars, pushing the dialogic exchange between the characters into the background. After the exposition of their respective first two lines to material reminiscent of y (b. 18–21), the disparities between their third lines ("Si stanchi il fato" / "Adempia il fato") are rather incomprehensible in a simultaneous, predominantly parallel setting. The remainder of the section (b. 12–15) combines the voices in a simultaneous texture described above, but separated by dramatic rests that look as if they were built in for dramatic effect but nevertheless somewhat miss the mark. The peculiar effect that this duet has is in the affective contrast between the dance-like, pastoral diatonic setting and the tragic drama of the text. Handel might have been on the trail of something similar in the siciliana aria "Ecco alle mie catene" from *Ezio* (1732). The titular hero experiences a comparable contradiction of emotions since he is relieved about his betrothed Fulvia's fidelity and thus happy to go to his death (cf. Leopold 2009, 79–80). The difference is that Handel expressed this ambivalence of the siciliana with subtler musical means, whereas Gasparini was somewhat more successful in making the connotations of a siciliana work for the duet's semantic and dramatic essence in section A, but failed to provide anything significant in its middle section. Although this duet is in line with the traits we found characteristic of Gasparini's opera duets in Chapter 3.3.1, its formal expansion and the treatment of the 12/8 metre render it more comparable to the kinds of duets that became characteristic

Gasparini MS, La fede tradita e vendicata, “Lascia ch’io mora sì / Nò morrai solo”
(III. 4 Ernelinda, Vitige), 75’-76, b. 1-12




10
[Vln. I]
[Vlan. II]
Vi.
so - lo nò, nò, nò, nò, vol - to a-do - ra - to, nò
Cemb. II
Er.
sì, sì, sì, vol - to a-do - ra - to.
Cemb. I

EXAMPLE 10

of the London pasticcios to come and it is therefore not impossible to imagine it in *Ernelinda* as well, although—as had already been stated—the textual divergences refute this.

The next two pasticcios performed in the Haymarket theatre were no less eclectic than *Ernelinda*, whose successful revivals were "repeatedly bolstered with new music" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 160). These two authors are scathing in their opinion that "the printed music from the two new pasticcios is mostly dull" (ibid.). *Creso, rè di Lidia* contains music by Albinoni, Caldara, Mancini, Gasparini, C. F. Pollarolo, Lotti and possibly even Vivaldi or Francesco Polani. It was based on the score of an opera whose authorship was contested shortly after the time of its creation. *Creso tolto alle fiamme* (1705) was conceived as an artistic collaboration between Francesco Polani and Antonio Vivaldi, who allegedly agreed to write arias for the opera without taking the credit for them at the premiere, but the professional relationship eventually turned sour and Vivaldi took Polani to court. Since these numbers in *Creso* would be the first operatic attempts by Vivaldi in general, Talbot (2008) investigated in detail which numbers could bear his authorial stamp. The sources available to me include the original 1705 libretto written by Aurelio Aureli (1705), the 1714 London libretto (Haym and Aureli 1714), probably revised by Haym who was also in charge of compiling the music for the pasticcio, and the collection of songs from the pasticcio (Albinoni et al. 1714). According to Talbot (2008, 26) and confirmed by my own comparative examination of the libretti, the pasticcio contained four duets but only two made it into the collection of songs, so that only these will be dealt with in a detailed analytical way.

The moral parable about the conflict between the Lydian king Croesus and the Persian king Cyrus was, according to librettistic fashion, enriched with amorous intrigues revolving around Creso's wife Climenide, who arouses the desire of Ciro to the chagrin of his betrothed Rosena. The aria texts were modernized to incline towards *da capo* and exit designs. As we shall see, the text of one of the published duets remained unchanged, leaving the retention of the 1705 music highly plausible, but the other saw some transformations, which opens up speculation about what music it was sung to. Talbot (2008, 28ff) dedicates the remainder of his article to an analysis of the five numbers in the opera whose texts he thought remained unchanged to determine if they were written by Vivaldi or Polani. In the end, he did not prove Vivaldi's authorship in any of the two cases, but concluded that it was possible that these operatic numbers were sung to his music in London.

In addition to the two (and the only preserved) duets in Act 1, the original libretto contains an additional one in the first act for Climene and Adraspe (I. 10; Aureli 1705, 22). It is of the *aria a due* type of design in which

one soloist (Climene) sings two lines in section A, the other (Adraspe) his two in section B, followed by a *da capo* repetition of Climene's solo. This renders the piece somewhat uninteresting for this study's investigation of proper duets, but it is nevertheless fascinating that it still made it unchanged into the 1714 libretto (Aureli and Haym 1714, 14), which means that it was either sung to the original music or the libretto does not document last-minute changes that Haym initiated in the course of rehearsals. Since this is the early London pasticcio with the highest number of identified composers as contributors, it paints a vivid picture of the extent to which Haym's initiative as a compiler of music transformed in the eight years since the premiere of *Camilla*, since "he may have often followed the dictates of the singers" (Lindgren 1987, 301). The 1714 libretto does include a duet that is missing from the 1705 source libretto, "Dolce mia vita addio / Ah! che morir mi sento" (III. 4 Creso, Climenide; Aureli and Haym 1714, 50), a duet of farewell for the principal protagonists just before they are about to be executed. Astonishingly, we are dealing with the exact same duet from *Il più fedel tra i vassalli* (Silvani 1703, 32 in the libretto) in whose place "Per te bell'idol mio / Per te caro mio ben" was inserted in *Antioco*. No evident explanation imposes itself as to why a duet dropped from a 1703 score that served as a starting point for a 1711 pasticcio would be reintroduced into another pasticcio that has no apparent connection to Gasparini in 1714. To add to the irony, if Nicolini was behind its exclusion from *Antioco*, he must have crossed paths with the duet again when he replaced Caterina Galerati as Creso in the course of the run of *Creso, rè di Lidia*. It is not known whether the duet was retained or replaced, but as we shall see later on, some changes to the original musical content of the premiere had to be made due to the differences between the two singers' tessitura. Since none of the preserved duets from the pasticcio (nor any duets by Gasparini analysed so far, for that matter) display features of the pathetic, minor-mode duet of departure whose prototype was introduced to London audiences in *Idaspe fedele*, it would be intriguing to gain an insight into the music of "Dolce mia vita addio / Ah! che morir mi sento", but the necessary sources were inaccessible to me.[173]

The preserved pair of duets reflects the trends of pairing up lovers played by singers of the same status (*primi* or *secondi*) in duets. The role of Climenide was the operatic debut of soprano Anastasia Robinson, whereas Creso was sung by Caterina Galerati, likewise a soprano. Unlike them, the secondary pair was differentiated by range, Ciro sung by the alto castrato

173 A RISM search reveals a duet for two sopranos (the range of the roles!) with the same incipit ascribed to Gasparini in a manuscript collection in the Uppsala University Library (S-Uu, Vok, mus. i hs. 57:22).

Valentini and Rosena by the contralto Jane Barbier, but the version of their duet "Un volto ch'appaga" (I. 3 Rosena, Ciro; Albinoni et al. 1714, 9–10) preserved in the 1714 collection of songs is for two sopranos, the higher with the range g1–a2, the lower with g1–g2, exploring the higher parts of the range somewhat less frequently. Barbier and Valentini were unable to sing so high, but it is difficult to answer with certainty whether the duet was transposed or replaced in performance. The score specifies the singers, but it does not give the names of the characters at the beginning of the staves as was usually the custom, so it is unclear why the duet was printed in this form with the clear awareness of the available cast. The stylistic proximity with the second preserved duet in the opera, ("Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che'questo core") implies that they were conceived as a unified contribution to the opera. This possibility is supported by the duet text, taken over from the 1705 source libretto (Aurelli 1705, 15)[174] with the minimal intervention of toning down its polytextuality by assigning all the lines to both protagonists, in succession.[175] We are dealing with a conventional love duet in which nothing suggests the friction that will impose itself between the characters after Ciro had met Climenide. Talbot's (2008, 30) analytical remarks on the duet hit the mark:

> *Alla-giga* style, the wide leaps, […] ritornello fragments to accompany the voice, the employment of a motto opening (the so-called double *Devise*) to launch the A section: all these are very characteristic of Vivaldi's early music, even if they are also thoroughly generic and occur frequently also in Albinoni. (Talbot 2008, 30)

Section A (b. 1–34) opens with a ritornello (b. 1–5) in a typical string idiom. Its material will be transferred to the vocal parts in their first alternating statements, b. 5–8 (S1) and b. 10–13 (S2, on the prime). After this, the voices engage in a *contrapunctus ligatus* type of sequential texture that can be described as leap-frogging (b. 14–17), the leaps (a fourth or a fifth) enabling an upward movement in spite of the continuous suspensions. After the brief interjection of a compressed ritornello there are two sections (b. 20–25, 25–30) in which the voices engage in a sequential, but this time parallel movement in thirds. It is here that the duet grows a little uneventful and repetitive since the composer varies the repetition of this section only by

174 **Ros: Un volto che appaga; Cir: Un vezzo, che alletta" / a 2: Saetta ogni cor; / Ros: Ma dolce e la piaga / Cir Ma cara e la piaga / S'il Colpa e d'amor.**

175 **In section A Soprano 1 opens with the text "Un volto che appaga / un vezzo ch'alletta" and Soprano 2 with "Un volto ch'alletta / un vezzo ch'appaga". Similarly, in section B both sing lines 4 and 5 but in a different order.**

inverting the voices, which is far from an accomplishment since they are of the same range and led in thirds. Talbot (ibid.) may have a point when he claims that unlike here, "even in his earliest and simplest works, Vivaldi likes to expand the central […] and cadential […] portions of his musical periods via such devices as phrase-repetition at the same pitch (or at an octave's distance) and sequence". However, if we examine the duet in the context of Italian operatic music in London with the possible exception of the three or four Handel operas performed so far, I am not sure that Talbot's impression of a "markedly short-breathed character of the music", which he considers an indication against Vivaldi's authorship, would necessarily stand. Section B (b. 34–44, Albinoni et al. 1714, 9–10) is more successful than the one in Gasparini's "Lascia ch'io mora sì / Nò morrai solo" in that it is concise, but retains a sense of direction, although the impressions of a formulaic character still stand. In spite of Talbot's remarks, I think that plenty about this duet speaks for an authorship by a different composer from the ones we have considered so far, and its markedly instrumental idiom could be speaking in favour of a Venetian composer such as Albinoni or Vivaldi after all. A lack of interest in the differentiation of the parts distances this duet from the early English-language Italian operas of the first decade of the 18th century. Structurally, it avoids the use of counterpoint, but thanks to a more substantial ritornello interplay, it manages to expand the form to the size of the duets from the Gasparini pasticcios or even the composer's original Italian dramatic duets.

The second duet in the collection, "Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che' questo core" (I. 16 Climene, Creso; Albinoni et al. 1714, 24–27) is set in Ciro's prison where Creso is held captive and although a duet of departure, it is pervaded with optimism. Climene has come disguised to Ciro's court and the couple experience a brief moment of rapture at being reunited, but they have to part soon so that her cover is not blown (cf. Talbot 2008, 30). As Table 3.3.9 shows, this time the differences between the version of the duet in the 1705 libretto on the one hand and the 1714 libretto and score on the other are considerable. In 1705 the duet had an old-fashioned *aria a due* type of design in which each soloist gets a solo of her / his own and the *da capo* repeat consists of the first solo only. Similarly to earlier adaptations of duet texts, in 1714 the polytextuality was toned down in favour of more unified textual variants for both characters, even if this was at the expense of the qualities of the original poetry. The main poetic idea (the lovers' hearts staying with each other in spite of separation) is slightly lost due to the modification of the text. The first two lines, reserved for section A, were made to resemble each other as much as possible so that the composer could set them accordingly, whereas polytextuality was reserved for the remaining four lines of section B. We can speculate when

this change took place: since the duet is stylistically similar (with some differences in scope and structure) to "Un volto che appaga", it is possible that it was introduced by Polani or Vivaldi in 1705 already without this being reflected in the libretto, or in a later, unknown reworking.

characters	1705 (I. 17 Aureli 1705, 29)		1714 (libretto and score)		lines
Clim:	A	Parto ma resta il core Priggionier nel' tuo sen.	A	Parto ma resta il core Priggioniero e del' tuo sen'.	1 3
Creso:	B	Vanne, mia cara, và; Che il mio ti seguirà Su l'ale de'Sospiri, amato ben.		Vanne, che' questo core Priggioniero e del' tuo sen'.	2 3
Clim:	A	Parto, ma resta il core Prigionier nel tuo sen.	B	Sento che più non posso, De te partir mio ben':	4 5
Creso:	%			Il' petto, è già commosso Da un crudo rio velen.	6 7
Cli & Cre	%		A'	Parto… (*da capo*)	

table 45.
Comparison of texts for the Act 1 duet for Climenide and Creso in the 1705 and 1714 versions of the opera *Creso*

Talbot (2008, 31) rightly notices the stylistic kinship between the two duets, but his claim that "Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che' questo core" "adds nothing to the points already made for and against Vivaldi's authorship" needs some further consideration. First of all, this duet is much more extensive than most duets encountered in productions of Italian opera in London at the time. As can be seen in Table 45, section A resorts to a systematic repetition of previous passages, almost in a patchwork manner. It introduces elements of a dialogic exchange between the voices, prompted by the opening words of each character ("parto" and "vanne", taking emphatic motivic form in downward leaps of varying scope, b. 15, 16, 53, 54, 91, 92, 106), a polytextual binary opposition between Climenide's announcement that she is going and Creso's acceptance and encouragement of this since their hearts are joined regardless. The amorous bliss and optimism of the characters is suggested by a fast tempo, a vivacious character enhanced by occasional melismatic semiquaver virtuosity and the use of C major whose stability is barely clouded by a momentary cadence in the dominant in b. 26. The composer set the word "priggioniero" as an almost inappropriately emphatic parallel passage (b. 20–26), as leap-frogging suspensions (b. 27–35) and the kind of quasi-imitation that

leads into semiquaver parallel flourishes (b. 37–44), often encountered in Bononcini's and occasionally also Handel's duets. The last subsection (a3) of section A adds nothing new and merely recycles previous passages. The ritornello provides the vocal parts with a motivic impetus and articulates the form, but it hardly becomes the source of all the material as was the case in "Un volto che appaga" due to a more pronounced instrumental idiom, clearly exemplified by the typical repetitive violin figurations that make out its second part (b. 7–16).

SECTION		BAR	KEY	LINES	DESCRIPTION
A	a_1	1–27	C, G	1–3	ritornello, dialogic exchange, parallelism
	a_2	27–52	C	3	leap-frogging, quasi imitation, parallelism
	a_3	52–89	C	1–3	patchwork from a_1&a_2: dialogic exchange, quasi-imitation, leap-frogging, ritornello
B	b_1	89–106	a	4–6	more alternation: main motif & new material
	b_2	106–128	a, e	4–7	head motif, variation of new & material from A
A'	da capo				

TABLE 46.
Formal outline of the duet "Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che' questo core" from the pasticcio *Creso, rè di Lidia* (1714)

It is true that the repetitive construction of subsection a3 imbues the duet with a sense of monotony. However, it also shares many of the qualities of "Un volto che appaga", such as a sense of drive and formal and structural clarity. Its section B (b. 90–128) is more unpredictable. Far from a mere formal clamp linking hurriedly into the *da capo* repeat, it resorts far more often to freely conceived alternating statements by the soloists, led by Climene (b. 90–93; Albinoni et al. 1714, 26), and continues with some new material (b. 94–102), subjecting it later on to *Fortspinnung* (b. 107–113). The composer continues to shape section B in surprisingly free, almost improvisatory terms by giving Creso a brief moment to shine alone with the semiquaver run (b. 114–122) derived from the quasi-imitative passage in section A, and eventually unites the voices in a free contrapuntal passage (b. 122–128; Albinoni et al. 1714, 27). The question imposes itself: where does such a contrast in the approach to the two sections come from? Although one is tempted to assume that after a highly unified first section a more improvisatory method was chosen for the sake of contrast, the text offers

an additional explanation, namely, unlike in the original 1705 text, the B section of the 1714 version of the duet explores Climenide's uncertainties, for she experiences a moment of weakness and is no longer sure if she can indeed leave Creso whose life is in danger, which would explain why her voice is—musically—pushed into the foreground with lengthy solos.

If some of the composers whose music was used for *Creso, rè di Lidia* were active in Venice in the first decade of the century, the music of *Arminio*, the pasticcio that immediately followed it on the Haymarket stage confirms the interest of the London public in Venetian music as it consists of numbers by different Venetian composers. This could include any of the composers who made a contribution to *Creso, rè di Lidia*, but the literature on the matter mentions Lotti, Orlandini, Giovanni Ristori, A. Scarlatti and Vivaldi (cf. Sasse 1959, 206; Strohm 2008, 279). There is a coincidental connection with Handel, who reached for the original libretto by Antonio Salvi for Pratolino[176] (Salvi 1703) for his own setting in 1737 (Handel 2011a). Strohm (2008, 73) finds that Handel and the anonymous adaptor of the libretto were more faithful to the original 1703 libretto than the 1714 London pasticcio, although when it comes to the duets, only the first out of Salvi's five or six original duets, the duet of flight for Arminio and Tusnelda (I. 1 "Il fuggir cara mia vita"; Salvi 1703, 3), was retained by Handel and two new duets inserted into Act 3 (cf. Dean and Knapp 1987, 352), probably because it was deemed that Salvi wrote too many duets.

SECTION		BAR	KEY	DESCRIPTION
A	a_1	1–10	B♭, F	ritornello, parallel vocal statement, ritornello
	a_2	11–14	F	2x chordal figures VS. exclamations (inverted CP.)
	a_3	15–19		2x leap-frogging sequential progression VS. exclamations (inverted CP.)
	a_4	19–24		2x falling progressions of sixth chords with suspensions (inverted CP.)
	a_5	24–31		parallel cadence, ritornello
B		31–36	g, d	motivically free alternating statements

A': ***da capo***

TABLE 47.
Formal outline of the duet "Con rigida sembianza" from the pasticcio *Arminio* (1714)

Since there are no indications that Haym was involved in the compilation of the pasticcio and Nicolini was not in the cast, we cannot identify whoever was behind the compilation and adaptation of the pasticcio, neither on the

176 The composer was Alessandro Scarlatti, but alas, only excerpts survive.

librettistic nor on the musical front. However, there are no discrepancies between the 1714 libretto (Salvi 1714) and collection of songs (Lotti et al. 1714): both contain two duets, written for Caterina Galerati (Arminio) and Anastasia Robinson (Ismena). The soloist constellation of the duets diverges from Salvi's original design, as the librettist also involved the secondary couple and wrote a duet for Arminio and his sister Ramise, called Cilene in the 1714 pasticcio. The story revolves around the conflicts between leaders of German tribes in the midst of a Roman invasion, resulting in the captivity of the heroic prince Arminio and a conflict of loyalties in his wife Ismena, who is the daughter of Segeste, Arminio's enemy.

The duet "Con rigida sembianza" (II. 13 Ismena, Arminio; Lotti at al. 1714, 45–47) occurs at a point when Arminio and Ismena reasserted their mutual love and devotion after some previous conflict. In the monotextual section A, they are adamant to negate any lack of faith to each other, whereas in the musically much shorter but textually somewhat longer section B they are optimistic amidst all their suffering.[177] Like in "Un volto che appaga" from *Creso*, we are dealing with another major-mode *gigue* duet that opens with a lulling ritornello (b. 1–5) in a recognisable string idiom and whose head motif and characteristic rhythmical patterning permeate the unfolding of the vocal parts. The voices set out simultaneously in parallel thirds with the repeated head motif and a downward cadential phrase, thus replicating the first two bars of the ritornello before giving way to another repetition of a varied, modulatory fragment from the ritornello. Like in "Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che questo core", this is the only brief departure from the tonic. The next passage consists of chordal motifs in one part juxtaposed to brief exclamations of a freely singled out "mai" in the other (b. 10–12). Repeated with inverted parts in b. 12–14 (with "nò" becoming the exclamation in S2), the main purpose of this passage is to express the determinacy of the couple never to break faith. If there was any way of disentangling the constantly crossed voices of S1 and S2, they have by now become indistinguishable. The whole process of conceiving a passage with a melody in one part and contrapuntal interjections in the other and then repeating it with inverted parts is re-enacted in b. 14–17 and b. 17–20, this time conceived as a sequential progression of chords where the continuo is leap-frogging, the higher positioned of the voices starting its downward movement at increasingly higher pitches while the lower one interjects "nò" and "mai". The last pair of sections consists of a downward chain of sixth chords with suspensions, and here b. 22–24 is again the inverted version of 19–22. The motivically much freer and somewhat formulaic section

177 **A section. Arm & Ism: Con rigida sembianza / destin tu non farai / ch'io manchi mai di fe. B section. Arm: Lusinga la speranza / affanni del cor mio. Ism: Sento la speme anch'io / si lusinghiera in me.**

B consists mainly of modulatory alternating statements. This duet shares many of the features of the two duets in *Creso*, and although it is more akin to Gasparini's Italian duets examined in Chapter 3.3.1.2 with their expansion of form, the three duets analysed in this chapter so far bear some stylistic stamps that could assign them to a group or even a single composer. They have a purposefulness and sense of direction sometimes lacking in early London duets, and their economy of means, often resorting to repetition or inverted counterpoint distinguishes them from Gasparini's Italian duets, as well. Although these traits can also be applied to Bononcini's duets, his more vocal idiom is irreconcilable with the instrumental figures that are often transferred from the string ritornello into the vocal parts in these duets.

The second duet in the opera, "Vanne o cara / Ah no, mio bene" (III. 9 Arminio, Ismena; Lotti et al. 1714, 54) is musically contrasting firstly because it is in a slower tempo and an even metre, in contrast to the dance-like brisk duets that dominate *Creso, rè di Lidia* and *Almahide.* Just before Arminio is led off to his execution, Ismena resolves once again to die with him, but he insists she should live for the sake of their infant son (cf. Salvi 1714, 79). We are dealing with a polytextual duet that involves a dialogic exchange comparable to the one in "Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che' questo core", but although here the characters are in disagreement about whether Ismena should stay or go, there is no essential conflict between them and thus no semantic or musical opposition. The duet would be very close to the prototype of duet of departure were there not the heightened exchanges between the soloists. There is a slight chance that its text was derived from a duet for Arminio and Ramise in the original 1703 libretto (III. 2 "Prendi o cara / caro in questo amplesso"; Salvi 1704, 43), in which the hero exhorts his sister to take courage and stay behind to take care of his wife Tusnelda (the name was changed in 1714 but retained by Handel and his libretto adaptor in 1737). Table 48 shows the versions of the text:

	1703	1714
A	**Arminio/Ramise: Prendi o cara/caro / in questo amplesso / Prendi ormai / l'ultima addio.**	**Arm: Vanne o cara / Ism: Ah no mio bene / a 2: prendi ancora / un altro amplesso.**
B	**Arm: Se vivrai / viverà nel tempo istesso Ram: Se morrai / morirà nel tempo istesso Col tuo core, anco il cor mio.**	**Ismene: Deh la morte / non ei sciolga Arm: o la vita / ad ambi tolga a 2: il dolor nel / punto istesso.**
A'	***da capo***	

TABLE 48.
Comparison of two possibly complementary duets from the libretti *Arminio* (1703) and *Arminio* (1714)

Clearly, sections B of the two duets have nothing in common, but it is possible that the 1714 section A was created as a variation of the original 1703 lines, unless such poetry belongs to the stock repertory of contemporary libretti. The duet distinguishes itself by relative brevity (a mere 15 bars), but the scope does not implicate musical uneventfulness, especially as there is a rhythmic dynamism in the tension between passages in longer and shorter note values. An introductory semiquaver passage in the continuo whose structure will permeate the vocal parts later on (b. 1–2) is followed by short dialogic alternating statements (b. 2–3 in S2, b. 3 in S1) that set the first two lines to contrasting, but freely conceived gestural material. The voices are then joined in a simultaneous, mostly parallel texture whose most marked characteristic is its semiquaver upbeat rhythm, leading seamlessly into a cadence in the dominant G minor (b. 3–5). The alternation of "Ah nò mio bene" and "Vanne o cara" leading into a simultaneous texture and a cadence is repeated in extended form in b. 5–9. The simultaneous passage (b. 7–8) progresses gradually from quaver chords to more vivacious semiquaver runs, freely alternating between parallelism and contrary motion before cadencing in the tonic. An emphatic alternation set to the same brief motif (a descending quaver minor second on the words "prendi"/"dammi") is integrated into it for added dramatic emphasis (b. 8). Performing its usual function of harmonic contrast, section B (b. 11–15) does not differ greatly.

This is an unusual duet of departure compared to the ones encountered so far. As we have seen from examples in *La fede tradita a vendicata* ("Lascia ch'io mora si / Nò morrai solo", a duet that possibly served as a model for an equivalent text in *Ernelinda*) and *Creso, rè di Lidia* ("Parto ma resta il core / Vanne che' questo core"), a duet of departure does not have to be tragic or pathetic in tone, and therefore the minor mode is not a requirement either. Together with "Per tè bell' idol mio", all these duets share a structural build-up from alternating statements to simultaneous movement, but they vary in the extent they want to differentiate the voices, and the London pasticcios usually made sure that these alternating statements were somehow contrasted. In affective terms, these duets of departure can evoke serenity, bliss, playful flirtatiousness, but they can also be tragic, although the latter option does not dominate in them to the extent it will—as we shall see—in Handel's duets of departure. "Vanne o cara / Ah no, mio bene" is somewhere in between these extremes, injecting its minor-mode sadness with a touch of rhythmic vivacity, related to the tension of the situation.

Some pasticcios performed in London in the period were not considered for detailed analysis because no musical sources that unambiguously document the music were handed down to us. For instance, no selected songs from the pasticcios *Lucio Vero* (1714) and *Clearte* (1716) were published.

It is nevertheless possible to reconstruct some information on the duets they contained on the basis of their libretti, and both scores and libretti of the operas that served as their point of departure. With *Lucio Vero* (1715) the situation is complicated by the fact that the musical source for the pasticcio, Albinoni's setting for Ferrara (1713) has not been preserved either. To compensate for this lack, the libretto in the original form that Apostolo Zeno conceived it for the first setting by C. F. Pollarolo (Zeno 1700), the 1713 Ferrara libretto (Zeno 1713), the London 1715 libretto (Haym and Zeno 1715) and also the libretto of the 1716 revival (Haym and Zeno 1716) can be thrown into the comparative mix. The latter version of the pasticcio partly reflects the changes in the cast, e. g. Nicolini's replacement of Galerati in the title role. Surprisingly few changes to the 1715 duets were made, especially if we have in mind how significantly other revivals transformed a pasticcio, e. g. *Ernelinda.* Presumably not only Nicolini or Zanoni but stellar female singers could have contributed to the choice of music in *pasticcios* as well. It seems that Zeno's original 1700 libretto with its abundance of duets inspired later adaptors to make interventions of their own.

On the other hand, the pasticcio *Clearte* (1716) was based on A. Scarlatti's opera *L'amor volubile e tiranno* (Scarlatti ms, L'amor volubile e tiranno) to the libretto by G. D. Pioli (Pioli 1709), premiered in Venice. In this pasticcio we are dealing with a paradox of sorts: although the starting point was an opera by a great master who was already familiar to and appreciated by London audiences thanks to the reworking of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* eight years ago and its revival for Nicolini only a month before the premiere of *Clearte* (cf. Sasse 1959, 212), the goal may have actually been to present the newest Venetian and Neapolitan operatic music to the audience. Judging by the London libretto (Pioli 1716), the first duet in the London pasticcio, "E dovrò pur lasciarti / Io sento nel core" (ii. 9) (Pioli and Zeno 1716, 36) is an extensive duet of departure with a highly dialogic middle section typical of Calella's "modern plan" duet. There is no equivalent duet at this point in the 1709 libretto and score, but the Scarlatti opera does contain a duet for these characters nearer the end of Act 2 (ii. 19). The contrast with the 1716 pasticcio could not be greater as we are dealing with a short duet text consisting of a mere four lines (Pioli 1709, 46), but the score contains only the setting of the first and parts of the second line, turning what was either a shorter monopartite, bipartite or even tripartite duet into a short arioso *a due* without simultaneity in the vocal parts, "Sì mia cara / Mio tesor, mia vita" (ii. 18 Arsace, Climene; Scarlatti ms, L'amor volubile e tiranno, 144).

Therefore, Scarlatti's music was most likely not sung in this instance, although the opposite might be true for the third duet in the 1716 pasticcio, "Sorte ria può voler / Può ria sorte darmi" ("Sorte ria può voler / Può ria

sorte darmi" MS), whose music is handed down in a Neapolitan MS dating from 1713 in the Gerald Coke Collection housed at the Foundling Museum in London. The text of this duet differs somewhat from the less polytextual one in the 1716 London libretto (Pioli and Zeno 1716, 62). It is clearly derived from Zeno's *Scipione nelle Spagne* (I. 17 Lucejo, Sofonisba; Zeno 1822, 281), whose second setting was by Alessandro Scarlatti himself in 1714. It would seem logical to conclude that a Scarlatti duet was included in a 1716 pasticcio based on an earlier score by the composer from 1714, but the fact that the MS source in the Gerald Coke Collection that contains the actual duet from *Clearte* is indicated as stemming from 1713 calls this into question. However, in I. 18a the Scarlatti score does contain the same duet (Scarlatti MS, Scipione nelle Spagne, 62) as the one in *Clearte* so the possibility that a duet by Alessandro Scarlatti was sung in *Clearte* in 1716 is plausible after all.

So far, the second decade of operatic life in London has been increasingly marked by how trends on the number, placing and importance of duets in contemporary Italian opera were changing on the continent. As had already been remarked, compared to the multitude and the musico-dramatic, structural and stylistic (often going hand in hand with somewhat old-fashioned, 17th-century traits) diversity of duets in the London operas preceding *Almahide*, the tide was changing in the direction of a lesser number of duets and their standardisation. Nevertheless, the case of *Lucio Vero* shows that when the composers and adaptors were inspired by the right libretto source, Londoners could still enjoy a higher number of duets that were not the exclusive right of the *primo uomo* and *prima donna* to express their love and/or bid a heart-rending farewell to each other. Conversely, *Clearte* shows that within the same pasticcio duets could be stylistically divergent, too.

As we shall see in Chapter 3.3.3, Handel's duets written in the period display a different image. The list of operatic performances in the period 1710–1717 including all the revivals, with performance numbers as an indicator of popularity and influence (Dean and Knapp 1987, 150), shows that although *Rinaldo* was by far the most popular opera with an overall number of 47 performances, no other Handel opera reached more than 15 performances except for *Amadigi*, with its 17 performances in three seasons (1715–1717). In between are *Idaspe fedele* with 36, *Ernelinda* with 22, the revived *Pirro e Demetrio* with 21 (not counting the original bilingual performances) and *Antioco* with likewise 17 performances. Handel was absent from the country from 1711 to 1712 and the second half of 1716 (cf. Dean and Knapp 1987, 155). Also, his whereabouts from July 1713 to autumn 1714 are unknown, so his influence on the unfolding of operatic life in London in this period and thus the evolution of dramatic duets, too, should not be overestimated.

3. 3. 3. Handel's Early Dramatic Duets (1706–1715)

By the time he returned to Germany after his formative stay in Italy, Handel was a formed composer also in terms of composing dramatic duets. Although we shall concentrate on his activity as a composer of dramatic duets in London from 1711 onwards (Chapter 3.3.3.2.) since this is of main interest to this study, it is still important to summarize his accomplishments up to that point. Therefore Chapter 3.3.3.1. shall look into the evolution of the dramatic duet in the composer's opus during his sojourn in Italy, with the duet from the later *Echeggiate, festeggiate* included for comparative purposes as it is a direct parody of the duet from *Arresta il passo*. The stress will be on Handel's Italian secular dramatic duets. Although he was keen to learn about Italian opera, the fact that he spent most of his time in Rome increased his exposure to other genres more favoured by the Eternal City at the time such as the cantata and the oratorio. The duets in Handel's Italian oratorios will be of interest when they display dramatic or operatic traits. Among the dramatic duets he wrote in 1706–1710 (listed in Table 49) there is only one opera duet (from *Rodrigo*, which had been lost) and most of them belong to the cantata and the serenata. Scholars are not unanimous in the distinction between the two, and in spite of the association of the serenata with ceremonial performance out of doors, it is not always clear if larger dramatic cantatas should be considered serenatas as well. For instance, in Marx's (2002, 591) list of Handel's works in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart Cor fedele*, *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, *O come chiare e belle* and *Echeggiate, festeggiate* come under serenatas, whereas *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Hicks 2001) lists them under the category of "dramatic cantatas". Attempting to devise a genre label for *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, Jung (cf. 2002, 139) admits that even though the work fits the definition of the serenata as an occasional work performed out of doors in the evening, similar works in the second half of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century were often called azione or festa teatrale, even cantata. Similarly, the status of *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* (1707) as an oratorio had been contested by Carolyn Gianturco (1994) who develops a convincing argument that we are dealing with an example of the moral cantata instead. This study will not dwell on intricate questions of genre but examine Italian dramatic duets *per se*, in light of a comparison with Handel's Italian contemporaries and their London performance context.

3. 3. 3. 1.
Dramatic Duets Written in Italy (1706–1710): Roots of Handel's Opera Duets

YEAR	WORK	HWV	PLACE	TEXT	CHARACTERS	VOICES
1707	Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno	46a	I. no.6	Il voler nel fior' degl'anni	Bellezza, Piacere	S, MS
			II no.12	Il bel pianto dell'aurora	Tempo, Disinganno	T, A
1707	*Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* (Cor fedele)	96	I no.7	Scherzano sul tuo volto	Clori, Fileno	S, A
			II no.8	Fermati! / No crudel	Clori, Tirsi	S, S
				Senza occhi e senza accenti	Tirsi, Fileno	S, A
1707	*Rodrigo* (Vincer se stesso è la maggio vittoria)	5	III. 8	Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/ prendo il core	Rodrigo, Esilena	S, S
1708	*La resurrezione* (Oratorio per la Resurrezione di Nostro Signor Gesù Cristo)	47	I no. 10	Dolci chiodi, amate spine / Cara effigie addolorata	Maddalena, Cleofe	S, A
			II no. 21	Impedirlo saprò / Duro è il cimento	Lucifero, Angelo	B, S
1708	*Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* (Sorge il dì)	72	no.1	Sorge il dì / Spunta l'aurora	Aci, Galatea	S, A
1708	*Aminta e Fillide* (Arresta il passo)	83	no.11	Per abbatter il rigore	Aminta, Fillide	S, S
1708	*Il duello amoroso* (Amarilli vezzosa)	82	no. 5	Sì, sì, lasciami ingrato / Su, su, restati in pace	Daliso, Amarilli	MS, S
1710	*Cantata per Carlo* VI (Echeggiate, festeggiate)	119	(no. 8)	Non più barbaro furore	Minerva, Giove	S, MS

TABLE 49.
List of Italian dramatic duets composed by G. F. Handel up to 1711

Table 49 presents the duets in chronological order. With the exception of the libretto of *Rodrigo*, they formed part of dramatic texts originally written for Handel to set, which allows us to examine how he responded to the wide variety of duet texts handed to him. This is where the difference with opera duets analysed so far comes to the fore. Whereas the adaptations of previously existing libretti enabled the adaptor of the libretto, the composer and the singers to display a preference for certain types of tendencies, whether textual or musical, in most of the cases analysed in this subchapter Handel was responding to outside stimuli without the ability to significantly influence them. As a young composer, this enabled him to develop different duet styles and make them his own. Therefore I am going to divide the duets written in this period into three groups. The first ones are the so-called "old-fashioned" duets that owe a lot to either older, 17th-century or simply non-operatic traditions such as the oratorio or the chamber duet. Expectedly, out of the four duets belonging to this category only one ("Il bel pianto dell'aurora" from *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno*) is in *da capo* form, and the group contains three out of four of Handel's Italian oratorio duets. The second and largest group, containing seven duets, could be described as the mainstream of Handel's Italian dramatic duets, displaying traits that Handel will adopt in many dramatic duets he came to write later, especially in the era of the Royal Academy of Music. It is not a coincidence that, with the exception of "Senza occhi e senza accenti" (*Clori, Tirsi e Fileno*), they are all written for a female and a male character who are in some sort of amorous relationship.[178] The third and smallest group counts only three duets whose texture displays some traits of dialogic structuring, mostly in terms of contrasting material in the voices, thereby approximating them to the duet of the so-called "modern plan". It is important to stress that these are not duets of conflict since the latter is present—on purely dramaturgic terms—in some of the duets of the second group, too.

Let us begin the examination of the first group by looking at the duets in *La resurrezione*. At the time, oratorio in Rome competed with opera's representative function on aristocratic courts by a spectacular performance at Marchese Ruspoli's residence, but this is not reflected in the ensembles, which are simpler and more modest than the rest of the score. The second duet, "Impedirlo saprò / Duro è il cimento" (II. no. 21 Lucifero, Angelo; Handel 2010, 89–90; Handel recording, La Resurrezione) is a brief musical standoff on the morning of the resurrection between these two forces of good and evil. Lucifero rages at the triumphant Angelo at the thought that

178 **Including the allegorical relationship between Bellezza and Piacere, who is given masculine traits by the librettist.**

the mystery will be revealed to the approaching Maddalena and Cleofa, swearing that he will prevent this. A sense of dramatic tension is achieved by the repetition of the replicas "Impedirlo saprò" and "Duro è il cimento" that could have been set as recitative, but instead Handel composed a brief (mere 13 bars), almost improvisatory arioso *a due* displaying material more reminiscent of melodic-rhythmic formulae and juxtaposing the voices freely in succession and free counterpoint. It goes without saying that these kinds of outbursts *a due* were to grow out of fashion in early 18th-century opera.

In "Dolci chiodi, amate spine / Cara effigie addolorata" (I. no. 10 Maddalena, Cleofe; Handel 2010, 41–46; Handel recording, La Resurrezione) Handel also paid tribute to the tradition of the strophic *aria a due*, since the first stanza is sung by the first soloist, the second by the second and the third section is the only moment of simultaneity in the duet. Handel modified this model to suit his needs, Maddalena's stanza (b. 28–77; Handel 2010, 42–43) being somewhat extended when compared to Cleofa's (b. 78–115; Handel 2010, 44–45). Their common section (b. 116–159) is a free interchange between alternating statements, free counterpoint and parallelism, to the same musical material as the two stanzas, but using mostly Cleofa's text. Maddalena is limited to her incipit line (b. 116–119), and although Handel avoids a clear-cut outline with a regular phrase structure, harmonically we are within the confines or a free tripartite conception (A B A'). Even if the strophic form means that no musical interpretation of the two characters' different words is offered, the setting succeeds in the aim of taking the horror out of the evoked events of Jesus's Passion and turning it into "sympathetic, sweet contemplation"[179] (Zywietz 2010, 63).

The same formal outline but with a much more regular structural plan is adopted in the duet "Sì, sì, lasciami ingrato / Su, su, restati in pace" (no. 5 Daliso, Amarilli; Handel 1994b, 62–64; Handel recording, Olinto pastore) from *Il duello amoroso*. This is probably the simplest duet Handel ever wrote, consisting of a regular successive unfolding of five 16-bar (8+8) periods bringing forth the same musical phrase: first by Daliso in E minor (A, b. 1–16), then by Amarilli in A minor (B, b. 17–32), followed by the two soloists joined in a contrapuntal section that modulates to C major and back to A minor (B', b. 33–64) and leaving it to the repetition of the phrase in A minor as an orchestral ritornello (b. 65–96) to round off this lapidary duet. According to Harris (2001, 129), *Il duello amoroso* is not one of Handel's most distinguished dramatic cantatas. The nymph Amarilli consistently rebukes the courtship of the shepherd Daliso, taunting him to resort to force and ridiculing him after he recoils: although it leaves

179 **Mitfühlende, süße Betrachtung.**

no doubt about the irreconcilability of their differences (and the fact that Daliso's love does not stand a chance), the final duet consolidates the characters nevertheless. Although somewhat unvaried compared to what we learn to expect from the composer in his later opus, the duet offers the maximum musical consolidation possible between nymph and shepherd. Clearly, they are not in a position to sing a love duet (of amorous unity) and Handel was not sufficiently inspired to write a modern, dialogic duet of conflict like he did a year earlier in *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno.* However, he did pay homage to certain traits of the so-called *Streitduett.* This is achieved in the third section (B', b. 33–64) with pseudo-imitative entries of the voices at the distance of two bars. As both voices unfold regular phrases with a repetition of an ascending dotted quaver figure every four bars, we hear this figure every two bars in alternation in each voice. Thus Handel produces an effect of emphatic, dialogic alternating statements ("Sì, sì!" / "Su, su") although he is in fact leading the voices in counterpoint. Albeit ingenious, this duet concept wears itself out quickly.

Judging by the HHA edition of *Rodrigo*, this opera contains another duet permeated with elements of the chamber duet. However, the duet "Ti lascio, idolo mio" (III. 2 Esilena, Rodrigo; Handel 2007, 143–144; Handel recording, Rodrigo) is merely a reconstruction on the part of R. Heyink, the editor of the edition (cf. Preface in Handel 2007, XVII). The autograph score, also the only available source for the opera, specifies a departure duet at this point in the dramaturgy, but no setting has been preserved. If the opera is to be performed, though, a duet equivalent in dramaturgic terms should be supplied in its place, which is why Reyink's choice fell on "Ti lascio, idolo mio" (II. 10 Lepido, Flavia; Handel 2015, 87–88) from Handel's *Silla* (1713), likewise a duet of departure for a couple in adversity. Although both operas are concerned with a married monarch's seduction of other women, in *Silla* it is the tyrant's victim Flavia and her husband Lepido who sing this duet, frightened for their life. If it was sung in *Rodrigo*, it would have been given to Rodrigo and his wife Esilena. Esilena has forgiven Rodrigo for taking advantage of Florinda who has borne him a child and she is bidding him farewell as he goes off to fight off the advancing rebels. Handel's aim was clearly to enhance the position of the *primo uomo* and *prima donna* by giving them an extra duet that was not in the original libretto serving as a starting point for the production. The libretto in question is Silvani's *Il duello d'amore, e di vendetta* (as first set by M. A. Ziani in 1700), and it contains another duet for the principal couple ("Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/prendo il core") that will be discussed later. Silvani's libretto also featured a second duet for the pair in II. 10, but clearly the adaptor of the libretto (there is disagreement in scholarly literature about his identity, cf. Dean and Knapp 1987, 97 and Strohm 2008, 40) chose to drop it. Although

Reyink's choice is stylistically viable, especially as the next duet in this first group of duets—written in the same year (1707) as *Rodrigo*—also displays traits of the chamber duet, nothing suggests let alone proves that "Ti lascio idolo mio" was written as early as 1707 and parodied in 1713 in *Silla.*

The duet "Il bel pianto dell'aurora" (II. no. 12 Tempo, Disinganno; Handel 1865, 85–86; Handel recording, Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno) is, in terms of its overall formal design, a fully-fledged dramatic duet in *da capo* form but it still exhibits prominent features of the chamber duet in an almost exclusively contrapuntal treatment of the voices, consistently eschewing alternation and parallelism. It also makes use of the somewhat archaic technique of free ostinato, the opening figure in the continuo (b. 1–4) permeating the duet with occasional, often varied occurrences. Around it Handel weaves a sensuous contrapuntal web in the fairly unusual vocal combination of contralto (Disinganno) and tenor (Tempo), containing surprisingly little imitation, but nevertheless dense and avoiding homorhythmic movement altogether. At this point in the dramatic action of *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno,* the titular pair had already won the allegorical war with Piacere over the favours of Bellezza, who comprehended the transient nature of worldly pleasures and turned to penance. The main poetic idea of the text is that the tears of a penitent soul are more beautiful than the tears of dawn on a flowery meadow. Handel must have been inspired by the word "piante", an emblem of the Baroque *lamento*, to introduce the ostinato. The voices bring no clearly outlined motivic content but still feel as if derived from the same stream and therefore perhaps reminiscent of the flow of tears. The composer thus imbued an image normally associated with the affect of sorrow and pain with sensuous beauty, which is in fact the main idea of the oratorio, progressing from the material domain to the spiritual. Although the duet is dramatic in its form, its monotextual reflexivity and the doubling of the dramatic agents of Disinganno and Tempo, who repeatedly make similar points throughout the oratorio, make it very different from the opera duets of unity or conflict that Handel developed in the second and third group of his Italian duets, to be discussed shortly. Also, a consistent use of counterpoint without the madrigalistic build-up of sections based on the contrapuntal working out of distinct themes and motifs is not typical of Handel's chamber duets either.

The second and largest group of duets Handel wrote in Italy produced a prototype that he developed throughout his career. It may not be a coincidence that out of the overall six, three of these duets belong to pastoral cantatas and serenatas (*Clori, Tirsi e Fileno*, *Aminta e Fillide* and *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*) and unlike the duets of the first group, most of them are written for high voices. Harris (1980a, 155 & 168) notes a change

in Handel's pastoral style from the complex and experimental works written from May to September in 1707 to the more regular and balanced ones dating from the summer of 1708. The earlier pieces favour irregularity and strong contrasts on the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic plane as well as the extensive use of figuration, *Fortspinnung* and counterpoint, whereas the later ones are characterised by clear-cut phrasing, brevity and succinct *da capo* formal designs. This applies to arias more than to duets since because of the imperative to unite two voices into a more or less balanced musical whole, duets were less prone to the kind of experimentation just described. However, the duet "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni" (I. no. 6 Bellezza, Piacere; Handel 1865, 20–24; Handel recording, Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno) seems to bear the stamp of the first period in the extensive, almost incessant figuration in the oboes and the strings that makes up its lengthy opening ritornello (b. 1–13). In terms of material, it outlines right at the beginning a recognisable rhythmic motif consisting of groups of upbeat double semiquavers followed by a quaver (b. 1–2) and repeats it straight away before moving on to the main rhythmic figure of semiquaver triplets that the duet subjects to an endless process of *Fortspinnung* (b. 3–13), varied by alternation in the violins and oboes. Handel also interweaves into the ritornello a passage in *contrapunctus ligatus* (b. 8–9) that will serve as the foundation for a specific type of texture in which two parts in interlocking suspensions and long note values are juxtaposed to a vivacious sequential semiquaver passage (b. 18–19, 22, 24–25). This type of texture that Handel may have borrowed from Reinhard Keiser's chamber duet "Caro autor di mia doglia" wrongly attributed to Handel as HWV 183 (cf. Marx 1993, 308–313) will continue to feature in many works of his, including two more duets examined in this chapter, but also choral movements from oratorios. The ritornello alone is a perfect musical embodiment of the concept of *joie de vivre* that is represented at this stage at the beginning of the oratorio by the allegorical characters of Bellezza and Piacere. The idea that it is foolish, even vain ("è vanità", as is often stressed by both voices in the few passages of monorhythmic simultaneity in this duet) to spend one's youth worrying is expressed by the musical equivalent of hedonism, endless instrumental and vocal flourishes that have no purpose in outlining some kind of material that will be worked out but playfully exercise their own virtuosic *raison d'être*. After the initial exposition of the opening rhythmic motif of the ritornello in alternation (Bellezza, who in spite of being manipulated by Piacere takes the lead, providing a held note counterpoint to Piacere's onset in b. 16), the voices are kept mostly in counterpoint, which shows that Handel is still removed from traditions of the Italian dramatic duet as represented in London in 1706–1717. However, the long flourish in semiquaver triplets (b. 30–33), modelled on the isolated parallel

moments between the oboes and violins in the ritornello, is undoubtedly operatic, as if Bellezza and Piacere were laughing at "affanni", the worries that they want to banish from youth. With its all-permeating figurative material and lack of periodic structures the duet definitely conforms to Harris's experimental style, although it is kept fairly simple harmonically and it contains neither contrasts nor formal surprises. In fact, in spite of a lengthy and sumptuous *ritornelllo,* its treatment of the *da capo* form is also rather simple. Section B is shorter, with continuo accompaniment only, its material freely derived from section A. The latter is bipartite, with two cycles (b. 13–25, 26–36) progressing from alternation (with a pedal counterpoint) via contrapuntal combining to parallelism, the first one cadencing in the dominant D major, the second one swiftly returning to the tonic. The ritornello at the end of section A is compressed, which is understandable since its spectacular character would have had less impact if it had been repeated as many as four times.

Although it was written in 1707 and presents on the whole a "study in contrasts" "with its great variety of aria styles", Harris (1980a, 168) sees several anticipations of Handel's new, 1708 style in the dramatic cantata *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno.* It is in works like these that it becomes evident why dramatic cantatas were so important for the development of Handel's dramatic duets. Due to the limited number of characters and a certain monotony of stringing together one aria after the other in what is usually a typified plot without significant dramaturgic variations, ensembles contribute to the appeal by combining the characters into duets and trios. Two and three is indeed the most common number of characters in a secular dramatic cantata, for a larger cast usually borders on genres such as the serenata. In the realm of the pastoral, love triangles are ideal for the exploration of the amorous passions of shepherds and nymphs, so it is no surprise that they determine the dramaturgy of both *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* and *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* but also of Bononcini's *La nemica d'amore fatta amante* as well as Handel's opera *Il pastor fido.* The fickle nymph Clori has sworn fidelity to Fileno at the despair of her other suitor Tirsi, and in the duet ending the first part of the cantata, "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro" (I. no. 7 Clori, Fileno; Handel 1994b, 181–186; Handel recording, Clori, Tirsi e Fileno), Clori and Fileno affirm their love in Watteauesque imagery of Graces and Cupids dancing on the two lovers' faces. The ritornello of section A is as lengthy as the one in "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni" (b. 1–12) and similarly built from a rhythmic motif followed by extensive figuration, but it is conceived as a more closed unit even though it displays no periodic structures. The voices are spaced out more leisurely and evenly in the texture, beginning with proper alternating statements with no counterpoint whatsoever (b. 12–13 and 14–15, a fourth lower), followed by figuration (the

word "mille" in syllabic declamation lending itself perfectly to this kind of treatment) over held notes (b. 16–19) and ending in parallelism based on the head motif of the ritornello (b. 20–22), thus lending the whole a sense of balance. The playful exchanges continue in a quasi-imitative passage (b. 22–25) that highlights the words "mille" before a texture in which the voices interchange semiquaver figuration and held notes (b. 25–29), drawing the vocal part of section A to an end. Whereas section A was genuinely polytextual (Clori singing about Graces and Fileno about Cupids), in section B Handel dealt with the abundance of the text by evenly distributing the lines between the two voices, although they were not originally conceived this way by the poet. Harris's description of middle sections in *da capo* forms from 1708 seems to apply here in that section B (b. 40–53) does not offer anything new on the motivic plane, drawing on the material of section A for alternating exchanges, brief quasi-imitative passages and the accompaniment of semiquaver flourishes with held notes.

The duets from *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* and *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* are examples of the evolving prototype of the love duet, and the extensive figuration in both the instrumental and vocal parts show that it is embedded in Handel's early Italian style, but if there is indeed a change about to happen, "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro" confirms that a lack of structural restraint will give place to more moderate and regular designs. Although not a love duet, "Senza occhi e senza accenti" (II. Tirsi, Fileno; Handel 1994b, 270–276; Handel recording, Aci, Galatea e Polifemo) should be considered here not only as it belongs to the same cantata but because it adopts and modifies the evolving structural plan. Handel wrote two alternative endings for the cantata. The second one, probably for a reworking for Naples, ends with a trio: after both Tirsi and Fileno have come to terms with Clori's infidelity, deciding that they will continue to worship her nevertheless, all three sing a praise to love as an irreplaceable life force. The first, Roman version of the work ends with the above mentioned duet for the two shepherds, in which after a recitative very similar to the one in the second version the two men reaffirm their friendship and comment somewhat sarcastically on the "woman of today".[180]

The duet's scoring is—and this is another factor of continuity with *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno*—equally rich, although the first and the second violins as well as the first and the second oboe are somewhat less independent of each other than in "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni" and "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro". On the other hand,

180 **Tirsi/Fileno: Senza occhi e senza accenti, / senza sdegni e lamenti, / vuol che sian gli amanti / la donna di oggidì; / E se non è il pastore / semplice e tutto amore, / nol prende per suo vago / perché lo vuol così.**

"Senza occhi e senza accenti" has a more complex take on ritornello form in its framing sections, and consequently, also a somewhat more extensive *da capo* form. First and foremost, it offers a contrast to the last two duets examined here with its different character, felt most of all in its ternary dance metre as opposed to the binary *concertante* idiom of "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni" and "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro". The ritornello opens by suggesting a periodic structure, but what it really does is a *tutti* repeat (b. 5–8) of its opening four-bar phrase (b. 1–4 in the oboes) before moving on to a cadence and a section in *contrapunctus ligatus* (b. 12–22) that one often encounters in the composer's chamber duets. This material is the starting point for some extensive *Fortspinnung* in the vocal parts. Tirsi embarks on it as soon as he has stated the main motif (the four-bar phrase described above, b. 25–28). After this it is Fileno's turn to bring the subject while he is sustained with a very long-held note in Tirsi's part before the voices burst into the same type of *contrapunctus ligatus* texture (b. 63–73) familiar from the ritornello. It is very significant for this duet in particular, but also for Handel's method of composing duets in general (differentiating him from Bononcini) that, although he resorts to the inversion of the parts, previously outlined contrapuntal material is never repeated literally but in varied form so as to give the impression of novelty. What distinguishes this duet is a free, almost improvisatory treatment of both form and counterpoint. I have already remarked on its dimensions, and we shall come back to this expansion of scope as something that transformed Handel's London duets from *Teseo* and *Amadigi* onwards in Chapter 3.3.3.2. Its A section can be divided into two greater subsections: the first one (b. 1–95) marked by a modulation to the dominant, the second one (b. 95–166) returning to the G major tonic. Both subsections are interspersed with orchestral and vocal statements of the main motif, the above mentioned *contrapunctus ligatus* texture extended by *Fortspinnung* and brief moments of parallelism. What is somewhat lacking is a sense of musical interpretation of the text and the sense of stringency that marks most of the numbers in the cantata. Section B (b. 166–206) is more purpose-driven with its opening imitations (b. 166–179) and dialogic exchanges of the replicas "lo vuol così" and "perché" (b. 183–187).

Compared to this unconventionality that might have led Handel to insert a trio in its place instead, the second duet in *Rodrigo* has fewer surprises in store. "Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/prendo il core" (III. 8 Rodrigo, Esilena; Handel 2007, 165–170; Handel recording, Rodrigo) is a duet of unity that acknowledges the renewed love of the principal couple after Esilena had brought about the denouement expressed in the opera's second title, *Vincer se stesso è la maggior vittoria.* At the height of dramatic tension when the avengers are about to kill Rodrigo, Esilena brings them

his child with Florinda, disarming everybody with her magnanimity and setting an example for forgiveness that everybody else follows. Calella (2009, 343) lists this duet as an example of a duet text that does not differ significantly from the text of an aria in spite of the fact that the characters are addressing each other in the imperative mood, which is dialogic. Dean and Knapp (1987, 104) describe it unflatteringly: "while on a more extended scale than the duets in *Almira*, [it, A/N] suffers from underdeveloped ritornellos and an excess of facile ornament". Compared to the more developmental, *concertante* figuration of "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni" and even "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro", this duet seems less ambitious and on an overall more modest scale. However, it does set up a structural plan that Handel follows in the duet in *Aminta e Fillide.*

Bar numbers in "Prendi/ prendo l'alma"*	**1–3; 11–12**	**3–5; 12–14**	**5–6; 14–15**	**7–8; 16–17**	**9; 18**	**10; 19–24**
"Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/ prendo il core"	**ritornello; free CP**	**alternation; parallelism**	**CP ligatus; CP ligatus**	**parallelism; parallelism**	**free CP; alternation**	**parallelism; parallelism**
"Per abbatter il rigore" & "Non più barbaro furore"	**ritornello; CP ligatus**	**imitation; alternation**	**CP ligatus; parallelism**	**parallelism; CP ligatus**	**free CP; CP ligatus**	**parallelism; altern.; par.**
Bar numbers in "Per abbatter il rigore"**	**1–6; 17–19**	**6–8; 19–20**	**8–10; 21–26**	**11; 26–29**	**11–12; 29–34**	**13–17; 34–35; 35–41**

TABLE 50.
Comparison of the sequence of vocal structural techniques in the A sections of three Handel duets written in the period 1707–1710

* **Bar numbers should be read dependently on the sequence of techniques in the next row: the first interval refers to the first technique, the second one (separated by a semicolon) to the second. The sequence of techniques should be read as if in two rows: "ritornello" is followed by alternation and not by "free CP".**

** **Up to b. 15 bar numberings in the two duets are identical, but in contrast to "Non più barbaro furore", "Per abbatter il rigore" inserts an extra bar in b. 16. There is some minor divergence in the figuration later on, which explains why section A of "Per abbetter il rigore" ends in b. 47 and section A of "Non più barbaro furore" in b. 45. Otherwise, the structural plan of the two duets is identical.**

The contrast with the above mentioned duets is even felt at its beginning: the opening ritornello (b. 1–3) is more of a compression of the main ideas that are to be developed during the course of the duet, the semiquaver

triplet passage that Dean and Knapp probably found "facile" (b. 1), the passage in *contrapunctus ligatus* (b. 1–2) that has been mentioned in relation to "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni" and probably stems from Keiser, ending with a cadential figure (b. 2–3). The voices are introduced promptly by stating a motif developed from the triplet figure in alternation (b. 3–4) and moving on straight away to the specific *contrapunctus ligatus* texture probably stemming from Keiser (b. 5–7) extended by the inversion of parts, something Handel makes ample recourse to in the next couple of duets. After this, the voices are joined in parallel and exchange semiquaver passages with the oboes and violins. The presentation of the ritornello, the alternating statements of the motivic material, their contrapuntal combining and eventual parallel combination leading onto a cadence is a process that can take dozens of bars in other duets, whereas here it has been accomplished in the space of a mere eight bars. From this point on, Handel merely develops this structural plan. Given the limited amount of material that he had presented, the fact that the duet does not slip into monotony in the remaining twenty bars of section A (b. 1–28) is a symptom of a firm grip on form and structure. The remainder of the section gradually gives more room to parallelism, culminating in flashy parallel triplet passages in b. 19–20 (again answered by the orchestra in b. 20–23) and b. 23–24. In the musical voluptuousness (justified by the allegorical moral of the text) that makes out the whole of "Il voler nel fior' degl'anni", passages like these would hardly stand out, but in "Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/prendo il core", their culminating effect is carefully prepared in an operatically self-conscious way.

Table 50 attempts to compare the sequence in which the techniques of voice-leading used in "Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/prendo il core" made their way into a duet in the dramatic cantata *Aminta e Fillide* that Handel wrote the next year, as well as the serenata *Echeggiate, festeggiate* that he borrowed it for without significant modification, at least in section A. Besides the difference in scope—the duets "Per abbatter il rigore" and "Non più barbaro furore" are longer than the *Rodrigo* duet—they also display a growth in the length and exposure of vocal parallelism and *contrapunctus ligatus* passages. However, the dramaturgy of the two later duets is not only far from the affirmation of the unity between Rodrigo and Esilena but also quite different in *Aminta e Fillide* on the one hand and *Echeggiate, festeggiate* on the other. *Aminta e Fillide* operates with a similar story like *Il duello amoroso*, which Harris (2001, 133) calls the monomyth or micromyth of pursuit: here, too, a scornful nymph is courted by a desperate shepherd, but with a happier outcome. Aminta manages to win Fillide over with this fidelity and in the final duet they conclude that "the rigour of a ruthless, cruel heart" (Fillide's) can be broken by "constancy and

the valour of fidelity". Thus "Per abbatter il rigore"(no. 11 Aminta, Fillide; Handel 1994b, 109–114; Handel recording, Aminta e Fillide) is not a typical duet of amorous unity expressing bliss at the strength of the lovers' bond but a moral comparable to the final lines of a chamber duet. Whereas it would be dramatically convincing in Aminta's mouth, it detaches Fillide's voice from her character. The troubles the lovers had to go through may explain an element of tension in the setting, witnessed already in the opening ritornello's energetic semiquaver octave leaps (b. 1), which possibly made the duet appropriate for parody as "Non più barbaro furore" (no. 8 Minerva, Giove; Handel 1995, 100–109), in which warring allegorical deities celebrate the arrival of peace.[181] This occasional political work, also known under the title *Io languisco fra le goje*, was most probably commissioned by circles in London belonging to the Tory party on the occasion of the coronation of Charles VI as Holy German Emperor. It is hard to date, the above mentioned hypothesis positioning its creation during Handel's first presence in London (1710–1711), although there are opinions that he could have composed it much earlier (cf. Marx 2002, 592). Whatever the case, Handel might have written the serenata in haste for it contains a large number of borrowings from his Italian period.

The appropriation of a pastoral duet to a heroic-allegorical one without the need for significant intervention or reworking is certainly suggested by the two duets' almost identical A sections, so that my analysis pertains to "Per abbatter il rigore" only. Its ritornello is longer than the lapidary ritornello of "Prendi/prendo l'alma, prendi/prendo il core", although still concise as it is built from the opening semiquaver figure in octave leaps, the "Keiser" *contrapunctus ligatus* passage mentioned above (b. 2–4) and a rhythmically energetic unison closing (b. 5–6). The abundant text lends itself to syllabic treatment appropriate to the declamation of words related to anger and other negative affects in both duets (such as "rigore", "crudel", "spietato", "barbaro furore", "orribile fragore"). The *contrapuntcus ligatus* texture alternates throughout the section with increasing parallel passages, the main difference with the duets analysed so far being that the function of parallelism is not only a display of virtuosity but also the emphatic syllabic enunciation of the text. Handel eschews monotony even though he stays within the confines of the tonic for most of the time thanks to the "Keiser" *contrapunctus ligatus* texture since it serves as filling material of great vivaciousness and variability, its trio-texture allowing for different combinations between the two vocal parts and the continuo.

181 **A section. Minerva/Giove: Non più barbaro furore / con orribile fragore / turbi all'orbe dolce quiete / ma sparisca il fier rigor. B section. Giove: Sol ulivi trionfanti, Minerva: Sol allori festeggianti, a 2: sian le mete / di grand'alma e nobil cor.**

Harris (1980a, 1975–1976) claims that in section B of "Non più barbaro furore" there is a stronger contrast in relation to section A than in "Per abbatter il rigore". True, in the former duet in addition to its more modest scale and reduced accompaniment, the middle section makes no direct reference to the material of section A. However, one could argue that the unison and harmonically ambiguous onset of the voices at the beginning of section B in "Per abbatter il rigore" is unexpected and therefore also successfully contrasting. The remainders of the two middle sections are structurally rather similar, so it is doubtful whether a certain smoothening out of the contrasts between sections of *da capo* form is indeed more pronounced in Handel's pastoral style (the pastoral cantatas and serenatas examined here) when compared to his heroic (opera seria) style, as Harris seems to think.

The third and smallest group of Handel's duets written in the period 1707–1711 contains duets that display some kind of dialogic elements. Given the already expressed reservations about attaching too much importance to this dramaturgic category, it must be said that the two very different duets belonging to it are exceptions of sorts in relation to the evolving prototype of Handel's dramatic duets, much like the more old-fashioned duets of the first group were exceptions, too. The duet from *Aci, Galatea a Polifemo* (1708) is indeed a singular duet solution that Handel did not return to in his later dramatic duets. On the other hand, Handel not only parodied the likewise rather particular (and in a way exceptional) "Fermati! / No crudel" from *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* in his first London opera *Rinaldo* but one can say that the foresaid duet presents an anticipation of his dramatic duets of conflict in the 1730s (cf. Ćurković 2009 and Ćurković 2010). "Sorge il di / Spunta l'aurora" (no. 1 Aci, Galatea) Handel 2000a, 3–6; Handel recording, Aci, Galatea e Polifemo), the opening number of Handel's largest serenata or dramatic cantata, owes part of its unconventional characters to the fact that the beginnings of works were often reserved for deviations from the norm (cf., for Handel's operas, Leopold 2009, 29–42). It is somewhere between a conventional duet of unity and a dialogic duet as it opens with alternating statements that present contrasting motifs (b. 1 in the ritornello, b. 7–8 in the vocal parts). Given that the ritornello (b. 1–7) opens with these motifs and continues to unfold as a *contrapunctus ligatus* texture even simpler than the "Keiser" type mentioned so many times in the course of this chapter (b. 2, 4–6), we are led to expect that the vocal parts will develop these motifs, using *contrapunctus ligatus* and parallelism as filling material. Instead, the *contrapunctus ligatus* texture dominates the duet with its steady, sequential semiquaver flow, bursting into parallelism only occasionally. We might want to associate the characters with their distinctive motifs (or at least contours of motifs), but these expectation are soon abandoned. The reason could be that Handel conceived the vocal

parts in an improvisatory manner, the frequent alternation being in the service of comprehensibility instead of dialogue. If we examine the text[182], it is in fact not dialogic either, for it merely describes different aspects of a landscape in dawn and contrasts its serenity to the suffering of a lover's (Aci's and Galatea's) heart. The revelation of the contrast is, like in a *simile* aria, postponed to section B (b. 24–31) and maybe this is the reason why it is somewhat more regular and conventional. Jung (2002, 135) is right in claiming that the main purpose of the duet is to set the action with its "serenely flowing movements in quavers and semiquavers" in an "idyll devoid of space and time"[183].

In "Fermati! / No crudel" (II. no. 8 Clori, Tirsi; Handel 1994b, 187–190; Handel recording, Clori, Tirsi e Fileno) we see Handel at the height of his creative powers. The dramatic situation at the beginning of the second part of *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* feels like a comic subversion of Harris's monomyth of pursuit, since gender roles are reversed and it is the nymph Clori who is pursuing, in fact chasing, the shepherd Tirsi. He overheard her previous amorous pledges to Fileno, culminating in the preceding number that ended the first act, the duet "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro". Disillusioned, he sets out to abandon the courtship, although—as we know it—he succumbs to Clori's charms again later on. At this stage, though, Clori puts on a tragic mask, swearing that she is faithful to Tirsi ("son fedel") and topping her plea in section B with the pathetic rhetorical question "Vuoi ch'io m'uccida?".[184] The duet opens with a ritornello (b. 1–10) that has no motivic significance but serves to set the scene in semantic terms instead. A discontinuous quaver line is expounded in the two violins, with—at least at the outset—the second violin repeating the note previously brought forth by the first violin. This way the musical flow is mimicking the chase and the unexpected appoggiatura clashes in b. 3, as well as the quickening of the pace with the semiquavers spreading from the continuo to the violins, are probably suggesting that Clori is catching up with the shepherd. This is why the duet is not in *da capo* but in *dal segno* form and the "sign" is placed in b. 10 (where the characters first engage in dialogue), as it would make no sense to repeat this orchestral introduction since Clori had already succeeded in stopping the fleeing Tirsi.

182 **A section. Aci: Sorge il dì, e tranquillo / par che brilli ancor il ciel. Galatea: Spunta l'aurora, e più sereno / par che brilli ancor il ciel. B section. Aci: Scherza l'aura in braccio a Flora / e sol pena il cor fedel. Galatea: Ride il fiore al prato in seno, / e sol pena il cor fedel.**

183 **Eine ruhig fließende Bewegung in Achteln und Sechszehnteln… eine raum- und zeitenthobene Idylle.**

184 **The entire text is displayed in Table 52 in the comparative analysis with the duet with the same incipit from *Rinaldo* in Chapter 3.3.3.2.**

The vocal parts begin their dialogue with alternating statements of brief contrasting motifs moving melodically in opposite directions as was the case in "Sorge il dì / Spunta l'aurora". The difference is that the text is conceived dialogically and that in the course of the duet, Handel uses at least the first one of these motifs as a motivic kernel of sorts to derive further material from it. Clori's opening outcry "Fermati!" presents this kernel (b. 10), answered by Tirsi—in stichomythia—with a downward leaping "No, crudel" (b. 11). The voices continue with seemingly improvised alternating statements that contradict each other ("Son Cori e son fedel" / "Sei Clori infida"), the ones outlining a broken major triad in b. 13–14 clearly derived from the motivic kernel, before they are intertwined contrapuntally in b. 16–19. However, the use of counterpoint has a clear dramaturgic function here since it juxtaposes parts of Clori's lines ("Fermati", "io son fedele") with energetic outcries of "no" by Tirsi, taking either the form of octave leaps or of descending discontinued semiquavers known from the ritornello. Whereas usually the alternating vocal statements were the sole domain of dialogic replicas in a dramatic duet (including Burney's "modern plan" duets), here the contrapuntal combination of the voices actually enhances the drama, which is something Handel achieved for the first time in his duets here, and chose to return to it in his later opera duets of the 1730s. The dialectic of following dialogic alternating statements of a motif derived from the kernel with this type of contrapuntal passage is repeated in b. 19–26, this time with inverted parts, leaving it to Clori to react with "no" to Tirsi's accusations of cruelty and infidelity. It is Tirsi who has the last word with a decisive "Sei Clori infida" in b. 26, reaching his emphatic highest note (b2). The fact that the duet is written for two sopranos definitely contributes to the convincing musical portrayal of quarrelling in which the interlocutors attempt to outvoice each other. Besides reducing the accompaniment to the continuo, the short section B (b. 29–40) does not add anything new to this dialectic, with the exception that a dialogue in alternating statements is followed by a free, sequential contrapuntal section (b. 34–36) in which pain is expressed with repeated dissonant intervals by repetition. Clori's plea "Vuoi che m'uccida?" is rendered more dramatic by harmonic means, meandering from C minor (b. 36–37) via F minor to a cadence on the dominant of D minor, almost convincing us that she is genuinely desperate. However, the fact that this was just a secondary dominant in the tonic key of B-flat major and that the argument resumes with the *dal segno* repetition leaves no doubt that this duet as a whole is conceived along comedic lines.

We have seen that in his Italian period, probably thanks to the wide array of contemporary influences he was exposed to, Handel experimented with a diversity of duet types, some of them reflecting the variety of genres—cantata, serenata, oratorio, and opera—that he was active in. Besides a group of duets following 17th-century traditions and only a few dialogic

ones, he mainly developed a prototype of a duet of unity in which, after initial alternation, *contrapuntus ligatus* played a role as important, if not more important than vocal parallelism. Although he showed a proclivity for imitative counterpoint early on in his career, there is little trace of imitation or even pseudo-imitation in these duets. It is left for us to see how his duet writing changed in Britain.

3. 3. 3. 2.
First London Operas (1711–1715)

year	work	hwv		text	characters	voices
1711	*Rinaldo*	7a	I. 6	Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro	Almirena, Rinaldo	S, MS
			II. 3	Il vostro maggio de'bei verdi anni	Armida, Rinaldo	S, MS
			II. 6	Fermati! / No, crudel	Sirene	S, S
			III. 6	Al trionfo del nostro furore	Armida, Argante	S, B
1712	*Il pastor fido*	8a	III. 8	Per te, mio dolce bene	Mirtillo, Amarilli	S, S
1713	*Teseo*	9	I. 4	Addio! Mio caro bene / Addio! Dolce mia vita	Clizia, Arcane	S, MS
			II. 2	Sì ti lascio / Sì ti sprezzo	Medea, Egeo	S, MS
			IV. 9	Cara!/Caro! Ti dono in pegno il cor	Teseo, Agilea	S, S
			V. 5	Unito a un puro affetto, non sa	Clizia, Arcane	S, MS
1713	*Lucio Cornelio Silla*	10	II. 6	Sol per te, bell'idol mio	Lepido, Flavia	S, S
			II. 10	Ti lascio, idolo mio	Lepido, Flavia	S, S
			III. 10	Non s'estingue mai la fiamma	Silla, Metella	S, S
1715	*Amadigi di Gaula*	11	II. 4	Crudel, tu non farai	Melissa, Amadigi	S, MS
			III. 3	Cangia al fine il tuo rigore	Oriana, Amadigi	S, MS

table 51.
List of Italian dramatic duets by G. F. Handel in the period 1711–1715

It has been established that Handel composed around 68 opera duets, out of which as many as 45, i. e. two thirds, are in *da capo* form (cf. Schläder 1995). Schläder's statistic did not take into account the different versions of duets that various revivals produced, mostly because it was devised before most of the modern critical editions of the operas were published. Nevertheless, it gives an indication of the scope and variety of opera duets written in the period of thirty years (1711–1741) during the composer's activity in London. The period of habitual performances of Italian opera in the second decade of the 18th century (1710–1717) is the least regular one in terms of a steady operatic output on Handel's part: in comparison, between 1720 and his last opera *Deidamia* in 1741 he composed at least one opera per season. The reason for this is Handel's absence from the country from June 1711 to spring 1712 due to his obligations as court composer in Hanover. Knapp (1986, 160) finds distractions and unfavourable conditions in the evolution of Handel's career as an opera composer in London after the stellar success of *Rinaldo*. When Handel returned to London, he was "pressed into a hurried production of *Il pastor fido* and soon thereafter (December 1712 and January 1713), the writing of *Teseo*". After two revivals of Rinaldo in May 1713, Handel went to Burlington House to concentrate on other kinds of musical genres, which is probably why no operas of his were performed in London during the 1713–1714 season. Table 51 displays all the duets in Handel's operas in this period, showing great diversity in both their numbers and structural-dramaturgic types.

Partly due to the somewhat unconventional way libretti for Handel's first London operas were assembled, all of them except *Il pastor fido* contain more duets than was to become the norm in Handel's later Italian operas. Similar to *Agrippina*, *Rinaldo* was conceived as a compilation of numbers from some of the best vocal music written in Italy, and thus contains only one original duet, the others being more or less direct parodies of duets from *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* and an aria from *Aminta e Fillide*. *Teseo* contains the same high number of duets probably due to the fact that the libretto was derived from Philippe Quinault's *tragédie lyrique*, a genre that operated with entirely different formal and structural premises. We shall see that this opera is the most diversified when it comes to combining as many as three couples into duets, neither of which is comical. In this early period Handel stayed true to borrowing duets from his earlier works, somewhat more often than in his operas of the 1720s. This can be explained by the fact that when he parodied an older duet, he always chose one that his current audience was not familiar with. For instance, in *Amadigi* he borrowed a duet composed for *Silla*, since this opera was probably only performed privately, so that the bulk of the Haymarket public would not have recognised it. We shall see that Handel resorted to similar practices

during the Royal Academy of Music era mostly when he was reviving older operas. Before we move on to the analysis of individual duets, we should remind ourselves of Handel's particular working methods when composing an Italian opera for London. First and foremost, he was writing Italian music for a public that did not understand Italian, so he radically cut recitatives from the original libretti that served him and his adaptors/librettists Haym and Rolli as a starting point. This lack was often compensated for by aria texts specially introduced for this purpose "or—and this was the more frequent method—by Handel's actual setting of the arias taking over this function" (Strohm 2008, 99). Although this ablity of the music to substitute a semantic loss applied more to arias than to the more typified duets, one should henceforth pay more attention to this ability of the setting to interpret and supplement the dramaturgy.

Rinaldo (1711) was not only an opportunity for the composer to shine brightly with the Italian music he composed in the past years of his creative development but also to test the adaptability of numbers from cantatas, oratorios and serenatas to the world of the evolving opera seria. Consequently, Handel developed his own types of opera duets by appropriating duets from the above mentioned genres to the operatic stage, in parallel to creating his own ideas of what an opera duet should be like. The libretto was written by Giacomo Rossi probably on the basis of an English prose draft, based in turn on Torquato Tasso's classic epic *Gerusalemme liberata*. With its love of the supernatural and the spectacular, this literary cooperation fitted well with the tradition of English theatre and the predecessor of Italian opera, the dramatic opera or semi-opera. However, as Dean (1995, 102) points out, "Handel himself must have contributed to the libretto", as well, due to the incorporation of both text and music from his earlier mentioned works. He obviously did not see a problem in the appropriation of pastoral music to the heroic and magic realm since in two of the duets he borrowed both text and music. In "Scherzano sul tuo volto / Ridono sul tuo labbro" (I. 6 Almirena, Rinaldo; Handel 1993b, 71–73; Handel recording, Rinaldo) his interventions into the original *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* duet were minimal in section A. As it was written for singers of similar tessituras, the original key of A major was retained, the rhythmic figuration slightly altered, the ritornello shortened by two bars (for dramatic immediacy that favoured a sooner onset of the voices in a genre like opera) and Rinaldo's part somewhat altered in relation to Fileno's, apparently written for a singer with a somewhat lower tessitura, whereas Nicolini felt more comfortable in his middle and upper register. Similar to the modifications of the duet in *Echeggiate, festeggiate* in relation to its counterpart in *Aminta e* Fillide, the B section of the *Rinaldo* duet is rather different from the one in *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno,* perhaps confirming Harris's

opinion on genre differences between cantata and opera as manifested in the shaping of middle sections in a *da capo* form. It has an altered, simplified and much shorter text and is contrasted not only harmonically in the exploration of dissonant harmonies in related keys but also with a different time signature and a "poco adagio" tempo, most effective in bringing a pathetic touch to this duet, which has no justification in the text but perhaps foreshadows the travails of these happy lovers to come as in the next scene, Armida kidnaps Almirena, leaving the heartbroken Rinaldo to sing one of Handel's most heartrending arias of grief, "Cara sposa".

	TEXT OF THE DUET "FERMATI! / NO, CRUDEL!" FROM THE CANTATA CLORI, TIRSI E FILENO (1707)	TEXT OF THE DUET "FERMATI! / NO, CRUDEL!" FROM THE OPERA RINALDO (1711)
A	**Clori: Fermati!** **Tirsi: No, crudel!** **Clori: Son Clori, e son fedel.** **Tirsi: Sei Clori infida.**	**Armida: Fermati!** **Rinaldo: No, crudel!** **Armida: Armida son, fedel…** **Rinaldo: Spietata, infida!**
B	**Tirsi: Lasciami!** **Clori: Pria morir!** **Tirsi: Non posso più soffrir.** **Clori: Vuoi ch'io m'uccida?**	**Rinaldo: Lasciami!** **Armida: Pria morir!** **Rinaldo: Non posso più soffrir.** **Armida: Vuoi ch'io m'uccida?**

TABLE 52.
Comparison of different versions of the duet text "Fermati!/ No crudel"

The musical transformation of "Fermati! / No, crudel" (II. 6 Armida, Rinaldo; Handel 1993b, 118–120; Handel recording, Rinaldo) when compared to "Fermati! / No crudel" (II. no. 8 Clori, Tirsi) (Handel 1994b, 187–190) is less extensive and refers mostly to the abridging of the ritornello and the adaptation of Tirsi's former soprano part to Nicolini's mezzosoprano by altering merely a few bars, including the above mentioned culmination on b2. The dramatic situation in the cantata and the opera bear many similarities, although the gender inversion of amorous pursuit is less harmless and comical here. The sorceress Armida has inadvertently fallen in love with the crusader Rinaldo and pursues him, provoking only disgust on his part for she is not only his enemy but had also abducted his betrothed Almirena. The main reason for a much shorter ritornello (b. 1–4) is the need to engage the characters in dialogue as quickly as possible since the plot twist (Armida's highly unexpected infatuation with Rinaldo) in the preceding recitative has triggered strongly opposed affects of love and hatred that—in the world of opera seria at least—need to be given musical

vent as soon as possible. Obviously more known than its counterpart in *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno*, this duet provoked differing opinions and evaluations in scholarly literature. Schläder (1995), who is aware that in contrast to the usual techniques of imitation and parallelism, the most common way of conveying a dialogue musically is "the distribution of a thematic line rich in motifs between both voices"[185] finds that Handel rarely implements this consistently. He counts "Fermati! / No crudel" from *Rinaldo* among the exceptions, maintaining that in spite of the technique of echo (already anticipated in the ritornello) and the swift vocal alternation mimicking the quick replicas in an argument, the lack of contrast between the two voices' material reduces it to the level of pseudo-dialogue. Ruf (2001, 91–92), on the other hand, finds that "Handel proves himself as a master of musical dialogue, even though here, unlike the trio from *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo*, the discrepancy of the affects and the differences between the characters do not play any [musical, A/N] role."[186] Handel portrayed clashing affects and characters with the help of contrasting musical means increasingly only in his duets of conflict in the 1730s (cf. Ćurković 2009; 2010).

"Il vostro maggio de'bei verdi anni" (Sirene; Handel 1993b, 99–101; Handel recording, Rinaldo) is not an independent dramatic duet in the modern sense of the word since it is first of all given to episodic and generic characters whose only purpose is to attempt to seduce Rinaldo by appearing in this one scene. A librettistic concession to the tradition of English theatre, including dramatic opera (the siren duet in Purcell's *King Arthur* comes to mind), it could scarcely have been imagined in an Aristotelean libretto by Zeno or Metastasio. The main melody with its periodic structure is a note-to-note parody of "Se vago rio" from *Aminta e Fillide*. "Aminta's final aria before Fillide's acceptance of his suit depicts his longing with the now familiar metaphor of the river running to the sea as an image of eternal union" (Harris 2001, 160). Perhaps this erotic subtext was the reason why Handel thought it especially suitable for a siren duet. This shows that even when he was parodying his own duets like in the three duets in *Rinaldo* just examined, Handel took great care to adapt them to their new musical surroundings and dramaturgic contexts. The voices are singing in unison and—in a way—not representing independent characters.

The only duet Handel composed specifically for *Rinaldo* is "Al trionfo del nostro furore" (III. 6 Armida, Argante; Handel 1993b, 162–169). After duets expressing amorous unity between Almirena and Rinaldo in Act 1

185 **Aufteilung einer motivreichen thematischen Linie auf beide Vokalstimmen.**
186 **Erweist sich Händel als ein Meister des musikalischen Dialogs – wenngleich hier, anders als im *Aci*-Terzett, die Diskrepanz der Affekte bzw. die Differenz der Charaktere keine Role zu spielen scheint.**

and conflict between Rinaldo and Armida in Act 2, in Act 3 the opera's two villains are joining forces against the crusaders. In terms of its character as well as the techniques of combining both vocal and instrumental forces, it is in line with the stylistic and structural developments Handel showed in his cantatas and serenatas. The duet unites the protagonists in monotextual terms as in the first two lines (section A, b. 1–35) they express common determination and in the remaining two (section B, b. 36–59) they promise each other their hearts as a reward for this renewed unity against the Christians, which enabled Handel to create another sharp contrast with a ternary time signature (as against the A section's 4/4), a slower tempo and a mostly homophonic texture with elements of free counterpoint. Although the orchestral accompaniment (two oboes and strings *a quattro*) is maintained, it is doubling the voices for most of the time, whereas in section A it engaged in a *concertante* interplay with the voices. Section A also applies some of the techniques known from Handel's Italian duets. The figurative ritornello's (b. 1–7) first two bars are used as material for the—atypically—parallel and not successive onset of the voices (b. 7–9). This is followed by another variant of the *contrapunctus ligatus* type of texture known from previous duets (b. 10–12, repeated in varied form with the parts inverted in b. 12–14). The remainder of the section, however, outlines a tripartite structure of a higher degree of formal regularity than was the case in the dramatic duets written in Italy. After section A1 (b. 1–14) follows a somewhat different section A2 (b. 14–20), distinguished by alternating statements of passages in dotted rhythm evoking the character of a march and eventually combined into a free contrapuntal texture (b. 21–22). By positioning the alternations in the upper fourth and lower fifth, this section explores F major, returns to the tonic B-flat major and then ventures to E-flat major before returning again to the tonic. After this, section A3 (b. 20–35) resembles a varied repetition of section A1 and thus rounds off the duet's framing sections as a unified whole. This formal expansion of sections in Handel's dramatic duets that had already begun during his stay in Italy will be interesting to examine in the duets to come.

As opposed to that, "Per te, mio dolce bene" (III. 8 Mirtillo, Amarilli; Handel 1876a, 66–68; Handel recording, Il pastor fido), the duet in Handel's *Il pastor fido* (1712) does not seem to follow this trend at first by being merely monopartite. On the other hand it continues what Handel was striving for in the duets analysed so far, appropriating it to a dramatic situation he has not quite explored yet, although—as we have seen in Chapters 3.2.5, 3.3.1.3 and 3.3.2—London audiences saw it grow into a specific type of opera duet in the period 1710–1714. Rossi derived his libretto from another classic of Italian poetry, Giovanni Battista Guarini's pastoral play *Il pastor fido* (1585) by simplifying the plot and reducing the number of characters.

The nymph Amarilli has been sentenced to death because of her presumed infidelity to Silvio, to whom she was to be joined in matrimony because of a wrongly interpreted prophecy. There would be no love in this arranged marriage as Silvio is not interested in women (but will eventually fall for another nymph, Dorinda), and Amarilli's love for the shepherd Mirtillo is mutual, but unacknowledged out of a sense of obligation and because of the scheming of the nymph Eurilla, also in love with Mirtillo. The duet occurs just before Amarilli is about to be sacrificed because of her infidelity, after misunderstandings with Mirtillo had been cleared and their love finally confessed to each other. After Mirtillo expresses his wish to die in her place, in this tragic duet of departure they both sing the two lines "Per te, mio dolce bene / son contento/contenta di morir". The tragedy is conveyed with the use of G minor and what is probably a moderate or slower tempo, but it is difficult to denote in precise analytic terms why it drew the following words of praise from the otherwise rather picky Dean and Knapp (1987, 211): "a beautiful movement in that mood of tragic resignation that never failed to draw the best from Handel". Part of the reason must lie in the invocation of the imitative texture of the chamber duet. Atypically for an opera duet and therefore exercising the effect of surprise on the audience, Mirtillo opens the duet with an emphatic leap of a fifth followed by a syncopated crotchet, so often encountered in imitative structures. Only after this does the continuo join in to accompany the voice. After he had presented a rounded short subject (b. 1–3), Amarilli joins in what seems like imitation at first, but it turns out that Mirtillo is providing contrapuntal support for a short space of merely three beats (b. 3), rendering Mirtillo's statement of the subject (b. 3–4) a successive statement rather than an imitation. Suggesting a dense contrapuntal texture and eschewing these expectations is one of the main characteristics of this duet and perhaps this is not surprising since rather than for neighbouring voices, it was written for two sopranos, the castrato Valeriano Pellegrini and Elisabetta Pilotti Schiavonetti, who had already sung duets of departure in *Idaspe Fedele* and continued to do so in the pasticcios *Ernelinda* and *Lucio Vero*. Since two sopranos cannot be woven into a dense imitative texture because of their tendency to cross and become less independent, Handel combines them in a freer manner, using both *contrapunctus ligatus* (b. 5–6, 14–5) and a simultaneous texture of parallelism and contrary motion (b. 6–7, 9–10, 16–19) that often leads to cadences. In motivic terms, the opening subject gets lost on the way as Handel gives a prominent place only to the incipit (the ascending fifth leap) that serves as the point of departure for the only two (sequentially repeated) imitative structures in the duet (b. 10–14) and to the arpeggio originating in the subject (b. 1–2) and permeating the vocal texture in b. 6–7 and 16–7. The interplay between the orchestra and the

voices is also interestingly diverse: after mere continuo accompaniment at the outset, the strings join in to support the voices harmonically and start to gradually interweave—joined by oboes—motivic interjections into the texture while the voices are pausing (b. 7–8, 10–11, 12–13, 14–15). This process of increasing orchestral presence culminates in an imitatively dense and harmonically challenging final ritornello. Luckily, the ensuing *sinfonia* (Handel 1876, 68) announces the grand priest of Diana who brings happy news that the prophecy can be fulfilled by their own marriage instead of Amarilli's and Silvio's.

Most of the criticism levelled at Handel's next opera *Teseo* (1713) stems from the fact that it was adapted by Nicola Haym from Quinault's *tragédie lyrique* and therefore does not abide by the laws of the nascent *dramma per musica* (cf. Kimbell 1963; Dean and Knapp 1987, 236–248). Haym had to cut the recitative extensively and Handel decided to drop some lines that he had already set just before the performance. The arias (and duets), some of which were derived from Quinault's text and some newly added by Haym, are often not the exit numbers that began to be imposed as a norm in Italian opera and if they had their place in the French original, they were meant to be set as much shorter musical numbers. As a result, we are dealing with an unexpectedly high number of duets—four, some of them derived from Quinault, some of them by Haym—and their assignment and placing does not always conform to the hierarchy of roles and singers in Italian opera. Two duets for the third couple of protagonists (in other words: subsidiary characters), Egeo's confidant Arcane and Agilea's confidant Clizia would be unthinkable in an opera that assigns one to Teseo and Agilea on the one hand and Egeo and Medea on the other. As Dean and Knapp (1987, 246) have noticed, "they are the only pair of secondary lovers in a Handel opera to enjoy two duets. Both are excellent and particularly well integrated in their context". Handel made sure to differentiate the in musical terms from the ones written for the *primo* and *secondo uomo* and the two *prime donne*.

The first one of these, "Addio! Mio caro bene / Addio! Dolce mia vita" (I. 4 Clizia, Arcane; Handel 1874, 19–20; Handel recording, Teseo) follows after Clizia had persuaded Arcane to join Teseo in the defense of Athens. Although earlier in the scene Arcane displayed some jealousy over Teseo given the gratitude and admiration Clizia expressed for him because he had saved her, it is a typical duet of departure for reconciled lovers in a slower tempo and a minor key. Dean and Knapp praise how it is integrated into the action, flowing almost seamlessly out of the preceding recitative and how it "develops into an eloquent cavatina on a wide-ranging bass, and culminates, after a recitative cadence, in an exquisite and fully scored ritornello rich in the suspensions appropriate to the parting of lovers".

(Dean and Knapp 1987, 246–247) This closing ritornello (b. 50–57) presents an effective ending to this continuo duet similarly to "Per te, mio dolce bene", but the suspensions are not unique to it: we have encountered them in the *contrapunctus ligatus* sections of many a Handel's duet analysed so far. What fascinates one about this duet is how it almost sounds as if it was improvised, although we are dealing with a free tripartite form. The starting point and the conclusion of its first section (A1, b.1–16) is indeed a cadence. The voices start off by exchanging alternating statements on the semantic essence of the duet, the word "Addio", set to a D-T-D cadence in the tonic G minor. The continuo figuration that ensues (from b. 4 onwards, carried throughout almost the entirety of the duet) propels the duet forward, but Clizia and Arcane bring it to a halt it again by another cadence (b. 7–8). After this they alternate on independent, freely developed material, presenting the textual binary opposition "io parto" / "or vanne" before cadencing again in B-flat major. This is the key in which the middle section B (b. 17–32), marked by a possible contrast in tempo, unfolds Arcane's extensive statement (b. 17–24). Since this segment of the text is highly polytextual[187], Clizia's three lines are presented in succession (b. 25–32) to new material and in a contrasting key. Section A2, although the setting of the exact same text as A1, significantly extends the music, introducing the kind of sequentially repeated imitative counterpoint starting with fourth leaps (b. 37–41) familiar from "Per te, mio dolce bene". It seems that, inspired by the possibility to work together with Haym (who may have been following Handel's suggestions), Handel relished in the possibility to develop his own ideas of what a tragic duet of departure should be like. In doing so, he was not bound by conventions of performance practice like the need to supply star singers with the kind of duets they wanted to sing.

The duet "Unito a un puro affetto, non sa" (V. 5 Clizia, Arcane; Handel 1874, 103–104; Handel recording, Teseo), is slightly more extended than the previous duet of departure for Clizia and Arcane. It displays more virtuosity than was expected from a secondary pair of characters and it is indeed "surprising to find Clizia and Arcane stealing the principals' limelight towards the end of the opera" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 247), although Agilea and Teseo outplay them with their own duet in IV. 9. Table 53 shows the clear formal outlining of closed musical units characteristic of "Unito a un puro affetto" in spite of its asymmetrical phrase-lengths. The alignment of the text is not in harmony with this formal structuring, but the subsections of section A are clearly separated from each other by strong cadences and changes in the texture. The motivic kernel is once

187 **Arcane: Parto, ma parto in pene / Che teco resta ognor / Questo mio cor. Clizia: Breve sia la partita / Poi farò pago allor / Il tuo desio.**

again contained in the incipit, this time in the continuo part, for it gives the whole duet its main rhythmic impetus. Like "Al trionfo del nostro furore", this duet shows that it is possible to start out with vocal parallelism and leave contrapuntal combining for the section's subsequent course, although the stress is on the technique of vocal parallelism, obviously expressive of the idea of amorous unity between the characters. Parallelism is also more suitable to the section's songlike structure and it fittingly culminates in coloraturas at the end of section a3, thus leaving it to an abridged subsection a1 to round off the section. Section B is of a smaller scope and more conventional, displaying harmonic contrast and standard contrapuntal combining. The statement of the ritornello after the *da capo* repeat of section A is in line with 17th-century operatic conventions and it is not surprising that it reproduces textures, even whole passages from the vocal parts.

FORM		BAR	KEY	TEXT	DESCRIPTION
A	a_1	1–19	G	Unito a un puro affetto non sa che sia sospetto	main motif (continuo), parallelism
	a_2	20–39	D, G	non sa che sia sospetto un cor amante.	main motif over held note & free CP: repeated in inverted CP
	a_3	40–52	G	un cor amante.	parallelism (dotted flourishes)
	a_1'	53–63	G	non sa che sia sospetto / un cor amante.	parallelism (from a_1)
B	b_1	63–82	G, e	Non vo'che gelosia / entri nell'alma mia mà vo'che sia l'amor / sempre costante.	imitation, parallelism
	b_2	82–92	b	mà vo'che sia l'amor / sempre costante.	main motif over held note, free CP

TABLE 53.
Formal outline of the duet "Unito a un puro affetto" from Handel's *Teseo* (1713)

In terms of sheer vocal virtuosity, the duet "Cara!/Caro! Ti dono in pegno il cor" (IV. 9 Teseo, Agilea; Handel 1874, 84–88; Handel recording, Teseo) definitely shows that it was written for the *primo uomo* and *prima donna* of the production, although—as we shall see—Medea could hardly be called musically inferior to Agilea. Valeriano Pellegrini (Teseo), a soprano castrato in the service of the Elector Palatine in Düsseldorf and a "technically proficient rather than a glamorous singer" (Dean and Rosselli 2001) could

not have found the excessive coloratura in the duet too challenging, and Margherita de L'Epine (Agilea) had already sung similar duets in *Almahide*. Dean and Knapp are critical of Burney's judgement that the duet is "equal if not superior to any one of the kind that Handel ever composed", labelling it "decidedly verbose" and concluding ironically that "perhaps Handel is right after all: such an unpredictable shift of fortune is calculated to make any pair of lovers babble." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 245). Labelling extensive vocal figuration as verbose and babbling disregards the legitimacy of a duet that replicates the aesthetic of the *aria di bravura*, although there is no doubt that this is not one of the most inventive duets Handel wrote. Nevertheless, it reflects the trend for section expansion that Calella (2000, 135) describes as "'larger form' with two vocal section separated by a caesura cadence on the dominant (or in the case of a minor tonality, the relative major)"[188]. Nevertheless, I have to agree with Calella that "Sì ti lascio / Sì ti sprezzo" is a better example of this tendency than "Cara!/Caro! Ti dono in pegno il cor", whose two sections are of a somewhat uneven scope.

But let us examine this major-mode, jubilant celebratory duet more closely. Convinced that Medea is going to force Agilea to renounce Teseo, the lovers are relieved to see that she seemingly approves of their union after all. A sense of rhythmic vivacity is accomplished first and foremost by its composite ritornello (b. 1–9) built from as many as three motifs in the manner of the instrumental *concerto*, characterised by sixth and octave leaps as well as scalar passages. The voices are introduced over a caesura in longer note values that enables ornamentation in the *da capo* repeat (b. 10–11). This slowing down of pace is a sensual effect reserved for the portrayal of amorous bliss: Handel will make use of it in his Royal Academy of Music operas as well, e. g. in the duet for Cleopatra and the titular protagonist of *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (1724) and the duet for Costanza and Riccardo, "T'amo, si" in *Riccardo primo* (1727). After this effective debut, the voices will alternate on a generic motif unrelated to the ritornello (b. 12–14) only to be united in parallelism straight away (b. 14–16). The section makes limited recourse to some contrapuntal combining of the voices, mostly semiquaver flourishes against held notes or suspensions (b. 16–20) before it cadences in the dominant. This first subsection (a1, b. 1–24) is shorter than the second one (a2, b. 24–58) but equally interspersed with orchestral interjections of motifs from the ritornello and thus vitalising the lack of invention in the vocal parts. The extended parallelism making out the second subsection renders it different from the first one: after alternation with the same motif as in a1 (b. 25–28) and a contrapuntal passage

188 **‚Grössere Form' mit zwei, durch einen zäsurbildenden Schluß auf der Dominante (oder, im Fall einer moll-Tonart, in der Dur-Parallele) getrennten Gesangsteilen.**

likewise modelled on the one from a1 (b. 30–34), the voices continue to spin out semiquaver coloratura passages in thirds, Agilea's part positioned under Teseo's, who was obviously considered the bigger *virtuoso*. Section B stays true to this kind of structuring, offering little contrast bar the obligatory modulation and the reduction of the accompaniment to the continuo. It starts out with an imitation of a semiquaver passage derived from section A (b. 57–65, the interrupted suspensions from the continuo adopted as Agilea's counterpoint to Teseo), and the whole passage is repeated—transposed and inverted—in b. 72–76. An equally important role is played by a contrapuntal passage juxtaposing a new, sequential and rhythmically pregnant motif to a held note (b. 67–72). This passage is also repeated transposed and with the parts inverted in b. 81–85, giving section B motivic unity and a sense of harmonic direction as it explores related minor keys. There was no model for this duet text in the original Quinault libretto and this is certainly felt in Handel's Italianate *di bravura* setting.

Calella (2000, 135) considers "Sì ti lascio / Sì ti sprezzo" (II. 2 Medea, Egeo; Handel 1874, 35–37; Handel recording, Teseo) the first duet in which Handel employed the above mentioned A section in "larger form" and found that henceforth this structural model was to become the norm for many of his duets. He is mistaken in the assumption that this structural model appears here for the first time since among the duets examined in this chapter, the A sections of "Il voler nel fior degl'anni" from *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* and "Senza occhi e senza accenti" (the original, Roman closing duet of *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno*) already clearly outline it. The duet from *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* is the more regular one of the two as it follows alternation (over a held note) with *contrapunctus ligatus* and then parallelism, also separating the two subsections with a fragment of the ritornello in the dominant key of D major. "Senza occhi e senza accenti" is more extended than "Il voler nel fior degl'anni" and also freer in the application of the vocal techniques of alternation, counterpoint and parallelism, which only proves that the structural model consisting of several cycles of these techniques that I had devised earlier (cf. Ćurković 2009 & 2010) should not be taken as a strict norm, for Handel can often combine them several times in different orders. We are evidently dealing with a trend towards formal expansion and complexity of the framing sections in *da capo* form. "Al trionfo del nostro furore" from *Rinaldo* presents an intermediary stage between Calella's "larger form" and a monopartite one since it does not separate the subsections of section A with a clear cadence but articulates a small-scale tripartite form with a contrasting middle section. But even if it is not Handel's first duet in Calella's "larger form", "Sì ti lascio / Sì ti sprezzo" is exceptional in many other ways, including its dramaturgy. "Handel strikes a shrewd dramatic blow by using

the procedure of a love scene to suggest something like its opposite, not so much a clash of wills as an agreement to differ with strong reservations on each side." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 241) Dean and Knapp compare it to "Ich will gar von nichtes wissen" (I. 10 Edilia, Osman; Handel 1994a, 75–77), a duet from *Almira* along entirely different stylistic lines since it occurs in a similar situation where two former lovers are ridding themselves of their previous bond. Nevertheless, in *Teseo* the duet is more confrontational, following Egeo's announcement that instead of himself, he wants Medea to marry his son. Although it is equally clear that both of them are interested in other, younger partners (Egeo in Agilea and Medea in Teseo), Medea reacts to this in anger and the duet is the musical venting of the irritation that both characters are feeling, almost competing with each other in the intensity of mutual repudiation. We are dealing with a case of polytextuality[189] that does not reflect opposing affective contents or character traits: in a way, Medea and Egeo are not even in conflict as both of them want to end the relationship. Rather than having the function of some sort of semantic distinction, the variants "lascio/sprezzo" and "fuggirmi/schernirmi" in the text serve to differentiate the voices in the texture, although this is not consistently implemented. Handel takes this differentiation to the musical plane by giving the voices different and contrasting motivic material in section A.

As Calella had noticed, it is built from two sections, each one presenting the material in vocal alternating statements and then combining the voices in free counterpoint and parallelism on the way to a cadence. This first subsection (A1, b. 1–32) persists in the association of Medea's line "Sì ti lascio" with an ascending fourth leap followed by a descending second (motif x, first occurrence b. 10–11) and Egeo's "Sì ti sprezzo" with a descending semiquaver passage (motif y, first occurrence b. 12–13). They alternate twice (b. 10–14) and then engage in imitation derived from motif x (b. 14–17) before the whole process of successive exchanges of contrasting motifs is repeated in the dominant key of C major in b. 19–23. However, this time the parts are inverted and—as a result—Egeo is singing "Sì ti lascio" and motif x, while Medea answers him with motif y and the respective line, "Sì ti sprezzo". Although it seems that Handel set out to differentiate his protagonists at first, this shows that they are in fact interchangeable and that their fates are inextricably linked. The remainder of this second part of A1 consists of a parallel texture (b. 24–28), which is a more appropriate way to lead up to the cadence in C major (b 31–32). Subsection A2 (b. 32–62)

189 **A section. Medea: Sì ti lascio. Egeo: Sì ti sprezzo. a 2: Altro cor io chiudo in petto. B section. Medea: Tu credesti col fuggirmi / Egeo: Tu pensasti col schernirmi / a 2: Che il mio cor fosse privo / d'orgni altro affetto.**

brings further changes: this time it opens with alternating statements of motif x only, both Medea and Egeo singing their original lines to it, whereas motif y is transferred to the violin part where it alternates with motif x in the same way it did in a1 (b. 32–37). The duet began with the lovers almost competing to retort each other as quickly as possible and with contrasting replicas, the short alternating statements being reminiscent of exchanges in a heated argument. After the association of each of the characters with his or her motif (and line) has diminished in the course of subsection A1, it is almost completely abandoned in subsection A2. Its subsequent course seems to confirm this: after a brief imitative passage (b. 38–40), the voices are led further parallel or in cadential passages, without any further alternation like in subsection A1. Does an increased vocal simultaneity for Medea and Egeo suggest that we are in fact dealing with an "agreement to differ" after all? Not necessarily, for Handel might have abandoned the contrasting motivic differentiation for the sake of textural diversity only. This duet draws attention by interweaving the voices as equals into an orchestra that consists of two independent parts for oboes and violas and only one for violins. The fact that at the beginning of section a2 the violins take over motif y must be regarded as one step in the textural diversification of the duet. Section B (b. 62–82) drops the orchestral accompaniment and explores the relative minor keys of the tonic and the dominant. Structurally it is similar in that it alternates between newly devised motifs that highlight the polytextuality and a simultaneous texture. It does so in two shorter subsections and also consistently reserves its first line for Medea and the second for Teseo, but as we are dealing with free derivation of material derived from the same kernel as opposed to a motivic contrast, nothing is added to the successfully conveyed impression that Medea and Egeo are turning to a different love ("altro affetto") only to spite each other.

Lucio Cornelio Silla (1713) is Handel's opera we know least about. Chrysander's assumption that it was only performed privately, most probably at Burlington House, has been confirmed. Dean and Knapp (1987, 263) and Strohm (2008, 43) are of the opinion that Rossi adapted the libretto from an older model. Although as short as *Il pastor fido* and *Imeneo* (both operas with pastoral subjects, which justifies the brevity), there is no doubt that *Silla* belongs to the genre of opera seria, whatever the shortcomings of its libretto. Dean and Knapp (1987, 264) have high words of praise for the two duets for which music has been preserved. The duet "Non s'estingue mai la fiamma" (III. 10 Silla, Metella; Handel 2015, 122–128; Handel recording, Silla) printed in the HHA edition of the opera is anoter reconstruction: the duet text was printed in the libretto, but there is no musical source documenting Handel's setting, so the duet "Prendi l'alma, prendi il core"

from *Rodrigo*, "which has the same verse-metre" (Preface in Handel 2015, 17), was adapted in its place transposed from the original G major to F major, probably in order to fit in with the disposition of tonalities in the opera. Handel did not normally engage in parody as direct as that. In the duet borrowings we have encountered so far he regularly adapted them in accordance with conventions of genre (cantata, serenata, opera), but also with the new dramaturgic context and affective content. He rarely took over whole duets note for note, and this would have probably not happened in *Silla* either. However, the fact that the two texts are in the same verse-metre is an odd coincidence given that both were assigned to a reconciled cheating husband and forgiving wife. Rodrigo does not display any of Silla's pathological behaviour—threats to rape Flavia and Celia and to kill Flavia's husband Lepido as well as Claudio—but the dramaturgic parallels between the two duets are striking. As we shall see in the comparison of the duets "Sol per te, bell'idol mio" and "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" from *Amadigi,* it was perfectly acceptable to Handel to reach for a duet he composed earlier, either because of a lack of time or in order to reap more success from it, but the transformation that "Sol per te", the first duet from *Silla* underwent in *Amadigi* suggests that a duet from *Rodrigo* written six years before would have been likewise adapted in some way. True, the difference between the dramatic situations in *Silla* and *Amadigi* is more pronounced, but as we shall see, this was probably not the main motivator for Handel's adaptation of "Sol per te, bell'idol mio" into "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore".

The other two duets in the opera are written for Flavia and Lepido, the secondary couple that, according to Dean and Knapp, outshine Silla and Metella with their music: "Both their duets, sung in the tyrant's shadow, are in minor keys, and both are excellent." (1987, 264–265) As had already been established in Chapter 3.3.3.1 when it was considered as a possible replacement for the unpreserved duet at the point in the action where Esilena takes leave from Rodrigo, "Ti lascio, idolo mio" (II. 10 Lepido, Flavia; Handel 2015, 87–88; Handel recording, Silla) displays some features of the chamber duet, but it does not implement them consistently since its purpose is to underline briefly and effectively the tragedy of departure. We have seen how Handel set an opera duet of departure for the first time (if we leave the unpreserved duet from *Rodrigo* out of consideration) in *Il pastor fido.* Similarly to "Per te, mio dolce bene", in this duet he did not strive for a complex form either, but while the former makes use of all the duet techniques explored in this study, including a ritornello form type of interplay with the orchestra, "Ti lascio idolo mio" is so short that we could label it an arioso *a due*. It consists of an imitation of the opening motif in b. 1–3, a seeming cadence in A major in b. 3, followed by a free contrapuntal

passage (b. 4–7) that contains a *contrapunctus ligatus* texture modulating via a sequence of secondary dominants back into the tonic F minor, "the tonality of sadness and pain, of death and the underworld"[190] (Leopold 2009, 83), according to the theory of affections as outlined in Mattheson's *Das neu-eröffnete Orchestre*. A brief cadence (b. 8–9) silences the voices and the closing ritornello Dean and Knapp praised so much as "a five-bar threnody of haunting contrapuntal eloquence" is based on the material already presented contrapuntally by the voices and the continuo, and is meant to accompany the moments when Flavia and Lepido are escorted offstage by Silla's guards (as the stage instructions say, "partono, custoditi da soldati"). Handel evidently wanted to achieve the maximum effect possible in so little space. A year before in "Per te, mio dolce bene" and earlier in 1713 in "Cara!/Caro! Ti dono in pegno il cor" he was developing a duet type, but had not yet reached the full-scale *da capo* form adopted by the duet of departure in the operas and pasticcios compiled from works of his Italian contemporaries that were performed alongside his operas in London at the time. As we shall see in Chapter 3.4.2, he gave a fully mature contribution to it only in his Royal Academy of Music operas. At this stage, Handel was still experimenting, and in "Ti lascio, idolo mio" he was at his most immediate and, if one will, also at his most bold when giving musical shape to a tragic departure.

The duets "Sol per te, bell'idol mio" (II. 6 Lepido, Flavia; Handel 2015, 71–76; Handel recording, Silla) and "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" (III. 3 Oriana, Amadigi; Handel 1971, 141–147; Handel recording, Amadigi) from the opera *Amadigi di Gaula* (1715) present—as had already been implied—one of the more interesting cases of self-parody in Handel's dramatic duet output. That is why after an examination of their respective dramaturgic contexts, they will undergo a comparative structural analysis. In *Silla*, the duet occurs just after Lepido had informed Flavia of Silla's lust for her: she reacts by saying that she would rather die than yield to the tyrant and he vows revenge. The duet consists of a pledge of love in section A and the invocation of Alecto's wrath in section B.[191] Unfortunately, this determination of the couple gives way to the musical hopelessness embodied in "Ti lascio, idolo mio" only four scenes later. Occurring in a similar situation of utter despair, *Amadigi di Gaula* (1715) unites the titular hero and his beloved, the princess Oriana in their last plea to the sorceress Melissa, who holds them captive and is unsure whom she should kill first to exact her revenge on Amadigi for rejecting her love. Although both duets depict a

190 **Der Trauer und des Schmerzes, des Todes und der Unterwelt.**

191 **Lepido & Flavia: A section. Sol per te, bell'idol mio, / il mio cor ha gioia e pace. B section. Chi tentar vorrà il mio petto / proverà di cruda Aletto / l'ardente face.**

serious predicament and express their distress, the affective contents are quite different: Flavia and Lepido radiate revolt and resistance and the formerly proud Amadigi and Oriana beg Melissa for mercy.[192]

FORM		BAR	KEY	"SOL PER TE" (SILLA)	"CANGIA" (AMADIGI)	KEY	BAR	FORM	
A	rit.	1–18	a	Keiser motif (k), *Fortspinnung*		1–18	g	rit.	A
	a_1	19–35		k in overlapping alternation		19–35		a_1	
		36–47	a, C	free CP, *CP ligatus*	free CP, parallelism	36–45	g, B♭		
	a_2^*	48–66	C, a	*Fortspinnung* of k, k in orchestra, *fermata* cadence		46–64	B♭,g	a_2^{**}	
		67–92	a	sequential free CP, parallelism, cadence	alternation over held note	65–89	g		
	rit.	93–110		different from opening rit.	different from opening rit.	90–101		rit.	
B		111–142	a, e	free CP, parallelism	mostly parallelism	102–121	g, d	B	

TABLE 54.
Comparative formal outline of Handel's duets "Sol per te, bell'idol mio" from *Silla* (1713) and "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" from *Amadigi di Gaula* (1715)

* The "border" between a1 and a2 is actually in b. 54.
** The "border" between a1 and a2 is actually in b. 52.

Interestingly, when he composed "Sol per te, bell'idol mio", Handel made use of material from an aria in Reinhard Keiser's opera *Octavia* (1705), "Kann dich mein Arm" (I. 2 Nero, Octavia; Keiser 1902, 15–18). The opera was published as a supplement to Chrysander's *Georg Friedrich Händels Werke* due to the fact that Handel extensively parodied it, "implying a process of deliberate foraging rather than spontaneous recollection", according to John Roberts (1986, 55). I have already stated that this study will not engage in an in-length discussion on questions of Handel's parody practices, but even a rudimentary examination of Keiser's original aria, whose construction is entirely different from Handel's duets', shows that Handel borrowed merely the main motivic idea in its first two bars. Both Keiser and Handel used it as a starting point for the outlining of the vocal

192 Amadigi & Oriana: A section. Cangia al fine il tuo rigore / Senti oh Dio di noi pietà. B section. Deh' ti muova il mio dolore, / troppo usasti crudeltà.

and the instrumental parts[193], but while Keiser mainly alternates the motif in different parts to pedal accompaniment, Handel's treatment of it is much more developmental as in his ritornello he submits Keiser's motif to extensive *Fortspinnung*, reaching as many as 18 bars in both versions of the duet. The more complex structure and the scope of the duet turn away from Keiser's aria, the above mentioned motif being the only common denominator. Table 54 lines up Handel's two duets together, differentiating passages in which they concur and ones in which they differ. After developing his own duet design with the use of Keiser's material in "Sol per te, bell'idol mio", Handel was prepared to vary it in accordance to the needs of the duet in *Amadigi di Gaula*.

The table above highlights the parallels between the two duets in a common column and the differences in separate columns, but not necessarily their common overall formal structure. Their A sections are examples of Calella's "larger form", cadencing on the relative major (C/B-flat major) midway through the section, and followed by a brief statement of the ritornello in the orchestra as the unfolding of the phrase beginning with Keiser's motif (k) is halted on a cadence each time the voices join in (b. 59–60 and 64–65 in "Sol per te, bell'idol mio"; b. 56–57 and 63–64 in "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore"). This puts a significant musical stress on the key words "sol per te" and "pietà", contributing to a poignant dramatic effect. As if momentarily discouraged by the sudden interruption of motif k and the harmonic *caesura* on the dominant, the lovers can only repeat what is important to them at this stage. For Lepido and Flavia this is their insistence on staying true to each other in spite of Silla's aggression, for Amadigi and Oriana "pity", but—in the sort of idealised amorous relationship that characterises the world of opera seria—never for the self, always selflessly for the other. Whether these brief moments of musical standstill are gestures of fear embodied in the music is open to interpretation. What is beyond doubt is that Handel took a motif that nearly reaches the status of an ostinato in the original context of Keiser's aria to propel his own duet forward, permeating the entirety of section A with its impulse. In both duets it is clear already from the ritornello that Handel wants to manipulate expectations on phrase-lengths: the repetition of Keiser's motif (b. 1–3 in the oboes and 4–6, enhanced by the *tutti* orchestra) gives the impression of interruption and the remainder of the ritornello vacillates between binary and ternary phrases, although in hindsight it seems that it is clearly

193 **Keiser's aria is scored for violins in unison, whereas both Handel's duets have independent parts for two oboes, two violins and a viola. "The scoring is richer and the development of the ideas more extended than in most of *Silla*." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 264–265)**

constructed of six three-bar phrases. The energetic impulse of motif k with its specific rhythmic (dotted semiquaver followed by a demisemiquaver, two quavers, a crotchet and another quaver) and melodic contours always seems to announce the beginning of a new phrase. After the voices set in in b. 19 of both duets, the interplay will continue since Handel conceived the alternation of motif k (extended to four bars) in interlocking pseudo-imitation. Flavia sets off at the last bar of Lepido's statement of the four-bar phrase (b. 22) with her own rendition of the phrase and the whole process is repeated in b. 25 with Lepido's entry now being premature. Thus we have three four-bar phrases coated on top of each other, building a structure of three times three bars (b. 19–27). After this, the entries in both duets are more widely spaced out and Handel varies the motif k in different ways.

The differences between the two duets refer mostly to the transitional passages and the filling material they use, as well as the whole of section B. Whereas in the duet from *Silla* Handel was more prone to *Fortspinnung* and free figuration, especially in passages such as b. 36–47 and 67–84 with a complementary or simultaneous semiquaver pulse, in *Amadigi di Gaula* he was more restrained, keeping the transitional passages in line with the rest of the duet. He often permeated them with motif k juxtaposed to a held note accompaniment (and thus looking back to a certain extent to Keiser's aria) or with a parallel movement in quavers, e. g. in sections such as b. 36–45 and 65–79. "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" is less exuberant and slightly more simple in its vocal figuration than the somewhat more melismatic and—as Dean and Knapp would say—verbose "Sol per te, bell'idol mio". Is this why they had the following impression, failing to mention the self-borrowing from *Silla*? "The imploring duet with Oriana has something of the atmosphere of a Bach church cantata." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 284) To a certain extent the dramaturgic context accounts for these differences: in *Silla* the characters are more self-confident and assertive, in *Amadigi* frightened for each other's lives. The fact that the soloists who sang the two duets had not only different ranges but also contrasting personalities probably played a role, too. Whereas "Sol per te, bell'idol mio" was sung by the soprano castrato Pellegrini and Margherita de L'Epine, "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" welcomed Nicolini back to his second Handel role with an entirely different soprano in the person of Anastasia Robinson at his side.

After *Teseo*, two years went by before the premiere of Handel's next opera *Amadigi*, and this time left a mark on the development of Handel's style. In another adaptation of a French libretto, Haym reworked Antoine Houdar de La Motte's *Amadis de Grèce,* set by André *Destouches* in 1699. According to Dean and Knapp (1987, 275), it does not measure up to the high literary standards of Quinault, but "the production of *Amadigi* shows Handel still under the spell of Burlington House and the classicistic,

French-oriented taste of the aristocracy" (Strohm 2008, 43). "Crudel, tu non farai" (II. 4 Melissa, Amadigi; Handel 1971, 93–102; Handel recording, Amadigi) was another insertion on the part of Haym (cf. Kimbell 1968; Ćurković 2009, 84–85). Melissa's attempt to win Amadigi over at the beginning of Act 2 is more nuanced in the original, whereas Haym wanted to confront the characters as sharply as possible, which is why Melissa's quick temper breaks out in menaces early on in the recitative dialogue, the altercation culminating in a clear case of a duet of conflict for equal adversaries. The duet's text, reproduced in Table 55, is monotextual in its section A but brings polytextual variants of most of its lines for the two characters in its middle section. However, as we shall see, this aspect and the quantity of lines does not reflect Handel's setting which clearly puts his musical emphasis on section A by composing it in Calella's "larger form" that shows the highest degree of structural unity and the most consistent implementation of contrapuntal techniques in Handel's duets examined so far.

FORM	CHRACTERS	TEXT
A	Amadigi & Melissa:	Crudel, tu non farai Ch'il tuo rigor giamai Perturbi la costanza.
B	Amadigi:	Ho petto da soffrire
	Melissa:	Si hai petto da soffrire
	A 2:	Ogn'aspro e rio martire,
	Amadigi:	Nè temo il tuo rigor
	Melissa:	Torrò col'mio rigor
	Amadigi:	Nè tua possanza.
	Melissa:	La tua speranza.

TABLE 55.
Text of the duet "Crudel, tu non farai" from the opera *Amadigi di Gaula* (1715)

This is one of the most markedly monothematic duets of Handel's opera duets as it derives most of the material of section A from the opening motif. In fact, as most of the material shares the rhythmic pattern of an upbeat quaver followed by two pairs of dotted quavers followed by a semiquaver, one could even say that all the motifs in the duet are derived from this proto-motif (x). For instance, the opening ritornello (b. 1–13) is a periodic structure that consists of a phrase built from motifs x1 (b. 1–3) + x2 (b. 3–7) that cadences on the dominant and another phrase built from motifs x1 (b.

7–9) + x2' (b. 9–13) cadencing on the tonic. The last two bars of both these phrases see the remainder of the orchestra joined to the two oboes that start out each phrase, in a way occupying the same place in the *concertante* texture that is later given to the two voices. The vocal parts open with a motif (x1', first occurrence in b. 13–16 in Oriana's part, followed by Amadigi in abridged form in b. 16–17) imitated to a pedal note counterpoint in the other voice, but according to the rules of tonal reply. Handel consistently uses pseudo-imitation in this sense, allowing himself some flexibility by subjecting the material to variation. After a free contrapuntal section with some voice-crossing that modulates to the dominant, an abridged ritornello will round off the first subsection (A1) of this "larger form". Its second part (A2, b. 28–66) is much longer, to the extent that one could begin to think that instead of a bipartite we are dealing with a tripartite conception. However, there are no strongly marked cadences or ritornello*s* before the final one to articulate further clearly-demarcated subsections. Instead, Handel makes the (quasi-)contrapuntal web even more complex. After imitating the head of x1 in free inversion (b. 28–29, 36–37) he modulates into the subdominant, but switches back to the tonic in the only unequivocally parallel vocal passage so far (b. 41–44). After this he engages in the alternation of a fragmentary variant of motif x (x3, b. 44–48) on the text "tu non farai" that culminates with a cadential, vocally simultaneous *caesura* on the key word "crudel", reminiscent of the outcries of "per te" and "pietà" in the two previously analysed duets. This is followed by the only genuinely imitative, canonical section in the duet, a sequential imitation based on motif x2. After a longer parallel passage, a new rhythmic motif of undulating triplets (b. 53–55) is introduced. Dean and Knapp (1987, 284) found that the treatment of this figure is symptomatic of "the improvisatory working of Handel's invention", and although spontaneous parallel outbreaks of the sort were usually reserved for moments of jubilation, Handel integrated it into the closing ritornello and even more importantly, into section B, too. Much shorter (b. 66–81) and more simple than section A, it dispenses with the orchestra and clearly organises the voices into smaller subsections (b. 66–74 and 74–81) that imitate a motif derived from x before bursting into the aforementioned triplets, while exploring related minor tonal centres.

Given the fact that section A is a setting of a single sentence split up into three lines shared by both characters, it is amazing how dialogic it can feel at times. In spite of contrapuntal combining, the lines are mostly stated in succession so that the integrity of the sentence is preserved, with the exception of the above mentioned emphatic treatment of "crudel" and "tu non farai". At this stage in the dramatic action, Amadigi is showing steadfast resistance to Melissa and although constantly resorting

to threats, she is still trying to win him over by her magical skills and her cunning. It is all the more fascinating with how many different meanings they imbue the relatively simple and unambiguous statement. Both are calling each other "crudel" (from Melissa's point of view, it is Amadigi who is cruel) and both are referring to their constancy ("costanza", a word underlined by melismatic ornaments), Amadigi to his constancy to Oriana and Melissa to—in her opinion—Amadigi. Clearly, if the same words set to the same or similar music can represent not only different affective stances but also such opposed personalities, the conflict is irreconcilable and it will inevitably lead to the situation that is at the heart of "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" and Melissa's subsequent shocking onstage suicide. By putting her in a parallel position to Amadigi, this duet leaves the door open for the possibility that Melissa is in the right as much as him, at least in musical terms. The duet "Sì ti lascio / Sì ti sprezzo", with the ambiguous relationship between the characters due to their unresolved past, at first sought to differentiate Egeo and Medea but later almost joined them in a simultaneous texture minuet. On the other hand, in "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" the conflict is very clearly focused with both protagonists fixated upon their positions and as such unresolvable. Handel found the most appropriate musical means to evoke both.

3. 4.
THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC (1720–1724) WITH EMPHASIS ON BONONCINI AND HANDEL

3. 4. 1.
Bononcini's Dramatic Duets

> Some say, compar'd to Bononcini
> That Mynheer Handel's but a Ninny
> Others aver, that he to Handel
> Is scarcely fit to hold a Candle
> Strange all this Difference should be
> 'Twixt Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee![194]

The oft-quoted epigram above (Burrows et al. 2013, 146) first saw light in *The London Journal* in 1725 when the rivalry between Handel and Bononcini as opera composers for the Royal Academy of Music in London had already ceased but was still vivid in the public's imagination. The satirist's perspective concerns the over-the-top animosity between the two composers' supporters in what he considered a uniform foreign genre. However, for a public more versed in music "it was not really a case of 'Tweedledum and Tweedledee': Handel and Bononcini clearly had distinct musical styles that could coexist in the opera programmes, with Bononcini's qualities lying in a lighter, tuneful vein (particularly in the pastoral style) as against Handel's strength in large dramatic canvases demanding strong musical characterization and sustained compositional skill." (Burrows et al. 2013, 145–146) In the realm of opera, Handel's and Bononcini's styles have been pitted against each other since their coexistence on the London operatic stage in the 1710s and the 1720s. Several house composers at the Royal Academy of Music were a practical necessity (at least in the first four years of its existence) since the great demand for operas could not be met by a single composer.[195] Besides the press, contemporary theorists and historians also contributed to the tendency to compare. For instance, in 1727 Johann Joachim Quantz saw performances of Handel's operas and Bononcini's *Astianatte*, noting that "Handel's bass line prevailed over Bononcini's

194 The author of this epigram is John Byrom, although the last two lines may be by Swift or Alexander Pope.

195 Third in the circle was Attilio Ariosti, but for reasons already outlined earlier, this study leaves a more detailed exploration of his contribution to London's operatic life out of consideration.

treble"[196] (quoted in Clausen 1996, 169). Thus he hinted at the rootedness of Handel's style in a firm harmonic fundament and Bononcini's in an attractive melody.

As a topos, the binary opposition between the thorough and profound on the one hand, and the pleasing but superficial on the other became rooted in later reception and perpetuated itself in the writings of Mainwaring, Burney and Chrysander as well, who all compared Bononcini to Handel in favour of the latter. Burney wrote that Bononcini "possessed a felicitous melodic invention for the mild and tender, less so for the dramatic"[197], while Chrysander was even less flattering in claiming that Bononcini wrote "truly thoughtless music in a truly beautiful way and he was liked by his age"[198] (Eitner 1900, 119). According to Hueber (1955, 1), Chrysander is responsible for the perception of Bononcini as a composer who rivalled Handel by making concessions to public taste. Also, the binary opposition was given a topical aspect by associating Handel with the heroic style and its elevated affects and Bononcini with the pastoral style's "sighing emotions" and "tender moods" (cf. d in Bennett and Lindgren 2001). The ambivalence in the evaluation of Bononcini's music reflects the changes in musical style during his lifetime:

> In 1716 J.E. Galliard had termed Bononcini's style "agreeable and easy", but by the late 1720s it was found to be lulling rather than exciting, and was derided by some "very fine Gentlemen for its too great Simplicity" (*The Craftsman*, 10 June 1727). If we hear this "simplicity" as both the final stages of 17th-century bel canto and the precursor of *galant* and pre-Classical melodies, it aptly becomes the touchstone of taste at the turning-point around 1700. […]. In the decades after 1700, however, when Bononcini's arias became markedly longer and more fully accompanied, their Handelian proportions were infrequently supported by the musical substance and inner propulsion which justifies such length in Handel's works or by the neutral, concerto-like figuration which maintains the momentum in Vivaldi's or Vinci's. (Bennett and Lindgren 2001)

Thus the music of this "somewhat older man whose style was more idiomatically Italian and up-to-date" (Taruskin 2010, 312) than Handel's is

196 **Händels Grundstimme überwog Bononcinis Oberstimme.**

197 **Besaß eine glückliche melodische Erfindung für das Sanfte und Zarte, weniger für das Dramatische.**

198 **Wahrhaft gedankenlose Musik auf eine wahrhaft schöne Weise und er gefiel seiner Zeit.**

associated with both older and newer tendencies, but not everybody was willing to view this ambiguity as worthy of scholarly attention, the aesthetic worshippers of Handel's works being particularly dismissive of Bononcini. According to Lindgren (1977, 98), Dent "derided Bononcini as 'intolerably conventional and artificial in his buckram truculence', while he at the same time admitted to hearing 'an irresistible swing' in Bononcini's melodies since 'one cannot help being attracted to the Handelian vigour of his style'". There lies another reception topos, the assumption that Bononcini's strong points reside in his similarity to Handel. Even Kurt Hueber, who wrote a dissertation on Bononcini's Vienna operas with the best intentions to focus on Bononcini's idiosyncrasies perpetuates the topos when he writes that "Camilla displays for the first time a musical style that is to be denoted in its pathetic stance as purely Handelian and does not appear so distinctly in any of Handel's predecessors"[199] (Hueber 1955, 34). It follows somewhat contradictorily that Bononcini reminds us of Handel when he makes use of both minor-mode chromatic and major-mode diatonic idioms. Dean and Knapp (1987, 149) were more nuanced in their criticism of Bononcini, highlighting the traits that may have diminished the developmental capacities of his melodic and rhythmic style:

> Bononcini appears as a graceful melodist, apt in declamation but addicted to stereotyped harmonic patterns and automatic sequences and repetitions. […] Above all, the music lacks dramatic vigour, paying more attention to smoothness and regularity than to the expression of emotion or character.

Wolff (cf. 1957; 1975b, 74–86; 1975a) was perhaps the most benevolent in his evaluation of not only Bononcini but of Handel's other Italian contemporaries such as Lotti, Gasparini, too. He distances himself from Chrysander's view of Bononcini as a "superficial 'entertainer' of a pleasure-loving society, a 'reactionary' who tried in vain to imitate Handel's 'noble style'", rightly stressing that "Handel found in Bononcini's operas a great source of inspiration" (Wolff 1975b, 74). He attempts to explain why Bononcini's music is sometimes more short-breathed than Handel's, rather than putting this down to the composer's deficiencies. The fact that Bononcini tended to compose shorter forms (e. g. songlike arias) as opposed to Handel's worked out grand *da capo* designs could be interpreted as a sign of generational differences as Handel was 15 years younger and Bononcini had built a

199 **In der 'Camilla' zeigt sich zum ersten Male ein Musikstil ausgebildet, der in seiner pathetischen Haltung als rein Händelisch zu bezeichnen ist und der bei keinem der Vorgänger Händels in dieser Weise ausgeprägt erscheint.**

career (and a distinctive style) as a young composer in the 1690s. Wolff finds that Bonocini's themes, motifs and formulaic structures made their way into the thesaurus of the baroque style and may have even been taken over by Bach or Vivaldi, although this is problematic since it is impossible to prove who took over what from whom. Dismissing criticism for a lack of development in Bononcini's music, Wolff (1957, 10) sees a strict sense of motivic unity, labelling the composer's arias "monothematic" because he only slightly varies the melodic content: "Bononcini, a master of melodic variation, was particularly fond of varying a short basic theme in such a way that a strict and ordered terseness of structure developed."

We need to remind ourselves that Bononcini was respected in his own country and abroad (in Paris and London) in the realm of vocal chamber music, especially his cantatas and by extension also his chamber duets. (Lindgren, 2009, 162) Although Bononcini's chamber and dramatic duets display less contrast, his musical skills made the strongest impact on his contemporaries in the non-dramatic domain of the cantata. In one of the main arguments in favour of the titular "relativity of historical judgement", Wolff (1957, 6) shows that Viéville's critique of Bononcini proves that his music had an entirely different effect on its listeners in the early 18th century than later when this impression was replaced by dullness, as witnessed by Galliard's and Burney's statements quoted above. We must nevertheless be sensitive to the fact that Bononcini built himself a reputation of "a bold innovator" whose music was "spiced with unusual dissonances and rapid modulations which horrified many of his contemporaries" (Wolff 1975b, 75) mainly in his small-scale works such as cantatas and not on the grand operatic stage.

3. 4. 1. 1.
Development before London

In previous chapters (most notably Chapter 3.2) we already had the chance to follow the development of Bononcini's duets on the London stage. This subchapter will attempt to preface the close examination of Bononcini's duets written for the Royal Academy of Music (Chapter 3.4.1.2) with a selective overview of his previous compositions in the realm of the dramatic duet written for and performed in other centres than the British capital, mostly in the period 1693–1710. In the overall selection of duets listed in Table 56, some duets will receive particular analytical scrutiny. In line with the methodology applied so far, even though not all the duets in a given work will receive equal attention, all of them will be considered in order to gain an insight into how Bononcini organised his duets in large-scale works. Besides operas, only a couple of works belonging to other

YEAR	WORK	SCENE	TEXT	CHARACTERS	VOICES
1693	*La nemica d'amore fatta amante*	no. 4	Per te peno / moro	Tirsi, Clori	A, S
1693	*La nemica d'amore fatta amante*	no. 10	Basta il tuo fallo / sguardo	Clori, Fileno	S. B
1693	*San Nicola di Bari*	II no. 10	Quando il Cielo alle colpe s'adira	Giovanna, San Nicola	S, S
1701	*La conversione di Maddalena*	I no. 4	Chi sol prezza / chi disprezza	Maddalena, Marta	S, A
		I no. 10	Goderò / Ti pentirai	Maddalena, Amor Divino	S, S
		I no. 11	Piangerò / T'inganni a fè	Maddalena, Amor Profano	S, B
		II no. 4	Goderà ne sacri ardori/ Senza riso e senza onori	Maddalena, Marta	S, A
		II no. 14	Al nume umanato / La fede	Maddalena, Marta	S, A
1702	*Cefalo e Procride*	Scena 7	Sì, sì che la colpa sono	Procride, Cefalo	S, MS
		Scena u.	Non vien per nuocer sempre	Cefalo, Procride	MS, S
1707	*Turno Aricino*	I. 4	Ama ma sol per gioco / Già il core è in man	Livia, Egeria	S, S
		I. 17	Che affanno, tiranno alato	Livia, Egeria	S, S
		II. 13	Scrivesti? E perchè mai / Se l'vuoi cancellerò	Egeria, Geminio	S, A
		III. 13	Pace goder desio / Pace ripiglio anch'io	Egeria, Livia	S, S
1708	*Mario fuggitivo*	II. 12	Cieli numi deh volgete	Icilio, Mario	S, A
		II. 13	Sospira pena e geme il cor ma sol per te / non per te	Publio, Dalinda	MS, S
		III. 8	Spirti dell'Erebo	Giulia, Icilio	S, S

1720	*Astarto*	I. 9	Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento	Sidonia, Nino	S, S
		II. 9	Innamorar e poi mancar	Elisa, Clearco	S, MS
		III. 9	Mai non potrei goder	Elisa, Clearco	S, MS
1721	*Muzio Scevola*	II. 5	Troppo loquace è il guardo / Se quando parla il guardo	Orazio, Irene	S, MS
		II. 10	Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto	Clelia, Muzio	S, MS
1722	*Griselda*	I. 2	Al mio nativo parto / E per voler	Griselda, Gualtiero	
		II. 12	Dell'offesa / Mio sovrano	Gualtiero, Griselda	MS, MS
		III. 3	Quel timoroso / Tutta timore	Ernesto, Almirena	S, S
1727	*Astianatte*	III. 6	Dolce conforto / Con speranza dell'alma	Andromaca, Pirro	S, A

TABLE 56.
List of Bononcini's dramatic duets selected for analysis in this chapter

genres such as the oratorio and serenata will be included for the sake of comparison, mostly from the composer's earlier years. As in the majority of examples in this study except for Handel's, the criteria of philological availability played an important role. Apart from the facsimile edition of *La nemica d'amore fatta amante* and the selections of songs from his London operas, all the duets were either available online (on open-access sites such as the *Petrucci Music Library*), acquired as microfilms or consulted on the spot at the British Library.[200] There is a slight stress on Bononcini's activity in Berlin (*Cefalo e Procride*) and Vienna (*La conversione di Maddalena*; *Turno Aricino*, *Mario fuggitivo*) since these were important centres for his development, as can be observed in the example of pasticcios examined in Chapter 3.2 that used music from this period. One might wonder why no works from the period 1710–1720 were included. The reason is the close association of Bononcini's career with powerful patrons. This is why he refused the invitation of the Earl of Halifax to come to London in 1707

200 The first three works in Table 56 have the additional advantage of being recorded.

as he had the most prominent patron of his career in the person of the young Austrian emperor Joseph I. After the emperor died in spring 1711, he followed his next patron, the already mentioned Count Gallas (who was dismissed from his post of Viennese ambassador in London), to Rome, where in the second decade of the century he wrote only two new operas, *Astarto* (1715), the model for his Royal Academy of Music debut in 1720 and the pastoral opera *Erminia* (1719). Unlike the very productive period from 1700 to 1710 that saw Bononcini move away from the foundations of his youthful Italian style, there were simply not enough sources to trace any kind of development in the second decade of the century. Finally, besides the availability of sources, *Turno Aricino* and *Mario fuggitivo* were chosen because of their connections to the London pasticcio *Almahide* (cf. Chapter 3.2.4).

The serenata *La nemica d'amore fatta amante* (1693) bears a connection to Handel not only because the two composers shared a patron in the person of the Cardinal Colonna but more importantly the Arcadian Academy's renewed interest in pastoral poetry and drama. Like Handel's pastoral serenatas and dramatic cantatas, its dramaturgy is based on a love triangle between the nymph Clori (S), the shepherd Tirsi (A) and the satyr Fileno (B), who is opposed to the main couple not only in dramatic terms but also in vocal range, thereby suggesting that he is mismatched to Clori the same way Polifemo was no suitable partner for Galatea. The action revolves around the proud Clori's change of heart after she had been systematically rejecting love and it is a sequel of sorts to Bononcini's serenata *La nemica d'amore* performed at the Palazzo Colonna a year earlier, in 1692, likewise to a libretto by Bononcini's regular collaborator Silvio Stampiglia. The serenata opens with Clori's admission that she has fallen in love with her suitor Tirsi and she spends most of the first part of the serenata trying to convince the sceptical shepherd that her declaration of love is genuine and not just another attempt to deceive and eventually reject him. After she finally succeeds, the duet "Per te peno / moro" (no. 4 Tirsi, Clori; Bononcini 1985, 156–158; Bononcini recording, La nemica d'amore fatta amante) presents the culmination of the second scene of the opera. It clearly reveals the temporal proximity of his *Duetti da camera* (1691) since it could easily be imagined as a movement in a chamber duet with its short sections conceived imitatively, where alternation quickly grows into imitative and then sequential free counterpoint. It nevertheless outlines a very short tripartite form, the only departure from the written out *da capo* form being the addition of a brief repetitive coda. Sections A and B are identical in their build-up, the only distinction being the convention of the relative minor. The repetition of the free sequential contrapuntal passage as a coda is only a mild attempt to extend the brief number.

FORM		BAR	KEY	DESCRIPTION
A_1		1–15	c	alternation growing into imitation and free CP.
B	B	15–23	E♭, g	alternation growing into imitation and free CP.
	coda	23–36	g	repetition of b. 19–23
A_2	A_1	26–38	c	written out *da capo* repeat of b. 1–13
	coda	38–45		repetition of b. 31–38 (=b. 6–13)

TABLE 57.
Formal outline of the duet „Per te peno/moro" from Bononcini's *La nemica d'amore fatta amante* (1693)

"Basta il tuo fallo / sguardo" (no. 10 Clori, Fileno; Bononcini 1985, 199–203; Bononcini recording, La nemica d'amore fatta amante) is an overt duet of conflict. Fileno, who courted Clori at the time when she was rejecting both him and Tirsi, uses deceit in order to plant discord between the lovers but fails to do so and is scorned by both of them. He refuses to leave and admits that Clori enflames him the more she rejects him so that the duet seamlessly flows out of the heating, often insulting recitative exchanges between the satyr and the pair into a succinct *a due* rendition of a single line per character. Polytextual variants make a semantic distinction ("basta il tuo fallo/ sguardo a lacerarti/lacerarmi il core") between the reasons of agitation. There are similarities in the imitative unfolding of the vocal parts, but the duet is still conceived differently to "Per te peno/moro". A regular tripartite design was not deemed appropriate for the raw conflict portrayed here; we are dealing with a series of five sections instead. It is as if Bononcini set out to be maximally concise in these early duets, confirming Wolff's above mentioned qualifications of "strict monothematicism". All five subsections start out imitatively with the same material, a four-bar phrase that sets the entire line except for the last word ("cor"), reserved for melismatic treatment later on. The first section (x1, b. 1–9) is the shortest, following imitation (b. 1–5) with a brief passage that modulates into the dominant. The second section (x2, b. 10–27) sets the bar for the remaining three by following the imitative passage with an ascending and then descending sequential free contrapuntal passage with suspensions (b. 16–27), modulating to the relative major. Without offering anything new, Bononcini manages to maintain a sense of momentum (and direction): in x3 (b. 28–43) he compresses the ascent in the *contrapunctus ligatus* passage from x2 just described, giving the impression of descending movement as he modulates back into the tonic. Section x4 (b. 44–60) extends it into a larger ascending and descending arch, while x5 (b. 61–80) is a slightly varied repetition of x4, reminiscent of the repetitions of closing passages in "Per te peno/moro".

FORM		BAR	KEY	TEXT
X_1		1–6	D	Quando il cielo / alle colpe s'adira
X_2	x_{21}	6–12	D, b	Si mitiga l'ira / Lo sdegno si frange
	x_{22}	12–16	b	Si mitiga l'ira / Lo sdegno si frange
	orch.	16–19	A	%
X_3	x_{31}	19–27	A, D	Da un cor che sospira / Da un alma che piange.
	x_{32}	27–37	D	Da un cor che sospira / Da un alma che piange.

TABLE 58.
Formal outline of the duet "Quando il cielo alle colpe s'adira" from Bononcini's *San Nicola di Bari* (1693)

The duet "Quando il Cielo alle colpe s'adira" (II. no 10 Giovanna, San Nicola; Bononcini MS, San Nicola di Bari, 75–81; Bononcini recording, San Nicola di Bari) from the oratorio *San Nicola di Bari* shares many of the previous duets' features. This is logical since it was written in Rome in 1693 by the same librettist. What makes it different is the accompaniment for two violins and a viola, engaging in *concertante* interplay with the two sopranos. The libretto concentrates on the young St Nicholas (San Nicola) and his relationship with his parents, especially his mother Giovanna, and introduces another youth, Clizio, the opposite of the virtuous Nicola who is to repent for his sinful ways. Instead of the customary *coro*, the oratorio poignantly closes with this duet for Nicola and Giovanna outlining the main moral. Like "Basta il tuo fallo/sguardo", it is based on the varying and working out of a contrapuntal passage in *contrapunctus ligatus*, organised in three sections. They are separated by orchestral interjections based on the same material. The first and—like in "Basta il tuo fallo/sguardo"—shortest one introduces the unaccompanied voices in suspensions (b. 1–3), after which the orchestra repeats this texture in the violins while the continuo provides a rhythmically more varied part, so typical of three-voiced *contrapunctus ligatus* sections in duets. The subsequent sections vary and extend this plan, embellishing or switching places between the three parts in the *contrapunctus ligatus* sections while related tonal centres are explored. Bononcini injected more variety into the structural plan of the duets in his serenata thanks to the presence of the orchestra and the extensive coloraturas in the vocal parts, surprisingly appropriate to a closing duet that describes the soothing of heaven's wrath with repentance.

This chapter will not focus on Bononcini's operas from the period, epitomised in *Camilla*, a work that received more than detailed attention in Chapter 3.2.1. In general, it seems that Bononcini's operas from the 1690s do not foreshadow the direction in which his dramatic duets would change

since they still owe a great deal to 17th-century conventions, as *Camilla* does. To a certain extent, we can claim the contrary about the Viennese oratorio *La conversione di Maddalena* (1701). The figure of Mary Magdalene has been a frequent oratorio subject due to the exemplary story of repentance and conversion ideal for the introduction of allegorical characters. Besides her sister Marta who provides moral advice, the opposed allegorical characters Amor Divino and Amor Profano woo Maddalena for his or her own cause, the negative character Amor Profano distinguished by his lower, bass timbre. However, out of the five duets in the oratorio listed in Table 56, proper duets are given only to the main characters of the sisters. The two brief, textually and musically equivalent duets that Maddalena sings with the allegorical characters were mistook by Lindgren for a trio since they follow each other without recitative in quick succession. In "Goderò / Ti pentirai" (I. no 10 Maddalena, Amor Divino; Bononcini MS, La conversione di Maddalena, 37'–38') and "Piangerò / T'inganni a fè" (I. no 11 Maddalena, Amor Profano; Bononcini MS, La conversione di Maddalena, 38–39') the tension in the dialogue is conveyed by the exclusively successive treatment of the voices and the contrasting material that they bring in sequential utterances, Amor Divino and Amor Profano dominating over Maddalena with their longer statements. In terms of form, structure and material, the two duets are identical, "Piangerò / T'inganni a fè" being a minimally modified transposition of "Goderò / Ti pentirai" from E minor to B minor. The fact that the opposing forces of divinity and profanity are portrayed by identical musical means shows that at this stage it was more important to produce a dramatically effective depiction of a situation in which Maddalena is torn between two spiritual forces than to elaborate on the conflict musically. On the other hand, the duet "Goderà ne sacri ardori / Senza riso e senza onori" (II. no. 4 Marta, Maddalena; Bononcini MS, La conversione di Maddalena, f. 77–85) will not be discussed at length for different reasons. Whereas the two small duets were unconventional dramaturgic inventions by the librettist and Bononcini, this one is an *aria a due*, for its section A is sung by Marta only, section B by Maddalena, followed by a *da capo* repetition of Marta's stanza. This type of strophic duet often appears in Bononcini's early operas (and the London pasticcios drawing on them), but it was to become less frequent in the new century.

Bononcini probably revised *La conversione di Maddalena* for a performance in Bologna in 1723, as documented by a published libretto (Anonymous 1723). No musical sources have been preserved, but the libretto does not contain any of the three duet texts mentioned so far, maybe because they were considered too old-fashioned or uninteresting. On the other hand, the two remaining original 1701 duet texts are to be found in the 1723 libretto with minor alterations, which means that it is possible that

their settings were also retained. "Chi sol prezza / chi disprezza la bellezza" (I. no 4 Maddalena, Marta; Bononcini MS, La conversione di Maddalena, 16'–20) is probably a more typical Bononcini duet. Its ritornello has no thematic significance, although it presents another typical passage in *contrapunctus ligatus* that does not play such a prominent role as in the examined duets from the 1690s. The characters are representing contrasting points of view, but this is reflected only in minimal textual variants and has no musical consequences. Whereas Handel, who also wrote duets of the sort, often found other musical means to depict the tension inherent in a situation like this, Bononcini's duets sometimes seem blissfully unaware of the possibility of friction between the text and its setting. "Chi sol prezza / chi disprezza la bellezza" is a perfect example of this: it seems as if Bononcini was inspired by the word "bellezza" in the overall atmosphere of the setting and left entirely out of consideration the fact that Marta is expressing disapproval for the idolatry of beauty and love, while Maddalena does the exact opposite. After alternating statements of the same motif, the voices are swiftly joined in syllabic semiquaver parallel movement. In section A Bononcini combines this type of texture and *contrapunctus ligatus*, whereas in section B he avoids parallelism, without musico-dramatic significance.

"Al nume umanato / La fede" (II. no 14 Maddalena, Marta; Bononcini MS, La conversione di Maddalena, 119–125) has a different status because it is charged with the important task of concluding the oratorio. Besides providing the audience with an appropriate moral, the text is a dialogue between the sisters in which Marta gives advice to Maddalena on how to follow the path to heaven. Maddalena had already made the decision to choose virtue and penitence and it is clear from the examination of Bononcini's setting that the duet is not expressive of tension. Nevertheless, it shows that the quest for the right path is still accompanied by questions. If we place this duet into the narrative of the formal and structural development of Handel's duets in the period 1707–1715, we shall see that its section A (b. 1–35) does not display features of the so-called "larger form", which is not surprising given the year of its creation and the more modest scale of vocal numbers at the time. However, this does not mean that Bononcini does not exploit the dialogic potential of the two sisters' questions and answers, for although he stays within the confines of the G major tonic throughout section A, he intones the upward inflection of Maddalena's first question (b. 1–4) with an ascending figure followed by a downward octave leap and also uses a secondary dominant to underline this harmonically. Marta's reply ("La fede", b. 4–5) resolves the tension with the resolution of the dominant of the dominant into the dominant proper. Typical of Bononcini's economy, he does not seek new solutions for the second question and answer in the duet text but chooses to set it to the

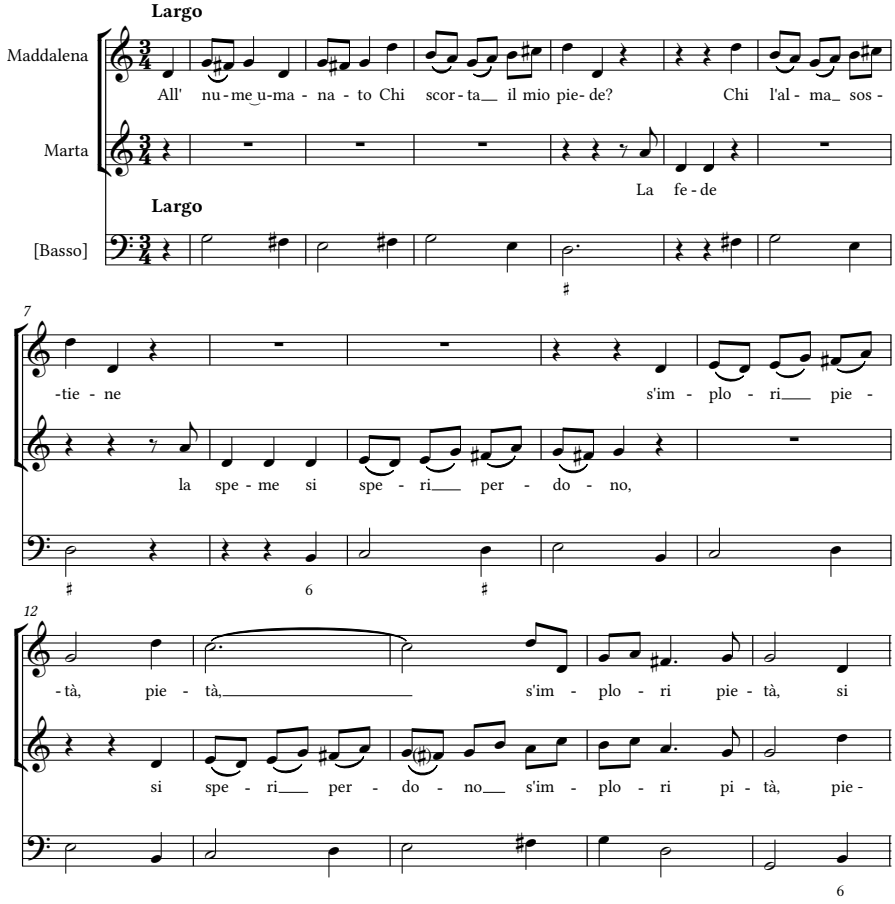
second half of the first dialogic exchange, thus repeating the dialogue from b. 2–5 in b. 5–8 ("Chi l'alma sostiene? La speme."). After these dialogic alternating statements, the remainder of subsection a1 (the first half of section A, see Table 59) consists of a brief, freely contrapuntal section that imitates and sequentially develops a motif derived from the quaver figure that "chi scorta il mio piede" and "chi l'alma sostiene" were set to (b. 10–14), before cadencing on the tonic. (Example 11) Subsection a1 is rounded off by a repetition of b. 12–16, with the parts inverted in b. 16–20. The interpretation of the text retreats to the background as Marta's and Maddalena's original distinct replicas ("Si speri perdono" and "S'implori pietà") are distributed to both parts, although without damage to the dramaturgy.

FORM		BAR	KEY	CHARACTER	TEXT
A	a_1	1–20	G	Maddalena	Al nume umanato / chi scorta il mio piede?
				Marta	La fede.
				Maddalena	Chi l'alma sostiene?
				Marta	La speme.
				A 2	Si speri perdono / S'implori pietà.
	a_2	20–35		A 2	Si speri perdono / S'implori pietà.
B		35–57	e, D	Marta	Chi sproma il desire?
				Maddalena	L'ardire.
				Marta	Chi affida il tuo core?
				Maddalena	L'amore.
				A 2	L'amor che diffonde di Dio la beltà.

TABLE 59.
Text of the duet "Al nume umanato / La speme" from Bononcini's *La conversione di Maddalena* (1701) with a basic formal outline

In contrast, subsection a2 starts out by fragmenting the last two lines of section A into halves and alternating short motifs in the parts before a varied rendition of the free contrapuntal passage from b. 12–16 in 24–27. This is followed by a ritornello based on the material presented in the voices (b. 27–35), the first time we have heard the orchestra in the duet and it remains present in its B section (b. 35–57), albeit in a more discrete form as harmonic support to the voices. The absence of contrasts in the middle section except for the usual modulations is another argument in favour of the contrasting approaches that Handel and Bononcini took

Bononcini MS, La conversione di Maddalena, “Al nume umanato / La fede, la speme”
(II. no 14 Maddalena, Marta), 119-120’: b. 1-16



EXAMPLE 11

in the shaping of a *da capo* form's middle section. Section B begins with alternating dialogic exchanges of the exactly same material as section A, to the extent that we could say that b. 35–41 are a slightly varied and transposed repetition of b. 2–8, but without the secondary dominants. Bars 41–48 are likewise based on a figure from section A, although Bononcini uses it here as filling material for the contrapuntal texture, tossing it from one part to the other before a cadence in E minor. In contrast to section A, he does not repeat it but transposes it a second lower in modified form. Unlike the slightly dramatic upbeat ending of *San Nicola di Bari*, here the closing duet evokes a different atmosphere in line with the central plot of the oratorio, Maddalena's quest for answers.

Cefalo e Procride and *Polifemo* are referred to as one-act operas or seen belonging to the festa teatrale or the serenata (cf. Huth 1991). Both were written in 1702 and represent an important station in Bononcini's career: Berlin, or to be more precise, Charlottenburg, the estate of Sophie Charlotte of Hanover. The music-loving queen invited Bononcini and his brother Antonio Maria to the court to join their colleague Ariosti who had already been in her service since 1697. Sophie Charlotte organised a series of entertainments to celebrate the king's birthday and *Cefalo e Procride* marked the beginning while *Polifemo* (to a libretto by Ariosti) was performed later on during the summer. Unfortunately, an examination of the duets in *Polifemo* will not be possible because the sources were unavailable to me. However, as already explained in Chapter 3.2.4, it contained the duet "Che cara la pena" (Aci, Galatea) that served as the object of direct parody in the duets "Che affanno, tiranno alato" in *Turno Aricino* and the London pasticcio *Almahide*. In the Viennese opera the duet serves the function of dramaturgic parallelism, but in *Polifemo* Bononcini used it to depict amorous unity. Nothing hints at tension in Bononcini's duet, perhaps making the ensuing violence of Polifemo discovering the lovers and murdering Aci even more shocking.

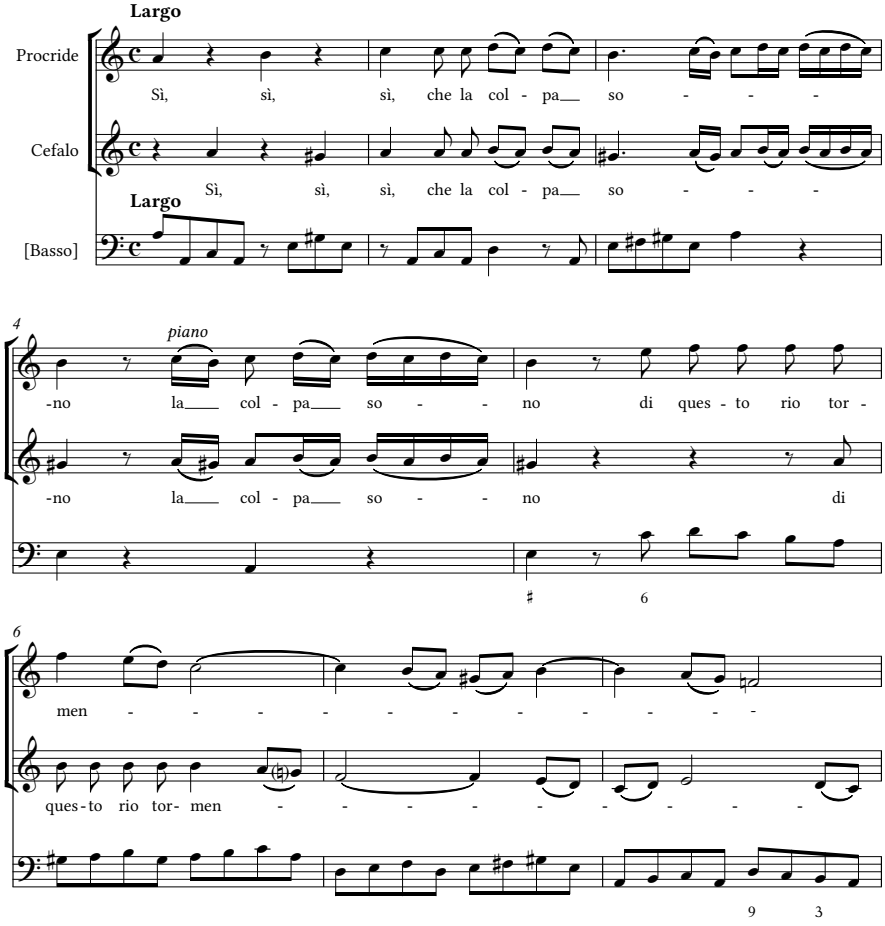
The mythological story of *Cefalo e Procride* is based on two trials of fidelity for the protagonists. In the first one, Cefalo puts Procride's love to the test by courting her under an assumed identity. Procride passes the test triumphantly and the first duet, "Sì, sì che la colpa sono" (Scena 7 Procride, Cefalo; Bononcini MS, Cefalo e Procride, 58'–61) is the culmination of the heated exchanges between them in the preceding recitative. The two characters' texts[201] differ in one line only, "sol per cangiar sembiante" and "nel vedermi inconstante", highlighting the reason behind the pain they are feeling, in Cefalo's case dishonesty, in Procride's the sheer possibility of being unfaithful. Both sections of this written out *da capo* form (rounded

201 **A 2: Sì, sì che la colpa sono / di questo rio tormento. Cefalo: Sol per cangiar sembiante / Procride: Nel vedermi si inconstante a 2: Un gran duol al cor io sento.**

off by a string ritornello based on the material of the voices) display features of the composer's chamber duets in the continuo accompaniment, the lack of periodic melodic arches and a relatively free, mostly contrapuntal unfolding of the voices, but it is still like no other duet by Bononcini that we have encountered so far. This mostly refers to the mood of sorrow, conveyed by minor keys, not only in section A (b. 1–23) but also in parts of section B and underlined by the slow tempo (*Largo*). The duet is already unorthodox in the way it opens with crotchet alternations on the word "sì", something that we would normally associate with a comic *Streitduett* in a fast tempo. After this, the voices are joined in figurative parallelism (b. 2–5), as if to stress that—although they might see the dramatic situation differently—they are actually affectively united. Section A does not provide any kind of motivic material in the strict sense of the word since its melo-rhythmic units are generalised enough to bear the impression of topoi. Bononcini resorts to repetition and to a lesser extent variation, but the section still possesses a sense of momentum since Bononcini achieves the maximum effect with minimal means. The freely contrapuntal passage in b. 6–10 is repeated in b. 12–16 and in-between Bononcini inserts a passage in parallel thirds that extends the melismas on the word "sono" from b. 3. (Example 12) The remainder of the section is a likewise freely contrapuntal passage with some emphatic melodic leaps such as diminished sevenths and fifths and as many as three different cadences in the tonic. Although even more freely contrapuntal with its seeming independence of the parts and absence of parallelism, section B (b. 23–36) has a more adventurous harmonic trajectory ranging from C major to C minor but only confirms the impression that the texture is conceived harmonically as an extended progression of chords. Bononcini occasionally suggests imitation, but it turns out that he is just tossing motifs from one voice to the other without losing a sense of direction (e. g. in b. 25–30). Section B starts out with alternating statements that highlight the already mentioned polytextual pair of lines revealing the cause of distress. Although it seems that the parts bring forward new material (a motif in quavers with an upbeat pair of semiquavers) to be developed, this does not happen as the section turns even freer than section A.

This duet precedes Procride's announcement that she will leave the scene agitated over the unknown seducer. Although this would have facilitated the introduction of a duet of conflict in which she expresses her anger and he his feigned desire, Bononcini followed Guidi's text with its dominant affect of sorrow. Perhaps the courtship of the "stranger" was not as unsuccessful as Procride would like Cefalo to believe and her sadness at parting is genuine, leaving Cefalo's self-confidence somewhat shaken? Regardless of whether this interpretation in the manner of Mozart's *Così*

Bononcini MS-, Cefalo e Procride, “Sì, sì, che la colpa sono” (Scena 7 Cefalo, Procride), 58’-59: b. 1-8



EXAMPLE 12

fan tutte is convincing or not, it must be acknowledged that Bononcini was not prone to writing pathetic love duets or duets of departure. Although it would be hard to compare it with Handel's duets of the sort, of all the duets examined here it comes closest to the type. If we compare it with "Addio! Mio caro bene / Dolce mia vita" from *Teseo*, besides a different formal structure the biggest contrast is in the treatment of the voices. Not only are there no ideas to develop, no composite melodic arches to outline, but there is no space or time left in the texture for the voices to catch their breath.

Luckily, "Non vien per nuocer sempre" (Scena ultima Cefalo, Procride; Bononcini MS, Cefalo e Procride, 117–124) is spaced out more broadly and leisurely, with an important role played by the orchestral ritornellos, an overall more developmental structure and virtuoso treatment of the voices that befits a closing duet. It marks a moment of consolidation: although the jealous Procride spied on the hunting Cefalo and was accidentally shot by him, a deus ex machina happy resolution restores the lovers to each other to sing a moral about suffering as the true price for happiness.[202] The choice of motivic material alone announces a highly polyphonic and imitative duet since the opening motif (b. 3–6, first occurrence in the vocal parts but anticipated already in the second violin in the opening ritornello, b. 1–3) gives the impression of a typical fugue subject with its recognisable head motif of an upward fourth leap followed by quaver repetitions. After the ritornello had presented this head motif in quasi-imitations in the strings (beginning with the second violins and followed by the first violins and the violas), section a1 (b. 1–17) starts to unfold as a regular imitative working out of the subject, the *comes* (b. 6–9 in Procride's part) modulating to the dominant key of C major, accompanied by something that looks like a conventional countersubject in Cefalo's part although it never appears again. The reason is that although Bononcini was perfectly capable of writing fugal structures (as evident from these first ten bars), it was against the conventions of the dramatic duet to conceive it fugally, in contrast to the chamber duet, especially Gasparini's and Handel's. After a cadence in C major (Example 13), a short variation of the ritornello (b. 10–12) gives way to what seems like another imitation, this time in stretto, but the composer is only toying with our expectations. The regular unfolding of the subject in the tonic in Cefalo's part (b. 12–15) is answered

202 **A section. a 2: Non vien per nuocer sempre / il mal che turba il cor. Cefalo: Cangia il destin le tempre / Procride: Divien gioia il dolor / Cefalo: Doppo tanti tormenti / Procride: Doppo tanti lamenti / a 2: Pur ti stringo o mio tesoro. B section. Cefalo: Se t'abbracciai consorte / Procride: Benché mi desti morte / io più t'adoro. Cefalo: Or dea t'adoro.**

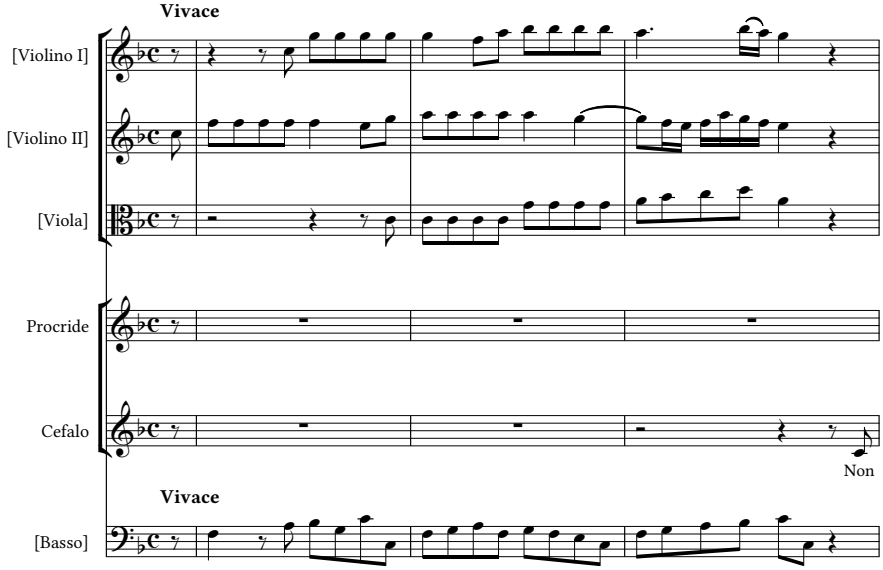
after only two beats in Procride's with what seems like the subject in tonal answer. But in fact, it is merely transposed a second higher so as to create appoggiatura clashes with the unfolding of the subject.[203] The bittersweet sound of resolved appoggiaturas seems appropriate to the celebration of newly found unity since the whole opera consisted of putting a love to the test with "mal che turba il cor".

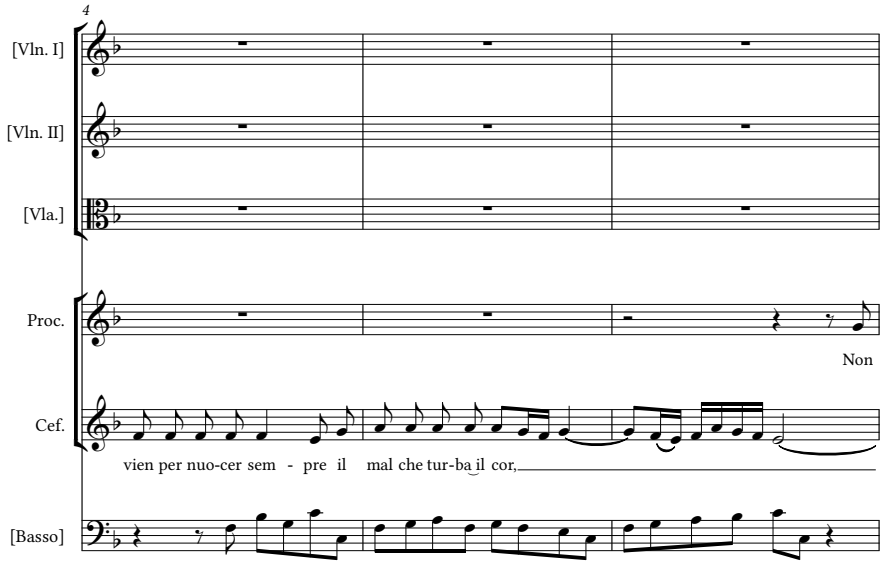
So far Bononcini had set only the first two lines of section A's text, shared by both protagonists. In the next two subsections (a2, b. 17–31 and a3, b. 31–46), he will focus on its polytextual remainder, the four lines distributed evenly between Cefalo and Procride and the final one brought forward *a due*. Whereas he set the monotextual two lines imitatively, he highlights the polytextuality by starting out both subsections a2 and a3 with alternating statements of variants of the same repetitive, mildly descending motif to ensure the comprehensibility of the verse pairs "cangia il destin le tempre" / "divien gioia il dolor", although the distinction is not semantic since both protagonists are expressing the same thoughts on the changeability of fortune. In a2, these alternating statements begin a modulation that ends up in the dominant and this is followed by a brief passage in *contrapunctus ligatus* with characteristic octave leaps in the first violins (b. 23–25), giving way to a simultaneous melismatic, mostly parallel passage (b. 25–31) on the key word "tesoro", pure musical jubilation. Bononcini would not be Bononcini if even in a relatively through-composed duet such as this one he did not reuse pre-existing sections since a3 replicates the structural plan of a2 even though it is the setting of different lines. After alternating statements that are—in contrast to a2—woven into a contrapuntal texture after two bars only, bars 32–40 are a slightly varied, transposed version of bars 22–31 in a2 with inverted parts. The much shorter section B (b. 47–55) does not live up to the expectations raised by its predecessor. Not only its material but also its contrapuntal passages are derived from section A and it is not particularly adventurous in its departure from the tonic.

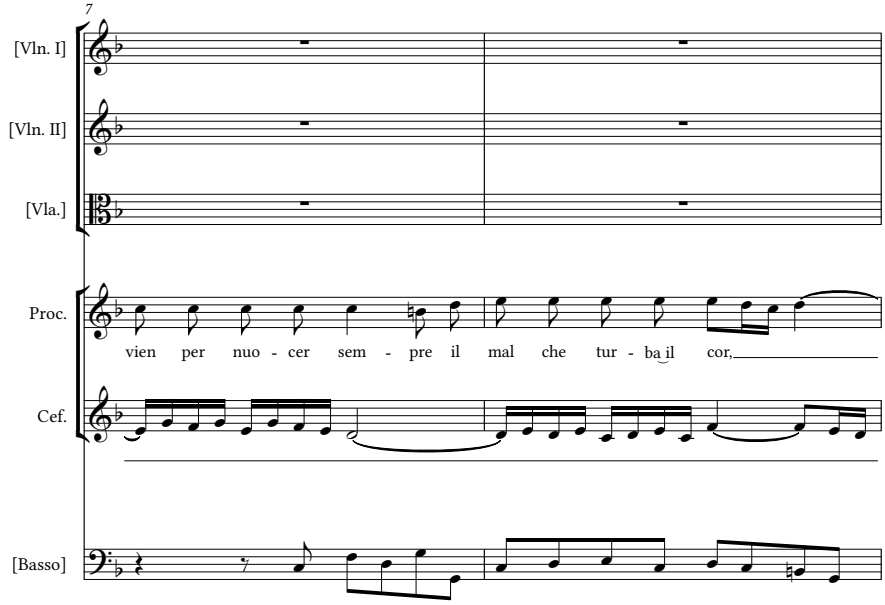
It is clear that *Cefalo e Procride* was written for a private performance before a chosen audience of music lovers and that Bononcini was more ready to experiment in such a context. Maybe that is the reason why there is more of a touch of the learned, contrapuntal style that he mastered in his youth in Bologna? Irrespective of questions of parody, the possibility

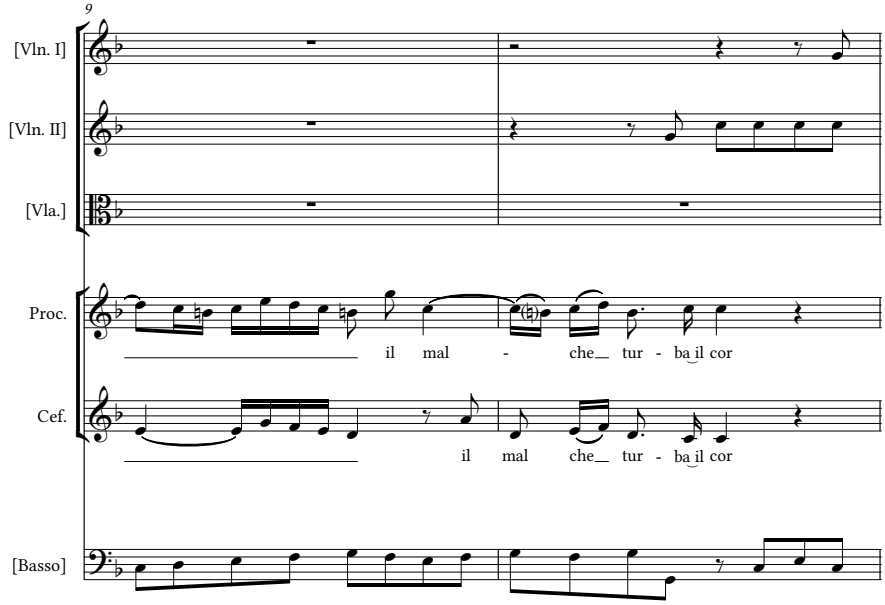
203 **Roberts (2012, 170) identifies this passage in Handel's works, describing it as a "chain of overlapping entries climbing up the scale". He was firm in the opinion that if Handel "got it from anywhere in particular, it was probably from the final duet in Giovanni Bononcini's one-act Berlin opera *Cefalo* (1702)". However, it is difficult to say if the passage is indeed idiosyncratic of Bononcini or just a generalised topos.**

Bononcini MS, Cefalo e Procride, “Non vien per nuocer” (Scena ultima Cefalo, Procride), 117-118: b. 1-10






7
[Vln. I]
[Vln. II]
[Vla.]
Proc.
vien per nuo - cer sem - pre il mal che tur - ba il cor,
Cef.
[Basso]


9
[Vln. I]
[Vln. II]
[Vla.]
Proc.
il mal - che tur - ba il cor
Cef.
il mal che tur - ba il cor
[Basso]

EXAMPLE 13

that Handel came into contact with Bononcini and his works written at the time in Berlin exists, even if Mainwaring's anecdote is not true. If any of Bononcini's duets examined so far had any kind of influence on Handel, the most likely candidate would indeed be „Non vier per nuocer sempre". Hueber's opinion that "in the Viennese operas of our master one does not find duets whose formal shaping rests solely on the laws of imitation like this is perceivable in Steffani" and that "the construction of the Bononcini duet is mostly determined by a *concertante* alternation of both vocal parts."[204] (Hueber 1955, 226) is clearly refuted by this piece. As we can see in this chapter, alternating statements do not always dominate in Bononcini's duets. Although in the conclusion of his dissertation Hueber (1955, 253) adds that the composer "was not a contrapuntist and a master of form"[205], it remains to be seen if imitation and contrapuntal working out are really avoided so consistently in the composer's Viennese and also the operas written later in London.

The duets in the Vienna opera *Turno Aricino* (1707) do not reflect these tendencies, showing continuity with the composer's Italian operas from the 1690s such as *Il Xerse* and *Camilla* in that they contain a larger number of short duets, almost *ariosi a due*. It is interesting and somewhat surprising that of the overall number of four duets, three are written for the only female characters of the opera, the princesses Egeria and Livia. Although their fathers are enemies, their evolving friendship is reason enough to unite them even in dramatic situations where they do not have anything to do with each other. In the short arioso *a due* "Ama ma sol per gioco / Già il core è in man" (I. 4 Livia, Egeria; Bononcini MS, Turno Aricino, 14'–15) Livia advises Egeria, who is in love with Geminio, not to take love so seriously. The duet consists of nothing more than alternating statements by the two characters, the knowing Livia gaining the upper hand. Although the voices outline what seem to be distinct motivic contours, the course of the duet seems improvisatory and it seamlessly flows into the next scene where the ladies are joined by Geminio and Ottavio. "Scrivesti? E perchè mai? / Se l'vuoi cancellerò" (II. 13 Egeria, Geminio) is another, even shorter arioso *a due* without almost any vocal simultaneity, either. In contrast to the former duet with its comical reflection on love, it is highly dramatic since it occurs at the moment when Egeria's beloved Geminio must vote for the execution of her father Turno under

204 **Duette, deren formale Gestaltung lediglich auf den Gesetzen der Imitation beruht, wie sie z. B. bei Steffani zu beobachten sind, trifft man in den Wiener Opern unseres Meisters nicht an. Die Anlage des Bononcini'schen Duetts ist meistens durch ein konzertartiges Alternieren der beiden Gesangstimmen bestimmt.**

205 **Der Meiser war kein Kontrapunktiker und Formkünstler.**

Tarquinio's threats even though he does not want to (cf. Hueber 1955, 111–112). This would have been the ideal spot for a dialogic duet of conflict in the "modern" style, but the librettist Stampiglia wrote no more than a recitative exchange. Wanting to stress the dramatic moment but not having an appropriate text to do so in the form of a large-scale number, Bononcini composed an arioso *a due* of even greater formal openness. Finally, "Pace goder desio / Pace ripiglio anch'io" (III. 13 Livia, Egeria; Bononcini MS, Turno Aricino, 101'–102) is a tripartite duet in which—in section A1 (b. 1.16)—Egeria outlines a melodic idea, followed by a variation of the same idea by Livia in the modulating section B (b. 17–32). The voices are joined in a simultaneous texture in section A2 (b. 33–51), back in the tonic. While Egeria repeats her melody from A1, Livia doubles it with a bar's delay, suggesting that we are dealing with an imitation, although it will soon be clear that for most of the time the two voices are led in parallel thirds. There are other examples of the sort in Bononcini's duets performed in London such as "Cease, cruel tyrannizing / to deceive me" and "Say must I then despair".

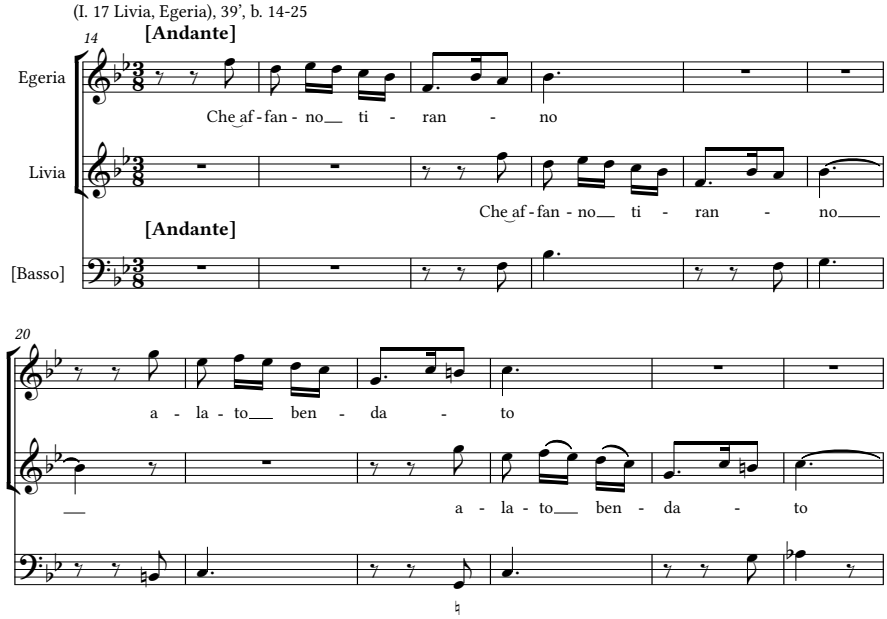
The duet "Che affanno, tiranno alato" (I. 17 Livia, Egeria; Bononcini MS, Turno Aricino 39–41) has already been examined in Chapter 3.2.4 as part of *Almahide*. There are no significant differences between any of the three versions of this duet, which makes yet another structural analysis redundant. However, since this version of the duet is available in MS only, we shall remind ourselves of the opening four successive entries of the voices, outlining four overlapping four-bar phrases that build a periodic structure of sorts. (Example 14) Unlike in *Almahide*, where the parallel unfolding of a monologic reflection on love was given to the fierce rivals Almiro and Almansorre, here the monotextual duet is assigned to the princesses Egeria and Livia. Compared to their first duet at the beginning of Act 1, their fortunes have been reversed: whereas Egeria is happy about the consent of her father to her marriage with Geminiano, Livia has admitted to herself that she has fallen for Ottaviano. Instead of teasing her like Livia did in "Ama ma sol per gioco / Già il core è in man", Egeria finds empathy for her friend and they are both united in an acknowledgement of the power of love. It is interesting how Bononcini found it important to stress the unity of the two ladies regardless of the conflict between their fathers, escalating in Egeria taking Livia hostage in Act 3. However, another duet of unity ("Pace goder desio / Pace ripiglio anch'io") will reaffirm this friendship in the last scene of the third act. Resistance to tyranny as the main theme of the opera has little bearing on the duets which focus on the female protagonists, uniting rather than differentiating or pitting them against each other like Francesca Cuzzoni and Faustina Bordoni were at the Royal Academy of Music. This is underlined by the fact that of all

Bononcini's duets examined in this chapter, the latter two are the only ones in a dance metre, a moderately paced minuet in 3/8 time.

Mario fuggitivo (1708), likewise on a libretto by Stampiglia, is singled out for its thematisation of conjugal love between Mario's son Icilio and his wife Giulia, drawing exaggerated comparisons with Beethoven's *Fidelio* (cf. Kretschmar, as quoted in Hueber 1955, 116). It does not possess such a high degree of dramatic unity as *Turno Aricino*, mainly because the intermixing of tragic and comic actions and characters shows Stampiglia's rootedness in 17th-century traditions. Besides the presence of the corporal Floro and the servant Blesa (included in the London pasticcio *Almahide*, as well), all the characters except Mario and the praetor Sestilio have a comic side to them, most notably Icilio, who came to Carthage disguised as the slave Elisa, lady-in-waiting to the Numidian princess Dalinda. Aware of his gender, Dalinda becomes enamoured with Icilio and a love triangle between the pair and Dalinda's suitor and Sestilio's officer Publio is created. Dalinda manipulates Publio to help Icilio free his father from Roman captivity. Giulia, disguised as the gipsy fortune-teller Argene, confronts Icilio over his infidelity but he claims that he was dissembling only to free his father. The comedy is additionally enhanced by Floro falling in love with "Elisa".

As a result of this, the duets, too, are more varied both dramatically and structurally. From the overall five duets in the opera, two are reserved for Floro and Blesa, the comic servants whose scenes made their way into *Almahide*. From the remaining three serious duets that are the object of this study, "Cieli numi deh volgete" (II. 12 Icilio, Mario; Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, 125–126) is a short simultaneous, although not homorhythmic syllabic duet comparable to the *ariosi a due* that dominated in *Turno Aricino*. Icilio frees his father Mario from prison, although the means to this end are hardly heroic: he persuades the infatuated Floro to unlock Mario's cell and Floro is punished for his lack of judgement by taking up Mario's place. The duet with its five bars followed by a ritornello of the same length based on the material presented by the voices leads the characters in parallel thirds for most of the time but instead of a jubilant expression of joy, it conveys an entirely different affective mood. This happens amidst the comedic shenanigans in the dungeon (if there was ever a tragic *locus* in *dramma per musica*, it is the dungeon!), including Floro's jealousy at the sight of Mario and "Elisa" embracing and his protests for her to leave the dungeon so that he can lock up Mario again. Mario taunts Floro and then manages to physically overpower and disarm him, threatening the cowardly *miles gloriosus* with his own sword. Before the duet itself, while Mario is occupied with persuading Floro to untie his chains,

Bononcini MS, Turno Aricino, "Che affanno, tiranno alato"
(I. 17 Livia, Egeria), 39', b. 14-25



EXAMPLE 14

Icilio sings the same three lines[206] that later feature in the duet as an even shorter, three-bar arioso (Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, 123–124). This invocation of heaven to aid the fugitive is repeated *a due* at the end of the scene in the form of the duet that is under scrutiny here. Father and son sing to solemn, harmonically effective, but simple progressions. Like in *Turno Aricino*, Bononcini's approach to these short numbers growing out of the action spontaneously is improvisatory. Rather than taking up the melodic line of Icilio's arioso, in the arioso *a due* Bononcini keeps some of the harmonies, the descending ductus of the melody, a few rhythmic elements and the occasional non-harmonic note, revealing that he did want to anticipate it earlier. These brief musical outbursts give the predominantly comic scene a certain *gravitas*.

The privilege of closing the second act is reserved for the mismatched lovers Publio and Dalinda. By using amorous persuasion to have Mario freed, Dalinda has succeeded in blinding Publio to her deception in spite of Giulia's efforts to enlighten him. After they discover Floro in Mario's place, Publio orders the pursuit of the fugitives, but the act closes somewhat unexpectedly with a (seeming) love duet for Dalinda and him, "Sospira, pena e geme il cor, ma sol per te / non per te" (II. 13 Dalinda, Publio; Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, p. 136–151). The differences between the different versions of the text and the dramaturgic repercussions of the multiple parody processes have already been discussed at length in Chapter 3.2.4 (see Table 34 in particular). The polytextuality has a hidden dialogic potential: although Dalinda still wants to keep up the deception that she returns Publio's feelings, she is negating his declarations of love with her variants of the lines, obviously conceived like asides in a comedy. Perhaps it was this comedic potential of the duet that led Hueber to describe it as a "duet rich in coloraturas and outright Neapolitan in its melodic and harmonic structure"[207] (Hueber 1955, 127). When Hueber was writing, scholarly literature still operated with stylistic labels such as "late Venetian" and "early Neapolitan" style, but I am at a loss as to which traits of this duet he found "outright Neapolitan".

Let us briefly summarise what a detailed comparative examination in Chapter 3.2.4 has already shown: musically, "Sospira, pena e geme il cor, ma sol per te / non per te" is almost a *contrafactum* of "Non vien per nuocer" from *Cefalo e Procride*. The F major key, the structure and the function of the ritornellos and the *concertante* exchange have been retained. Section B is equal in scope in all three versions of the duet, but in *Mario*

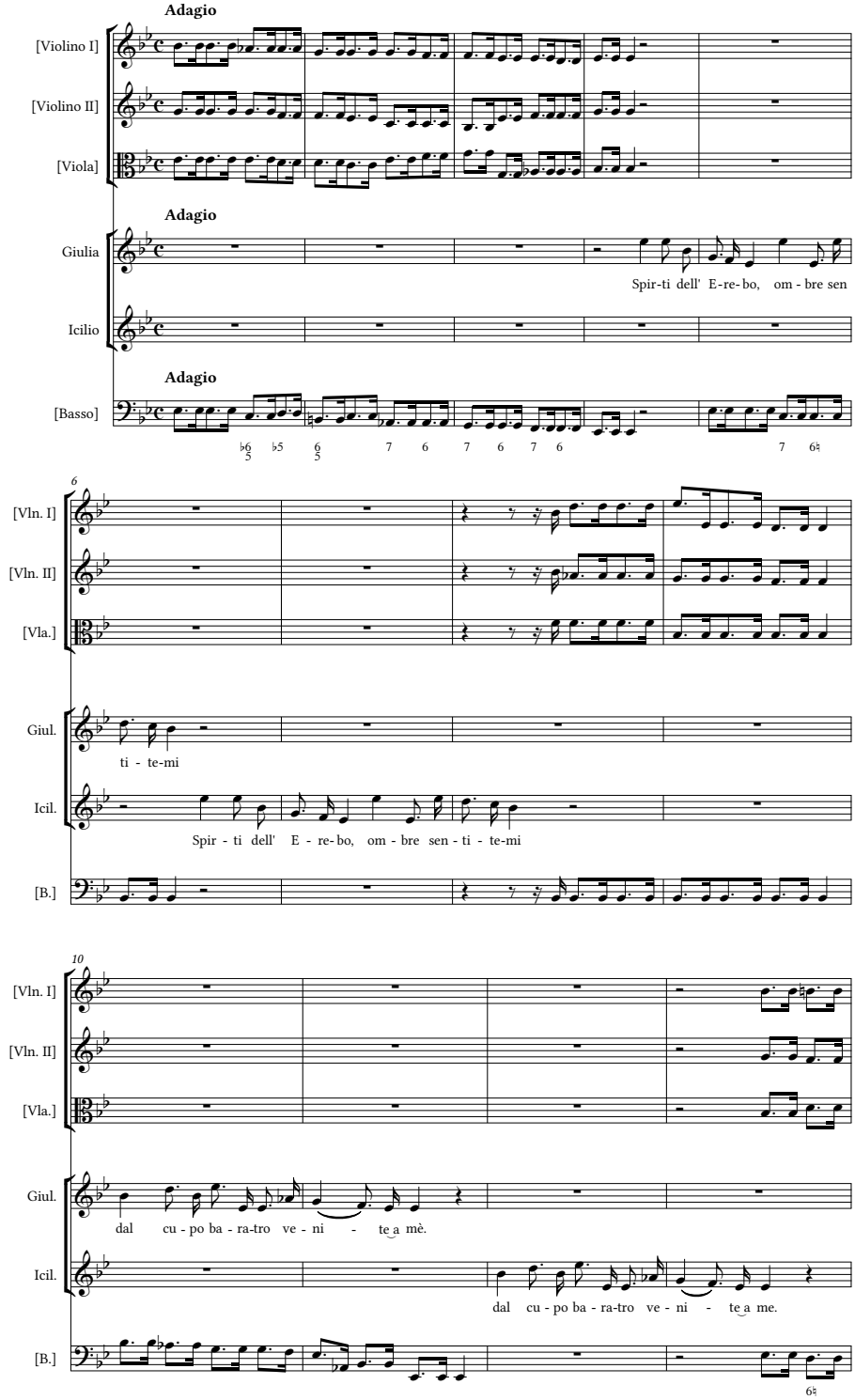
206 **Cieli, Numi / Deh volgete i vostri lumi / A chi torna in libertà.**

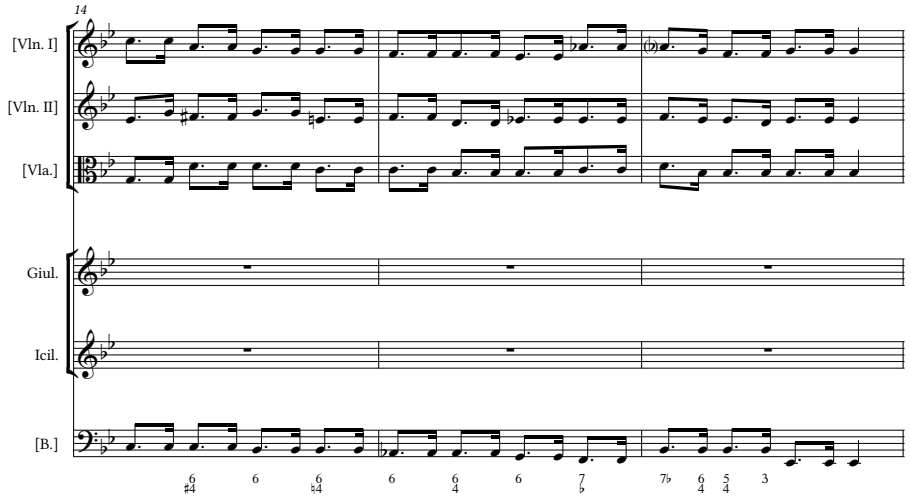
207 **Ein koloraturreiches, in seiner melodischen und harmonischen Struktur ganz nepolitanisches Duett.**

fuggitivo and in *Almahide* the contrapuntal voice-leading from "Non vier per nuocer" (b. 50–53; Bononcini MS, Cefalo e Procride, 123') has been replaced by a texture with more homorhythmic and parallel movement (Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, p. 144). Bononcini must have been aware of the attractiveness of "Non vien per nuocer" otherwise he would not have reintroduced it in a different dramatic situation six years later. Who knows, perhaps he even asked Stampiglia, with whom he had successfully collaborated since the early 1690s to close the opera with a metrically equivalent text so that he could engage in such a direct process of parody. Even though interventions were minimal, he nevertheless chose to slightly abridge the ritornello as well as to change section B in order to make it more operatic than "Non vien per nuocer". Otherwise, there seems to have been no dramaturgic contradiction in the fact that in *Cefalo e Procride* the duet expresses triumphant unity and in *Mario fuggitivo* an almost comical process of dissembling. However, in the *lieto fine* of the opera, Icilio will be joined with his spouse Giulia, leaving Dalinda no other choice than to go back to her former suitor. The logic of the *lieto fine* did not see a problem in the seemingly arbitrary pairing up of its protagonists into couples.

As opposed to "Sospira, pena e geme il cor, ma sol per te / non per te", the third duet in the opera is more specific and it follows entirely from the libretto. *Ombra* scenes in 17th- and 18th-century opera were the domain of the supernatural and they relied on a set of musical conventions to depict a mystical, sometimes even sinister atmosphere (cf. McClelland 2001). The invocation duet "Spirti dell'Erebo o ombre sentitemi" (III. 8 Giulia, Icilio; Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, p. 83–96) is preceded by a scene for Floro and Blesa (III. 7; Stampiglia 1708, 72–74) likewise set in a grotto. After the *buffo* bickering of these two characters, Giulia and Icilio appear, still in their disguises. She summons the spirits to tell the recaptured Mario's fate and instructs him to repeat her incantations with his eyes closed, while she retires into the cavern. The purpose of this elaborately scripted charade is for Giulia to mock and shame Icilio by removing her disguise during the "ritual", appearing to him as his betrothed after he opens his eyes. The whole interaction could be seen as a parody of an *ombra* scene, but it speaks in favour of Stampiglia's and Bononcini's skilful, pre-reform intermixing of the serious and the comic. For although the duet does not encompass all the traits listed in the *Grove Music Online* definition of an *ombra* scene such as "slow sustained writing (reminiscent of church music), the use of flat keys (especially in the minor), angular melodic lines, chromaticism and dissonance, dotted rhythms and syncopation, pauses, *tremolando* effects, sudden dynamic contrasts, unexpected harmonic progressions and unusual instrumentation", it can still function on both levels. The *Adagio* tempo, dotted orchestral ritornelli, the keys of E-flat

Bononcini MS, Mario fuggitivo, "Spirti dell'Erebo" (III. 8 Giulia, Icilio), p. 83-87, b. 1-16





EXAMPLE 15

major and C minor, the octave leaps in the vocal parts and the harmonic progressions often involving seventh chords and secondary dominants contribute to a solemn, serious tone that never verges on being too dark or gloomy since it avoids excessive dissonance and darker instrumental colours. "Spirti dell'Erebo" can be said to reflect Giulia's perspective as it does not let us forget that instead of a genuine invocation we are dealing with her gimmick, but at the same time it is also credible for Icilio, who falls easy prey to Giulia's deception.

In formal terms, the duet is a written out *dal segno* structure consisting of the following sections: A (b. 1–16; Example 15), B (b. 17–31) and A' (b. 32–44), a literal repetition of bars 4–16 preceded by an abridged string ritornello. This ritornello (b. 1–4) is in reality a descending homophonic progression of chords in a dotted, ostinato rhythm associated with orchestral *sinfonias* that have a ceremonial function. Hueber described it as "highly rich in harmonic terms"[208], which is perhaps a slight exaggeration, but it is effective in what seems like a departure from the tonic E-flat major in the second bar already, although this proves to be a secondary dominant leading into a sequential progression of seventh chords resolved into sixth chords and eventually flowing into a cadence on the tonic. It is descriptive not only of the descent into the spiritual world but perhaps also of Giulia's descent into the cavern as well as Icilio's hypnotic submission to the spell. He consistently repeats Giulia's phrases like she instructed him, with the important difference that her statements are accompanied by the *basso continuo* and his are not, hovering in the texture with the harmonies that accompanied Giulia still reverberating in the listener's ear. These alternating statements by the voices are separated with orchestral interjections that are always related to the opening ritornello but are usually shorter, with the exception of the progression that closes section A (b. 13–16). Section B corresponds to the function of a middle section in *dal segno* form by exploring related tonal areas. It vacillates between C minor and E-flat major (a tension already contained in the opening ritornello) and raises the tension by making the alternating statements of the voices increasingly shorter until they reach the length of a bar (b. 27–30).

Let us end the discussion on Bononcini's dramatic duets written in 1693–1708 with this unorthodox duet. None of the examples examined here are typical nor do they outline some sort of a developmental curve. However, duets such as "Al nume umanato / La fede, la speme" (*La conversione di Maddalena*), "Non vien per nuocer" (*Cefalo e Procride*) and "Che affanno, tiranno alato" (*Mario fuggitivo*) illustrate well what Bononcini was capable of in the realm of the dramatic duet, and we shall see whether he

208 **Harmonisch äußerst reich**.

will stay on this path in London or look for new solutions as instigated by the developing competition with the master from Halle.

3. 4. 1. 2.
The Rival's Duets

> The new links which later introduced GB's new music to London were truly forged by the old link, Gallas. […] GB's first opera after the death of Joseph I was the 1715 *Astarto*, which was produced under the direction of another of Gallas's employees, Paolo Rolli. […] The Earl of Burlington attended this production, presumably also attended the private assemblies given by Gallas, and brought Rolli with him when he returned to London. Burlington and Rolli perhaps introduced Londoners to new music written by GB for Gallas. […] James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos, might also have sponsored performances of GB's music at his Cannons estate. (Lindgren 1997, 244–245)

Although not only Bononcini himself but proponents of his music were mostly absent from London in the second decade of the 18th century, the quote by Lindgren listed above shows that preparations were being made for a second wave of increased interest in the Modenese composer's music. Bonocini's art was an integral part of the Italian cultural diaspora all over Europe, and as such enthusiastically promoted by some of his countrymen. The role played by Haym and Gallas in the early period of the performance of Italian opera in London was now undertaken by Giuseppe Riva, the Duchy of Modena's new representative in London and even more importantly, Paolo Rolli, Bononcini's new librettist with whom he started working together in Rome in 1714 and 1715. Rolli settled in London in 1716, acquired royal patronage as a poet, translator and Italian teacher and acted as the first secretary of the Royal Academy of Music in its first three seasons (1720–1722). He served as the author/adaptor of libretti for the operas performed during this time with the exception of *Radamisto* and he supervised their staging. Thus his role was comparable to Haym's in the earlier period. A lot has been written about the (supposedly) antagonistic relationships between Bononcini and Rolli on the one hand and Handel and Haym on the other (cf. Dean and Knapp 1987; Lindgren 1987; Clausen 1996; McGeary 2013). If there is something beyond doubt in this complicated artistic social web, it is the changeability and pragmatic nature of relationships. This study will engage in value judgements over the merits of Haym and Rolli as librettists since both of them worked together with Handel as well as Bononcini. I do not find it purposeful to transfer binary oppositions established in the history of reception of the two composers onto other levels such as the libretti they set and the positions of duets therein.

As had already been explained, we shall concentrate on the period 1720–1724 because this is when Bononcini was active as a composer for the Royal Academy of Music, although the stress will be on the period of the first three years as his most intense and successful. His last London opera *Astianatte* (1727), set to a libretto adapted by Haym, will also be drawn into the comparison. The flowering of Italian opera in the age of the Royal Academy of Music is closely connected to the royal subsidy from the Hanoverian dynasty, a vital financial contribution that was absent in the past. Let us give a brief overview of Bononcini's London operatic output: "Eight operas plus one act of *Muzio Scevola* constitute GB's contribution to the London stage from 1720 to 1727. Three of these operas were revivals of ones heard in Rome: Astarto (1715), Erminia (1719) and Crispo (1721)." (Lindgren 1997, 248). The complete list includes: *Astarto* (1720, revived in 1734), *Muzio Scevola* (Act 2, 1721), *Odio e amore / Ciro* (1721), *Crispo* (1722), *Griselda* (1722, revived in 1733), *Erminia* (1723), *Farnace* (1723), *Calfurnia* (1724) and *Astianatte* (1727). Unfortunately, although we are aware that some of these operas did contain duets, due to diverse, mostly philological reasons it was impossible for me to access them. For example, collections of songs containing ten and eleven numbers do exist for *Farnace* and *Calfurnia*, but these selections lack the two duets contained in the opera *Farnace* or the single duet from *Calfurnia*, whereas MS copies of numbers from the respective operas were out of reach. However, the selection of five of Bononcini's London operas as outlined in Table 56, if not representative, provides a sample still giving a rather nuanced insight into the composer's dramatic duets performed in London, especially at the beginning of his activity. Lastly, due to the several examples of parody in duets examined in Chapter 3.4.1.1., it is important to stress that most of Bononcini's London duets were original creations: he seems to have wanted to present himself in a novel light:

> None of the 13 arias in MUZIO SCEVOLA, only 3 of the 29 in GRISELDA, and only 5 of the 30 in FARNACE have been found in earlier works. Thus it does seem likely that these three works as well as ODIO E AMORE, CALFURNIA and ASTIANATTE consist mainly of newly-written arias settings. (Lindgren 1997, 249)

Before we move on to the examination of duets in Bononcini's London debut—the second version of the opera *Astarto*—we need to remind ourselves that the Royal Academy of Music did not open with an opera by Handel or Bononcini, but with a commission from the Venetian composer Giovanni Porta, described by Strohm (1979, 99) as "an important representative of

a new style in opera around 1720"[209] who was significantly influenced by his teacher Gasparini. *Numitore* (1720), to a libretto by Rolli, was a success and continued the trend of publishing selections of a high number of arias from operas, often including duets (Gasparini and Porta 1986, Numitore).[210]

"Il ciel, le piante i fior vien meco a rimirar / per te vuò a rimirar" (Gasparini and Porta 1986, Numitore, 7–8) is the culmination of the exceptional opening scene in which Romolo frees his mother Rhea Silvia from a cave in which she was imprisoned by cutting down a tree and using it as a ladder. The duet is a jubilant celebration of Romolo's heroism and Rhea Silvia's joy, but given the more active role the son has in the plot, he also dominates in the unusual design of this freely tripartite duet. In contrast to the regularity of strophic form that features so often in Bononcini's works (A1: first soloist; B: second soloist; A2: both soloists in simultaneity), here it is Romolo only who sings in the duets' first two sections (X1, b. 1–14; X2, b. 15–28). Rhea Silvia joins him only in the third one (X3, b. 28–53), although this does have a dramaturgic justification. The wealth of motivic material distinguishes this duet from most of Bononcini's examined so far, rendering it comparable to some of the duets from the pasticcios *Creso* and *Arminio*. The opening ritornello (b. 1–8) contains several motifs and subjects them to *Fortspinnung*, a process that continues in the unfolding of Romolo's part in the first two sections, too. In the last section Rhea Silvia repeats Romolo's statement from section A, after which the voices are combined in alternation, parallelism and a brief section in *contrapunctus ligatus*. This was Margherita Durastanti's (Romolo) London debut, a singer with whom the composer from Halle obviously had a special rapport since she had already created the roles of Maddalena in *La resurrezione* and Agrippina in the eponymous opera. Handel extensively borrowed from the opera, including its opening duet, during the composition of his later oratorios *Messiah*, *Samson* and *Solomon*.

"Parto, ma oh Dio non sò / Resto ma dir chi può" (II. 1 Remolo, Lidia; (Gasparini and Porta 1986, Numitore, 31–33) displays Porta as an able composer of duets as well. More conventional in dramaturgic and vocal terms, this is a departure duet for the lovers Remo (soprano castrato Benedetto Baldassari) and Lidia (Anastasia Robinson, whose range had meanwhile changed into that of a contralto due to illness), who engage with each

209 **Wichtiger Vortreter eines neuen Stils in der Oper um 1720.**

210 **Decades later, Handel most probably consulted this selection of songs when he extensively borrowed from it, including its opening duet, during the composition of his later oratorios *Messiah*, *Samson* and *Solomon*.**

other musically on an equal footing. The extended section A (b. 1–85) has a dual construction: sections in which the relationship between the voices is predominantly simultaneous, with quasi-imitation and parallelism (b. 1–23; 42–53) interchange with sections in which alternating statements dominate (b. 24–41; 54–65), growing increasingly shorter. The reason for this is in the text: Porta makes sure that the significant differences between the lines are comprehensible in succession, although there is no semantical opposition since both characters bemoan their bad fortune and express a wish to die in the other's place. Displaying continuity with the departure duets encountered in pasticcios of the previous decade, it shows how London audiences welcomed different conceptions of it besides Handel's minor-mode pathetic type.

But let us return to the main topic of this chapter, Bononcini's activity in London. The first season with its delayed beginning and short duration (lasting from April to June 1720) featured only three operas: *Numitore, Radamisto* and a version of Domenico Scarlatti's *Narciso* with additional numbers composed by Thomas Roseingrave. The second season of the Royal Academy of Music was planned more ambitiously. Dean and Knapp (1987) as well as Bennett and Lindgren agree that 1720/1721 and 1721/1722—Bononcini's first two seasons—were outstandingly successful for him since "five of his works (including *Muzio Scevola* […]*)* accounted for 82 of the 120 performances given by the Royal Academy of Music." (Bennett and Lindgren 2001). This did not necessarily result in antagonism between the two composers working together:

> We have little positive evidence of Handel's attitude to anybody at this time, and none at all of personal antagonism between him and Bononcini. Since Bononcini was a cellist, he and Handel presumably accompanied the recitatives in all the operas. The faction was instigated by third parties. (Dean and Knapp 1987, 307)

Except for the performances of authorial operas by Handel and Bononcini, in the second, 1720/1721 season plans were made to stage Steffani's opera *Tassilone* with the recitative adapted by Bononcini. Although this did not come to fruition, it is interesting to see that Steffani almost brought Handel and Bononcini together, both of whom had a connection with the Hanover composer and his chamber duets, although they responded to the questions posed by this genre in markedly different ways. The second season of the Royal Academy of Music was a breakthrough also because it saw the arrival in London of the alto Francesco Bernardi aka Senesino, the leading London castrato in the 1720s who sang in 32 operas before the company's dissolution.

Astarto (1720) was Bononcini's second setting of an opera "adapted by Rolli from a libretto by Zeno and Pariati based on two plays by Quinault (originally set by Albinoni for Venice in 1708)." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 306) Since the 1715 Roman setting was responsible for Bononcini's invitation to London, it is not surprising that it satisfied the expectations of the audience and received 23 performances, the highest number in one season by any opera produced at the Royal Academy of Music, especially since 25 of the 33 arias from the 1715 setting were retained. As a result, "for two years Bononcini's operas dominated the King's Theatre stage, outnumbering Handel's by 71 performances to 26." (ibid.) In contrast to this, contemporary written reception of the opera was not always so positive, e. g. Burney's:

> The spirit of party, ignorance of good Music, and an unformed and trivial taste, must have enhanced its value with the public; but, for my own part, I am not only unable to point out a single air in which there is dignity, originality of design, or a fanciful melody, but to discover that tenderness and pathos, for which Bononcini has been so celebrated, even by those who denied his invention and science." (quoted in Dean and Knapp 1987, 309)

This reflects Dean and Knapp's opinions (1987, 309–310), coloured by the reception trope of unfavourable comparisons with Handel: "The basic idiom is Handel's, but the music lacks his energy, inventive power, unpredictability, and feeling for character. The arias are mostly short and slight, with initial ideas that tickle the ear but never tax it; they are almost never developed, falling instead into sequences." Although they find that "Bononcini's powers had advanced little in the quarter century since *Xerse* (1694) and *Camilla*", Dean and Knapp still single out the duets in *Astarto* as "agreeable". Moreover, they add that "Bononcini is happiest in contrapuntal textures, where the absence of long-breathed phrases is no disadvantage" (311), but this probably applies to arias since Bononcini does not seem to have excelled in a pronounced use of imitation in his duets.

The popularity of *Astarto* has resulted in the publishing of the entire musical contents of the opera without recitative instead of the usual "selected songs" format (cf. the reprint of Walsh's 1721 edition, Bononcini 1984). It reflects the original London form of the opera, and indirect comparisons with the 1721 and the 1734 revival were possible thanks to the published libretti (cf. Rolli, Zeno, and Pariati 1720; Rolli, Zeno, and Pariati 1721; Rolli, Zeno, and Pariati 1734[211]). However, he did not sing the most popular

211 **The last revival was initiated by Senesino at a time when Bononcini's music was past its heyday so it can be written down to his nostalgia.**

duet in the opera that saw light as a separate publication, "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento" (I. 9 Sidonia, Nino; Bononcini 1984, 27–28). It is given to the secondary couple, Sidonia (Maddalena Salvai) and Nino (Matteo Berselli) whose characterisation is more light-hearted. In the first act, the schemer Sidonia tries to take advantage of the conflict between Clearco and Elisa in order to win Clearco over for herself. In the last scene, Nino courts her and she pretends to be returning his feelings in order to get rid of him, ending the act with a highly hypocritical dissembling of amorous unity.

FORM		BAR	SOLOISTS	KEY	TEXT
A	a	1–12	Sidonia	E♭	Mio caro ben / non sospirar perchè mi fai penar.
	b	12–29		g, c, d	Già sento ch'il tuo desire / divien martire di questo sen. Tu peni, ma / spera sì / caro non sospirar.
	a	29–41		E♭	Mio caro ben / non sospirar perchè mi fai penar
B	b'	41–58	Nino	g, c, d	Già sento ch'il gran tormento divien contento / di questo sen. Io peno, ma / cara sì / sola mi puoi bear.
A'	a'	58–81	Sidonia & Nino	E♭	Mio caro ben / non sospirar perchè mi fai penar.

TABLE 60.
Formal outline of the duet "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento" from Bononcini's *Astarto* (1720)

Table 60 outlines the duet's regular, songlike structure. If instead of the dramaturgy of vocal successiveness and simultaneity we took the text and the harmonic structure into consideration, it would be more correct to describe it as a rondo of sorts, a subsection serving as a refrain, framing the episodes (subsections b) that explore related tonalities. However, Bononcini treated the text as a strophic *aria a due* although it does not seem to have been intended for such a setting, even though the duet must be Rolli's addition to the Zeno-Pariati original since it does not feature in the 1708 libretto, where the act ends with an aria by Nino (cf. Zeno and Pariati 1708). The first three lines, shared by Sidonia and later also Nino, present the monotextual part of the duet, whereas in the next five lines the text reflects the different takes of the characters on the situation: Sidonia feigns pity for Nino's amorous suffering and he is in turn comforted by this. The postponement of Nino's rendition of the first three lines make

sense in dramaturgic terms since those words are a reaction to Sidonia's feigned sighs, but it must have been Bononcini who chose to reconcile this with the principle of strophic exchange of one stanza per character followed by a common one. Sidonia's stanza is in ternary song form itself, but it is not surprising that her share in the duet is bigger since she initiated the duet in an attempt to manipulate Nino's feelings. Subsections b as sung by Sidonia and Nino in succession are identical, which is unusual because the polytextuality is not highlighted musically. Maybe it can be read as Nino's utter musical beguilement by Sidonia, which is facilitated by the parts' equal soprano ranges. Subsection a', on the other hand, unites the two voices either by the distribution of the melody between them in succession or by its doubling in thirds. The fact that the material of both subsections a and b is uniform, with its characteristic, ostinato-like dotted rhythm and the leaps that close each short phrase contributes to the sense of a spontaneous, clear-cut melody. Sidonia's deception is obviously convincing on the musical plane, as well. One could even interpret the duet as a somewhat varied variant of the ternary song form (a II: b a :II) or a binary form with coda (II: a b :II coda).

Although somewhat shorter, the second duet in the opera "Innamorar e poi mancar/abbandonar" (II. 9 Elisa, Clearco; Bononcini 1984, 52–55) also brings an act to a dramatically effective close. *Astarto* seems to strive for the opposite of *Numitore*, where duets were placed at the beginning of the first two acts. The dramatic situation that prepares the introduction of the duet is rather tense: the queen Elisa (Durastanti) has had Fenicio, the man whom Clearco (Senesino) holds for his father, arrested on charges of treason. She wants to learn from him the identity of the titular Astarto, who is the legitimate heir to the throne and thus threatens her sovereignty, but since Fenicio will not divulge this information, she leaves the two men alone hoping that the older man will be more forthcoming to his son. In a surprising plot twist, Fenicio reveals that Clearco is in fact Astarto. Although he is true to the queen in both political terms and as her lover, holding no pretensions to the throne, Clearco/Astarto wants to save Fenicio, so he buys himself some time by telling Elisa that he will reveal Astarto's identity later. The duet's text (see Table 61) is a thematisation of conflicts that had troubled the pair in the course of the first two acts. Elisa reproaches Clearco that he betrayed her (politically), he assures her that this is not the case and as a result she gives him hopes for a reconciliation. Zeno and Pariati wrote a semantically similar duet for Clearco and Elisa at a later point in the dramatic action ("Occhi vezzosi / Alma crudele" III. 6 Clearco, Elisa; Zeno and Pariati 1708, 46–47). This means that Bononcini and Rolli wanted not only to move the disclosure of Astarto's identity and the confrontation between Clearco and Elisa to an earlier point in the action, but devised their own duet text as well.

FORM	BAR	CHARACTER	TEXT
rit.$_1$	1–8	%	
a	8–16	Elisa	Innamorar / e poi manchar / dimmi perchè?
		Clearco	Innamorar / e abbandonar / dimmi perchè?
b	16–25	Clearco	E fido il mio cor / e ingrato non è.
		Elisa	E pur mi tradi /
a	25–33	Elisa	ma se vorrai / il premio avrai / della tua fe.
		Clearco	T'ingannerai / se temerai / della mia fe.
b	33–40	Clearco	E fido il mio cor / e ingrato non è.
		Elisa	E pur mi tradi /
a'	40–50	Elisa	Innamorar / e poi manchar / dimmi perchè?
		Clearco	Innamorar / e abbandonar / dimmi perchè?
a'	50–60	Elisa	ma se vorrai / il premio avrai / della tua fe.
		Clearco	T'ingannerai / se temerai / della mia fe.
rit.$_2$	60–73	%	

TABLE 61.
Formal outline of the duet "Innamorar e poi manchar / abbandonar" from *Astarto* (1720)

In formal, motivic and harmonic terms this duet is even simpler than "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento". It is also structured like an interchange of motivically related sections by repetition and minimal variation, the difference being that they are even shorter here and that a simultaneous texture prevails instead of the predominantly successive in "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento". The duet stays within the confines of the pastoral tonality of F major. All of the sections, including the ritornellos that replicate section a in instrumental form, start out with a quasi-imitation but quickly unite the voices in parallel thirds. In musical terms the second occurrences of both a and b (b. 25–33 and 33–40) are identical with the first (b. 8–16 and 16–25). The third and fourth occurrences of a (b. 40–50 and 50–60) differ only by the repetition of the last two bars as a *codetta*. However, as highlighted in Table 61, while he reserves b for Clearco's fourth and fifth line and Elisa's fourth line, Bononcini set all the remaining lines and the first three of each protagonist as section a. This association of the same music with a wide array of textual lines is unusual even for Bononcini, who is known to have treated his texts freely. With its oscillation between different affective contents, the text would have allowed for a more diversified approach, but Bononcini chose to give

a distinctly binary musical code to the duet, negating the grammatical, rhetorical and—to a lesser extent—semantical focuses inherent in it. There does not seem to be a musical equivalence to the dramaturgic complexity of the situation. One cannot escape the impression that instead of elaborating on the relationship between the characters and all their affects, Bononcini's aim was to end the act as soon as possible at the height of tension, to stifle a conflict instead of trying to express or interpret it. Not only the pastoral key and the diatonic harmonies with a lot of pedals but also the presence of horns frame the duet as a hunting scene of sorts, as if the characters were getting ready to go hunting together as part of a French operatic *divertissement*. Bononcini showed a proclivity for *da capo* form early on in his career when it was not yet the absolute formal norm and we have already seen that he often adopted it in the most lapidary form, so that its absence here at the end of the second act, usually reserved for a virtuoso number, was a conscious choice. Maybe the possibility that he borrowed it from an earlier work should be considered, although the complexity of the text would imply extensive adaptation. Its presence in all the versions of the opera associated with Bononcini (1715, 1720, 1721 and 1734) suggests it belongs to Rolli's original plan; Bononcini clearly stood behind this duet!

The monotextual duet of amorous unity "Mai non potrei goder" (III. 9 Elisa, Clearco; Bononcini 1984, 73–76) is probably the only conventional duet in the opera after the two lapidary, almost minimalist duets. As is customary in the *lieto fine*, the relationship between Elisa and Clearco/Astarto is consolidated on the personal and the political plane and this closing duet testifies to their unity, resolving their differences. Although we cannot call it particularly elaborate in terms of the techniques used as we could some of the duets examined in Chapter 3.4.1.1, it is the longest and technically most demanding duet in the opera, allowing the *primo uomo* and the *prima donna* a few moments of vocal brilliance. For the first time in a London duet, Bononcini works with two motifs, already clearly outlined in the opening ritornello (b. 1–4). Its first bar tosses a playful descending motif back and forth in the two violins in quasi-imitative alternating statements. In the second two bars they unite in parallel thirds in the outlining of a sequential syncopated passage featuring in both sections of this regular *da capo* form. The voices open by developing a subject (b. 4–6, first occurrence in Elisa's part) from the first motif in the ritornello, imitated in a slightly modified form (b. 5–8 in Clearco's part). Accompanied by some orchestral *Fortspinnung*, the voices engage in a contrapuntal section that juxtaposes the subject to a pedal note, followed by a parallel passage based on the second motif from the ritornello (y, b. 10–13) that modulates to the dominant.

The second part of this "larger form", a2 (b. 14–28) is structured similarly, with the difference that it compresses the opening part into the alternation of the first motif from the ritornello in the violins accompanied by alternating crotchet outcries of "no" in the voices (b. 14–16). This way the setting stresses the impossibility of happiness without each other as "Mai non potrei goder / intero un sol piacer / mio bene senza te" is the only text in section A. Back in the confines of the G major tonic, the passage with the subject juxtaposed to a dominant pedal is now reproduced with the parts inverted (b. 16–18), followed by a parallel rendition of motif y (b. 18–21) interspersed with a bar of free contrapuntal combining. A closing ritornello reworking of motif y leads into section B (b. 28–38) distinguished by no particular contrast in affect or motivic material. It resorts, though more often than section A, to contrapuntal passages while exploring related minor keys, avoids references to motif x and uses motif y instead for orchestral interjections and cadential passages.

The text of "Mai non potrei goder" was not a part of Zeno's and Pariati's original 1708 libretto or Bononcini's first 1715 setting. The introduction of this third duet may have been prompted by Bononcini. Unlike the first two duets with their long texts and dramaturgic specificity, the more typified "Mai non potrei goder" is easily replaceable, which is exactly what happened in the 1721 revival of *Astarto*, when a duet with the incipit "Cara/caro non v'è dolce diletto" took up its place.[212] The 1734 revival saw a further replacement, closing Act 3 with an aria for Clearco ("L'onor severo brama") and a *coro* that incorporated a duet passage for Elisa and Clearco with the incipit "Contento e tormento". In any case, *Astarto* shows that along with shorter and simpler, but unconventional duets that could capture the attention of the audience, Bononcini was ready to create more typical duet designs that still bear the stamp of his style.

The origins of the libretto for the London pasticcio *Muzio Scevola* (1721) are complex, going back to the eponymous libretto by Nicolò Minato, first set by Francesco Cavalli in 1665. The first act of the Haymarket production was composed by Filippo Amadei, a violoncellist active in London who did not compose much in his lifetime bar this commission. As there were no duets in his act of *Muzio Scevola*, we shall concentrate on Act 2, composed by Bononcini, whereas the third act by Handel will be discussed at length Chapter 3.4.2. Bononcini had already been involved with the story of the Roman hero Mutius Scaevola at least two times, in 1695 in Rome and in 1710 in Vienna. Back then his librettist was Silvio Stampiglia, who took Minato's old libretto as his starting point and introduced some innovations.

212 **I cannot account for the provenance of this duet as I could not access any sources documenting it.**

For the 1710 production Stampiglia significantly revised the text and this libretto was probably the point of departure for Rolli. His reworking was more substantial, introducing new characters into the Minato / Stampiglia model. It is by now evident that because of the intricate derivative processes and the inaccessibility of some of the sources, a detailed comparison of all versions was not possible. Most of the background information will be based on scholarly literature (Powers 1976; Ford 1974), although I have verified myself that none of the duets from the 1695 libretto (Stampiglia 1695) and the 1710 score (Bononcini MS, Muzio Scevola)[213] made it into the London opera. Its libretto was published (Rolli 1721) along with a selection of four vocal numbers, but since I had access to the integral MS copy of the pasticcio at the British Library (Bononcini MS, Muzio Scevola, Act 2), this will be my main source.

The main difference between the 1695 and 1710 versions of the opera on the one hand and the 1721 pasticcio on the other is the treatment of the second plot involving the Roman officer Orazio, who in the 1695 version has a wife and a daughter, whereas in Rolli's version of the libretto he is in love with Porsenna's daughter Irene. Muzio's love interest in the 1695 and 1710 versions was Valeria, the daughter of the Roman consul, while in the 1721 pasticcio he loves Clelia, who displays even more valour and courage, provoking Dean and Knapp's (1987, 368) description of "a veritable Roman Amazon". The 1695 libretto and the 1710 score contain a duet for Muzio and Orazio (I. 4), a duet for Orazio and Elisa with a somewhat different text (II. 8 in the 1695 version of the opera, II. 9 in the 1710 one) and "Cara infido tu mi credi / ad altri tu mi cedi" for Muzio and Valeria (III. 4 in the 1695 version, III. 5 in the 1710 one), analysed in Chapter 3.2.3 in connection with its borrowing in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* (1708). The first two 1695/1710 duets do not have a dramaturgic equivalent in the 1721 pasticcio. The third one would have had dramaturgic potential in the 1721 retelling of the Mutius story as a scene where Muzio and Clelia meet after he had ceded her to Porsenna appears there as well. I wonder if Bononcini was aware of the fact that London audiences had already heard this duet as part of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* in 1708 even before he decided to borrow it himself for the 1710 Vienna *Muzio Scevola*. We shall see in Chapter 3.4.2 that Rolli replaced a duet at this point in the dramatic action of Act 3 with one nearer the end of the act. Moreover, the 1721 London version of the opera contains duets at entirely different dramaturgic points in general, so it is safe to conclude

213 **The availability of this source came to my knowledge in the finishing phase of the research, so that it was impossible to include duets from it into the analysis in Chapter 3.4.1.1. I can however confirm that there is no direct parody between the duets in Bononcini MS, Muzio Scevola and other duets examined in this study.**

that the new duet texts stem entirely from Rolli, who clearly had different ideas about what kind of duets he wanted in his retelling of the story.

Muzio Scevola presented Chrysander (1919b, 58–68) with an ideal opportunity to compare the styles of the two composers in the pasticcio's second and third acts. The comparison was very unfavourable for Bononcini, whose music was repudiated because of its likeability as "light" art. We should examine if the customary qualities of "lightness" and "sweetness" indeed apply to Bononcini's two duets as compared to Handel's two. Both composers wrote them for the same constellation of *primi* and *secondi* singers as in *Astarto*: one duet per act for Senesino (Muzio) and Durastanti (Clelia) and one for Berselli (Orazio) and Anastasia Robinson (Irene). In both acts the *secondi* sing a duet first, Bononcini's being "Troppo loquace è il guardo / Se quando parla il guardo" (II. 5 Orazio, Irene; Bononcini MS, Muzio Scevola, Act 2, 68–73).[214] Porsenna initially wanted to give his daughter Irene's hand in marriage to the exiled Roman king Tarquinio Superbo and he was opposed to her love for Orazio. Impressed by Muzio's and Clelia's courage and instigated by his growing infatuation for Clelia, Porsenna is considering a change of allegiances. The duet is a part of the scene containing a clandestine meeting between Irene and Orazio on the banks of the Tiber: Irene arrives on a boat to let Orazio know that her father might be changing his mind about consenting to their marriage but she cannot stay for long, so that the lovers' prolonged parting is sealed with this flirtatious dialogue duet.

As shown in Table 62, it is definitely not a tragic or pathetic duet of departure. At first it seems to have a similar structural plan like "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento" and other duets in varied strophic tripartite form. However, the situation is more complex than that. The free tripartite form consists of two sections in which each voice sings its own stanza in longer, motivically related alternating statements. Orazio, who initiates communication with the parting Irene because he wants to extract a kind look from her before she leaves, always takes the lead, Irene answering him in the lower fourth. They engage in a discussion on love and its manifestations. Orazio chides Irene for being too restrained in the expression of her affections, while Irene encourages him to look deeper into her eyes—as the window to the soul—for reassurance. The melodies they both outline in A1 and A2 are similar, cleverly vacillating between a minor key and its relative major equivalent and spicing up the diatonicism with alterations in the form of a frequent figure of a diminished third. In the third section of the duet (A1') their singing is intertwined, beginning by alternations of

214 **The MS source is often illegible which would have made a precise transcription difficult.**

a shorter span based on the motivic material of A1 and gradually combined into a simultaneous, mostly freely contrapuntal texture giving way to parallelism only in the last two bars (b. 44–45) before a short ritornello rounds off the duet. In textual terms, a fifth stanza sung by Orazio is juxtaposed to the repetition of the fourth stanza repeated by Irene, but whereas in A2 it was sung in dialogue with him, here the peculiarities of the text, although highlighted in comprehensible alternating statements before being sung in simultaneity, flow into a mutual agreement and a musical unity, thus abolishing what little conflict this duet had in itself. The collaboration between the composer and Rolli that probably began in 1714 in Rome but continued in London obviously favoured irregular duets forms of abundant polytextuality with dialogic traits. The *da capo* was the exception rather than the rule, and although Bononcini had shown a proclivity for the *da capo* early on in his career, he gladly experimented with varied strophic forms and the creation of musical dialogue, e. g. in "Al nume umanato" from *La conversione di Maddalena*. Whether this was Bononcini's and Rolli's answer to the "modern plan" duet remains to be seen.

A_1 (b. 1–16)			
a_1 (b. 3–10)	**a_1^{ι} (fourth lower, b. 10–16)**		
Orazio	**Irene**		
Troppo loquace è il guardo S'è messaggier del cor Ma tu col tuo rigor Muto lo rendi.	**Se quando parla il guardo, Tu sai che dice il cor Col nome di rigor Troppo l'offendi.**		
Orazio	**Irene**	**Orazio**	**Irene**
Sul labbro venne l'alma Nel'intendesti allor Or viene al volto e ancor Tu non l'intendi.	**Caro in quest'occhi Se non vedesti allor Or te la svelo ancor, Sì tu l'intenti.**	**Solo piacer dell'Alma, Mio primo dolce ardor, Con troppe fiame il cor, Cara, m'accendi.**	**Caro in quest'occhi Se non vedesti allor Or te la svelo ancor, Sì tu l'intenti.**
a_2 (b. 16–22)	**a_2^{ι} (fourth lower, b. 22–28)**	**$A_1^{\flat}$ – in simultaneity (b. 28–50)**	
A_2 (b. 16–28)			

TABLE 62.
Text and formal outline of Bononcini's duet "Troppo loquace è il guardo / Se quando parla il guardo" from the pasticcio *Muzio Scevola* (1721)

Although its text is less elaborate, the duet "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto" (II. 10 Clelia, Muzio; Bononcini MS, Muzio Scevola, Act 2, 80–83') continues the trend just described. It is even more dialogic since Muzio's stanza is a direct reply to Clelia's and the immediacy is enhanced by the number's brevity. It occurs at the moment of an encounter between the pair on Muzio's way back from Porsenna's camp. As is known from ancient Roman history, Mucius Scaevola volunteered to assassinate Lars Porsena in the Clusian camp during his siege of Rome, but killed someone else by mistake. Impressed by his courage and the fact that he put his right hand into a fire in punishment for his error, Porsenna sets Muzio free "and gives him an escort of guards, who are attacked by Clelia and her women." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 368) Wanting to keep Clelia near, Porsenna decides to hold them hostage. Ford (1974, 119) describes the duet as "an example of the serious duet style" since the cries of "ahi", often mocked in parodies of serious opera by comic characters, "are here used seriously", namely, Clelia sees that Muzio's hand is wounded and expresses sympathy for his pain with a touch of sentimentality, although he negates it.

The duet has the same structural plan of strophic alternation followed by a final simultaneous texture. It is in three sections, the first two consisting of alternating statements and the third bringing the voices together in simultaneity. In this sense it shows continuity with "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento". However, the duets from *Muzio Scevola* move away from the simplicity and diatonic idiom of the duets in *Astarto* into a harmonically more adventurous and also more dramatic, dialogic understanding of strophic form. "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto", likewise in a minor key, is shorter and contains less text than "Troppo loquace è il guardo / Se quando parla il guardo"; instead of the latter duet's five stanzas, it has merely one stanza per character. Thus its first section (A1, b. 1–10) is the rendition of Clelia's stanza in a single alternating statement and the second section (A2, b. 10–15) the setting of Muzio's stanza as the repetition of Clelia's melody transposed a fourth lower. The third section (A3, b. 15–33) consists—in textual terms—of the repetition of each characters' stanza broken up into ever shorter alternating statements and then combined into a simultaneous texture in the last three vocal bars (b. 29–31) before the closing short ritornello. Unlike the two aforementioned duets in varied strophic form, "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto" keeps vocal simultaneity to the minimum, reaching it gradually in a culminating process. But let us take a look at sections A1 and A2 (Example 16).

In terms of its text, this duet is the most simple of the three strophic duets mentioned ("Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento", "Troppo loquace è il guardo / Se quando parla il guardo") with its mere

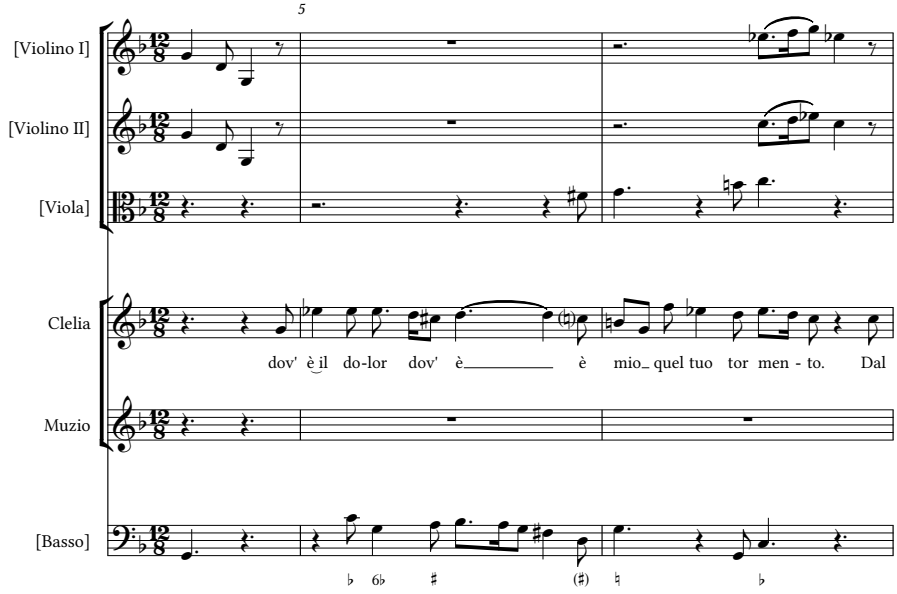
two stanzas[215]. However, Bononcini achieves a sense of complexity by carefully building a melodic arch consisting of as many as five motifs: the opening x1 (b. 4–5[216]), x2 (b. 5–6) with its specific leap of an ascending seventh, x2' (b. 6–7), a sequential repetition of x2 a second lower, x3 (b. 7–8), a descending melody outlining a diminished third and finally, the cadential x4 (b. 8–9). The way these motifs are separated by pauses but still grow out of each other in a spontaneous manner is a slap in the face of Bononcini's critics who insisted on a squareness and repetitiveness of the composer's phrase structures. Some of these motifs are anticipated already in the opening ritornello (b. 1–5): x1 appears in imitation in the two violins and the viola, x2 takes its cue from the second violins and is then transferred to the first violin, while motif x4 rounds off the ritornello. In contrast to the principles of ritornello form (or a duet such as "Il ciel, le piante i fior vien meco a rimirar / per te vuò a rimirar"), here the orchestra presents just a sample of the material that the vocal parts work out in its entirety. Clelia's statement of the composite, five-part subject touches upon B-flat major with a series of secondary dominants, but stays within the confines of the tonic. As a transposition of A1 into the dominant, A2 does the same on the tonal plane of D minor. However, Bononcini's harmonic mastery, so praised by his contemporaries such as Lecerf de la Viéville, is evident in section A3, where he combines motifs in the two vocal parts that appeared in the preceding two sections in different keys. The ritornello alone drew the attention of the listener with harmonic audacity already in the second bar: as soon as the G minor tonic has been established with an authentic cadence, it is destabilised by a brisk modulation into D minor and the statement of the dominant of its dominant (b. 2, second beat), after which it sequentially proceeds to further secondary dominants so that the aforementioned harmonic surprise does not stand out. Perhaps this is a good example of what Bononcini's contemporaries had in mind when they spoke of the shocking qualities of the composer's harmonic language.

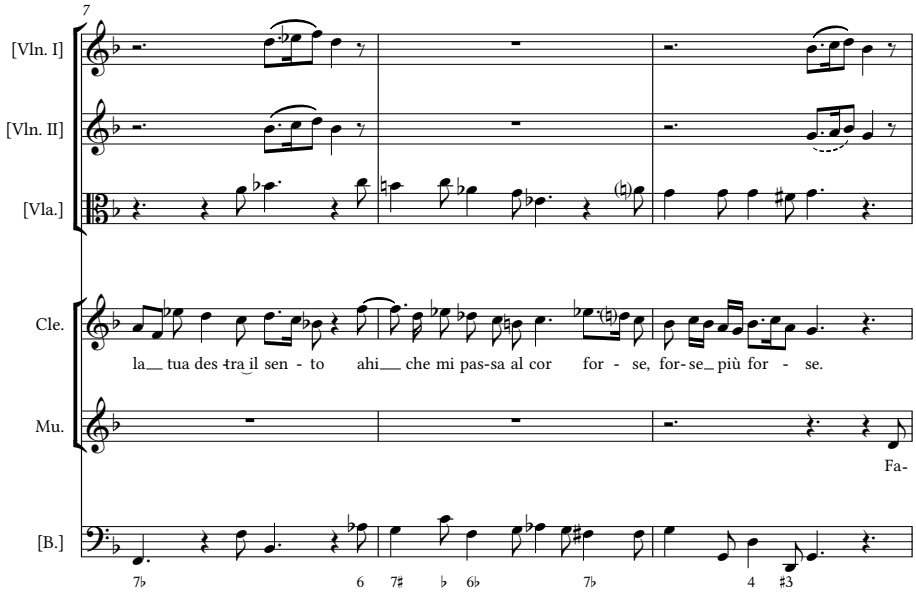
Section A3 proceeds by balancing statements of varied and repeated motifs in Clelia's (soprano) and Muzio's (mezzosoprano) parts. It, as well, starts out in the tonic G minor, and after touching upon E-flat major and F minor during the sequential statements of x2, x2' and x3, it returns to the tonic in b. 24. It breaks up the composite, five-part subject onto two

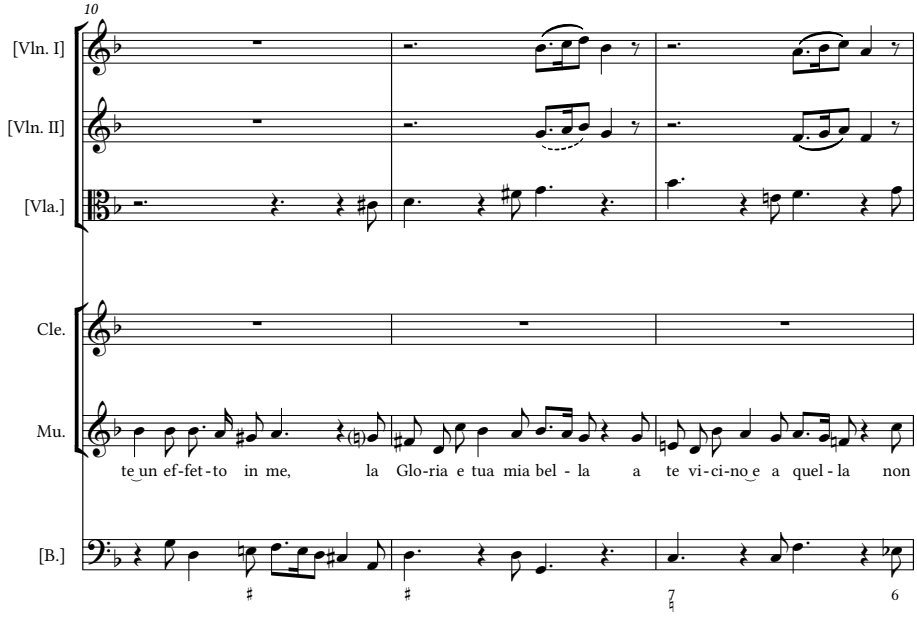
215 **In absence of a tabular outline, I am bringing the text here: Clelia: Dov'è il dolor, dov'è / E mio quel tuo tormento. / Dalla tua destra il sento / Ahi che mi passa al cor / Forse più forte. Muzio: Fate un'effetto in me / La gloria e tua mia bella. / A te vicino e a quella / Non so che sia dolor, / cara e la morte. Clelia/Muzio: Dov'è / Fate…**

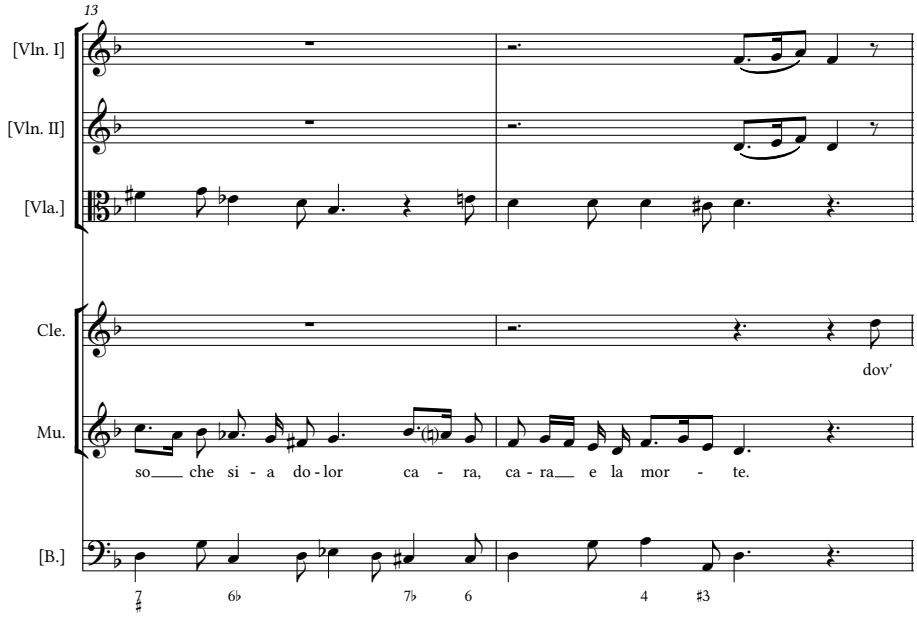
216 **Bar numbers refer to the first occurrence in the vocal part (Clelia's).**

Bononcini MS, Muzio Scevola, "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto" (II. 10 Clelia, Muzio), 80'-81', b. 5-15






10
[Vln. I]
[Vln. II]
[Vla.]
Cle.
Mu.
te un ef-fet-to in me, la Glo-ria e tua mia bel - la a te vi-ci-no e a quel - la non
[B.]


13
[Vln. I]
[Vln. II]
[Vla.]
Cle.
dov'
Mu.
so che si - a do-lor ca - ra, ca - ra e la mor - te.
[B.]

EXAMPLE 16

voices in a not altogether straightforward way. At first, an impression of regularity is conveyed by the rendition of x1 a fourth lower in Muzio's part (b. 16–17) after Clelia had stated it in b. 15–16. After x2 had been brought forward in Clelia's part (b. 17–18), the alternation becomes slightly more erratic: Muzio brings x2 forth (b. 18–19), Clelia states x2' and x3 together sequentially a second lower, she herself transposes x3 (b. 21–22) a fifth higher, which is followed by her emphatic outcry "ahi". Although the text is not new (we have heard it in its entirety in sections A1 and A2), Bononcini gives Clelia's distress some additional emphasis. To balance out the alternation, Muzio steers back the harmonic course to the tonic with a rendition of x2' and x3 (b. 22–24), after which the voices exchange x4 in varied form (b. 24–27). This is followed by a coda (b. 27–33) of sorts, the passage Ford (1974, 119) had described and also transcribed in his article. The alternation reaches its dialogic culmination since Clelia's cries ("ahi") are juxtaposed to Muzio's ("cara") in a sequential progression of sixth and seventh chords that outlines a cadence in the tonic, but nevertheless conveys some of the delicate sentimental sweetness of the situation. After this, the already mentioned brief moments of vocal simultaneity provide a conventional closing.

Comparing the Vienna *Muzio Scevola* with former operas by Bononcini, Hueber (1955, 143) concludes that "the style of the master has not changed considerably in a period of 13 years since 1697, both in content, form and in terms of orchestration"[217]. However, it had changed in the following decade, possibly under the influence of Rolli's and Bononcini's new ideas on musical dramaturgy, at least in the realm of duets. In *Muzio Scevola* their collaboration seems to have gone a step further. The dramatic situation in which the coda occurs and the coda itself are indeed slightly sentimental (although one could argue that there is nothing sentimental about second-degree burns), but the duet as a whole is certainly not. With their minor-mode tonalities, the renouncement of mellifluous motivic material and the absence of regular, periodic structures, as well as a love for irregularity and occasional harmonic audacity, Bononcini's two duets in this opera depart from his previous duets, although in formal and structural terms they do show some continuity as well.

In 1721/1722 *Crispo* and *Griselda* by Bononcini were performed alongside Handel's *Floridante*, reaping slightly more success than Handel. Due to the absence of Durastanti, the female leads in both operas were written for Anastasia Robinson, who won the hearts of London audiences in

217 **Der Stil des Meisters hat sich seit 1697, also innerhalb eines Zeitraumes von 13 Jahren nicht wesentlich verändert, weder in inhaltlicher, formaler, als auch instrumentationstechnischer Hinsicht**.

Griselda in particular. "According to Hawkins, Bononcini had improved her method of singing and wrote particularly well for her in *Crispo* and *Griselda.*" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 312). The publication of *Cantate e duetti* (1721) cemented Bononcini's success in this season, although these chamber duets were quite different from the duets in *Muzio Scevola* and the first two in *Astarto*. In general, the stylistic and structural changes that the genre of the chamber duet underwent between the publishing of the two collections (1691 and 1721) were smaller than the ones witnessed in the composer's dramatic duets.

As has already been remarked, although Bononcini wrote many more operas before he left the Royal Academy of Music, we are able to consider only those in Table 56 because some operas either contain no duets at all, or no sources documenting them were accessible. For instance, Salvi's *Amore e maestà* in Orlandini's 1715 setting, with the libretto revised by Rolli and the addition of 15 arias by Amadei was premiered under the title *Arsace* just after *Astarto* in 1720, but contained no duets. *Ciro*, the last premiere of the second, 1720/1721 season does not seem to have either. On the other hand, *Crispo* definitely contains one duet, "Mi lasci crudele / Consolati e parti" (I. 7 Costante, Olimpia), as can be seen from the printed libretto (Rolli and Lemer 1721, 18). In this variant of the Phaedra story Fausta, the wife of the emperor Constantine the Great is in love with her stepson Crispo. The duet is assigned to Fausta's son Costante and Olimpia, Crispo's betrothed. Asked by the emperor Costantino to choose between her two suitors, Olimpia has chosen Crispo, to Costante's dismay. In this "modern plan" duet text he complains and admonishes her for not returning his feelings, while she remains steadfast and wants to leave. We are dealing with a highly polytextual and dialogic text. This time it does not stem from Rolli but from Gaetano Lemer, the author of the libretto for the first version of the opera, produced in Bononcini's absence in Rome in 1721 (Lemer 1721, 25), which proves that there were other librettists besides Rolli who were interested in exploring innovative, serious duet designs. It is a shame that there are no musical sources that reflect a setting of this text with absolute certainty. However, although Robinson in the role of Fausta was the absolute *prima donna* of the opera, she did not take part in any duets.

This was not the case in *Griselda* (1722), the opera by Bononcini most praised by his contemporaries including Burney who was otherwise not particularly positively inclined to Bononcini: "It is manifest that Handel's bold and varied style, rich harmony, and ingenious contrivance had made such an impression on the public as to render it necessary for Bononcini, in setting this opera, to quit his *rambling nag,* and to mount his great horse, accoutred in all his trappings, and endeavour to move with unusual pomp

and stateliness." (quoted in Dean and Knapp 1987, 313). Dean and Knapp themselves do not give Bononcini the benefit of the doubt, claiming that "there is nothing here that Handel did not do much better. As before, he strikes the mood of a piece in the first phrase, ignores its undercurrents, and falls back on formulae." (ibid., 313–314). My intention is not to refute these tropes of negative reception of Bononcini's music since it would be hard to debate them on the basis of isolated examples from the opera, but let us nevertheless examine how they compare to the rest of Bononcini's dramatic duets examined so far.

Zeno's *Griselda* was one his most renowned and popular libretti, first set by Pollarolo (1701) and before Bononcini by a variety of composers such as Albinoni (1703), Orlandini (1716), Antonio Maria Bononcini (1718) and A. Scarlatti (1721). It remained popular throughout the first half of the century. However, for the London performance the libretto was adapted by Rolli, and we have seen that he had a tendency to make significant changes not only to the texts of the vocal numbers but to the dramaturgy in general as well, much bigger changes than are present in the settings of Bononcini's brother, Scarlatti and Vivaldi. If we narrow a brief comparison of these settings down to the duets, we shall see that the operas by A. M. Bononcini and Scarlatti contain one duet for Griselda and Costanza and one for Roberto and Costanza, which is a big difference when compared to Rolli's three duets. Rolli also changed the name of the characters as we already witnessed him do before, keeping only those of the *primi*, the Sicilian king Gualtiero and his plebeian wife Griselda, whom he subjects to cruel tests of worthiness to the throne after her legitimacy had been questioned by the people. Having told Griselda that their daughter is dead, Gualtiero banishes her to the countryside and announces that he will remarry. As part of the next ordeal, he summons her back to court to be a servant to his new bride-to-be, called Costanza in most versions of the opera but renamed Almirena by Rolli. She is in love with Prince Ernesto, called Roberto in Zeno's original. Griselda stoically accepts all these ordeals, so it is revealed to her that Costanza/Almirena is actually their daughter and that Gualitero had been testing her all along. In a typical *lieto fine*, the people accept Griselda as their queen since she has proven that the nobility of character is more important than the nobility of blood. Perhaps Griselda was so popular precisely because of this enlightened moral, and London audiences were able to identify with it since they drew parallels between the titular character and Anastasia Robinson, the singer having come from a modest social background and was about to marry the Earl of Peterborough (cf. Dean 2001b). It was also important for librettists to soften Gualtiero's cruelty by letting him express the depth of his love for Griselda and the remorse he feels for torturing her when he is left alone on stage.

Although he kept a duet for the secondary pair, Almirena and Ernesto, but placed it earlier in the third act into a different dramatic situation, Rolli clearly wanted to place additional emphasis on the main protagonists and his *primi* singers Robinson and Senesino by giving them two duets, none of which have an equivalent in Zeno. Their first duet is the only duet among the numbers from *Griselda* cited by Dean and Knapp as an example of "slow and plaintive" minor-mode melodies. One must add without delay that "Al mio nativo prato / E per voler di quello" (I. 2 Griselda, Gualtiero; Bononcini 1722, 7–8)[218] is none of this as not only is it ascribed *Andante* but it is also in D major and does not possess a plaintive character at all with its 3/8, dance metre. The dramatic situation would allow for the expression of the affect of sorrow, at least on Griselda's part, as the duet occurs after Gualtiero had announced that she is to be sent back to the meadows where she used to tend to her flocks. Griselda's lower social background is given overtly pastoral overtones and this is noticeable even in the flute accompaniment. Modulating from the tonic to the A major dominant, Griselda recounts how it was for the will of her king that she left her meadows in the first place. Gualtiero adds in what may sound sarcastic (as underlined by the use of the diminutive form "praticello") that it was for his will, too, that she will be returning there.[219] Otherwise the duet is not of particular importance to this study because it is in strophic bipartite form, built out of two short sections (X1, b. 1–19; X2, b. 19–38), in each of which a character sings her or his three-line stanza without any vocal simultaneity whatsoever. However, even in this simplest design Bononcini showed a proclivity for varied strophic form as he based Gualtiero's section only loosely on Griselda's, retaining merely the opening motif (b. 1–2 in the orchestra, b. 2–4 in Griselda's part, b. 19–21 in Gualtiero's). After a brief detour to E minor (b. 21–25) that may or may not be expressive of Gualtiero's hidden discomfort concerning Griselda's banishment, Gualtiero modulates back to the tonic with the repetition of the main motif (b. 25–27), but the subsequent course of his section unfolds differently from Griselda's. The grace with which Griselda accepts her fate is clear from the start in this first number in the opera.

A lot happens before the pair is joined again in a duet at the end of Act 2. Just before they sing "Dell'offesa / Mio sovrano" (II. 12 Gualtiero, Griselda; Bononcini 1722, 50–52), Gualtiero rescues Griselda from Rambaldo's

218 **Although clearly entitled as "sung by A. Robinson & Sigr. Senesino in Griselda", at first sight it seems that "Al mio nativo prato" is an aria for Griselda only since Gualitero's name has been erroneously left out of its place before the stave on p. 8. of Walsh's edition.**

219 **Griselda: Al mio nativo prato / dirò t'o abbandonato / per voglio del mio Re. Gualtiero: E per voler di quello / puoi dire al praticello / oggi ritorno a te.**

unwelcome advances, but he cannot admit in front of his retinue and Griselda that the motif for his act was love, so he insists that he was instigated by "giustizia" (justice) and not by "amor", warning Griselda not to foster any false hopes, which she stoically accepts, nevertheless maintaining that on her part, she is incapable of not loving Gualtiero. In many ways this is an atypical duet for Bononcini, but not for the reasons some of the duets in *Astarto* and both duets in *Muzio Scevola* were, for it is in regular *da capo* form, with an A section in "larger form" (A1, b. 1–19; A2, b. 19–35). The duet does not venture beyond the diatonic "sweetness" normally associated with Bononcini, either. Moreover, whereas in the duet "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto" the dramatic situation might have been "sweetly" sentimental, but the music not necessarily so, in *Griselda* the music smoothens out what could have been portrayed with more intense, pathetic expressive means, in line with the treatment of the story that did not strike people as misogynist as it does today. On the other hand, "Dell'offesa / Mio sovrano" is distinguished from most of the duets examined so far (except for the short *ariosi a due* from *La conversione di Maddalena* and *Turno Aricino*) by an unequal relationship between the characters and their vocal parts, to a certain extent also the lack of motivic-thematic and contrapuntal regularity.

The duet opens with a figurative, semiquaver ritornello (b. 1–5) that appears not to have any motivic significance but is well suited for orchestral accompaniment and it can be clearly contrasted to the parts. Gualtiero opens with a longer statement (b. 5–11) that consists of the main motif (b. 5–6) and a free *Fortspinnung* of melodic and rhythmic motifs derived from it, outlining a modulation to the dominant and culminating in a semiquaver triplet passage derived from the ritornello. After a quick modulation back to the tonic, Griselda sets in with the main motif on the same pitch (b. 12–14; after all, the two roles share a common *tessitura*), but Gualtiero soon enters again with the head of the main motif (b. 15–16) followed by extensive sequential *Fortspinnung* of the semiquaver triplets (b. 16–19). Griselda accompanies this with a downward moving sequential quaver phrase that gives the impression of a countersubject (b. 16–19). After this, A1 is rounded off by a clear cadence in C major without parallel vocal movement and a brief ritornello. If any expectations of following alternating statements by the voices with their contrapuntal combining have been set up in the first part of this "larger" form in which each protagonist has sung all of his or her four lines[220], they are not followed in subsection A2. Griselda

220 **The text of the duet in its entirety is as follows: A section. Gualtiero: Dell'offesa vendicarti / e giustizia amor non è. / Pastorella non lasciarti / lusingar dalla speranza. Griselda: Mio sovrano non amarti / sai che in mio poter non è. / Ma non serbo per turbati / ne pensiero ne speranza. B section. Gualtiero: Soffri e sii l'esempio solo / di fortuna e di costanza. Griselda: Non sdegnarla e questo solo / sia merce della costanza.**

starts it off with the head of the subject followed by some free variation, and although Gualtiero replies to her with the same, only slightly varied motif in b. 22–23, the ensuing contrapuntal passage does not balance out the contrapuntal relationship between the parts by turning—as Bononcini often did, first and foremost in his chamber duets—to the technique of inverted parts. Although he could have easily conceived the juxtaposition of semiquaver figures in Gualtiero's part to Griselda's countersubject in section A1 in inverted counterpoint, in b. 23–27 Bononcini merely transposes the passage from b. 15–19 in modified form instead. After a brief ritornello interjection, Gualtiero continues with *Fortspinnung* of the triplet figure to a predominantly pedal accompaniment in Griselda's part, pushing her into the background of the texture once again. Section B (b. 36–52), in which Gualtiero insinuates that Griselda could be rewarded for her patience after all, features even more alternation as it harmonically explores the relative minor. Besides the occurrences of the head of the main motif from section A, it does not attempt to present any motivic material of its own but proceeds along free derivative and improvisatory lines. Griselda's answer (b. 39–43) to Gualtiero's initial statement contains her only brief passage in semiquavers in the duet on the key word "costanza", but when it comes to figuration, it is still Gualtiero who dominates, closing section B over Griselda's counterpoint with his longest triplet passage so far (b. 48–52).

Although the soloists are of a similar *tessitura* and occasionally engage in voice-crossing, Bononcini clearly differentiated them in the texture by letting Gualtiero shine in virtuoso semiquaver passages, and pushing Griselda in the background most of the time to provide contrapuntal support. That this clearly has semantic significance is backed by the fact that the composer was not interested in the imitative working out of his material, but subjected it to derivation and improvisation instead, with almost as much *Fortspinnung* as we witnessed in the first duet in *Numitore*, "Il ciel, le piante i fior vien meco a rimirar / per te vuò a rimirar". Griselda does not communicate with Gualtiero as her equal, but plays a subordinate role in this duet on the musical plane, as well, which stands out in view of the gender roles in *dramma per musica* of the 18th century. As Leopold (cf. 2000; 2009, 140–174) and many others have shown, opera seria often placed its female and male heroes in a relationship of absolute equality, which was reflected, among other things, in the proximity of their vocal range. Thus it cannot be a coincidence and it clearly derives from the libretto that Bononcini produced an imbalance between two voices of the same *tessitura*. After having written the role of the Fedraesque Fausta in *Crispo* for Robinson, Bononcini and Rolli clearly wanted to show off the range of talents of their only current *prima donna* in a role that was the exact opposite of Fausta. As a result, this duet provides an even more effective closing to the second act than "Innamorar e poi mancar" did for *Astarto*.

"Quel timoroso / Tutta timore" (III. 3 Ernesto, Almirena; Bononcini 1722, 63–66), the third duet in the opera, was sung by the *secondo uomo* Benedetto Baldassari and Maddalena Salvai, who was recommended to the Royal Academy of Music by Senesino and debuted as Polissena in Handel's *Radamisto*, singing mostly *seconda donna* or roles lesser in stature in the course of the first two seasons. Gualtiero uncovers the deception in front of the pair somewhat earlier in Act 3 than in Zeno's original libretto, so that Ernesto and Almirena can sing a happy duet of unity abounding in pastoral imagery. He compares himself to a scared deer fleeing a hunter that finds a spring to quench its thirst, she to a lost sheep that eventually hears the voice of its shepherd.[221] The treatment of this secondary couple is akin to contemporary English sentimental comedy, and Clausen (1994, 59) considers this as a conscious appeal to the bourgeois part of the audience. Rolli clearly had an aversion to monotextual duets, so that even when he needed to express relief at the accomplishment of amorous unity, he wanted to describe it in different poetic images. This duet is another variant of strophic form, but Bononcini—probably affected by the harmonious nature of the unity—went back to his more regular and less dramatic strophic designs, such as "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento" from *Astarto*. Apart from Rolli's Arcadian pastoral text, the oboes, too, vouch for pastoral atmosphere, consistently underlining a rhythmic figure at the end of phrases whenever it appears in the voices. Section A consists of two subsections, the first one (A1, b. 1–14) a wholesome outlining of Ernesto's stanza and all the motivic material in the duet, the second one (A2, b. 15–39, with a closing ritornello in b. 34–39) starting out as Almirena's stanza, but letting Ernesto gradually join her in a simultaneous texture. Unlike "Dell'offesa / Mio sovrano", the duet is straightforward in the outlining of its motivic material and it does not depart from it in any way.

Ernesto's melodic line consists of three parts: a1 (b. 1–6), a rhythmically unified idea in which each bar shares the same formula, underlined by the oboes; the sequential, modulatory a2 (b. 7–10) with its descending movement and a3 (b. 11–14) with its downward octave leap and ascending semiquaver passage in contrary motion, cadencing in the D major dominant. Almirena replicates the course of A1 in its first two parts, but when it comes to a3 in b. 24, Ernesto joins in by imitating the octave motif after which the two voices cadence in parallel (b. 27–29). Bononcini extends this

221 **A section. Ernesto: Quel timoroso / cervo cacciato / fuggito al monte / tutto affannoso / tutto assetato / trova un fonte / nel suo contento / somiglia a mè. Almirena: Tutta timore / smarita agnella / in selva solta / se dal pastore / che la rapella / la voce ascolta / nel suo contento / somiglia a mè. B section. Ernesto: Pietoso amore / si lieto core / Almirena: Sorte gradita / si dolce vita / a 2: sol devo a tè.**

part of A2 by transposing the simultaneous rendition of a3 back into the tonic with the parts inverted. Thus in a3' (b. 29–34) Almirena takes the lead with the octave motif, Ernesto imitates it and they cadence together. A ritornello based on varied motifs a1 and a3 leads into a much shorter section B (b. 40–49). It explores related minor keys in what starts out as short alternations (of a bar's length) between the voices based on the motif from a1 (b. 40–43), followed by a cadence and an extensive parallel passage derived from the descending motif in a2 (b. 45–49). The composer made sure that the young lovers are united on not only the dramatic but also the musical plane. Although the voices occasionally cross, there is no hierarchical relationship between them even though Ernesto has the whole of section A1 to himself, which is not something that could be said of Gualtiero and Griselda in "Dell'offesa / Mio sovrano". In their London collaboration, Bononcini and Rolli were developing a prototype of a dramatic, dialogic duet on the one hand, but they could also work together on duets of unity such as this one. On the other hand, Handel had been developing a structural duet prototype of his own in his Italian and early London years, so far not directly connected to the activity of a single librettist.

At the height of his London success, in the autumn of 1722 Bononcini's fortunes took "an abrupt turn for the worse. On 5 October Lady Bristol wrote to her husband: 'Bononcini is dismissed … the reason they give for it is his most extravagant demands'" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 314). Other authors (cf. Lindgren 1997; McGeary 2013) have speculated on Bononcini's dismissal from the Royal Academy of Music, too. Besides him asking for too high a salary, political reasons may have had a hand in this since the recent Jacobite rebellion made every Catholic and Italian suspicious, although McGeary is sceptical about this explanation. Dean and Knapp (ibid.) went furthest in their speculation by referring to the composer's general lack of likeability as the possible reason for his dismissal: "Hawkins says 'he was haughty and capricious, and was for ever telling such stories of himself as were incredible' (Hawkins, *History*, ii, 862)." A more level-headed appraisal of the situation has been offered by Burrows et al. (2013, 146), although it does not shy away from the possibility of personal animosity and confrontation between the two composers, either: "Bononcini was unquestionably the senior partner in terms of age, experience and European reputation. Bononcini presumably played continuo cello in his operas, perhaps in dangerously close proximity to Handel as 'Master of the Orchestra' at the harpsichord." (ibid.)

No musical sources for the two duets in Bononcini's *Farnace* (1723) were available to me. According to Lindgren (1981, 342; 1987, 307), it was the composer himself who adapted the libretto by Lorenzo Morari but the opera was coolly received and the indisposed and annoyed Bononcini

asked Ariosti to take his place in the continuo group at the third performance. His last opera before his official departure from the Royal Academy of Music in May 1724 was the Roman-themed *Calfurnia* (1724), a revised setting of an original libretto by Grazio Braccioli, first set by J. D. Heinichen in 1713. Working together for the first time with N. Haym with whom he was allegedly "reconciled" by Riva (cf. Clausen 1994, 63), Bononcini thus broke up the yearlong collaboration with Rolli as librettist. I was not able to access musical sources documenting "Caro, ti lascerò / Cara, non partirò" (III. 2 Calfurnia, Trebonio; Braccioli and Haym 1724, 58), the only duet in *Calfurnia*. The plot slightly resembles the Iphigenia in Aulis plot: jealous of Calfurnia and her beloved Trebonio, Lucio falsely reports to her father Mario that an oracle demands her sacrifice, although the designated victim is he himself. Like Iphigenia, Calfurnia stoically accepts her duty and the duet is a tragic and pathetic departure for her and Trebonio. It was clearly Haym's addition to the score as the original libretto (Braccioli 1713) does not contain any duets whatsoever. Francesca Cuzzoni, who had debuted in Handel's *Ottone* in January 1723 was already part of the cast in *Farnace*, but in *Calfurnia* she sang her first Bononcini duet with the *primo uomo* Senesino. She would go on to sing many duets with Senesino, including tragic duets of departure by Handel.

Luckily, the second and last Bononcini duet she sang with Senesino, at the same time Bononcini's last opera duet performed in London, has been preserved. Although Bononcini stopped writing for the Royal Academy of Music after he had taken up the offer of the Duchess of Marlborough for an annual stipend (cf. Burrows et al. 2013, 145), he was invited one last time to compose the opera *Astianatte* (1727), collaborating again with Haym at a time when Handel was setting Rolli's libretti. This was an ambitious project aiming to approximate the reworking of Salvi's 1701 libretto to Racine's original play *Andromaque* and thus make *dramma per musica* more similar to literary tragedy (cf. Clausen 1996; Ograjenšek 2010). Handel's *Admeto*, the opera created for the Royal Academy of Music in the same season is a reworking of an old, 17th-century libretto, probably because Rolli was not as motivated to revise it as he did in his previous collaborations with Bononcini, leaving the majority of Aureli's text intact. In his comparison of the two operas, Clausen (cf. 1996, 170) finds that Handel drew more tragedy out of *Admeto* than Bononcini did from *Astianatte* because the Italian composer "did not possess the strength to help implement the breakthrough of ideas put before him"[222]. Regardless of this typical Bononcini reception trope, it will be interesting to observe how

222 **Besaß nicht die Kraft, den an ihn herangetragten Ideen musikalisch zum Durchbruch zu verhelfen.**

Haym's tragic reworking was reflected in the number of duets and their placement as well as to compare it to another adaptation of Salvi's libretto already examined in Chapter 3.3.1.2, Gasparini's *Astianatte*. As Ograjenšek (2010, 133) has shown, in Haym's reworking "Ermione and Oreste do not pledge their love in Act I". Thus Salvi's only original duet "Begli occhi, alfin poss'io" (I. 13 Ermione, Oreste) was excised as in both Gasparini's 1719 and 1722 settings. In the London version of the opera we do not find "Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano" (II. 15 Ermione, Andromaca), the duet that was introduced into Gasparini's versions of the opera at the end of Act 2 after Oreste's attempted assassination of Pirro, although this is hardly surprising. Since the days of the London debut of Faustina Bordoni in Handel's *Alessandro* (1726), where her character Rossane sings a duet with Lisaura (Cuzzoni), the rivalry between the fans of these two primadonnas made it undesirable to pit them against each other in the same musical number. That these fears were justified is proven by the infamous incident that interrupted the performance of *Astianatte* and put an abrupt end to the 1726/1727 season. With a duet for Andromaca (Cuzzoni) and Ermione (Faustina) in Bononcini's opera, riots might have broken out even sooner.

Instead, Haym inserted the duet "Dolce conforto / Cara speranza" (III. 6. Andromaca, Pirro; Bononcini MS, Astinatte, no. 9). An amorous union between these characters may seem unlikely since Andromaca, the widow of the Trojan prince Ettore, is trapped with her son Astianatte at the court of her enemy Pirro, king of Epirus, whose unwelcome advances she must put up with. In order for Andromaca's feelings for Pirro to change in a convincing manner, he, as Ograjenšek (2010, 133–134) explained, "had to be made into a character worthy of her love. […] Andromaca does not love Pirro from the start; he earns her love with his actions, and is generally presented as a more sympathetic character than previously." At the end of Act 2 in Haym's libretto, after the assassination attempt, Andromaca sends the guards after Oreste as "queen of Epirus" and despairs in the greatly admired aria "Deh! lascia o core di sospirar" because without Pirro's protection, she and her son are in danger (cf. Lindgren 1992). Unlike this aria, the duet did not make it into Walsh's selection of songs from the opera, but luckily it is available in an MS copy in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Bononcini MS, Astianatte, no. 9). In Act 3 Andromaca finds out that Pirro is alive, and she is much more welcoming to him than before, arousing Pirro's suspicions about this sudden change of heart. The duet consists of her reassurance that the feelings are genuine.[223] As explained

223 **The text of the duet is as follows - Andromaca: Dolce conforto / dell'alma amante / si che costante / te voglio amar. Pirro: Cara speranza / dell'alma mia / te il cor desia / non ingannarar.**

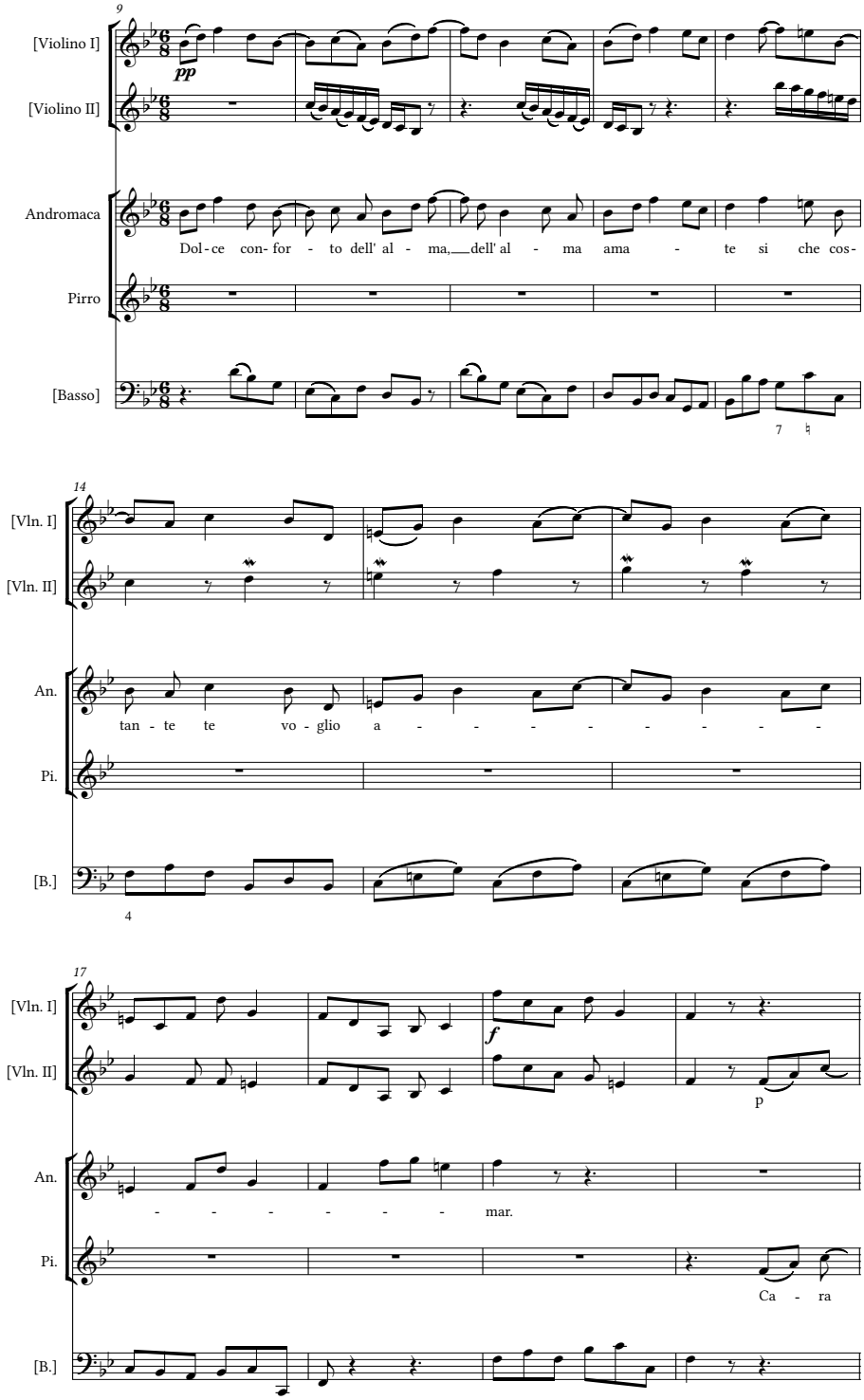
by Ograjenšek, Andromaca will stay true to her promise, making the *lieto fine* more convincing.

form		bar	key	description
X_1	ritorn.	1–8	B♭	concordance with subject in the vocal parts (triad motif, b. 1–4)
	x_{11}	9–20	B♭,F	subject (Andromaca), ***Fortspinnung*** of triad motif
	x_{12}	20–30	F, B♭	subject a fourth lower (Pirro), different course b. 27ff (back to B)
X_2	x_{21}	30–40	B♭,E♭	start of subject (Andromaca), CP from ritornello's 2nd violins (Pirro); alternation (motif from subject, b. 34–35), free CP (to "nò" in Pirro's part)
	x_{22}	40–54	E♭,B♭	inverted parts: start of subject (Pirro), CP from ritornello (Andromaca); alternation (motif from subject, b. 44–45), extended free CP passage (first "sì" in Andromaca's part (b. 47–48), "nò" in Pirro's (b. 50–51))
	ritorn.	54–58	B♭	abridged

table 63.
Formal outline of the duet "Dolce conforto dell'alma" from Bononcini's *Astianatte* (1727)

As seen in Table 63, the duet is in one section only, which is not surprising since it consists of four short lines per character only, and it would have been impossible to split those lines up into two lines per section in a *da capo* form. Bononcini stays true to the tendency that he started in *Astarto* and continued in *Muzio Scevola* and *Griselda* by opening the duet—after a ritornello—with extensive alternating statements for the voices, the one by Pirro not an entirely literal transposition of Andromaca's (which is stated first, see Example 17) since it needs to be modified to veer the harmonic course back from the dominant to the tonic. After this, the second part of the duet (X2) explores the subdominant area by combining the voices contrapuntally. In subsection x21 Bononcini makes use of a descending scalar figure familiar from the second and the first violin part in the ritornello and from the two statements of the subject (first occurrences: b. 2 in the orchestra and b. 31 in Pirro's part). After some brief alternation of a motif derived from the subject, the voices engage in a free contrapuntal section (or quasi-contrapuntal, given the quantity of held notes and voice-crossing) whose main purpose is to juxtapose the cries of "nò" in Pirro's part (embellished with trills) to a flowing melismatic line in the other voice. Since in the aforementioned alternating statements in section X1 the whole text was presented comprehensively, the dialogic potential

Bononcini MS, Astianatte, "Dolce conforto dell'alma / Con speranza dell'alma"
(III. 6 Andromaca, Pirro), no. 9, p. 2-3, b. 9-20



EXAMPLE 17

of Pirro's emphatic outcalls to "speranza" (or metonymically, Andromaca herself) not to deceive him is perfectly conveyed. Bononcini's sense of motivic economy (already displayed in the use of the violin passage as a countersubject of sorts) is further emphasised by conceiving subsection x22 by inverting the parts of b. 30–38 in b. 40–48, this time Andromaca's repeated outcries of "sì" (stressing that she wishes to love Pirro) juxtaposed to Pirro's melismas. Moreover, once back in the safe confines of the tonic, Bononcini was able to extend the second part of x22 by the repetition of three bars from the second part of x21 (the juxtaposition of emphatic outcries to a flowing contrapuntal line, b. 36–38) in b. 49–51, thus seemingly prolonging the couple's affirmative and negative exchanges.

Although he continued some of his previous tendencies, in this duet Bononcini went back to the "sweet" diatonic idiom and motivic economy characteristic also of his chamber duets, bringing his duet opus full circle. Clearly, Rolli was his favourite collaborator when it came to innovation in the realm of the duet, but he had no trouble working with Haym on a dramatically effective design that, in harmony with the dramatic situation, unites the voices in contrapuntal intertwining that tickles the ear but does not give them the longed for resolution of parallelism. Andromaca might want to give in to Pirro at this stage, but they will be properly united at the end of the opera, only when Astianatte is safe and they have fully proven to themselves that they can trust each other. Unlike in the duet for Andromaca and Ermione "Le stelle s'amano / I cieli tuonano" from Gasparini's *Astianatte* (1722) where the characters were united in a simultaneous texture without any sort of dialogue happening between them, in his own *Astianatte* duet Bononcini proved that he can achieve a dialogic dramatic exchange with the subtlest of means.

3. 4. 2.
Handel's Duets for the Royal Academy of Music before the Departure of Bononcini

On the one hand, Handel's period at the Royal Academy of Music (1720–1729) is a well-known and researched aspect of his activity as a composer, to the extent that it is considered representative and in a way, typical. This impression is supported by the genre uniformity of the operas written in this period, since most of them belong to the so-called dynastic type of opera seria with historical subjects from Classical antiquity or the Middle Ages (cf. Dean 1969). Handel achieved a "peak" in the middle of this period (1724–1725) with his "masterpieces" *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda* (Burrows et al. 2013, 287). The fact that the developmental dialectic of rise, culmination and decline has often been applied to, this decade in Handel's operatic output suggests that the period is not as monolith or typical after all.

Theories that in the 1720s and the 1730s Handel was encouraged and spurred on by competition (Bononcini and Ariosti in the first period, younger representatives of the so-called Neapolitan school in the second) have been refuted by Burrows (ibid.), who "dispels any notion of a simple causal relationship between commercial or social pressures and artistic quality. […] Handel's art had come to its full flowering only in the absence of competition: the great operas of the mid-1720s were the product of a situation in which he enjoyed a monopoly of creative opportunities in the theatre. By the time of *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda,* Bononcini and Ariosti had departed from the scene."

One can also try to explain Handel's development in the 1720s in intrinsic terms of his "own technical invention and fluency as a composer" (ibid.). Clearly, a comprehensive explanation would need to find its place between these two extremes. In this chapter, we shall concern ourselves only with the first half of his activity at the Royal Academy of Music, when Handel was exposed to strong competition on the part of Bononcini. The first subperiod, marked by Bononcini's superiority in terms of popularity (1720–1722) will be singled out in a separate subchapter (3.4.2.1). In the second (1723–1724, dealt with in Chapter 3.4.2.2) Handel was gradually gaining the upper hand, although Bononcini's works were still performed alongside his.

As seen in Table 64, although Calella (2000, 128) claimed that "the number of ensembles in Handel's opere serie lies above the average, especially in the twenties and the thirties"[224], a decrease in the number of duets per opera is evident when compared to Handel's early London operas, most often narrowed down to two. Whether this can be explained by the influence of reform tendencies remains to be seen, although Rolli and Haym adapted both older and newer libretti for Handel as they did for Bononcini. The selection will take into consideration only the revivals of operas that occurred during the period of the first five seasons of the Royal Academy of Music (1720–1724). Since even during this short period, Handel's interventions in his own older duets were sometimes minimal (especially when compared to the transformations some of the arias underwent), minimally revised duets did not get a separate entry in the table. A brief dramaturgic overview of the 13 selected duets reveals that—with the exception of the two versions of the duet for Gismonda and Matilda from *Ottone* and the duet of departure for mother and son, "Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar" from *Giulio Cesare*—we are dealing with duets of amorous unity for the *primi* or *secondi* pairs of characters. The duets are usually positioned nearer the end of acts as a musico-dramatic culmination of sorts. Schläder (1995) considers the proximity of the final duet of unity for the *primo uomo* and the *prima donna* to the ending of the operas *Radamisto* (HWV 12b), *Ottone*, *Flavio* and *Giulio*

224 **Die Anzahl von Ensembles in Händels *Opere seire* besonders in den späten zwanziger und in den dreißiger Jahren lag über dem Durchschnitt.**

Cesare in Egitto as a sign of the integration of vocal numbers into larger wholes, since the final *coro* is seen as a logical continuation and culmination of the formal and textural process begun in the duet preceding it. We shall disregard this slightly far-fetched claim and examine the duets on their own in relation to other duets in the opera within the period in question and in relation to Handel's duet output as a whole as well as the duets by his Italian contemporaries analysed in this study.

YEAR	WORK	LIBRETTO	TEXT	ACT	CHARACTERS	VOICES
1720 April	*Radamisto* (HWV 12a)	Haym, Lalli	Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara	II. 12	Radamisto, Zenobia	S, MS
1720 Dec.	*Radamisto* (HWV 12b)		Non ho più affanni	III. 11	Zenobia, Radamisto	S, MS
1721	*Muzio Scevola,* Act III (HWV 13)	Rolli, Stampiglia	Vivo senza alma / Mà quell'amore	III. 10	Orazio, Irene	S, MS
			Mà come amar? / Torna ad amar	III. 11	Clelia, Muzio	S, MS
1721	*Floridante* (HWV 14)	Rolli, Silvani	Ah mia cara, se tu resti/ Ah mio caro, se tu parti	I. 8	Floridante, Elmira	S, MS
			Fuor di periglio	II. 6	Rossane, Timane	S, S
1723	*Ottone* (HWV 15)	Haym, Pallavicino	Notte cara, a te si deve	II. 12	Gismonda, Matilda	S, MS
%			Non tardate a festeggiar (replaced with "Notte cara")	(II. 12)	Gismonda, Matilda	S, MS
1723			A teneri affetti	III. 9	Teofane, Ottone	S, MS
1723	*Flavio, re di Longobardi* (HWV 16)	Haym, Noris	Ricordati, mio ben	I. 1	Vitige, Teodata	S, MS
			Deh perdona, o dolce bene	III. 7	Guido, Emilia	S, A
1724	*Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (HWV 17)	Haym, Bussani	Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar	I. 11	Cornelia, Sesto	A, S
			Caro/bella, più amabile bellta	III. 9	Cleopatra, Cesare	S, MS

TABLE 64.
List of Italian dramatic duets by G. F. Handel performed during the first five seasons of the Royal Academy of Music (1720–1724)

3. 4. 2. 1.
Competing with Bononcini (1720–1722)

The libretto for *Radamisto* (1720) derives from Gasparini's second setting of Lalli's libretto *L'amor tirannico* in 1712, probably revised by Gasparini himself from his original, 1710 setting. Strohm (2008, 44) is of the opinion that Haym's adaptation of the libretto was "made under Handel's supervision", and Dean and Knapp (1987, 334) make an even stronger point by referring to "Handel's dominant role in the preparation of his London librettos". For instance, the duet of unity for the protagonists Radamisto and Zenobia "Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara" was the replacement of another duet ("Il vedermi / vederti a te vicino") for the same characters also positioned at the end of the act (II. 14) in the 1712 libretto (cf. Bianconi 1992). It is difficult to explain why Haym and Handel had replaced a moderately polytextual duet with smaller morphological and lexical variants with a semantically similar text with five lines per character instead of Lalli's four, but this is not the only change the opera's duets underwent in a short space of time. For the second season marked by the arrival of Bononcini and the star castrato Senesino, Handel revised the original version of the opera premiered in April 1720 (HWV 12a; Handel 1997) by adding thirteen numbers, including "Non ho più affani", another duet for Zenobia and Radamisto, with the difference that this one does not have an equivalent in Lalli. According to Dean and Knapp (1987, 341), the second version of the opera (HWV 12b; Handel 2000b) "had strong claims to rank with or even above the original". Most of the revisions were conditioned by the significant changes in the tessiture of the roles, but its premiere in December 1720 "in the middle of the very successful run of Bononcini's *Astarto*" must have played some part in how Handel approached his old score.

The composer may have easily envisaged *Radamisto* as the opening opera of the Royal Academy of Music even though this honour was given to Porta's *Numitore*, for he relished great care on the score and made sure it conformed with the requirements of the elevated, serious *dramma per musica* that was eventually imposed as the norm in the company. "Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara" (II. 12 Radamisto, Zenobia; Handel 1997, 126–132; Handel recording, Radamisto) ends Act 2 on a happy note after the numerous travails that the protagonists, especially Zenobia, had seen up to that point. The beginning of the act catches them fleeing from the enemy Tiridate. Not being able to keep up with her husband, Zenobia begs him to kill her and throws herself into the nearby river out of despair since Radamisto's sword manages to cause only a minor injury to her. She is rescued and taken to Tiridate's court where she suffers his unwelcome advances, but Radamisto makes his way to the court in disguise,

too, heralding his own death. Failing to recognise him, Tiridate charges Radamisto with the advancement of his cause with Zenobia and leaves the happily reunited couple alone. Judging by the techniques applied in this duet, not much time seems to have passed since Handel's last three London operas, *Teseo*, *Silla* and *Amadigi*. Like in most of the duets in these works, the orchestral accompaniment is dense, with independent string and oboe parts and an almost *concertante* interplay with the voices. As described by Dean and Knapp (1987, 333), the "rich counterpoint in the inner parts", among others, gives the duet "a solidity sometimes lacking in movements of this type". The treatment of the vocal parts is also characterised by contrapuntal shaping, less imitative and more often freely contrapuntal. The ritornello (b. 1–8) consists of several sections with their respective motifs, but we shall single out three—all in the part of the first violins—that feature in the vocal parts: the incipit (a1, b. 1–2), reminiscent of a fugue theme and suitable for imitative treatment, its continuation (a2, b. 2) and two ascending semiquaver passages followed by two quavers (a3, b. 3–5). The remainder of the ritornello abounds in typical string semiquaver figuration and it was to play a key role in the demarcation of section A's two subsections, A1 (b. 1–22) and A2 (b. 22–42). The first bars featuring the voices (b. 8–12) preserve the integrity of the ritornello: in two short alternating statements, motifs a1 and a2 are split between Radamisto (b. 8–9) and Zenobia (b. 9–10), after which the strings set in with motif a3, but their culminating pairs of quavers are underlined by the oboes and by Zenobia with her outcry "caro" (b. 11), answered by Radamisto with "cara" (b. 12). This kind of equal distribution of the material between the orchestra and the voices is rare in Handel's Italian dramatic duets. The remainder of A1 consists of a free contrapuntal flow between the voices and the instruments, modulating to the dominant, while the closing part of the ritornello is left to round off the subsection and confirm the new key. However, A2 quickly slips back to the tonic, opening with what seems like the imitation of a1 a fourth higher (b. 22–23), but turns out to be another free contrapuntal section derived from the material heard so far. While the oboes double the voices in a *contrapunctus ligatus* type of texture (b. 25–26), the strings supplement them contrapuntally and—after the voices have cadenced (b. 28–29)—almost seamlessly burst into the semiquaver passages familiar from the ritornello, leading into combined renditions of a3 with the voices underlining the phrase endings with "caro"/"cara" (b. 30–31). Section B (b. 42–48), a mere harmonic contrast, begins with alternating statements derived from the material of section A but quickly gives way to *contrapunctus ligatus*.

FORM	CHARACTER	HWV 12A	HWV 12B
A	Radamisto & Zenobia	Se teco vive il cor, Caro/cara! che la tua fè Non m'abbandoni almen.	Se teco vive il cor, Cara/caro! per la tua fè Non ho più affanni al sen.
B	Radamisto	Può cader l'eterna mole	Sarà ognor ques'alma amante
	Zenobia	Può mancar la luce al sole	Il mio cor sarà costante
	A 2	Vacillar non può il mio piè	Più fedel a te, mio ben.

TABLE 65.
Comparison of texts for the duet "Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara" from the two versions of Handel's opera *Radamisto*

"Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara" is not particularly concerned with a clear enunciation of its text. After highlighting the first line and the variants "caro"/"cara", it leaves the remaining text of section A ("che la tua fè non m'abbandoni almen") fairly incomprehensible. Handel was more concerned with a playful expression of joy: after all, Radamisto and Zenobia have earned this temporary moment of unity with their cunning and not their innocence. The only intervention in this duet in the December revival of the opera (HWV 18b; cf. Handel 2000b, 133–136) was a vocal swap of the roles and a change in the text that left the metrical structure intact (see Table 65). The December text seems more appropriate to the dramatic situation, with the April one somewhat out of place with its mention of the "abandoning of faith", absolutely unimaginable with these characters, especially Zenobia. Maybe this is an indication that Haym and/or Handel took the duet text from an earlier source, perhaps even the setting of an earlier work by Handel no sources have survived for? In April, the two main roles were sung by Durastanti (Radamisto) and Robinson (Zenobia), whereas in December Senesino was heard as the *primo uomo* and Durastanti was given the role of Zenobia instead. Although this posed a challenge to the reworking of the arias, in the revision of "Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara" Handel opted for the simplest solution: he merely gave Radamisto's part to Zenobia and vice versa, without the need for any further musical intervention.

According to Leopold (2009, 275), the duet "Non ho più affanni" (III. 11 Zenobia, Radamisto; Handel 2000b, 202–204; Handel recording, Radamisto), inserted into the December version of the opera, "belongs to the musical pinnacles of the opera"[225]. In the second version of the opera it follows the dramatic quartet "O cedere o perir" in which Radamisto,

225 Gehören zu den musikalischen Höhepunkten der Oper.

Zenobia and Polissena beg Tiridate for mercy and the ensuing recitative in which, instigated by a rebellion against him and Radamisto's magnanimous forgiveness, Tiridate repents and everybody is reconciled. The duet is a monotextual expression of a joy for the principal couple that erases the memory of past troubles. As proven by many examples in Chapter 3.3.3, Handel liked to display a wide musical range in his duets and often conceived them along contrasting lines, but it is difficult to imagine that "Non ho più affanni" was added to *Radamisto* without any connection to the challenges of competition that *Astarto* and other Bononcini operas posed to Handel. Written in a contrasting style and building an entirely different structural plan to "Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara", one could say that this duet is a take on varied strophic forms Bononcini was developing in *Astarto* and *Muzio Scevola* as it can be roughly divided into three sections, the first one given to Zenobia, the second to Radamisto and the third brought forward in simultaneous texture by the two voices. However, this would simplify the duet's regular, almost periodic unfolding in two-bar phrases with occasional extensions, and it could be said that it is in varied and extended ternary song form.

BARS	1–5; 5–9	9–13	13–17	17–21	21–25	25–29	29–33	33–45	45
PHRASE	x_1+x_1'	x_2+x_2'	x_1+x_1'	x_2+x_2'	x_1+x_1''	$coda_1$	x_1+x_1''	$coda_2$	x_1+x_1'
CHARACTER	Zenobia			Radamisto	Zenobia & Radamisto				orchestra
FORM 1	II: a :II	b a		b a		coda			
FORM 2	a b		a b		a c		a c		coda

TABLE 66.
Formal outline of the duet "Non ho più affanni" from Handel's *Radamisto* (HWV 12b)

Table 66 highlights the regularity of phrase structures that—up to b. 25—consist of periodic two-bar phrases, the first one cadencing on the dominant (x1, x2), the second one on the tonic (x1', x2', x1''), which is A major in the case of x1 and F-sharp minor in the case of x2. At first Zenobia dominates the duet, outlining a small ternary form on her own before Radamisto takes over with the second rendition of the phrase x2+x2', only to have her join him in the upper third as he sings phrase x1+x1'. Henceforth both voices feature throughout the duet in a mostly parallel, occasionally freely contrapuntal texture, at its most ornamental and virtuosic in the extended codas (settings of the key words "nel gran piacer"),

especially the second one (b. 25–45). It features a long parallel flourish replete with triplets, trills and other ornaments and is even embellished with the insertion of an *Adagio* bar. Formally, it can be interpreted in both ternary (Form 1 from Table 66) or binary terms (Form 2), but this matters less than the fact that Handel skilfully rounds off an opera serious enough to be described as following reform tendencies with the most light-hearted of duets, expressive of little else but sheer jubilation. The text offers two ideas in the manner of a *simile* aria: the first two lines (set to the phrase x1+x1) state that the characters are forgetting their previous troubles in each other's arms, while the second two (set to x2+x2') draw a simile with the helmsman who reaches a safe harbour. Apart from the reaching of the parallel minor, this has little significance for the duet. Can one speculate that by drawing on varied strophic form, one we have not seen in Handel's duets since *La resurrezione* and *Amarilli vezzosa*, Handel was influenced by a wish to rival not only the sweet simplicity of Bononcini's "agreable and easie style" (cf. Lindgren 2009) style, but also the design of some of the duets he may have heard in the previous month at the premiere of *Astarto*, e. g. "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento"? This is a question difficult to answer on the basis of one opera only. The influence of Bononcini on Handel's early Royal Academy of Music operas has also been discussed by R. A. Streatfeild, as explained by Hueber (1955, 256):

> In Handel's early operas Steffani's and Keiser's influence is significantly stronger than Bononcini's. […] This changes in the works that Handel wrote for London. Ever more of those pathetic siciliana and sarabande arias that are characteristic of Bononcini come to the surface, proving how intensely Handel was occupied with the simple, cantabile idiom of his rival. Streatfield points out especially the stylistic turnabout in Handel's "Floridante" that was conditioned by the great success of Bononcini's "Astarto" in London (1720) and goes on to show that the German master adhered to the newly acquired stylistic principles also in his operas "Ottone" and "Flavio".[226]

226 **In den frühen Opern Händels der Einfluß Steffanis und Keisers bedeutend stärker ist als jener Bononcinis. […] Das ändert sich in den Werken, die Händel für London schrieb. Es treten jetzt immer mehr jene für Bononcini so charakteristischen, pathetischen Siziliano- und Sarabande-Arien in Erscheinung, die beweisen wie intensiv sich jetzt Händel mit der einfachen, kantablen schreibewiese seines Rivalen beschäftigte. Streatfeild weist besonders auf den Stilumschwung in Händel 'Floridante' hin, der durch den großen Erfolg des Bononcinischen 'Astarto' in London (1720) bedingt war und führt weiter aus, daß der deutsche Meister auch in seinen Opern 'Ottone' und 'Flavio' an den neu gewonnene Stilprinzipien festhielt**

In a way, the purpose of this chapter is the examination of the validity of this influence in the mentioned operas, but if there is a fitting example to pit the two composers against each other as rivals in the realm of the duet, the pasticcio *Muzio Scevola* (1721) is one. Since an overview of Stampiglia's source libretto, its subsequent revisions and Rolli's substantial reworking for London have already been given in Chapter 3.4.1.2 in the discussion of Bononcini's contribution to the second act of the opera—not to forget the intricate case of the parody of a 1695 duet in the 1708 pasticcio *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* discussed in Chapter 3.2.3—I shall now focus on Handel's two duets in Act 3 of the pasticcio.

"Vivo senza alma / Mà quell'amore" (III. 10 Orazio, Irene; Handel 1874a, 54–57; Muzio Scaevola recording) is Rolli's invention entirely. Although scene III. 6 offered the opportunity to write another duet of departure for the secondary pair, Rolli chose to close the former scene by giving each character an exit aria and to reward them with a duet after Orazio had proven his military valour once again by freeing Irene from Tarquinio's unwelcome advances. The text consists of two stanzas with the conventional images of losing one's heart, one for each protagonist.[227] Handel follows up the strophic approach taken in "Non ho più affanni", but whereas there he had a single stanza to work with, here Rolli supplied him with a genuine strophic design that enabled Handel to approximate Bononcini's own varied strophic designs such as the ones in "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento" from *Astarto* or "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto" from Act 2 of the pasticcio. In the free treatment of varied strophic repetition, Handel is closer to the former. One wonders if the two composers had the chance to hear each other's duets for *Muzio Scevola* in rehearsal and possibly influence each other directly during the process of composition. As both of them took part in rehearsals, Handel at the harpsichord and Bononcini playing the violoncello, this is not unlikely. *Muzio Scevola* was envisaged by the directors of the Royal Academy of Music as a competition of the two composers and Handel "was very much on his mettle and aware that comparisons would be made. He took a great deal of trouble, not only over the details of each number but to achieve as much variety as possible within the arias and between the different sections of the work." (Dean and Knapp 1987, 371).

As Table 67 clearly shows, the first two section of this irregular tripartite form belong to each of the characters in turn, whereas in the third they are combined in a simultaneous, predominantly parallel texture, both

227 **Orazio: Vivo senza alma, oh bella / Perch'ella vive in te, / E solo amore e fè / Mi tiene in vita! Irene: Mà quell'amore, o caro, / E quella salda fè, / Sì l'alma mia sol è / Ch'ho in te smarrita!**

Orazio and Irene singing their former stanzas. Since we already clearly heard it in sections A1 and A2, Handel's guideline in the third section was not the comprehensibility of the text but to follow the structural outline of the melody with minimal variation and harmonic adjustment. In "Dov'è il dolor / Fate un effetto" Bononcini manoeuvred the alternation between ever shorter statements by the soloists, but Handel chose the path his older colleague took in "Mio caro ben / Già sento ch'il gran tormento", simply adding one voice on top of the other. By doing so, he achieved more variety innate to his sense of variation. The phrasal and motivic skeleton of each section is the sequence of three passages: a1 (modulating to the dominant), a2 (modulating to the tonic) and a coda addition that reiterates the final cadence. This structure—periodic in harmonic terms but not so in morphological—is slightly varied by Irene in her own section with modulations to related minor keys, but her subsection a2 is basically a transposition of Orazio's a2 from B-flat major to F major. Section A2 cadences in the dominant, leaving it to A1' to reaffirm the tonic and explore the richer sonority of two voices. In its subsection a1, Irene's (lower) part at first only enhances Orazio's melodic line in parallel thirds (b. 34–36). Afterwards the voices are led in free counterpoint (b. 37–38), while in a2 Irene joins Orazio in the lower fourth in quasi-imitation. The extended coda reverts to parallel doubling, and the voices even get a chance for a *cadenza* in an *Adagio* bar comparable to the one from "Non ho più affanni", leaving it to full strings (as opposed to unison violins) to round the duet off. In spite of the careful formal structuring, it is important to stress that Handel succeeds in miming the effortless tunefulness of Bononcini's style.

BARS	1–8	8–13	13–18	18–19	19–22	22–27	27–32	32–33	34–38	39–44	45–51	51–56
FORM	A_1				A_2				A_1'			
	$rit._1$	a_1	a_2	coda	$rit._1'$	a_1	a_2	coda	a_1'	a_2'	coda'	$rit._2$
CHAR.	%	Orazio				Irene			Orazio & Irene			
KEY	B	B♭, F	F, B♭	B♭	g	g, d	d, F		B♭, (F)	B♭		

TABLE 67.
Formal outline of Handel's duet "Vivo senza alma / Mà quell'amore" from the pasticcio *Muzio Scevola* (1721)

Great care was taken to balance out the two composer's contributions to the opera, even at the level of duets. For instance, in Act 2 Berselli (Orazio) and Robinson (Irene) had sung the longer of Bononcini's two duets, while Handel gave a fully-fledged *da capo* duet to the *primi* in Act 3 instead. "Mà come amar? / Torna ad amar" (III. 11 Clelia, Muzio; Handel 1874a, 60–65;

Muzio Scaevola recording) presents an evident stylistic contrast, perhaps even stronger than the one between the two duets in the second version of *Radamisto*. Maybe it could be read as a statement about Handel's specificity as a composer, at least in relation to the earlier duet in which he proved he could write in a style closer to Bononcini's. The complicated love triangle between Clelia, Muzio and Porsenna has already been discussed in previous chapters: at this final point in the dramatic action, Muzio leads his new ally and friend Porsenna back to Rome, ready to cede him Clelia's hand in marriage. Although formerly unwilling to accept Porsenna's proposal because of her feelings for Muzio, or—more importantly—to honour her pledge to him, Clelia had earlier (III. 6) escaped from Porsenna's camp, but is now willing to marry Porsenna and casts it in Muzio's teeth. When the Clusian king realises that Muzio and Clelia are lovers, he magnanimously renounces Clelia and gives them his blessing. However, Muzio needs to win back Clelia's trust and the duet is a musical depiction of this attempt.[228] Bononcini's 1695 and 1710 settings of Stampiglia's *Muzio Scevola* contained a genuine duet of conflict for Muzio and Valeria (the equivalent of Clelia) somewhat earlier in the act when her destiny was still uncertain. Rolli probably found Stampiglia's original duet text "Cara infido tu mi credi / Caro ad' altri tu mi cedi" too long and unpoetic, so instead of its direct dialogic exchange with stichomythia in section B, he opted for a more subtle exploration of the tension between the characters after their fate had been resolved.

Dean and Knapp (1987, 371) described the duet in the following—for them, rather flattering—terms: "The duet is long, the ritornello contrapuntal, and the voices almost wholly independent. […] The style is carefully wrought, almost in the manner of a trio sonata or its vocal equivalent, a chamber duet." The contrapuntal density of the texture, even more pronounced here than in "Se teco vive il cor, caro/cara" from *Radamisto*, brings with it a particular relationship between the orchestral parts and the voices. The material initially brought forward by the voices is not related to the ritornello (b. 1–15), but its continuous imitative quaver pulse does have motivic relevance for the overall structuring of the duet. Apart from the separation of subsections in this example of a "larger form" A section (A1, b. 1–34; A2, b. 35–86, with a cadence on the dominant in between) and occasional interjections into the vocal texture in the manner of ritornello

228 **A section. Clelia: Mà come amar e come mai fidar? / La mia gran fedeltà ha così poca fè. Muzio: Torna ad amar, perchè non ti fidar? / Fù sola fedeltà il mio mancar di fè. B section. Clelia: Sento, ch'Amor vuole alletarmi ancor! / Mà l'alma ancor non sà come fidarsi a te. Muzio: Al suo gran cor cedi si bell'onor / Non generosità forza d'Amor sol è.**

form, the ritornello plays an additional role in that a typical motif replete with neighbour notes (first occurrence in b. 1 in the first violins) gradually permeates the vocal parts in subsection A2. In A1 the vocal parts begin with alternating statements of two unrelated motifs, contrasted by movement in contrary motion and reflecting the upward inflection of Clelia's question "Mà come amar?" (b. 16–17), answered by the downward inflection of Muzio's reply "Torna ad amar!" (b. 18–19). The remainder of the two characters' first lines ("e come mai fidar? / "perchè non ti fidar") are set to another brief motif alternated between the voices (b. 19–23), after which they engage in free counterpoint that contains the aforementioned motif from the ritornello (b. 24 and 26 in Clelia's, b. 25 in Muzio's part). The second lines in the characters' texts are incomprehensible in this type of simultaneous texture when heard for the first time in b. 29–35. The first section of this "larger form" ending in b. 35 is shorter and more introductory than the elaboration that follows. However, both subsections share what Dean and Knapp had noticed: apart from a few beats preceding the aforementioned cadences, parallelism in the voices is entirely avoided.

Subsection A2 presents the duet's textual incipit, Clelia's question and Muzio's answer differently than was the case in A1, with a brief imitation of a motif based on A1's opening motifs (b. 41–44). The voices are thus no longer contrasted in a dialogic fashion and the remainder of section A stays predominantly contrapuntal. The opening motif from the ritornello features prominently in the prolonged free contrapuntal section that follows (b. 45–71), appearing in almost every bar in turn in the two voices (in b. 45–49, 55–58 and once again in 59). From b. 63 onwards the texture is gradually dominated by the ascending sequential motif derived from the opening of the ritornello. This is accompanied by an increasing polyphonic interplay between the orchestra and the voices. From b. 56 an almost *concertante* relationship between the two violins and the voices develops. The ending (b. 75–76) is preceded by a contrapuntal section that works out both motifs from the ritornello over a pedal accompaniment. An abridged statement of the ritornello leads into section B, contrasting two lengthy alternating statements by the voices (b. 87–101) and modulating to the relative minor and the dominant. The material is not derived from section A, bar the beginning of Muzio's statement (b. 94–95). The remainder of section B (b. 101–112) focuses on a free contrapuntal section loosely based on figures from A. The dialogic and dramatic potential of the text (Clelia's presentiment that she might be giving in to Muzio) is not really explored in musical terms, the section seemingly in a hurry to bridge the repetition to section A.

At this stage we should remind ourselves that it was exactly this duet that served Burney for his famous distinction between an "old plan" and a "modern plan" duet. Its text seems envisaged for an entirely successive

setting of the "modern plan" with its dialogic structure: the protagonists alternate twice as they sing their own stanzas, which facilitates their pairing up in a bipartite or—more likely—*da capo* tripartite form. However, upon closer inspection it becomes evident that by unifying the first two stanzas metrically, Rolli enabled Handel to set them simultaneously as well (cf. Calella 2000, 137). Indeed, in section A Handel set only the fully polytextual lines successively, while in the other two stanzas (section B) he maintained the consistently successive approach. The fact that—almost paradoxically—for Burney this was an example of a duet of the older "plan" shows how forced, not to mention exclusive the distinction really is. Although Dean and Knapp condemn the libretto's "incompetence in language as in dramaturgy" (1987, 370), Rolli's importance in the shaping of the duets in this pasticcio should not be underestimated. It was him who held all the threads of the opera together and we can say that apart from Bononcini, Rolli, too, exerted some kind of influence on Handel. This was probably no longer the case after the Jacobite rebellion, at the time of the opera's single revival, opening the fourth season in November 1722. Some of the duets so dear to Rolli may have been dropped since the role of Orazio was probably reduced to recitative.

Floridante (1721) was Handel's first full-scale operatic collaboration with Rolli. Although it has been implied that Handel had initially refused to work with Rolli (cf. Clausen 1994), this study shall refrain from going into detail about different factions in the Royal Academy of Music. It is beyond doubt that Bononcini, Rolli, Riva and some members of the British aristocracy formed a circle that may have been close to Jacobite political currents, but for this study it is more important that in the early years of the Royal Academy of Music this faction prevailed in the selection of libretti to be set by Bononcini and to a certain extent by Handel. Besides a certain affinity for reform tendencies and its dramaturgic tenets, an exclusive preference for Roman, Greek and Oriental, especially Persian subject was asked for. Although Bononcini and Ariosti will remain faithful to this requirement, Handel and Haym often disregarded it, e. g. in the Lombard-themed operas *Flavio* (1723) and *Rodelinda* (1725). The fact that the Persian-themed *Floridante* satisfies this condition may have been motivated by political reasons, too. The source libretto, Silvani's *La costanza in trionfo* (1696) was set in Norway, which could have facilitated a (wanted or unwanted) allegorical identification of the usurper of the Persian throne Oronte with George I (cf. Strohm 2008, 46). Once again, Rolli's reworking almost qualifies as a new libretto since no aria texts from *La costanza in trionfo* can be identified, including the duets.

We should begin with the examination of the second duet, "Fuor di periglio" (II. 6 Rossane, Timante; Handel 2005, 87–93; Handel recording,

Floridante). Unlike the main protagonists sung by the *primi*, the secondary pair—Oronte's real daughter Rossane (Maddalena Salvai) and Timante, Prince of Tyre (Benedetto Baldassari)—have less to worry about, for although their union is not favoured politically, they are planning their escape from the court. The duet follows after the scene in which Oronte reveals his intentions to marry his adopted daughter Elmira and she vents her disgust and hatred in an aria ("Barbaro, t'odio a morte"), followed by Oronte's "Ma non s'aspetti, no", in which he expresses impatience. The duet with its idyllic imagery comparing the lovers to doves is a clear contrast to the horrors of the former scene. Handel set Rolli's two stanzas as a monotextual duet (which were probably Rolli's intentions, too) and wanted to supply the scene with pastoral overtones in F major. He painted the atmosphere with sumptuous orchestral colours, including *a quattro* strings, two oboes, two bassoons and, according to original designs that he was forced to abandon, two horns. Dean and Knapp (1987, 399) were taken with the ritornello and its relationship to the voices: "the question and answer in the long ritornello adds variety, and the full orchestra periodically breaks into the interstices of the voice parts. The music is not particularly inventive […] The charm of the piece lies in the orchestral texture."

After the lengthy ritornello (b. 1–16), Rossane outlines what seems like a proper subject, consisting of two parts: a1 (b. 17–22), a descending sequential repetition of the main motif and a2 (b. 23–26), with a particularly memorable ascending two closing bars. It is consistently imitated, first in Timante's part (b. 27–36) in the lower fourth, with a2 slightly modified and accompanied by a countersubject in Rossane's part, and then—somewhat abridged—back in the tonic in Rossane's part again (b. 37–44), as it is Timante's turn to provide the same countersubject. After this imitative, almost fugal outset, the voices are combined in a parallel texture in alternation with the instruments, outlining instrumental figures from the ritornello (b. 44–54). Handel plays about with the listeners' expectations by bringing forth the last two bars of a2 in imitation in both parts, seemingly modulating to the dominant again (b. 55–56), but the subject does not ensue and instead the two voices continue in the varying of the orchestral flourishes before they cadence in b. 69–70. Perhaps because he conceived the duet in the pastoral style, Handel contrasted section B (b. 70–93) only with the usual exploration of related minor keys and the reduction of the accompaniment to the continuo, but otherwise he worked with motifs derived from a1 and a2 in a contrapuntal texture.

As Dean and Knapp (1987, 399) have established, "in Rossane's music, and perhaps still more in Timante's, Handel—whether consciously or not—came close to aping Bononcini". It is beyond doubt that, instigated by the great success of *Astarto*, Handel may have been inspired to abandon the

"grand heroic style of *Radamisto* and *Muzio Scevola*" for "something more modest, distinguished by graceful tunes, light accompaniments, and a less learned approach. We may feel that he beat Bononcini at his own game" (ibid., 390). As the first duet in the opera will show, on the level of duets this may have more to do with Rolli's tendency, followed on the musical level by both Bononcini and Handel, to treat the secondary pair of characters in a lighter, perhaps also comedic vein. This is true of both Sidonia and Nino in *Astarto*, Irene and Orazio in *Muzio Scevola*[229] and Almirena and Ernesto in *Griselda* and it will be followed up by Handel again—this time in a libretto by Haym—in the comedic *Flavio* with the portrayal of Teodata and Vitige. Obviously, this element should not be attributed to Rolli's invention since it owes something to the mixed style of 17th-century opera, but it is probably not a coincidence that most of these duets were written for two sopranos, some of them even for the same singers, Salvai (who sang Sidonia, Almirena and Rossane), Berselli (Nino and Orazio) and Baldassari (Ernesto and Timante). Thus apart from the specialisation of singers in a type of *secondi* roles, we can also speak of a duet type that both Bononcini and Handel cultivated with certain stylistic similarities, although Handel is clearly distinguished with his *da capo* form in relation to Bononcini's strophic designs in *Astarto* and *Muzio Scevola*. On the other hand, *Griselda* (February 1722) saw light only after *Floridante* (December 1721) so it could not have exerted an influence on Handel in this sense.

"Ah mia cara, se tu resti / Ah mio caro, se tu parti" (I. 8 Floridante, Elmira; Handel 2005, 54–58; Handel recording, Floridante) occurs at the end of Act 1 and is a reaction of the lovers to Oronte's banishment of Floridante. At this stage the couple are unaware of the more difficult challenges (repeated rape and death threats) that they will have to face, but the strength of their love is affirmed in pledges to die together rather than be separated. In his setting Handel reflected that this was not just a grand amorous gesture. The duet was highly regarded by both Burney ("an exquisite duet in the grand style of pathetic"), and by Dean and Knapp as "one of the opera's great moments" (both quotes in 1987, 391). The part of Elmira was originally conceived for Margherita Durastanti, and Handel composed Act 1 with her in mind, but she was replaced due to illness by Anastasia Robinson, so Handel transposed the duet down from the original F minor to E minor and modified Elmira's part to suit Robinson's lower range (cf. Dean and Knapp 1987, 391, 394–395). In this study the

229 **This applies more to Handel's than Bononcini's duet for the pair as Bononcini's duet "Troppo loquace il guardo / Se quando parla il guardo" is written in a less diatonic idiom (see Chapter 3.4.1.2).**

original version of the duet has been taken into consideration.[230] This duet shows how relative the distinction between duets of the "old" and "modern" plan really is. Although the text is minimally polytextual i. e. the lines of the two characters are differentiated with slight morphologic or lexical variants, Handel still opens it with long successive statements. There is less counterpoint between the voices than in *Muzio Scevola*, but the dense orchestral writing proves how we must consider the vocal and instrumental parts together.

The duet opens with an extensive, pathetic and densely contrapuntal, although not imitative ritornello. "The slurred quavers and heavy repeated crotchets of the string parts, a little reminiscent of Radamisto's 'Ombra cara', and the short sighing vocal phrases, often in thirds, paint a picture of unrelieved tragedy" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 391). The voices set in with long alternating statements of a subject (b. 16–24, first occurrence in Floridante's part) distinguished by an incipit with a prominent semitone movement and some descending arpeggiations, one in quavers, outlining a ninth chord (b. 18) and the other in crotchets, outlining a descending triad and repeated sequentially (b. 19–23) in alternation with the first violins, while the continuo outlines a vivacious walking bass resembling a free ostinato. In Elmira's rendition of the subject (b. 26–34, on the same pitch) the accompaniment is reduced, but Floridante takes over the role of the first violins, alternating the triad motif with Elmira (b. 30–33) before they cadence together. After this, the voices elaborate the incipit of the subject in parallel with the orchestra (b. 34–39), followed by an extended free contrapuntal section (b. 39–52) with a freer treatment of the text and the occasional imitative outlining of the quaver arpeggiation motif (reduced to a seventh chord, b. 43–44) as well as the descending triad (b. 48–49) before the voices cadence again. A sense of variety and purposefulness has been achieved so far without any departure from the tonic. After this, a fragment of the ritornello (b. 52–58) slightly pushes the voices into the background while they alternate in stating the subject's incipit in varied form before they are briefly joined in parallel (b. 57–58), followed by a free contrapuntal section (b. 59–62) cadencing on the dominant. After an emphatic pause, the voices are joined one last time in section A to resolve the dissonance in an emphatic statement of the key words "io morirò" / "a morte io vo" (b. 64–66). No significant change occurs in section B apart

230 **As with "Fuor di periglio", Clausen published another version of the duet suggested for performance that reflects Handel's original intentions (that is, his conception before the replacement of Durastanti with Robinson) and at the same time respects the change of tessitura, but this is an editorial creation that has little philological legitimacy, so that the original version performed in December 1721 was analysed instead.**

from the usual ones. It shares its predecessor's affective stance, its material and the structuring of the vocal parts in alternation followed by free counterpoint. It seems a bit more dialogic due to the more prominent place given to the successive treatment of the voices, but in semantic terms, the text does not provide anything new.[231]

Although sung by Senesino and Robinson as well as Senesino and Durastanti in later revivals of the opera, this first example of a special type of duet of departure in Handel's operas for the Royal Academy of Music will become a specialty of Senesino and Francesca Cuzzoni, appearing in the subsequent operas *Tamerlano* (1724) and *Rodelinda* (1725) as well. They are the only duets in these latter operas, both sung by the *primo uomo* and the *prima donna*, which is indicative of their rise to prominence. Bononcini's final departure from the Royal Academy of Music in that season may seem like an unrelated coincidence, but it is evident that he did not have an inclination to write duets in this vein, as witnessed by "Sì, sì che la colpa sono" from *Cefalo e Procride*, the only duet vaguely approximating the type but still very different from Handel's.

The duet "Vivo in te mio caro bene / mia dolce vita" (III. 5 Asteria, Andronico; Handel 1876b, 102–105) written for them in *Tamerlano* (1724) shares with the duet from *Floridante* not only the key (E minor) and the quaver-walking bass but also the dramatic situation of lovers in a predicament expressing their mutual devotion and the readiness to die for each other. The ritornello of the duet from *Tamerlano* is even more complex in terms of orchestration due to the addition of a pair of flutes to the strings, engaging in a similar interplay with the voices. It is distinguished by alternation in shorter motifs, as if a composite subject was broken up between the two voices, thus diminishing its "modern plan" potential for a lengthy dialogic exchange. This adds to the relativity of the categories since Asteria and Andronico are communicating with each other on the same musico-dramatic level as Elmira and Floridante. Handel uses some of the same techniques as in the duet from *Floridante* with a lesser penchant for counterpoint, which is understandable given the short alternating statements.

The same applies to the composer's next duet of departure, "Io t'abbraccio" (II. 7 Rodelinda, Bertarido; Handel 2002, 132–136) from *Rodelinda* (1725), occurring in an identical dramatic situation of lovers in adversity, with the important difference that the alternation of brief motifs is of an even shorter span and the voices predominantly led in parallel, with

231 **A section. Floridante: Ah, mia cara, se tu resti, / infelice a morte io vo. Elmira: Ah, mio caro, se tu parti, / per l'affanno morirò. B section. Elmira: Altra speme / senza te, cor mio, non ho. Floridante: Altro bene / senza te, cor mio, non ho.**

an insignificant share of free counterpoint. Bertarido has just been condemned to death by the usurper Grimoaldo, who wants to marry Rodelinda himself. Perhaps the unity of the spouses in the situation of extreme adversity was expressed more poignantly with parallelism? We shall see how Handel responded to a similar situation in the duet "Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar" in *Giulio Cesare* (1724), although its protagonists were mother and son. Since all these duets with the exception of "Io t'abbraccio" were additions to the libretti reworked for Handel by Nicolo Haym, could it be that Handel realised how memorably he set a departure duet written for him by Rolli and asked his colleague Haym to provide him with more texts of the sort?

3. 4. 2. 2.
Finding One's Own Way (1723–1724)

In 1722 Rolli fell out of grace for reasons already explained and was replaced by Nicola Haym as secretary of the Royal Academy of Music. His ambitions as a poet were not as high and found no inconvenience in adapting old libretti for Handel's, Bononcini's or Ariosti's purposes. In his revisions, Haym was more faithful to the original, retaining parts of the recitative and the texts of arias as well as duets, but he was equally prepared to replace them with old ones from his large collections of libretti or—more rarely—by writing his own texts, at the behest of singers or composers. These changes were accompanied by new arrivals to the company, most importantly Francesca Cuzzoni in 1723 for her London debut in Handel's *Ottone*. According to Larue (1995), this led to a different system of casting and also transformed audience reception of Italian opera in London as singers were seen as specialists not only in certain aria types and vocal styles but they also came to be associated with character types to the extent that the libretto as well as its setting were meant to reflect this. This was in overt contrast with the versatile contribution of Margherita Durastanti who, apart from being the *prima donna* in the early years of the Royal Academy of Music, sang a variety of roles in terms of gender, temperament and importance in the hierarchy. Maybe all this contributed to the duets becoming the domain of the *primi* singers and the main protagonists of the opera, while duets for other characters and dramatic situations other than jubilatory celebrations of amorous unity or sorrowful departures became rarer.

This process was not completed in the first two seasons of Haym as secretary, that is, in the duets that will be examined here. There was nevertheless a specialisation taking place at the level of performance practice, not always necessarily reflecting dramaturgic tendencies. In all three of

Handel's new operas for the seasons 1722/1723 and 1723/1724 there are duets sung by Cuzzoni and Senesino as the *primi* on the one hand, and duets sung by Durastanti and Robinson in different character constellations on the other. This seems to reflect a singer-central duet conception that Haym and Handel must have been aware of during their collaboration, although rather than contribute to a sense of specialisation of the pairs of singers in duets of a certain stylistic, structural or dramaturgic type, variety was still sought. The influence of Bononcini and Rolli on Haym and Handel was no longer direct. Although Ariosti was less of a rival than Bononcini in the second and third seasons of the Royal Academy of Music, Handel's way of setting these operas must have reflected the fact that although his domination and confidence were growing, he was still aware of not being the only house composer in the company.

Haym did not have a preference for a high number of long, polytextual duets. Although the merits of the two librettists have been subject to debate in scholarly literature, it is a fact that Haym supplied Handel with just the kind of shorter aria and duet texts that he needed so that he could elaborate on them in his settings (cf. Clausen 1996). Let us at first examine the only duet in *Ottone* not by Haym, "A teneri affetti" (III. 9 Teofane, Ottone; Handel 2008a, 183–187; Handel recording, Ottone). This duet forms part of *Teofane* (1719), a libretto by Stefano Benedetto Pallavicino set by Lotti in Dresden, whose performance Handel most likely heard and saw in person. The fact that Senesino (Ottone), Durastanti (Gismonda) and Emireno (Boschi), three singers who performed in Dresden, reprised their roles in London confirms the connections between the two operas. On the other hand, Larue (1995, 98–101) thinks that Handel probably conceived the role of Teofane with Durastanti in mind before the arrival of Cuzzoni was confirmed, although this did not particularly influence the writing of this duet, the only one for her and Senesino in the opera. The monotextual "A teneri affetti" is generic in its celebration of joy that the protagonists Ottone and Teofane feel at being finally united in the *lieto fine* of the opera. It consists of one four-line stanza for each section of this *da capo* form, but they hardly differ in metric or semantic terms.[232] Described by Dean and Knapp as a "light piece" (Dean and Knapp 1987, 426), the duet is characterised by syncopated homorhythmic movement that extends from the opening ritornello (t. 1–10) to the entirety of section A and part of section B.

A subject derived from the ritornello first occurs in b. 10–14 in Teofane's part and it is imitated by Ottone with a gestural counterpoint

232 **A section. a 2: A teneri affetti / Il cor s'abbandoni / Al duolo perdoni / Chi gode così. B section. a 2: Condisce i diletti, / memoria di pene / Ne sa che si bene / Chi mal non soffri.**

in quasi-imitation (b. 15–17). Handel treats the material freely throughout the duet in both the strings and the voices, subjecting the elements of the ritornello and the vocal melodies to variation and *Fortspinnung* by maintaining the syncopated rhythmic pattern that he probably took over from Lotti's setting of the same duet in *Teofane* (cf. McLauchlan 1997 365–366). During a brief vocally parallel passage interrupted by pauses, a varied ritornello sets in (b. 21–26 in the first violins), but it soon gives way to a more extended parallel passage likewise based on the main material, briefly interrupted by the violins for two bars (b. 33–34). Although the text does not give reasons for a contrasting setting, section B drops the strings and modulates to minor keys by switching between lengthier alternating statements that vary the material of section A before uniting the voices again in a predominantly parallel texture with occasional free contrapuntal voice-leading. Although one can draw certain parallels to the duet "Fuor di periglio" in its structuring, the closing duet in *Ottone* explores a different kind of simplicity that injects the diatonic, euphonious melodies with rhythmic vitality without recourse to dance patterns and also achieves an almost strict sense of motivic unity.

As in *Floridante*, Handel rejected some of the numbers he had already finished composing and replaced them with others during the process of composition. This affected the duet ending Act 2, in which Gismonda and Matilda (Anastasia Robinson) celebrate the nocturnal flight of Gismonda's son and Matilda's betrothed Adelberto that they helped execute. A former prisoner of the German king Ottone, Adelberto is also his rival for Teofane's love. In contrast to Gismonda, who wants to advance her son on the political as well as the personal front, Matilda will regret her actions in Act 3 when she finds out that Adelberto had abducted Teofane. At this stage of the action, however, the two ladies express happiness that their plan, aided by the secrecy of night, had succeeded. A duet for characters who are not connected by amorous or familial bonds is very rare in 18th-century opera. To a certain extent, the 17th-century tradition to unite unrelated characters in a duet of dramaturgic parallelism is taken up here, although unlike the duets from the early London pasticcios that belong to this group, Gismonda and Matilda are united in both dramaturgic agency and affective content. Handel originally composed the duet "Non tardate a festeggiar" (II. 12 Gismonda, Matilda; Handel 2008b, 244–248; Handel recording, English cantatas[233]) for them, but chose to replace it with "Notte cara, a te si deve". Both duets are written for a soprano and a mezzosoprano / alto and have a monotextual text that celebrates the flight, but with

233 **The recording is of the duet "Gentle Hymen" found in the Oxford MS source *3 English cantatas*. It is a parody of "Non tardate a festeggiar" not authorised by Handel (cf. Hicks 2001).**

different emphasis. Pallavicino's original text[234] focuses on the celebration of the "triumphs of two hearts" in its shorter A section, whereas section B blesses night for enabling the deception, and we shall see that Haym expanded this element in his replacement lines for "Notte cara".

Handel's first setting was not triumphant, but a mild-tempered minuet whose character brings to mind duets such as "Senza occhi e senza accenti" from *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* (1707). This duet resembles the original *Ottone* duet not only in metre and overall musical character, but also in its initial motivic material. However, the two duets could not be more different in the way Handel works with motifs and how he treats the voices, for—as already stated in Chapter 3.3.3.1—in the cantata duet he was much less restrained by regularity, writing in his early, abundantly figurative melodic style. From the more recent duets, "Fuor di periglio" comes to mind since although in a slower tempo, it shares a similar character and the mild diatonicism and "sweetness" reminiscent of Bononcini's melodies with the original *Ottone* duet. The entries of the voices are spaced out similarly, in leisurely alternating statements and regular imitation with a countersubject. In both duets they end the first sections of the *da capo* form with ornamental parallelism intermixed with traces of free counterpoint. The maturing of Handel's duet style as evident in the Royal Academy of Music operas is confirmed here by the lack of experimentation and the penchant for regularity. Perhaps the temporal proximity of Bononcini's *Griselda*, the opera in which Bononcini partly distanced himself from the varied strophic approach dominating the previous two Rolli operas suggests that the influence went two ways? The interchange might have begun by Handel imitating Bononcini's style to compete with his popularity in the Royal Academy of Music's first two seasons. With as many as two *da capo* duets with a higher share of leisurely imitation, Bononcini himself may have been influenced by Handel in *Griselda*, whereas "Non tardate a festeggiar" could be seen as a continuation of Bononcini's influence on Handel, felt to a certain extent also in *Floridante.* This line of thought can be concluded with another in a series of questions: could Handel—becoming aware of Bononcini's gradual decline as an opera composer in London—have replaced "Non tardate a festeggiar" because he felt that he could pursue his own ways with "Notte cara, a te si deve" after all? A parallel analytical overview of the two versions of the duet for Gismonda and Matilda may provide a possible answer to this question.

The opera had a complicated history of revivals, but we need not concern ourselves with them in detail since in chronological terms they

234 **A section: Non tardate a festeggiar / Il trionfo di due cor. B section: Lunga età di te si dica / notte cara, notte amica / alle imprese dell'amor.**

fall outside the scope of this study.[235] The "Notte cara" text[236] must have been supplied by Haym for Handel shortly before performance and he may have composed it as a last-minute substitue for "Non tardate a festeggiar". Both Roberts and McLauchlan have pointed out borrowings from pieces by Handel's Italian contemporaries in this new duet, although they name different compositions as the object of Handel's parody. Roberts's claim that Handel parodied Torri's chamber duet "Langue, geme, sospira", a composition that even shares its incipit with Handel's chamber duet setting of the same text, is among the more convincing. Handel may have closely followed Torri "throughout the vocal exposition" (Roberts 2012, 171) when he composed "Notte cara, a te si deve" (II. 12 Matilda, Gismonda; Handel 2008a, 130–135; Handel recording, Ottone), but it is difficult to say with absolute certainty why. As rightly pointed out by McLauchlan (1997, 374–375):

> The substituted text hardly differs in either meaning or emotion from Pallavicini's original. A substantial amount of this text is indeed borrowed and reaaranged from "Non tardate a festeggiar" […] In both texts, Gismonda and Matilda address the night in gratitutde for the successful outcome of their scheme for Adelberto's escape. However, the vocative "Notte cara", which is concealed within the "B" section of Pallavicini's text, is placed prominently at the opening in Haym's. The dramatic significance of these words is reflected in Handel's musical setting of them.

Perhaps Handel and Haym thought it inappropriate to openly invite the audience to celebrate the "il trionfo di due cor" in "Non tardate a festeggiar" as one of those hearts (Matilda's) will be disillusioned as soon as she finds out that Adelberto had abducted Teofane. Gismonda deceptively conceals this from her, giving their joyful celebratory unity a touch of irony. Whatever the case, the new text is more concerned with painting a nocturnal atmosphere than being overtly celebratory.

"Non tardate a festeggiar" opens with an extensive string ritornello (b. 1–22) unrelated to the material of the vocal parts in motivic terms, but akin to it in the regularity of its phrase structure. It provides regular motivic interjections into the vocal texture, at first conceived in alternating

235 In the 1723/1724 season presumably no changes were made to the duets. In the 1726 revival, "Notte cara" was replaced by an aria for Matilda, while in 1733 "Non tardate a festeggiar" was reinstated, sung by Durastanti and the contralto M. C. Negri as Matilda (cf. McLauchlan in Preface to Handel 2008a, x–xi).

236 A section. Notte cara, a te si deve / Il trionfo di due cor. B section. Tu sei grata, / Sei bramata / Nelle imprese dell'amor.

statements of a simple subject (first occurrence in b. 22–29 in Gismonda's part, followed by b. 29–36 in Matilda's). After a short freely contrapuntal section with a pedal note accompanying derivations of the subject and a brief ritornello cadencing in the dominant, the subject is resumed, its first part presented in alternation (b. 48–55) and the second in parallel thirds (b. 56–61). After the aforementioned section with a pedal note transposed back to the tonic, the remainder of the section follows in a parallel texture, growing increasingly ornamental. Section B stays true to this plan, providing a slight harmonic contrast, perhaps conditioned by the mention of "notte cara".

Although considered by Calella a *par excellence* representative of the contrapuntal, imitative duet of the "old plan", "Notte cara, a te si deve" has some things in common with its predecessor. It likewise opens with a ritornello unrelated to the material of the vocal parts (b. 1–6), with the difference that it is shorter, but injects the duet with more rhythmic vitality and a sense of urgency with its dotted arpeggiations. Like in "Ah mia cara, se tu resti / Ah mio caro, se tu parti" from *Floridante*, the continuous quaver movement in the continuo, although not an ostinato, provides a highly motoric background. The contrapuntal effect is enhanced by a subject in longer note-values that creates suspensions with the continuo. A sequential countersubject in even shorter note-values consistently accompanies the subject (cf. McLauchlan 1997, 375). Handel opens with the subject in Matilda's part (b. 6–10) and continues with Gismonda's, accompanied by the aforementioned countersubject (b. 10–14). At first it seems that the parts are then inverted, although it turns out that Gismonda is providing a modified, extended version of the countersubject to accompany a varied subject in Matilda's part. Both voices lead into a perfect cadence in the dominant in b. 19. After this we are back in the tonic, and another regular statement of the subject and the countersubject (b. 19–23) is introduced, giving way to an even more heavily modified one (b. 24–27).

This first part of section A (A1, 1–28, clearly contradicting Calella's idea of "larger form" since it cadences on the tonic) inspired Dean and Knapp (1987, 429) to describe it with these words: "the voices are beautifully intertwined, sometimes in canon, against a light accompaniment, half dreamy, half ironical." In spite of all the specificities of Handel's style including the independent ritornello, the duet is comparable to Bononcini's "Non vien per nuocer" (*Cefalo e Procride*) as both duets structure the first subsection of section A in an almost fugal manner, although Handel surpasses Bononcini in the number of entries of the subject, reminding us of some of his and Gasparini's chamber duets analysed in Chapters 2.3 and 2.4. As in Bononcini's duet, subsection A2 (b. 28–41) is different and although much shorter, it still forms a unified whole with the preceding

subsection. Varied fragments of the subject are built into the rendition of the first part of the ritornello theme in the first violins (b. 28–31), after which parallel semiquaver passages from the countersubject cadence on the tonic (b. 31–36), leading to a repetition of the opening ritornello. A comparison with the contrapuntally dense dramatic duets from his Italian years that contain lots of *contrapunctus ligatus* passages (see Chapter 3.3.3.1) imposes itself: this is the composer reverting back to his old contrapuntal ways, but with more poise and regularity. Section B (b. 41–53) contributes to the overall sense of unity and direction by providing multiple contrasts.

It does not come as a surprise that the chamber duets "Se tu non lasci amore" and "Langue, geme, sospira" were written around the same time. Perhaps instigated by the lack of sensitivity in the text of "Non tardate a festeggiar", Handel had asked Haym to write a new text focusing on the image of the "cara notte", and decided to remind Londoners that along with the ability to emulate Bononcini's "agreable and easie style" he could also compose learned duets. However, he did not pursue this path in the duets of his next opera, *Flavio* (1723). The source libretto was *Flavio Cuniberto* by Matteo Noris, first set by G. D. Partenio in 1682, although Haym's starting point was the 1693 adaptation for A. Scarlatti. Haym's interventions were extensive, but besides cutting a second duet for the secondary pair of characters (probably because it would not have been suitable for the *secondi* singers to sing more duets than the *primi*), he merely replaced Noris's duet texts in I. 1 and III. 7 with different ones, either his own or taken from other libretto sources (cf. Dean and Knapp 1987, 462–464; Bianconi 1992). On the whole, the libretto had a mixed reception because of its intermixing of the comic and the tragic. It is not surprising that the love triangle between the secondary couple and Flavio is depicted by comic overtones, but the treatment of the main plot involving the principal couple Guido and Emilia is somewhat more unorthodox. Emilia's father Lotario is offended because a post promised to him by Flavio was awarded to Guido's father Ugone instead. In an offstage confrontation he slaps Ugone, who—outraged by the offense—asks his son to challenge Lotario to a duel. Torn between the obligation to defend the family honour and his love for Elmira, Guido eventually challenges and kills Ugone. Although Emilia's conflict between her love for Guido and the need to continue the cycle of revenge (reminiscent of Thomas Corneille's tragedy *Le Cid*) has tragic potential, it is treated with ambivalence that allows for a comic perspective, too. According to Hicks (1992), "the blend of dark tragedy and lighter, satiric comedy is especially subtle" in *Flavio* and this perspective has coloured the reception of Handel's setting, e. g. in Dean and Knapp's (1987, 466) opinion that the "flickering emotional cross-currents between tragedy and farce, irony and pathos are held beautifully in balance" by Handel's music.

In the two duets in the opera, a more light-hearted vein prevailed. The opera opens with a rushed, clandestine goodbye between the secondary couple Teodata and Vitige after they had spent the night together. She expresses hope that she will see him again that evening, but he will not be able to make it because of his duties at court. Teodata's reaction takes the form of her opening line in the duet "Ricordati, mio ben" (I. 1 Teodata, Teodata; Handel 1993a, 11–16). Vitige does not need to be reminded that Teodata feels lost without him since the feeling is mutual, soon confirmed by the minimal polytextual variation with which he repeats her lines throughout section A of the duet.[237] As in many of Handel's Royal Academy of Music duets from *Muzio Scevola* onwards, the independent ritornello (b. 1–14) with its regular build-up of two- or three-bar phrases will interject into the vocal texture although it is unrelated to it in motivic terms. This is facilitated by the fact that the subject (beginning in b. 14 in Teodata's and b. 22 in Vitige's part) also consists of regular phrases interrupted by pauses. It is difficult to say where the subject ends as its second part is varied to facilitate the modulation to the dominant and the return to the tonic. Likewise, Teodata's *Fortspinnung* of motifs from the subject continues without a clear cadence even after Vitige's onset, giving the impression of overlapping, which to a certain extent reminds one of the duet "Sol per te, bell'idol mio" (*Silla*) and "Cangia al fine il tuo rigore" (*Amadigi*). The structure of those two duets was much tauter, whereas in "Ricordati, mio ben", Handel treats the material and the voices much more freely. After Vitige had outlined the subject, the voices are combined in a free sequential contrapuntal texture that is not conceived as *contrapunctus ligatus* for a change, after which they are joined in parallel thirds in alternation with the strings. This process of a free contrapuntal passage (with added suspensions, b. 47–50) followed by vocal parallelism is repeated with the use of different material derived from the subject. The literal repetition of the ritornello leads into section B (b. 71–96), contrasting in the usual modulatory sense, but likewise deriving its melodic and rhythmic *ductus* from section A. It is Vitige who opens it, contributing to a sense of equality between the lovers as they confirm that their hearts will compensate for the absence.

This duet was dropped from the 1732 revival of the opera, presumably because of the changes in the cast. Teodata was sung by the contralto Francesca Bertolli, which would not have required revision or

237 **A section. a 2: Ricordati, mio ben / Teodata: Che se da me tu parti, / Vitige: Che se da te io parto, / a 2: Io vivo sol con te. B section. Vitige: Già teco resta il cor / In pegno del mio amor, / Teodata: Già teco resta il cor / In pegno del tuo amor, / a 2: Di mia costante fè.**

transposition, but the role of Vitige was given to Anna Bagnolesi, another singer of the same tessitura, which must have caused difficulties. Since this combination of ranges occurs comparatively rarely not only in Handel's but in opera duets of the time in general, we may conclude that it was easier to drop the duet rather than revise or replace it. Besides, the presence of a duet for the *primi* singers was more important, and since the ranges of the roles of Guido (Senesino in both the original production and the revival) and Emilia (Cuzzoni in 1723 and Anna Maria Strada del Pò in 1732) had not changed, the second duet in the opera, "Deh perdona, o dolce bene" (III. 7 Emilia, Guido; Handel 1993a, 143–149), although the weaker of the two, may have been retained for the revival. One can almost say that Handel's duets for Durastanti and Robinson in the Royal Academy of Music operas after Cuzzoni's arrival display more variety on both the musical and the dramatic plane, and this impression will be confirmed by the two duets in Handel's next opera, *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*. Dramatically, "Deh perdona, o dolce bene" had considerable potential. Emilia, who asked for justice from the king for the murder of her father, was unable to exact the revenge herself when Guido handed her his sword. In the last scene of the opera Flavio gives her the false news of Guido's death, allowing Guido and the court to observe Emilia's heartbroken reaction, eventually leading to a reconciliation of the lovers. Similar to the modification of the first duet in the opera—where Handel probably asked Haym to write a shorter duet in place of Noris's long, strophic text—Noris's lines have been replaced here, too. However, whereas the original libretto had a shorter, monotextual text of two lines per section with a didactical moral on the pleasures and pains of love, Haym wrote or inserted a more dialogic text in which Guido asks for forgiveness and Emilia grants it, requesting some time to mourn her father in section B in the manner of Donna Anna (cf. Bianconi 1992).[238]

We are dealing with another light-hearted, major-mode duet in a ternary metre and *Andante* tempo, but while the mellifluous ways of "Ricordati, mio ben" saw Handel recall his Italian phase with direct borrowing of the melodic material from the dramatic cantata *Amarilli vezzosa* (the aria "Piacer che non si dona") and his opera *Agrippina* (Poppea's "Col peso del tuo amor"; cf. Dean and Knapp 1987), here the diatonic sweetness recalls his attempts to mime. The ritornello (b. 1–14) and the vocal material share the same incipit and are related. Handel employs it in the same

238 **A section. Guido: Deh, perdona, o dolce bene, / la mia colpa fu l'onor. / Emilia: Ti perdono, o dolce bene, / se tua colpa fu l'onor. B section. Emilia: Deh! Concedi in tante pene / Qualce triegua al mio dolor. Guido: Ti concedo in tante pene / qualche triegua al tuo dolor.**

manner as in most of his duets from the 1720, by interspersing the vocal texture with brief motivic interjections as well as for formal demarcation. The fact that a "larger form" is articulated (A1, b. 1–54; A2, b. 55–122) shows just how relative Calella's differentiation is, as there are much shorter sections in Handel's duets that attain a higher degree of complexity, whether they can be articulated into two subsections by some other means or not. "Deh perdona, o dolce bene" consistently avoids counterpoint and imitation, but it is hard to tell if Handel was motivated by the dialogic stance in the text and the wish to highlight its comprehensibility. He certainly disregarded this aspect in other settings of dialogic texts! Instead of repeating Guido's opening statement (b. 15–22) in succession, Elmira presents a variant of it that is nevertheless aligned with Guido's idea in syntactic and harmonic terms, likewise cadencing on the dominant of the dominant, which would have suited a "modern plan" dialogic logic, as well as the alternation in two-bar phrases that follows. However, in the remainder of the section, this differentiation of the voices subsides as they are mostly combined in parallel (b. 35–44, 77–82, 88–108) or in very loose free counterpoint, mostly accompanying figuration in one voice with a pedal note in the other (b. 46–50, 69–74).

At its beginning, subsection A2 enhances the dialogic exchange especially effectively, with short overlapping alternation (b. 61–65, highlighting the couple's exchanges "deh perdono" / "ti perdono" and "dolce bene / caro bene" as if we were dealing with stichomythia), but otherwise it is simply a bit too long. The motivic repetitions exhaust themselves and the harmonic insistence on F major does not help the growing impression of monotony. After the exact repetition of the ritornello, section B (b. 123–158) adds more interest with quasi-imitation of material derived from the opening statements of section A (b. 123–132 in Vitige's, b. 134–135 in Teodata's part). It quickly flows into a parallel texture and a skilful vacillation between D and A minor, appropriate to Emilia's ambivalent wish to mourn her father rather than be united with her betrothed. On the whole, could it be that Handel attempted to emulate Bononcini's style but with less convincing results than in previous operas? Or does the setting reflect a lack of dramatic convincingness, the same way Cornelia's final and only major-mode, but hardly jubilant aria "Non ha che più temere" does not really do justice to the joy she should be feeling after Sesto had finally killed Tolomeo? Whatever the case, Handel did not return to this structural type of duet before *Admeto* (1727), incidentally (or not?) only a few months before the premiere of Bonocni's *Astianatte*.

It is fitting to end not only this chapter but also this study with the consideration of *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (1724) as one of the peaks of the operatic style that Handel gradually developed in London. The eponymous source libretto stems from Giacomo Francesco Bussani as set by Antonio

Sartorio in 1677, although the process of adaptation was one of the most intricate ones in Haym's collaboration with Handel. According to Dean and Knapp (1987, 486–487), he strengthened the dramatic fibre by focusing the dramaturgy on Cesare's and Cleopatra's love on the one hand and Sesto's and Cornelia's revenge on Tolomeo on the other. From Bussani's original libretto and its 1685 reworking he took over only fragments, including "some rearranged lines" for the duet "Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar" (I. 11 Cornelia, Sesto; Handel 1875, 48–50). In a process comparable to the changes undergone by *Ottone*, Handel began working on the score in the summer of 1723 with a different cast in mind. Although this did not affect the setting of the duet for Cornelia and Sesto since the tessituras of the two roles were merely reversed when compared to the 1723 manuscript—where Sesto was the contralto and Cornelia the soprano and not the other way around—Handel changed its position, moving it from midway in the first act to its ending. According to Dean and Knapp (1987, 488), this "was a brilliant stroke, clearly motivated by dramatic and structural demands". Fate has not been kind to Pompeo's widow Cornelia and their son Sesto: after the Egyptian king Tolomeo had beheaded Pompeo, they are imprisoned at his court where she can barely ward off the king's and his general Achilla's unwanted amorous advances. The duet finds the characters at the outset of their troubles, when they are separated as Sesto is led off to prison and Cornelia is humiliated by serving as the gardener in Tolomeo's harem.

Dean and Knapp (1987, 497) were exceptionally complimentary of this duet, finding that it "conveys an impression of overwhelming pathos" with its siciliana 12/8 metre, characteristic rhythm and phrasing as well as the expressive use of the minor mode. As pointed out by Leopold (2009, 79), it finds itself at the beginning of Handel's tendency of abandoning the use of the siciliana to paint pastoral atmospheres and making it a prototype of operatic anguish and pain. Interestingly, Calella (2009, 344) singled it out as an example of duets whose text does not suggest a setting of the "modern plan", but Handel nevertheless set it with opening alternating statements and a predominantly successive treatment of the voices. The absence of contrapuntal combining, the maximal comprehensibility of the text, as well as the emphatic singling out of fragments of the text such as the sighs "ah", "ah sempre" and "mai più" it does, indeed, suggest a pronounced dialogic stance in a presumed last effort of mother and son to communicate with each other. The duet fascinates with the careful combining of its motivic material in both the vocal parts and the orchestra. The ritornello is made up of three units, the last one being a somewhat extended version of the opening one. Both these motifs are to feature in the vocal parts, although it seems at first that their motivic material is independent, consisting of distinct motifs set apart by pauses. However, motif x from the ritornello is used to round

off vocal statements as well. Cornelia and then Sesto alternate the same, likewise multi-sectional idea, in Sesto's rendition seemingly transposed to the relative major but modulating back to the tonic with the cadential motif x somewhat extended. The remainder of the first subsection consists of the alternating overlapping of motif y in Sesto's part to Cornelia's "ah" sighs. A cadence (always based on variants of motif x) in the dominant conforms the section to Calella's definition of "larger form".

FORM		BAR	KEY	CHARACTER	MOTIF	LINE	TEXT
A	A_1	1–6	e	(ritornello)	x+y+x'	&	Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar E il dolce mio conforto Ah, sempre piangerò. Se il fato ci tradì Sereno e lieto dì Mai più sperar potrò.
		6–9		Cornelia	a+b+x	1–3	
		9–13	G, e	Sesto	a+b+x	1–3	
		13–15	b	C &* S	y'+x	3	
	A_2	15–19	e, a	C /** S	a,b	1–2	
		19–21	a, e	C & S	x	3	
		21–24	e	C & S	y'+x		
		24–28		C&S / vn.	y'+x		
		28–31		(ritornello)	y+x'	%	
B 33–38 38–39		31–33	G	C / S	a'	4	
		b	C & S	x',y',x'	5–6		
			(ritor-nello)	y'+x'	%		

TABLE 68.
Formal outline of the duet "Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar" from Handel's *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (1724)

* Denotes simultaneity in the treatment of vocal parts.
** Denotes successiveness in the treatment of vocal parts.

The constituent units of the vocal parts' subject (a+b) are now presented in alternation instead of continuously, sequentially transposed and modulating back to the tonic and—via a series of secondary dominants—the subdominant, before being united in a brief moment of parallelism on motif x (b. 19–20). This harmonic trajectory is facilitated by motif b, an arpeggiation outlining a seventh chord and thus particularly suitable for modulatory processes. This method of sequential and harmonic manipulation of a subject broken up into motifs that alternate in the parts is reminiscent of Bononcini's two duets in Act 2 of *Muzio Scevola* (1721). The overlapping juxtaposition of motif y in Cornelia's part to Sesto's sighs in b. 21–24 are in fact b. 13–15 transposed back to the tonic with the parts

inverted, although Handel extends this process by setting a parallel vocal "ah" in thirds against motif y in the strings. The orchestra is present throughout the densely conceived duet's two sections, doubling and supplementing the vocal parts in harmonic terms, but this is the first time it engages in a *concertante* interplay with the voices. After a cadence and an abridged ritornello, section B brings few contrasts apart from exploring related keys. After alternating statements of a variant of motif a, the voices are led in a parallel exploration of x and y with renewed sighs on the words "mai più", which underlines the hopelessness of the situation.

Since in most later revivals of *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* Sesto's role was recast for a tenor, it does not come as a surprise that this duet, exploiting rare moments of vocal simultaneity in a markedly tight relationship between the voices, was not included in the revisions. While in "Notte cara, a te si deve" Handel stressed the contrapuntal independence of the voices, in the next two duets composed for Durastanti and Robinson he emphasised their proximity. This does not come as a surprise since Durastanti's *tessitura* was verging on the modern mezzosoprano, possibly also explaining the versatility of roles that she sang for Handel and Bononcini. It is fascinating how even in a duet of the "modern plan" Handel found a way to stress the closeness of the parting mother and son in such moving terms. More concise and also more mellifluous but less contrapuntal than "Ah mia cara, se tu resti / Ah mio caro, se tu parti" from *Floridante,* "Son nata a lagrimar / Son nato a sospirar" may have paved the way for the already discussed duets of departure in his next operas *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda.* These were closer to a "modern plan" duet than the *Floridante* duet, but remained pathetic like the duet for Cornelia and Sesto. The fact that they were given to the *primo uomo* and the *prima donna* suggests that Handel was confident enough to let his biggest stars shine in a more subtle, but no less effective way than the case had been so far. The singers, too, must have recognised the benefits of presenting their skills together in such a way. As had rightly been pointed out by Leopold (2009, 164), Handel was capable of closely integrating not only equal, but also neighbouring vocal ranges such as Cuzzoni's soprano and Senesino's alto, and these duets are a sign that vocal proximity could also have dramaturgic poignancy.

Although not a pathetic duet, the closing number of the opera before the final *coro*[239] and also the final example in this study, "Caro/bella, più amabile beltà" (Cleopatra, Cesare; Handel 1875, 128–131) represents

239 The *coro* "Ritorni omai nel nostro core" contains another duet section for Cesare and Cleopatra as its middle section ("Un bel contento"), thus drawing parallels with similar elaborate endings in Handel's operas, e.g. ***Alessandro*** **(1726). Since it does not present a separate duet number, it will not be considered for analysis although it is symptomatic of the increased representation of Cuzzoni and Senesino in duets.**

a qualitative change in the duets for Cuzzoni and Senesino as the *primi* singers of the Royal Academy of Music. Its structure is much more taut and goal-driven than the homophonic "A teneri effetti" or the somewhat leisurely "Deh perdona, o dolce bene" from the two previous operas, either because or in spite of the fact that it is a lively gigue in a brisk tempo. For a change, the relationship between the ritornello and the vocal parts is simple: the ritornello's first half is taken up by the voices with minimal variation in their alternating statements, and its incipit becomes the main motivic source of the entire duet, subjected to a seemingly endless process of *Fortspinnung*. Besides a strong emphasis on the two voices shining melismatically in parallel thirds and sixths, this kind of material is also prone to a free contrapuntal treatment abiding in *contrapunctus ligatus*, a texture Handel seems to have been avoiding in his operas for the Royal Academy of Music so far. But instead of a detailed analysis, I find it more fitting—especially as we are dealing with the last example in this lengthy study—to compare this duet to other similar duets by Handel, Bononcini or some of the Halle master's other Italian contemporaries, thus both anticipating and seamlessly leading into the conclusion to come in Chapter 3.5.

In the dramatic duets written up to this point, Handel made recourse to a *gigue* only in "Una guerra ho dentro il seno" from *Apollo e Dafne*. However, if there was a model for this piece in Handel's duet output so far, it would be the duet "Cara/Caro, ti dono in pegno il cor" (*Teseo*) with its acutely self-aware virtuosic representation of the voices of the *primo uomo* and *prima donna*. This duet also opens with a *fermata* on the characters addressing each other with terms of endearment ("cara/caro") in longer note values, suggesting a slowing down of the tempo, although this is a feature also shared by the duet "Cara infido tu mi credi / Caro se ad altri tu mi cedi" from Bononcini's *Muzio Scevola* (1695), heard in London as "Charmer, if faithfull thou'lt believe me" in the pasticcio *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* (1708). The *Teseo* duet, however, is more comparable to "Caro/bella, più amabile beltà" with its more ambitious structure and the exploring of figurative writing for two voices in brief alternation, counterpoint over pedal notes and extensive semiquaver flourishes in parallel thirds. In *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, Handel realised that this kind of duet writing could be more effective and also more spontaneously joyous in a dance rhythm, and he also skilfully avoided a sense of monotony. London audiences have already had the chance to hear gigue duets in the pasticcios *Creso* ("Un volto che appaga") and *Arminio* ("Con rigida sembianza"), and although these duets presented novel, more instrumental vocal styles from contemporary Venice, they were still very different from the jubilant duet for Cesare and Cleopatra, probably because Handel's setting does not have a "short-breathed character" (Talbot 2008, 30). Bononcini also composed two

gigue duets that were analysed in this study. The much older "Cara infido tu mi credi / Caro se ad altri tu mi cedi" has only a few moments of brief successive treatment and persists with its unvaried, syllabic parallelism. "Dolce conforto dell'alma / Con speranza dell'alma" from *Astianatte*, on the other hand, opens with widely spaced out alternating statements and its dialogic potential has already been analysed in Chapter 3.4.1.2. However, it is distinguished by an almost total lack of parallelism and it was probably meant to be performed in a moderately fast tempo.

I hope to have demonstrated that when it came to vivacious splendour, it was difficult to match Handel's talents. However, rather than as an equivalent of Handel's playful gigue, the duet in *Astianatte* can be seen as Bononcini's reaction to Handel's domination at the Royal Academy of Music by providing a similar, partly dialogic and successive duet of the "modern" plan that nevertheless entangles the voices in a contrapuntal web of expressive and dramatic significance, something Handel was good at doing. He may have also provided Bononcini and his other Italian peers with a model to emulate.

3. 5.
CONCLUSIONS ON THE COMPARISON OF THE DRAMATIC DUET AND OVERALL CONCLUSION

While analysing the duet "O lovely peace!" (Israelite Man, Israelite Woman) from *Judah Maccabaeus* as an example of the lyric duet, Hugo Riemann (1921, 182) notices that it produces the illusion of canon with the help of "imitation in both voices at two bars that are actually not canonical, but taken leisurely as they come in the given moment"[240]. He names the duet "O death! Where is thy sting / thy victory?" from *Messiah*, a true example of this seemingly canonical voice-leading (ibid., 198) and adds that only a pedant could resent the lack of observance of the rules of canon in those cases. He lists more examples of the so-called "imitative duet", repeatedly stressing that it is desirable to combine strict and free counterpoint in the writing of a duet.

Although Riemann plays the role of the teacher rather than the scholar, illustrating the craft of composition on a wide historical and stylistic array of examples, it is nevertheless significant that his example of flexibility in the imitative treatment of voices in a duet comes from the composer at the heart of this study. Granting that his examples are from Handel's oratorios rather than his Italian operas simply because Riemann must have known them better, I hope to have shown that not only Handel but other composers strove for a free and skilful combination of different techniques in a vocal duet. As we have seen, the manipulation of these techniques can be rather different in the realm of the chamber duet and the dramatic duet. These two genres, namely, employ the same techniques in different ratios and build large-scale structures in thoroughly different ways. Although Handel may be an exception because he occasionally imbued his dramatic duets with a degree of contrapuntal density characteristic of his chamber duets (to a certain extent also the chamber duet in general), the case with some other composers such as Bononcini and Gasparini is different. True, certain stylistic marks accompany composers in the realms of different genre conventions, but the most significant difference is in the treatment of the text. And while we have seen a certain rapprochement of the chamber duet to a vocal number in *da capo* form in examples by both Handel and Bononcini, considerations of theatrical performance practice and operatic dramaturgy still greatly influenced the way composers set a dramatic text as opposed to a lyric one.

240 **Imitationen der beiden Stimmen in kürzeren Abstände (2 Takte), die aber wieder nicht eigentlich kanonisch, sondern so genommen sind, wie sie sich gerade bequem ergeben.**

These last attempted conclusions focus on tendencies in the composition of dramatic duets with only occasional references to the named composer's chamber duets. This does not mean that there are no links whatsoever: for example, Gasparini's tendency to open his dramatic duets with some form of musical simultaneity must have roots in the composer's position as a learned conservative in Italian musical life, best exemplified in his cantatas and the twelve chamber duets that this study devoted a great deal of attention to. Bononcini, on the other hand, is an example of a composer who took genre conventions into account, but also fully adapted as a composer to his surroundings, the patron and the audience he wrote for. This does not mean that he did not stay true to his style the same way as Handel and Gasparini did, but the need to challenge his audience or to form its taste was not as pronounced in his case.

But let us now turn to an overview and a summary of the development of the dramatic duet by Handel and his Italian contemporaries in 1706–1724, the period under scrutiny. The first stage of the performance tradition of Italian opera in London (1706–1710) was crucial in many ways. A gradual process from performing English-language adaptations of Italian operatic music with a mixed cast made up of local and foreign singers to a full professionalization with an ensemble of mostly Italian professional singers singing in Italian took place. It was more or less completed with *Almahide* and *Idaspe fedele,* laying the foundation for the decade to come. As we have seen, the period between 1711 and 1717 was marked not only by the advent of Handel but also by different turbulences that thwarted a continuous functioning of opera production. The staging of authorial operas with the occasional pasticcio thrown in became the norm with the foundation of the Royal Academy of Music in 1720 and lasted until its dissolution in 1729.

In the earliest period of Italian opera in London the initial variety of comical and serious duet types and their structural unconventionality and diversity as visible in *Camilla*—owing a lot to operatic traditions of the 17th century—gradually gave way to a lesser number and more uniform conception of duets. In *Camilla* and to a certain extent *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia* monopartite, bipartite or varied tripartite forms coexisted with the most common *da capo* form. However, the duets in *Thomyris* were not numerous enough and they were still on a somewhat modest scope to indicate a change of course in the conception of opera duets in London. Although it was not considered in Chapter 3.2 due to its unorthodox nature, brief mention should be made of *Love's Triumph*, a work performed in London in 1708, with a pasticcio from 1696 and Scarlatti's reworking of it from 1705 as its starting point. It is impossible to determine the

authors of its ten duets with certainty.[241] The score (Bononcini, Cesarini, and Gasparini 1708) is very difficult to position stylistically, not least because of the sheer quantity of duets. Although among the ten there are some conventional and uniform ones, it also presented London audiences at least one or two duets of diversified structural-dramaturgic designs hitherto unfamiliar to them. An even sharper differentiation between comic duets (with their predominantly successive treatment, smaller scope and monopartite or irregular forms) and serious duets (*da capo* form and a predominantly simultaneous treatment of the vocal parts) predicted the eventual overall prevailing of the serious duet. However, the duets in *Love's Triumph* still show a tendency for polytextuality, presumably because in the context of a strong British tradition of spoken theatre it was important to differentiate and also to understand the characters.

Along with a growing sense of vocal virtuosity in each successive London opera, *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* added a structural novelty in that its sources sustain the voices with denser instrumental accompaniment, but it showed slightly less structural variety in its duets, since unity and parallelism between the voices was favoured to contrapuntal techniques. Unlike the duets in *Love's Triumph* and to a certain extent also *Thomyris*, most of the duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* join rather than oppose characters that are in some sort of conflict, thereby smoothening the dramatic situations in musical terms. Also, the study of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* enabled us to follow a seemingly random, but evidently editorial adaptation of a source opera into a pasticcio in great detail. The clear musical contrast between the duets in the London as opposed to the Florence opera cannot be a result of chance but only of conscious musical shaping on Haym's part. Whereas the duets in *Pyrrhus and Demetrius* displayed an equal share of polytextuality and monotextuality, *Almahide*, in contrast to the predominantly polytextual duets of *Love's Triumph*, showed a tendency for duets in which the characters sing the same text.

Some of the duets in *Almahide* showed a degree of adaptability to different dramatic situations characteristic of the (other) Bononcini duets

241 **The pasticcio in question is *L'amore eroico fra pastori*. Act 1 was probably composed by C. F. Cesarini, Act 2 by G. L. Lulier and Act 3 by Bononcini. It was reworked by A. Scarlatti under the title *La Pastorella* in 1705 and a manuscript collection of arias from this work kept at the British Library is the only other extant source, along with a selection of songs published in London. It is unlikely that the numbers in each act of the London pasticcio are entirely by the composers listed above since it is possible that Scarlatti's version, containing additional numbers by him, served as the model for *Love's Triumph* rather than the 1696 original.**

analysed in this study.[242] With a limited use of parallelism and the clear distinguishing between the voices in spite of textural or affective unity, these duets written either for the *primo* and *secondo uomo* or the couple of main protagonists announced duet types that would dominate opera in the first third of the 18th century. Since *Almahide* was supposed to showcase music from Bononcini's Vienna operas written in the first decade of the century unlike the earlier pasticcios which presented music from his late 17th-century Roman works, it is hardly surprising that they are more advanced in stylistic terms. They are more *concertante*, expansive and also more virtuoso in the simultaneous vocal representation of the opera's principal characters. *Idaspe fedele* added to this development the appearance of the duet of departure for the principal couple in adversity and although lacking in the dignified *pathos* of the tragic duets of the sort written by Handel, it still pointed the way for future developments.

Duets were becoming an important part of the growingly self-conscious representation of singers as *virtuosi* on the London stage. The fact that Nicolini wanted to make sure he outshone his colleagues not just in the arias but also in the duets, foreshadowed the importance of the balance between the "rival queens" Francesca Cuzzoni and Faustina Bordoni in the era of the Royal Academy of Music. Although stylistically less consistent than the ones in *Almahide,* the duets in *Idaspe fedele* with their smaller numbers and dramaturgic standardisation, as well as the growing importance of all 3 types of duet techniques (alternation, counterpoint, parallelism) announced traits of the two following periods of Italian opera in London. On the level of performance practice, the transformative processes can be followed in the example of Nicola Haym's role in the staging of Italian opera in London. When he rehearsed *Camilla* with the singers in 1706, "his decision to include few aria settings which were not from the original Naples production probably received no opposition from them" (Lindgren 1997, 242–243). When they were preparing *Pyrrhus* in 1709, "he was apparently able to satisfy many of their demands by his own compositions." (ibid.) By the time of the staging of *Etearco*, Haym's responsibilities were gradually reduced to tailoring the texts of arias included in the production at the behest of the singers since a growing sense of teamwork began to dominate operatic life in London. In the understanding of Italian

242 **It remains difficult to answer the question if Bononcini and the other Italian composers considered in this study were slightly less differentiated or sophisticated than Handel in the appropriation of a duet from one dramatic situation to an entirely different one. The Halle master also resorted to recycling parody practices of the sort at play in Bononcini's Vienna operas, but he—as seen in Chapter 1.1.3—also had much more varied ways of engaging with pre-existing material.**

opera in London in the second decade of the century, this dialectic between composers like Bononcini and Scarlatti whose music we can identify and whose duets may even display some common features and the ones whose authors cannot be identified was even more important.

When we compare the duets from Handel's opera *Rinaldo* and the Gasparini duets in the pasticcio *Ambleto*, a stark contrast is evident between the German composer's contribution and the duet tradition represented in the older Italian composer's work. Chapter 3.3.1 has shown how different Gasparini was as a composer of chamber duets on the one hand and dramatic duets on the other. The biggest difference is in the avoidance of a consistent application of imitation techniques that have such a prominent place in his chamber duets (as well as Handel's), although this may have been down to the genre itself. In spite of all the contrasts between his chamber and dramatic duets on the structural and stylistic plane, there is an element that binds them together, and this is flexibility. Gasparini was evidently a flexible composer who adapted to all these conventions without the need to sacrifice his stylistic profile as a composer with a learned background. He displayed significant progressivity in his youth but became a staunch aesthetic enemy of nascent *gallant* and pre-classical tendencies in his maturity. His chamber duets, although a private genre that could not do a lot to boost his public reputation, display significant care and attention to detail, whereas dramatic duets were obviously not a domain in which he sought to assert himself, so that some of them show signs of a compositional routine. They do display some of the traits highlighted in the introduction to chapter 3.3.1 ("skilful and pleasing", but somewhat static melodies, relatively little dramatic substance), and they also possess a sense of direction and roundedness. Gasparini was hardly an eccentric or original duet composer like Handel or Bononcini. However, his contribution to the culture of dramatic duets in London was somewhat limited and it did not leave a strong mark on the second period at the heart of Chapter 3.2, the operatic diversity that ruled the London stage between 1711 and 1717. Juxtaposed with what little music by him is known to have been performed with absolute certainty in London a few years earlier, the duets he wrote between 1715 and 1722 show an apparent stylistic contrast.

On the other hand, In Chapter 3.3.2 we were able to follow how pasticcio duets performed in London in the course of the decade gradually became more extended. The gap witnessed at the beginning of the decade lessened as duets by different, most probably Venetian composers broadened the stylistic and structural frame of what Londoners recognised as viable dramatic duets. Techniques such as instrumental figuration, clear motivic unity and the recourse to (varied) repetition, along with an overall bigger scope made these duets more similar to Handel's, although they

could not necessarily compete with them in musical and dramaturgic complexity. In line with the goals of this study, the pieces by Handel's Italian contemporaries in Chapter 3.3.2 were examined in more detail since often nothing had been written on them, in contrast to Handel's.

Before moving on to Handel's contribution in this period, it was important to point out Handel's roots in the cantata and serenata duets written in Italy, experimenting with and distinguishing between three duet types (Chapter 3.3.3.1). The most represented of these grew into what can be described as the prototype of Handel's dramatic duets, anticipating his mature dramatic duets written in London in the 1720s. In terms of dramaturgy, these are duets of unity or conflict of an amorous nature, and in them Handel developed large-scale *da capo* forms with framing sections that tend to articulate a bipartite, "larger form" (as described by Calella) with a clear cadence in the dominant or another related tonal centre in the middle. In his operas, the composer sharpened the contrast between this more substantial section and a shorter middle section, more so than in the pastoral genres of the cantata and the serenata of his Italian years. Handel was not alone in this: the examination of Gasparini's duets in Chapter 3.3.1 shows that his older Italian contemporary sometimes also articulated his *da capo* duets this way. However, in the same way these tendencies were occasional in Handel's works from the period 1706–1710 but gradually became the norm in his first London operas, Gasparini—and to a certain extent also Bononcini—also participated in this trend towards formal expansion and complexity, but only to a certain degree. In some of his dramatic duets Gasparini displayed a tendency for contrapuntal, even imitative vocal shaping, too, but they seem less consistently implemented than in Handel's works.

Another duet type mentioned only in passing in this period is the strophic *aria a due*. Although it leaves an old-fashioned aftertaste in Handel's and some of Gasparini's duets, implying that it was beginning to be considered too dated even for Londoners' taste, we could see that Bononcini brought it back in the years of the Royal Academy of Music, offering his own specific forms of it that will challenge perceptions of the strophic duet as more simple and backward-looking than, say, either Handel's (freely) contrapuntal duet or Burney's "modern plan" dialogic duet. Moreover, Bononcini had amalgamated the latter type of dialogic duet with the principle of strophic alternation. In the pasticcio duets analysed in Chapter 3.3.2 we have also seen the rise of the prototype of the tragic duet of departure in a rather multi-faceted guise. While these duets by Gasparini and other Venetian composers were in fully-fledged *da capo* form, but displayed a wide range of affective content as well as considerable diversity of character, Handel experimented with different formal

solutions in this duet type but established as its main characteristics a minor key, a slower tempo, as well as different harmonic and contrapuntal means of achieving pathetic expression. Another important aspect of Handel's dramatic duets detected already in the period 1706–1715 is the dialectic of the techniques of alternation, contrapuntal combining and parallelism with a particular eye on vocal counterpoint. Although Handel made little use of imitation in the dramatic duets written during his Italian sojourn, the culmination of Chapter 3.3.3.2 in the form of the duets from *Teseo* and especially "Crudel tu non farai" from *Amadigi* with their skilful combination of imitation and pseudo-imitation probably pointed the way.

The entirety of dramatic duets considered in Chapter 3.4 covers a substantial chronological span from 1693 (Bononcini's *La nemica d'amore fatta amante*, the oldest work considered here) to 1727 (*Astianatte*). As already explained, similar to Chapter 3.3.3.1 on Handel's early dramatic duets, in Chapter 3.4.1.1 it was important to fashion a background for the development of Bononcini's dramatic duets in the stages of his career preceding his arrival to London in 1720. In Bononcini's opus there is a lacuna between the intense operatic activity in Vienna in the first decade of the century and in London in the third, so that the novelty of his Royal Academy of Music operas (and their duets) is strongly highlighted. In contrast, Handel's development seems more continuous, although we are in a position to follow this due to the accessibility of critical editions. Nevertheless, he seems to have abandoned some of the processes begun in his Italian years and perfected in his early London operas since he must have wanted to make a fresh start in the special circumstances and working conditions that the Royal Academy of Music provided, the same way Bononcini did.

However, the composers reacted to these new working conditions in different ways. As the stress on his relationship with Rolli in Chapter 3.4.1.2 has shown, Bononcini was likely a more equal collaborator to librettists, and as such more open to teamwork. As an Italian composer likelier to identify with vocal music in his mother tongue as national culture, he was probably more attuned to the literary, Academic agendas that Rolli may have cherished as a pupil of the distinguished poet and teacher Gian Vincenzo Gravina. Although the Italo-German Haym has shown great admiration for both Bononcini and Rolli, his relationship with Handel was less a union of equals, but a more pragmatic and perhaps—in a way—a more productive collaborative rapport.

The examination of Bononcini's dramatic duets has shown that contrapuntal techniques are not his trademark; he made use of them only in certain situations, more often in the early serenata and oratorio duets and only occasionally in the London works, thus conforming to genre

conventions that the learned does not have a place in the theatre. His London productivity in the realm of the dramatic duet is connected to an affinity for varied strophic form, favoured by Rolli who had an inclination to write long, polytextual duet texts. Therein lays a contradiction as strophic form was a relic of 17th-century operatic practices but it also enabled Bononcini to devise more modern, dialogic duet designs. Although Burney's differentiation of the "old plan" and the "modern plan" was rightly subjected to criticism by Calella, it is still a relevant category since duets with longer successive alternating statements were indeed increasingly cultivated by both Handel and Bononcini in their Royal Academy of Music duets, probably instigated by their mutual rivalry and competition. To a certain extent, this type of duet with longer alternating statements was anticipated on the London stage in the duets from *Creso* and *Arminio* in 1714 and probably also many other duets in the varied pasticcio production that marked the decade, showcasing music by recent Venetian or Neapolitan composers, stylistically much more progressive than Handel's.

It is important to stress that the binary opposition "successive"–"simultaneous" as used by both Burney and Calella to describe the differences between the "modern" and the "old plan" duet should not be taken literally or even necessarily in connection with dialogic exchanges in the text. If the duets analysed in this study have shown something, then it is the possibility that dramaturgic models can be superimposed on different kinds of polytextual and even monotextual texts, which relativizes the category of dialogue. Likewise, examples have shown that after presenting the material in longer alternating vocal statements, the composers can combine the voices in a variety of ways with each other, often also with the independently treated instrumental parts. Thus the initial successiveness often does not pertain to the entirety of the duet but only to its outset.

Even though we owe the singling out of the London pasticcio *Muzio Scevola* to Burney who picked out the two duets by Handel as examples of "old" and "modern plan" duets and to Chrysander's scathing opinion on Bononcini's Act 2, I still find that this opera was crucial for the subsequent development of Handel and Bononcini as duet composers in London. In this pasticcio Bononcini amalgamated "modern" dialogic alternation underlined by unconventional harmonic progressions with intricate strophic designs that show a simpler side to them in both operas preceding it (*Astarto*) and following it (*Griselda*). Handel responded with an aesthetic statement of sorts that he can produce both a more modern duet, albeit in his own way ("Vivo senza alma / Mà quell'amore") and a "conservative", more contrapuntal duet such as "Mà come amar? / Torna ad amar". Pasticcios have often been considered in negative terms, but maybe it was the competitive nature of the enterprise that inspired both composers to

experiment and to be open to influence, at the same time staying perfectly attuned to the dramatic situations and the portrayal of the characters.

In Handel's next operas for the Royal Academy of Music it is clear that he wrote them with the Italian composer's challenging popularity in mind. Regardless of whether they were conscious or not, the two-way processes that went on between these two composers are too complex to describe by the exclusive term "influence". Handel definitely changed in relation to his previous duet opus by deliberately pushing a "sweet", simpler, sometimes almost homophonic diatonic idiom into the foreground in some of his subsequent duets. At the same time, he would not be Handel had he not at the last minute inserted "Notte cara, a te si deve" into *Ottone*, a duet even more consistently imitative than "Mà come amar? / Torna ad amar". As the tide was changing and Bononcini fell out of grace, writing for the Royal Academy of Music only occasionally till 1724, it was interesting to observe how in the duet "Dolce conforto dell'alma / Con speranza dell'alma" from *Astianatte* the process was perhaps reversed. Although he followed the logic of widely spaced out, leisurely alternations between the voices, Bononcini insisted on an almost total absence of parallelism in this duet, choosing to work out the parts contrapuntally (although not imitatively) as a reflection of the dramatic situation in which Andromaca and Pirro make only furtive attempts at amorous unity.

If not in terms of character and dramaturgy, this duet can definitely be brought into a structural connection with Handel's departure duets, a prototype that he was developing ever since "Ah mia cara, se tu resti / Ah mio caro, se tu parti" from *Floridante* and that culminated in the pathetic anguish of the duets in *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*, *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda.* The fact that this vacillation between Burney's "modern" and "old plan" is typical of London and probably also of the relationship between Bononcini and Handel is sustained by the analysis of the limited number of duets from Gasparini's later operas. With the exception of his somewhat old-fashioned strophic duets in *Ambleto* and the two dramatic cantatas, Gasparini does not seem to have been interested in "modern", successive dialogic structuring at all. He showed an affinity to combine the vocal parts in a simultaneous texture whether it was imitation, free counterpoint or parallelism, with a possible textural contrast only in the B section of a *da capo* form.

Let me end this monograph with a comment on the article that encouraged it, Calella's study of Handel's "dramatic multi-voiced"[243] music (Calella 2009). It goes without saying that both that article and this study

243 **The original German substantive form ("Dramatische Mehrstimmigkeit") does not translate into English.**

have demonstrated a rare variety and dynamism in Handel's treatment of the vocal duet. Calella does not refrain from asking the question as to whether Handel was an innovator in the realm of the duet and the ensemble, but eventually dismisses the possibility since he does not want to make a causal connection between quality and innovation (ibid., 351). Against the developments of Metastasian dramaturgy that he must have found too limiting, Handel was—according to Calella—a rather conservative composer. No contemporary of his was able to "shape operatic ensembles so that they not only exhibit dramaturgic diversity but also traces of the learned art of Steffani that had almost disappeared from opera duets and trios around the time"[244] (ibid., 352). Handel's difference had been falsely interpreted as innovation, especially when his output was approximated to the dramaturgic freedom and stylistic synthesis that opera had acquired in the late 18th century in Mozart's opus, with whom older literature often attempted to unsuccessfully compare him. Calella rightly warns us that "whether we see him [Handel, A/N] as a trailblazer depends on the historical perspective and not least on the ideology that is behind it"[245] (ibid.).

Striving to minimise any implicit "ideology" of the sorts, I hope to have proven that Handel was exceptional in the treatment of duets in relation to the Italian contemporaries Calella wanted me to compare him to. Even though duets are often a subsidiary aspect of opera seria, Handel often strove to reflect the specificities of the dramatic situation or the inner world of his characters in his duets. In terms of the variety of techniques employed, neither of the composers matches him, although some of them, especially Gasparini in his chamber duets and Bononcini in his dramatic duets come close, but from an entirely different angle. As shown, Bononcini was encouraged to do this by the two-way processes of exchange and rivalry in their common Royal Academy of Music period. However, we must bear in mind the socio-historical specificity of Handel, especially in London. One of the biggest differences between Handel and his Italian peers is the fact that Handel was not in the direct service of aristocrats in London, but as a commercial freelance composer he depended on his own success:

> He was obliged to try to develop the taste of his audience in his own favour. […] His public still remained the same year after year,

244 **Keiner konnte wie er Opernensembles gestalten, die nicht nur dramaturgische Vielfalt, sondern auch noch die Spüren der gelehrten Kunst eines Steffanis aufweisen konnten – und die zu einer Zeit, in denen Duette und Terzette aus der Oper fast verschwunden waren.**

245 **Ob man ihn als ‚Vorreiter' sehen kann, hängt vom historiographischen Gesichtspunkt und nicht zuletzt von der dahinter stehenden Ideologie ab.**

> continually demanding something new and better. […] Handel was always judged by the standards which he himself had set, as is clear from contemporary reactions to his works. (Strohm 2008, 101)

Another big difference in relation to Italian composers including Bononcini was the amount of time he had at disposal for—and subsequently also invested in—the process of composition, which accounts for the careful planning and the abundant revision. Therefore, Handel was in a unique position to develop in aesthetic terms comparatively independently of institutional or individual patronage: few composers of his age were able to gain that much autonomy, especially in Italy.

Maybe the richness and variety of his duets as compared to the Italian composers examined in this study also stem from these socio-cultural conditions? Not having the according methodological resources nor the space and time to do this, it is at the point of attempting to answer these questions that this study should hand over the baton to others.