NICOLA PORPORA'S OPERAS FOR THE 'OPERA OF THE NOBILITY': THE POETRY AND THE MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

Studies of Italian opera in London during the first half of the eighteenth century have focussed on George Frideric Handel (1685-1759). As the most prolific composer of this genre in the English capital, this is unsurprising, but it has meant that other composers, contemporaneously active in this field, have been relatively neglected. This is especially true of the period 1733 – 1737, during which time two Italian opera companies attempted to co-exist in the city. Leading one of the companies was Handel, with the Neapolitan, Nicola Porpora (1686-1768), recruited to compose the works for the rival opera company, the so-called 'Opera of the Nobility'.

This study therefore discusses Porpora's contribution of five operas to the London operatic stage during his three year residency between 1733 and 1736, in opposition to Handel's company. This has required an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the formation of the rival opera company, its operation in terms of repertoire and the influence of its librettists on Porpora's works. Detailed analysis of the music has been undertaken to consider Porpora's style, establish how he adapted this in London for an English, rather than Italian audience, and determine the efficacy of his communication of the drama through his music.

This thesis is the first large-scale detailed study of Porpora and his operas. Although the primary focus of this work is his London operas, the necessity of providing a context for these has resulted in a contribution to greater knowledge of Porpora's overall style. There is still much work to be done on a full study of all of Porpora's 44 operas and other compositions. This study also significantly adds to the current knowledge of operatic rivalry in London between 1733 and 1736, for the first time evaluating the fabric and importance of Porpora's operas within this period.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Graham Cummings, for guiding me through this project. His ideas and advice have been invaluable throughout, and his constant support and encouragement crucial, not only to the completion of this thesis, but also to my well-being.

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I am grateful to the many friends and family members who have learnt more about Nicola Porpora and his operas than perhaps they ever thought possible, and deep thanks must go to my husband, Peter, who has lived through it all.

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Word count including footnotes and excluding appendices is 101,606.
Ancillary data (footnotes, tables and quotations) amounts to approximately 11,500 words.

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Where applicable all tables in Chapter Three (6-13)have been compiled from the librettos and those in Chapters Five (14-26) and Seven (27-37) from the scores.

ABBREVIATIONS AND EDITORIAL NOTES

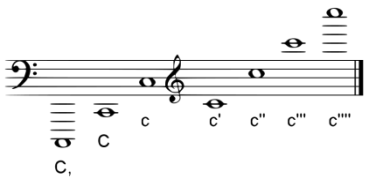
Library Sigla

GB-Lbl	London (Great Britain), British Library
GB-CDu	Cardiff (Great Britain), Music Library, Cardiff University
I-Nc	Naples (Italy) Conservatorio di Musica S Pietro a Majella, Biblioteca
I-MC	Montecassino (Italy) Monumento Nazionale di Montecassino, Biblioteca

The titles of Porpora's five London operas and the characters within are referred to throughout in Italian, as shown on the librettos.

When not in-text, the words 'act' and 'scene' are omitted. For example, Act III, scene iv is shown as III.iv. Unless referring specifically to the score, references to act and scene numbers are as they appear in the libretto.

Pitch notation is shown as follows:



Abbreviations:

b.c.	basso continuo
d.c.	da capo
d.s.	dal segno
f./ff.	folio/folios
fl.	flourished
lib.	libretto
r	recto
recit.	recitative
rev.	revised
rit.	ritornello
v	verso
Keys:	capital letter = major key. For example D = D major
	capital letter + m = minor key. For example Dm = D minor

Because of the number of references to newspapers these are not shown in-text but in footnotes.

Until 1752 the calendar in England gave 25 March as the first day of the New Year (Julian calendar). Throughout this thesis I use the 'new style' Gregorian calendar in which the New Year begins on 1 January.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1711 and 1741 George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759), wrote 34 full operas for London, enjoying varying degrees of success with these productions. It was only between 1733 and 1737 that he encountered rivalry from a second Italian opera company active in the city. During these four years the two companies competed vigorously for the same audience and consequently both ultimately faced financial ruin. With Handel leading his company, the Neapolitan composer, Nicola Porpora (1686 – 1768), was recruited to compose the works for the rival opera company.

Porpora arrived in London sometime after May in 1733 to take up his post as composer to the so-called 'Opera of the Nobility'. The new company was founded specifically to rival Handel's and produce an alternative Italian opera seria experience.[1] The aim of this thesis is to investigate and consider the operas that Porpora produced for London in his three seasons of residency from 1733 to 1736 in the light of these intentions. In that time he wrote five operas which were produced at two theatres over the three seasons, after which he returned to his native Italy.

The thesis is split into two parts as it is important to firstly describe the environment into which Porpora came which was very different from that of the major operatic centres of Italy where he had hitherto been working and living. Chapter One investigates the circumstances in which Italian opera was established in London, and specifically those of the rival opera company, the 'Opera of the Nobility', formed in 1733. This chapter considers the importance of the singer, Senesino, in the formation and early operation of the company.[2] Unfortunately, there is, as yet, scant detail on the involvement and influence of the subscribers involved at the 'Opera of the Nobility's inception. Any relationship between these subscribers and the running of the new company would be, currently, largely conjecture based on their whereabouts in Italy during the Grand Tour. Further research into this area is required and a major project entitled 'Operatic Rivalry in London 1733-1737' is presently being undertaken by Cummings and Taylor which will significantly increase knowledge of this subject. Chapter One also follows the course of Porpora's life and career

[1] For the purposes of this thesis, *opera seria* is taken to mean all Italian opera other than *opera buffa* from c.1700 to c.1750.

[2] Senesino was an Italian alto castrato, born Francesco Bernardi, 1686-1758.

to better understand how and why he came to London. Chapter Two focuses on the rivalry between the two opera companies, investigating repertoire choice and performance nights and providing context for the environment in which Porpora composed his London operas.

Part Two is a detailed study of Porpora's five London operas. In the course of my research I came to realize that Porpora's two librettists, Paolo Rolli (1687 – 1765), and Colley Cibber (1671 – 1757), made a significant contribution to the structure of the operas, not just textually but also musically. This is especially true of Paolo Rolli, the Italian librettist of the first four of the five operas and his influence on choice of subjects for the operas of the new company, at least initially, is shown. Chapters Three and Four, therefore, provide an analysis of the poetry and investigate its influence on Porpora's music. Chapter Five goes to the heart of this thesis and considers Porpora's style both as the generic 'new Neapolitan' style and also his own idiosyncratic style, and how this was modified to please the London audience. A detailed study of Porpora's first London opera, *Arianna in Naxo,* is given in Chapter Six to show how Porpora successfully portrayed the drama through his music. The final Chapter, Seven, concentrates on the sources for this thesis, discussing the copies made for the Royal Music Library and the authenticity of autograph scores held at the British Library. It also provides further evidence of Porpora's ability and commitment to producing engaging and dramatically convincing music through a study of an autograph score of part of his third London opera, *Polifemo*.

As yet there has been no major work published on the life and works of Nicola Porpora; Frank Walker's 33-page *A Chronology of the Life and Works of Nicola Porpora* is the most recent and was published in 1951. As the title states, this is a chronology and therefore gives no analysis of Porpora's music. Journal articles (Burrows 2004, Cervantes 1999, G. Cummings 2007, Hume 1986, McGeary 1998b, Streatfeild, 1917) that cover the three years Porpora was in London focus on Handel and operatic rivalry in general. Milhous (1984) and then with Hume (1978, 1984) has given valuable insight into the finances of the period and Dorris (1967) and Taylor (1991) have substantially increased knowledge of the environment in which Italian opera existed in the first half of the eighteenth century. None of these works, however, gives the details and significance of Porpora's music whilst he was in England. The two works that consider Porpora's London operas are Yorke-Long's unpublished dissertation, written in 1951, *The Opera of the Nobility,* and Robinson's 1971/2 article for the *Soundings* journal, 'Porpora's Operas for London, 1733-1736'. While these

works offer some valuable details of the London operas, they only 'scratch the surface', providing an initial impetus for further research. My investigation continues and expands upon this start, giving detailed analysis of Porpora's operas and offering context for the dynamic environment of Italian opera in London 1733, into which the Neapolitan composer found himself plunged.

PART ONE – NICOLA PORPORA AND THE 'OPERA OF THE NOBILITY'

CHAPTER ONE: BIRTH OF A COMPANY

Introduction

During the first decades of the eighteenth century there was a bewildering variety of musical entertainment on offer in London, flourishing in concert rooms, private houses, pleasure gardens and an array of theatres. The range of these entertainments encompassed pantomime, masque, pastoral, burlesque, ballad-opera and both Italian and English opera. Interest in Italian and 'all-sung' opera had been piqued as early as 1705 with Thomas Clayton's (1673 – 1725) successful *Arsinoe,* translated from the Italian into English. Opera then moved from productions wholly in English, to a hybrid type sung in both English and Italian, to productions sung entirely in Italian. An attempt in December 1707 by the architect, playwright and theatre manager John Vanbrugh to delineate the types of production to be performed at each venue had been short-lived. Convinced that all-sung opera would make him a fortune, he persuaded the Lord Chamberlain to decree that only plays with no music could be presented at the Drury Lane theatre and all types of opera could be presented at his own in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Poor repertoire and Italian singers unable to manage the English language soon scuppered this notion. In any case the regulation was flouted as early as 1709, and after 1714 the three operational London theatres were all presenting productions that contained music. There was mixed success with these ventures but the mismanagement of affairs, particularly with regard to the ruinous salaries paid to some of the singers, meant that Italian opera was temporarily finished in London by the spring of 1717.

Opera in London 1711 – 1733

Between 1711 and 1717 Handel wrote four operas for London. The first, *Rinaldo,* which was premièred on 24 February 1711, was a significant success and was revived several times during this period. Despite the failure of previous enterprises to maintain Italian opera, the 'Royal Academy of Music' was set up in 1720 by leading members of the aristocracy. A considerably more judicious approach to the financing of the venture was adopted than previously; it was established on a subscription basis with an annual bounty of

£1000 authorized by King George I (1660 – 1727) in an effort to present Italian opera on a secure financial basis for the first time in London. Handel contributed 13 operas to this venture and enjoyed notable success before, once again, the costs involved proved exorbitant and unsustainable and the enterprise collapsed in 1728.

Before the end of the 1727/28 season English musical theatre was taken by storm by a ballad-opera. *The Beggar's Opera,* with a sharply satirical libretto by John Gay (1685 – 1732), was premièred on 29 January, 1728 at Lincoln's Inn Fields and ran for an unparalleled 62 performances. Perhaps perceiving a shift in audience taste, a new offensive to establish English opera was subsequently launched. In early 1732 there were attempts to establish serious opera in English and over the next 15 months eight English operas were produced at the Little Haymarket theatre. Milhous and Hume (1997, p.510) assert that John Frederick Lampe (1702/3 – 1751) and Gay's *Dione*, first performed on 23 February 1733 was 'another attempt to do in English and in miniature at the Little Haymarket what Handel was doing with Senesino and company at the King's Theatre'. Similarly, Thomas Augustine Arne (1710 – 1778) was at Lincoln's Inn Fields in order to present 'English Opera's after the Italian manner', but between November 1732 and April 1733 only three productions there were managed.[1] After this time 'serious' English opera ceased, being subsumed by the myriad of diverse entertainments offered at the many theatres. Milhous and Hume (1997, p.530) suggest that the absorption of the principal players in the English opera productions into other theatre companies was one reason for it discontinuing, and Lord (1964, p.251) believes that the native performers were not sufficiently talented to stave off opposition from the Italian superstars dominating the operatic stage at the King's Theatre. Ultimately, although some of these English operas were popular, they were not profitable and at the start of the 1733 season circumstances for presenting opera became even more competitive with the establishment of a second Italian opera company.

After the collapse of the Royal Academy in 1728, only one season passed before Handel and the impresario John Jacob Heidegger, allowed to use scenery and costumes from the Academy for a further five years, started a new opera season (Rolli to Senesino, letter, 4 February, 1729, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.237). This was established, again on a subscription basis, at the King's Theatre and the so-called 'Second Academy' opened in

[1] *The Craftsman*, 4 November, 1732. See Bibliography for details of newspapers consulted during the preparation of this thesis.

December 1729. Only moderately successful to begin with, the enterprise gradually gathered momentum, especially after the return of Senesino in the second season (1730/31). During the four seasons to 1733, Handel wrote six new operas and gave 14 revisals[2] of 12 previous operas. From 1731 he had begun to incorporate English unstaged productions into his season and at the end of the 1731/32 season he did not renounce Italian opera, but adapted his approach and style.[3] Alongside the resurgence of interest in English opera in 1732/33 were two pirated versions of Handel's oratorio *Esther*, and masque *Acis and Galatea*; the former privately staged in February 1732 and the latter given as a pastoral opera production in May.[4] Handel's response to both of these performances was to present new versions of the works himself, even introducing Italian arias from his *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* serenata of 1708 into the English *Acis and Galatea* so that it could be performed by the native singers and his continental stars. No action was added to the performances although an elaborate scenic backdrop was used for *Acis and Galatea*.

Conjecture suggests that this was the moment for Handel to seize the initiative and start to compose his own English operas. The playwright and manager Aaron Hill appealed to Handel in a letter of 5 December, 1732, writing: 'My meaning is, that you would be resolute enough, to deliver us from our *Italian bondage;* and demonstrate, that *English* is soft enough for Opera' (as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.299); evidently Handel did not agree. In the following season, although he continued to present unstaged versions of *Esther*, *Acis and Galatea* and even a new oratorio, *Deborah*, Handel only presented fully-staged opera productions in Italian. Nevertheless, he was not impervious to either the rising tide of discontent from both patrons and singers, or the interest in English productions; *Orlando* was Handel's response to the unrest and was premièred on 27 January, 1733.[5] He was not going to abandon his Italian operas but instead moved away from the recent heroic and epic plots and towards a more magical and fantastic text in *Orlando* with spectacular stage

[2] 'Revisal' is used to describe a repeat of a previously performed opera which has been altered. This is distinct from 'revival' when the repeated opera has remained unchanged.

[3] *Acis and Galatea* on 26 March, 1731 at Lincoln's Inn Fields, countering a pirated version given on 13 March. The first of his English productions at the King's Theatre was *Esther* on 2 May, 1732.

[4] *Acis and Galatea* is described as a 'masque or serenata' and 'Handel's first dramatic work in English' by Sadie (1992). He adds that this work has also 'variously been described as a serenata, a masque, a pastoral or pastoral opera, a 'little opera' (in a letter while it was being written), an entertainment and even (incorrectly) an oratorio.'

[5] Ellen Harris (1989, p.xi) writes that during 1732 to 1736, 'urged by his former collaborator Aaron Hill...he produced "English style" Italian operas.' Handel finished the score of *Orlando on* 20 November, 1732 (Dean, 2006, p.251).

effects and machinery. Dean (2006, p.241) remarks that Handel was 'stretching the bounds of the *opera seria* convention...breaking off or distorting formal units' and it includes nine accompagnatos, cavatinas, anomalous duets, a trio, a quartet, sinfonias and a rondo. The da capo aria form is stretched to the limit and the whole is 'one of the most original of Handel's operas in design' (Dean, 2006, p.242).

Cummings writes that by the 1730s 'Handel's audiences had become seekers of novelty, who wanted not merely to be entertained, but amazed and astonished by fresh experiences of musical virtuosity' (2007, p.6). At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Italian literature was popular in London and there was also a 'sudden craze for Italian opera' (Streatfeild, 1917, p.430) into the capital which led to an influx of musicians, librettists, dancers and set designers from Italy, joining the substantial circle of Italian businessmen, diplomats and impresarios already established there.[6] These artists could often command exorbitant salaries and enjoyed aristocratic patronage. It was not only Italian literature and opera that fascinated the English at this time but also the visual arts and architecture. The aristocracy was familiar with Italian culture largely through personal experience gained through the 'grand tours' undertaken. Strohm (1997, p.100) suggests that the enthusiasm for importing Italian art and artists was to enable the aristocracy to 'demonstrate the superiority of their taste to that of a flourishing middle-class culture' and Lindgren (1997, p.91), writing about Italian musicians, states that 'all new arrivals were keenly awaited, for they were expected to keep Londoners up to date by displaying the most recent Italian compositional styles and performance practices.'

Millner (1979, p.193) affirms the existence of a new type of libretto, aria form and styles of harmonic and instrumental accompaniment that were consolidated into a successful genre in Naples in the 1720s by Porpora and his contemporaries. Robinson (1962, p.35) also comments on the 'new type of melody' which the Neapolitan composers of the 1720s and 30s had evolved. That Handel was perceived to be writing in an old-fashioned style opposed to this new, modern style coming out of Italy can be seen in Burney. Whilst writing about the 1734/35 season he states that, in *Alcina*, Handel was 'adopting the new taste which Vinci, Porpora, and Hasse had rendered fashionable in Italy', and 'had changed his style' (Burney, 1789, p.796). He goes further, classifying the arias

[6] See Lindgren, 1997, for further details.

contained within *Alcina* as '*arie all' antica*, or in Handel's own style, twenty-one; *alla moderna*, eight; *antica e moderna*, or of a mixed style, three'.

'Senesino's House'

In the season of 1732/33 Handel produced his first oratorio written especially for the opera house; *Deborah* ran for six performances beginning on Saturday, 17 March.[7] This was the first time that Handel had presented an oratorio on a Saturday, traditionally hitherto, an opera night, and he raised the price of the tickets for the first performance for which the subscribers also had to pay. This caused considerable bad-feeling and the subscribers, not surprisingly unwilling to pay, forced their way into the theatre (Lady A. Irwin to Lord Carlisle, letter, 31 March, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.310). A letter in the *Country Journal or The Craftsman* on 7 April castigates Handel, stating that the 'Absurdity, Extravagancy, and Opposition of this *Scheme* disgusted the whole Town.'[8] The discontent that Handel had stirred up by his perceived high-handedness extended to his singers. On 24 May the public servant Charles Delafaye wrote to the Earl of Essex

> Hendel is become so arbitrary a prince, that the Town murmurs, Senesino not being able to submit any longer to his Tyranny threatens to revolt and in conjunction with Cazzona to set up a separate Congregation at Lincolns Inn Fields, which is thought will be sooner full than that for y^{e} Hay Market, tho' Heydegger, who is in great Distress spares no pains to repair y^{e} Loss by getting new Singers of y^{e} first Distinction from Italy (GB-Lbl Add MS 27732, as cited in Chrissochoidos, 2008).[9]

On 2 June, a newspaper report states that Handel had effectively sacked Senesino the previous week, to which the singer had responded the following day with a letter of resignation.[10] Senesino took it upon himself to explain his actions to the audience after the final performance of the season on Saturday, 9 June.

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[7] Some of the music came from earlier works. 'Twelve sources covering twenty years were drawn upon' and 'at least twenty-eight – thirteen airs, fourteen choruses, and the Overture - consist in whole or part of old music' (Dean, 1959, p.230).

[8] Although signed by the scarcely concealed name of Paolo Rolli it is unlikely to have been written by him. See Chapter Three for more details.

[9] Francesca Cuzzoni, soprano, 1696-1778.

[10] *Country Journal or The Craftsman*.

> Signor Senoseni took his Leave of the Audience in a short Speech, acquainting them, as he said, with Regret, 'That he had now perform'd his last Part on that Stage, and was henceforward discharg'd from any Engagement: He thank'd the Nobility for the Great Honours they had done him in an Applause of so many Years, and Assured them, that whenever a Nation to whom he was greatly obliged, should have any further Commands for him he would endeavour to obey them.'[11]

This speech does not have the tenor of an agreement between Senesino and the nobility that has been discussed and settled; it concludes as more of an appeal to them. Indeed, nearly three weeks previously there appeared in *The Weekly Register or Universal Journal* a report that 'As there are to be no Italian Opera's here next Season, several of the most eminent Performers both Vocal and Instrumental, will attend her Royal Highness to Holland.'[12] This gives no indication of the private plotting that must have already been taking place amongst the members of the nobility to form a rival company for the following season. On the other hand, Senesino was making his displeasure with Handel and his desires to set up an alternative company well-known. The new 'congregation' that Delafaye mentioned in his letter had not come to fruition by the end of May, but Handel, aware of Senesino's wishes, attempted to pre-empt the singer's departure by dispensing with his services. Senesino then addressed members of the aristocracy, placing himself at their service for any future venture. This appeal appears to have been successful as, four days later, on 13 June, an announcement in the *Daily Post* asks for 'Subscribers to the Opera in which Signor Senesino and Signora Cuzzoni are to perform' to attend a meeting the following Friday, 15 June.[13] Clearly the members of the nobility who were requested to attend this meeting had been propositioned long before this time, but maybe it was not until now that Senesino (and Cuzzoni) had been formally approached. Where the members of the nobility's intentions become clear is in the oft quoted letter from Lord Delaware to the Duke of Richmond of 16 June in which he stated that a new subscription had been initiated because of the antipathy towards Handel (as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.303).[14] The

[11] *Applebee's Original Weekly-Journal*, 16 June, 1733.
[12] Report for 21 May in 26 May, 1733.
[13] For details of subscriptions, income and expenditure 1732-34 see Milhous & Hume (1978).
[14] Dated incorrectly in Deutsch (1955) as January.

directors are named in this letter and Delaware wrote that they had contracted with Senesino and sent for Cuzzoni, Farinelli and Porpora.[15]

By 23 June, plans for two opera companies for the following season seem to have been well established:

> We hear that Subscriptions are actually in great Forwardness for having 2 different Operas next Winter, one at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, under the Direction of Messrs. Handel and Heydegger, and the other to be at 1 of the Playhouses, under the Management of Directors chosen from among the Subscribers.
> Signor Carastini, Signor Schaltzs, and Signora Durastanti, are engag'd by Mr Handel to come over from Italy to perform in the former, as is likewise Signora Antonina from Portugal: The latter are to have Signor Senesino, and Signora Cuzzoni, 2 Voices that were once the Delight of our Nobility and the Envy of all Europe.[16]

This report states that one or more of the noblemen subscribers will manage the new venture, but over the summer months Senesino obviously established himself in charge of proceedings for the setting up of the company. On 26 July Baron Romney wrote to Lord Leeds in Paris of 'Senesini['s] Passo Tempo (the new name for an opera)' (GB-Lbl Add MS 28051, f.172) and the *General Evening Post* of 9 – 11 October states that Senesino had 'contracted with several Voices abroad to perform with him this Winter at the Play-house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which he has hired for this Season'. The *Daily Advertiser* also reported on 9 October that

> There are to be two Italian Operas this Winter, one at the Hay-market, under the Direction of Mr. Handel; and another at Mr. Rich's Theater in Lincolns-Inn-Fields, under the Direction of Signor Senoseni; and we hear that both will open about the middle of next Month, great Preparations of fine Cloaths and Scenes having been made in order thereto.

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[15] Directors are listed as follows: 'D. of Bedford, Lds. Bathurst, Burlington, Cowper, Limmerick, Stair, Lovel, Cadogan, DeLawarr, & D. of Rutland. Sir John Buckworth. Henry Furnese Esq. Sr Micl. Newton' (West Sussex Record Office. Goodwood MS 103, ff.173-75, as cited in McGeary, 1998, p.157).
The influence of the female members of the nobility on and during the life of the rival company would be worth further investigation. Cervantes (1972, p.352) points out that 12 of the 13 dedicates of the 19 operatic works staged by the 'Opera of the Nobility' are women.
Farinelli was an Italian mezzo soprano castrato born Carlo Broschi 1705-1782.

[16] *Read's Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, 23 June, 1733.
Giovanni Carestini c.1704-c.1760, Carlo Scalzi fl.1718-39, Margherita Durastanti fl.1700-34. There are no details of Signora Antonina.

Senesino's prominence is borne out by a letter in *The London Journal* on 24 November which is entitled 'S-----o's *Letter of Thanks to the Inhabitants of the City of* Westminster.' In this he offers his thanks not only for having been invited to sing but also for 'your Readiness to concur with me upon all Occasions, where the TRADE and WELFARE of *Opera's* were concerned'.

All of Handel's singers, with the exception of the soprano Strada, deserted him over the summer.[17] Thus the new company comprised the defectors Senesino, the soprano Hempson, the contralto Bertolli and the bass Montagnana, joined by the soprano Segatti who was later replaced by the returning Cuzzoni, another of Handel's defectors.[18] Handel assembled a new line-up of singers around Strada of the soprano castratos Carestini and Scalzi, the alto/mezzo-soprano Negri sisters, the mezzo-soprano Durastanti and the English bass Waltz.[19]

At the beginning of the new enterprise, clearly Senesino was the new company's figurehead, engaging the singers, hiring the venue and making arrangements for the company.[20] The *Daily Post Boy* of 31 December reported that the Royal Family had attended the first performance of Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo* by 'Senesino's Company' and the Colman Opera Register (1712 to April 1734, ff.31v – 32r) for the 1733/34 season refers to the two companies as 'Haymarket. Handells House' and 'Operas Lincolns Inn Fields. Senesino's House'. The new company is not identified by the name by which it is now known – the 'Opera of the Nobility'. The only contemporaneous mention of such a title is in a private letter from the company's chief poet, Paolo Rolli to his friend, Antonio Cocchi in Florence, where he wrote that 'l'Opera de' Signori' would begin on the following Saturday (29 December) with one of his dramas, *Arianna in Naxo* (26 December, 1733, as cited in Lindgren, 1991, p.155). In a similar vein are the word books for the first season at Lincoln's Inn Fields which are printed with either 'for the English [or British] Nobility' or its Italian

[17] Anna Maria Strada del Pò fl.1719-41.
[18] Celeste Hempson, née Gismondi ?-1735, Francesca Bertolli ?-1767, Antonio Montagnana fl.1730-50, Maria Segatti ?-?.
[19] Maria Caterina Negri, contralto fl.1719-45, Maria Rosa Negri, mezzo-soprano ?-1760, Gustavus Waltz fl.1732-59. (Although Waltz was of German birth the only details of his career are from London where he sang in numerous English theatre pieces as well as Handel oratorios). Carestini was later to sing as an alto castrato.
[20] This is not without precedent. From 1708-1717 the Italian castrato Nicolini was to be paid 'for a fair Score with the words & parts of an Opera to be by him fitted for the English stage every Season, if such Opera's shall be approved of.' (Milhous & Hume, 1982, p.120).

equivalent, 'per la Nobilità Britannica'.[21] There is a reference to the 'Opera-house of the Rebels' undertaken by the 'Noblesse' in a dispatch from the Prussian Minister in London to King Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia on 1 January, 1734 (as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.341). However, this same dispatch reinforced Senesino's prominence by stating that 'The premier singer, *Senesino*, is stamped on the *Piquet* of the subscribers' with the motto *Nec pluribus impar*.[22]

At the end of the first season, a letter from Thomas Bowen to the Earl of Essex on 8 July, 1734 says that 'they say Hendell has lost £3000 and Senesino £1500 by the Season' (GB-Lbl Add MS 27,738, as cited in Taylor, 1991, p.205). For the second season, the rival opera company was no longer referred to as belonging to Senesino. Perhaps financial considerations prompted Senesino to take a step back from the responsibility of managerial duties. A report from 11 – 13 July mentions that there will be two opera companies next year; one will be at the Haymarket and the other, under Handel's direction, will be in Covent Garden. Senesino was merely listed as one of the singers.[23] 'Noblemen Subscribers' now appeared to be in charge as it is they that were reported to have taken the Haymarket for the following season and also to have contracted with Farinelli to sing there. [24]
There is also a report that the King was to give his annual bounty to the 'Noblemen Subscribers' at the Haymarket.[25] On 9 November, the *Ipswich Gazette* referred to the 'Opera of the Nobility' as 'the Opera House in the Haymarket', but subscriptions and expenses relating to Covent Garden were ascribed to 'Mr. Handell' (as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.374). In the absence of a principal composer to set up and manage the rival company before the season began it had been expedient to allow Senesino to do so. As Porpora settled into the company perhaps it was no longer appropriate for one of the singers to appear to be managing affairs. By the time of Farinelli's arrival in England, for the second season, Charles Burney (1726 – 1814) says that it was Lord Cowper, listed as one of the original directors in Lord Delaware's letter, who was the 'principal manager of the opera under Porpora' (Burney, 1789, p.790). Thereafter there is no mention of 'Senesino's

[21] There is no extant wordbook for only one opera, *Belmira*.
[22] Literally 'not unequal to many'.
[23] *London Evening Post*, 11-13 July.
[24] *London Evening Post,* 10-12 October and 12-15 October.
[25] *London Evening Post,* 17-19 October.

company', and other references to this company's productions are hereafter identified by title or venue.

Nicola Antonio Porpora (1686 – 1768)

It was into an environment of development, competition and fierce rivalry that Nicola Porpora arrived in 1733. Porpora seemingly spent much of his life embroiled in rivalry with fellow composers, continually trying to impress and win posts to provide himself with a living. Born in Naples on 19 August, 1686 to a bookseller, Porpora was a pupil at the Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo from at least 1696. It is as early as this that the first seeds of rivalry were sown with a fellow Neapolitan, Leonardo Vinci (1690 – 1730), that would provide the important operatic venues of Italy with one of the greatest rivalries of the 1720s into 1730. Vinci was a pupil at the Conservatorio at the same time as Porpora and, according to Burney (1789), had run away from there after the two boys had quarrelled.

On 4 November, 1708, Porpora's first opera, *L'Agrippina,* was performed at the Royal Palace in Naples, described in the *Avvisi di Napoli* as 'a most noble opera' (as cited in Walker, 1951, p.30). It was repeated on 10 November at the Teatro San Bartolomeo. In 1711 Porpora is named in the libretto of his second opera, *Flavio Anicio Olibrio,* as *Maestro di Cappella* to the Prince of Darmstadt, but by 1713 he is calling himself *Maestro di Cappella* to the Portuguese Ambassador in the libretto of *Basilio Imperatore di Oriente*.[26] Prince Philipp, Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, was commanding general of the army of the Kingdom of Naples between 1709 and 1713 which is when Porpora's initial employment with him ended. Philipp was then appointed Governor of Mantua (1714 – 35) and was patron to a good many composers including Albinoni, Orlandini, Pollarolo and Vivaldi in a lively musical environment flourishing there.[27] Porpora's post with the Portuguese Ambassador appears to have been short-lived as he had two operas performed in Vienna, both on 1 October, the Austrian Emperor's birthday, in 1714 and 1718, which was probably

[26] *Flavio Anicio Olibrio*: Naples, Carnival 1711. *Basilio Imperatore di Oriente*: Naples, June 1713.
[27] Tomaso Giovanni Albinoni 1671-1750/51, Giuseppe Maria Orlandini 1676-1760, Carlo Francesco Pollarolo 1653-1723, Antonio Vivaldi 1678-1741.

due to Philipp's influence.[28] Porpora remained in favour with the Viennese court at this time as a third opera, *Faramondo*, was performed in Venice on 19 November, 1719, which was the Empress's name-day. Having returned to the Prince's service, Porpora was named as his *Maestro di Cappella* or *Virtuoso* on the librettos of six operas between 1719 and 1725.[29] How much right Porpora had to the title he was claiming to hold is debatable as he also held the post of *Maestro* of the Neapolitan Conservatorio di Sant'Onofrio from July 1715 to 1722 and none of his operas is known to have been performed in Mantua. Vivaldi was also claiming to be the Prince's *Maestro di Cappella* on his librettos during the same period and his claim has more veracity as he had at least three operas performed in Mantua. This is perhaps the first appearance of the type of professional rivalry that was to follow Porpora throughout his life.

It was during his time at the Conservatorio di Sant'Onofrio that Porpora began to establish his reputation as one of the foremost singing teachers of his time. The British Library holds a copy of 'Porpora's Elements of Singing' (GB-Lbl H.2245.(2.).) which is a set of *solfeggi*, published, in 1858 showing the high regard in which Porpora's methods were held, not only in his own lifetime, but also throughout the following century. His pupil, Domenico Corri (1746 – 1825), in his own guide to singing, (c.1810, p.8) draws attention to Porpora's emphasis on producing 'a free and clear tone' through impeccable technique. Corri (p.34) also states that

> Solfeggio should not be attempted until the Scholar has attained correct and perfect Intonation, if an Interval cannot be executed with precision by uttering the letter A, (as advised by the celebrated Professor Porpora) no greater assistance will be derived from sounding the syllables Do and Re to Mi and so on, to any other intervals.

Among Porpora's pupils were some of the most renowned castratos of the day – Porporino, taking his name from his teacher, Caffarelli, Salimbeni and, the most famous of all, Farinelli.[30] Porpora's serenata *Angelica* had its first performance in Naples 1720, again for the Austrian Emperor's birthday, which was not only Farinelli's first public appearance, but

[28] *Arianna e Teseo* 1714, *Temistocle* 1718. Hesse-Darmstadt had allied itself with the House of Habsburg which ruled Austria.
[29] *Faramondo* 1719, *Eumene* 1721*, Flavio Anicio Olibrio* (revised) 1722, *Adelaide* 1723, *Amare per regnare* 1723, *Didone abbandonata* 1725.
[30] Antonio Uberti, detto Porporino 1697?-1783, Gaetano Majorano, detto Caffarelli 1710-1783, Felice Salimbeni 1712-1752.

also Pietro Metastasio's (1698 – 1792) first text set to music.[31] A second serenata, *Gli orti esperidi*, also by Metastasio and starring Farinelli, was performed on the Empress's birthday in 1721. This combination of composer, poet and singer, alongside Alessandro Scarlatti's (1660 – 1725) departure from Naples in 1719, was no doubt helpful in establishing Porpora's reputation. He also began to enjoy success in Rome; between 1721 and 1723 Porpora's operas replaced those of Francesco Gasparini (1661 – 1727) and his opera *Eumene,* presented in Rome in Carnival, 1721, was judged 'superior' to Scarlatti's *La Griselda* (*Avvisi di Napoli*, 18 February, 1721, as cited in Markstrom, 2007, p.66).

Between 1722 and 1724 Porpora had four operas premièred at theatres in Rome and Naples, three of which featured Farinelli.[32] Having resigned from the Conservatorio di Sant'Onofrio he then travelled to Germany and Austria but this produced just one production of *Damiro e Pitia* in Munich in 1724. The visit to Vienna the following year was not a success as apparently he was 'too lavish with trills and vocal ornaments for the taste of the Emperor' (Walker, 1951, p.40). It was around this time that another rivalry was to form, that between Porpora and Johann Adolf Hasse (1699 – 1783). When the German composer arrived in Naples he briefly studied with Porpora but quickly deserted him for Alessandro Scarlatti. Fétis (1867, p.98) writes that 'il en résulta entre eux une haine qui ne fit que s'accroitre avec le temps.'[33] Although this may be an extreme interpretation of the situation, Porpora must surely have taken Hasse's defection as a snub.

In the season of 1725/26 Porpora and Vinci first came up against each other in the same city. Between 1719 and 1724 Vinci had presented his operas in his home city of Naples, with his first production away from here, *Farnace,* in Rome, 1724. Porpora perhaps was not unduly concerned with this as he had already established a name for himself in Rome three years previously in 1721. However in the 1725/26 season both composers were to have Metastasian works premièred in Venice; Porpora's *Siface* in December 1725 at the Teatro S Giovanni Grisostomo and Vinci's *Siroe re di Persia* at the same theatre soon after in Carnival. Although Metastasio (1832, originally written in 1723) writes in his preface to *Siface* that this text was meant for Porpora it had already been set by Francesco Feo (1691 –

[31] Metastasio was an Italian poet who became renowned chiefly for his 28 opera seria librettos. His texts have been set by over 400 composers. There are commonly between 25-50 settings of his librettos with *Artaserse* and *Alessandro nell'Indie* having about 90 each (Feldman, 2010, p.232).

[32] *Flavio Anicio Olibrio* (revised): Rome 1722, *Adelaide*: Rome 1723, *Amare per regnare*: Naples 1723 (without Farinelli), *Semiramide regina dell'Assiria*: Naples 1724.

[33] 'It resulted in a hatred between them that only served to increase with time.'

1761) in Naples, 1723. Vinci had the satisfaction of being the first composer to set *Siroe re di Persia* and Quantz told Burney (1775, vol.II, p.186) that 'the latter was most applauded'. This then was the continuation of the rivalry that had apparently sprung up in their youth and the enmity was reportedly so great that each composer came to have his own group of supporters, singers and even coffee houses where they could meet (Marpurg, 1760, vol.I, p.225 as cited in Markstrom, 2007, p.288).

From 1725 until Vinci's death in 1730 the two composers' operas were regularly playing in Venice and Rome, but it would be wrong to suggest that it was only between these two composers that there was rivalry and competition. During these five years both Vinci and Hasse each produced at least one new opera every season in Naples and there were many composers active and producing operas in all three cities such as Leo, Albinoni, Feo, Broschi, Vivaldi, Pollarolo, Porta, Sarro and Porsile, to name but a few.[34] Porpora was certainly not above upstaging somebody else's première and in 1728 gave the first performance of Metastasio's *Ezio* in Venice, pre-empting the 'official' version by Pietro Auletto (1698 – 1771) which the poet himself was supervising in Rome.

1729 saw simultaneous productions of *Semiramide riconosciuta* presented during Carnival with Porpora's in Venice and Vinci's in Rome, which was perhaps an escalation of the rivalry between these two composers. Burney (1789) reports that in the following year Vinci set two operas with Metastasio texts, *Alessandro nell'Indie* and *Artaserse,* in Rome, when one of them was meant for Porpora. He further suggests that Vinci offered to set both the operas for the price of one 'to gratify his enmity to Porpora' (p.916). However Markstrom (2007, p.287) proposes that Vinci may have been motivated as much by his role as impresario at the Teatro dell Dame and a desire to keep costs low as by any antipathy towards Porpora. Nevertheless, Porpora cannot have been happy to have missed out on setting one of the new Metastasio texts and Torre (2006, p.1) points out that it meant Porpora was sidelined to the less prestigious Teatro Capranica to oversee his *Mitridate* and a revisal of his 1725 *Siface*. Porpora retaliated by presenting his own version of *Alessandro nell'Indie,* reworked as *Poro,* in Turin the following year.

There is also a curious anecdote which Marpurg (1760, vol.I, p.225 as cited in Markstrom, 2007, p.304) recounts of the lengths to which the Vinci/Porpora supporters

[34] Leonardo Leo 1694-1744, Riccardo Broschi 1698-1756, Giovanni Porta c.1675-1755, Domenico Natale Sarro 1679-1744, Giuseppe Porsile 1680-1750.

were allegedly prepared to go to ensure success for 'their' composer. It involved the castrato Gaetano Berenstadt (1687 – 1734) of whom Porpora had reportedly spoken ill. The singer allied himself with Vinci and apparently, at the final rehearsal of Porpora's *Siface,* stole into the theatre and proceeded to blow snuff over the audience, causing universal sneezing and the rehearsal to be abandoned. There is some doubt as to the veracity of this tale but Marpurg writes it in 1760, perhaps close enough to the time of events to suggest some truth at least in the fierce rivalry that existed in the operatic circles of Italy at that time.

While Porpora and Vinci were busy in Rome, Hasse was able to present his *Artaserse* in Venice in 1730. This proved to be popular and Hasse continued to produce operas for Venice until 1758. It was also Hasse's *Artaserse*, originally starring Cuzzoni and Farinelli, which the 'Opera of the Nobility' produced in a pasticcio version in London in 1734, allowing the two singers to reprise their roles (Mandane and Arbace) to great acclaim. Porpora and Hasse both produced operas during the Carnival season in Rome 1732 and Porpora's last production before leaving for England was *Issipile* in Rome during the Carnival of 1733.[35]

By 1726 Porpora had been appointed *Maestro* of the Ospedale degli Incurabili in Venice and held this position for seven or eight years, producing much church music for the female chorus and orchestra (Hansell, 1970). Porpora was seemingly looking for another appointment at this time as a notice in the 'Musicalisches Lexicon' of Johann Gottfried Walther (1732, as cited in Walker, 1951, p.44) says that he was to replace Heinichen (1683 – 1729) as *Kapellmeister* in Dresden. It may well be that Porpora had been considered for a position there but clearly it had come to nothing because Hasse had beaten him to the chief post and started to use the title *Primo maestro di cappella di S.M.Re Augusto di Polonia ed Elettore di Sassoni*. This was first seen on the libretto of Hasse's opera *Dalisa* in May 1730, although whether he had been officially appointed by then is not clear as he did not arrive in Dresden until July 1731. Porpora turned his efforts in March 1733 to attaining a church post, that of *Maestro di Cappella* at St. Mark's in Venice. Again Porpora was thwarted, this time by Antonio Lotti (1666 – 1740) who was eventually awarded the post in 1736. Fortunately for Porpora, after these disappointments he was approached around this time to come to London to join the fledgling 'Opera of the Nobility' company, although even then

[35] 1732: Porpora *Germanico in Germania,* Hasse *Cajo Fabricio*.

he may have been second choice to Hasse.[36] Mainwaring (1760, p.116) writes that on being invited to London, Hasse's first question was to ask if Handel was dead. On being answered in the negative he declined the offer on the grounds that two Saxons in the same place could not both be successful.[37]

Whilst in London, as well as five operas, one oratorio and a serenata Porpora also published 12 cantatas, op.1, in 1735 and a set of six *Sinfonie da camera*, op.2, in 1736, both collections being dedicated to the Prince of Wales. It is possible that Porpora never really settled in London despite the presence of a well-established circle of Italian expatriates around him. There is evidence to suggest that he was offered and accepted a post at the Russian court of St Petersburg in only his second season of 1734/35. Ritzarev (2006) writes that the violinist Pietro Mira was sent to Italy in 1734 to engage musicians to present Italian opera at the court of Anna, Empress of Russia, but negotiations appear to have faltered. 'After unsuccessful attempts to court Nicola Porpora, Mira's mission resulted in an invitation to Francesco Araja (1709 – ?1770), who became the first Italian Kapellmeister at the Russian court' (Ritzarev, 2006, p.39). In 1734 Porpora was in London, but evidently the offer was communicated to him and eventually rewarded because a report in the *British Observator* of 11 February, 1735 announces that from next winter 'Signior Porpora...is engag'd to her Czarian Majesty for the Opera at Petersburg.' Unfortunately it seems that Araja had already been engaged before news of Porpora's acceptance reached Mira. In an undated letter from Count Löwenwolde in Russia to his envoy, Prince Cantemir in London, the Count writes that Araja will not break the contract which has already been signed, fearing it would harm his reputation (as cited in Maikov, 1903, p.36).[38] Löwenwolde adds that 'il n'y a pas eu moyen absolument de se défaire honnêtement de ce monsieur.'[39] He regrets that this means he can no longer consider Porpora and asks the Prince to inform him of this. That Porpora was keen to accept this position and was once again thwarted is suggested in the tone of Löwenwolde's letter as he entreats Cantemir to assure Porpora that he has not forgotten him. Araja evidently does take up the position, describing himself

[36] The first mention of Porpora's name being linked to the 'Opera of the Nobility' company is in the letter of June 1733 written by Lord Delaware mentioned earlier.
[37] How much truth there is in this tale is difficult to know because Mainwaring (1760, p.117) also asserts that Hasse was eventually persuaded to overcome his misgivings and came to London, which he never actually did.
[38] This letter (plus two others) is inserted between letters dated 7 December, 1735 and 24 February, 1736.
[39] 'There is absolutely no way to get rid of this man [Araja] honestly.'

as 'maestro of her Majesty, ruler of all the Russias' on the libretto of his *Lucio Vero*, performed in Venice in 1735 (Robinson & Gargiulo, 2001).

On returning to Italy in 1736 Porpora resumed his post at the Ospedale degli Incurabili in Venice.[40] After two years he then moved to Naples becoming *Maestro* of the Conservatorio di Santa Maria di Loreto from 1739 – 1741. From there he returned again to Venice and became *Maestro* of the Ospedale della Pietà in 1742, changing to the Ospedaletto from 1744 – 1746. During this time Porpora failed to secure another post, that of *Maestro* at the Royal Chapel in Naples, the post eventually going to Giuseppe di Majo (1697 – 1771). Is it telling that Hasse was one of four judges responsible for appointing this position or is it simply that Hasse considered di Majo best suited for the job rather than harbouring antagonism for Porpora (and the other candidates Fago and Durante)?[41] Kandler (1820, p.29) writes of Hasse being asked to compose an oratorio for the Imperial Chapel in Vienna in 1737. Hasse is reported to have asked if the commission could be given instead to Porpora, which scarcely constitutes the actions of a man at loggerheads with the other.

Porpora spent the years 1747 – 1752 in Dresden and enjoyed, for a change, some measure of success over Hasse who was compelled to oversee a performance of Porpora's *Filandra* given there on 18 July, 1747. Millner (1979, p.23) writes that 'this was the first time since Hasse had become *maestro di cappella* [fourteen years ago] that he had produced an opera seria by another composer, and the first time that a prima donna other than Faustina [his wife] had sung.'[42] The situation was exacerbated by it being Porpora's pupil, the considerably younger Regina Mingotti (1722 – 1808), who replaced Faustina as prima donna. The rivalry appears to have resurfaced here as Mingotti later reported to Burney (1773, vol.I, p.155) that Porpora received 100 crowns for teaching her and Hasse contemptuously called it 'Porpora's last stake; the only twig he had to catch at.' An added blow for Hasse however was the appointment of Porpora as *Kapellmeister* in 1748, although this was later offset by the German being made *Ober-Kapellmeister* in 1750.

Porpora was pensioned off in 1752 and he returned to Vienna where he remained for seven years, at one point taking in Joseph Haydn (1732 – 1809) as an assistant, valet and

[40] For details of Porpora's time in London and the opera productions produced by the 'Opera of the Nobility' and Handel's companies see Chapter Two.
[41] Nicola Fago 1677-1745, Francesco Durante 1684-1755.
[42] Faustina Bordoni 1693 or 1700-1781. Italian mezzo-soprano who married Hasse in 1730.

sometime pupil. Haydn (as cited in Webster & Feder, 2003, p.6) wrote that he 'profited immensely from Porpora in singing, composition and Italian.' Porpora returned to Naples in 1758 and remained there for the rest of his life with two short visits to Venice and Vienna, holding a position as *primo maestro straordinario* (extra to the others) at the Conservatorio di Santa Maria di Loreto until 1760 and then again very briefly until 1761.

After his return from England Porpora composed a further 13 operas between 1737 and 1760, bringing his total to 44, alongside several serenatas and pasticcios and a substantial body of sacred vocal music. He composed very little instrumental music, presumably because he was not commissioned to do so and it therefore produced no money. Porpora died a poor man in 1768 although he was still held in sufficient esteem for the musicians of Naples to raise money to pay for his funeral (Walker, 1951, p.60).

There is not a great deal written of Porpora's character and temperament but what there is does not paint a flattering picture. His relationship with Metastasio seems to have been stormy at best, despite their early collaboration. In 1732 Metastasio wrote to the soprano Marianna Benti-Bulgarelli advising her 'never to have anything to do with him' and accusing Porpora of feeling 'no compunction about causing harm to so many and displeasure to all' (21 June, as cited in Walker, 1951, p.45).[43] Although Haydn acknowledged learning from Porpora he admits to having had to endure verbal and even mild physical jibes; 'there was no lack of Ass, Blockhead, Rascal and pokes in the ribs' (as cited in Webster & Feder, 2003, p.6).

Despite being his pupil from an early age Farinelli was reportedly not keen to spend time with Porpora 'owing to his imprudent and unrestrained loquacity' (Sacchi, 1784, as cited in Walker, 1951, p.59). These characteristics are borne out in a letter from Metastasio to Farinelli in February 1753 where the poet says he cannot give Porpora any work for fear he will 'be talking of it, and excite a general curiosity throughout the city' (as cited in Burney, 1796, vol.II, p.50). A month later, again to Farinelli, Metastasio wrote of Porpora 'you know him well enough to be certain that he would not easily listen to reason. His tongue is flippant' (as cited in Burney, vol.II, p.56). Despite his misgivings however, Metastasio did hold Porpora in high regard as in 1759 he wrote of the misery in which the composer lived, saying he was sad 'to see a man of such merit in his profession, reduced to

[43] Italian soprano, Marianna Benti-Bulgarelli 1684?-1734.

an *absolute want of daily bread*' and 'he is of eminence, and a friend' (as cited in Burney, vol.II, p.213).

At regular intervals throughout his long life Porpora was competing for positions and commissions with other composers, most notably with Vinci and then with Hasse. Although he held many important positions in the operatic centres of Italy, Dresden and London he was also passed over for several posts which must have left him frustrated and feeling undervalued. With notable success early on in his career, associating with Metastasio and Farinelli, he must surely have believed that a long and illustrious career was assured. Porpora did enjoy significant success as an opera composer but all too often he was thwarted in his career plans or obliged to assume a subordinate status to another composer who achieved greater renown and distinction than himself.

Opera in London 1733 – 1737

With Porpora's arrival in London in 1733 began a four-season rivalry between the two Italian opera companies. During the three seasons of Porpora's tenure the 'Opera of the Nobility' presented new and revised operas, pasticcios, one oratorio and one serenata – all in Italian. Handel offered the same fare with the addition of his English works, the masque *Acis and Galatea*, oratorios *Deborah, Esther* and *Athalia* and an ode, *Alexander's Feast*.[44] Handel also introduced other new elements into his seasons in an effort to attract a dwindling audience. The following chapter investigates the details of the performances given by both companies in these three seasons, 1733 – 1736.

Porpora left England in 1736 and returned to Venice, probably disillusioned by the response his own works were provoking and the unstable financial conditions in which he was working. Theatre manager John Rich was unable to pay his ground rent in 1737 due to 'Severe Losses by the Opera's etc. carry'd on by Mr Handel and my Self at Covt. Garden Theatre for these three years last past.' (Greater London Record Office, Bedford Estate Papers, E/BER/CG/E8/10/1, as cited in Saint, 1982, p.827). Presumably the same pecuniary problems were being encountered at the Haymarket and during the 1735/36 season it is probable that two calls were made upon the directors of the 'Opera of the Nobility' of £50

[44] Some performances of *Acis and Galatea* included Italian arias.

each (Duke of Bedford receipts, as cited in Hume, 1986, p.358).[45] Thomas Bowen, business manager to the Earl of Essex wrote to his employer in March 1736

> 'Tis Generally thought the Operas will hardly last 'till the next Winter, the Spirit which Supported them seems to flagg very much: And indeed if, it is thought it will the next Session, the Interest of the Funds should be reduced to three per Cent, the Reduction of the present unmeasured way of Expence must follow it, or many people will feel great Uneasiness (GB-Lbl Add MS 27738, ff.186v-187r).

The situation was apparently no better by May, as later observed by theatre manager and writer, Benjamin Victor, who wrote that 'the two operas are, neither of them, in a successful way' (as cited in Dean, 2006, p.280).[46] Senesino and Cuzzoni also left in the summer of 1736 and the 'Opera of the Nobility' only continued for one more season with Giovanni Battista Pescetti (c1704 – 1766) in charge of the music. Handel's health failed in the spring of 1737 and he left for a health-cure at Aix-la-Chapelle but not before he had agreed to return next season to enter into a new collaboration with the directors at the King's Theatre.

[45] Hume says it is impossible to tell whether this relates to 1736 or 1737 because of the confusion surrounding Old Style and New Style dating, but states that 1736 is likelier.

[46] For details of the finances of the 'Opera of the Nobility', in as much as any exist, see Hume (1986) and Milhous & Hume (2005).

CHAPTER TWO: THE SEASONS

1733 – 1734

During the 1733/34 London opera season the 'Opera of the Nobility' gave a total of 53 performances at the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre from Saturday, 29 December 1733 to Saturday, 15 June 1734 while Handel's company played for 61 nights at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, starting earlier on Tuesday, 30 October 1733 and finishing later on Saturday, 6 July 1734. (See Appendix 1 for performances and dates).

Table 1. Type and number of performances at the two London opera theatres, 1733/34[1]

	NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES 1733/34			
	LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS		**HAYMARKET**	
NEW OPERA	*Arianna in Naxo*. Porpora	24	*Arianna in Creta*. Handel	16
	Fernando. Arrigoni	5		
	Enea nel Lazio. Porpora	7		
	TOTAL	**36**	**TOTAL**	**16**
REVISED OPERA	*Astarto*. G.Bononcini	6	*Ottone*. Handel	4
			Sosarme. Handel	3
			Il pastor fido. Handel	13
	TOTAL	**6**	**TOTAL**	**20**
PASTICCIO	*Belmira*	4	*Semiramide*	4
			Cajo Fabricio	4
			Arbace	9
	TOTAL	**4**	**TOTAL**	**17**
NEW ORATORIO	*David e Bersabea*. Porpora	7		
	TOTAL	**7**	**TOTAL**	**0**
REVIVED ORATORIO			*Deborah*. Handel	3
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**3**
NEW SERENATA			*Parnasso in festa*. Handel	4
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**4**
REVISED MASQUE			*Acis and Galatea*. Handel	1
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**1**
	GRAND TOTAL	**53**	**GRAND TOTAL**	**61**

Table 1 shows that throughout this opening season the 'Opera of the Nobility' relied heavily on new productions to attract audiences to the theatre with 43 of the total 53

[1] These figures have been compiled from the newspapers sources as listed in the Bibliography, and also from Scouten (1961), Latreille (1731-39), Hervey (1950)and Egmont (1920 & 1923).

performances being of newly composed works. Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo* accounted for 24 of the new opera performances, his *Enea nel Lazio* another seven, leaving only the remaining five to one other composer – Carlo Arrigoni (1697-1744) with *Fernando*. Of the 17 remaining performances given at Lincoln's Inn Fields during this season, all seven oratorio performances were of Porpora's new production of *David* e *Bersabea*. The other 10 performances were split between the pasticcio, *Belmira,* which was arranged by Porpora, and a revival of Bononcini's *Astarto.*[2] With nearly three-quarters of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' productions being specially composed by Porpora for this season (38 out of 53), it was clear that the new company was expecting the recently arrived Neapolitan composer to deliver an exciting and attractive new style that would entice the opera-going audience away from Handel's rival offerings at the Haymarket.

Handel's approach to this season was demonstrably different as he spread his faith more evenly across new, revised and revived works of his own and also across three pasticcios. Handel only produced one new opera for this season, *Arianna in Creta*, which proved popular and ran for 16 performances. The only other new work for this season was the serenata *Parnasso in festa* which Handel composed for the nuptials of the Princess Royal to the Prince of Orange. The remaining performances at the Haymarket comprised revisions of three of his own operas, *Ottone*, *Sosarme* and, most successfully, *Il Pastor Fido,* which together ran for 20 performances, a revision of his masque *Acis and Galatea* for a single performance and a revival of his oratorio *Deborah* from the previous season for three performances.[3]

The pasticcio *Semiramide* opened the season at the Haymarket, with two others, *Cajo Fabricio* and *Arbace,* following later. This was unusual for Handel as he did not generally include more than one pasticcio in a season. These three pasticcios accounted for 17 performances during the season which means that, as was Porpora at Lincoln's Inn Fields, Handel was wholly responsible for the music of nearly three-quarters of the productions given at the Haymarket during 1733/34 (44 out of 61).

The traditional opera nights were Tuesday and Saturday, although several of these regular nights were omitted, particularly at the beginning of the season. The two opera companies pitted themselves against each other by going head-to-head on 39 of these

[2] Giovanni Bononcini 1670-1747.
[3] See p.17, fn.7 for details of *Deborah*.

Tuesday and Saturdays, each potentially splitting their audience in half. Occasionally other nights also came into play, particularly during the Lenten season (Wednesday, 27 February to Sunday, 7 April) and Holy Week (Monday, 8 April to Saturday, 13 April). The 'Opera of the Nobility' missed only four Tuesdays or Saturdays throughout the season. Two of these were in Holy Week, one at Pentecost and only one appears to be in direct response to what was being produced at the King's Theatre (see below). This is in contrast to the 14 Tuesdays and Saturdays missed by Handel, seemingly for a variety of reasons.

Handel opened the 1733/1734 season on Tuesday, 30 October with *Semiramide,* a pasticcio with music mostly by Vinci but with arias by other composers also.[4] This date was the King's birthday and it was customary for the Royal Family to attend a ball in celebration of the event. However, 30 October was originally intended to be the date for the Princess Royal's wedding. This had to be postponed due to the Prince of Orange's ill-health and the *Daily Post Boy* (31 October) reported that the King consequently postponed the ball until the wedding could take place. This left the evening free for the opera which, in the absence of a ball, the King, Queen, Prince of Wales, Duke and the three eldest Princesses are all reported to have attended.[5] The success of *Semiramide* was short-lived as it lasted only four nights. Lady Bristol pronounced the Haymarket to be a 'dull, empty opera' (letter to her husband, John Hervey, Earl of Bristol, 3 November, 1733, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.336) and the Earl of Egmont (1920) was sufficiently uninterested to leave before the end.[6] The opening pasticcio gave way to a revision of Handel's *Ottone* which, judging by the cast list in the libretto, had been intended for the previous season (Strohm, 1985, p.184).

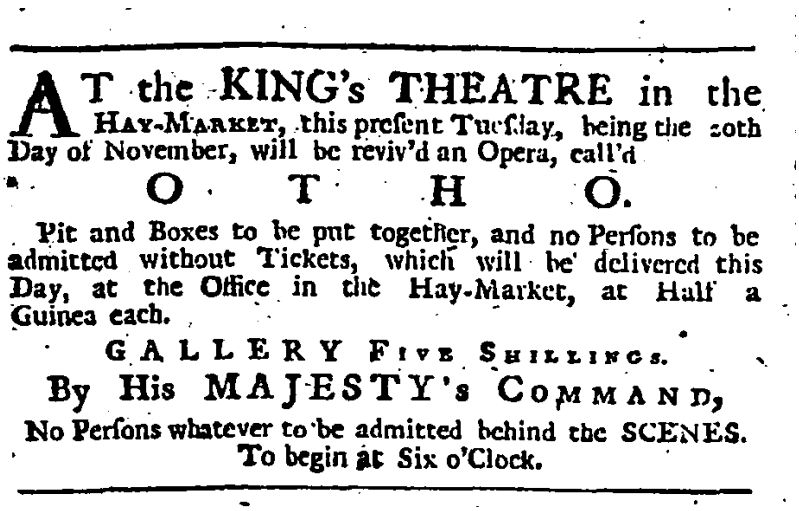
Perhaps Handel wished to show early on that he was able to present his own operas without the need for Senesino, Montagnana, Hempson and Bertolli who had all defected to the rival company. By offering pasticcios at the beginning of his season, Strohm (1985, p.183) suggests that Handel was trying to outsmart Porpora by presenting superior examples of similar work by rival Italian composers. Handel was also playing to the strengths of his new castratos, Carlo Scalzi and Giovanni Carestini who, with Durastanti, the two Negri sisters and Waltz made up Handel's company this season. Scalzi had played the leading role of Mirteo in *Semiramide* in Rome, 1729, although, unfortunately, when the castrato arrived in

[4] *Semiramide riconosciuta*: Rome, February 1729.
[5] *Daily Journal*, 31 October.
[6] John Perceval, 1st Earl of Egmont 1683-1748.

London in October 1733, it transpired that his voice had lowered in pitch so much that his arias had to be transposed down first a tone and then ultimately a major third. *Cajo Fabricio*, so recently performed with great success in Rome (January, 1732), was designed to allow Carestini to dazzle the London audience. Strohm (1985) remarks that Handel may not have considered the third pasticcio of *Arbace* which opened on Saturday, 5 January when he was initially planning the season as he had already used the sinfonia from Vinci's *Artaserse* in his first pasticcio, *Semiramide.*[7] Ultimately the pasticcios may have proved unpopular because the audience did not want to hear Handel in the 'new style'. His stalwart supporters would have wanted what they were used to and liked and patrons hankering after the 'new Italian style' did not want this served up by Handel, but desired a new Italian composer to go with it, Porpora fitting the bill.

All of Handel's 61 productions at the opera house in the Haymarket during this season were advertised in the *Daily Journal* and *Daily Advertiser* with the added imprimatur 'By His Majesty's Command' (Ex.1).[8] The productions at Lincoln's Inn Fields were also regularly advertised in the *Daily Advertiser,* but without the royal directive.

Example 1. *Daily Journal*, 19 November, 1733.



AT the KING's THEATRE in the HAY-MARKET, this preſent Tueſday, being the 20th Day of November, will be reviv'd an Opera, call'd

O T H O.

Pit and Boxes to be put together, and no Perſons to be admitted without Tickets, which will be delivered this Day, at the Office in the Hay-Market, at Half a Guinea each.

GALLERY FIVE SHILLINGS.

By His MAJESTY's COMMAND,

No Perſons whatever to be admitted behind the SCENES.

To begin at Six o'Clock.

[7] The third pasticcio, *Arbace,* is derived from Vinci's *Artaserse*, Rome, February 1730.

[8] Burrows (2004, p.156-7) states that the run of performances designated 'By His Majesty's Command' which runs from 30 September 1733 to 21 May 1735 (where after it is 'By Her Majesty's Command' until the end of this season, as the King has left for Hanover), is unique. Only occasional performances were designated as such in all other seasons. He further states that 'the subject of 'command' performances is one that still needs investigation into the motives and mechanisms of the commands, and the relationship between the advertisements for such performances and actual Royal attendance'. One interesting addition is that two of the advertisements for *Parnasso in festa* performances (19 and 23 March) are NOT designated 'By His Majesty's Command'.

Ottone ran for four nights from Tuesday, 13 to Saturday, 24 November. There were no advertisements between 24 November and 1 December and no performances on the following two opera nights, Tuesday, 27 November and Saturday, 1 December. It may be that Handel had no choice other than to cancel his performances for these dates as they were not commanded by the King in consideration for the ill-health of the Prince of Orange. In the *General Evening Post* of Tuesday, November 27 to Thursday, 29 November it was stated that 'the Royal Family will forbear going to any of the Theatres til his Highness is recovered'. The *Universal Spectator and Weekly Journal* reported on 1 December that 'the Prince of Orange is so well recovered and received the Compliments of the Nobility' and the opera advertisements resumed on this day for a performance of *Cajo Fabricio* on Tuesday, 4 December. It may be that Handel had intended this second pasticcio to be performed on the first empty night of 27 November; there was a curious report in the *Daily Courant* of Wednesday, 28 November that gave the King and Queen, Prince of Wales and three eldest Princesses as having attended the opera the previous evening (Tuesday, 27th). There was no such performance, but interestingly the paper gave '*Frabricius*' as the opera attended. *Cajo Fabricio* was the second pasticcio that Handel offered, with music mostly by Hasse and additional arias by other composers. It opened on Tuesday, 4 December and ran for four performances as did the first two operas of the season at the Haymarket, although not on consecutive opera nights.

The health of the royal family may also have played a part in the next 'missing' opera night performance on Tuesday, 11 December. Again there were no advertisements for this performance and the *Daily Post Boy* reported on 17 December that their Majesties, the Prince of Wales and the three eldest Princesses went to the opera last Saturday (15th) which was the first time since the 'Queen's indisposition'. There is no record from this season of the King attending the opera without the Queen so perhaps the performance was again cancelled due to lack of a royal command and consequent interest from the nobility for such. Charles Burney (1789, p.783) suggests that there was a lack of curiosity in what was being performed at the opera house and Charles Jennens wrote on 13 December that 'Handel has been forc'd to drop his Opera three nights for want of company' (letter to John Ludford, as cited in Dean, 2006, p.133). Even if a royal command was not entirely necessary, perhaps a combination of poor audience numbers combined with the knowledge that there would be no royal attendance at the opera forced Handel to drop some of the performances. By 22

December Handel decided that there would be a break in performances over the Christmas period as the advertisement in the paper for *Cajo Fabricio* on that day reported that it would be 'the last Time of performing till after the Holidays'.[9] For whatever reason, from 27 November to 5 January 1734, Handel gave no opera performance on seven Tuesdays or Saturdays.[10]

Perhaps the anticipation of 'Senesino's new opera company' was what was ultimately proving detrimental to Handel's enterprise as everyone eagerly awaited the debut offering from Porpora and the new rival company. As early as July, 1733 the dowager Duchess of Leeds wrote ' I am at Present in top spirits wth y^{e} certainity of having a very good opera here next winter, in opposition to Handell' (letter to Duke of Leeds, as cited in Cervantes & Geary, 2001, p.607). The *London Evening Post* reported at the end of December that the 'famous Signora Cuzzoni is lately return'd here from Italy, to perform with Signor Senesino', although she did not actually arrive until the April of the following year.[11] A rehearsal on Christmas Eve at the Prince of Wales's house of the rival company's opening opera, Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo,* was reported in the newspaper 'where there was present a great concourse of the Nobility'.[12] The first performance of *Arianna in Naxo* was not given at the beginning of the New Year, as was usual for a première, but on 29 December and was attended by the whole court (dispatch from Prussian Minister in London to King Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia, 1 January, 1734, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.341).

Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo* proved to be a success running for 11 consecutive performances. An additional incentive to attend this opera at Lincoln's Inn Fields came from the ticket prices for this theatre's galleries being cheaper than at the Haymarket. The first gallery cost 4 shillings and the upper gallery 2 shillings and 6 pence compared to the Haymarket's overall gallery price of 5 shillings. Handel had completed his own opera on the subject of Arianna, *Arianna in Creta,* on 5 October, 1733 (Strohm, 1985, p.183) but held off performing it, preferring to try to win audiences with the pasticcios of Vinci and Hasse's works already mentioned and his own operas. Handel now tried a third pasticcio, *Arbace,* again with arias mainly by Vinci. As *Artaserse* this opera had been a great success in Italy with Carestini able to reprise the role of Arbace in this London production. Colman (1712 – 1734,

[9] *Daily Journal*, 22 December.
[10] One being Christmas Day.
[11] *London Evening Post*, 27-29 December.
[12] *Daily Post*, 25 December.

f.31v) noted that *Arbace* 'did not take at all', even though it was marginally more successful than the previous two pasticcios with an initial run of six performances. A satirical report of unknown authorship gives an indication of the perception of Handel's audiences at the time

> A Nobleman going to see the Opera of *Arbaces*, perform'd in the *Hay-Market*, and perceiving not above a Dozen Persons in the House, return'd back to his Company at the Tavern, who were surpriz'd at his short Stay, 'till he told them, *That seeing a select Company met there (as he thought,) on some private Occasion, and not being willing to interrupt Business, he made his Bow, and went away*.[13]

From Saturday, 5 January both opera houses gave performances on Tuesdays and Saturdays for 10 weeks, continuing throughout January and February and on into the beginning of the Lenten season on 27 February, until Saturday 16 March. After the six performances of *Arbace* Handel decided to present his *Arianna in Creta* on Saturday, 26 January. This proved to be Handel's biggest success of the season, running initially for 14 consecutive performances until Tuesday, 12 March, with a further two performances in April (Tuesday, 16th and Saturday, 20th). The Earl of Shaftesbury (1760, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.846) remarked that Handel's 'Houses were generally very thin, till the Opera of Ariadne was exhibited, which gained him several full Houses.' For three consecutive nights on 26 and 29 January and 2 February the two *Ariannas* played opposite each other. Handel may have enjoyed greater success than Porpora with these performances as the rival company then introduced a new opera on 5 February, Arrigoni's *Fernando.*[14] This was no great victory for Handel however, as his own *Arianna* had been premièred on the ninth performance of Porpora's. It was probably perceived that after 11 performances of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' debut production, *Arianna in Naxo*, it had unsurprisingly run its course, at least for the time being.

Arrigoni was in London between 1731 and 1736, his presence coinciding with the existence of the 'Opera of the Nobility'. In the context of this season, with *Arianna in Naxo* achieving 24 performances and *Arianna in Creta* 16, *Fernando* was only a moderate success and performed five times in total. Hill (2013) suggests that Arrigoni's 'relative success as a composer was due to his mastery of fashionable stylistic conventions rather than to the real worth of his music.' Perhaps to bolster support for *Fernando* and

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[13] *England's genius: or, wit triumphant. Being a Collection of several hundred elegant satirical jests*. 1734.
[14] Libretto by Rolli, after Gerolamo Gigli.

encourage dwindling audiences defecting to Handel at the Haymarket, Porpora inserted two more performances of *Arianna in Naxo* and an *Astarto* between the fourth and final fifth performances of *Fernando.* The removal of *Arianna in Naxo* after only another two performances (19 and 23 February) may have been prompted by the appearance of yet another *Ariadne* being presented in London. This entertainment being staged at Covent Garden was advertised as *Bacchus and Ariadne,* 'a new Grand Ballet' with the part of Ariadne being danced by the celebrated French dancer, Mademoiselle Sallé.[15] Initially scheduled for its first performance on Friday, 22 February, this production was deferred until Tuesday, 26 February, one of the regular opera nights.[16] If *Arianna in Naxo* had also played on this night the audience would have had a choice of three *Ariadne/Ariannas* to attend. Indeed this is what happened later in the season (see below), but for now, perhaps Porpora preferred to place his trust in the tried, tested and previously successful production of *Astarto*.

This was Porpora's only offering of a revised opera and he chose Bononcini's most successful Royal Academy opera, probably writing his own recitatives for this production.[17] Perhaps this was chosen as a deliberate provocation to Handel encouraged by the 'Opera of the Nobility's' and also *Astarto's* librettist – Paolo Rolli. It was also the opera in which Senesino had made his London debut which could be seen as another snub to Handel.

The last performance of *Fernando* signalled a new offensive by Porpora and an escalation of the aggressive rivalry manifested in the scheduling and choice of programming by the 'Opera of the Nobility'. Until now opera performances had been given only on Tuesdays and Saturdays. On Thursday, 28 February Porpora inserted an extra performance adding yet another opera night for this week and indicating his willingness to perform on days other than the customary Tuesday and Saturday. During Lent (27 February to 14 April) the 'Opera of the Nobility' missed only two Tuesdays (19 March and 9 April) and instead gave performances on the Wednesday of those weeks. There were also two extra performances on Wednesdays (27 March and 3 April) making three performances (Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday) in those two weeks. The

[15] *Daily Journal*, 22 February. Marie Sallé 1709-1756.
[16] *Daily Journal*, 23 February.
[17] Rome, January 1715. Revised London, November 1720.

programming was clever as in the first of these weeks there were two opera performances of *Belmira* split by the oratorio *David e Bersabea* and in the second, the three performances were all different – *Belmira, David e Bersabea* and *Astarto*. It would seem that Porpora was hoping to draw in the same audience by diversification of productions. In Holy Week (7 – 14 April) Porpora avoided the usual opera nights and performed *David e Bersabea* on the Monday and Wednesday, avoiding Handel's *Deborah* on Tuesday. Neither company gave a performance on Easter Saturday (13 April).

Handel's *Arianna in Creta* played against *Astarto* for three nights in early March (2nd, 5th and 9th) while preparations for the long anticipated royal wedding between the Princess Royal and the Prince of Orange were finally underway for 14 March. Handel was composing his serenata *Parnasso in festa* for this occasion and it was advertised in detail in the *Daily Journal* on 11 March with it being said that 'people have been waiting with Impatience for this Piece, the celebrated Mr Handel having exerted his utmost Skill in it.'[18] The serenata was performed four times and it must have been popular at the time of the wedding as it was advertised that ticket holders who had been unable to use their tickets on Saturday, 16 March would be able to use them the following Tuesday.[19] Perhaps the expectation of a large audience at *Parnasso in festa* was what prompted Porpora to move *David e Bersabea* from the usual Tuesday night to Wednesday for that week. The King also commanded an extra performance of the serenata to be given on a non-opera night, Wednesday, 13 March, which was presumably because the wedding itself was taking place the following day.

Porpora counteracted against Handel's wedding serenata by producing his new oratorio *David e Bersabea* on Tuesday, 12 March, the night before *Parnasso in festa* opened. Between 12 March and 10 April Porpora's oratorio had a respectable run of seven (non-consecutive) performances including two in Holy Week and a benefit for Celeste Hempson on its last performance. It was not to everybody's taste however and Mrs Pendarves pronounced it 'too solemn for a theatre' (letter to Anne Granville, 28 March, 1734, as cited in Walker, 1951, p.49).

After three performances of *David e Bersabea,* Porpora presented the only pasticcio of the season at Lincoln's Inn Fields – *Belmira* - being arranged from Antonio

[18] Music chiefly from *Athalia*, July 1733.
[19] *Daily Journal,* 19 March.

Galeazzi's 1729 *Belmira in Creta*.[20] This did not prove overwhelmingly popular and after its run of four performances was not given again. Porpora may not have initially planned on staging a pasticcio at all as he was hoping to reintroduce *Arianna in Naxo* into the season as soon as Cuzzoni arrived from Italy. On 9 March it was reported that she had set out from Genoa in mid February and was expected in a fortnight in time to perform in the remainder of the season.[21] As she had not arrived after the three performances of *David e Bersabea* Porpora presented *Belmira* on 23 March perhaps hoping that this would run until Cuzzoni's arrival. However, he then had to wait nearly another month until 20 April before she made her debut performance in *Arianna in Naxo.* During that month he split the performances between four each of *Belmira* and *David e Bersabea* and two of *Astarto.* This last *Astarto* must have been a further frustration for Porpora as, in the *London Evening Post* of 16 – 18 April, it was said that Cuzzoni was 'hourly expected'. Having made it as far as the north coast of France, Cuzzoni was taken ill and delayed at Calais and did not arrive in England until 17 April.[22]

Handel returned to opera after *Parnasso in festa* with three more performances of the most popular of the pasticcios, *Arbace*, including one for Durastanti's benefit on Thursday, 28 March. He then gave three performances of his oratorio *Deborah,* leading up to and including Holy Week. With Cuzzoni's arrival in London imminent Handel produced two more performances of *Arianna in Creta* in April (16th and 20th), probably timed to detract from the soprano's eagerly-awaited debut in Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo* on 20 April. Cuzzoni however provided a successful new attraction for *Arianna in Naxo* which managed a further run of seven performances between 20 April and 7 May, including an additional performance on Thursday, 25 April. This extra night was even more remarkable given that the third *Ariadne* (Covent Garden's *Bacchus and Ariadne*) had already played alongside Handel and Porpora's *Ariannas* on the previous Saturday (20 April). Handel withdrew from the contest before the extra Thursday performance, giving only two performances of *Arianna in Creta* before deciding not to present any production at the Haymarket on the Tuesday of that week (23 April).

[20] Venice. No dates for Galeazzi.
[21] *London Journal*, 9 March.
[22] *Daily Post Boy,* 20 April.

Against the success of the second run of *Arianna in Naxo* Handel again turned to his own operas with a revised version of *Sosarme* which had previously been very well received in February 1732 with Senesino in the title role. The opera was shortened and given four new arias but failed to attract the audience away from Lincoln's Inn Fields. It only managed three performances (27 and 30 April and 4 May) and was apparently not expected to be a great attraction. Mrs Pendarves wrote to her sister on the second night that she was attending the opera that evening to see 'Sosarmes, an opera of Mr. Handel's, a charming one, and yet I dare say it will be 'almost empty' (letter to Ann Granville, 30 April, 1734, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.364).

With a new opera being expected by Porpora – *Enea nel Lazio* – Handel produced a single performance of *Acis and Galatea* on 7 May which cannot have attracted a large audience as the Haymarket was then silent the next Saturday and Tuesday (11 and 14 May). As with Porpora's first London opera, *Arianna in Naxo,* Handel thus avoided competing with the Neapolitan's second new opera of the season, *Enea nel Lazio,* on its opening night, Saturday 11 May.

After this short break Handel delivered his final opera of the season which proved to be a success – a revised version of *Il pastor fido* which included choruses from the earlier serenata *Parnasso in festa*, contributing to its popularity.[23] The *Daily Journal* reported after the opening night that *Il pastor fido* had been received with 'greater satisfaction and applause than anything else this year'.[24]

This production ran long after the 'Opera of the Nobility' finished its season on 15 June; after 13 performances *Il pastor fido* closed on Saturday, 6 July. Perhaps Handel did not anticipate being able to sustain attracting large houses because an advertisement on 28 May stated that this day would see the last performance at the opera house until after the holidays.[25] There was no performance on Saturday, 1 June, but after then *Il pastor fido* ran for a further nine performances between 4 June and 6 July. There was no performance at either theatre on Saturday, 1 June, as it was the weekend of Pentecost. To compensate for this omission there was, for this season, a unique Friday evening

[23] First performed 1712 and now revised with many additions including choruses from other works and two new arias.
[24] *Daily Journal*, 20 May.
[25] *Daily Journal*, 27 May.

performance when *Arianna in Naxo* was performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields on the preceding Friday, 31 May.

Handel also avoided Saturday, 15 June and this may have been as a result of the Royal Family's movements. On 17 June the *Daily Journal* reported that the King, Queen, Prince of Wales and Princesses Amelia and Caroline were at Lincoln's Inn Fields on the previous Saturday, the 15th, to see Porpora's *Enea nel Lazio.* That Handel was aware that the Royal Family would be attending the rival opera on that evening is borne out by the newspaper advertisements for *Il pastor fido*. On Friday, 14 June the announcement for the next performance of *Il pastor fido* was changed from Saturday, 15 June to Tuesday, 18 June. The Latreille register (1731-39, f.129v) also reports that this final performance of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' season was by Royal command.

One other anomaly at the end of Handel's season was a performance of *Il pastor fido* on Wednesday, 3 July instead of the usual Tuesday of that week. This was caused by the Prince of Orange's late arrival in London. The *Daily Journal* reported that the opera would be postponed until the Wednesday night when all the Royal Family, including the Prince of Orange, would be present.[26]

Porpora's second new opera of the season, *Enea nel Lazio,* did not enjoy as much success as his first. Six consecutive performances ran between 11 and 28 May before the more popular *Arianna in Naxo* returned for a final four performances. *Enea nel Lazio* then made its final appearance to close the first season for the 'Opera of the Nobility' on Saturday, 15 June.

Milhous and Hume's assertion (2005, p.362) that the 'Opera of the Nobility's' 'inaugural season was evidently not a success' seems a little harsh. Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo* was easily the most successful production of the season with 24 performances compared to Handel's most popular, *Arianna in Creta* with, what would have been in other seasons a triumphant 16. Although nowhere near as successful, Porpora's other new opera of the season, *Enea nel Lazio*, managed a respectable seven performances, as did his new oratorio *David e Bersabea.* Handel's revised *Il pastor fido* was a success with 13 performances and enabled him to continue the season three weeks longer than Porpora. Although the pasticcio *Arbace* managed nine performances none of Handel's

[26] *Daily Journal*, 3 July.

other productions mustered more than four nights and his company was compelled to switch between 10 works during the season compared to the 'Opera of the Nobility's' six. Both companies achieved a measure of success and also disappointment in this first competitive season and it was honours even at the conclusion.

1734 – 1735

The 1734/35 season saw the 'Opera of the Nobility' taking up residence at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket where hitherto Handel had been producing his operas. Although Burney (1789, p.788) suggests that Handel began his season at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields before moving on Wednesday 18 December to John Rich's theatre in Covent Garden, the newspaper advertisements gave the venue as Covent Garden right from the opening performance of *Il pastor fido* on Saturday, 9 November. An announcement in the *London Evening Post* of 10 - 12 October stated that 'Mr Handel has agreed with Mr Rich, to perform Opera's two Days in a Week at Covent-Garden Theatre for the ensuing Season' and well before this, at the end of the previous season, the same newspaper announced Handel's occupancy of the 'new Theatre in Covent-Garden'.[27]

[27] For further details of Handel's move to Covent Garden see Hume (1986), Dean (2006, pp.274-6), Taylor (1991, pp.206-210).
London Evening Post, 11-13 July.

Table 2. Type and number of performances at the two London opera theatres, 1734/35

	NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES 1734/35			
	HAYMARKET		**COVENT GARDEN**	
NEW OPERA	*Polifemo*. Porpora	14	*Ariodante*. Handel	11
	Issipile. Sandoni	4	*Alcina*. Handel	18
	Ifigenia in Aulide. Porpora	5		
	TOTAL	**23**	**TOTAL**	**29**
REVISED OPERA	*Ottone*. Handel	5	*Il pastor fido*. Handel	5
			Arianna in Creta. Handel	5
	TOTAL	**5**	**TOTAL**	**10**
PASTICCIO	*Artaserse*	33	*Oreste*	3
	TOTAL	**33**	**TOTAL**	**3**
REVIVED ORATORIO			*Deborah*. Handel	3
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**3**
REVISED ORATORIO	*David e Bersabea*. Porpora	3	*Esther*. Handel	6
			Athalia. Handel	5
	TOTAL	**3**	**TOTAL**	**11**
	GRAND TOTAL	**64**	**GRAND TOTAL**	**56**

During 1734/35 Handel slightly reduced the total number of performances he presented from 61 in the previous season at the Haymarket, to 56 at his new venue in Covent Garden. (See Table 2 for type and number of performances and Appendix 1 for individual performance dates). Conversely the 'Opera of the Nobility' added another 11 performances to last season's 53, giving a total of 64 performances at the Haymarket. In the first season that the two companies pitted themselves against each other it was Handel who gave an extra eight performances throughout the season. In the second season the difference was still eight performances between the two companies, but this time it was the 'Opera of the Nobility' that gave the higher number of performances. This was largely brought about by an earlier start to this company's season, beginning on Tuesday, 29 October, whereas its previous season did not start until 29 December. Handel began slightly later on Saturday, 9 November, but, as last season, continued on into July (2nd) after the 'Opera of the Nobility' had finished some three and a half weeks earlier on 7 June.

With the arrival of the much-celebrated castrato, Farinelli, who was making his London debut, the 'Opera of the Nobility' gave its most successful production ever with a version of Metastasio's libretto of *Artaserse*. Although advertised as a 'new Opera' it was really a pasticcio of the Hasse opera performed in Venice, 1730, in which both Farinelli and

Cuzzoni had enjoyed great success.[28] It included arias which Dean (2006, p.276) attributes to Porpora and to Farinelli's brother, Riccardo Broschi. Porpora was intimately acquainted with Farinelli's voice and abilities having been his singing teacher in Naples until 1724 (Burney, 1789, p.915) and Farinelli had made his début in Porpora's serenata *Angelica e Medoro* in 1720, aged only 15 (Walker, 1951, p.36). This marked the beginning of the castrato's stellar career and he henceforth made many appearances in Porpora's operas making the composer wholly suited to writing the most ravishing and entrancing arias with which his erstwhile pupil enraptured the London audience.

An overwhelming success, *Artaserse* accounted for over half of all the performances at the Haymarket during the 1734/35 season. Porpora also achieved success with his first new opera of the season, *Polifemo*, which initially ran for 11 performances, beginning on 1 February, and then for another three. His second new opera for this season, *Ifigenia in Aulide,* did not prove as popular, running for five nights in May. As in the first season with Arrigoni's *Fernando*, the 'Opera of the Nobility' presented one new opera by a composer other than Porpora; *Issipile* was premièred on Tuesday, 8 April. This opera was composed by Cuzzoni's husband, Pietro Sandoni (1685-1748) but only managed four performances before being replaced by the ubiquitous *Artaserse*. Porpora's oratorio from the previous season, *David e Bersabea*, was revised for three performances and the remaining production for this season at the Haymarket constituted an audacious gesture as the rival company presented a much revised version of Handel's own *Ottone* (Dean, p.277). Although the number of performances of new works composed by Porpora fell from the first season's 38 to 19 for the second season, he was still very much at the forefront of the company with significant contributions to both *Artaserse* and *Ottone* and the revisal of his own *David e Bersabea*. This left only the one production of *Issipile* over four nights without any significant compositional input from Porpora. He was unable to revive his popular *Arianna in Naxo* from the previous season as it contained no role for Farinelli.

At Covent Garden Handel decided not to repeat the experiment of last season when he presented the three pasticcios by Porpora's rival Italian opera composers, Vinci and Hasse. For this season he relied solely on his own music to entice the audience to his

[28] *London Evening Post*, 24-26 October. Lord Cowper, one of the original directors of the 'Opera of the Nobility' was the dedicatee of *Artaserse,* which he saw in Venice, and was probably instrumental in engaging Farinelli for London. Burney (1789, p.790) identifies Cowper as the company's manager (see Chapter One) and so he probably would have had a hand in the inclusion of this opera in the season.

theatre. Handel did produce one pasticcio, *Oreste*, but this was derived from his own works. New operas especially composed for this season, *Ariodante* and *Alcina*, account for just over half of all the performances - 29 from 56. Handel presented two revised operas, *Arianna in Creta* and *Il pastor fido* which had both run with some success in the previous season, and two revised oratorios, also from earlier seasons, *Esther* and *Athalia.*[29] The remaining performances were a revival of his oratorio *Deborah* which had been partially assembled from earlier works from its inception.[30]

Catherine Edwin wrote to Giuseppe Riva sometime before the start of the second season that Farinelli, Senesino and Cuzzoni would make 'un'opera invidiabile [enviable]' and that 'Porpora sta componendo un nuovo dramma del Rolli intitolato *Il Polifemo* e gareggerà con l'Hendel (qui, come voi ben sapete, molto e forse troppo stimato) e spero che ne riporterà vittoria, come dicono facesse l'altro anno' (as cited in Bertoni, 1927, pp.323-4).[31] This then specifies that Porpora and Handel were in competition and that at least some considered that Porpora had gained the upper hand at the end of the first season. Surely Handel now felt compelled to introduce some major innovations into his works this season to entice the audience. One such was the inclusion of ballet music which can be found in all of his operas, whether new or revised. The admired French dancer and choreographer Marie Sallé had already been engaged as early as July 1734. The same report in the *London Evening Post* of 11 – 13 July that announced Handel's move to Covent Garden also stated that 'Mademoiselle Salle is to dance at the said Opera at Covent Garden'. That the inclusion of ballet was increasingly attractive in the opera productions is illustrated by an anecdote related in Perugini's *A Pageant of the Dance and Ballet,* cited by McCleave (2013, p.73 fn.17 on p.217). The story tells of how Handel, having seen Sallé in Paris, offered her 3000 francs to appear in his operas at Covent Garden. Upon hearing of this, Porpora is reported to have approached her with a bigger offer, which, apparently she turned down.[32] McCleave also

[29] Although much of the music from *Athalia* had been heard in the serenata *Parnasso in festa* in the previous season.
[30] First performance March 1733. See p.17, fn.7 for details of *Deborah*.
[31] 'Porpora is composing a new drama by Rolli entitled Polyphemus and will compete with Handel (who, as you well know, is held in too much esteem here) and I hope that it will bring victory, as they say he did last year'. Rolli refers to Catherine Edwin as the 'soave e amabilissima Siga. Caterina Edwin' in a letter to Riva (29 January, 1735, as cited in Dorris, 1967, p.145) and Dorris also writes that she was reputed to have been the mistress of Frederick, Prince of Wales. Rolli also dedicated the libretto of *Orfeo* (March 1736) to her.
[32] McCleave states that Handel did NOT see Sallé in Paris but in London when Sallé and her brother, Francis, danced as child prodigies in productions in London as early as 1717, including the entr'acte dances of the fifth production of *Rinaldo* in 1717 (pp.8 and 42).

makes the point that it is only for this one season that Handel writes a 'substantial body of dance music', drawing 'heavily on contemporary London theater' (pp.19 and 188), emphasizing that it was a deliberate attempt to introduce and establish this popular and current art form in his operas.

Another innovation Handel initiated this season was the inclusion of organ concertos between the acts of his oratorios. During his 'oratorio season' which he ran from Wednesday, 5 March to Saturday, 12 April, Handel introduced four new organ concertos which he played himself. A newspaper report of 4 March stated that

> Mr. Handel has prepar'd several Oratorio's, which are to be perform'd this Lent, and has made several Additions to that of Esther, in which the Part that Signior Carastini is to perform, is intirely new; as also two Concerto's for the Organ, in which Mr. Handel will perform the Solo Parts. The whole, excepting the Part of Signor Carastini, is to be perform'd in English.[33]

The first oratorio performance was *Esther* on 5 March, which was advertised as having several new additions; the second advertisement for this performance elaborated slightly more, adding that the additions are both vocal and instrumental.[34] After the initial performance it would seem that the organ concertos were well received because future newspaper advertisements for the oratorios specifically mentioned the occurrence of new organ concertos that would be performed.[35] This conclusion is corroborated by Mrs Pendarves in a letter in which she stated that Handel's playing of the organ concertos in Esther was 'the finest things I ever heard' and also by a correspondent to the *Old Whig or The Consistent Protestant* who called the same two concertos 'inimitable' (Mary Pendarves, letter to Dean Swift, 16 May, 1735, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.390).[36]

From the outset Handel did not to go head-to-head with the 'Opera of the Nobility' on two nights a week and one of his performance nights was altered from Tuesday to Wednesday. Covent Garden Theatre was a busy venue, often presenting performances on six nights during a week, and Handel may have been obliged to organise his opera nights around Rich's programming.[37] This resulted in the two opera companies only actually

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[33] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 4 March.
[34] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 3 & 4 March.
[35] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser,* 6 March.
[36] *Old Whig or The Consistent Protestant*, 20 March.
[37] See Cummings (2007, p.13) for further details.

playing on the same nights 17 times during the season compared to 39 times in the previous season. Fifteen of these were Saturday night performances with one Tuesday and one Thursday, both during Holy Week. All of the concurrent performances in the 1733/34 season were on either Tuesdays or Saturdays. It is not known whether the switch of performance day for this second season of rivalry improved audience figures at either theatre. It did mean that for 23 weeks of this 35 and a half week season it was possible to attend either an oratorio or opera performance three times a week. For four weeks during the Lenten period and Holy Week this was increased to four times and for one week at the beginning of March the most ardent opera/oratorio devotee could attend five times. Perhaps Handel was hoping that the audience would attend both rival productions during the week and then return to its preferred choice, hopefully his production at Covent Garden, on the Saturday.

With Farinelli drawing the crowds into the Haymarket, Porpora was able to present *Artaserse* for 12 consecutive Tuesday and Saturday performances at the beginning of the season, from Tuesday, October 29 to Saturday, 7 December. The *London Evening Post* of October 29 – 31 reported that all the Royal Family attended Farinelli's first public London performance which was met with 'prodigious Applause' and that the theatre was 'exceedingly crowded'. Handel opened his season with a revised production of *Il pastor fido* before which he presented the newly-composed Prologue *Terpsicore.* Dean (2006, p.276) describes this as 'a one-act *opéra-ballet* after the French manner.' Although dancing features in all subsequent operas in this season, this 'new Dramatic Entertainment (in Musick)' as it was described in the newspaper advertisements, was not enormously popular and evidently did not encourage Handel to ever repeat the format.[38] After five performances of *Il pastor fido,* Handel performed a revised version of last season's *Arianna in Creta*, beginning on Wednesday, 27 November which ran for five performances.

Handel was surely dismayed by the next offensive from the 'Opera of the Nobility' which presented its own version of Handel's *Ottone* on 10 December. Senesino and Cuzzoni reprised their roles from when the opera was first performed, with a libretto arranged by Nicola Haym (1678 – 1729), under Handel's own direction in 1723. In this new version Farinelli sang his only Handel role, that of Adelberto, but it was considerably enlarged and

[38] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 5 November.

altered from the original so that not one of Handel's original arias remained.[39] *Ottone* managed one more performance (five) at the Haymarket this season than it had under Handel in the previous season and drew in a large crowd, certainly on its opening night, when it was reported that 'the House was fuller than has been known for some Years.'[40] Its last performance, unusually, was on a Monday (23 December) and this was probably because the Tuesday was Christmas Eve. Similarly Handel did not present an opera on his normal Wednesday of this week, it being Christmas Day. The performances of *Ottone* may be why Handel did not present an opera on Saturday, 14 December deciding not to pit a sixth night of *Arianna in Creta* against the intriguing novelty of Farinelli appearing in a Handel opera which was luring in the crowds at the Haymarket. He waited until the following Wednesday (18th) and produced *Oreste,* a new pasticcio from his own works (including three arias from *Ottone*). However this did not prove popular and lasted for only three performances leaving Covent Garden with no production on Wednesday, 1 and Saturday, 4 January, 1735. Although Handel had completed *Ariodante* on 24 October 1734 (Dean, 2006, p.301) and, according to the *London Evening Post* of 2 - 5 November, when he 'waited on their Majesties with his New Opera of *Ariodante,* his Majesty express'd great Satisfaction with the Composition', Handel delayed presenting his new opera until the conventional time period of the New Year. He was perhaps hoping that *Oreste* would run until *Ariodante* was ready which it clearly was not. An advertisement in the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* on Wednesday, 1 January announced that Handel's *Ariodante* 'is now in Rehearsal' and 'will be perform'd some Day next Week.'

Handel presented *Ariodante* 11 times throughout January and February, ending on Monday, 3 March. However, it was only during its first two weeks that two performances of this opera were given each week, and thereafter this was reduced to one performance a week for the next six weeks. Handel presumably was suffering from poor audiences when the two companies were playing on the same nights and consequently decided to omit Saturday performances for the next five weeks when the 'Opera of the Nobility' was playing. It did not help that Sallé was injured sometime around the end of January and was unable to

[39] Of the seven arias for Adelberto, five were from other Handel operas and two have not as yet been identified (Dean & Knapp p.441).
[40] *St James's Evening Post*, 10-12 December.

dance until at least the second week in February, possibly not until after 13 March.[41] On Friday, 24 January there was an advertisement in the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* for a performance of *Artaserse* on the following day, Saturday, January 25. The same paper carried an advertisement for *Ariodante* which was not to take place until the following Wednesday, 29th. The situation for Handel cannot have been ameliorated by a variety of entertainments and gatherings held on his remaining opera night. On Wednesday, 5 February the Spanish Ambassador gave an Assembly which 'was as numerous as before, most of the Persons of Quality in Town being present' with 'Musick in which Signor Farinelli sang'.[42] The following week on Wednesday, 12th the Ambassador gave a grand ball at his home where 'the Concourse of Nobility....was greater than ever'.[43] The timing of these events cannot be coincidental as the Spanish Ambassador had shown his support for the 'Opera of the Nobility' from the outset. Rolli dedicated his first libretto for the company, *Arianna in Naxo,* to the wife of the Ambassador and his ticket was used for five of the six nights of this inaugural production for which there are box office reports (Milhous & Hume, 1978, p.257).

Opera performances were not given on Wednesdays or Fridays during Lent so Handel moved his performance night from Wednesday, 19 to Thursday, 20 February for that week and again from Wednesday 26 to Monday, 24 February the following week. Neither theatre gave a performance on Saturday, 1 March, this being the Queen's birthday when all the Royal Family was attending a celebratory ball.[44] After *Ottone,* Porpora returned to *Artaserse* for another 10 consecutive performances from Saturday, 28 December to Tuesday, 28 January. He then presented his first new opera of the season, *Polifemo,* which was Porpora's second most successful London opera after *Arianna in Naxo*. The initial run for *Polifemo* was relatively popular with eight consecutive performances throughout February, followed by another three in March, separated only by one performance of his oratorio *David e Bersabea* on Friday, 28 February (see below). The *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* reported on Monday 3, February that the première of *Polifemo* (Saturday, 1st) had attracted 'one of the greatest Audiences that hath been known this Season'. Although

[41] Notice in the *Bee*, 7 February with no further notices advertising Sallé's performances anywhere until 13 March.
[42] *General Evening Post*, February 6-8.
[43] *London Evening Post*, February 13-15.
[44] *General Evening Post*, March 1-4.

advertised in the *Daily Post Boy* on Saturday, 1 March there was no performance of *Polifemo* that evening due to its being the Queen's birthday. So as not to drop one of his bi-weekly performances Porpora presented a revisal of his oratorio from the previous season, *David e Bersabea,* with a part rewritten for Farinelli, on Friday, 28 February. The decision to perform an oratorio, the first of the season, on the Friday evening may also have been a pre-emptive strike against Handel's *Esther* which was presented for the first time this season the following Wednesday (5 March). After the one performance of *David e Bersabea Polifemo* was reinstated. Perhaps the oratorio had not been enthusiastically received because it was presented only twice more when it was necessary to avoid opera during Holy Week (Tuesday, 1 and Thursday, 3 April).

After three more performances of *Polifemo*, a benefit performance for Farinelli saw the return of *Artaserse* at the Haymarket on Saturday, 15 March which proved to be a mighty triumph, the adulation for the castrato being at its peak in London at this time. A correspondent in the *Prompter* wrote on Friday, 14 March that 'Farinelli is unquestionably the greatest Performer, in the Vocal Way, of the Age' and another predicted that 2000 people were expected at his benefit.[45] After the performance the newspapers reported of 'a very numerous and gay Appearance on Saturday Night at Signior Farinello's Benefit, the Pit was full soon after 4 o'Clock'.[46] It was also reported that 'many of the Songs in the Opera were new' which perhaps persuaded such high numbers to visit an opera which had already had a run of 21 performances in the current season.[47] The success of this performance prompted Porpora to capitalize on *Artaserse's* rejuvenation with a further two performances before reintroducing *Polifemo* on Tuesday, 25 and Saturday, 29 March during the approach to Holy Week.

Against the extraordinary response that Farinelli was eliciting at the Haymarket Handel launched an 'oratorio season', beginning in Lent on Wednesday, 5 March and continuing after Holy Week until Saturday, 12 April. Handel's apparent decision to avoid playing on the same weekday night as Porpora meant that he was unable to present an opera on his chosen day of Wednesday, this being prohibited during Lent.[48] It therefore

[45] *Weekly Evening Post,* March 11-13.
[46] *General Evening Post*, 15 March.
[47] Ibid.
[48] All theatrical productions other than sacred performances were prohibited on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent in the City of Westminster.

made sense to offer oratorios on the two nights, Wednesdays and Fridays, when he could be reasonably confident there would no competition from the other company still presenting operas on Tuesdays and Saturdays. For four weeks then, Handel consistently presented two oratorios each week, followed by an astonishing four performances on consecutive nights, Monday to Thursday, in Holy Week and a return to Wednesday and Saturday for the final two oratorio performances (9 and 12 April). Perhaps a poor showing for the opening night of Sandoni's *Issipile* at the Haymarket on Tuesday, 8 April encouraged Handel to move back to the Saturday night for his final performance of *Athalia*, in direct competition once again with the 'Opera of the Nobility'.

Six performances of a revised *Esther* were followed by three of a *Deborah* revival and five of an *Athalia* revisal. In all of these performances Handel himself played new organ concertos between the acts. In *Athalia* he even introduced Italian arias into an otherwise English text, perhaps hoping that his Italian castrato performing in an English oratorio would tempt the audience. This may have given a temporary fillip to audience figures as *Athalia* was initially given on three consecutive nights of the week in Holy Week (Tuesday, 1, Wednesday, 2 and Thursday, 3 April). Remarks in the *Old Whig or The Consistent Protestant* of 20 March however suggest that none of his strategies was particularly effective. A correspondent wrote that Handel 'has this Winter sometimes performed to an almost empty Pitt', the reason being that 'so strong is the Disgust taken against him, that even this [his playing of his new organ concertos] has been far from bringing him crowded Audiences'.

After Holy Week the 'Opera of the Nobility' presented its second new opera of the season, Sandoni's *Issipile*. After a modest four performances *Artaserse* returned yet again for two nights, perhaps filling in the time until Porpora's second opera, *Ifigenia in Aulide* was ready. Handel's second new opera of the season, *Alcina,* was premièred after three performances of *Issipile.* On the following Saturday (19 April), when these two operas went head-to-head for the first time, presumably it was *Alcina* that proved the bigger draw as *Issipile* was immediately changed for *Artaserse* at the next performance and was not seen again. *Ifigenia in Aulide* was premièred on Saturday, 3 May, but, like *Issipile,* did not prove overwhelmingly popular with only five performances. The Earl of Egmont (1923, p.174) wrote in his diary that he went to the opera on 6 May to see '*Iphigenia,* composed by Porpora, and I think the town does not justice in condemning it.' The 'Opera of the Nobility' turned again to *Artaserse* on 17 May before a final performance of *Ifigenia in Aulide* on 20

May. This opera was then finally abandoned and the stalwart *Artaserse* was re-presented for a final four performances from Friday, 23 May to Tuesday, 3 June. Saturday, 24 May was avoided by both companies as it was Pentecost, which is why the Haymarket played on the Friday of that week. The 'Opera of the Nobility's' season ended with a final performance of *Polifemo* on Saturday, 7 June.

Handel's final work in this season was his most popular in terms of number of performances given. His new opera *Alcina* ran for 18 performances between Wednesday, 16 April and Wednesday, 2 July. For the first five weeks he was able to give twice-weekly performances, drawing in larger audiences perhaps than the Haymarket which ran three different works in this time (*Issipile, Artaserse* and *Ifigenia in Aulide*). For the remaining seven weeks of the season at Covent Garden *Alcina* was performed only once a week for every week (five Wednesdays and one Thursday) except for the penultimate when it was given twice (Wednesday, 25 and Saturday, 28 June). Perhaps the unusual Thursday performance was because of the Wednesday of that week (11 June) being the anniversary of the King's succession to the throne and the Royal Family were attending celebrations for this.

Handel's scheduling appears erratic compared to Porpora's and would suggest that he was reacting to what was happening at the Haymarket. Throughout its entire 32 week season the 'Opera of the Nobility' presented two productions consistently every week. On only four occasions did this deviate from the normal Tuesday and Saturday nights. These departures from the usual days were for specific reasons, not prompted by the programming at the rival theatre: Christmas Eve, the Queen's birthday, Holy Week and Pentecost. By contrast, Handel only presented productions twice a week for half of his season (17 weeks). Of the remaining weeks, 15 contained only one performance, there was one week containing three and one containing four performances and even one week when there were no Handel performances at all at Covent Garden. It appears that with *Alcina* Handel enjoyed more success than with any other production in the season; Lord Shaftesbury (as cited in Dean, 1987, p.327) remarked that *Alcina* 'gave some turn in his [Handel's] favour, and a little recovered his losses' and Burney (1789, p.793) makes reference to a newspaper report that said *Alcina* was met with 'great applause'. It nevertheless remained the case that although the 'Opera of the Nobility' ceased performing after Saturday, 7 June, Handel was still only able to give two productions in the week for one of the remaining four weeks

of his season, suggesting that Handel struggled to fill the theatre throughout most of this season. That he had been expecting to give the customary two performances each week, even at the busy Covent Garden theatre, has already been shown in the newspaper announcement given the previous October (see p.44 above). Long before the end of his season, Handel seemed to have lost his appetite for all opera productions for the following season. The *General Evening Post* of 20 May reported that 'Mr Handel goes to spend the Summer in Germany, but comes back against Winter, and is to have Concerts of Musick next Season, but no Opera's.'

1735 – 1736

The number of performances by the 'Opera of the Nobility's' company in its third season reverted to a similar figure to that of its opening season.

YEAR	NUMBER of PERFORMANCES
1733/34	53
1734/35	64
1735/36	56

Confident after Farinelli's triumphant debut in October 1734 which contributed substantially to well-attended performances, Porpora and the 'Opera of the Nobility' company were surely in buoyant mood in the autumn of 1735. This was however to be Porpora's final season as he was to suffer his own works being sidelined in favour of others. In 1733/34, as has been shown, it was probably only the one new opera, *Fernando*, running for just five nights, in which he had little or no compositional input. In the following season of 1734/35, it was again only in one new opera production, four performances of *Issipile,* that his involvement in terms of writing or arranging the music was minimal. In this third season of 1735/36 it was Francesco Maria Veracini's *Adriano in Siria* which was the biggest success, running for 20 performances.[49] (See Table 3 for type and number of performances and Appendix 1 for individual performance dates).

[49] Francesco Maria Veracini 1690-1768.

Table 3. Type and number of performances at the two London opera theatres, 1735/36

	NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES 1735/36			
	HAYMARKET		**COVENT GARDEN**	
NEW OPERA	*Adriano in Siria*. Veracini	20	*Atalanta*. Handel	8
	Mitridate. Porpora	4		
	Onorio. Ciampi[50]	1		
	TOTAL	**25**	**TOTAL**	**8**
REVISED OPERA	*Polifemo*. Porpora	3	*Ariodante*. Handel	2
	TOTAL	**3**	**TOTAL**	**2**
NEW PASTICCIO	*Orfeo*	15		
	TOTAL	**15**	**TOTAL**	**0**
REVISED PASTICCIO	*Artaserse*	9		
	TOTAL	**9**	**TOTAL**	**0**
NEW ODE			*Alexander's Feast*. Handel	5
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**5**
NEW SERENATA	*Festa d'Imeneo*. Porpora	4		
	TOTAL	**4**	**TOTAL**	**0**
REVISED MASQUE			*Acis and Galatea*. Handel	2
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**2**
REVIVED ORATORIO			*Esther*. Handel	2
	TOTAL	**0**	**TOTAL**	**2**
	GRAND TOTAL	**56**	**GRAND TOTAL**	**19**

Porpora's only new opera of the season, *Mitridate*, did not fare nearly as well as *Adriano in Siria* with only four performances which is the same number as his only other new work of the season, the serenata *Festa d'Imeneo*. Instead of being responsible for the composition and arrangement of the majority of works as in the first two seasons, Porpora gave way to other composers' newly-composed works for 21 of the 57 performances this season.[51] What must also have been provoking for Porpora was that the second most successful production of the season was a pasticcio containing arias not only by himself, but also by Vinci, Araja and Hasse; *Orfeo* ran for 15 performances, with another pasticcio, the ever-popular *Artaserse* from last season, running for nine. Porpora's two new works between them only accounted for eight of the performances this season, and a revisal of *Polifemo* a scant three. This surely was a disappointment for Porpora and it is perhaps

[50] Francesco Ciampi (c.1690 – after 1764)
[51] Twenty of Veracini's *Adriano in Siria* and one of Ciampi's *Onorio*.

unsurprising that he returned to Italy in the summer of 1736, leaving the 'Opera of the Nobility' to continue in its final season without him.

Having been reported to be giving no opera productions at Covent Garden for this coming season as early as May 1735 (see previous section), there is evidently some confusion as to what Handel was intending to produce during 1735/36. A report at the beginning of September announced that 'Mr. Handel is to have Operas this Winter at Lincoln's-Inn Fields', followed by another report in October that stated 'We hear Mr. Handell will perform Oratorios, and have Concerts of Musick, this Winter, at Covent-Garden Theatre.'[52] In any case, Handel held off performing anything until Thursday, 19 February, opening his season with the ode of *Alexander's Feast.* Five performances of this were followed by two of his masque *Acis and Galatea* and then two of his oratorio *Esther*. It is not until 5 May that Handel presented his first opera of the season, and that was a revisal of last year's *Ariodante*. His final offering was his only new opera of 1735/36, *Atalanta*, which ran for eight performances, finishing the season at Covent Garden on Saturday, 12 June. In total Handel only gave 19 performances this season. A major consideration during the planning may have been the departure of Carestini who had returned to Italy the previous summer. Having lost his other castrato, Scalzi, after the 1733/34 season, Handel may have had no choice but to delay performing Italian opera until he could engage another castrato and present a full company of singers.[53] Another contributing factor for Handel's unwillingness to present anything at Covent Garden was the late start of the Parliamentary session on 1 February which delayed bringing a large number of Handel supporters to the capital (Burrows, 2004, p.158).

As in the two previous seasons the 'Opera of the Nobility' stuck rigidly to its opera nights of Tuesdays and Saturdays, only deviating from these because of religious festivals, Farinelli's ill-health and the Prince of Wales's wedding. Unlike in the previous seasons, on only one occasion was a performance given at the Haymarket on an alternative day of the week if the normal night had to be missed.[54] For 11 weeks of Handel's short 16 week season

[52] *General Evening Post*, 6-9 September and 14-16 October

[53] Carestini's departure is sufficiently important to have been reported in the newspapers. *Old Whig or The Consistent Protestant*, 17 July.

[54] Although there were 12 instances of a 'missed' Tuesday or Saturday, seven of these were probably due to Farinelli's ill-health making a substitution impossible.

he presented only one performance each week. The remaining five weeks had two performances except for one which had no performances at all.

A revisal of Porpora's *Polifemo* opened the season at the Haymarket on Tuesday, 28 October and was well received 'with great Applause by a numerous Audience.'[55] Shortly before the first performance, the *St James's Evening Post* reported that 'a fine Singer is arrived here from Venice, in order to perform this Season in the Operas at the Hay-Market.... and Mr Porpora has composed a new Part for her in the celebrated Opera of Polifemo'.[56] The new singer was Santa Tasca, recently arrived from Italy, who took over the role of Calipso from Bertolli.[57] This revisal only lasted for three performances before it was brought to a premature end due to Farinelli being unwell.[58] The King's Theatre was forced to close for three weeks, not opening again until Tuesday, 25 November. An advertisement for the new opera, *Adriano in Siria,* to be performed on Saturday, 22 November appeared on the previous Monday of that week (17th), but presumably Farinelli had not sufficiently recovered until the following Tuesday (25th).[59]

Veracini was known throughout Europe as a celebrated violin virtuoso and had been in London in 1714, playing in several concerts and operas where his technical brilliance was much admired (White, 1972, p.20). When he returned in 1733 he was evidently popular at least as a performer as Burney (1789, p.1003) remarks 'There was no concert now without a solo on the violin by Veracini or Clegg'. *Adriano in Siria* was the first of four operas Veracini set for the King's Theatre in London which constituted his entire operatic oeuvre.[60] The original Metastasio libretto was currently popular in Italy and had already been set six times since 1732.[61] Angelo Maria Cori (fl. London 1735 – 1742) substantially revised the libretto for Veracini (Hill, 1979, p.187) and this new partnership signified a change in the established regime at the 'Opera of the Nobility'. As chief poet until now, Rolli (1926) cannot have been happy with Cori's involvement, believing his amending of librettos for the 'Opera of the

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[55] *General Evening Post*, 28-30 October.
[56] *St James's Evening Post,* 16-18 October.
[57] The only details for this singer are in Sartori (1990-1994) where there are three listings for Santa Tasca, known as La Santina; only one is for a performance in London - Ismene in *Mitridate* (1735). The other two are Prague, 1748 and Strasbourg, 1750. See Chapter Seven for further details of the cast change in *Polifemo*.
[58] Lord Hervey (1950, p.237) wrote to Mrs Digby on 25 November 'Farinelli is recovered; and there is to be an Opera tonight for the first time'.
[59] *London Daily Post*, 17 November.
[60] *La clemenza di Tito* 1737, *Partenio* 1738, *Rosalinda* 1744.
[61] Caldara 1732, Giacomelli 1733, Pergolesi 1734, Sandoni 1734, Broschi 1735, Duni 1735.

Nobility' to be poor. Equally, Porpora could not have enjoyed seeing Veracini's opera achieve greater success than his own. A leading proponent in the 'Opera of the Nobility' from the outset, Senesino may have played a part in Veracini's involvement with the company. They had been together in Dresden during the 1717/18 season where Veracini was employed as *compositor di camera* (White, 1972, p.21). According to Hill (1979, p.448) the singer and composer enjoyed mutual respect. Perhaps it was at Senesino's urging that the new composer and librettist were given this opportunity to produce an opera for the 'Opera of the Nobility' after a disappointing showing for Porpora and Rolli's *Ifigenia in Aulide* at the end of the previous season.

Adriano in Siria ran initially for nine performances from Tuesday, 25 November to Tuesday, 30 December, omitting one Saturday and one Tuesday (20 and 23 December). The performance scheduled for 20 December had to be deferred because of Farinelli's illness. A report in the *Daily Advertiser* of Monday, 22 December stated that 'Farinello was on Saturday last much indispos'd with a Cold, which occasion'd there being no Opera'. That Farinelli's popularity was not as magnificent as it once was is suggested as early as 25 December in a letter to Lord Essex which says 'many that admired beyond measure at first say they are now tyrd wth his fine bugle tho it is so exceedingly sweet' (letter from H. Corry, GB-Lbl Add MS 27,738, as cited in McGeary, 1998a, p.386). Perhaps the cancellation was due to a recurrence of the illness that had caused the abrupt curtailing of *Polifemo* the month before, but a more cynical (and speculative) view of Farinelli's general ill-health could be construed given his apparently diminishing appeal which surely rankled. Colley Cibber (1822, p.367) noted that 'within these two Years even *Farinelli* singing to an Audience of five and thirty pounds'. After an advertisement on Thursday, 18 December for *Adriano in Siria* to be performed the following Saturday (20th) there were then no further advertisements until Wednesday, 24 December advertising the next performance for the opera to take place on Saturday, 27th.[62] There was also an announcement on this same advertisement that tickets given out for 20th would be taken on 27th confirming that there had been no performance on either 20 or 23 December.

Veracini himself played first violin in his opera and perhaps the appearance of the renowned virtuoso violinist enticed the audience and contributed to its success. After the

[62] *London Daily Post*, 18 & 24 December.

first performance, Charles Jennens was particularly taken with *Adriano in Siria*, writing on 27 November that 'I like it better than any opera we have yet had from an Italian' (letter to Holdsworth, as cited in Eisen, 1978, p.258).[63] Conversely, Lord Hervey pronounced it 'the longest and dullest Opera that ever the ignoble ignorance of our present musical Governors ever inflicted on the ignorance of an English audience' (letter to Mrs Digby, 25 November, 1735, as cited in Deutsch, 1955, pp.395-6).[64] The King perhaps shared some of the same sentiments as Lord Hervey as the *Daily Advertiser* of 15 December reported that, although *Adriano in Siria* had been performed to great applause, Veracini was compelled to shorten the opera as the King thought it too long.[65]

At the beginning of January, 1736, four performances of the ever-popular *Artaserse* were given. There was no performance on Tuesday, 6 January because of Epiphany and none on Tuesday, 20th because of the Prince of Wales's birthday.[66] Porpora's only new opera of the season, *Mitridate,* was premièred on Saturday, 24 January. The *Daily Advertiser* announced that the Haymarket was so full on the second night (27th) that there were over 440 ladies and gentlemen present besides the subscribers and over 50 people were asked to leave as there was no room for them.[67] Despite this early success *Mitridate* was replaced after only four performances with another seven performances of *Adriano in Siria* and then seven performances of the new pasticcio, *Orfeo*. Farinelli's benefit on Saturday, 27 March instigated a further two performances of *Artaserse,* although it would seem that the hysteria surrounding his appearances had subsided since the previous season. The *Prompter* of 2 April reported that

> Farinelli's Benefit has pass'd without an Article mentioned in any Paper, of a single Present made him; nay, I have been told, some of the Subscribers used their Tickets; yet everybody can remember last Year, what an Epidemical Madness was diffused all over the Town.

After two more performances of *Orfeo* on 6 and 10 April, the new opera of *Onorio* had its first and last performance on Tuesday, 13 April. *Onorio* was composed by Francesco Ciampi with a libretto by Lalli and Boldoni. It was first performed in Venice, 1729, but how it

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[63] Charles Jennens, English patron, scholar and librettist, 1700-1773.
[64] John, Lord Hervey 1696-1743.
[65] *Daily Advertiser,* 15 December.
[66] As stated in the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 14 January.
[67] *Daily Advertiser,* 30 January.

ended up in London is unknown. Why this particular work only lasted for one night is unclear, but the newspaper advertisement the day after its debut was once again for *Orfeo* for a performance the next Saturday (17th).[68] Perhaps members of the Royal Family attended the performance of *Onorio* and found it not at all to their taste.[69] *Orfeo* was certainly admired by the Royal Family; a report in the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* of 30 April stated that *Orfeo* was so well liked by the King, Queen and Prince and Princess of Wales that they 'bespoke it again for Tomorrow Night'. After three further performances of *Orfeo*, one of which was deferred from Tuesday, 27 April until Thursday, 29, due to the Prince of Wales's wedding, Porpora produced his final work for London, the serenata *Festa d'Imeneo*.[70] This ran for four performances from Tuesday, 4 until Saturday, 15 May and was advertised as 'a THEATRICAL FEAST in Honour of the Royal Nuptials of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of WALES'.[71] It does not appear to have been popular, being called 'sad stuff' by Katherine Knatchbull (letter to James Harris, 8 May, 1736, as cited in Burrows & Dunhill, 2002, p.16).[72] Thomas Harris gives an indication of the diminishing appeal of productions at the King's Theatre, 'I am told the Feast of Hymen at the Haymarket is good for nothing, for great things are not to be expected from that quarter (letter to James Harris, 11 May, 1736, as cited in Burrows & Dunhill, 2002, p.18).

The 'Opera of the Nobility's' audiences may have compared unfavourably to Handel's at the end of the season. In the four weeks that Handel's new opera *Atalanta* played at Covent Garden from 12 May to 9 June, no fewer than four different productions were staged at the Haymarket: the final *Festa d'Imeneo,* four performances of *Adriano in Siria,* two of *Artaserse* and an *Orfeo*. The insertion of *Artaserse* suggests that *Adriano in Siria* was declining in popularity after 16 performances already this season against the new offering from Handel, and the perennial stalwart of *Artaserse* was called upon. The advertisement for the performance of *Orfeo* on 8 June was reported as 'Being the last this Season'.[73] The apparent popularity of this opera with the Prince and Princess of Wales however meant that

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[68] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 14 April.
[69] Although there are no newspaper reports of any member of the Royal Family attending any opera between 26 February and 29 April it would be highly unusual if there had been no attendance during this time. There are many missing newspapers from January to May 1736. See Bibliography.
[70] Reported in the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 28 April.
[71] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 4 May.
[72] Katherine Knatchbull, wife of Sir Wyndham Knatchbull-Wyndham, 5th Baronet.
[73] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 8 June.

a further two performances by their command were given on 15 and 22 June, the final advertisements stating that it was 'positively the last Time of performing this Season'.[74]

With no castrato to complete his company Handel had no choice but to delay any opera production until one could be engaged. He decided to open his season with an ode, *Alexander's Feast,* which had a small cast and included orchestral and organ concertos and an Italian cantata. Handel's preferred weekday night of performance had been Wednesday during the last season, avoiding the Tuesdays when the 'Opera of the Nobility' habitually performed. He could not however begin on Wednesday, 18 February as this night had been advertised as early as 6 February for the play, *Theodosius*, for the benefit of Mrs Porter and advertised as being by their Majesties' command.[75]

Handel started to ignite interest and curiosity as to his opening production over a week before the première, ensuring that the unusual Thursday performance date was known. On 9 February the *Daily Advertiser* reported that 'Mr Handel is making great Preparations at the Theatre in Covent Garden, for performing a fine Piece of Musick there on Thursday se'nnight.'[76] The first performance of *Alexander's Feast* therefore was given on Thursday, 19 February and thereafter once a week for the following four weeks. All but one of these further performances was on Wednesday except for 10 March, which was the beginning of Lent and the performance was on Friday, 12th for that week. This production was advertised as an ode, never performed before, written by the late Mr. Dryden and set to music by Mr. Handel.[77] The delayed opening to Handel's season had aroused much curiosity regarding what was to transpire on his opening night, especially with the unusual choice of work. The newspapers reported that 'Never was upon the like Occasion so numerous and splendid an Audience at any Theatre in London, there being at least 1300 Persons present.'[78] The same report stated that it had met with 'general Applause' but commented on the distance between performers and an audience being too great. Despite this clamour for the first night *Alexander's Feast* was not successful enough to enable Handel to give twice-weekly performances. Two performances of a revised *Acis and Galatea* at the end of March

[74] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 14 & 16 June.
[75] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 6 February.
[76] *Daily Advertiser*, 9 February.
[77] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 14 February.
[78] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 20 February.

were then followed by two of *Esther* on 7 and 14 April which, as the oratorios of last season, were complemented by two organ concertos.

On Thursday, 15 April it was reported that Gioacchino Conti (1714 – 1761), the soprano castrato, had arrived in London and that his first performance would be in *Alcina.*[79] Friday, 23 April carried the first advertisement for an opera at Covent Garden this season to be performed on Wednesday, 28 April, but it was for *Ariodante* rather than *Alcina*.[80] The advertisement explained the change of opera by stating that one of the singers had not yet arrived from Italy; Lord Shaftesbury believed that this was (Maria) Negri (letter to James Harris, 22 April, 1736, as cited in Burrows & Dunhill, 2002, p.15). As it turned out neither opera could be performed on that date as on Thursday, 29 April it appeared that Handel was still waiting for singers to arrive; it was reported that several singers, having been sent for from Italy had only recently arrived.[81] Conti made his first appearance in *Ariodante* and was exceptionally allowed to substitute other composers' arias for Handel's, presumably because of the haste in preparing for the first performance.[82] (Burrows & Dunhill, 2002, p.16).

In his first week of operas, Handel adopted the pattern from last season of presenting his performances on Wednesday and Friday. Perhaps encouraged by the positive reception for his new primo uomo he took on the 'Opera of the Nobility' for the first time since the previous May and for the next three weeks staged his new opera, *Atalanta*, not just on Wednesdays but also on Saturdays. A report in the newspaper stated that Conti met with 'an uncommon Reception' and that 'he may truly be esteem'd one of the best Performers in this Kingdom.'[83] After hearing him in *Ariodante*, Lord Shaftesbury wrote of Conti that he is 'the best singer I ever heard & they say in the world' (letter to James Harris, 8 May, 1736, as cited in Burrows & Dunhill, 2002, p.17).

Handel composed *Atalanta* in honour of the Prince of Wales's marriage to Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha and it was a spectacular production. The *London Evening Post* carried a long description of the elaborate staging and lighting employed and a report in the *St James's Evening Post* after the first night stated that *Atalanta* was 'received with unusual

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[79] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 15 April.
[80] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 23 April.
[81] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 29 April.
[82] For further details see Burrows & Dunhill (2002), and Burrows (2004). *Florilegium musicae: studi in onore di Carolyn Gianturco*. (Vol.II, pp.429-46). (P. Radicchi & M. Burden, Eds.) Pisa, Italy: ETS.
[83] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 6 May.

Acclamations.'[84] Despite the initial success its appeal apparently diminished as Handel reverted to single performances in the last two weeks of the season ending on Wednesday, 9 June. Not only did Victor write to Matthew Dubourg that both of the opera companies were in a bad way (see p.31), but also that 'this winter will compleat your friend *Handel's* destruction' (as cited in Dean, 2006, p.280).

It was not long after the end of the season that reports appeared of changes to the personnel of both companies for the following season. Handel was said to have sent to Italy to engage Domenico Annibali (c.1705 – 1779) and *Fog's Weekly Journal* reported on 26 June that Senesino and Cuzzoni were preparing to return to Italy.[85] Farinelli and Montagnana were to stay in England. Porpora also left London, returning to his post at the Incurabili in Venice and, although Rolli remained, his role was diminished in the 'Opera of the Nobility's' following and final season, only contributing one pasticcio libretto for *Sabrina*.

The 'Opera of the Nobility' appears to have roundly trounced Handel's opera company in the third season, managing 56 performances against Handel's paltry 19. In the first two seasons Handel had started his productions in late October and early November respectively and continued until the beginning of July. In this season, due to the lack of a castrato, he was unable to start until February and then, despite the new opera of *Atalanta*, only managed to continue until early June. The 'Opera of the Nobility' however succeeded in presenting a full season from late October to 22 June. During this time the company managed to produce a run of over six performances of an opera three times. The first of these, nine performances of *Adriano in Siria,* is perhaps not surprising as it received no competition from an alternative production at Covent Garden. However, the second run of seven performances of this opera continued to run twice weekly when Handel's opening production of *Alexander's Feast* was performed. It then made way for a run of seven twice weekly performances of *Orfeo* suggesting that there was still considerable interest in the productions at the Haymarket. Handel did achieve one run of over six nights with *Atalanta* (eight) although the final two performances were a week apart. The 'Opera of the Nobility's' last three performances of *Orfeo* were also each a week apart suggesting that the audience had significantly reduced for both companies at the end of the season.

[84] *London Evening Post,* May 11-13. *St James's Evening Post*, 11-13 May.
[85] *Rayner's Morning Advertiser*, 21 June.

Royal Attendance

Much has been written about the alleged animosity of Frederick, Prince of Wales towards Handel and the divided patronage of the rival opera companies by the King and his son.[86] This has largely been driven by Lord Hervey's assertion in his memoirs (1931) that the Prince was at the forefront of the move to establish a rival opera company in the 1730s in order to ruin Handel. George II, his wife Queen Caroline and Frederick's sister, Anne, all supported Handel but any suggestion that the Prince of Wales was motivated to establish a rival opera company due to the animosity between himself and family members is emphatically quashed by McGeary (2013, p.156) who states 'that the various accounts of Frederick as founder of the Opera of the Nobility targeting the king or his sister, the division of the court and society, and the alignment of the Nobility opera with opposition partisan politics are largely a fiction is shown by a wide range of contemporary evidence.' An investigation into Frederick's accounts has also led Taylor (2013, p.1) to remark in her paper on the Third Duke of Rutland that these show 'a far more balanced account of the Prince's support than historians had been inclined to believe based on Hervey's account alone.'

An investigation into attendance figures of both King and Prince certainly reveals that any partisanship was not a straightforward division of the King only attending Handel's productions and the Prince those of Porpora and the 'Opera of the Nobility'. It is also worth noting that in the period under discussion (1733-36) there are only two recorded instances of the King attending the opera without the Queen, and he was often accompanied by other members of the Royal Family. Queen Caroline was an educated and intelligent woman who counted philosophers, writers and artists amongst her friends. Having married Georg August, son of the Elector of Hanover, in 1705, she and her family came to London in the summer of 1714 with her father-in-law on the throne as King George I. During her years as Princess of Wales (1714-27) she actively enjoyed the arts, giving balls and hosting musical performances as musicians vied for her patronage. Her attendance at the opera continued when she became Queen.

[86] See Yorke-Long (1951), Hume (1986), Taylor (1991 pp.190-240), McGeary (1998b and 2013), Aspden (2001) and Burrows (2004). For details of monies paid to each company by the Prince see Taylor (1984).

Table 4 shows the attendance figures for the three seasons that Porpora was in London.

Table 4. Attendances at each opera company's productions by the King and the Prince of Wales[87]

SEASON	OPERA COMPANY[88]	KING	PRINCE
1733/34	HANDEL	29	20
	PORPORA	3	9
	TOTAL	**32**	**29**
1734/35	HANDEL	10	1
	PORPORA	6	7
	TOTAL	**16**	**8**
1735/36	HANDEL	2	1
	PORPORA	6	13
	TOTAL	**8**	**14**

The most complete data is for the first season, 1733/34.[89] The King and Prince were both keen to attend the opera in this season as can be seen by the comparable overall total figures. It appears that it was not only the King, but also the Prince who favoured Handel, although the Prince also attended the 'Opera of the Nobility's' productions nine times compared to the King's three. The majority of the King and Prince's visits to Handel's productions were together, albeit sitting on opposite sides of the theatre, but there are three instances when the Prince went to the Haymarket without his father. Two of these were perhaps to satisfy his curiosity and see the first performance of a work – *Cajo Fabricio* on 4 December and *Il pastor fido* on 18 May. Presumably he was taken with the latter as the third performance he attended without the King was another *Il pastor fido* 10 days later. The King and Prince also attended three performances of Porpora's productions on the same night – the first and second nights of *Arianna in Naxo* on 29 December and 1 January, and the last performance of the season, a one-off final showing of *Enea nel Lazio* on 15 June.

[87] These figures have been compiled from the newspapers sources as listed in the Bibliography, Scouten (1961), Latreille (1731-39), Hervey (1950)and Egmont (1920 & 1923). Only attendances where reports state that they have been there, not will be have been included. Although it is accepted that newspaper reports will not always be wholly accurate, in the majority of cases reports of attendance have been found in more than one source. In any case the figures will be able to give indications of trends.

[88] In 1733/34 Handel's company was at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket and Porpora, with the 'Opera of the Nobility', was at the Theatre Royal in Lincoln's Inn Fields. For the following two seasons, the 'Opera of the Nobility' was at the Haymarket and Handel's company moved to the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden.

[89] See Bibliography for newspaper sources.

Perhaps the King realised he had not seen this second new opera from the celebrated Neapolitan composer which explains this single royally commanded performance. That the Prince attended the opera so many times (20) when the King was present belies the impression that they would never be seen at the same opera together or that they rigidly adhered to their own championed composer. The Prince seemed to almost go out of his way to be seen as unbiased at the beginning of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' season. After hosting a rehearsal of *Arianna in Naxo* at his house on 24 December and then attending its first two performances, the Prince then alternated between the two theatres for the next four nights he attended.[90] His support for the 'Opera of the Nobility' can scarcely be classed as ardent after this as he does not visit Porpora's productions again from 12 January until a benefit performance for Celeste Hempson on 10 April. Apparently the arrival of Cuzzoni later in April to take over the title role in *Arianna in Naxo* was not sufficient to tempt either father or son back to another performance of this popular opera.

Although showing support for Handel by his regular attendance, the King appeared to redress the balance by attending the first (and second) night of Porpora's *Arianna in Naxo* and then avoiding Handel by not attending the first night of his new opera, *Arianna in Creta*. He in turn mitigated this by attending nine performances of this production making it one of his favourite Handel operas.[91] Having shown his support for the rival opera company, the King then avoided Lincoln's Inn Fields until the final performance of *Enea nel Lazio*, in the meantime supporting Handel by attending three of the four performances (including the first) of his wedding serenata *Parnasso in festa*. Although the balance of favour tips definitely on Handel's side the King by no means avoided the alternative offerings from the 'Opera of the Nobility'.

The sources for the figures for the following two seasons are incomplete but nevertheless still give an indication of the trend of attendance by both parties.[92] All of the Royal Family 'turned out' for the first performance of the 1734/35 season, *Artaserse*, on 29 October. This was almost certainly due to it being Farinelli's debut in London rather than any consideration of endorsement for the 'Opera of the Nobility'. The King showed equal support for Handel by attending his opening night performance of *Il pastor fido* on 9

[90] *London Evening Post*, 22-25 December. *Arianna in Naxo* on 5 and 12 January, *Arbace* on 8 and 29 January.
[91] According to Pedicord (1991) only *Poro* was more popular with 11 attendances.
[92] All issues of the *London Daily Post* from April (except 10th) to June, 1735 are missing, as are the volumes covering January-May 1736 (vols. 90A-90D) from the Nichols Newspapers collection.

December. This is all the more noteworthy as the King appears to have attended without the Queen, which is one of only two reported instances of him doing so throughout these three seasons. The *Whitehall Evening Post* of 9 – 12 November reported of the Queen being indisposed with gout and therefore, presumably, unable to attend the opera. In the previous season the King did not attend the opera on his own when the Queen was ill. Perhaps Handel's opening night of the season, first advertised four days prior to its performance on 5 November, was seen as too prominent to cancel, encouraging the King to attend with the Duke of Cumberland and the Princesses Amelia and Caroline. Added to this was the other occasion that the King had attended the opera without the Queen occurring only four days prior; the *Daily Advertiser* reported that the King attended *Artaserse* without the Queen who was 'indisposed' on Tuesday, 5 November.[93] Perhaps the King was as taken with Farinelli as the rest of London at this time and was unwilling to either cancel or stay away from only the third performance from the fêted castrato. Having set this precedent to attend a performance from the rival opera company without the Queen, the King may have felt further inclined to attend Handel's opening night. The King (with the Queen) also attended the first nights of *Oreste* and *Ariodante* at Covent Garden and those of *Ottone* and *Polifemo* at the Haymarket.

It has been shown that whenever possible Queen Caroline attended the opera with the King. That this was as much driven by an interest in the arts rather than by mere duty can be seen from her extensive library. Although there are no full scores of any operas performed in London listed in the catalogue of her library, there are 88 operatic librettos and 53 of these are from Italian operas performed in London during the years she lived there (1714-37).[94] From the period under investigation (1733-1736) there are no librettos of Handel's productions, but there are nine librettos of productions presented by the 'Opera of the Nobility'.[95] These include librettos of works where there is no record of the Queen having attended (*David e Bersabea*, *Issipile*, *Mitridate* and *Onorio*). Daub suggests that the possession of librettos would 'seem to reflect the Queen's attendance' (Daub, 1994, p. 144).

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[93] *Daily Advertiser,* 6 November.

[94] There are 19 Hanoverian scores from 1689-97. The full list is in *A Catalogue of the Royal Library of her late Majesty Queen Caroline, Distributed into Faculties, 1743,* discovered in 1961 (Daub, 1994).

[95] *David e Bersabea, Polifemo, Issipile, Ifigenia in Aulide, Adriano in Siria, Mitridate, Orfeo, Onorio, Festa d'Imeneo*.

This in turn suggests that there may be additional dates for which there is no report, when the Queen, and therefore the King, attended productions by the 'Opera of the Nobility'.

The Prince showed less interest in the operas of Handel in the 1734/35 season. Throughout the season there is only one record of his attendance at any Handel production which is a performance of *Alcina* on 30 April with the rest of the Royal Family. His scant attendance at Covent Garden was not matched by a corresponding rise in his attendance at the 'Opera of the Nobility's' productions. The Prince only went to one more productions at the Haymarket than the King, both performances of the first run of *Artaserse*, although he did host a rehearsal of *Ottone* at his house on 29 November.[96]

In Porpora's final season in London, 1735/36, the Prince attended more operas produced by the 'Opera of the Nobility' than in the previous two seasons and seven of these were without the King. There was very little attendance by either party at Handel's offerings notwithstanding it being a very short 16-week season at Covent Garden. Only three performances are recorded as being attended, two by the King and one by the Prince. The one by the Prince was after the King had left for Holland on 22 May and the Prince accompanied the remaining Royal Family, including his new wife, to *Atalanta.* This is the only record of the Prince having attended a performance of *Atalanta*, despite Handel having written the opera to celebrate the Prince's marriage to Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha on 27 April that year. On its opening night, 12 May, the King attended the performance of *Atalanta* but the Prince and Princess of Wales did not attend this opera in their honour, ignoring Handel and attending the tragedy, *Cato*, and farce, *Taste à la mode,* at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane.[97] Similarly, Porpora composed his serenata *Festa d'Imeneo* in honour of the Prince's nuptials but he was not honoured with the Prince's presence until the second night of the production, 8 May.

In his first season, Porpora saw that both the King and Prince attended Handel's operas more frequently than the performances presented by the 'Opera of the Nobility'. He could however take satisfaction from knowing that whenever the Royal Family did attend it was to see a work of his own composing: seven performances of *Arianna in Naxo,* one of *David e Bersabea* and one of *Enea nel Lazio*. In the second season, combined with less apparent interest from the Royal Family in attending productions at either of the

[96] *St. James's Evening Post*, 28-30 November.
[97] *St. James's Evening Post*, 11-13 May.

two opera houses, only two of the reported attendances at the Opera of the Nobility's productions were for a new work by Porpora, that of *Polifemo.* The other attendances were for performances of Handel's revised *Ottone* and Hasse's pasticcio *Artaserse*.

In the final season there was a significant decrease in the competitive rivalry with poor attendance at Covent Garden for Handel's productions and a slight increase in attendance at the Haymarket by the King and Prince. Despite this, the Royal Family is recorded as seeing newly-composed Porpora works only four times: one performance of *Polifemo,* one of *Mitridate* and two of *Festa d'Imeneo*. The pasticcio of *Orfeo* (four performances attended) and Veracini's *Adriano in Siria* (five performances) proved more popular. This lack of interest and support from the Royal Family was surely further encouragement for Porpora to abandon his London operatic career and return to Italy at the end of his third season.

Conclusions

Over the course of the three seasons that Porpora was engaged by the 'Opera of the Nobility', he saw his newly composed works becoming appreciably less popular (see Table 5).

Table 5. Number of performances of Porpora's London works

		1733/34	**1734/35**	**1735/36**
OPERAS	*Arianna in Naxo*	24		
	Enea nel Lazio	7		
	Polifemo		14	3
	Ifigenia in Aulide		5	
	Mitridate			4
	TOTAL	**31**	**19**	**7**
ORATORIO	*David e Bersabea*	7	3	
SERENATA	*Festa d'Imeneo*			4
	GRAND TOTAL	**38**	**22**	**11**

In his third season there were only seven performances of his operas and three of those were a revisal. Much must have been expected from and by Porpora when he arrived in London. His first opera *Arianna in Naxo* lived up to the promise and was a significant success with an initial run of 11 performances and another 13 later. This was the most popular of all

the operas from either company, excluding pasticcios, throughout the period and must have given Porpora and Rolli great expectations of subsequent success. However, of his other four operas only *Polifemo* reached double figures and can be considered to have had a reasonable run in its first season with 14 performances. The most successful production by far during Porpora's tenure in London was the pasticcio of Hasse's *Artaserse*. With 42 performances over two seasons and 33 of those in just the 1734/35 season alone, this was almost double the number of performances of Porpora's most successful opera. Would Porpora have enjoyed such success emanating largely from the work of one of his greatest rivals in Italy, Hasse? Likewise, his main librettist, Rolli, had to endure this original Metastasio text being more popular than any of his own works and then find himself supplanted for Porpora's final opera, *Mitridate,* by the English poet, Colley Cibber. It is interesting to note, given the path of Handel's career from now, that of the four oratorios performed over these three seasons it was the sole contribution in this genre from Porpora, the Italian *David e Bersabea*, which was the one that achieved the greatest success with a run of seven performances in its first season and another three in its second.[98]

It is likely that Porpora's financial situation was never particularly robust throughout his life which is why he was constantly trying to obtain new posts; there is no reason to believe it any different in London. Farinelli wrote that he had to send his former teacher money while he was there, which presumably was before Farinelli arrived in London in 1734 (Sacchi, as cited in Walker, 1951, p.59).[99] With Veracini's *Adriano in Siria* being easily the most popular new opera of the third season, Porpora must have felt his input marginalised and concomitant influence and standing weakened. Combined with the perilous financial circumstances in which opera in London permanently existed, his own precarious pecuniary state, dwindling audiences and royal support at the end of the third season it is not surprising that Porpora decided to return to Italy in the summer of 1736.

[98] Handel's *Esther, Deborah* and *Athalia* are the other three. For details on oratorio performances in London at this time see Lindgren (2002).

[99] It is just possible that this relates to a trip Porpora may have made in 1743 to attend the première of his opera *Temistocle* performed at the Haymarket on 22 February, 1743. (Walker, p.54).

PART TWO – PORPORA'S LONDON OPERAS

CHAPTER THREE: THE LIBRETTOS OF PORPORA'S FIVE LONDON OPERAS

Introduction

Although the London environment was new to Porpora in 1733 the same was certainly not true for his first and main librettist, Paolo Rolli, who was the author of four of the five librettos that Porpora set. By the time Rolli came to be appointed poet to the 'Opera of the Nobility' in 1733 he had been living in London for 18 years and had already written or adapted some 14 librettos for the London operatic stage. He counted members of the aristocracy amongst his friends and moved in the circles of educated and cultured noblemen and native Italians. He was well placed to understand what the London audience wanted from its opera and was presumably invaluable to the newcomer, Porpora, in providing him with suitable plots, carefully tailored to their company of Italian singers and designed to delight the audience. The fifth opera, *Mitridate,* has a text by Colley Cibber. This astute English manager of the Drury Lane Theatre for 24 years was better known and regarded for his acting than his poetry and, as such, the setting of his final London opera offered new challenges for Porpora.

As the originator of the drama a librettist had considerable influence as to the structure of an opera and he was then dependent upon the composer following through his ideas as laid out in the libretto. Rolli was an established member of London's Italian circle, respected poet and experienced librettist for the Royal Academy, and was therefore well placed to exert significant influence over the productions of the newly arrived Neapolitan composer. Similarly, Cibber, as a prominent and knowledgeable member of the theatre world, would presumably have had definite ideas of what would be successful in front of the London audience.

Table 5 showed the total number of performances for each opera and it is the fifth opera, *Mitridate*, with text by Cibber rather than Rolli, that had the least number of performances. This certainly cannot solely be attributed to the change of librettist as it can be seen that *Ifigenia in Aulide,* with five performances, fared only slightly better than *Mitridate's* four*,* and *Enea nel Lazio* only managed a moderate seven. Porpora's last opera also came at a time when Italian opera in London was struggling as the two rival companies

tried to sustain the attention of a dwindling audience becoming less interested in what they had to offer.

Mitridate was also the only one of the operas that Porpora set with a plot based on an historical figure. Rolli favoured the classical stories from mythology (see following section) and the two most popular of Porpora's operas, *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo,* have the best combination of uncomplicated plot, spectacle and believable psychological conflict within and between the characters.

The presence of fewer characters lessens the opportunity for more complicated and confusing scenarios involving unrequited or unsuitable affections between the roles. *Arianna in Naxo* is the only opera of the five to have five characters, although the cast of *Polifemo* was ultimately reduced from six to five for its revisal. The other four have either six or seven (see Table 6). Senesino, Bertolli and Montagnana were constants throughout and the increase in number must have been partly driven by the appearance of Farinelli after the first season, although this does not account for the cast list of seven in the second opera, *Enea nel Lazio*. The addition of the tenor, Filippo Rochetti (fl.1724 – after 1750) in this opera appears to be solely to supply a tenor voice to the quartets as he does not feature in any other of Porpora's operas and does not sing a single aria in this one.[1]

Table 6. Number of characters and voice type in Porpora's London operas

OPERA	SOPRANO	CONTRALTO	ALTO CASTRATO	MEZZO SOPRANO CASTRATO	BASS	TENOR	TOTAL NUMBER
Arianna in Naxo	Segatti/Cuzzoni Hempson	Bertolli	Senesino		Montagnana		**5**
Enea nel Lazio	Cuzzoni Hempson Segatti	Bertolli	Senesino		Montagnana	Rochetti	**7**
Polifemo	Cuzzoni Segatti	Bertolli	Senesino	Farinelli	Montagnana		**6**
Polifemo **revisal**	Cuzzoni Santa Tasca		Senesino	Farinelli	Montagnana		**5**
Ifigenia in Aulide	Cuzzoni Segatti	Bertolli	Senesino	Farinelli	Montagnana		**6**
Mitridate	Cuzzoni Santa Tasca	Bertolli	Senesino	Farinelli	Montagnana	Palma[2]	**7**

[1] Rochetti sang with Rich's company from 1724 until 1735 (Dean, 2001).
[2] This is the only entry for Palma (no dates) taking a role in any opera. (Sartori, 1990-1994).

Although Cuzzoni was not present for the greater part of the first run of *Arianna in Naxo* (between 29 December, 1733 and 23 February, 1734), she took over the title role in April 1734, ousting Segatti not only from the role but also from the opera. Rolli must have known that Cuzzoni was not going to be able to join the cast until later in its run as he wrote no part for Segatti in *Arianna in Naxo* from the outset, intending her to take the title role until Cuzzoni arrived. He did however include a part for Segatti alongside Cuzzoni in his three other Porpora librettos, even when this swelled the total of sopranos to three, as in *Enea nel Lazio.* Rolli would have known the cast for whom he was writing and this accommodation for at least two sopranos is another reason why the character count is higher for Rolli's three opera texts following *Arianna in Naxo*. That he was more comfortable with the smaller number of characters is highlighted by Segatti's totally superfluous part of Nerea in *Polifemo* which is dramatically unnecessary and was ultimately cut.

The Rolli Librettos

Paolo Antonio Rolli (1687 – 1765)

Paolo Antonio Rolli was born in Rome and, like Metastasio, was trained by Gian Vincenzo Gravina who introduced him to literary circles where he met some of the most famous artists of his day including the composers Corelli, Caldara and A. Scarlatti.[3] It is likely he also met Handel, who arrived in Rome in 1707, in either the house of Cardinal Ottoboni or Marquis Ruspoli, both great patrons of the arts. Originally one of the members of the pastorally inspired Academy of Arcadians, Rolli left this group with other followers of Gravina to found the Academy of Quirina, identifying himself as a member of this group in his first dramatic work, a serenata entitled *Sacrificio a Venere,* produced in 1714. By the age of 28 Rolli had begun to establish himself in Italian literary circles and he travelled to England in the winter of 1715/16. Abate Giuseppe Riva, Ambassador of the Grand Duke of Modena at the English Court wrote to the Italian historian and scholar Ludovico Muratori on 31 January, 1716 'the Abate Rolli has arrived here from Rome with the brother of Lord Stair, a fine poet and a wonderful improviser, whom I knew well in Rome' (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.430/1).

[3] Arcangelo Corelli 1653-1713, Antonio Caldara 1671-1736.

In London Rolli soon established his reputation, becoming known through his editions of the *Rime e satire* of Ariosto, Marchetti's translation of Lucretius and *Pastor Fido* of Guarini.[4] Rolli was also producing his own poetry, publishing five volumes during his time in London beginning with his *Rime* in 1717, dedicated to Lord Bathurst. Rolli was popular with the aristocracy and was appointed to teach Italian to the families of his noble patrons, including the Earls of Stair and Pembroke. His most influential patron was Caroline, Princess of Wales (becoming Queen Caroline in 1727) who also employed Rolli as preceptor to her children, including the Prince of Wales. Although the Prince did not arrive in England until 1728 at the age of 21, Rolli appears to have also tutored him in the Italian language as Maffei (Tondini, 1776, as cited in Dorris, 1967, p.145) remarks that the Prince is learning from 'un bravo Poeta.....cioè dal Sig. Paolo Rolli'. Rolli's most famous work was probably his translation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. He was working on this between 1717 and 1735 and the first six volumes appeared in 1729, with the completed work issued in 1735 and dedicated to the Prince of Wales who had enabled its completion with a gift of £100 to Rolli (Dorris, 1967, p.150). From the moment of his arrival Rolli was soon established in the close knit circle of Italian expatriates in London, including the diplomat Giuseppe Riva, the savant Antonio Conti, musicians Nicolini, Antonio Maria Bernacchi and Geminiani, and, from 1720, Giovanni Bononcini and Senesino.[5] Also part of the flourishing Italian set were rival teachers and librettists Nicola Haym and Giacomo Rossi (fl.1710 – 1731).

When the Royal Academy of Music was founded in 1720 Handel, Bononcini and Attilio Ariosti (1666 – 1729) acted as composers for the venture with Handel also being commissioned to contract with singers. Rolli was appointed as the official librettist at a salary of £200 a year (Rolli to Giuseppe Riva, letter, 5 July, 1720, as cited in Lindgren, 1991, p.34). This association with the London stage lasted to a greater or lesser degree for more than 20 years until Rolli returned to Italy in 1744 having supplied original, or adaptations of, librettos for at least 33 productions. Of the five active Italian librettists in London at the

[4] Many of Rolli's works are available online through the English Short Title Catalogue accessible through the British Library website (estc.bl.uk).

[5] Nicolino Grimaldi known as Nicolini 1673-1732, Antonio Maria Bernacchi 1685-1756, Francesco Geminiani 1687-1714.

beginning of the eighteenth century, Rolli was one of the most prolific in this field with only Haym producing more texts than him.[6]

Rolli produced the librettos for all the Royal Academy's operas in its first three seasons except one. The opening production was *Numitore,* with music by Porta and an original libretto by Rolli, which had its first performance at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket on 2 April, 1720. Handel's *Radamisto,* with a libretto possibly by Nicola Haym, swiftly followed on 27 April and the third opera of the season, *Narciso* with music by Domenico Scarlatti (1685 – 1757), was first performed on 30 May.[7] The libretto for *Narciso* was adapted by Rolli for the English stage and dedicated to his patron, the Princess of Wales.

The following season opened on 19 November with Bononcini's *Astarto*, again with an adapted libretto by Rolli. This was the first London stage appearance of the famous alto castrato Senesino, recently arrived in London. Rolli was clearly immediately taken with him and this regard was presumably mutual as can be seen later in their collaboration during the years of the 'Opera of the Nobility'. Rolli wrote to Riva on 23 September 'I am delighted to find that the celebrated artist is a man of polished manners, well-read, extremely agreeable and imbued with the highest sentiments' (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.435). A letter the following month highlights the strictures under which Rolli felt he was working in order to produce librettos that were suitable for an English audience. In October, 1720 he wrote to Riva,

> la Margherita [Durastanti] in concert with our friend Senesino has proposed the opera, "Amore e Maesta", which cannot be given in the version used at Florence, because it contains such an immense amount of recitative, and so few ariettas that Senesino would only have four solos in the whole work. So I had orders to shorten it, and with the assistance of .... I added to it and changed it where necessary' (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.435).[8]

[6] Haym wrote as many as 35 adaptations between 1706 and 1729. Rossi wrote four between 1711 and 1713 and possibly more after Haym's death in 1729. Cori produced nine between 1734 and 1737 and Francesco Vanneschi (? – ?1759) produced at least two new texts and several reworkings between 1741 and 1759 (Lindgren, 1997).

[7] Hicks (1992) says that Burney's attribution of the libretto to Nicola Haym is plausible but cannot be confirmed.

[8] *Amore e Maesta* was eventually performed in London as *Arsace* in 1721.

Compounding these limitations was the conflict rife between the various composers producing works for the Academy and in 1722 Rolli was compelled to produce a libretto that would satisfy three composers. *Muzio Scevola* first performed on 15 April, 1721, comprised three Acts, each of which was written by a different composer – Filippo Amadei (c.1665 – c.1725), Bononcini and Handel. Bononcini then enjoyed successes with his *Crispo* (10 January, 1722) and *Griselda* (22 February, 1722), both with librettos by Rolli, but the Jacobite conspiracies uncovered later in that year meant that it was not politically shrewd to be seen championing Catholics and both Bononcini and Rolli fell out of favour.[9] Handel, working with Haym, was able to capitalize on this, especially with the arrival of the renowned soprano Francesca Cuzzoni who made her debut in Handel's *Ottone* on 12 January, 1723. Between 1723 and 1726 Rolli did not feature as poet to the Academy whilst Handel achieved three triumphs with librettos by Haym.[10] Rolli returned to favour in 1726 with the libretto of Handel's *Scipione* (12 March, 1726) and supplied Handel with two more librettos (*Alessandro*, 30 April, 1726 and *Riccardo primo* 11 November, 1727) before the collapse of the Academy in June 1728.

Handel and Heidegger moved quickly to form their new opera company but Rolli had no place in this undertaking and on 2 February, 1729 he wrote: 'Handel ["il caro Handelino"] is determined to try experiments and to pay court to the right people. ... I am still on bad terms with him, and shall remain so' (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.438). Rolli was clearly not part of the new venture and wrote again on 3 September: 'You knew before that Attilio and Haym have joined forces. Now learn that the famous Rossi, Italian author and poet, is Handel's accredited bard' (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.440). No Italian opera was performed in London during the 1728 – 29 season and the 'Second Academy' opened in December 1729 with *Lotario* (librettist unknown, adapted from Salvi's *Adelaide*, Venice, 1729).

With Handel and Heidegger in charge Rolli was to have no part in the London opera performances between 1728 and 1733 until the formation of the 'Opera of the Nobility' in 1733. Dorris (1967, p.112) states that this new company grew out of the wishes of a group

[9] The Atterbury Plot was a significant attempt to restore the catholic Stuart monarchy in Britain in the first half of the eighteenth century. Its aim was to overthrow the Hanoverian King George I and replace him with the so-called James III. Francis Atterbury (1663–1732), Bishop of Rochester, led the conspiracy abetted by various prominent men, including Charles Boyle, 4th Earl of Orrery, Lords North and Grey and Sir Henry Goring . The plot collapsed in the spring of 1722.

[10] *Giulio Cesare in Egitto,* 20 February, 1724, *Tamerlano,* 31 October, 1724 and *Rodelinda,* 13 February, 1725.

of noblemen who wanted to 'guarantee themselves the operas they liked, sung by their favourite singers (Senesino and Cuzzoni)'. This is borne out in Lord Delaware's letter of 16 June, 1733 (as cited in Deutsch, 1955, p.303), which says that with the formation of a new subscription and directors will come 'a chance of seeing Operas once more on a good foot.' Delaware stated that the Italian cynosures Senesino, Cuzzoni, Farinelli and Porpora were all expected to be joining them. With the Italian singers (Montagnana, Bertolli and Hempson also defected from Handel's company) and composer assembled it would have been a natural step to appoint an Italian poet to complete the set and write the new rival company's librettos. Rolli was connected to many of the directors of the new company through friendship or their patronage, particularly the Earl of Burlington with his love of all things Italian and the Earl of Stair whose circle of anti-Walpole Whigs and Tories contained most of the literary figures of the day.[11]

Rolli was also known to be, if not openly hostile to Handel, at least disapproving of his 'bristly nature' (Rolli to Riva, letter, 23 September 1723, as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.113) Although Rolli is thinly disguised as the author of a vitriolic attack seemingly on Handel in *The Country Journal or The Craftsman* of 7 April 1733, it is more likely to be an oblique assault on Walpole which Streatfeild (1917) attributes to Bolingbroke and Dean (2006, p.132) to 'some political hack'.[12] Rolli seemed to be more content with calling Handel mildly insulting names in his many letters, for example, 'the Man' [l'Uomo] and 'the Savage' ['il Selvaggio'] in a letter to Riva in October, 1720 (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.435). Rolli's antagonism towards Handel was however sufficiently well-known for his name to be used, albeit as an alias, in a major political publication designed to attack the establishment through Handel. He was an ideal choice to be one of the main protagonists in the rival operatic venture.

During the period of the 'Opera of the Nobility' Rolli produced nine librettos for this new company, comprising four new opera texts, one revised opera text, two pasticcio texts, one oratorio and one serenata text (see Table 7). All six of the original texts solely written by Rolli (four operas, one oratorio and one serenata) for the 'Opera of the Nobility' had music composed by Porpora. The first pasticcio, *Orfeo*, was also compiled by Porpora (the

[11]Robert Walpole (1676-1745). 1st Earl of Orford, leader of the Whig party and generally regarded as the first Prime Minister of Great Britain, 1721-1742.

[12] Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751). English politician, government official, political philosopher and a leader of the Tories.

second, *Sabrina*, was performed in the 'Opera of the Nobility's' fourth and last season after Porpora had returned to Italy). This collaboration between poet and composer obviously suited them both because during his three years in London Porpora only used one other librettist for a new work – Colley Cibber for his final opera *Mitridate*.

Table 7. Rolli's librettos for the 'Opera of the Nobility'

SEASON	TYPE	TITLE	COMPOSER
1733/34	Opera	*Arianna in Naxo*	Porpora
	Opera (with Gigli)	*Fernando*	Arrigoni
	Oratorio	*David e Bersabea*	Porpora
	Opera	*Enea nel Lazio*	Porpora
1734/35	Opera	*Polifemo*	Porpora
	Opera	*Ifigenia in Aulide*	Porpora
1735/36	Pasticcio	*Orfeo*	Porpora, Vinci, Araja, Hasse
	Serenata	*Festa d'Imeneo*	Porpora
1736/37	Pasticcio	*Sabrina*	Unknown

Rolli obviously had high hopes of this new company and wrote to his friend, the doctor Antonio Cocchi in Florence on 26 December, 1733: 'Next Saturday [Dec 29] the opera of the Nobility (l'Opera de' Signori) will begin with one of my dramas, entitled *Arianna in Naxo*. I hope that it will begin better days for me.' (as cited in Lindgren, 1991, p.155). Unfortunately it did not quite work according to plan and Rolli soon had to report that the first season was not the unqualified success everybody had hoped for. With two opera companies vying for the London audience, finances were stretched to breaking point and both companies inevitably made losses. Rolli wrote to Cocchi only part way through the first season of the 'Opera of the Nobility' on 27 April 1734 that 'We have not prospered this year because of the two opera houses and because of our carelessness' (as cited in Lindgren, 1991, p.345). What he means by this 'carelessness' is not clear but he must have been hopeful of better things to come in the following season as he continues 'But next year we will be masters of the field, and all will be well'. Presumably Rolli was aware that if, as the Earl of Egmont suggests, Handel and Heidegger had been granted a five year tenure early in 1729, it would be coming to an end thus allowing the 'Opera of the Nobility' to

move into the King's Theatre for the next season.[13] Rolli continued his involvement with the 'Opera of the Nobility' throughout its existence of four seasons and contributed two more librettos (*Arsace* and *Partenio*) in the season following its collapse (1737/38) when Heidegger took over all Italian opera management in the one venue of the King's Theatre, Haymarket.

Although Rolli contributed no librettos to the opera during the 1738/39 season he wrote 10 more for London between 1740 and 1744 before Italian opera finally drew to a close with the collapse of Lord Middlesex's company. Rolli returned to Todi in his native Italy where he spent the remaining 21 years of his life.

Rolli and the Opera Seria Libretto

Kimbell (1994) identifies three categories of opera seria plots in the eighteenth century:

i) didactic - intended to educate and delight in equal measures.

ii) pastoral - born out of the group of aristocrats, intellectuals and artists in the 1690s, the Arcadia, who wanted to return to a natural and simple style.

iii) neo-classical – modelled on the classical paradigm with noble characters, serious fates and high stakes. Divine intervention is common.

This last category was the dominant one in the early eighteenth century and often included a conflict between love and duty which was frequently complicated by cases of mistaken identity and disguise. The hero was often shown to be motivated by duty and honour instead of love and passion, and it was believed that 'right' should ultimately triumph, culminating in the required *lieto fine* (happy ending).

Rolli had to adapt what was already the very proscriptive format of the Italian opera seria libretto to the particular taste and expectations of the London audience.[14] In a letter to Muratori in 1725, Riva gives an interesting account of how to advise a poet to write a libretto for London

> in England people like very few recitatives, thirty airs and one duet at least distributed over the three acts. The subject must be simple, tender, heroic - Roman,

[13] According to the Earl of Egmont (1923, vol. III, p.329), Handel and Heidegger had been allowed to 'carry on operas without disturbance for 5 years'.

[14] See p.153 for details.

> Greek or possibly Persian, but never Gothic or Lombard. For this year, and for the next two, there must be two equal parts in the operas for Cuzzoni and Faustina. Senesino takes the principal male character and his part must be heroic. The other three male parts should be arranged proportionally song for song in all three acts. The duet should be at the end of the second act, and entrusted to the two women. If the subject demands three women, a third woman may be employed, as there is a third singer here to take the part' (as cited in Streatfeild, 1917, p.433).

Rolli considered his librettos to be 'dramatici scheletri' (dramatic skeletons), perhaps because it was necessary to pare down the recitative containing the action to the bare bones, leaving only what was essential to carry the plot and advance the action for the English audience (letter to Frugoni, 11 October, 1749, as cited in Fassini, 1914, p.176).[15] Rolli's librettos favour mythological rather than historical characters and it is here that he shows his roots in the Arcadian Academy where he began his poetic career, with smooth and graceful rather than melodramatic lines (Dorris, 1967, p.167). This style was eminently suited to the lyrical and homophonic style of Porpora.

With the increased job security offered by the post as chief poet to the 'Opera of the Nobility', Rolli could allow himself more artistic licence in how he approached his opera librettos. In the introductions to his *Componimenti poetici in vario genere* (1744) and *De' poetici componimenti* iii (1753) Rolli mentions the greater freedom he had in choice of subjects with the new company, allowing him to adapt his favoured classical tales. In his librettos for the Royal Academy Rolli sometimes noted how much of the text he accredited to himself or even the constraints under which he was working. In *Riccardo I* (1727) he wrote that 'Il Drama è quasi tutto del Sig Paolo Rolli'.[16] He was more specific in *Griselda* (1722), writing that 'The Character of RAMBALDO, in the First and Second Act, with some few Lines of Recitative in its proper Scenes, is taken from an Old *Drama* of the same Name, the Subject of which I was order'd to follow.' No such instructions appear to have been issued to him for the production of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' librettos. Although he wrote at least seven 'original' texts during his tenure as poet for the Academy it is clear that even

[15] In this thesis any mention of 'recitative' should be taken as 'secco recitative'. 'Accompanied recitative' is referred to as such throughout.

[16] 'The drama is almost all by Paolo Rolli'

when writing these and not adapting other librettos he was working to order (Dorris, 1967, p.166).[17]

Rolli's taste for mythological subjects could be found in French musical theatre of the time and he stated that he liked the 'fabulous' tales used in French opera as they allowed him to introduce exotic elements and spectacle (preface to his final drama, *Teti e Peleo*, 1749, as cited in Lindgren & Caruso, 2001). He was also able to push the boundaries of the static opera seria conventions with a greater freedom of structure that challenged the prevailing rigid formula of alternating action contained in secco recitative with suspension aria. According to Caruso (1993, p.xxi) this was another point of similarity with French musical theatre where this kind of strict recitative/aria alternation was unheard of in this period. Rolli felt more at liberty to experiment with a freer structure along with other less conventional practices, such as inserting recitative between aria verses, for example, in *Arianna in Naxo,* or by combining recitative, aria duet and coro all in the same scene, which can be seen at the beginning of *Polifemo*.

Rolli's Plots

Sources

All librettos are held at the British Library (GB-Lbl) with the following shelf marks:

Arianna in Naxo	639.d.21.(6.)
Enea nel Lazio	11714.aa.23.(1.)
Polifemo	11714.aa.21.(11.)
Polifemo (revised)	907.i.11.(1.)
Ifigenia in Aulide	907.i.2.(5.)

Arianna in Naxo

Cast list:

Arianna, daughter of Minos, King of Crete	Maria Segatti, replaced in April 1734 by Francesca Cuzzoni[18]
Antiope, Queen of the Amazons	Celeste Hempson

[17] Dorris (1967, p.142) notes that it is often difficult to distinguish between original and adapted librettos as 'an "original" work could be almost completely formula, while an adaptation was often so completely re-worked as to be barely recognizable.'

[18] See Table 6 for voice types.

Teseo, son of Aegeus, King of Athens	Senesino
The god Libero, disguised as his high-priest Onaro	Francesca Bertolli
Piritoo, son of Ixion, King of the Lapiths	Antonio Montagnana

This story is taken from various sources of Greek mythology and weaves together three different strands of stories involving Arianna and Teseo.[19] The first concerns the flight of these two lovers, Arianna and Teseo, from the island of Crete to Naxos after Teseo has killed the Minotaur. The second deals with the Amazon, Antiope, who is married to Teseo and is searching for him, and the third strand is the friendship that springs up between Piritoo and Teseo. Piritoo is the King of the Lapiths in Thessaly and has heard rumours of Teseo's courage and strength in battle. He seeks out Teseo intending to challenge him to fight and thereby test this strength. When they meet however, they are so impressed by each other that they take an oath of friendship. Although this role appears dramatically superfluous, it was necessary to give the bass, Montagnana, a part. The fifth character in the opera is the god Libero who is disguised until the end of the opera as the high priest Onaro.

The action begins on the island of Crete but soon moves, after two scenes, to the island of Naxos. Arianna is being pursued by Libero and Teseo by Antiope, both of whom try to win over the object of their desires by devious means. Antiope tries to create suspicion of Teseo's love in Arianna's mind and Libero uses his divine powers to cause Teseo's shipwreck, appearing in a dream to Teseo and induce Arianna to fall asleep. Piritoo, although initially seeking out Teseo to challenge him to a duel, becomes his ally and accomplice, helping him to avoid Antiope. The *lieto fine* is achieved by Teseo leaving Naxos with Antiope, as is his duty, having been warned by Libero that it is the only way to save Arianna, and by Arianna realising that she has fallen in love with Libero when he reveals himself to her. The psychological interest lies in the character development of the two leading roles. Arianna begins with a simple unshakeable love for Teseo which she then begins to question and doubt; she ultimately capitulates to this uncertainty when she

[19] Detailed accounts of Teseo's life are given in Plutarch's *Life of Theseus* (c.50-c.150 AD.) For further details of the sources of mythological literature see the relevant entries in Hornblower, Spawforth & Eidinow (Eds., 2012).

succumbs to Libero. Teseo's transformation of character is arguably more extreme as he is compelled to change from being a conquering and dominant hero at the beginning to the eventual realisation that he must humbly yield to a greater power.

Rolli returned to his literary roots at the beginning of *Arianna in Naxo,* portraying a scene of pastoral serenity. The scene is set on the sea shore with a ship in the distance. The gates to the labyrinth are shut giving the opportunity for Teseo to enter triumphantly and vigorously in scene ii, brandishing the club with which he has killed the Minotaur and presenting a dramatic contrast to the lyrical peace of the opening. In Act II Rolli introduces some spectacular stage effects with Libero appearing within a 'luminosa nuvola' (bright cloud), the temple darkening, and thunder and lightning accompanying the furious voice of the unseen god. Act III concentrates on building the dramatic tension to the concluding dénouement, when all is resolved, at which point Rolli was able to introduce dancers as a final exciting visual element.

Enea nel Lazio

Cast list:

Lavinia, daughter of Latino and Amata	Cuzzoni
Camilla, Princess of the Volsci	Hempson
Amata, wife of Latino and mother of Lavinia	Bertolli
Enea, Prince of the Trojans	Senesino
Pallante, son of Evandro, King of Palatine	Segatti
Turno, King of the Rutuli tribe	Montagnana
Latino, King of Laurentum, husband of Amata and father of Lavinia	Filippo Rochetti

Although Enea is a character in Homer's *Iliad* this plot comes more from Roman than Greek mythology and is very loosely based on part of Virgil's *Aeneid*.[20] It opens with Enea's arrival in Lazio and his election, supported by Pallante and Latino, as King of the Tirenni. Enea falls in love with Lavinia, Latino's daughter, but this is opposed by Turno, Camilla and Lavinia's mother, Amata, not wanting Laurentum to pass to a foreigner. Turno's real

[20] *Iliad,* 900-800 BC. *Aeneid*, 29-19 BC.

motivation in opposing the match is his own love for Lavinia. Enea is supported by his mother, the goddess Venus, who appears in Act I, scene i to promise victory to her son.

In Act II Turno and Camilla persuade Latino to fight with them against Enea. Latino is unsure whether this is the right course of action because he has promised Lavinia that she can choose her own husband. In the following battle, Turno abducts Lavinia to prevent Enea from capturing her, but Venus sends down a cloud to cover Lavinia, wafts her away and places her by Enea's side. The battle goes against Turno and his allies and Camilla is sent to seek terms with Enea. Camilla meets Pallante who professes his love for her but is rebuffed. She then meets Enea and offers him the throne of Laurentum if Lavinia is returned. This offer is rejected so Camilla offers up Turno for a duel.

In Act III Turno and his allies are preparing for further battle when the gates of the temple of Janus fly open and flames are seen within. Camilla follows a beckoning hand inside the temple and re-emerges with a sword which she says is a 'dono celeste' (celestial gift). Everyone now believes that the gods are on their side, but Enea also wins the second battle. He disarms Turno who pleads for his life, agreeing to give up Lavinia. Enea notices that Turno is wearing Pallante's belt and assumes that he has killed him. As Enea is about to take revenge and kill Turno, Lavinia rushes on to say that Pallante is only wounded. Latino gives Lavinia to Enea and peace ensues.

Unlike the libretto of *Arianna in Naxo* this text does not contain the psychological interest of watching the characters develop and grow as they have their hopes and beliefs challenged. The only character who appears hesitant is the King, Latino, and his indecision as to the right course of action is constant throughout. This only serves to make him appear weak. Turno's capitulation to Enea at the end of the opera when he has been conquered appears self-serving rather than noble. The other characters remain true to their personality types as revealed at the outset, giving little opportunity to show different facets of their characters during arias. To offset this lack of dramatic conflict and growth within the characters there are more special effects, changes of set and general spectacle to capture the audience's attention. Along with *Mitridate*, *Enea nel Lazio* requires the largest number of sets, eight, with a different set being required for each of the four scenes in Act III. This final act is very short – the four scenes containing only six and a half pages of text (see Table 8) – but contains a spectacular passage in the first scene where the gates of the temple fly violently open and flashes burst from within. Camilla enters the temple and

reappears with a naked sword in her hand taken from the altar. This is interpreted as a sign that victory for Camilla and her allies will be forthcoming but quickly appears absurd and completely extraneous to the drama when shortly afterwards, in scene iii, we see them in defeat. Other special effects in both Acts I and II require clouds to appear and descend on stage containing the goddess Venus in her chariot. Having proved himself with his initial success in *Arianna in Naxo* perhaps Rolli was allowing himself free rein to indulge his predilection for exotic elements in his librettos as there is a sense that this final grand spectacle in the third act was inserted somewhat arbitrarily.

Table 8. Number of scenes and pages in the librettos for Porpora's London operas

		Arianna in Naxo	***Enea nel Lazio***	***Polifemo***	***Ifigenia in Aulide***	***Mitridate***
NUMBER OF SCENES	ACT I	7	5	6	6	8
	ACT II	6	5	7	6	11
	ACT III	6	4	7	5	16
	TOTAL	**19**	**14**	**20**	**17**	**35**
NUMBER OF PAGES[21]	ACT I	10	10	10	10	14
	ACT II	10	8.5	10	9	11
	ACT III	10	6.5	13	7	15
	TOTAL	**30**	**25**	**33**	**26**	**40**

Polifemo

Cast list:

Polifemo	Montagnana
Aci	Farinelli
Galatea	Cuzzoni
Ulisse	Senesino
Calipso	Bertolli/Santa Tasca
Nerea	Segatti

The plot of *Polifemo* is similar to *Arianna in Naxo* in that it uses three ideas woven together from Greek mythology.[22] The principal theme comes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (xiii, 750) concerning the story of the shepherd Aci, the sea nymph Galatea and the Cyclops

[21] Taken from the Italian text only.
[22] Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (finished by 8 AD) and Homer's *Odyssey* (900- 800 BC).

Polifemo. Aci and Galatea are in love but Polifemo, who also desires Galatea, kills Aci in a jealous rage. Galatea prevails upon the gods to save her love and Aci is returned, much to Polifemo's despair, as a river-god. The second theme comes from Homer's *Odyssey* telling how Ulisse is captured by Polifemo who intends to kill him and his men. Ulisse manages to drug Polifemo and, while he is sleeping, blinds the Cyclops in his one eye and he and his men escape strapped to the underside of Polifemo's rams. For the third theme in this libretto Rolli portrayed Calipso as Ulisse's friend and ally, whereas in the *Odyssey* they meet long after Ulisse has escaped from the monster.

Perhaps Rolli was striving for greater dramatic truth here, as in the popular *Arianna in Naxo,* aiming for believable and multi-faceted characters to a greater extent than with his previous libretto, *Enea nel Lazio.* The story is uncomplicated and derives most of its interest from the strong characterization of the monster, Polifemo, particularly in the third act. He is unsurprisingly portrayed as hideous and cruel, but Rolli reveals his despair in Act III when he has everything taken from him. Polifemo's loss is exacerbated upon learning of Aci's newly acquired immortal status with which he is taunted by the former lowly shepherd. The text suggests that Polifemo may deserve our sympathy to some extent as his pain is compounded by having his sight taken from him by his father, Neptune– a fate worse than death in his opinion. Galatea is also shown to be more than unidimensional as she loses her god-like serenity with the death of Aci, pleading for his life in her despair.

Once more a pastoral element is much in evidence from the beginning, though with a nautical variant here. The opening of the opera depicts a serene and charming scene of Galatea and Calipso landing from their sea-shells, accompanied by Nymphs and Sea Gods. There are no spectacular stage effects involving thunder and flashes of light as in the first two operas but some neat machinery would probably have been required in Act III to show the rock falling on Aci and then opening to reveal his new immortal status.

The only real jarring aspect of the *Polifemo* libretto is the dramatically superfluous inclusion of Nerea. This character adds nothing to the plot or action and appears simply to have been a vehicle to give Segatti a role. It was clearly a problem and the part was cut entirely for the revisal of *Polifemo* at the beginning of the 1735/36 season.[23]

[23] See Chapter Seven.

Ifigenia in Aulide

Cast list:

Ifigenia, daughter of Clitennestra and Agamennone	Cuzzoni
Clitennestra, wife of Agamennone and mother of Ifigenia	Bertolli
Achille, a Greek warrior	Farinelli
Agamennone, King of the Greeks, husband of Clitennestra and father of Ifigenia	Senesino
Ulisse, a Greek warrior	Segatti
Calcante, a prophet	Montagnana

Of all Rolli's librettos for Porpora this one is the most closely modelled on classical tragedy and ancient legend. Again it takes its theme from Greek mythology but here Rolli concentrates almost entirely on the psychological conflict between the characters to the detriment of any action taking place.[24]

The opera begins at the point when Ifigenia and her mother, Clitennestra, have been invited to Aulide, ostensibly so that Ifigenia can be betrothed to Achille. In reality they have been invited so that Ifigenia can be sacrificed by Calcante to appease the goddess Diana whom the Greeks have enraged by killing a sacred deer. Achille knows nothing of the invitation for fear that he may discover the true reason for it. Agamennone has sent a secret message to Ifigenia and Clitennestra warning them not to come but it has been intercepted by Ulisse who wants the sacrifice to take place. Mother and daughter continue their journey to Aulide and arrive unaware of Ifigenia's intended fate. There they are met by a surprised Achille and a dismayed Agamennone.

Achille learns what is to happen and vows to appease Diana and somehow stop Calcante. There is no action during the first four scenes of Act II as various characters meet Agamennone and try to persuade him to their way of thinking. He cannot decide what he should do, so the focus turns to two more proactive characters, Achille and Calcante, who argue over the planned sacrifice.

In Act III Achille's soldiers try to smuggle Ifigenia away, but Calcante and his priests bar their path through the forest. A mysterious clap of thunder and lightning makes the soldiers think it is an omen and Ifigenia's sacrifice seems certain. It is only stopped at the

[24] Euripides's *Iphigenia in Tauris* (480-c.406 BC).

last moment by the appearance of Diana herself who wishes Ifigenia to become her priestess.

As in *Enea nel Lazio* the third act of *Ifigenia in Aulide* is short and dramatically very unsatisfying. The episode with the thunder and lightning appears to have been added to include some histrionic drama and the necessary aspect of divine intervention although it is not explained or developed. The *lieto fine* is awkwardly and abruptly contrived by the appearance of Diana who abruptly announces her wish for Ifigenia to be her high priestess, thus saving her from sacrifice.[25] Another similarity with *Enea nel Lazio* is the presence of a supposed authoritarian figure being presented as indecisive. In *Ifigenia in Aulide* it is Agamennone, King of the Greeks who is torn over the right course of action with regard to his daughter's sacrifice, whilst in *Enea nel Lazio*, it is Latino, the King of Laurentum who is unsure whether he should allow his daughter to marry Enea. In *Polifemo*, sympathy is elicited for the character of the one-eyed monster who develops from being solely cruel to being revealed as a tortured and unhappy pariah. Agamennone, however, does not arouse sympathy as he considers his dilemma, but rather appears weak and indecisive in much the same way as Latino does in *Enea nel Lazio*. The title character, Ifigenia, also adopts a somewhat passive role, seemingly unwaveringly content to be sacrificed, even though Rolli gives her the highest number of lyrical items[26], and therefore the opportunity to present differing emotions in her arias throughout the opera. The text of *Ifigenia in Aulide* appears to be a deliberate attempt to concentrate on the psychological aspect between the will of the gods and the desires of humans. Unfortunately this division is clouded by having the mortal Calcante taking the side of the gods with no apparent human doubts. Although Calcante is a prophet, which would indicate his servitude to the gods, Rolli ignores the opportunity here to present a character experiencing inner conflict. Having largely dispensed with spectacle in this libretto Rolli did not compensate for this with added interest in multi-faceted character portrayal or development.

[25] Although this connection between Ifigenia and the goddess Diana who took pity on her would have been known to the audience (Hyginus's (c.64 BC-AD17) *Fabulae*) the inept handling of the association and consequent saving of Ifigenia's life is awkward.

[26] In this thesis 'lyrical items' are defined as all vocal items except recitative (secco and accompanied) and passages of arioso.

The Cibber Libretto

Colley Cibber (1671 – 1757)

Porpora's fifth opera text, *Mitridate,* was probably written by Colley Cibber, under the pseudonym of Gavardo da Gavardo. Cibber was an English actor, writer and theatre manager, regarded as one of the leading players of his day. He was also fully involved with the managing of the Drury Lane Theatre, dominating its history during the 1720s before finally retiring in 1733 at the age of 61.

For 24 years Cibber ran the theatre efficiently, expertly negotiating with and mediating between squabbling actors, authors, businessmen and officials while managing to take to the stage himself, usually in leading roles, three or four times a week. Cibber wrote 25 theatre pieces – 12 comedies, seven tragedies, two farces and four English opera librettos, of which 10 were adaptations from Dryden, Corneille, Fletcher, Shakespeare, and Molière.[27] Salmon (2012) reports that 'Cibber's reputation as a dramatist has fluctuated curiously from one extreme to the other and from one era to another' and that it is generally now accepted that one or two of his plays are considered to have some worth and significance. In December 1730 Cibber was appointed poet laureate which reflected the high esteem in which he was held by King George II. As a court position the poet laureate needed to be sympathetic to the Hanoverian court and its government and Cibber had shown himself as such. He was well known at court and the royal appointment rewarded his 'naturally obsequious, sycophantic nature and his lively eye to the main chance' (Salmon, 2012).

In the 1728/29 season Cibber 's *Love in a Riddle* was performed to a hostile audience; an unknown author (*The Life of Mr. James Quin*, 1766, p.28) reports that 'it was damned to the lowest regions of infamy the very first night, which so mortified Cibber,that it threw him into a fever.' The subplot from this was subsequently performed as an independent piece called *Damon and Phillida* in the summer of 1729, enjoying success as Cibber had removed his name from it. *Love in a Riddle* was, with the exception of *King John* in 1745, the last of Cibber's works to appear on stage. Barker (1939) suggests that his enemies were alert to any works in which they thought he had been involved and were

[27] The four English opera librettos attributed to him are the masque, *Venus and Adonis* and the pastoral interlude, *Myrtillo,* both 1715 and with music by Johann Christof Pepusch (1667 – 1752), and the ballad opera, *Love in a Riddle* and its separately performed sub-plot, *Damon and Phillida*, both 1729.

quick to react aggressively against them. This may explain Cibber's use of a pseudonym at the end of the dedication on the *Mitridate* libretto of 'Gavardo da Gavardo, Giustinopolitano' and the scarcity of evidence tying Cibber to this libretto. The only evidence appears in a article in the *Daily Advertiser* of 15 December, 1735 which stated that

> We hear that after this Opera [Adriano] has had its run, there will be a new one call'ed Mithridates, the Drama of which is wrote in English by Colley Cibber, Esq; Poet Laureat, and translated from thence into Italian.

After the disaster of *Love in a Riddle* in 1729, Koon (1986, p.122) suggests that Cibber 'had no desire to spend time writing another play, although he may have written a libretto for the Italian composer Nicolai Porpora'. However, in the endnote relating to this (p.210), she writes 'Porpora, in England this year, [1729] had the libretto translated into Italian and wrote the music'. Although Cibber may have written the libretto of *Mithridates* as early as 1729, he could not have had Porpora in mind as the composer did not arrive in England until 1733.

After his retirement from the stage at the end of the 1732/33 season Cibber continued his involvement with court, society and music. Barker (1939, p.176) says he frequently sang in company and Cibber himself admits to doing so in front of Handel in his pamphlet, *The Egoist*, published in the *Gentleman's* Magazine in January, 1743. Although Barker (1939) makes no reference to Cibber being the author of *Mitridate*, he does confirm Cibber's interest in the Italian opera by citing him as the translator of the English version of *Polifemo's* libretto (p.176). This evidence is found in the *Notes Variorum* to Alexander Pope's fourth book of *The Dunciad*, published in 1742. In his note to line 305 'Teach thou the warb'ling Polypheme to roar,' Pope (1742, p.334) states that Cibber 'translated the Italian Opera of Polifemo; but unfortunately lost the whole jest of the story.' He suggests that Cibber's knowledge of classical literature was deficient as he mis-translates Ulisse's lines in Act III of Rolli's libretto. When Ulisse gives his name to Polifemo as 'Niun m'appello' (III.iii) he is pretending that his name is Nobody as he cannot tell Polifemo the truth that he is Ulisse, King of Ithaca. Cibber, ignorant of the myth, wrongly translated this as 'I take no name'. The blunder is continued further on in the act in scene vi when Polifemo cries 'Ah Niun traditor!' which Cibber translated as 'Where's this nameless traitor?'. A more accurate translation in keeping with the legend would be 'Nobody is a traitor', at which point in the myth Polifemo's fellow Cyclops, who have rushed to his aid, all depart again. The first

mistake was deemed important enough to be corrected to 'No one is my name' in the libretto printed for *Polifemo's* revisal in the following season.

In the English version of *Polifemo* Cibber has taken pains to translate the aria text into rhyming verse. The English translations of *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio* do not have aria texts with verses that rhyme whereas *Ifigenia in Aulide* contains similar rhyming schemes to *Polifemo* and *Mitridate*, suggesting that Cibber may also have been the translator of this fourth Rolli libretto. If this is the case, having already produced two translations, the choice of Cibber as poet for Porpora's fifth opera is not as peculiar as it initially appears.

Cibber's Plot

Source

The libretto is held at the British Library with the shelf mark: GB-Lbl 162.e.54.

Mitridate

Cast list:

Mitridate, King of Pontus	Senesino
Sifare, elder son of Mitridate	Farinelli
Semandra, daughter of Archelao	Cuzzoni
Farnace, younger son of Mitridate	Bertolli
Ismene, betrothed to Mitridate	Santa Tasca (known as La Santina)
Archelao, General to Mitridate	Montagnana
Arcante, confidant of Farnace	Bernardo Palma

The plot of *Mitridate* is taken from ancient historical sources as Mithridates VI was the King of Pontus from 134 – 63 B.C. Mitridate is betrothed to Ismene who loves him, but the King is in love with Semandra, the daughter of Mitridate's general, Archelao. Mitridate's elder son, Sifare, also loves Semandra and his younger son, Farnace, loves Ismene. The remaining charcter is Arcante, Farnace's confidant.

A fake disturbance in the temple has been arranged by Mitridate to convince Ismene that the gods disapprove of her marriage to him. Archelao pleads with the King to allow his commoner daughter, Semandra, to marry Sifare as they both wish. Mitridate wants

Semandra for himself and rages against her when she says she loves Sifare. He orders Sifare to lead the army against the invading Romans from which he returns triumphant. Mitridate then contrives to place himself and Semandra in a compromising situtation which is discovered by Sifare; this misunderstanding is later explained away by Archelao.

In Act III Farnace turns traitor and joins the invading Romans in an effort to win both the crown and Ismene for himself. Arcante takes Semandra to prison and gives her poison to drink which he says comes from Mitridate. Just as she is about to willingly drink it Archelao arrives and stops her. Mitridate and Sifare defeat the Romans but the King is wounded and dies on stage after consenting to Sifare and Semandra's marriage.

Assuming that it was Cibber who wrote the libretto for *Mitridate*, his apparent lack of knowledge of Greek mythology may explain why this is the only one of Porpora's five London operas that takes its story from ancient history with which Cibber conceivably felt more comfortable. There are differences between Cibber's and Rolli's librettos that suggest that Cibber was not familiar with all of the conventions of the Italian opera seria libretto. The first and most obvious comparison between his text and the other librettos is the length (see Table 8). It has a third more pages of text than the next longest – 40 compared to the 30 of *Arianna in Naxo.* It also has an astonishing 16 scenes in Act III with characters repeatedly going on and off the stage and the expected adherence to the exit aria convention often does not feature.[28]

When considering the librettist's intent there is another layer to add in *Mitridate.* Cibber would have written his text in English which was then translated into Italian, which is presumably what Porpora used when composing the music. Analysis of the English version of the libretto reveals a number of rhyming schemes in Cibber's aria texts which are dispensed with in the Italian to produce the expected two-verse aria text with the final line of each verse producing a rhyme. The English text of Semandra's aria in Act I, scene iv (Ex.2) follows a foursquare and easily defined rhyming scheme:

Verse 1: a b a b
Verse 2: c d c d

[28] These discrepancies are discussed later.

Example 2. *Mitridate*, I.iv, p.12

'Tho' fervent now your Flame may prove,
Nor scorns my humble Race.
Yet Time may charge on sated Love,
Your Royal Blood's Disgrace.

When Full of Possession palls the Tast,
Then, then you may reflect,
What Queens your Arms might have embrac'd,
And her you lov'd, neglect.'

When translated into Italian (Ex.3) the structure and rhyming pattern is less formulaic although, in accordance with convention, the last line of each verse now rhymes:

Verse 1: a b b c
Verse 2: d e d e c

Example 3. *Mitridate*, I.iv, p.13

'Or che Amor di me ti accese,
Benche nacqui in Cuna- umile,
La fortuna-mia servile
Non ti lascia che bramar.

Ma allor quando il tuo desio
Sarà pago del mio Amore
Rammentando il sangue mio,
Senza sdegno, o almen dolore,
Nol potrai tu rammentar.'

Cibber does not seem to have been ignorant of this convention however as several of his aria texts contain the rhyming of the ultimate line of each verse, regardless of rhyming patterns within each verse as seen in the following examples (Exs.4 & 5). That he did not

follow the scheme in every text suggests that he either expected the translator to make the necessary adjustment or that he was unaware of the rigidity of this convention.

Example 4. Archelao's aria, *Mitridate*, I.iii, p.11

'The Sighs, that now her Bosom heave
Arise from conscious Bridal Flame;

She knows the Joys she's form'd to give,
And dreading what you must receive,
Dissolves her Blushes into Tears of Shame.'

Example 5. Semandra's aria, *Mitridate*, II.v, p.44

'Ye Sylvan warbling Choir,
Whose melting Notes inspire
Delight in every Lover's Breast:

With your melodious Strains
Compose my tender Pains
Sing! sing! and lull my Cares to Rest!'

Whether Cibber expected the translator and/or the composer to follow his structure rigidly cannot be known, but whoever provided the Italian text clearly made a conscious effort to ensure that the English aria texts were translated into a more conventional format. In four cases one-verse aria texts in the English libretto have been expanded into two in the Italian.[29] For example, the short four-line, one-verse text that is Farnace's aria, 'When Truth with Falsehood, is return'd' (III.i), becomes nine lines with two verses in the Italian. Similarly, what is no more than a rhyming couplet for Semandra in Act III, scene xi:

'Relieve, ah gentle Death! relieve my Woes,
In the cold Arms alone is sure Repose.'

[29] The arias in Act III.i, III.vi, III.xi, III.xiv.

becomes eminently more workable in a standard musical format in the translation:

'Vieni o Cara – o amica morte,
Tu l'Amara – pena mia,
Tu consola il mio dolor.

Fra le gelide tue braccia
Dolce pace avrà il mio Amor.'

This restructuring of the text from one verse to two would have enabled Porpora to write conventional da capo arias with an A and B section. The three instances where the translator leaves Cibber's one-verse texts without expansion are discussed below.

Apart from taking pains to ensure that the aria texts, when written in Italian, conform to expectations by rhyming the last line of each verse, the Italian translator also ensured that the recitative followed the usual pattern of septa- and hendecasyllabic lines.

Structures and Settings Proposed by the Texts[30]

Any composer of opera seria was dependent upon his librettist providing him with a suitably stimulating plot with compelling characters engaged in dramatic situations for which he could supply a full range of expressive music to entertain and delight the audience. The librettist also had to concern himself with providing the singers with the requisite number of lyrical items to maintain the hierarchy, and also with working within the framework of established and accepted conventions for the genre. The following section will investigate the structures and settings as apparently proposed in the librettos, considering the choices Rolli and Cibber made, and their dramatic effects.

[30] Verses of indented rhyming poetry have been classified as being designated for setting as a lyrical item (aria, arietta, cavatina, ensemble or coro) and passages of non-indented and non-rhyming text for setting as recitative.

Cavatinas and Ariettas[31]

Table 9. Number of solo lyrical items in the librettos for Porpora's London operas[32]

	DA CAPO ARIAS	CAVATINAS	ARIETTAS	TOTAL
Arianna in Naxo	22	2	6	**30**
Enea nel Lazio	23			**23**
Polifemo	21	4	2	**27**
Ifigenia in Aulide	21			**21**
Mitridate	24[33]		3	**27**

Table 9 shows the number of texts for solo lyrical items in each of the five librettos. The number of full-length aria texts (i.e. with two or three verses) is relatively consistent throughout the five works, but the number of other solo items varies quite widely. Rolli's first use of the one-verse aria (cavatina) text in *Arianna in Naxo* is in the last scene (vii) of Act I. This cavatina, Arianna's 'Il tuo dolce mormorio', provides an effective and dramatic contrast with the aria it immediately follows at the end of the previous scene (I.vi), 'No, non amasti mai', where Antiope tells of the horror and pain of being in love. Although both Antiope and Arianna are separated from their beloved at this time Arianna presents an altogether more serene and calm portrayal as she tells of the beautiful pastoral scene surrounding her even though it can give her no comfort. That Rolli did not write a two-verse text here indicates that he did not intend for Porpora to set a fully worked da capo exit aria. The dramatic contrast with Antiope is effective and allows Arianna to remain on stage for the remainder of the scene, bringing the act to a close with a duet with Teseo.

The second cavatina text is Arianna's 'Va mancator di fe' in Act II, scene ii. This is interesting because the Italian text differs from the English, which has an additional two verses. To complicate matters further, these extra verses do not come immediately after the first verse, but later in the scene after a line of recitative and an arietta (Ex.6), which is where the Italian text finishes. That these two later verses are part of the same aria text as the first is clear as the third verse is almost an exact reiteration of the first, suggesting that this should be the da capo repeat. It would appear that Porpora was not happy to leave the

[31] All two- (or three-) verse aria texts are categorized as 'Da Capo Arias', one-verse aria texts as 'Cavatinas' and solo lyrical texts of only a few lines, which are not suitable for development because of their place in the drama, as 'Ariettas'.

[32] These figures have been compiled from the Italian version of the librettos.

[33] This figure does not include a two-verse text, the first verse of which is for Sifare only, as it then becomes a duet for Sifare and Semandra in the second verse. 'Quando de miei desiri', I.iv.

aria as a one-verse cavatina and set an expanded text to create the enlarged structure of a da capo aria containing a line of recitative and arietta within. Perhaps the English translation, prepared for the audience's word book, was then taken from the score. Whether Rolli, Porpora or someone else wrote the new poetry is impossible to tell. Dramatically it is effective as the fractured structure reflects Arianna's brittle state of mind, as she breaks off from her opening verse to instruct Teseo to read the words carved on the tree, accusing him of infidelity. When he has done so she vehemently resumes her invective, commanding Teseo's departure.[34]

Example 6. *Arianna in Naxo*, II. ii, p.32

Ar. Begone, faithleſs man,
Far from me begone?
When to me thou offered'ſt love,
Then, another thou betrayd'ſt;
Begone, ungrateful man!

Aria: A

Read, Read, faithleſs man, and think upon thy ſelf.

Recitative

T. reads.] Truſt not, O fond heart,
To him who has already broke his faith.

Arietta

Theſ. Ah cruel! and believ'ſt thou rather theſe trees than me?

Ar. Perfidous man! yes, 'tis true:
I know thou'rt falſe.
Go, cruel, make thy boaſt,
That to an innocent heart,
And to love reciprocal,
Thou haſt been faithleſs.

Aria: B

Go, faithleſs man,
Far from me begone!
When to me thou offerd'ſt love,
Then another thou betrayd'ſt;
Begone, ungrateful man! [*exit.*

Aria: A

In *Polifemo,* Rolli wrote a cavatina text for Galatea in Act II, scene iv, 'Placidetti Zeffiretti', imploring the breezes to guide her to safety. A passage of recitative between herself and Polifemo then replaces the B section, before the opening verse is repeated at the end of the scene. Rolli extended this idea further by writing another cavatina text for Aci, 'Amoretti vezzosetti', at the beginning of the next scene, v, with similar words and sentiment, asking for Galatea's safe delivery to shore. This elaboration of the expected structure is an example of Rolli stretching the normal boundaries of the opera seria schema

[34] See Chapter Six for further details on the musical setting.

and here it evolves fundamentally from the emotions of the characters. Rolli extended the initial sentiments expressed by Galatea to Aci, showing the congruity between the two lovers by their complementary cavatinas.[35]

The third cavatina in *Polifemo*, 'Alto Giove', is for Aci in Act III, scene v, when the former shepherd reveals his immortality in three short lines before Galatea bursts in to tell of Polifemo's fate. As with Galatea's cavatina in III.vi (see below), this more unconventional form was replaced initially by extending it into a full-length da capo aria, probably sometime during the first run, and then replaced by a duet for Aci and Galatea, 'Immortale, dal tuo sen', for the revisal at the beginning of the 1735/36 season.

The fourth cavatina, 'Sì che son quella sì', is for Galatea in Act III, scene vi and appears superfluous, being included only to give Galatea the chance to join Aci in gloating over Polifemo before sweeping off and leaving the stage to the amorously competitive positions of Aci and Polifemo. That this cavatina could be considered gratuitous is demonstrated as it was extended into a full da capo aria in the music before being ultimately cut altogether for the revisal.[36]

Four of the ariettas in *Arianna in Naxo* (for Antiope, Arianna, and Teseo) are part of the recurring theme of a verse carved into a tree trunk designed to spread doubt and mistrust in the two main characters' minds.[37] The remaining two are also ariettas of recall, 'Io son la sola sola', III.iv, and 'Sì caro ti consola', III.v, as Arianna first remembers Teseo's loving words to her in his 'Un altr' ogetto può', (II.iv), and then tells of her own love for him.[38] The use of the shorter arietta text in this opera is not contrived, but is woven into the story as a natural part of the drama. The same applies in *Polifemo* where the two ariettas are for the Cyclops. In 'Ma i piè non mi sostengono', (III.iii), he falls asleep having drunk the drugged wine given to him by Ulisse and the shorter lyrical form captures his disjointed thoughts and speech. The second, 'Furie che mi strazjate', is later in Act III (vi) when his rage enables him to bellow out only two lines.

In *Mitridate* there are three instances of arietta text, all befitting the shorter musical setting. Two are similar in that they are both delivered at some distance from the main

[35] See section on Large-Scale Structures below for further details.
[36] This and all the points on the cuts made for the revisal of *Polifemo* are discussed more fully in Chapter Seven.
[37] All four begin 'Non fidarti o core amante'. Three in II.i for Antiope and Arianna and one in II.ii for Teseo.
[38] See section on Large-Scale Structures below for further details.

action on the stage so are suitable for a shorter lyrical setting. In Act I, scene v Trifone enters the cave, 'dalla quale s'intende l'Oracolo' (from whence the Oracle is heard). A four line lyrical text ensues, 'La Vergine, che il Re vòrrebbe ìn sposa', in which the L'Oracolo confirms that Ismene will never marry Mitridate. The second arietta, 'Selvette ombrose, e mormoranti', is in Act III, scene iv when Mitridate is 'in distanza' (at a distance), and Sifare and Semandra, already on stage, hear him coming with dismay. Mitridate also has the third arietta, 'Deh! un Sol sospiro ancora' in the opera's final scene. This cannot be developed as the three lines are the King's dying words.

Accompanied Recitative[39]

It is not really possible to determine from the libretto if the poet intended for a passage of recitative to be set with string accompaniment. Generally the text set as a lyrical item is indented and follows a rhyming pattern. There are however two instances in *Arianna in Naxo* which are immediately striking as requiring special treatment rather than the more usual secco recitative setting. In Act II, scene vi an unseen voice proclaims two lines from the darkened temple amidst the thunder and lightning (Ex.7).

Example 7. *Arianna in Naxo*, II.vi, p.46

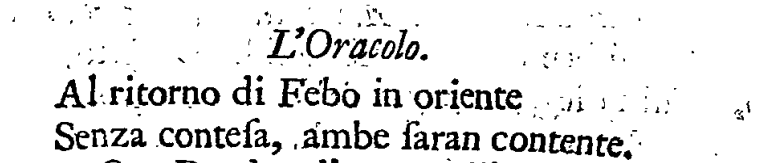
Voce.

Empio, l'audace tuo furor s'ingànna.
Per tuo duolo maggior, pera Arianna.

These lines are not indented but are given a title, 'Voce', and are rhyming hendecasyllabic lines, marking them out as unusual and therefore important. The other example comes in Act III, scene i and is very similar to the first example. Again there are two rhyming hendecasyllabic lines which are not indented and are entitled 'L'Oracolo' (Ex.8).

[39] See Chapter Five for an investigation into the use of accompanied recitative in Porpora's London operas.

Example 8. *Arianna in Naxo*, III.i, p.49



L'Oracolo.

Al ritorno di Febo in oriente
Senza conteſa, ambe ſaran contente.

Both of these examples involve divine intervention. In the first, a disembodied 'Voce' rages at Teseo and pronounces that Arianna will die because of Teseo's impiety. The second example has L'Oracolo predicting that both Arianna and Antiope will be happy in love when next the sun rises. As these are key moments for the drama, Rolli must have been keen to draw attention to them and they are set out in the libretto in such a way as to indicate that a special treatment was required of these lines. Porpora complied with settings of accompanied rather than secco recitative in both cases. There are several passages of accompanied recitative in all five of Porpora's London operas but these are the only two instances where the setting seems to emanate from the librettist, Rolli. Perhaps after overtly encouraging Porpora in this way to set text as accompanied recitative Rolli did not think it necessary in his subsequent librettos. That Porpora set another 10 passages of accompanied recitative in *Arianna in Naxo* apart from the two that Rolli apparently highlighted should have been evidence enough of Porpora's willingness to use this technique, and the composer does indeed continue with its use throughout the remaining four operas.

Ensemble Items

i) Duets

There is at least one duet text in each libretto and, as may be expected, over half of these (seven) are found as the last lyrical item of either Act I or II or, if in Act III, close to the end in the final scene (see Table 10).

Table 10. Number of ensemble items in the librettos for Porpora's London operas

	DUET	TRIO	QUARTET	CORO	TOTAL
Arianna in Naxo	2			1	**3**
Enea nel Lazio	1		2	3	**6**
Polifemo	2	1		2	**5**
Polifemo **revisal**	3			2	**5**
Ifigenia in Aulide	2	1		1	**4**
Mitridate	6			1	**7**

It is less usual to find a duet in the middle of an act and this is found only once in Rolli's librettos in that of *Arianna in Naxo;* Teseo and Antiope are given a duet in Act III, scene iv, 'Vieni, parti, fuggi l'incanto', which reflects both characters' excited states of mind. The duet setting here is implied by repetition of the text in a lively and impassioned section, which frames passages of recitative between the two characters, and an aria by Teseo. The only other deviation from convention, as far as the placing of duets in Rolli's librettos is concerned, is the inclusion of a duet for Calipso and Galatea, 'Il Contento', in the opening scene of *Polifemo*. Perhaps, as with the beginning of *Arianna in Naxo* which opens unusually with a non exit aria containing a passage of recitative, Rolli was immediately attempting to engage the audience with a subtle but definite departure from the norm.

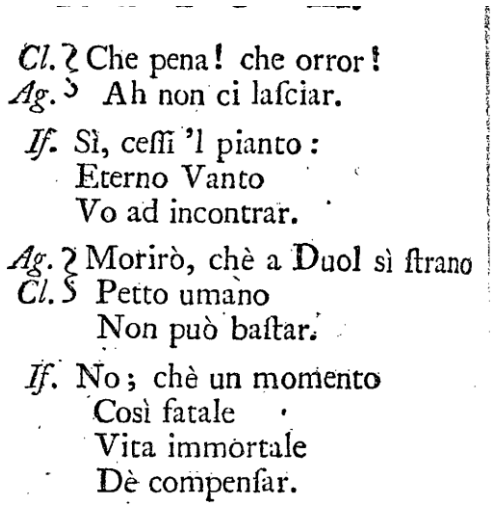
There are duet texts placed conventionally at the end of Act II of Cibber's *Mitridate* and in the final scene of the opera.[40] The remaining four duets in this libretto are placed to give a total of two per act.[41] This unusually high number of duets in *Mitridate* gives an indication that Cibber was more concerned with fulfilling the requirements of the drama rather than following the dictates of convention.

ii) Trios

Of the two trio texts in these librettos, that of Aci, Galatea and Ulisse in the final scene of *Polifemo,* 'Un bel contento', seems to be the replacement ensemble item for the customary duet in this scene.[42] The other trio, 'Che pena! che orror!', occurs in Act III, scene iii of *Ifigenia in Aulide*. Here Ifigenia tries to comfort her grieving parents, Clitennestra and Agamennone, in the face of her impending sacrifice. Although there are three characters involved there are really only two strands of emotion. There is no indication in the libretto that the three voices sing together, but there is for Clitennestra and Agamennone as they are bracketed (Ex.9).

[40] II.xi, Sifare and Semandra 'In qual così lontano'; III.ult., Sifare and Semandra 'Così doppo ria procella'.
[41] All for Sifare and Semandra: I.iv 'Quando de miei desiri'. This is a hybrid form of duet as the first verse is for Sifare alone and the second verse is then marked 'a due'; I.vi 'Pietà, pietà, Signore'; II.ii 'La gioja, ch'io sento'; III.iii 'Ah! ch'essa al certo è questa'.
[42] The trio however is preceded by three lines to be sung as a duet by Galatea and Aci. Both were subsequently cut for the revisal.

Example 9. *Ifigenia in Aulide*, III.iii, p.46



Cl. } Che pena! che orror!
Ag. } Ah non ci laſciar.
If. Sì, ceſſi 'l pianto:
Eterno Vanto
Vo ad incontrar.
Ag. } Morirò, chè a Duol sì ſtrano
Cl. } Petto umano
Non può baſtar.
If. No; chè un momento
Così fatale
Vita immortale
Dè compenſar.

iii) Quartets

The addition of quartet texts appears uniquely in Rolli and Porpora's operas in *Enea nel Lazio*. In Act III, scene i Camilla, Amata, Turno and Latino are twice involved in short quartets, 'Qual ti piace' and 'Spegni di Marte', which set Latino and his desire for peace clearly against Camilla, Amata and Turno and their thirst for war. These opposing views can be seen from the layout of the text which brackets the three voices together and always leaves the dissenting Latino on his own (Exs.10 & 11). These quartets also explain the presence of Rochetti who had no other lyrical items throughout the opera, but conveniently and neatly added the tenor part to the soprano (Cuzzoni), contralto (Bertolli) and bass (Montagnana) voices of the other characters. Rolli included an innovation here that has not truly evolved cohesively and organically from the drama, but appears as a somewhat gratuitous attempt to appear fresh and novel with this unusual structure.

Example 10. *Enea nel Lazio*, III.i, p.41

Cam. }
Am. } a 3 { Qual ti piace
Tur. } { Quelle porte
Apri o ferra.
Lat. Voglio pace.
Cam. }
Am. } Voglio morte.
Tur. Voglio guerra.

Example 11. *Enea nel Lazio*, III.i, p.42[43]

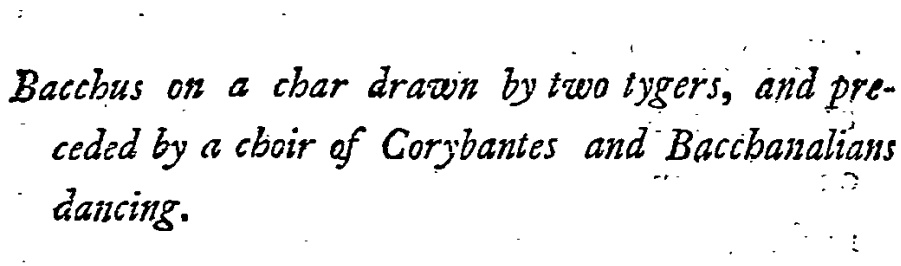
Cam. } Spegni di Marte
Am. } Se puoi la Face.
Tur. Or quelle porte,
Se puoi riſerra.
Lat. Voglio morte.
Cam. } Voglio pace.
Am. }
Tur. } Voglio guerra.

Coros[44]

Each of the five operas has at least one coro text which is, as convention dictated, the last item of the work (see Table 10). The structure of this final item varies as to whether it is one or two verses, or a repeat of the text earlier in the scene or, in the case of *Ifigenia in Aulide,* the da capo repeat of the preceding aria. *Polifemo* has one other coro text and *Enea nel Lazio* has two, all three of which are in the opening scene, designed to add to the immediate impact at the start of the opera. Handel wrote no items for chorus in his operas at the King's Theatre between 1729 and 1734. Therefore, without a chorus, the principal singers would have been required to sing the final coro. In Porpora's operas there are supernumerary characters on stage in every instance that a coro is required which meant that the principals did not need to fulfil this function as the chorus would have been available to do so. In *Arianna in Naxo,* performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields, the English version of the libretto specifies a choir and dancing (Ex.12) suggesting that both a chorus and a troupe of dancers were required for this.[45]

[43] Latino's line 'Voglio morte' has probably been incorrectly switched with Camilla and Amate's 'Voglio pace' here as it appears the other way round in the English version of the libretto and makes more sense with the characters if reversed as in Example 10.
[44] Throughout this thesis 'coro' is used for text and music to be sung by several performers. 'Chorus' is used to describe additional singers to the principals.
[45] The corresponding word 'dancing' is not in the Italian version, nor is it in the score.

Example 12. *Arianna in Naxo*, III.ultima, p.64


Bacchus on a char drawn by two tygers, and preceded by a choir of Corybantes and Bacchanalians dancing.

The popularity of dancing in the theatre was growing in the 1730s, which is perhaps what prompted the inclusion of this art-form into the 'Opera of the Nobility's' first production. Whether it came from Rolli, the English translator, or elsewhere is uncertain and there is no further mention of dancing in Porpora's other London operas, suggesting it was not universally applauded. During the 1734/35 season Handel collaborated with the internationally renowned French dancer and choreographer Marie Sallé. After the initial production however, Sallé's involvement did not extend to dancing any further prologues.[46]

In *Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Mitridate* there is only the one final coro, although non-singing supernumerary characters are required elsewhere in these operas. Theoretically, the principal singers could have sung the coro without the chorus in the final scene, but as a chorus was needed in the first three operas it is more likely that it continued to sing the coro in the last two operas.

Supernumerary Characters

The use of extra characters is reasonably consistent throughout the librettos and, as stated, they would have been required to sing at least in the first three operas and probably also in the remaining two. Four of the librettos have additional characters in the opening scene (only *Ifigenia in Aulide* does not. See Table 11.) Appearances of groups of subsidiary characters anywhere other than in the opening or ultimate scene are few. Additional characters do not have a very important function in these operas and do not contribute dramatically, advance the action or comment independently. The extra characters are there to add to the visual spectacle rather than the aural impact and other appearances throughout the operas are borne of textual necessity.

[46] Handel's revised *Il pastor fido* (November, 1734) was performed with the first danced prologue (*Terpsicore*) preceding a London opera seria. The text indicates that Sallé, as Terpsicore, the muse of dance, was to depict various passions.

Table 11. Scenes with additional characters in the librettos for Porpora's London operas

OPERA	ACT I	ACT II	ACT III
ARIANNA IN NAXO	i) Companions iv) Amazons v) A few attendants		ultima) Choir of Corybantes and Bacchanalians dancing
ENEA NEL LAZIO	i) Inhabitants & Soldiers iv) Council members	iii) Soldiers	i) Populace ultima) Populace
POLIFEMO	i) Nymphs & Sea Gods iii) Followers		ultima) 'Etc.'[47]
IFIGENIA IN AULIDE		(v) 'Exit with Mirmidons')[48]	ii) Mirmidons & Priests iii) Attendants, Mirmidons & Priests ultima) Mirmidons & Priests
MITRIDATE	v) Priests, Courtiers & Attendants		xiv) Soldiers xv) Attendants ultima) Attendants

Sinfonias

Of the five librettos only two have any kind of instructions for instrumental passages and even then the only one mentioned in any of Rolli's librettos is more implicit in the scene description rather than a specific instruction. This is in *Ifigenia in Aulide* where the final scene (III.ult.) opens with the description 'Marcia de' Mirmidoni e Sacerdoti' (March of the Mirmidons and priests). The other instance is in *Mitridate* where two sinfonias are called for, both in Act I, scene v. For the first sinfonia Cibber's directions are stringent and describe graphically what the music is to portray (Ex.13). He was less verbose with the second sinfonia for which he required only a 'short solemn Symphony'.

[47] This is how additional characters are referred to in the libretto, rather than being specifically listed.
[48] Although not specifically listed at the beginning of the scene there is this direction part way through the scene.

Example 13. *Mitridate*, I.v, p.15

A full Symphony of all Inſtruments is ſounded, which, from the moſt pleaſing Movement, ſuddainly changes to the ſtrongeſt Expreſſions of Terror, and Confuſion; at which the Temple ſeems darkn'd, the Flame of the Altar is extinguiſh'd, Statues of the Deities fall in Pieces, Birds of ill omen fly croſs the Stage, Subterraneous Groans are heard, with Thunder, &c. The Muſick continues the Terror, during the Concern of the Aſſembly.

Whether Porpora followed Cibber's instructions is impossible to tell as there is no extant score of Act I of *Mitridate.*

Liaison des Scènes

The convention of the *liaison des scènes* comes from the tradition developed by the seventeenth-century French playwrights Corneille, Racine and Molière. This convention demands that the stage be empty as rarely as possible which requires either one character to remain on stage while others entrance and exit around them, or that the section starts with several characters who then exit in turn. Strohm (1997, p.187) identifies the first of these two types as 'static' and the second as 'dynamic' or a 'chain' type. The 'dynamic' type tends to be more interesting but is more difficult to manage convincingly because of the plausibility of having several characters being in the same place at the same time at the beginning of a scene or section. The 'static' type of *liaison* could be problematic as one character needs to be present throughout several scenes requiring the delay of any aria until the end of the section because of the need to exit after the aria. This convention of the exit aria was firmly established in opera seria by 1715 (Strohm, 1997, p.187). If handled skilfully, the 'static' type allows the one constant character to progress climactically throughout a section to its conclusion where he/she can then deliver his/her aria before exiting.

For the most part both Rolli and Cibber avoided interrupting the continuity of scenes, an empty stage only normally occurring when there was a set change. There are

only two instances in Rolli's four original London librettos where the continuity is not maintained, both occurring in *Ifigenia in Aulide.* The first instance comes when Calcante leaves the stage after a passage of recitative when there is no set change (end of II.iv). At first this appears to be structurally clumsy, but perhaps Calcante's exit was deliberately conceived to mark the end of a long psychologically intense section involving Agamennone over the first five scenes of Act II. In each of the first three scenes Agamennone is approached by a different character who tries to sway him to his/her way of thinking concerning the sacrifice of his daughter, Ifigenia. In scene iv Agamennone is joined by the high priest, Calcante, and in an impassioned passage of recitative followed by an aria, 'Tu spietato non sarai', Agamennone tells of his refusal to countenance the idea of Ifigenia being sacrificed. He exits the stage leaving Calcante to conclude this section in Act II with a prediction that all that has been said in the previous scenes will have no bearing on the 'gran fatti' (mighty deeds) that are to come. Calcante's abrupt and unexpected exit after his recitative highlights his hurry to avoid Achille and repair immediately to the temple, and there would be no aria to relax the tension built up during the increasing psychological torment of Agamennone's dilemma.

The second instance occurs in Act III between the final two scenes (iv to ult.). Calcante exits after his stirring aria, 'Son nostre Forze le Turbe ignare', in which he declaims the gods' mighty power. The empty stage then allows for the dramatic aural and visual impact which ensues with the 'Marcia de' Mirmidoni e Sacerdoti', leading Ifigenia to her sacrifice.

This device of leaving the stage empty before the final scene is also used in the revisal of *Polifemo*. In the original libretto, although there is no instruction for Nerea to exit after her final aria, 'V'ingannate' in Act III, scene vi, the penultimate scene, it is most likely that she did. The drama has been concluded before Nerea's aria and the final scene is only required to present the *lieto fine* in a trio and concluding coro. This situation was slightly altered and the dramatic effect heightened in the 1735 revisal of *Polifemo* as the part of Nerea was removed for this new production. Here, the penultimate scene ends with Polifemo's raging passage of recitative, followed by the 'parte' (exit) direction. This concludes the action, leaving only a passage of recitative for Ulisse and a very short coro in the final scene. An empty stage between the two final scenes would not disrupt any flow in

either libretto, and in the revised version, Polifemo's abrupt exit serves to sharpen the depiction of his isolation before the joyous final scene.

There is only one instance of an empty stage in Cibber's *Mitridate*, which occurs between scenes ii and iii in Act I. In the opening scene of the opera Farnace is alone to tell of his misery because his beloved Ismene is to marry his father, Mitridate. He does not exit after his aria, 'Lasciar senza morire' but is joined by his confidant, Arcante, in scene ii. Arcante tells Farnace not to despair as Mitridate has hatched a plot whereby a commotion, initiated by the High Priest, will convince Ismene that the gods are against the marriage. This would leave Mitridate free to pursue the true object of his affections, Semandra. Farnace and Arcante then exit, leaving the stage empty with no set change required before the arrival of Archelao, Sifare and Semandra for scene iii. Although this undoubtedly interrupts the continuity of the scenes and appears at first to be poor structure, perhaps Cibber thought of this opening section as a Prologue. That the stage is not left empty again throughout the remainder of the opera suggests that this was a deliberate contrivance. A Prologue was a common feature of Cibber's English plays and he may simply have viewed this section as an introductory scene-setting passage before the main dramatic action began.[49]

Exit Aria Convention

As has been stated the convention of the exit aria was already firmly established in the early eighteenth century. Robinson (1972, p.54) speculates as to why this convention became virtually inviolable and asks

> Did the singers leave after an aria, for instance, because they liked the sensation of sweeping offstage to the audience's applause? Did they feel the need to relax after a prominent solo? Or was it generally felt among librettists that a sense of anticlimax was created if a singer relapsed from aria into recitative?

Whatever the reason, the acceptance of this device necessitated dramatic justification for any variance. Table 12 shows that Rolli used the non-exit aria carefully, and usually at the beginning or end of the drama.

[49] Many of Cibber's plays include Prologues, e.g. *Love's Last Shift* or *The Fool in Fashion* (1696) and *Xerxes* (1699). He also wrote at least two Prologues for plays written by other authors, e.g. *The Tragedy of Zara* (Voltaire, adapted by Hill, 1736) and stand alone Prologues, e.g. for the monthly literary periodical *The Muses Mercury or The Monthly Miscellany* (1707).

Table 12. Non-exit arias in the librettos for Porpora's London operas[50]

OPERA	ACT I	ACT II	ACT III	TOTAL
ARIANNA IN NAXO	1	0	1	**2**
ENEA NEL LAZIO	3	2	0	**5**
POLIFEMO	0	0	1	**1**
IFIGENIA IN AULIDE	0	0	3	**3**
MITRIDATE	8	3[51]	1	**12**

In *Arianna in Naxo*, there are two non-exit aria texts. The first is the opera's opening item, Arianna's 'Ahi! che langue oppresso il core'. Arianna is the only principal character on the stage during the scene and is required to remain after her aria to rejoice and marvel at Teseo's triumphant entrance in scene ii, the impact of which is not diminished by her exit. Teseo tells Arianna he is victorious only because of her and they are then able to sweep off together after his aria, 'Ho vinto ma non già', at the conclusion of scene ii, showing their unity. Arianna's remaining on stage is dramatically justifiable, especially this early in the opera. The second occurrence is the last aria of the opera, Arianna's 'Nuovo amore sì m'accende'. There is only the concluding coro to follow this, rendering Arianna's exit unnecessary at this final stage in the opera.

All of the non-exit arias in Act I of *Enea nel Lazio* come in the first scene and are part of Enea's spectacular crowning ceremony. Pallante's 'Per assalto o per difesa' is the first aria of the opera after 12 lines of recitative. He presents Enea to the assembled crowd as the Prince they are to crown their King. The focus is on Enea and his impending glorious coronation in this scene, and Pallante's departure early in the scene would detract from this build up. Venere's non-exit after her aria, 'All' affetto ed al valore', must have been prompted as much by practical considerations as dramatic. She has arrived in a chariot, pulled by doves, with cupids descending from another cloud which, presumably, all took some time to arrive on stage. For her to leave again after her short text would significantly

[50] This table includes only two- (or three-) stanza arias for a principal character where the singer is clearly required to remain on stage. It does not include arias for which there is no specific 'parte' (exit) direction but there is no need for the singer to remain on stage. The arias without a 'parte' instruction in the libretto are *Arianna in Naxo*: Antiope 'Già lo sò', II.i, *Enea nel Lazio*: Enea 'Bella mano che armasti 'l mio fianco', III.ii, *Polifemo*: Polifemo 'M'accendi in sen col guardo', I.ii, Aci 'Nell'attendere il mio Bene', II.v, *Ifigenia in Aulide*: Ifigenia 'All' Imago nel pensier', I.iii, Ifigenia 'Quando sarai fra l'Armi', III.i, *Mitridate*: Archelao 'Scaccia dal seno', III.ii: Ismene 'È troseo dell' onor mio', III.vi. Both of the *Mitridate* arias have an 'exit' instruction in the English version.

[51] As taken from the Italian translation. There is an additional two-verse non-exit aria in the English libretto which is reduced to one verse in the Italian translation, Semandra's 'In van con tanti voti', II.i.

hold up the drama. Enea has the third and final aria in this opening scene – 'Chi vuol salva la Patria e l'onore'. He does not exit immediately but only has to wait for the short final framing coro which implores the gods to protect and assist him as the newly-crowned King. There is then a mass exodus and set change before introducing the machinations of other characters.

The two non-exit arias in Act II, scene ii of *Enea nel Lazio* are anomalous, being the only non-exit aria texts Rolli has written in the second Act in these four librettos for Porpora. They serve however to build a situation of heightened drama and tension with an exciting visual aspect. The scene opens with Enea engaged in battle with Turno when two clouds appear with Venere's chariot which conceal both Turno and Lavinia. Enea is dismayed at the disappearance of both his enemy and beloved, and after four lines of recitative, has his first aria, 'Ma in vano tu contrasti'. He does not then exit as, in a state of anxiety, he stays to implore his mother, Venere, for assistance. Lavinia emerges from Venere's chariot with a non-exit aria, 'Grazie a te della disesa', and the reunited lovers are then able to release the tension in consecutive exit arias. Enea tells of his love in 'Dolce m'è la rimembranza', and Lavinia responds that the suffering endured has been ultimately worthwhile in the scene's closing aria 'Dalla iquarciato grembo'. Not only is this carefully constructed scene dramatically effective, but, if set as Rolli has indicated, it also gives both the primo donna, Cuzzoni, and primo uomo, Senesino, equal opportunity to demonstrate their brilliance with two arias apiece. Rolli perhaps wanted to tease the audience with the unconventional non-exit arias to begin with before producing the expected exit arias later in the scene.

The non-exit aria in *Polifemo* comes in Act III, scene iii. Ulisse has given Polifemo some wine which contains a sleeping draught. During the ensuing recitative there are two instructions in the libretto for Polifemo to take a drink. Rolli gives a third instruction to drink at the end of the first verse of Polifemo's aria 'D'un disprezzato Amor'. There is then a line of recitative before the aria continues with its second verse. The interruption of the aria seems to indicate that Rolli did not expect this to be set as a fully-worked da capo aria which enables Polifemo to remain on stage. This also makes greater dramatic sense as Polifemo is being drugged and falling asleep and a mighty da capo aria would be out of place here. Following this aria there are only three more lines of recitative between Polifemo and Ulisse and then a four-line arietta, 'Ma i piè non mi sostengono', where Polifemo sings that he can scarcely keep his eyes open before he exits the stage.

Rolli's three remaining non-exit arias all come in the final scene of *Ifigenia in Aulide*. Ifigenia has been led to the altar for her sacrifice at the beginning of the scene from where she sings of her willingness to die for her country, 'Per tua Gloria O Grecia'. Clearly she cannot exit after this aria as she and the audience anticipate her sacrifice. The dramatic tension is immediately intensified by Achille's rushing to her rescue, brandishing his sword. He is stayed by the arrival of the goddess Diana in a cloud, coming to save Ifigenia and appoint her a priestess. Diana's exit after her aria, 'Già scherzando a i lidi il vento', is unnecessary (and impractical) as there follows only Achille's final (non-exit) aria, 'Con alte lodi', and the concluding coro.

Table 12 shows that in the respect of non-exit arias *Mitridate* is entirely different from Rolli's librettos with half of the arias (12 out of 24) being non-exit. This is a major area in which Cibber appears ignorant of, or at least unconcerned about, a prominent opera seria convention as time and again the singer is obliged to remain on stage after his/her aria. Cibber was a regular contributor of plays to the English stage and would have been mindful of the dramatic effect of characters leaving the stage as has been suggested. Perhaps Cibber was more concerned with the flow of the dramatic action and structure of the scenes than adhering to the conventional practices of opera seria.

The initial non-exit aria is Farnace's 'Lasciar senza morire' and is the first solo lyrical item of the opera in scene i. As discussed above, these two opening scenes may be acting as a type of prologue. The next non-exit aria in Act I comes in scene iv and is the first aria in the opera for Semandra. In her aria, 'Or che Amor, di me ti accese', she tells of how Sifare may come to regret choosing her over a royal Queen. She stays to hear his response and in six lines of recitative followed by a one-verse lyrical text, 'Quando de miei desiri', Sifare avows his love for Semandra. This subsequently continues as a duet for these two characters in which they can express congruent sentiments, after which they both exit at the end of the scene. Although breaking with exit conventions the scene is dramatically well-conceived and realised.

Mitridate's first aria, 'Lascia il timore', in Act I, scene v, is another similar break with convention as the drama requires him to remain on stage to hear the Oracle's pronouncement on his and Ismene's marriage. Not only does he remain on stage after this aria until the end of this scene, v, but also until the end of the following lengthy scene.

Scene vi is curiously constructed and certainly does not adhere to the standard da capo exit aria formula.

The structure of Act I, scene vi is as follows:

Recitative:	Sifare, Mitridate, Semandra, Archelao
Aria:	Mitridate – 'Fuggi dagli occhi miei'
Aria:	Archelao –' Fiero così 'l mio Re'
Duet:	Sifare and Semandra – 'Pietà, pieta, Signore'
Aria:	Mitridate – 'Bella, che il tutto puoi'
Recitative:	Semandra and Mitridate
Aria:	Semandra – 'Lusinghe, diletto'
Recitative:	Mitridate and Sifare
Aria:	Sifare – 'Se in veder quei vaghi rai'
Recitative:	Mitridate, Sifare and Semandra

None of the five arias in this scene is an exit aria and Cibber therefore presumably conceived this scene as a continuous whole, not to be disturbed by the coming and going of characters on and off the stage. The scene concerns the wishes and emotions of Mitridate and his son Sifare, and Mitridate's General, Archelao, and his daughter Semandra. The poetry flows swiftly and the sentiments are impassioned as Sifare and Semandra confess their love for each other. Archelao defends his daughter's lowly birth by suggesting his own loyalty to the King makes the match between her and the noble Sifare favourable. Both issues enrage Mitridate who threatens Archelao with death and claims Semandra for his own. The dramatic impact of this scene is heightened by the vast majority of scenes in *Mitridate,* unlike this one, containing no more than one lyrical item (31 out of 35). This scene has six, including four in a row, rendering the exiting after every lyrical item unfeasible. The structure of the four continuous lyrical items in this scene almost serves as a type of quartet and if viewed as an ensemble item rather than two separate arias, one duet and another aria, then the non-compliance to the exit aria convention does not apply. Unfortunately, without an extant copy of the music for Act I of *Mitridate* it is impossible to assess what Porpora thought of this unusual structure and how he set this text.

Two of the three non-exit arias in Act II (Semandra's 'Augelletto, che cantando', scene v and Mitridate's 'Per un sol momento ancora', scene vii) require the singer to sleep on stage which was accepted as a suitable alternative to an exit after an aria. There is one other non-exit aria in Act II and this appears anomalous. Mitridate's 'Alza al Regno i guardi suoi' in scene i, after which he stays to woo Semandra and impart his plans to conquer her to the audience. The only non-exit aria in Act III of *Mitridate* comes near the end of the opera; Semandra's 'Vieni o cara – o amica morte' in scene xi, in which she laments the loss of Sifare and welcomes death. As she is imprisoned, an exit after the aria is clearly not possible.

It would seem that Cibber did not consider the exit aria a necessary convention to follow. What the singers and audience thought of this obvious and pervasive disregard of convention is interesting to imagine. Perhaps it is telling that after an initial enthusiastic response to the opera it could only manage a total of four performances.

Hierarchy of Singers

Both Rolli and Cibber were careful to maintain the hierarchy of singers as can be seen from Table 13 with the prima donna (Cuzzoni) and primo uomo (initially Senesino and then Farinelli) receiving the most number of lyrical items.

Table 13. Number of items per singer in the librettos for Porpora's London operas

		OPERA					
SINGER	**LYRICAL ITEMS**	***ARIANNA IN NAXO***	***ENEA NEL LAZIO***[52]	***POLIFEMO*** ***(Original lib.)***	***POLIFEMO*** **(Revised lib.)**	***IFIGENIA IN AULIDE***[53]	***MITRIDATE***[54]
CUZZONI	ARIAS[55]	6[56]	6	6	5	6	5
	OTHER[57]	1	1	3	3	1	6
	ARIETTAS	4[58]	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	**11**	**7**	**9**	**8**	**7**	**11**
SENESINO	ARIAS	6	6	5	5	3	5
	OTHER	2	1	1	0	2	0
	ARIETTAS	1	0	0	0	0	2
	TOTAL	**9**	**7**	**6**	**5**	**5**	**7**
FARINELLI	ARIAS	-	-	7	6	5	5[59]
	OTHER	-	-	2	2	1	6
	ARIETTAS	-	-	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	**-**	**-**	**9**	**8**	**6**	**11**
BERTOLLI	ARIAS	4	2	3	-	2	3
	OTHER	0	2	1	-	2	0
	ARIETTAS	0	0	0	-	0	0
	TOTAL	**4**	**4**	**4**	**-**	**4**	**3**
MONTAGNANA	ARIAS	3	2	2	2	2	3
	OTHER	0	2	0	0	1	0
	ARIETTAS	0	0	2	2	0	0
	TOTAL	**3**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**3**
HEMPSON	ARIAS	5	4	-	-	-	-
	OTHER	1	2	-	-	-	-
	ARIETTAS	2[60]	0	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL	**8**	**6**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
SEGATTI	ARIAS	-	2	2	-	2	-
	OTHER	-	0	0	-	0	-
	ARIETTAS	-	0	0	-	0	-
	TOTAL	**-**	**2**	**2**	**-**	**2**	**-**
SANTA TASCA	ARIAS	-	-	-	4	-	3
	OTHER	-	-	-	1	-	0
	ARIETTAS	-	-	-	0	-	0
	TOTAL	**-**	**-**	**-**	**5**	**-**	**3**

[52] One aria, 'All' affetto ed al valore' (I.i), for the character Venere is not included in this table as it was probably sung by a chorus member. Rochetti is not included in this table as he only has the two quartets in *Enea nel Lazio* and does not appear in any other opera.

[53] One aria, 'Già scherzando a i lidi il vento' (III.ult.), for the character Diana, is not included in this table. It may have been sung either by Segatti or a chorus member.

[54] One arietta, 'La Vergine, che il Re vòrrebbe ìn sposa' (I.v), for the character L'Oracolo, sung offstage, is not included in this table.

[55] One-, two- and three-verse aria texts.

[56] Although Segatti initially sang the title role of Arianna, Cuzzoni took over the role when she arrived in England in April 1734, leaving Segatti without a role in this opera.

[57] Duets, trios and quartets.

[58] Cuzzoni shares one arietta, 'Non fidarti o core amante' (II.i), with Hempson as they sing alternate lines of this recurring arietta. See Chapter Six for further details.

[59] This figure includes a one-stanza aria text, 'Quando de miei desiri' (I.iv), which is marked for Sifare (Farinelli) alone. The second stanza is marked 'a due' for both Sifare and Semandra (Cuzzoni) so is also included in both Cuzzoni and Farinelli's tally of duets.

[60] See fn.58.

In the first two operas, *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio*, Cuzzoni and Senesino, as the two principal singers, maintained parity, particularly with regard to the number of arias they each sang – six apiece. With the arrival of Farinelli in *Polifemo*, Senesino had to cede his primo uomo status for the remaining three operas but maintained his 'third place'. Cuzzoni and Farinelli remained more or less equal in the three operas. Hempson took the place of 'second lady' in *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio* with five and four arias to Bertolli's four and two respectively. When Hempson died on 11 March 1735 it was not necessary to inflate the remaining singers' tally of arias as Farinelli had arrived for the following opera – *Polifemo.* Having taken the title role of Arianna in the Opera of the Nobility's inaugural production of *Arianna in Naxo,* Segatti was left without a role in this opera when Cuzzoni took over the title role in April 1734. Segatti was then demoted to 'fourth lady' for the second opera of *Enea nel Lazio* being given a standard two arias to sing in this and the following two operas, before being dropped completely for the revisal of *Polifemo* in October 1735. After Hempson's death, Bertolli was elevated to the position of 'second lady' for the initial run of *Polifemo*, but she lost the entire role to Santa Tasca in the revisal of *Polifemo* as her part of Calipso was rewritten and even expanded for the new soprano joining the company. Segatti did not appear in the final opera with a text by Cibber; perhaps it was only Rolli who had been keen to include her in his librettos. Bertolli however is reinstated for *Mitridate* and achieves parity with Santa Tasca at three arias apiece in Porpora's fifth opera.

Montagnana enjoyed a unique standing in the operas being the only bass in all five and, apart from the two castrati, the only male singer to have arias written for him, even when the cast lists other male singers. In *Enea nel Lazio* there are two quartets in Act III for which the tenor Rochetti has been added to the cast. Apart from these two ensemble items Rochetti, as Latino, had only a total of 30 lines of recitative to sing throughout the entire opera, appearing in only four scenes. In *Mitridate* the tenor Palma took the role of Arcante with no lyrical items, appearing in seven scenes but with only 43 lines of recitative to sing. Montagnana was given a steady tally of lyrical items in each opera, providing both the audience and himself with enough exposure to be an integral part of the drama without detracting from the status of the principal singers. The only opera which diverges slightly from this pattern is *Polifemo.* As the title character, the role of Polifemo has more psychological and dramatic interest than Montagnana may have usually expected from his

roles. Consequently he had more variety in his solo lyrical items which Porpora expanded upon further in his musical setting; the two aria and two arietta texts for Polifemo in the libretto were increased by two more arietta texts in the score as will be seen in the next chapter. This was in contrast with the expected two or three showpiece arias that were more usual for Montagnana's characters.

Large-Scale Structures Issuing from the Libretto

Rolli occasionally dictated the structure of an aria, section or scene by his placing of the lyrical items and the recitative. The opening scene of *Arianna in Naxo* shows Arianna accompanied by a group of Teseo's Athenian companions. The opera's first lyrical item is Arianna's anguished aria 'Ahi! che langue oppresso il core' as she waits for Teseo to join her. After the aria's customary two verses Rolli wrote a passage of nine lines of recitative. Immediately following this is a repeat of part of the opening line of the aria, 'Ahi che langue, &c.' The direction from Rolli here is clear that he intended Porpora to write the A and B section of this aria but delay the usual da capo repeat until after Arianna has broken off to sing the passage of recitative.[61]

Rolli used a similar device in *Polifemo*; in Act II, scene iv Galatea opens the scene with a one-verse cavatina, 'Placidetti Zeffiretti'. The scene then continues with a 15 line exchange of recitative between Galatea and Polifemo. At the end of this section Polifemo exits and, after a further four lines of recitative from Galatea, part of the first line of her opening aria, 'Placidetti, &c.' is restated to conclude the scene. As in *Arianna in Naxo* the reiteration of the opening line of the aria indicates precisely where Rolli wanted a repeat of the aria to begin. In this instance Rolli extended the idea further as the following one-verse cavatina at the beginning of scene v is clearly the second verse to Galatea's cavatina in scene iv. (Exs.14 & 15). By indicating that a repeat of Galatea's text should immediately precede Aci's , Rolli was trying to ensure that the link between the two characters' emotions here was clearly conveyed not only by the words but also by the music.

[61] The dramatic effect of this is discussed in Chapter Six. It is an elaboration of a structure previously employed by Rolli. Harris (1989, p.xv) states that 'when building scenes with more flexible coordination between recitative and aria, Rolli tends to write refrains that enclose a recitative, creating a kind of da capo formal scheme with a recitative B section'.

Example 14. Galatea's cavatina, *Polifemo*, II.iv, p.33

'Placidetti Zeffiretti	a
Che sull'Onda	b
Scherzando volate	c
Alla sponda	b
M'appressate	c
Dov'è placido il mio Sen.'	d

Example 15. Aci's cavatina, *Polifemo*, II.v, p.34

'Amoretti vezzosetti	a
Che sull'onda	b
Volando scherzate	c
Sulla sporda	b
Riportate	c
A quest'anima il suo Ben.'	d

Alongside this device of deliberately delaying an aria's da capo repeat, Rolli dictated the structure of several scenes in *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo* with his use of one-verse aria and arietta texts. The use of these shorter forms is often as part of a larger overall structure as has already been discussed above in the case of two of the cavatina texts in *Polifemo*.

In *Arianna in Naxo* four of the ariettas are linked because the text consists of words carved into a tree trunk and are therefore immutable. In Act II, scene i the structure of the scene is as follows:

Recitative	Antiope
Arietta	Antiope
Recitative	Antiope and Arianna
Arietta	Arianna
Recitative	Arianna
Arietta	Arianna then Antiope
Recitative	Arianna and Antiope
Aria	Antiope

Viewed like this the structure of this scene appears fragmented. However Rolli drew the short lyrical items together as each arietta begins with the same two lines.

'Non fidarti o core amante
Di chi già mancò di fe.'

These are the words that are being carved into the tree in the first arietta and subsequently read and considered in the second and third. This scene is then concluded with a full, raging aria from Antiope, 'Già lo sò'. Rolli elaborated on this structure even further in the next scene (II.ii) when Teseo arrives and reads the carving on the tree so that there is a fourth arietta also beginning with the same two lines.

The other two instances of the arietta in *Arianna in Naxo* are also used deliberately as Rolli used this device to recall an earlier situation. In Act II, scene iv Teseo sings of his love for Arianna:

'Un altr' ogetto può
Venir a gli occhi miei,
Poi come vien, sen va.
Ma sola sola sei
L'immagine adorata
Che impressa è nel mio core,
E mai non partirà,

Se amor negar mi vuoi
Crudel però se'l fai)
Misero far mi puoi:
Ma poi che vanto avrai?
Un' alma abbandonata
Dell' aspro tuo rigore
Sempre si lagnerà'

Ex. 16

Ex.17

Rolli recalled these words in Arianna's arietta at the beginning of Act III, scene iv when, in her sleep, she remembers Teseo's loving words to her from the second half of verse one (Ex.16):

‘Io son la sola sola Ex.16
Immagine adorata
Che impressa è nel tuo core,
E mai non partira.’

The final arietta in *Arianna in Naxo* begins the following scene (III.v) and also recalls Teseo’s words from the second half of verse two of his same aria in II.iv. Arianna, still speaking in her sleep, now sings of her love for Teseo (Ex.17):

‘Si caro ti consola.
Quell’ alma innamorata
Dell’ aspro mio rigore Ex.17
Mai non si lagnerà’

It appears that the use of lyrical structures other than the most frequently used da capo aria form was contentious, at least in *Polifemo,* where there is a revisal to compare with the original. Both Galatea’s one-verse cavatina, ‘Sì che son quella sì’ in III. vi and Aci’s three-line cavatina ‘Alto Giove’ in III.v were cut for the revisal.

Rolli’s *Enea nel Lazio* and *Ifigenia in Aulide* librettos contrast with those of *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo* in that neither of the former contains any shorter one-verse cavatina or arietta texts, nor do they often stray from the more conventional alternating secco recitative – da capo aria format. *Mitridate’s* overall structure is unbalanced; Act I has eight scenes, Act II has 11 and Act III 16. There are many short scenes, particularly in Act III, but two consecutive long scenes (v and vi) in Act I as discussed above. Cibber also deviated from standard practice to perhaps an unacceptable extent in his construction with many non-exit arias and unusual ensemble placement. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the two most popular operas of the five, *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo,* are those that contrive to satisfy the demand for an expected format, combined with some degree of structural sophistication and psychological interest. It now remains to investigate how Porpora approached the challenge of setting these five librettos to satisfy an audience as yet untried and unknown to him.

CHAPTER FOUR: PORPORA'S INTERPRETATION AND REALIZATION OF THE LIBRETTOS

Sources

Manuscript copies of four of Porpora's five London operas are held in the British Library as part of the Royal Music Library, bound in 1735 for Frederick, Prince of Wales.[1] Each of the four operas comprises three volumes containing one act in each with the following shelf marks:

Arianna in Naxo	GB-Lbl R.M.22.m.29–31
Enea nel Lazio	GB-Lbl R.M.23.a.1–3
Polifemo	GB-Lbl R.M.23.a.7–9
Ifigenia nel Aulide	GB-Lbl R.M.23.a.4–6[2]

There is no such known copy of the fifth opera, *Mitridate,* although the British Library holds an alleged autograph volume, GB-Lbl MUS/ADD/14115, containing Acts II and III of *Mitridate* and Act III of *Polifemo.*[3] There is no extant autograph score or copy of Act I of *Mitridate*.[4] I have used these copy and autograph sources to investigate where Porpora has followed the structure in Rolli and Cibber's librettos to determine where and why he has imposed his own ideas on the setting of the text.

The London Operas

Arianna in Naxo[5]

Porpora stayed very close to the structure of *Arianna in Naxo* as set out in the libretto which perhaps is not surprising since this was his first opera for the London stage. In Rolli he had a librettist who was very familiar with what was required and perhaps Porpora was inclined to trust a fellow-Italian. What innovation there is seems to have been

[1] See Chapter Seven for a physical description of the manuscripts.
[2] Henceforth these manuscripts will be referred to without the identifying library siglum GB-Lbl.
[3] See Chapter Seven for details of autographs. Henceforth GB-Lbl MUS/ADD/14115 will be referred to without the identifying library siglum GB-Lbl.
[4] Although Markstrom (1992) lists a copy of *Mitridate* as being held in the Conservatoire Royal in Brussels this copy is of Porpora's earlier production of the opera in Rome, 1730.
[5] Full analysis and discussion of the dramatic effects of all points raised in this section on *Arianna in Naxo* can be found in Chapter Six.

driven by the text, which left Porpora to concentrate on delivering music in the 'new Neapolitan style' that would provide the contrast to Handel's offerings.

Solo Lyrical Texts

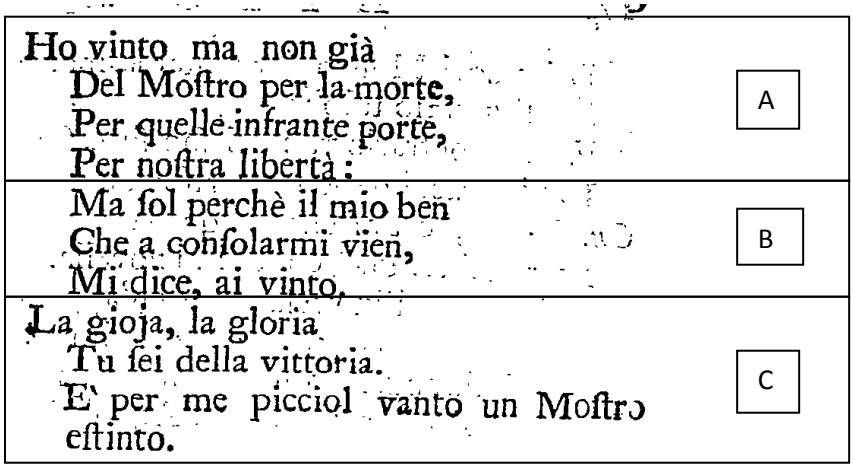
Any divergence from a customary alternation of dialogue secco recitative and da capo aria with occasional ensemble items is almost entirely directed by Rolli's libretto. *Arianna in Naxo* contains an unusually high number of ariettas, six, split into two groups. The first group is a set of four all connected with the words that Antiope has carved into a tree to make Arianna doubt Teseo's fidelity to her. Porpora followed the text, using similar music to link these passages where Rolli used similar text. The remaining two ariettas are instances of recall when Arianna remembers Teseo's loving words to her. Again, the similar music Porpora wrote in these instances mirrors the text.[6]

Rolli's libretto contains only two one-verse (cavatina) texts. Porpora followed the text for the first one in Act I scene vii, Arianna's 'Il tuo dolce mormorio'. This makes dramatic sense as it contrasts effectively with the expansive da capo aria it follows at the end of the previous scene (I.vi), Antiope's 'No, non amasti mai'. It also allows Arianna to remain on stage to conclude the act with a duet with Teseo. As was discussed in the previous chapter, the second cavatina text in Act II, scene ii, 'Va mancator di fe', differs between the Italian and English text and Porpora set the enlarged text with an extended da capo aria structure. This could have been Porpora's innovation as it does not emanate from Rolli and his Italian libretto.

In all of the 22 two-verse arias in the Italian libretto, only once did Porpora set an aria without a da capo repeat , Teseo's 'Vengo, ma oh Dio!' (III.iv). This is again part of a larger structure (see section on duets below). The only other modification to a two-verse aria that stems from Porpora is to set Teseo's first aria, 'Ho vinto ma non già' (I.ii) in three sections (Ex. 18). Porpora divided the first verse into two sections of four lines and then three lines. The setting is unexpected and unusual and reflects the impetus and excitement of Teseo's triumphant entry.

[6] See Chapters Three and Six for specific textual and musical comparison.

Example 18. *Arianna in Naxo*, I.ii, p.13



As was standard convention, Rolli wrote very few da capo arias that did not require the character's subsequent exit. Porpora did not have to consider how to respond to any potentially inconveniently placed non exit da capo arias in *Arianna in Naxo* because there are only two which are Arianna's first and last arias of the opera, 'Ahi! che langue oppresso il core' and 'Nuovo amore sì m'accende'/ 'Celeste forza'.[7] The opera's opening scene was carefully constructed by Rolli and the non-exit helps build the dramatic momentum through the initial stages of the act. The final aria does not require an exit as it is followed only by the concluding coro. Porpora wrote da capo arias in both instances here which, although they do not strictly follow exit aria convention, are sustainable due to their place in the drama.

Ensemble Lyrical Texts

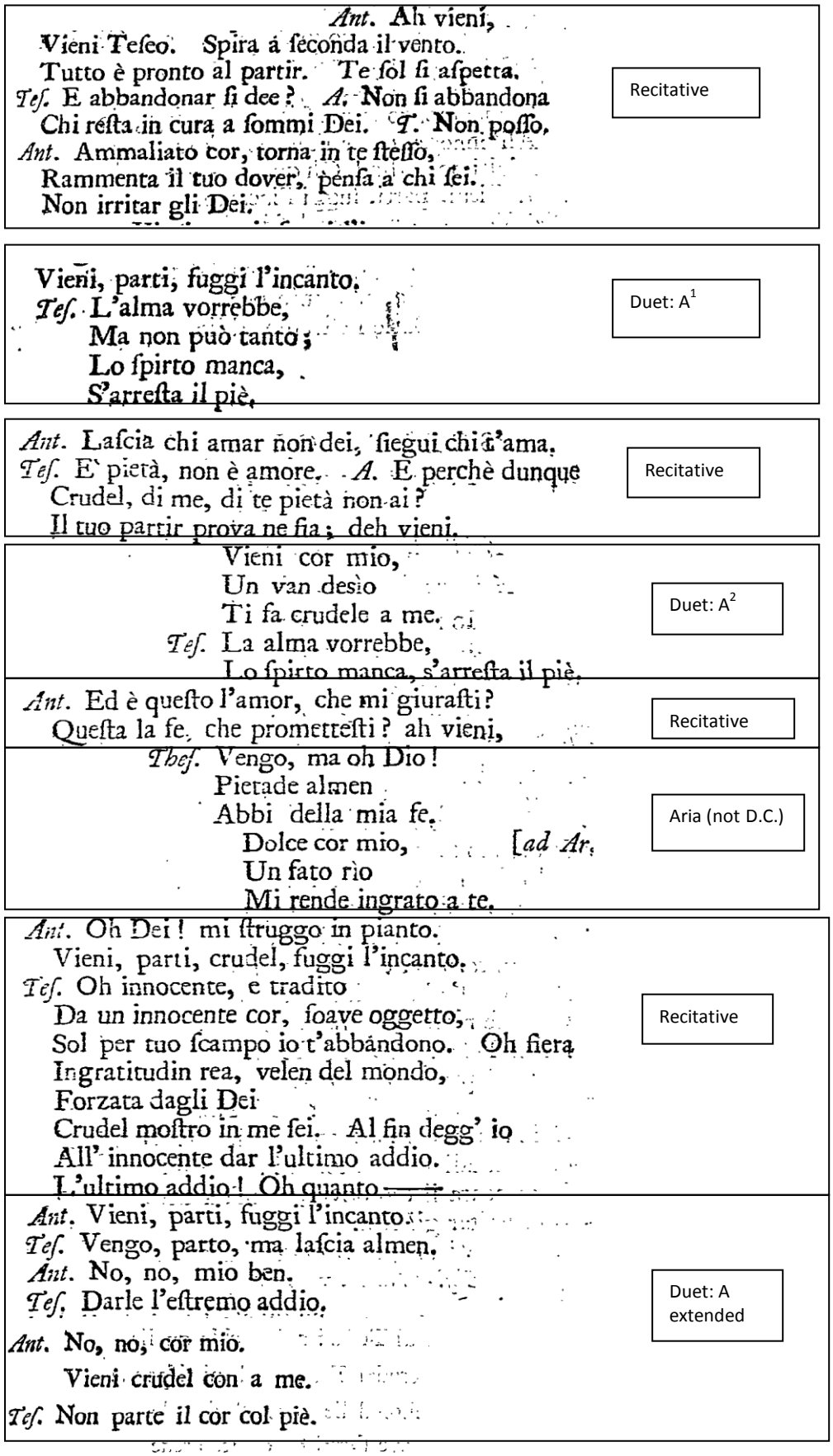
There are two duets in the libretto; the first, 'In amoroso petto', (I.vii) is for Arianna and Teseo. Porpora followed the text and set this chiefly in stock thirds and sixths moving in parallel motion which illustrates the unity of the pair as they often sing together. The second duet is for Antiope and Teseo, 'Vieni, parti, fuggi l'incanto', and is placed unusually, halfway through Act III (scene iv). In this duet, passages that are sung together are suggested by the repetition of text. They are part of a larger structure that is partly driven by the text, but refined and integrated into a cohesive whole by the music (Ex.19). The duet verses are punctuated by short passages of secco recitative, which effectively act as textual

[7] The first aria, 'Nuovo amore sì m'accende', is in the libretto but has been changed for the second, 'Celeste forza', in the score.

ritornellos to the duet sections. Teseo's aria, 'Vengo, ma oh Dio!' functions as the B section to the duet. After this aria there is another passage of recitative text in the libretto which continues to the end of the scene. However, in the score, after 10 lines of this, set as secco recitative, Porpora returned to a lyrical setting which provides the da capo section for the duet. This structure is clearly Porpora's response to the text and he chose a musical interpretation which is not evident from the poetry.

Teseo's aria in the middle of this duet passage is the only two-verse aria text in *Arianna in Naxo* that Porpora did not set with a da capo structure. This would not be appropriate here as it is part of a larger whole and a repeat from the beginning of the text would cause the entire passage to lose impetus. The aria follows immediately after a passage of secco recitative without opening or intermediate ritornellos. The A section is in two parts (A^1 and A^2), as Teseo pleads with Antiope to have pity on him. The immediate contrasting B section sees him wretchedly address the sleeping Arianna. A very short concluding ritornello leads into the final passage of recitative.

Example 19. *Arianna in Naxo*, III.iv, pp.57-61



Ant. Ah vieni,
Vieni Teſeo. Spira à ſeconda il vento.
Tutto è pronto al partir. Te ſol ſi aſpetta.
Teſ. E abbandonar ſi dee? *A.* Non ſi abbandona
Chi reſta in cura a ſommi Dei. *T.* Non poſſo.
Ant. Ammaliato cor, torna in te ſteſſo,
Rammenta il tuo dover, penſa a chi ſei.
Non irritar gli Dei.

Recitative

Vieni, parti, fuggi l'incanto.
Teſ. L'alma vorrebbe,
Ma non può tanto;
Lo ſpirto manca,
S'arreſta il piè.

Duet: A^1

Ant. Laſcia chi amar non dei, ſiegui chi t'ama.
Teſ. E' pietà, non è amore. *A.* E perchè dunque
Crudel, di me, di te pietà non ai?
Il tuo partir prova ne fia; deh vieni.

Recitative

Vieni cor mio,
Un van deſio
Ti fa crudele a me.
Teſ. La alma vorrebbe,
Lo ſpirto manca, s'arreſta il piè.

Duet: A^2

Ant. Ed è queſto l'amor, che mi giuraſti?
Queſta la fe, che promettеſti? ah vieni,

Recitative

Theſ. Vengo, ma oh Dio!
Pietade almen
Abbi della mia fe.
Dolce cor mio, [*ad Ar.*
Un fato rio
Mi rende ingrato a te.

Aria (not D.C.)

Ant. Oh Dei! mi ſtruggo in pianto.
Vieni, parti, crudel, fuggi l'incanto.
Teſ. Oh innocente, e tradito
Da un innocente cor, ſoave oggetto,
Sol per tuo ſcampo io t'abbandono. Oh fiera
Ingratitudin rea, velen del mondo,
Forzata dagli Dei
Crudel moſtro in me ſei. Al fin degg' io
All' innocente dar l'ultimo addio.
L'ultimo addio! Oh quanto ——

Recitative

Ant. Vieni, parti, fuggi l'incanto.
Teſ. Vengo, parto, ma laſcia almen.
Ant. No, no, mio ben.
Teſ. Darle l'eſtremo addio.
Ant. No, no, cor mio.
Vieni crudel con a me.
Teſ. Non parte il cor col piè.

Duet: A extended

There is a third duet in the score which does not appear in the libretto. New text for Arianna and Libero was subsequently added at the end of the opera and set as a simple B section of the ultimate coro. This provides a more conventionally placed duet setting as well as the unusual structure and placement of the ensemble item already present in the middle of the act. As there is an ensemble item in the final scene of Porpora's four other London operas (duets in all but *Polifemo* which has a trio), perhaps it was Porpora who felt this addition necessary.[8] Dramatically this duet, again written almost entirely to be sung in thirds moving in parallel motion, assists in showing the unity between Libero and Arianna which has come about somewhat abruptly with Arianna's sudden change of heart towards Libero.

There is only one coro in the libretto which frames the final scene. Porpora however expanded this in the music with a second coro. He may have been influenced by a trend appearing in Handel's operas in the 1730s of enlarging the final scene to provide more of a rewarding conclusion to the opera, rather than simply supplying the perfunctory and often inexplicable *lieto fine* by way of a very short coro. Dean (1969, p.146) suggests that 'Handel gave more and more weight to his finales....going out of his way to build a satisfying climax, generally linking the coro with the previous movement.' Porpora used the same technique in this finale; the additional coro has the same sentiment as the first of finding happiness in liquor, and acts as the A section to the new duet added in the music. In addition to the new coro and duet, Porpora set the first passage of recitative as partly secco and partly accompanied and he cut the second passage entirely. The structure in the libretto for the final scene is:

Coro: 1 verse	Recitative	Da capo Aria	Recitative	Repeat of opening coro
	Libero & Arianna	Arianna	Libero	

The structure in the score is:

Coro 1	Recitative		Da capo Aria	Coro 2	Duet	Repeat of coro 2
1 verse	Secco	Accompanied		1 verse	Libero & Arianna	
	Libero & Arianna	Arianna	Arianna			

It may have been that this change to the final scene was made when Cuzzoni arrived to take over the part of Arianna as her aria in this final scene was altered from the one in the libretto.

[8] The trio was cut from the revised version of *Polifemo* for the 1735/36 season.

Accompanied Recitative[9]

The main area in which Porpora was free to decide the musical setting was the passages of recitative text. As stated in Chapter Three, Rolli appears to have given a strong suggestion of where two passages were ideal for setting with string accompaniment and Porpora duly complied.[10] There are, however, a further 10 passages of accompanied recitative throughout the opera, some of which are lengthy and involving more than one character. This surely was Porpora's decision to set these lines in this way because of his response to the demands of the drama.

Enea nel Lazio

The libretto for *Enea nel Lazio* adheres more closely to the conventional format of alternating recitative and aria texts than that for Rolli and Porpora's first opera. There are no cavatina or arietta texts, nor are there any larger structures expanding the da capo model with additional sections as in *Arianna in Naxo.*

Solo Lyrical Texts

Porpora set three arias that have two verses without da capo repeats. The first comes in Act I, scene i, 'All' affetto ed al valore', and is a very short text, each verse consisting of two lines. It is sung by Venere who does not exit after she has sung but stays until the end of the scene which sees her son, Enea, crowned as King of the Tirenni. The character of Venere does not appear in the list of 'Personaggi' at the beginning of the libretto so it is not known who sang this part. Before this short aria she has three lines of recitative to sing but that is all in the opera. The range required would have been suitable for any of the three sopranos in the cast – Cuzzoni, Hempson or Segatti, but Segatti is already on stage and Cuzzoni and Hempson are required immediately at the beginning of scene ii. Therefore an additional singer (from the chorus) was required but clearly was not important enough to be added to the cast list. A fully-worked da capo aria was not necessary but something slightly more substantial than a passing cavatina was probably

[9] For a detailed investigation into the occurrence of accompanied recitative in this and Porpora's other London operas see Chapter Five.
[10] Voce in II.vi and L'Oracolo in III.i.

deemed more suitable for a goddess. Another reason for this being more than a cavatina is that the message that Venere is delivering is significant as she is promising victory to Enea. Accordingly Porpora set the text as a short strophic aria with a clear but simple A, A, B, B, structure.

The second two-verse text that Porpora did not set as a fully worked da capo aria is Lavinia's 'Grazie a te della disesa' in Act II, scene ii. Porpora curtailed the usual structure, probably because Lavinia does not exit after this aria and has another aria to close the scene. The dramatic effect of Rolli's scene construction was discussed in the previous chapter and Porpora followed this through into the music with a shortened structure containing no A^2 section. This truncated aria form then arguably does not require a subsequent exit and will not detract from the fully-worked da capo aria that Lavinia sings to conclude this scene, 'Dalla squarciato grembo'.

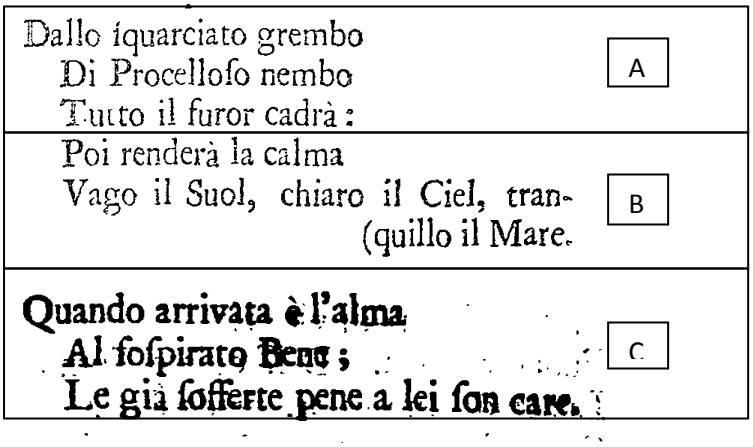
Act II, scene ii also contains the third two-verse aria text which Porpora did not set as a standard da capo aria. Enea has two aria texts in this scene and Porpora reserved the fully-worked da capo structure for the second of these, 'Dolce m'è la rimembranza', after which he exits. Porpora set Enea's first aria text in this scene, 'Ma in vano tu contrasti', as more of an arioso between two sections of accompanied recitative.[11] This is dramatically apposite as Enea is inflamed at having his enemy removed and their battle thwarted, and the fluctuating musical structure reflects his anxious thoughts. It also deals with the potential problem of Enea's remaining on stage after an aria in order to sing his second. Porpora clearly did not want to set two non-exit da capo arias in the scene and, despite Rolli's two-verse texts suggesting conventional settings, chose to set them with different structures, leaving Enea and Lavinia with only one conventional da capo aria apiece in this scene.

The only other modification to a two-verse aria that Porpora made in *Enea nel Lazio* is the expansion of an aria into three sections. The aria is Lavinia's 'Dallo squarciato grembo' which is the final aria of II.ii and Porpora chose to carefully reflect the obvious changes in the poetry in the musical setting (Ex.20). The first verse of this simile aria falls distinctly into two parts with the first three lines depicting the fury falling from a stormy cloud. Porpora matched this with a short and punchy allegro $\frac{3}{8}$ section. This is then

[11] See Example 52.

contrasted with the next section, B, which continues after the briefest of ritornellos and a pause, with no repeat of A. This is marked moderato, with a **c** time signature and is a more measured section with a pulsing quaver string accompaniment and long cantabile vocalizations[12] to portray the subsequent calm described in the last two lines of the first verse. The third section changes to yet another time signature of $\frac{3}{4}$, and moves to the tonic minor of D minor. This C section is different again with musical repetition and sequence leading to a sustained ending before the da capo repeat. In this simple setting for the final section Porpora reflected the uncomplicated emotion of the text that when the heart has obtained its longed-for treasure the pains hitherto suffered are pleasing.

Example 20. *Enea nel Lazio*, II.ii, pp.29-30



Ensemble Lyrical Texts

A deviation from the expected ensemble items is the inclusion of two quartets, 'Qual ti piace' and 'Spegni di Marte', sung by Camilla, Amata, Turno and Latino, both in Act III, scene i. Porpora followed the lead from the libretto in both cases with the three battle-hungry characters initially sharing similar material with contrapuntal entries and then often coming together and singing homophonically. This is contrasted with the impassioned interjections of the one dissenting voice of Latino desiring peace.

Enea nel Lazio ends with the expected coro, set homophonically with an A^1 and A^2 section. There are two more coros in this opera, both in the opening scene. This is a very grand spectacle depicting a large square before a royal palace, full of inhabitants and soldiers. Enea has arrived to be crowned King of the Tirenni and in the first coro the crowd

[12] 'Vocalization' should be taken to mean the prolongation of a word over several notes.

swears allegiance to him. After a passage of recitative which Porpora set with accompaniment, the coro is repeated with slight textual differences and Porpora treated this as the da capo repeat of the first coro. The second coro is followed by Enea's recitative and aria and then printed out again showing the da capo repeat of the coro. The opening scene is one of grandeur and spectacle and Rolli made use of the resources at his disposal, writing the two coros and presenting Venere and her cupids descending from clouds in her chariot drawn by doves. Porpora represented and intensified this in his music, setting some of the recitative text to be accompanied by strings and using trumpets, horns and oboes to accompany two of the arias and one of the coros.

Sinfonia

Porpora composed a sinfonia to accompany Venere's arrival (I.i) although this was probably borne as much out of necessity as dramatic impulse. Venere's elaborate chariot in the clouds would have taken some time to manoeuvre on to the stage requiring the instrumental covering music. Another short sinfonia was composed for Act III, scene ii, presumably for the same reason, when Venere's chariot makes a second appearance, although it is not mentioned in the libretto.

Accompanied Recitative

As in *Arianna in Naxo,* Porpora included many passages of accompanied recitative in *Enea nel Lazio*, clearly deciding that this potentially more trenchant style was better suited to the drama at these points than a simple secco delivery. Act I contains three such passages, Act II contains five, including two sections framing a passage of arioso as mentioned above, and Act III has three passages. This total of 11 is only one fewer than in *Arianna in Naxo*. Porpora must have considered the instances of accompanied recitative in his first London opera were dramatically effective and well-received, and decided to continue the trend into his second.

Polifemo

Polifemo was Porpora's third opera for the 'Opera of the Nobility' and by the time of its first performance on 1 February, 1735, he had been in London for well over a year.

Porpora seemed content to follow Rolli's lead in the first two operas, *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio,* and showed relatively little inclination to deviate or alter the structures and patterns as laid out in the librettos. In *Polifemo,* however, Porpora used settings of his own choice, making amendments and cuts to the libretto and altering structures.

Solo Lyrical Texts

From the autograph copy of the third act of Porpora's music for *Polifemo* (MUS/ADD/14115) it is clear that Porpora made many adjustments both for the original and the revised productions. Galatea's one-verse cavatina text 'Sì che son quella sì' in Act III.vi was extended into a fully-worked da capo aria which has a second verse text that does not appear in the original libretto (GB-Lbl 11714.aa.21.(11.)). The entire aria was cut from both the second libretto (GB-Lbl 907.i.11.(1.)) and from the Royal Manuscript copy of the music (R.M.23.a.9). In Act III, scene v, Aci's cavatina 'Alto Giove' was initially similarly extended into a da capo aria with a second verse of text that does not appear in either libretto. This expanded version appears in the Royal Manuscript copy but appears as a duet for Aci and Galatea both in the revised libretto and in the autograph manuscript.[13] Without the autograph manuscripts of Acts I and II of *Polifemo,* my observations on how Porpora set the music for these two acts are based on the copies prepared for the Royal Music Library.

Polifemo is the first and only of Porpora's London operas in which he set text laid out as recitative in the libretto as something else.[14] Porpora set many of these passages as accompanied recitative, arioso, or even as an arietta or aria. This varied approach can be seen from the first scene of the opera where the one short passage of recitative in the libretto is set with string accompaniment, leaving this opening scene with no secco recitative. Perhaps Porpora was now aware that he was writing for an audience which was more interested in the lyrical items delivered by the operatic stars than vast tracts of potentially unintelligible secco recitative. For this same reason of communication he may also have considered it more effective to portray the characters' emotions in these passages in lyrical musical forms than in a drier speech-inflected delivery.

[13] See Chapter Seven for a fuller discussion on the chronology, reasons and effect of these cuts and amendments in Act III of *Polifemo*.
[14] Without the music for Act I of *Mitridate* I cannot be sure that Porpora did not do this here but he did not in Acts II or III nor anywhere in the other three operas.

There are four examples of recitative text being set as a lyrical item, one in Act I and three in Act III. In Act I, scene iv Rolli opens the scene with a passage of recitative text for Nerea. Porpora, however, set this as a short aria, 'Giusta non à delle tue forze Idea' and, unusually, this now gives two lyrical items in a row – Aci's 'Dolci fresche Aurette grate' at the end of scene iii, immediately followed by this new aria of Nerea's. In his essay on opera in 1715 Pier Jacopo Martello (Weiss, 1980, p.394) wrote:

> when you end a scene with an exit aria you do not begin the very next one with an entrance aria. That would rob the music of its chiaroscuro. The instrumental *ricercate* [ritornellos?] would tumble over each other and instead of helping would hinder the effect.

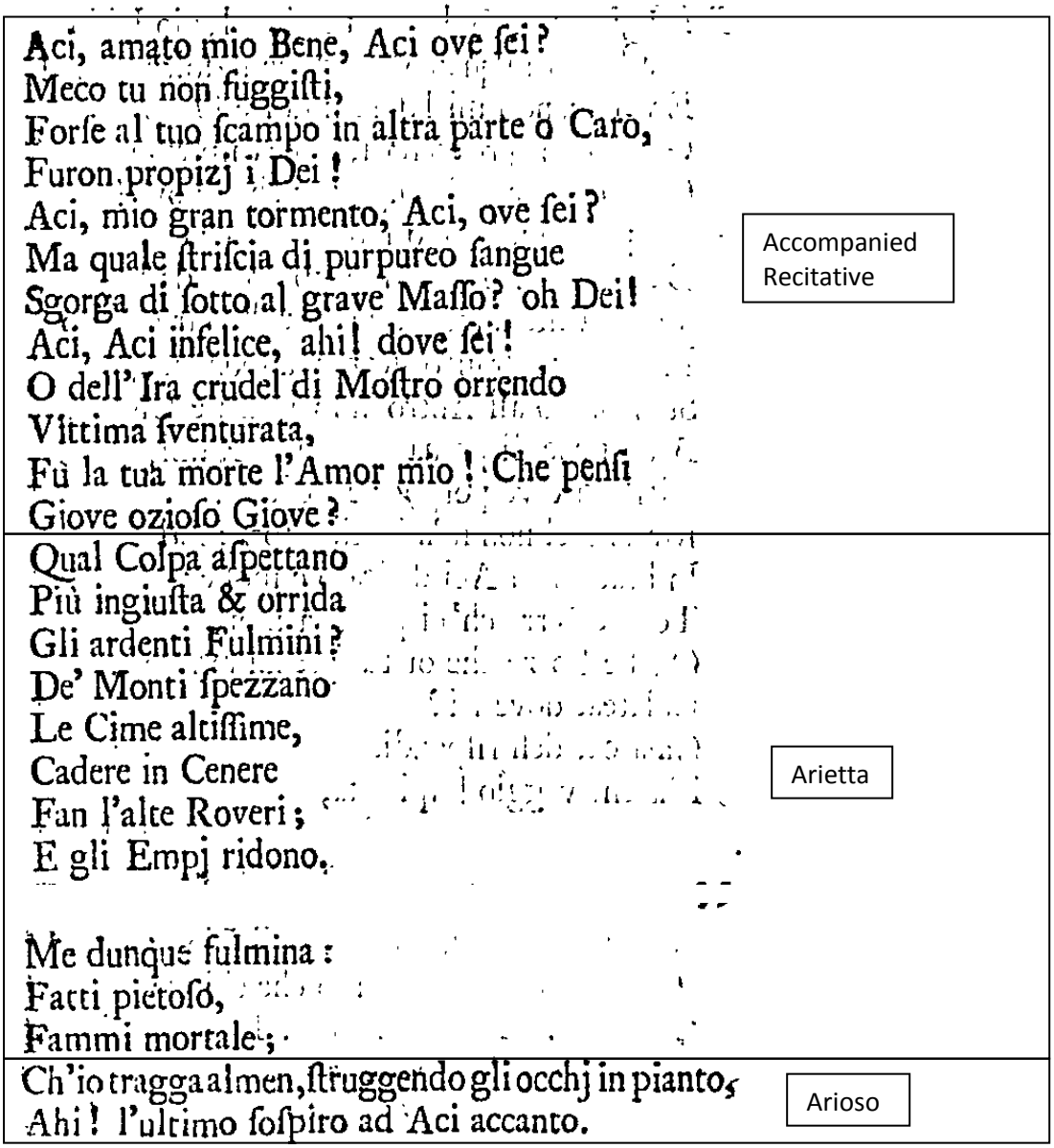
The two arias are, however, entirely different. Unlike Aci's fully-worked da capo exit aria at the end of scene iii, Nerea's non-exit aria is a simple and elegant $\frac{6}{8}$ strophic aria in D major, accompanied by a sparse texture with the strings 'tutti col basso' and occasionally leaving the voice wholly unaccompanied. The sentiments expressed here do not advance the action as Nerea reflects upon the impossibility of being happy without knowing love, making the static aria setting appropriate. It is Nerea's first appearance in the opera which allowed Porpora to mark out her character as simple and thoughtful through the careful musical construction. There is a scene change after Aci's aria at the end of scene iii thus avoiding the ritornellos of the two arias colliding as feared by Martello. In the libretto Nerea has two aria texts, in Act II, scene i, 'Una Beltà che sa' and Act III, scene vi, 'V'ingannate'. This second aria is cut in the Royal Manuscript score however, so a further reason for Porpora's setting may have been his wish to set a second lyrical item for Nerea to replace this.

The first of the three instances in Act III where Porpora set lines of recitative as a lyrical item is in scene i. Act III begins with a sinfonia, not mentioned in the libretto, so presumably at Porpora's instigation (see below), and scene i then opens with the monster, Polifemo, sitting upon a rock and wondering why Galatea only comes to visit his island when he is asleep. Porpora set the first three lines of the text in the libretto as an appealing and measured $\frac{12}{8}$ arietta, 'Fugace Galatea, perchè al mio Lido'. It has a very short construction of an opening ritornello, A section and closing ritornello but is scored more extravagantly than usual with two flutes and two bassoons alongside four-part strings and basso continuo. With this deliberately lyrical setting Porpora is giving a glimpse of another side to Polifemo – that of an unhappy soul. It is only a brief intimation as this attractive arietta is very short,

but it is enough to stir up a few crumbs of sympathy for this otherwise hideous and cruel character. The remainder of the passage is set as accompanied recitative but not until Porpora had further tightened the section with an additional cut of nine lines of text.

The second instance comes in the following scene, III.ii. A passage of 25 lines of recitative for Galatea is set as 12 lines of accompanied recitative, 11 as an arietta, 'Qual colpa aspettano', and the concluding two as an arioso section (Ex.21). Porpora's music here matches Galatea's changing emotions. As the scene opens Galatea is seen looking round for Aci who has disappeared under the rock that Polifemo has thrown at him. An opening ritornello is scored similarly to that in Polifemo's short aria from scene i reminding us of Polifemo with flutes and bassoons but with an altogether more unstable and menacing quality, set in E minor with suspensions and dotted rhythms. Galatea does not take this up but enters abruptly with accompanied recitative. As her desperation mounts with the realisation that Aci has fallen victim to Polifemo's rage, the music changes to a presto $\frac{3}{8}$ arietta with furious semiquavers. Exhausted after this frenetic outburst the pace slows to an adagio arioso for the final two lines as Galatea calls on the gods to make her mortal so that she may die from her grief.

Example 21. *Polifemo*, III.ii, pp.46 & 49



The third example of recitative text being set as a lyrical item in Act III is in scene iii. This passage is for Polifemo and once again Porpora briefly shows us another facet of the Cyclops's character. Polifemo enters the cave where he is holding Ulisse and his followers captive. He is in a good mood for he believes himself to have taken his revenge on Aci and Galatea. He sings a short allegro arietta of two lines, 'Crudel se m'ai sprezzato', before continuing with secco recitative. The structure of the arietta is ritornello – A^1 – ritornello – A^2 – ritornello and is unlike any other lyrical item in the opera as it is accompanied by bassoons only, playing in unison with the voice. This gives the arietta a simple and jaunty feeling and in a very short space of time Porpora made the most of Montagnana's virtuosity,

with leaps and runs across a wide range. The whole is clever characterisation on Porpora's part as it gives Polifemo a hitherto unseen carefree quality.

There are three two-verse aria texts in the *Polifemo* libretto that Porpora chose not to set as fully-worked da capo arias but instead with a strophic structure. The first is Calipso's 'Sorte un'umile Capanna' in Act I, scene iv and the second is Ulisse's 'Fa ch'io ti provi ancora', in the following scene. Both of these arias have the same structure and Porpora may have intended to draw attention to the bond between these two characters in this way. Calipso and Ulisse's relationship is not wholly developed through the opera but there is no conflict between them or over them.[15] Calipso's aria is set in B♭ major and Ulisse's in F major and both are in triple time. These similarities in consecutive arias help link the characters as being empathetic towards each other.

The setting of the third aria with a strophic structure was instigated as much by the librettist as the composer as there is a line of recitative between the two verses. Polifemo's aria 'D'un disprezzato Amor' in Act III scene iii comes when Ulisse has given the Cyclops some wine containing a sleeping draught so that he and his friends can escape. Both Rolli and Porpora seem to have agreed that a da capo exit aria here would not suit the situation of the increasingly drowsy Polifemo, particularly as he has an additional arietta to deliver, 'Ma i piè non mi sostengono', before he leaves the stage to succumb to sleep. The other arietta text that Rolli wrote, 'Furie che mi strazjate' also for Polifemo in Act III, scene vi is set as such by Porpora. The frantic semiquavers in the violins and unrelenting repeating quavers in the lower strings and continuo illustrate Polifemo's furious state as he blindly searches for Ulisse before being interrupted by Aci.

In *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio* one of the few alterations to the structure of the text in the librettos is to set a two-verse aria in three sections. Initially this does not seem to be the case in *Polifemo.* However it is interesting to note that although Porpora did not set any existing aria text in three sections, in the revised libretto,[16] Aci's aria, 'Nell' attendere il mio Bene' (II.v), was changed for 'Dal guardo che incatena' which has three verses. There is no music for this aria to show Porpora's setting but perhaps, when

[15] This may have been contrary to the audience's expectation which would have known about the amorous connection between Calipso and Ulisse in Greek mythology. For details see Homer's *Odyssey* (900-800 BC).
[16] GB-Lbl 907.i.11.(1.), produced for the 1735/36 season. See Chapter Seven for details

replacing what may have been perceived as an unpopular aria, Porpora saw the opportunity to insert one of these 'special' three-part arias.[17]

Ensemble Lyrical Texts

Other than Aci's cavatina in III.v and Galatea's in III.vi mentioned above, there are two other cavatina texts in the libretto. Porpora's treatment of Galatea's 'Placidetti Zeffiretti' and Aci's 'Amoretti vezzosetti' in Act II scenes iv and v respectively is noteworthy. Rolli had already produced an unusual structure involving these two one-verse texts and Porpora developed this idea, using a cavatina form for Galatea's verse and then writing a duet to draw attention to the rapport between the two characters more obviously. The structure in the libretto is:

Scene iv			**Scene v**
'Placidetti Zeffiretti' One verse	Recitative	Repeat of 'Placidetti Zeffiretti'	'Amoretti vezzosetti' One verse with similar sentiment to Galatea's aria
Galatea	Polifemo & Galatea	Galatea	Aci

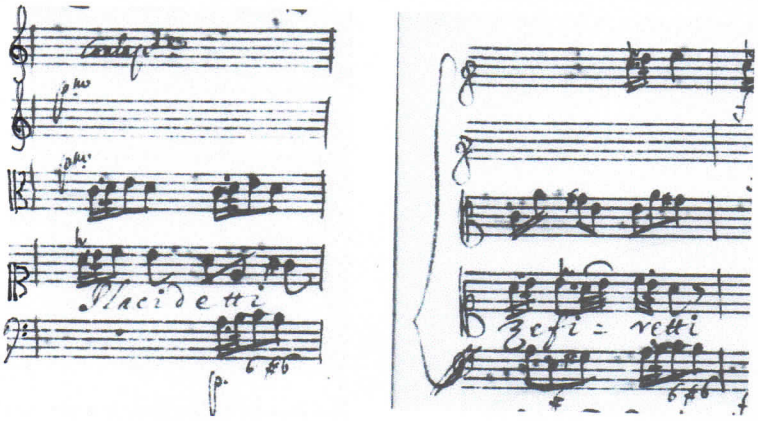
The structure in the score is:

Scene iv		**Scene v**
'Placidetti Zeffiretti' Cavatina	Recitative	Duet using 'Placidetti Zeffiretti' and 'Amoretti vezzosetti'
Galatea	Polifemo & Galatea	Galatea and Aci

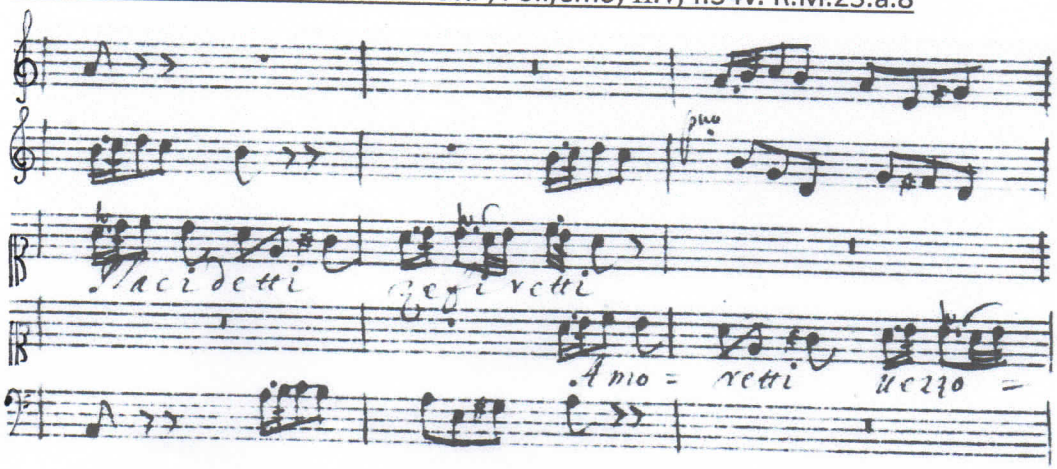
The duet at the beginning of scene v uses similar musical material as in Galatea's cavatina in scene iv and takes the same key of A minor with a shortened ritornello (Ex.22). Polifemo and Galatea's recitative between the two lyrical sections acts as a dramatic contrast; Galatea disdains the furious Polifemo in the passage of recitative and then the lovers sweetly sing of the gentle breezes bringing them together.

[17] See Burney's comments p.325.

Example 22. Galatea, 'Placidetti Zeffiretti', *Polifemo*, II.iv, f.31. R.M.23.a.8



Galatea and Aci, 'Placidetti Zeffiretti', *Polifemo*, II.v, f.34v. R.M.23.a.8



There is an unusually placed duet in *Polifemo* which is Galatea and Calipso's 'Vo presagendo' in the opera's opening scene. Porpora gave each singer a solo verse before the voices come together in the third verse. The duet setting follows Porpora's usual style of congruous thirds and sixths moving in parallel motion which is unsurprising as the singers are both nymphs expressing the same sentiment of being struck by love for a mortal. There is no da capo, Porpora deciding to move swiftly on to the action in the following scene. To achieve this Porpora also cut the repeat of the second coro, which is the opening item of *Polifemo*. This framing of the opening scene with the repeat of a lyrical item is something that Rolli had already used in *Arianna in Naxo* so the repeat of the opening coro would have been not unexpected. Porpora chose instead to move immediately on to scene ii, making the first entrance of the monster, Polifemo, all the more dramatic for its unexpectedness.

The second duet in the libretto, 'Tacito movi e tardo', comes in Act II, scene vii between Galatea and Aci to close the act. This duet setting is expected as Act II would often end with a duet between the principal pair. This is an attractive setting with the voices

alternating at the beginning before coming together with a little more independent voice work than in the other duet. The final two verses of the duet were cut from the revised libretto, perhaps to effect a more succinct conclusion to the act.

The final scene of the opera has a trio for Aci, Galatea and Ulisse, 'Scherzino con le Grazie', framed by two coros in the original libretto. The entire trio was cut from the revised libretto and the opening coro was cut both from the revised libretto and the Royal Music Library manuscript.[18] Porpora did not add much invention to his usual practice of duet writing to take account of the third voice; two of the parts generally work together, often with the second voice entering a bar later with similar material to the first. The third voice then often only adds suspensions or held notes to this and does not contribute independent material.

Sinfonias

As in *Enea nel Lazio* there are two occasions where Porpora added instrumental passages not called for in the libretto. The first comes in Act I scene iii when a sinfonia scored for two trumpets, two horns, four-part strings and basso continuo is required at the beginning of the scene. This may have been necessary to cover the action taking place as the directions in the libretto read 'Veggonsi da Lontano venir le navi d'Ulisse: Una avanzandosi approda, Ulisse e suoi Compagni sbarcano' (the ships of Ulysses are seen at a great distance: from one of which he and his followers disembark). The second occurrence is at the beginning of Act III. This unusual instrumental opening to the act, scored only for strings and basso continuo serves to set the scene, portraying a different side to the monster's character as Polifemo sits and stares in contemplative mood.

Accompanied Recitative

Continuing from Porpora's apparent eagerness to impose his own structures on the libretto rather than slavishly following what was already set out, the music of *Polifemo* contains even more passages of accompanied recitative than the first two operas. In the Royal Manuscript copy, Act I has six passages, Act II has two and Act III has seven, making a total of 15. In the autograph manuscript this is increased even further with an additional

[18] See Chapter Seven for a full description.

two passages in Act III. Porpora clearly found many places in the drama of *Polifemo* requiring an intensified setting with a text suitable for this medium.

Ifigenia in Aulide

After the success of *Polifemo* it might have been expected that Porpora would continue or even build upon his ideas and set more of the libretto for the following opera in his own way. The opposite seems to be true. Porpora returned to a far more conventional structure throughout *Ifigenia in Aulide*, alternating secco recitative with da capo aria with little innovation or deviation. However this seems to be true not only of the music but also of the libretto. *Ifigenia in Aulide* is the most uninspired of Rolli's four librettos for Porpora. There is less spectacle, action or character development than there had been in the previous three operas and Porpora followed this through into his music. Perhaps it was a deliberate attempt by Rolli and Porpora to present an entirely different opera from the spectacular and magical *Alcina* that was being produced by Handel at Covent Garden at the same time.[19]

Solo Lyrical Texts

Whatever the reason for this return to a formulaic model, Rolli wrote no one-verse cavatina texts nor any larger structures stretching out the format of the da capo aria as he had done in the previous three librettos. Without any textual impetus Porpora followed Rolli's lead and the only deviation from what might be expected is the setting of four two-verse arias as strophic items rather than da capo arias, perhaps to introduce some variety.[20]

There are two other modifications to the fully worked da capo aria which both occur in the final scene. Ifigenia's aria 'Per tua Gloria o Grecia amata' has only a short text of two and three lines and, although this has a final da capo instruction, Porpora set this without the usual repetition of the A section before the B (i.e. $A^1 – B – A^1$). This was probably because Ifigenia cannot exit after her aria as she is awaiting her sacrifice. The following aria in this scene is for the goddess Diana, 'Già scherzando a i lidi il vento', (possibly sung by

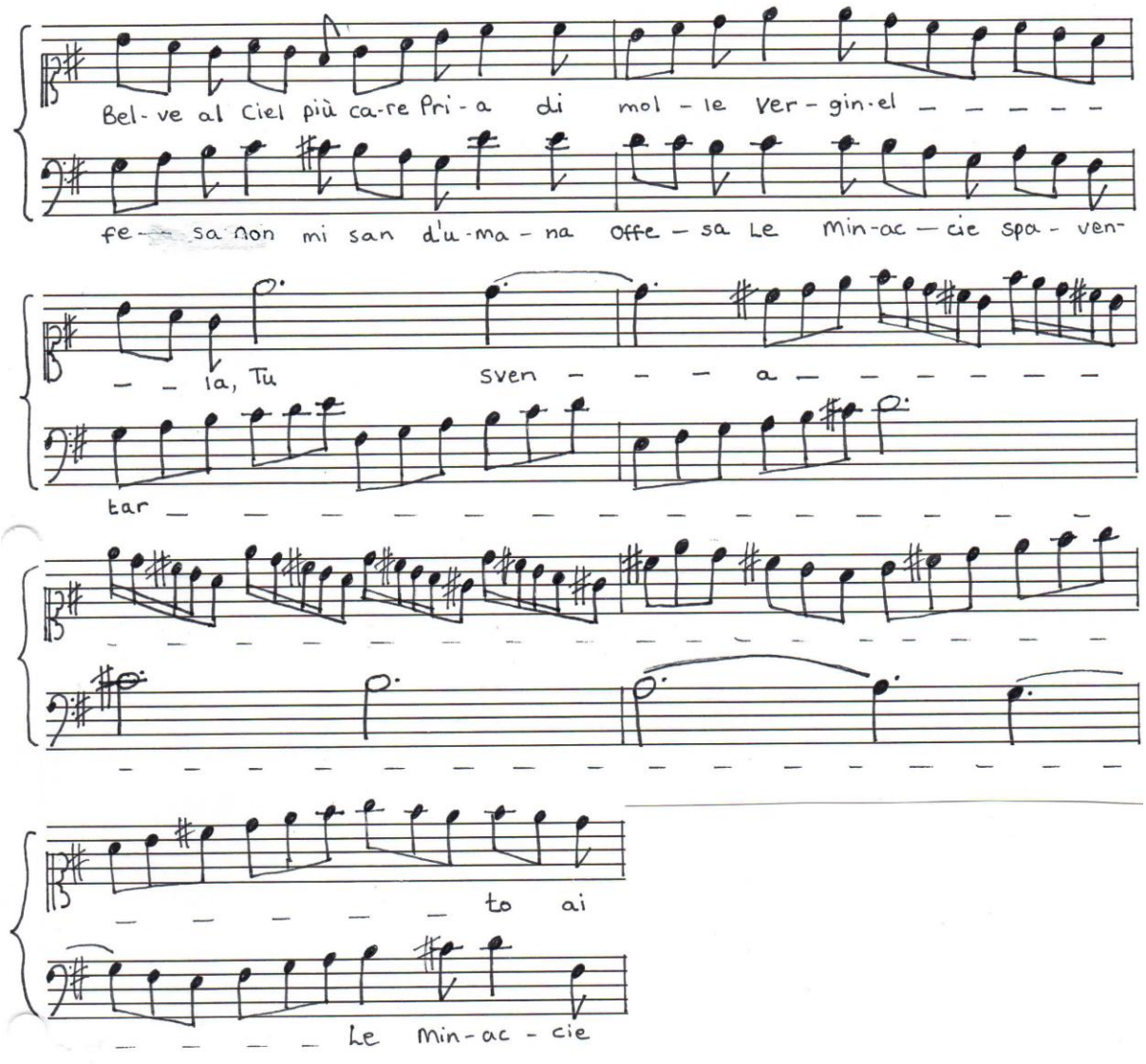
[19] *Alcina's* first performance was Wednesday, 16 April 1735 and *Ifigenia in Aulide's* was Saturday, 3 May 1735.
[20] Clitennestra's 'Con le fiamme piu vivaci' I.v, Calcante's 'Padre di tutti è Giove' I.v, Ulisse's 'Scegli Atride II.i, Ifigenia's 'All' Amor di dolce Madre' II.v.

Segatti who, as Ulisse, does not appear in Act III) and also has a shortened structure of A – B, with a dal segno instruction to repeat from the beginning of the B section. A subsidiary character such as Diana, who only appears in this last scene to save Ifigenia from being sacrificed, would not have warranted a fully-worked da capo aria. To offset this, the following duet for Agamennone and Clitennestra, 'Bella Dea di tal Contento', runs on from Diana's aria and has no opening ritornello and only one section. It thereby expands the structure of Diana's shortened aria by fulfilling the function of the da capo repeat.

Ensemble Lyrical Items

The second duet in *Ifigenia in Aulide,* 'Per cader de i Numi all'Are', is in its expected place at the end of Act II although peculiarly, it is between Achille and Calcante rather than the principal pair. The second Act therefore ends strongly with this $\frac{12}{8}$ allegro duet pitting Achille, who vows to save Ifigenia from being sacrificed, against the priest Calcante, determining to fulfil the gods' wishes. Porpora moved away from his standard pattern of setting the voices in complementary thirds and sixths moving in parallel motion as the duettists here are angrily expressing opposing views. He reflected this by setting more passages where the voices move in opposite directions, or where one voice is singing long sustained notes against faster moving quaver or semiquaver figuration from the other voice (Ex.23).

Example 23. Achille and Calcante, 'Per cader de i Numi all'Are', *Ifigenia in Aulide*, II.vi, transcribed from ff.52r-53r



The remaining ensemble item is a trio in Act III, scene iii for Ifigenia, Clitennestra and Agamennone, 'Ah no, non piangere'. Porpora set this with separate entries for each of the three voices in turn and then they come together with Clitennestra and Agemennone singing similar material of short impassioned phrases, united in their grief, with a more flowing and independent line from Ifigenia over the top, as implied in the libretto.[21]

The one coro item in *Ifigenia in Aulide* comes in its expected place at the end of the opera. The text of this four-line verse is the same as the first verse of Achille's preceding

[21] See Example 57.

aria, 'Con alte lodi'. It is a perfunctory but not unusual finale to an opera seria with the obligatory concluding coro in both libretto and score.

Sinfonias

Porpora did not introduce any sinfonias in *Ifigenia in Aulide* that are not already called for in the libretto. After the overture there is only one additional musical item which is the 'Marcia de' Mirmidoni e Sacerdoti' called for at the beginning of the final scene. This is in contrast to *Enea nel Lazio* and *Polifemo,* both of which have two extra instrumental items added by Porpora which are not specifically called for in the libretto.

Accompanied Recitative

The use of accompanied recitative is less frequent in this fourth opera which appears in keeping with the prevailing return to a more rigid alternating da capo aria, secco recitative structure. After the large number of accompanied recitative passages in *Polifemo* this was perhaps a reflection of the quality of the poetry in *Ifigenia in Aulide* as Porpora was not inspired by the text and its inherent drama to use such setting frequently; there are two sections each in Acts I and II and one in Act III, making a total of five.

Mitridate

After the 1734/35 season it appears that Rolli's dominance as principal supplier of librettos for the 'Opera of the Nobility' was fading. *Ifigenia in Aulide* was the last original opera libretto with which Rolli provided the company. The 'Opera of the Nobility' was beginning to move away from original opera librettos and turning more to reworkings of Zeno and Metastasio texts by Cori. *Mitridate* was the only original opera libretto used in the 1735/36 season by the 'Opera of the Nobility'. Perhaps it was the relative failure of Rolli's *Ifigenia in Aulide* that prompted the decision to use a new librettist, Cibber.

Solo Lyrical Texts

Only the music of Acts II and III of *Mitridate* are extant, bound in the same autograph volume as Act III of *Polifemo* (MUS/ADD/14115).[22] Porpora was presumably working from the Italian libretto which had been translated from Cibber's original English text.[23] This is shown in three of the four instances where the Italian translator expanded Cibber's original one-verse arias into two verses, probably to facilitate the composition of conventional da capo arias which Porpora duly produced.[24] The music for the fourth aria, Ismene's 'E trofeo dell'onor mio' in III.vi is missing.

The Italian libretto has five instances where a solo lyrical item does not have the conventional two-verse text. The first of these, the Oracle's 'La Vergine, che il Re vòrrebbe in sposa' is in Act I for which there is no extant music. There are two other arietta texts, both in Act III. The first of these is Mitridate's 'Selvette ombrose, e mormoranti' in III.iv when he sings of his love, unaware of Sifare and Semandra's presence. Porpora did not have a second verse to enable him to write a standard da capo aria with A and B section here but he chose to expand the format on a grand scale. The arietta is scored for two horns, two flutes, two bassoons, four-part strings and basso continuo which should certainly alert Sifare and Semandra of his approach. There is a nine bar ritornello in $\frac{12}{8}$ marked larghetto after which Mitridate sings 'in distanza', hopefully loudly enough to be heard over the thick accompanying texture. The first section (A^1) has many word repetitions and after the shortest of ritornellos is quickly followed by the second section (A^2) before the arietta concludes with the full complement of instruments playing a final ritornello. For such a short text sung at a distance, the choice of such lavish instrumentation appears odd. In Acts II and III there are only two other vocal items that use fuller instrumentation than four-part strings and basso continuo and one of these evolves from the preceding March. Perhaps Porpora thought the pastoral text here was the ideal opportunity for a gentle $\frac{12}{8}$ melody with sustained horns and bassoons as Mitridate beseeches the 'Selvette ombrose, e mormoranti' (shady whispering Groves).

The second arietta in Act III is in the ultimate scene and comprises Mitridate's dying words 'Deh! un Sol sospiro ancora'. Porpora set these lines as a simple arietta with a

[22] See Chapter Seven.
[23] It is not known who translated the libretto into Italian.
[24] III.i 'Non a piacer maggiore', III.xi 'Vieni o Cara – o amica morte', III.xiv 'Cessa Roma superb, ed altera'.

hesitant quaver rhythm played lento by the strings and basso continuo, at the end of which, unusually in an opera seria, the character dies on stage. Clearly a fully-worked da capo aria would not be appropriate as Mitridate sings of his strength and breath forsaking him.

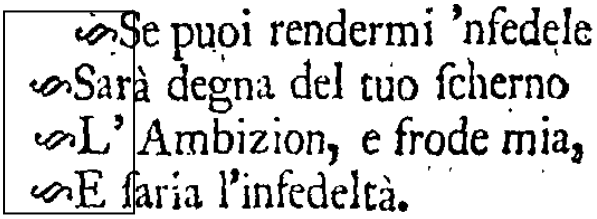
The other two occasions in the Italian libretto where an aria differs from the usual two-verse formation are in Act II scenes i and vii. Both of these arias are for Mitridate and have been expanded, unusually, from two-verses in the English libretto to three verses in the Italian translation. In the first instance, Mitridate's 'Alza al Regno i guardi suoi' in II.i, Porpora followed the lead from the text and set the da capo aria in three sections, albeit the third runs on almost immediately from the second as do Mitridate's thoughts as he yearns for Semandra's love. Porpora apparently made no concession to the aria being non-exit.[25] However, in Mitridate's aria, 'Per un sol momento ancora' in II.vii (marked viii in the score), he cut the third verse of text and set the remaining two verses in a more fitting strophic form. At the end of the first verse the music repeats from the opening ritornello and the shorter second verse is sung until the text runs out, leaving the remaining music for Mitridate to rest his head in Semandra's lap, 'laying her hand gently over him' and appear to be sleeping.[26]

Porpora seems to have taken the initiative when setting the text in four other places in Acts II and III of *Mitridate.* In Act II, scene v (scene vi in the score), Semandra implores the little birds in the woods around her to lull her to sleep in 'Augelletti, che cantando'. As in Mitridate's arietta 'Selvette ombrose, e mormoranti' in III.iv, this gentle pastoral setting has suggested flutes and bassoons and also oboes here within a lilting compound time signature ($\frac{6}{8}$). At the end of this aria Semandra sleeps and, despite being given a standard two-verses, Porpora wrote a through-composed aria with a structure of ritornello – A – ritornello – B – ritornello and no da capo. The absence of the da capo here links the aria to Mitridate's strophic 'Per un sol momento ancora' in II.vii where he also sleeps at its conclusion. This shorter version seems more apt for characters who are succumbing to sleep.

[25] It would be interesting to see how Porpora dealt with the eight non-exit aria texts in Act I but is impossible to do so without any extant score.
[26] These stage directions have been omitted from the Italian libretto.

In Act II, scene i Semandra sings 'In van con tanti voti' which appears as a two-verse text in both the English and Italian librettos. Porpora only set the first verse and the second is marked with a cut sign in the Italian libretto (Ex.24).

Example 24. *Mitridate* libretto, II.i, p.37


Se puoi rendermi 'nfedele
Sarà degna del tuo ſcherno
L' Ambizion, e frode mia,
E ſaria l'infedeltà.

This text[27] is set as a cavatina therefore with a shortened structure of ritornello – A^1 – ritornello – A^2 – ritornello, probably because Porpora was mindful that Semandra needed to remain on stage for the following passage of recitative and duet between herself and Sifare, making a full da capo exit aria impossible.

The other two arias that Porpora did not set as da capo arias are Ismene's 'Sìa pur crudel, sia fiera' in II.iii (iv in the score) and Archelao's 'Scaccia dal seno' in III.ii. Both of these are set as strophic arias for no discernible reason other than the sake of variety.

Ensemble Lyrical Texts

Of the four duets for which the music is extant, Porpora set the two in Act II as da capo duets and the two in Act III with no repeats. The Italian translation of 'What Tongue the killing Joys I feel' in II.ii (iii in the score) expanded the original one verse of four lines into two verses of five and four lines. Porpora duly composed a standard ritornello – A^1 – ritornello – A^2 – ritornello – B – ritornello da capo structure with the voices singing mainly in thirds and sixths moving in parallel motion with some alternation between the two parts. The scene ends after this duet so both characters are able to exit. The next duet, 'In qual così lontano', in scene xi (xii in the score) concludes Act II. The two verses of text allow another formulaic da capo structure with very little contrasting work for the voices.

'O quanto accorte, o quanto' is the third duet for Sifare and Semandra. This is in Act III, scene iii and is very different from the others. The Italian libretto followed the pattern

[27] Translated in the English libretto as 'Could you my Heart to Falshood turn,/That Falshood would deserve your Scorn.'

as laid out by Cibber in the English text and Porpora then followed this through in the music to make a neatly graduated and satisfying whole. After an opening ritornello from only the 'primo cembalo', the same four lines are sung by each singer in turn. The first – Semandra – is accompanied by the 'primo cembalo' and then Sifare by the 'secondo cembalo'. This slender accompaniment continues with Semandra and Sifare alternating the third and fourth verses, but now with the 'non' singer interjecting a fervent 'ahi' every bar. Still with no intermediate ritornello, the texture thickens for the fifth verse; two violins and viola accompany Sifare with no basso continuo as the music changes from a moderato $\frac{4}{4}$ to an andante $\frac{3}{8}$. The structure broadens with a short ritornello at the end of this fifth verse, reintroducing the basso continuo which remains throughout Semandra's following verse. After a two-bar ritornello the two lovers sing together as they finally come together on the stage. A return to the $\frac{4}{4}$ time from the opening begins the final section which is an extended repeat of the first/second verse but with both singers now involved and a full four-part string and basso continuo accompaniment. The music matches the drama effectively throughout. At the outset both characters express similar emotions, unaware of the other's presence. On hearing each other's voice they try in vain to find each other, coming ever nearer until they eventually meet, which is when the voices sing together. It is effectively a da capo structure which Porpora ingeniously adapted to the dramatic requirements of the situation.

The last duet, 'Così doppo ria procella', comes in the final scene very near the end of the opera and, in common with all the duets, is for Sifare and Semandra. Once again the Italian translator augmented the English text, turning eight lines into 16. The English libretto instructs that the beginning should be 'In 2 part'. This is not found in the Italian version and Porpora did not comply in the music. After the opening ritornello, much as in the previous duet, each duettist sings a verse in turn to the same music and accompaniment of four-part strings and basso continuo. The B section then turns to the tonic minor (G minor) and for the third verse Porpora followed his familiar pattern of duet writing where the voices sing in parallel motion mainly in thirds, occasional sixths, with a little alternation between the voices. The fourth verse is cut and this is also shown in the libretto. A da capo here would not make dramatic sense as Sifare and Semandra have sung of their love for each other with

the two voices joining together demonstrating their unity. A return to the beginning would split them apart again as they sing separately.[28]

Sinfonias

The libretto calls for two sinfonias both of which appear in Act I, scene v when the gods are apparently displeased with the idea of Mitridate marrying Ismene. There is no other mention of instrumental passages in the libretto, but Porpora wrote a 'Marchia' for the beginning of scene xiv in Act III. The March is scored for two horns, two oboes, four-part strings, two bassoons and basso continuo. The first section is a grand if unremarkable passage which heralds the arrival of Sifare and his soldiers, having triumphed over the Romans. After the repeat of the first section, the second vivace section begins with added flutes, busy semiquaver motifs, culminating in a full orchestral sound marked fortissimo. Rather than just being the second section to the March however, this is the opening ritornello for Sifare's final aria in the opera 'Cessa Roma superb, ed altera'. The grandeur of the preceding March set Farinelli up to deliver his final bravura aria with a dazzling display of virtuosity.

Porpora did not really stray very far from the libretto in Acts II and III of *Mitridate*.[29] On only three occasions did he deviate from a conventional da capo setting for the arias. In the two instances where an aria text was cut – from three verses to two (II.vii) and two to one (II.i) these cuts are also marked in the libretto leaving doubt as to the impetus for these cuts. Two of the four duets are standard da capo (II.ii and II.xi), one is in two parts (III.xvi) and only the fourth shows imaginative invention (III.iii). Porpora added one extra musical passage of his own accord (III.xiv) and decided to set six passages of accompanied recitative, three in each of Acts II and III.

Conclusions

Porpora was an experienced Italian opera seria composer of the new 'Neapolitan' style with a well established reputation by the time he came to London.[30] However, he was

[28] *Mitridate* ends with a coro but the music for this is missing.
[29] There is no music to tell if he did in Act I.
[30] See Chapter Five for details of this style.

now confronted with an unknown native English audience and consequently seemed to follow Rolli's librettos closely, at least in his first two operas. These librettos were not without innovation and generally any deviation from a standard secco recitative – da capo aria alternating pattern with a few ensemble items appears to have been driven by the text. The main area in which Porpora was able to impose his own choice of musical setting is the passages of recitative. The occurrence of accompanied over secco recitative is greater than it was in his pre-London operas and was likely to have been ultimately Porpora's decision.[31] That he may have been guided in his choice is apparent from the two passages in *Arianna in Naxo's* libretto that strongly suggest the use of accompanied recitative and perhaps Rolli also proposed other sections to set likewise.

Another area where Porpora obviously felt confident to impose his own ideas is where there are non-exit aria texts in the librettos. In these cases Porpora often amended the structure or even wholly dispensed with the fully worked da capo aria. He did not seem to have considered non-exit arias that were the first lyrical item for a character as too heinous a deviation from standard convention and perhaps considered them, as did the librettists, as dramatically plausible; three of the four that appear in scene i of the first four operas are written with da capo configuration, as is the one occurring as part of the opera's concluding coro.[32] Of the remaining 11 non-exit arias in the librettos, only two were set as full da capo arias, the remainder are shortened variations of the da capo form, strophic settings or an arioso/accompanied recitative structure.

The appearance of three-sectioned arias in Porpora's London operas is rare. *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio* both have a two-verse aria from the libretto set with a three part structure in the music. *Polifemo* has no such setting in the original libretto or music, but there is a three-verse aria to replace one with only two in the revised libretto, which Porpora may have chosen to set similarly.[33] *Mitridate* has two three-verse arias in the Italian libretto but Porpora chose to set only one of these as such. Perhaps he was not happy with more than one three-part aria in any opera.

By the time of Porpora's third opera, *Polifemo*, it appears that he had more confidence in using unusual structures in his London works and a study of the autograph

[31] See Chapter Five for more details on Porpora's use of accompanied and secco recitative.
[32] It is not possible to say how he treated the eight non-exit arias in Act I of *Mitridate* without the music.
[33] There is no extant music for this aria.

score of Act III shows that Porpora was involved in major alterations to the score and consequently the libretto.[34] The most significant deviation from the libretto is found in this middle point of the London operas in Porpora's decision to set many apparent recitative passages as lyrical items. It is also only in this opera that Porpora developed an unusual structure laid out by Rolli and built upon it further to the extent that solo items in the libretto become a duet in the music. It is also the only opera in which Porpora cut repeats of the coro, perhaps feeling more confident with what the audience wanted to see and hear. After *Polifemo* however, there was a return to a more standard production with the uninspiring *Ifigenia in Aulide*. This opera did not prove popular, managing only four performances and the more successful *Polifemo* was revised and chosen to open the next season. For his fifth and final London opera, *Mitridate,* Porpora was presented with a change of librettist and he chose to adhere reasonably closely to the text once again, a practice he had returned to in *Ifigenia in Aulide* after the innovative *Polifemo.*

This may explain why Porpora was, at least initially, content to be guided by his librettist in terms of dramatic structure. The following chapter considers how Porpora's musical style had evolved before he came to England, beginning with an investigation into the development of the opera seria genre in Italy, with specific reference to the Neapolitan influence. This continues in an exploration of the adaptations and refinements Porpora incorporated into the music of his London operas to please his singers, satisfy his paymasters - the directors of the 'Opera of the Nobility', and delight the audience sufficiently to entice it away from Handel's rival opera company.

[34] See Chapter Seven for details.

CHAPTER FIVE: PORPORA'S OPERAS. A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Opera Seria and the 'Neapolitan' Style

At the end of the seventeenth century leading members of the Accademia dell'Arcadia, a literary institution founded in Rome in 1690, tried to move away from the excesses of Baroque taste, and fashion a genre with a style of noble simplicity, pastoral ideals and a sense of dignity. The 'reform' of the Italian libretto was influenced by French tragedians and philosophers such as René Descartes, Pierre Corneille and Jean Racine. Nathaniel Burt (1955, p.151) identified that 'the "Anti-Baroque" may first have crystallized in France around 1630, particularly in the neo-classic drama of Corneille and that the French dramatists had produced a 'return to dignity, grandeur, and reason'.[1] Amongst the Italian authors involved with this reformation were Apostolo Zeno, Domenico David, Antonio Salvi and Silvio Stampiglia and the composers included Carlo Francesco Pollarolo, Alessandro Scarlatti, Gasparini, Giovanni Bononcini and Lotti. The manifestation of this uncluttered approach was a style that removed all comedic elements, concentrating on characters' serious and moral aspirations. The poetry and its rhythm were paramount and the music was initially seen as the means to further intensify the appreciation of the text and drama. The voice was eventually given utter dominance in da capo arias with lilting, cantabile melodies which were specifically designed to show the voice in all its virtuosic glory. The arias allowed for expressive embellishments for which the castrati of the day were renowned. The accompaniment became simple and homophonic, usually consisting of four-part strings and basso continuo, and moved with the voice rather than having independent lines.

The label of 'Neapolitan opera' has often been attached to this emerging style, but whether it was specifically Neapolitan has been questioned by several authors in the second half of the twentieth century.[2] Wolff (1970, p.402) suggests that the origin of the use of this term began with a misinterpretation of a remark by Charles Burney in his *A General History of Music*. Burney (1935, p.936) referred to the 'Neapolitan School of Counterpoint' which Wolff believes led German musicologists Otto Jahn, Hermann Kretzschmar and Robert Haas

[1] For a fuller investigation into the French influences see Cummings (1991, pp.6-12).
[2] See Strohm (1997, Chapter 3 'The Neapolitans in Venice', pp.61-80) for a full investigation.

to believe 'in the fairy tale of a 'Neapolitan Opera''.[3] Strohm (1997, p.61) confirms that the work carried out in Germany was 'paralleled in Britain by Edward J. Dent and Frank Walker.'

Strohm (1997, p.21) does, however, affirm the existence of 'a 'Metastasian type' or even 'Neapolitan type' of opera seria that was created by collaboration between poet (Metastasio), singers, and composers in Naples and Rome. Metastasio produced his first of 28 texts in this genre in 1723: *Siface rè di Numidia* was set to music by Francesco Feo and premièred in Naples in the same year. As this was essentially a reworking of Domenico David's *La forza del virtù*, it was *Didone abbandonata,* set by Sarro, again for Naples in 1724, that was his first truly original opera seria libretto. Metastasio sought to combine the principles of Arcadia, producing poetry to enhance the beauty of the language with the reformist urge for simple, didactic and moral plots. His librettos express noble aspirations that were utterly suited to the simpler, mellifluous melodies being produced by the Neapolitan composers. Elegant and economical verse sung by the virtuosi of the day was matched to lighter textures and homophonic accompaniment, expressing the words and music with sensitive and passionate singing. Strohm suggests that any regional variations giving rise to the idea of separate Neapolitan or Venetian traditions were only relevant until the 1730s after which the operatic style became more generalized across Italy. Webster (2004, p.54) goes further and even identifies 1720 to 1780 as constituting a musical period in its own right with opera seria having 'assumed its definitive form.'

According to Robinson (1972, p.23-27), Venice was seen as the centre of the operatic world in the second half of the seventeenth century and, before Alessandro Scarlatti's arrival in Naples in 1683, many Neapolitan opera productions were Venetian in origin, altered to suit local conditions. Venetian opera was showing signs of the 'new' style emerging at the end of the seventeenth century; Downes (as cited in Wolff, 1970, p.402) remarks that the da capo and expanded form of the aria, use of coloratura and more homophonic rather than contrapuntal lines could all be found in the late seventeenth-century Venetian works of Porta, Orlandini and Fiorè.[4] However, when Scarlatti travelled away from Naples in 1702, a new generation of composers began to emerge - Sarro, Porsile

[3] Wolff (1970, p.401) cites two papers read at the I.M.S. Congress of 1961 in New York by Helmuth Hucke and Edward O.D. Downes ('die neapolitanische Tradition in der Oper/The Neapolitan Tradition in Opera') which he says 'proved that the term of 'Neapolitan Opera' cannot be used in the former way; it can at best be employed for Neapolitan dialect comedies, but will certainly not serve for the characterization of the whole Italian opera from about 1700 to 1750.'

[4] Stefano Andrea Fiorè 1686-1732.

and Porpora. These musicians graduated from the four conservatoires in Naples that had been founded in the sixteenth century, initially to provide for the city's orphans.[5] Over time, male students applied to the conservatoires and attended as boarders undergoing musical training. This resulted in more musicians emerging from these conservatoires than the city could support and many Neapolitans were forced to look elsewhere for work. These composers continued with the ideas of the Venetians, developed them further and took their own style of Neapolitan opera with them not only to Venice but also to other centres throughout Europe. Markstrom (2007, p.66) remarks that after 1720 Neapolitan composers also flourished in Rome. Between 1718 and 1720 the new Teatro Alibert delle Dame mounted productions by Gasparini, who had settled in Rome in 1713, but from 1721 to 1723, these were replaced by works by Porpora and Antonio Pollarolo.[6]

By the time of the 1720s and early 1730s, Venice was producing Neapolitan settings of operas with Metastasian librettos, which was a reversal of the situation as it had been at the end of the seventeenth century. Although Naples produced its last Venetian opera for 16 years in 1720, around 30 operas were performed in Venice during the same period that had been composed by Neapolitans.[7] It was from Venice that European cities received the greater part of their Italian operatic repertoire and the dissemination of this repertoire, often with a libretto by Metastasio and music by a Neapolitan composer, was wide-spread across Europe (Strohm, 1997).

Whether the term 'Neapolitan' is wholly apposite or not, there is no doubt that a new style of opera seria was evident at the beginning of the eighteenth century, largely cultivated and promoted by the group of composers emerging from Naples, including Porpora.

Before specifically investigating Porpora's own style and how this was modified and adapted for the London stage it is worth considering the basic components of the opera seria. The genre was a distinct form, largely constrained by convention, and composers were required to produce music that followed the expected formula whilst simultaneously delivering an aesthetically pleasing and engaging work of art.

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[5] S. Maria di Loreto, S. Maria della Pietà dei Turchini, Poveri di Gesù Cristo, S. Onofrio a Capuna.

[6] Porpora: *Flavio Anicio Olibrio* 1722, *Eumene* 1723, *Adelaide* 1723. Antonio Pollarolo (1676-1746): *Cosröe* 1723.

[7] The last Venetian opera in Naples, 1720 was *Tito Manlio* by C.F. Pollarolo, adapted by Ignazio Prota. Strohm (1997, p.65) lists the composers as Porpora, Hasse, Leo, Vinci, Sellitti, Araya, Fiorelli, Sarri and Broschi.

Main Constituent Parts of Opera Seria

Aria[8]

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, although the aria had a da capo structure it was generally shorter overall than the arias to come in the following decades. A continuo only accompaniment was quite common but quickly became much rarer. The opening and intermediate ritornellos became longer and 20 to 30 da capo arias throughout the opera became the well-established pattern. As the vocal line was extended and developed with musical and textual repetition, the binary organisation of the opening section of the aria evolved. The first verse of the aria (A section) was expanded with the text being set twice (A^1 and A^2) modulating from the tonic to a related key (usually the dominant) and then back to the tonic. The second verse (B section) usually stayed in one section and did not grow proportionately to the first; it was sometimes used more as a bridge passage back to the repeat of the A section.

During the 1720s and 30s the melody developed a lilting quality emanating from syncopated rhythms, triplets and a desire to create elegant and balanced phrasing to match the rhythm of the poetry. Several melodic characteristics featured at the beginning of the eighteenth century to identify the 'new' style; rhythms to balance the vocal line and achieve overall symmetry were used: ♪ ♩ ♩ ♪ ; the use of appoggiaturas became more widespread; a deliberate attempt to match high and low notes in phrases to achieve an equilibrium could be seen; a descending scalic passage in the voice leading to the final cadence was often used. With increasing emphasis on the ability of the voice to deliver the meaning through vocal flair, new techniques were introduced with longer vocalizations, wider leaps and a greater range being demanded of the singers.

The triple time signatures $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{2}$, with their dance connotations fell out of favour in the eighteenth century. $\frac{6}{8}$ also became rarer after c.1720 although $\frac{12}{8}$ was used for pastoral arias or those with a pathetic idiom. $\frac{4}{4}$ was commonly used for bravura or lively arias allowing for fast repeated quavers in the accompaniment. By 1710 the first violins often played *colla parte* (with the voice), with the seconds adding a simple middle line and the violas playing with the bass line. The accompaniment started to adopt a 'Trommelbass',

[8] For more details than it is practicable to give here see Dean (1969), Robinson (1972) and Kimbell (1994).

playing continuous repeating quavers, giving the impression of forward momentum and progression even where there was little harmonic change.

Ensemble Items

Ensembles were considerably scarcer than solo items; a duet was generally found at the close of either Acts I or II, but trios and quartets were rarer. The da capo structure for the aria was so embedded during the beginning of the eighteenth century that this was also extended to the lyrical ensembles. This often had the effect of causing the item to be predominantly a solo melody shared out between the voices with little true concerted singing. Occasionally a cumulative build up was realised by each voice entering in turn. The composer was dependent upon the librettist supplying him with suitable rhyming text for individual characters that could be sung by two singers concurrently, or with text that was emotionally appropriate for more than one character to sing. The relative rarity of an ensemble did give the composer the opportunity to produce something a little different and occasionally there is some contrapuntal invention in the item.

A closing coro generally concluded the opera. This was a simple four-part homophonic setting sung most often by the principals. Occasional additional coros could be found to set the scene or round off a section but were not an independent part of the drama.

Secco Recitative

Shorter note values than previously were used in passages of secco recitative at the start of the eighteenth century, suggesting a faster pace, but with no traces of lyricism and with slow harmonic change. It was syllabic and composed to match the speed and flow of the text. Robinson (1972, p.74) says that in the 1730s and 40s the chords of the final cadence were displaced to sound after the vocal phrase had ended, leaving the voice to finish on its own with no possibility of a harmonic clash with the accompaniment. Dean and Hansell suggest that this move happened later. Dean (1977, p.394) writes that 'Handel and his contemporaries....almost invariably wrote or printed the dominant bass note under the

last accented syllable of the voice.' Hansell (1968, p.246) asserts that the delayed cadence was used in the latter half of the eighteenth century.[9]

Accompanied Recitative

At the end of the seventeenth century passages of accompanied recitative occurred more frequently in operatic works than earlier. The average length of each passage grew and orchestral ritornellos were interspersed. The strings were used both to support the singer with sustained chords and to highlight a character's emotion, with punctuations between statements. In the 1720s Neapolitan operas were likely to have one or two passages of accompanied recitative, increasing sometimes to three or four (Robinson, 1972, p.85). Such passages were used to reinforce moments of intense drama, often underlining a character's inner turmoil or anguished indecision. A connection with the gods was also often featured. Marvin (1978, pp.4-7) identifies three categories of situation where accompanied recitative can be found. The first is a scene containing a supernatural or 'unreal' quality. Variations on this are when a character addresses an absent friend or lover, dream sequences and invocations to the gods. The second category is for scenes of death or dying and the irrationality of madness when a distraught character loses the ability to organize his thoughts in a logical fashion. The third category she identifies is when a character faces a choice between two unacceptable alternatives.

As the difference between aria and secco recitative became more pronounced, free lyrical sections (arioso) accompanied only by continuo were less frequent. These sections tended to be confined to a very short passage within the framework of accompanied recitative.

Overture

The French overture was developed by Lully in the seventeenth century.[10] A slow first section, characterized by dotted rhythms, was followed by an imitative second section in triple or compound time. This type of overture became popular in Germany, England and to a lesser degree in Italy. Handel opened nearly all of his operas with the French type of

[9] This is investigated more fully in the following section on Porpora's style.
[10] Jean-Baptiste Lully, 1632-1687.

overture.[11] Developing at roughly the same time was the Italian overture (sinfonia). This became standardized after about 1690 and comprised three sections – fast, slow, fast. D major was a favourite key as it was suited to the trumpets which often featured. The new style emerging in Italy was apparent in the sinfonia, with contrapuntal writing and an opening fugal section giving way to further homophonic sections. The central slow section was more varied in size and tended to move furthest away from the tonal centre with the sparsest texture of the three. The third section was usually in triple time and took the form and style of a dance. By the 1720s and 30s the three sections of the Italian overture had developed into an integrated and cohesive unit and by the middle of the century this was the standard opening for all European operas.

Porpora's Style

The purpose of the following section is to investigate how Porpora adapted the style and configuration of his operas to suit a London audience. The previous chapters have considered the importance of the librettists – Rolli and, to a lesser extent, Cibber – in the production of Porpora's London operas. Any innovations of structure emanating firstly from the librettist and secondly from Porpora have also been examined. This chapter deals with the music that Porpora wrote before, during and, briefly, after his three-year visit to London. The nine operas under consideration comprise three before he came to London, the five in London and one after he left (see Table 14).

[11] *Agrippina* (Venice, 1709) begins with an Italian sinfonia and *Rodrigo* (Florence, 1707) begins with an overture including dance movements.

Table 14. Sources of nine Porpora operas[12]

OPERA	LIBRETTIST	YEAR	CITY	LIBRARY SOURCE	SHELFMARK/REFERENCE/ACCESS[13]
L'Agrippina	N. Giuvo	1708	Naples	I-Nc	Retrieved from IMSLP.org
Siface[14]	Metastasio after D. David	1725	Milan/Venice	GB-CDu	442/18
Germanico in Germania	N. Coluzzi	1732	Rome	I-MC	Retrieved from IMSLP.org
Arianna in Naxo[15]	Rolli	1733	London	GB-Lbl	R.M.22.m.29–31
Enea nel Lazio	Rolli	1734	London	GB-Lbl	R.M.23.a.1–3
Polifemo	Rolli	1735	London	GB-Lbl	R.M.23.a.7–9 and MUS/ADD/14115 (Act III only)
Ifigenia in Aulide	Rolli	1735	London	GB-Lbl	R.M.23.a.4–6
Mitridate	Cibber	1736	London	GB-Lbl	MUS/ADD/14115 (Acts II and III only)
Semiramide riconosciuta	Metastasio rev. D. La Vista	1739	Naples	I-Nc	Retrieved from IMSLP.org

L'Agrippina was Porpora's first opera, written while he was at the Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo and performed at the Palazzo Reale in Naples in 1708. *Siface* came at one of Porpora's busiest periods when, between 1723 and 1725, he was producing two new operas per season for various centres. *Siface* was one of his most successful works and was first performed in 1725 in Milan's Teatro Ducale and was also performed in the same season in Venice at the Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo. *Germanico in Germania* was the penultimate opera Porpora wrote in Italy before he left for London. It was performed

[12] The four operas chosen to complement my study of Porpora's style in his five London operas were chosen as follows: *L'Agrippina,* being Porpora's first opera, to investigate his initial style; *Siface* as being representative of the period when Porpora was at his most busy and successful in Italy; *Germanico in Germania*, Porpora's penultimate opera before coming to London, as being indicative of how Porpora's style may have changed in Italy; *Semiramide riconosciuta,* performed only three years after Porpora's return to Italy, to investigate any reversion to earlier methods and style.

[13] All manuscripts listed are copies except for MUS/ADD/14115 which is an autograph score. See Chapter Seven for details.

[14] All images reproduced from this manuscript (442/18) are with the permission of Cardiff University Library: Special Collections and Archives.

[15] All images reproduced from the manuscripts held at the British Library (R.M.22.m.29-31, R.M.23.a.1-3, R.M.23.a.4-6, R.M.23.a.7-9, MUS/ADD/14115), are with the permission of the British Library, © The British Library Board.

during the Carnival season of 1732 in Rome's Teatro Capranica.[16] After his return to Italy in 1736, Porpora composed 13 more operas, *Semiramide riconosciuta* being performed in the Teatro San Carlo, Naples for the king's birthday in January 1739.

Overall Structure

Table 15. Number of scenes and characters in nine Porpora operas

OPERA	SCENES				CHARACTERS
	ACT I	ACT II	ACT III	TOTAL	
L'Agrippina	19	18	15	**52**	9
Siface	14	15	11	**40**	6
Germanico in Germania	12	14	10	**36**	6
Arianna in Naxo	7	6	6	**19**	5
Enea nel Lazio	5	5	4	**14**	7
Polifemo	6	7	7	**20**	6/5[17]
Ifigenia in Aulide	6	6	5	**17**	6
Mitridate[18]	8	11	16	**35**	7
Semiramide riconosciuta	15	13	13	**41**	6

Table 15 shows the significant difference in number of scenes between the highest number of 52 in *L'Agrippina* in 1708 and the lowest of 14 in *Enea nel Lazio* in 1734. The structure of the libretto for the opera seria at the beginning of the eighteenth century was still being formulated; Metastasio being credited with producing the definitive opera seria libretto beginning in 1724. During the 15 years between Nicola Giuvo's text of *L'Agrippina* for Porpora in 1708 and Metastasio's *Siface* in 1725, the opera libretto for the latter that was presented to Porpora had shed 12 scenes and three characters. This was then set as the standard format for the opera seria libretto, comprising three acts, between five and seven characters and between 20 and 30 da capo arias. The obvious anomalies in the list are the opera librettos which Rolli supplied for Porpora in London. All four have significantly fewer scenes than the others. This is in keeping with Rolli's librettos for other composers which seldom have an act with scenes that run into double figures.[19] In *Mitridate* Cibber restored Porpora's final London opera to something more akin to the earlier operas for Italy,

[16] Porpora's last opera written in Italy before he came to London was *Issipile*, first performed in Rome in the Teatro Rucellai in the Carnival season of 1733.
[17] The character of Nerea was written out for the revisal.
[18] Compiled from the libretto.
[19] Rolli's first libretto for the Royal Academy in 1720 was *Numitore* set by Porta in the old-fashioned Venetian style. Act I had six scenes, Act II four and Act III only three.

with 35 scenes. As a greater number of scenes was something that Porpora was used to from the librettists supplying him with texts in Italy there are no discernible differences between the operas due to this factor. It appears more as the librettists' device to aid delivery of the story in logical and dramatic chunks. Rolli often constructed his scenes with several items rather than write many shorter scenes containing, perhaps, just one passage of recitative and an aria.

Tonal Axes and Use of Keys[20]

A study of the keys used by Porpora shows a remarkable consistency throughout these works. Of the nine operas, it is possible to compare the opening item - the sinfonia, with the closing item - a coro, in seven of them. Although the final folio in the score of Act III of *Mitridate* is marked 'segue coro', the music for both this item and the whole of Act I is missing and consequently cannot be included. The final folio in the score of Act III of *L'Agrippina* is marked 'siegue tutti', suggesting that the following item is a coro. Again, the music is missing. Table 16 shows the opening key of each sinfonia and that of the closing coro in the operas where known.

Table 16. Opening and closing keys in eight Porpora operas

OPERA	**OPENING SINFONIA**	**CLOSING *CORO***
L'Agrippina	D major	?
Siface	D major	D major
Germanico in Germania	D major	D major
Arianna in Naxo	D minor	D major
Enea nel Lazio	G major	D major
Polifemo	D minor	D major
Ifigenia in Aulide	E major	A major
Semiramide riconosciuta	D major	D major

[20] The sections on tonality are to identify trends across the nine operas rather than provide evidence of a conscious tonal plan applied by Porpora. An investigation into this area of overall tonal structure across opere serie would merit further study. Grout (2003, p.190, fn66) identifies studies that have been undertaken regarding other composers' operas (A.Scarlatti, Hasse, Rameau) with inconclusive results. Leichentritt (1935, p.213) states that Steglich, in his Händel (1924), identified 'an apparently planned *Architektonik der Tonarten*, extending over whole acts' in **many** of Handel's operas and oratorios. Leichentritt (p.214) concludes that 'Handel repeated no fixed structural scheme, but devised a new and ingenious ground-plan of tonalities for each dramatic score'. Both Grout and Dean (1969) identify a clear overall tonal plan in **some** of Handel's operas and Cummings (1991, p.308) gives the example of *Poro* which 'does not exhibit the same clarity of tonal planning as those examples listed by Dean and Grout.'

The table shows a marked preference for the key of D major. This was the most popular key when using trumpets, but Porpora still favoured it even when the sinfonia does not include trumpets, as in *Germanico in Germania* and *Polifemo.* When D minor is initially used, as in the opening sinfonias of *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo*, this is superseded by D major in the second section in *Arianna in Naxo* and in the third section in *Polifemo.* It is only in the two London operas of *Enea nel Lazio* and *Ifigenia in Aulide* that Porpora branched out to different keys for his sinfonia. These are the two London operas which have already been identified as being less structurally innovative than *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo,* so perhaps Porpora was adding variety and interest to these operas through his different choice of tonality. Even so, *Enea nel Lazio* still has a strong connection to D major as this is the opera's ultimate key and the sinfonia opens in the closely related subdominant key of G major. Of the nine operas under consideration here (as listed in Table 14) it is clear that Porpora favoured the keys of D major and minor as the pivotal keys and closer examination of the aria keys used in each opera show that the majority are along the D axes.[21]

Major Keys

In each of the D-centred operas except *L'Agrippina,* over half the keys used in the arias are the major keys that are related along the tonal axes of D major and D minor (D,G,A,F,B♭ and C major, see Table 17).

Table 17. Tonal axes and relationship of keys in D major and D minor

	I	IV	V
KEY of D MAJOR	D major	G major	A major
RELATIVE MINOR	B minor	E minor	F♯ minor
KEY of D MINOR	D minor	G minor	A minor
RELATIVE MAJOR	F major	B♭ major	C major

In *L'Agrippina* Porpora used a wider range of keys – 16 in total whereas the other operas use between nine and 12 different keys. This suggests that overall musical coherence became

[21] Although the music of the final item of *L'Agrippina* and both the opening and final items of *Mitridate* are missing these operas have been included as being D centred operas as the aria keys used are largely consistent along the D axes.

more important to Porpora after his first opera. D major, unsurprisingly, is the most popular key for the arias. Not only is this key the linchpin for all the D-centred operas, but also, as a 'trumpet' key, D major was eminently suitable for grand, triumphant or regal situations which, Porpora utilised accordingly. For example Siface's 'Scettro corona e soglio credimi', I.v, *Siface*, and Teseo's 'Ho vinto ma non già', I.ii, *Arianna in Naxo*.

There is one additional major aria key, E♭ major, that features either once or twice in all of the D-centred operas, and a second major key, E major, in which there are between one and three arias in all but two of these operas, *Siface* and *Semiramide riconosciuta*. The use of these two keys in addition to the related keys along the tonal axes is clearly deliberate as there are no other keys used in the D-centred operas with the exception of *L'Agrippina* (see below). Porpora tended to use E♭ major to express forthright ideas without sentimentality. In *Mitridate*, as he prepares for battle, Mitridate states that he will accept victory or defeat as long as he has vengeance. ('Se il Fato mio tiranno', III.ix). In *Polifemo,* Aci uncompromisingly depicts Polifemo's horrible fate while he himself will reside with the gods. ('Senti 'l Fato', III.vi). In *Arianna in Naxo* (Teseo's 'Nume che reggi l'mare', I.v) and *Enea nel Lazio* (Enea's 'Lunge benchè dal monte', I.iii), the serious and straightforward tone is still apparent. The singer addresses the gods in these two arias, asking for safe passage in the first and promising glory to the gods in the second.

E major is used for arias of extreme love, often when the singer expresses intense pain. In *Arianna in Naxo,* Antiope sings despairingly of her abandonment ('Pensati a vendicar', I.iv), reinforcing this sentiment later in Act III, scene ii with another E major aria, 'Vivere senza te', where she cannot bear to contemplate living without Teseo. In *Polifemo*, Aci sings of his pain at being parted from his beloved, 'Dolci fresche Aurette grate' (I.iii), in this key. When Clitennestra sings 'Con le fiamme più vivaci' in Act I, scene v of *Ifigenia in Aulide*, it is ostensibly to call upon the power of love to fill the hearts of the betrothed Achille and Ifigenia. Unbeknown to Clitennestra however, her daughter, Ifigenia, is to be sacrificed and Porpora's choice of E major belies the happy positive emotions of the text with a desperate undercurrent. As Matheson (1704, as cited in Buelow, 1970, p.100) describes it, 'E major expresses incomparably well a despairing or wholly fatal sadness'. Although Porpora's choice of E major certainly suits Matheson's classification here it is worth noting that Rameau, in 1722, (as cited in Stebin, 2012, p.39) characterised E major as

a key of grandeur and magnificence, tender and gay, while later in the eighteenth century (1796), the Italian violinist and pedagogue, Galeazzi, considered it 'a very piercing key, shrill, youthful, narrow and somewhat harsh' (as cited in Steblin, 2012, p.104). In his treatise, *Elementi teorico-pratici di musica*, Galeazzi makes the important point that 'a clever artist knows how to express any affect in any key' (as cited in Steblin, 2012, p.103). Perhaps Porpora's skill lay more in the consistent choice of key for a particular affect to aid the audience's interpretation of a character's emotion, rather than in assigning a key to conform to any perceived notion of characteristic.

Minor Keys

There is a striking decrease in the use of minor keys for arias between *L'Agrippina* and *Siface* (see Table 18). Of the 44 arias in *L'Agrippina* the split between major and minor is nearly equal – 24 major to 20 minor. Eighteen years later, apart from a big drop in the total number of arias from 44 to 24, *Siface* only has six minor key arias to 18 major. This was consistent with the general trend of minor key arias falling out of favour during the first decades of the eighteenth century, along with the smaller number of arias overall.[22] This reduced number of arias remains consistent throughout the rest of the operas. The use of minor keys appears to take a marked dip in *Germanico in Germania* in 1732 with only 8% being in a minor mode. After *L'Agrippina* there are no more than six in any opera, regardless of the total aria count suggesting that Porpora developed more specific criteria for his minor key arias. More often than not the B sections of the major arias are in a minor key. In *L'Agrippina* and *Siface* this is usually the relative minor. From *Germanico in Germania*, this could also be the supertonic or, occasionally, the tonic minor. With the reduction of the overall number of arias Porpora seemed to have been more judicious and sparing with his use of the minor key arias perhaps preferring to keep the minor mode as a contrast to the A section of the major key arias. They are also always evenly distributed throughout the operas and *Germanico in Germania* is the only opera without at least one minor key aria in one of its acts (Act I).[23]

[22] Robinson (1972, pp.110-1) remarks that 'arias in minor keys were from the 1730s on in such a small minority that they had special significance.'

[23] Without the music of Act I this cannot be confirmed in the case of *Mitridate*.

Table 18. Major and minor aria keys in nine Porpora operas

OPERA	MAJOR KEY ARIAS	MINOR KEY ARIAS	TOTAL NUMBER OF ARIAS	% OF MINOR
L'Agrippina	24	20	**44**	45
Siface	18	6	**24**	25
Germanico in Germania	23	2	**25**	8
Arianna in Naxo	18	6	**24**	25
Enea nel Lazio	19	3	**22**	14
Polifemo	16	6	**22**	27
Ifigenia in Aulide	16	5	**21**	24
Mitridate[24]	9	2	**11**	18
Semiramide riconosciuta	23	3	**26**	12

Aside from E major and E♭ major there are only two other aria keys that feature in the 'D' operas that are outside this tonal axis. In *L'Agrippina* there is one aria in each of C minor and F minor and the only other occurrence of these keys being used for arias is in the tonally anomalous *Ifigenia in Aulide,* which also has one of each key. The reappearance of these keys in this one opera that is not tonally centred on D may suggest that Porpora took careful consideration of the overall tonal structure of the operas rather than that these two minor keys had merely fallen out of favour. It would seem that after *L'Agrippina* the keys of C minor and F minor did not fit into the overall scheme for arias in the D-centred operas and Porpora preferred the related keys along the axes. *Ifigenia in Aulide* appears to be a temporary break from Porpora's usual tonally-structured pattern with the use of these two unrelated keys – C minor and F minor – along with an aria in another unrelated key, B♭ major.

F♯ minor was another key that apparently fell out of favour with Porpora despite being on D's tonal axis. *L'Agrippina* has two arias in this key and *Siface* has one, but then this key is not used for any more arias in these operas. As *L'Agrippina* was Porpora's first opera it is not surprising that he was perhaps more experimental with his use of aria keys before deciding which he preferred to portray the particular emotion or thought of the drama. After the one more aria in *Siface* he may have decided that it was too 'unrestrained, strange and misanthropic' (Buelow, p.102) to be appropriate.

[24] Figures for *Mitridate* are based on Acts II and III only as the music for the sinfonia and Act I are missing.

Arias

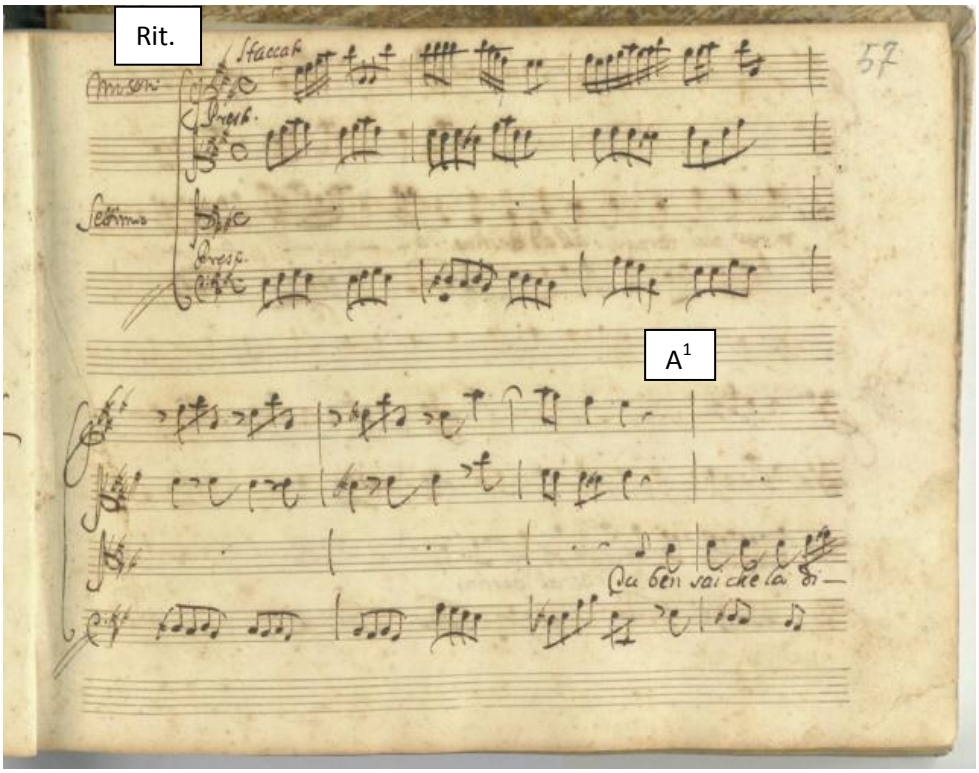
As has been seen, the number of arias reduced significantly from 44, in Porpora's first opera, *L'Agrippina* in 1708, to 24 by the time of *Arianna in Naxo* in 1733. This reduction of the total number of arias resulted from the various ways that the individual arias were lengthened. In *L'Agrippina* many arias consist in their entirety of only 20 or 30 bars. The structure for the majority of the arias is that of the expected format and this does not vary throughout Porpora's operas:

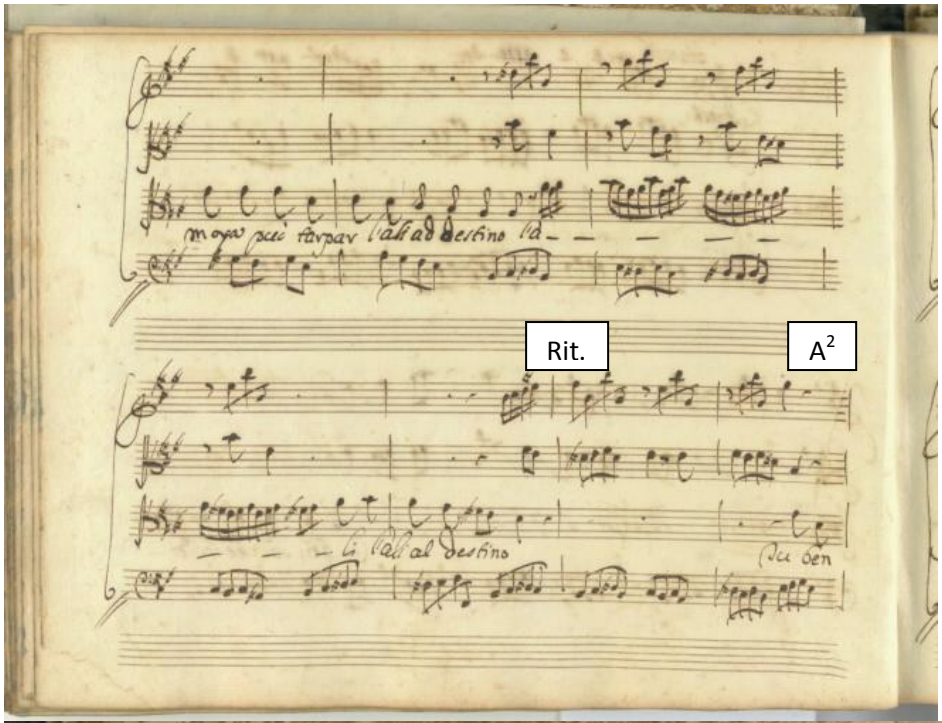
Opening ritornello – A^1 – ritornello – A^2 – ritornello – B – da capo.

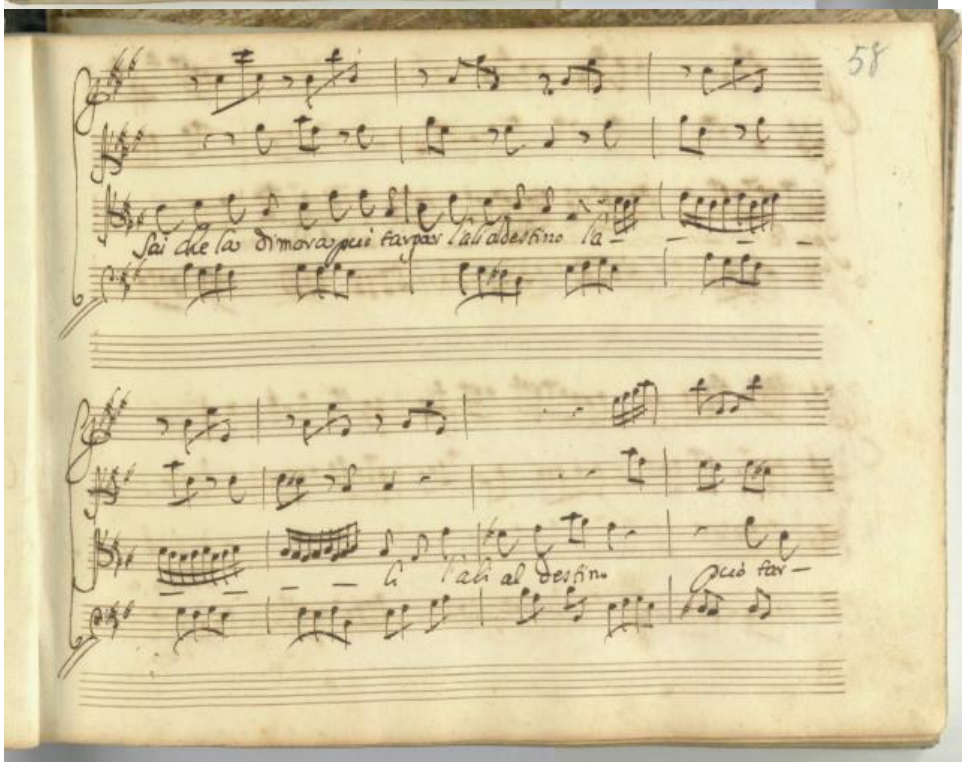
To accommodate this full format, brief statements of the text with little extension are necessary in the shorter arias, with intermediate ritornellos of only a few bars in length. For example, Settimio's 32-bar da capo aria 'Su ben sai che la dimora' in Act I, scene xvi has the following section lengths (Ex.25):

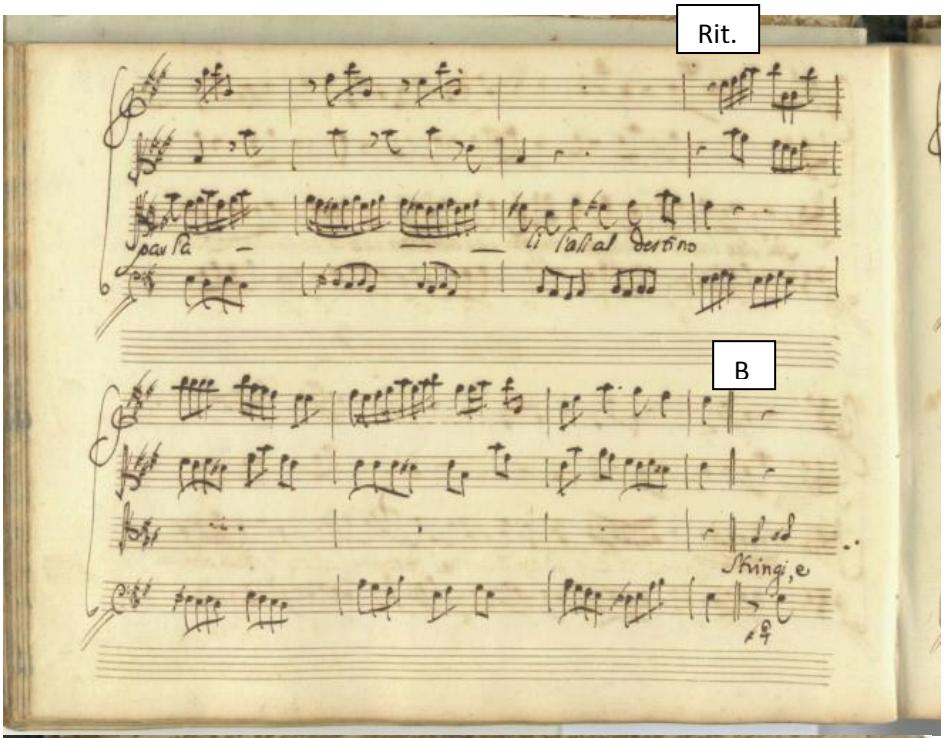
SECTION	Ritornello	A^1	Ritornello	A^2	Ritornello	B
NUMBER OF BARS	6	5	2	8	4	7

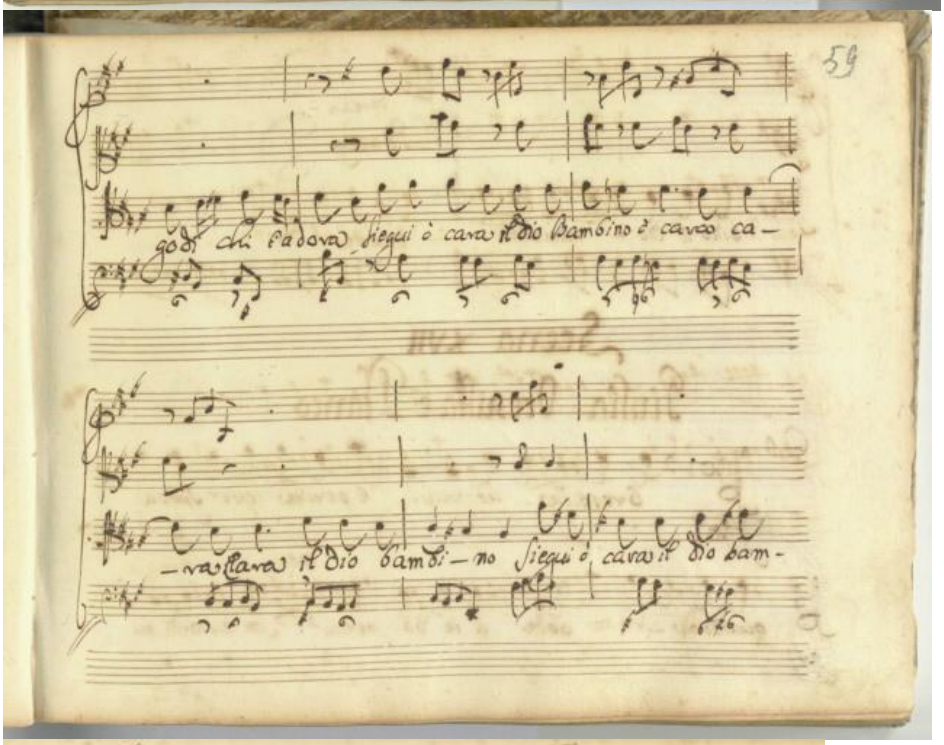
Example 25. Settimio, 'Su ben sai che la dimora', *L'Agrippina*, I.xvi, ff.57r-59v

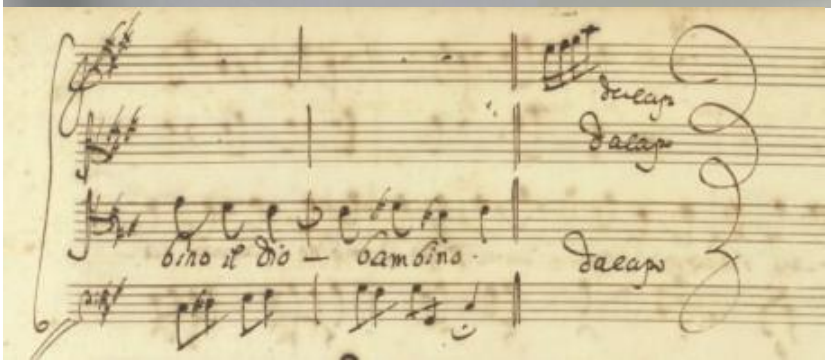



Rit.
A2


58

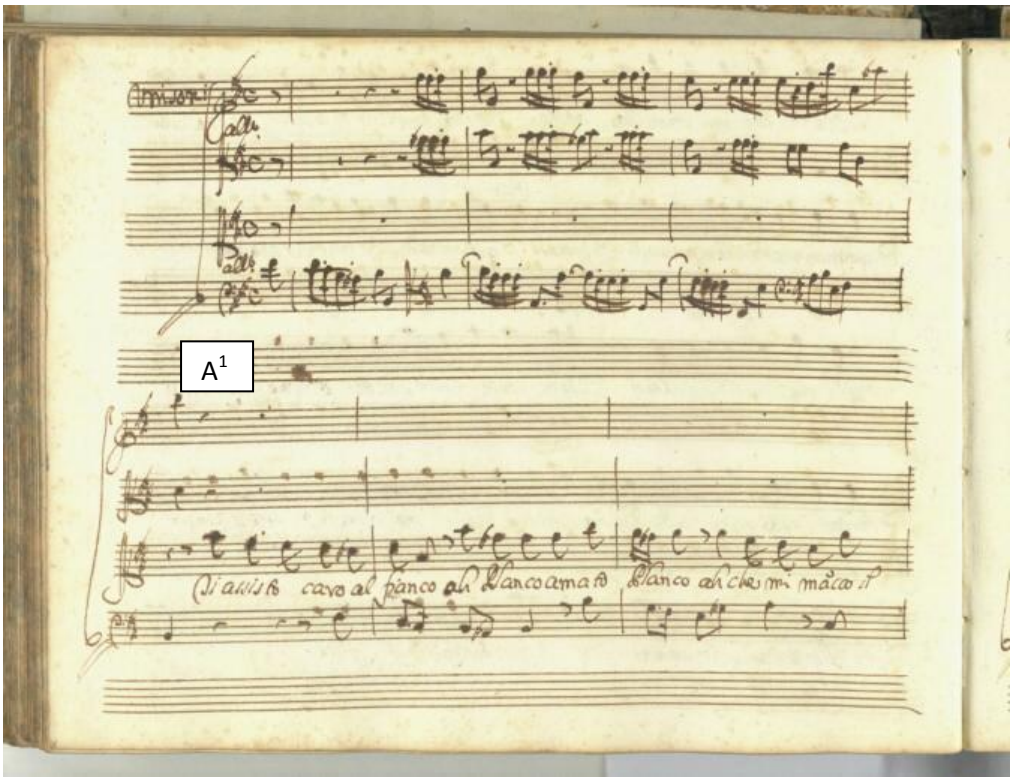

Rit.
pausa
li fatal destino
B
stringe

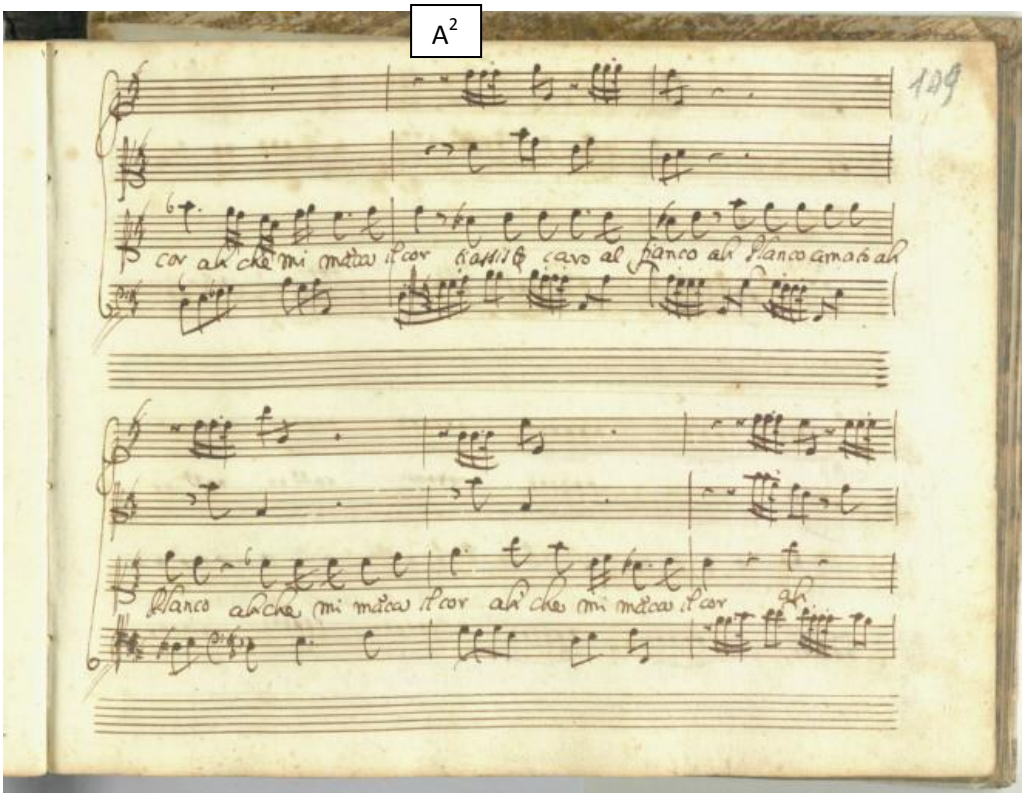

59
godi chi adora, siegui o cara il dio bambino è caro ca-
-rissima il dio bambi-no siegui o cara il dio bam-


bino il dio — bambino.

This aria shows a common format for the arias in *L'Agrippina*. The A^2 section is slightly longer than that of A^1 whilst the B section is roughly comparable in length to that of either A section. In this aria it is two bars longer than A^1 and two bars shorter than A^2. The opening ritornello is a little longer than the two intermediate ritornellos which are both short. In a few cases the ritornello between the two A sections all but disappears entirely as in Armilla's aria in Act II, scene viii (Ex.26).

Example 26. Armilla, 'Si assisto caro', *L'Agrippina*, II.viii, ff.108v-109r

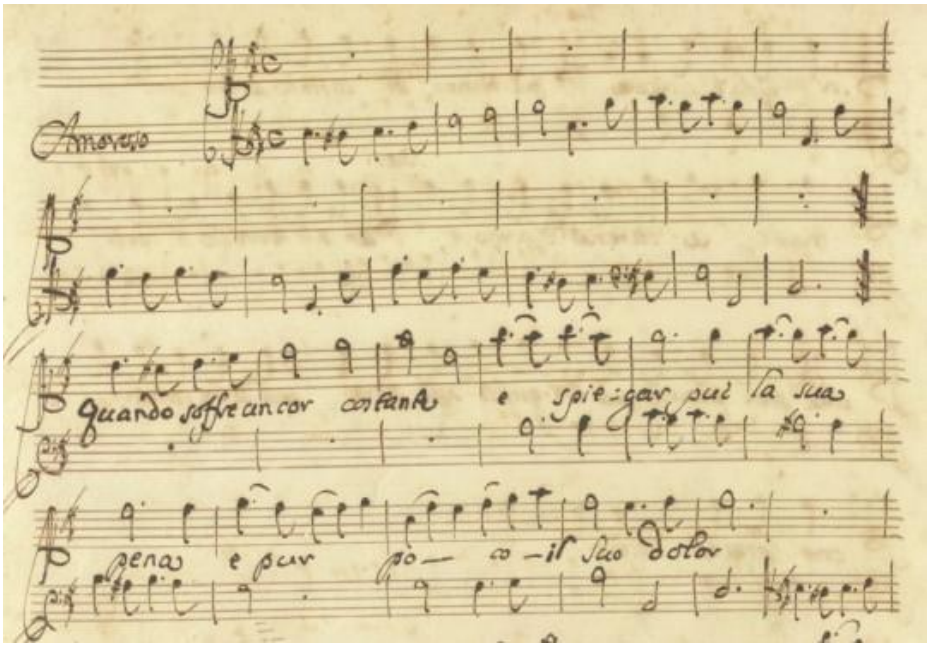




A comparison of the opening ritornellos throughout the operas shows a more variable range by the time of *Germanico in Germania* in 1732, with some still only four to six bars in length but also some of 20 plus bars. The trend of lengthening the opening ritornello appears to have reached its limit at the end of the London operas with most being over 10 bars long. A return to Italy for Porpora reintroduced shorter opening ritornellos in some of the arias in *Semiramide riconosciuta.* In the opening ritornello Porpora could set the mood of the forthcoming aria through key, tempo and rhythm. This may have been more important in London where the audience would not have understood the singers' foreign words as easily as the native Italian audience.

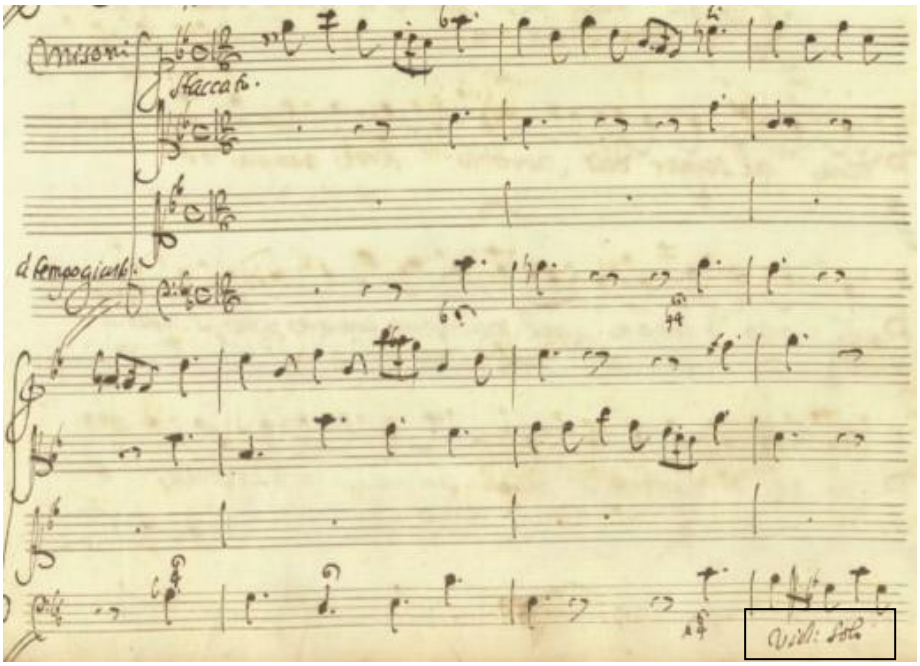
As the opening ritornellos grew longer it became more and more common for Porpora to set out the opening of the vocal phrase in the ritornello. This was not always the case in the earlier operas. In *L'Agrippina* 10 of the arias are continuo arias and, in these instances, provided that there is an opening ritornello, the continuo sets out the opening of the vocal phrase (Ex.27).

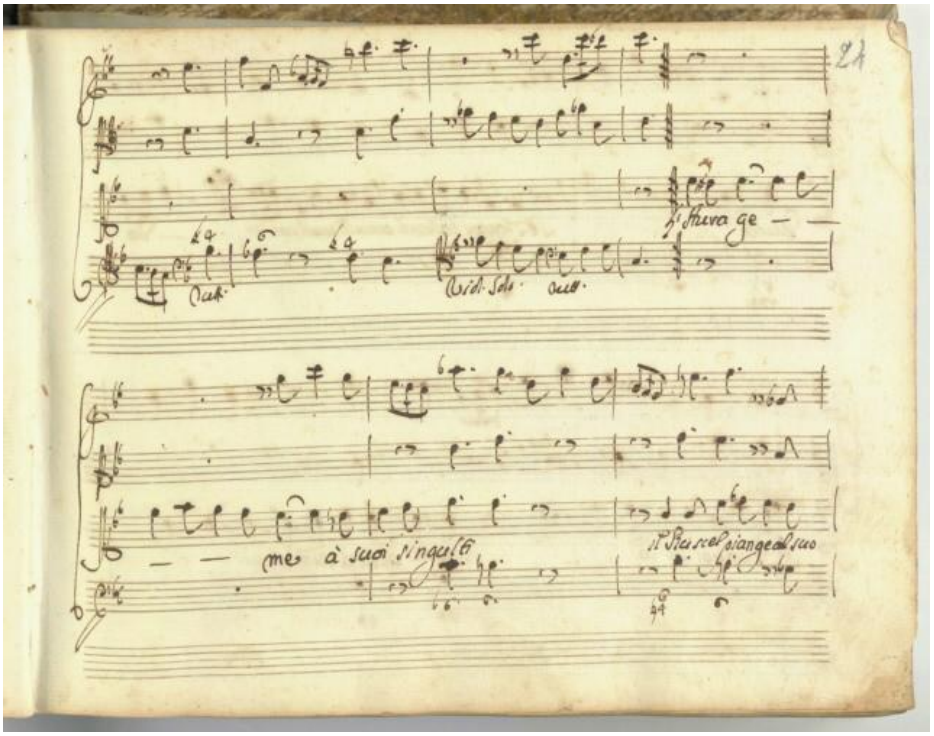
Example 27. Orestilla, 'Quando soffre ancor constante', *L'Agrippina*, I.xvii, f.60v



However, in arias with four-part strings and basso continuo accompaniment, the opening of the vocal material is not always stated first in the ritornello (Ex.28). In this aria the violins have an independent melody which is taken up by the 'viol. solo' at bar 6. When the voice enters it is with a new unaccompanied phrase, leaving the violins to join the voice after two bars, restating their opening material.

Example 28. Orestilla, 'L'Aura geme a suoi singulti', *L'Agrippina*, I.vi, ff.23v-24r

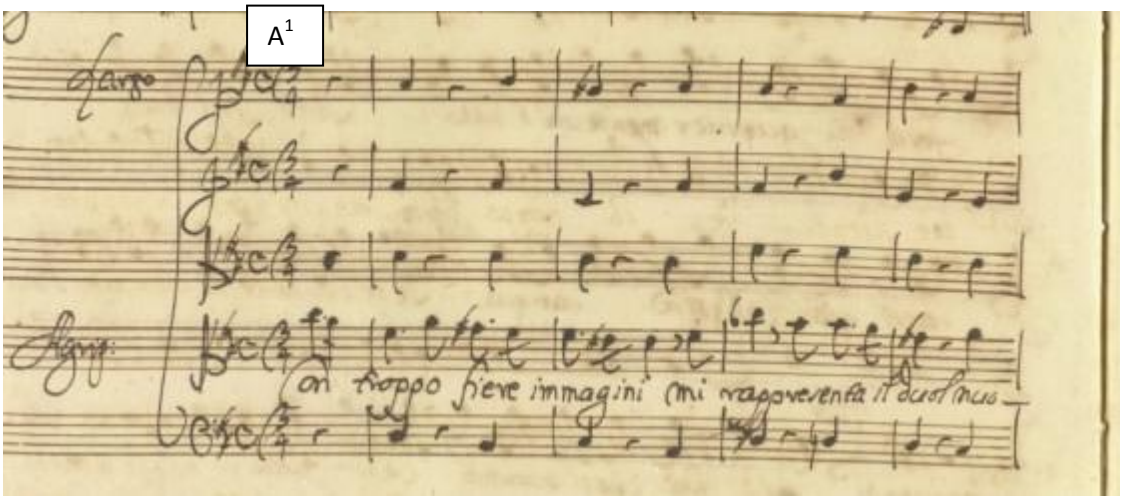


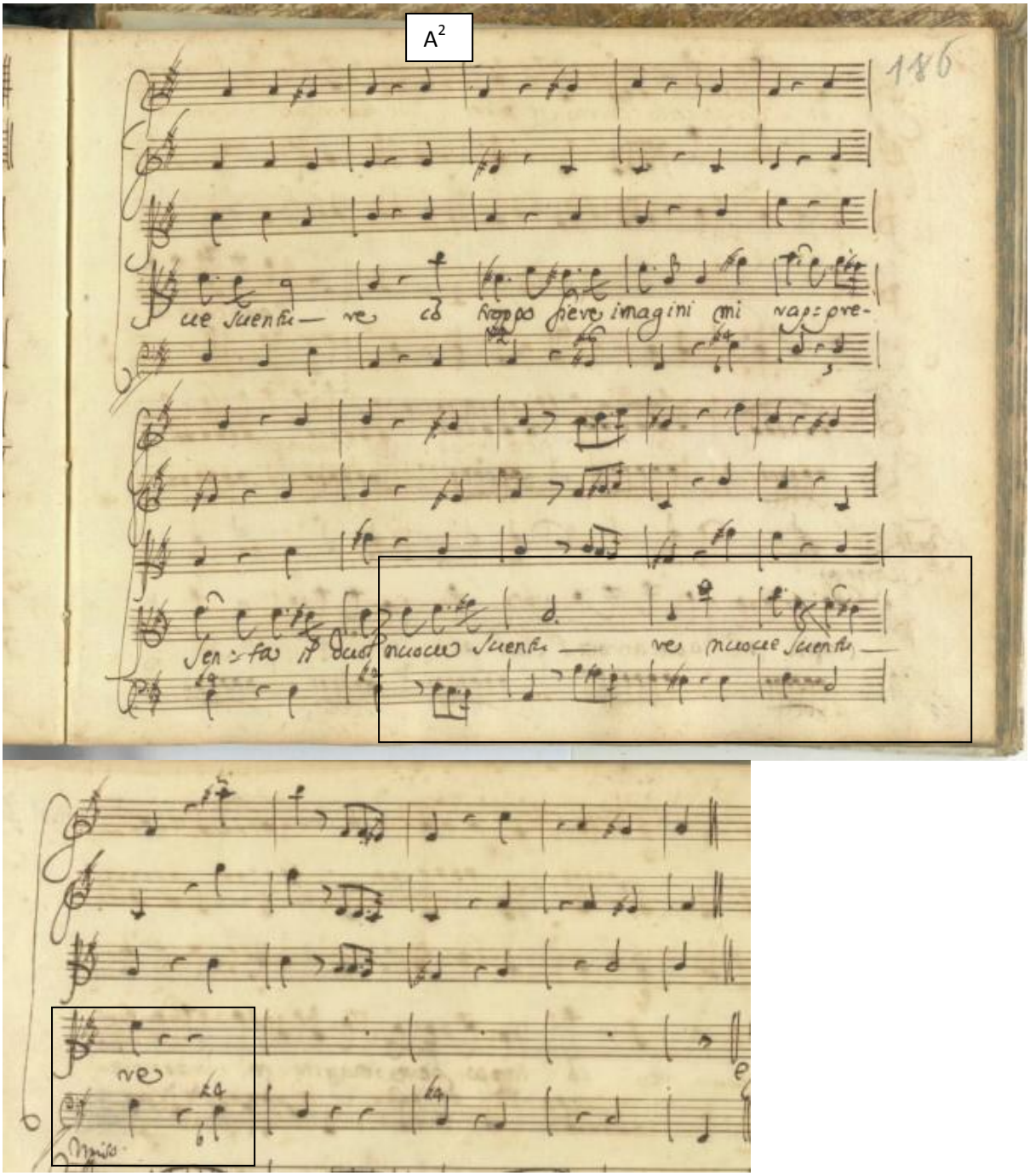


This independent instrumental writing became scarcer in operatic arias of the early eighteenth century and by the time of his London operas it is rare to find an aria where Porpora did not set out at least part of the opening vocal phrase in the opening ritornello.

Many arias in *L'Agrippina* contain the first statement of text (A^1), unextended by any vocalisation or repetition. The second statement (A^2) is then slightly longer with some elaboration, often achieved as in the following example, by a simple repetition of the final words of the phrase, 'nuove sventure', set to different music (Ex.29).

Example 29. Agrippina, 'Con troppo fiere immagini', *L'Agrippina*, III.vii, ff.185v-186v



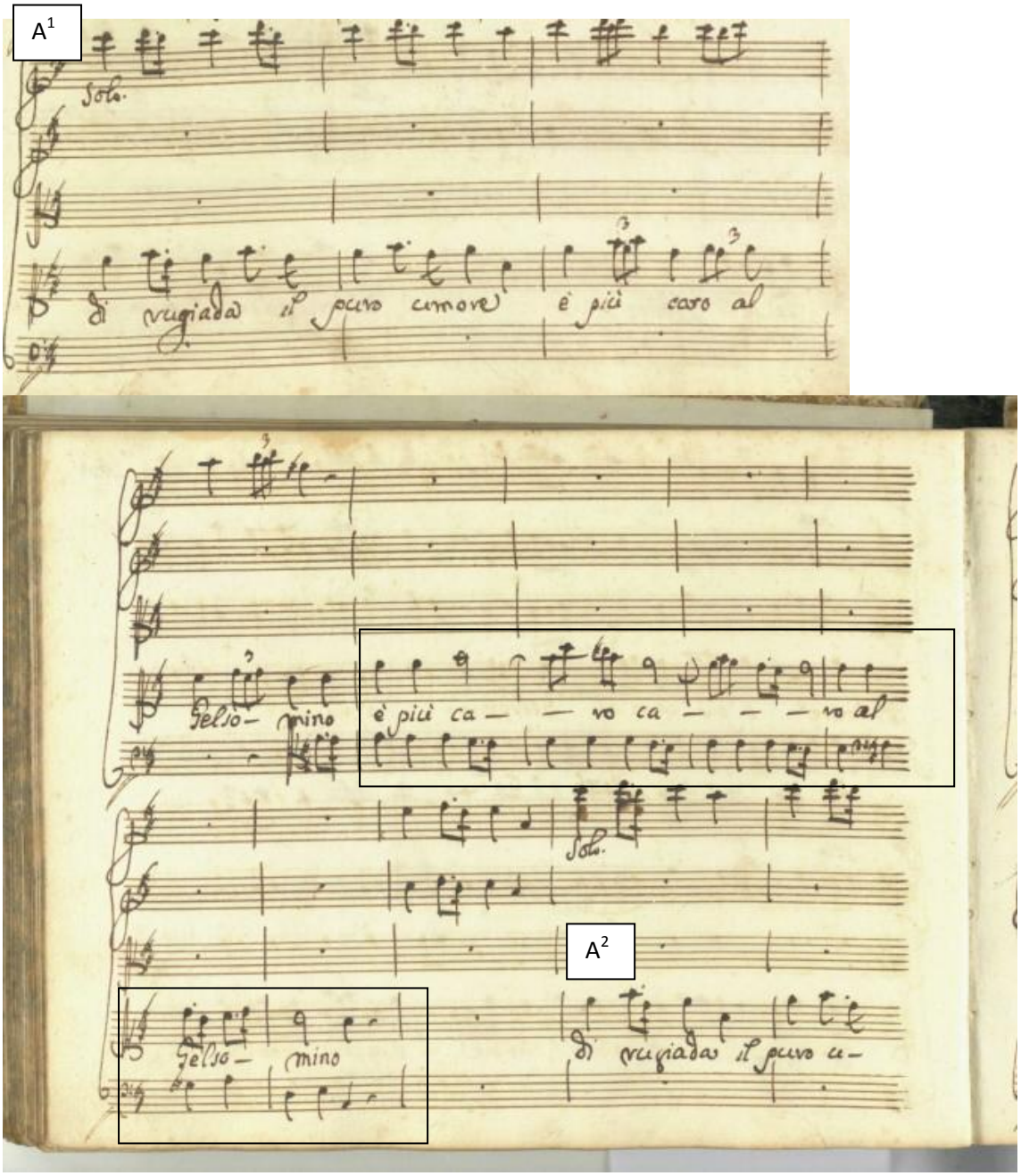


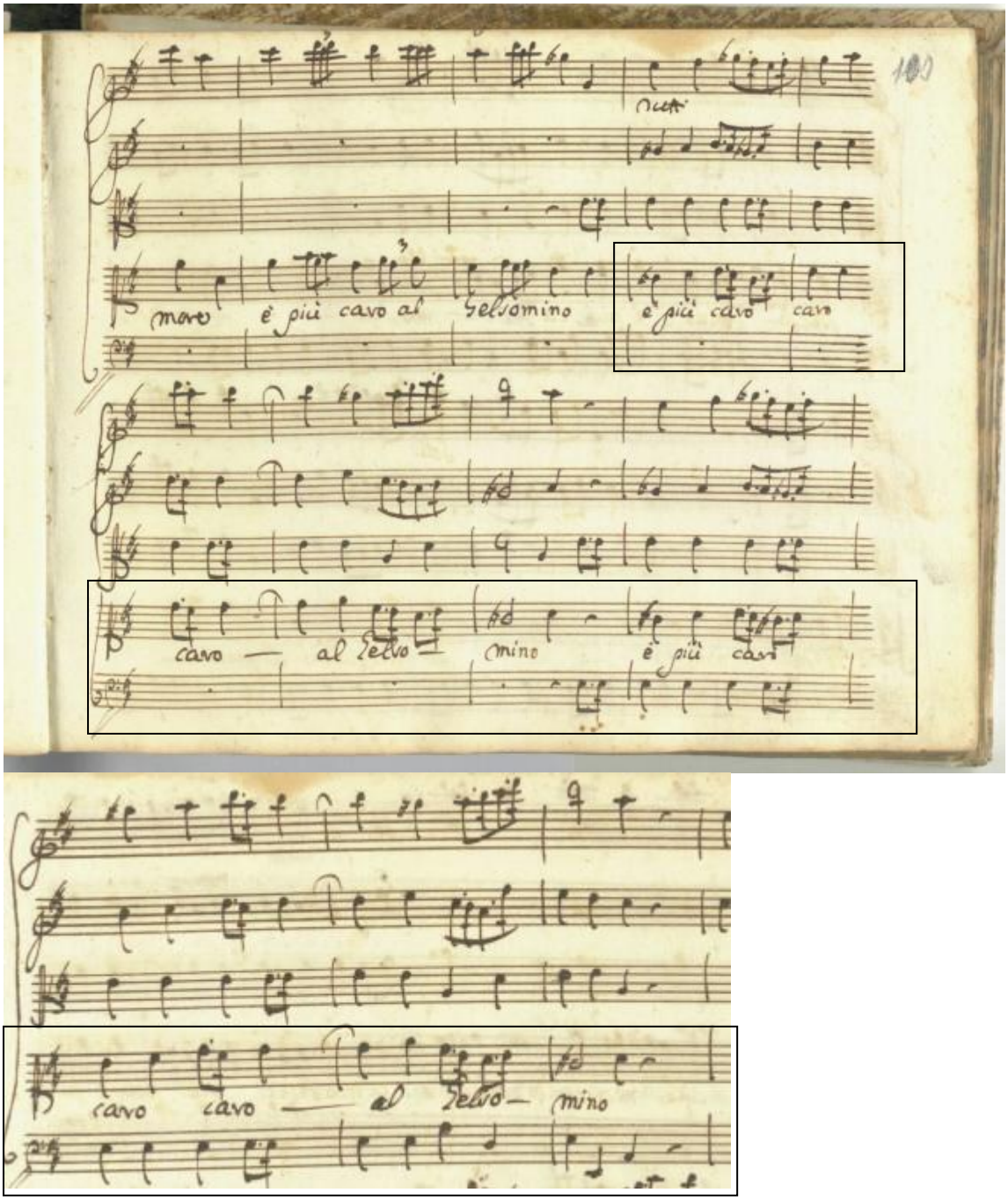
Although in *L'Agrippina* this simple setting out of the text is the most common vocal opening, there are also several instances of a short extension of the initial statement, usually by repetition (Ex.30). In the following aria the first verse of text consists of two lines:

'di rugiada il puro amore
è più caro al Gelsomino'

This is extended in A^1 by repetition of the second line with an extra 'caro' within that repetition. The melisma on the second 'caro' is unusual, as such vocalisations in *L'Agrippina's* arias were rare, especially in the opening statement. The emphasis on this one word gives it clear emphasis. In A^2, rather than restating or elaborating upon the earlier melisma, the second line is extended further by both textual and musical repetition. The repeat has the addition of the basso continuo, lending further weight to the sentiment.

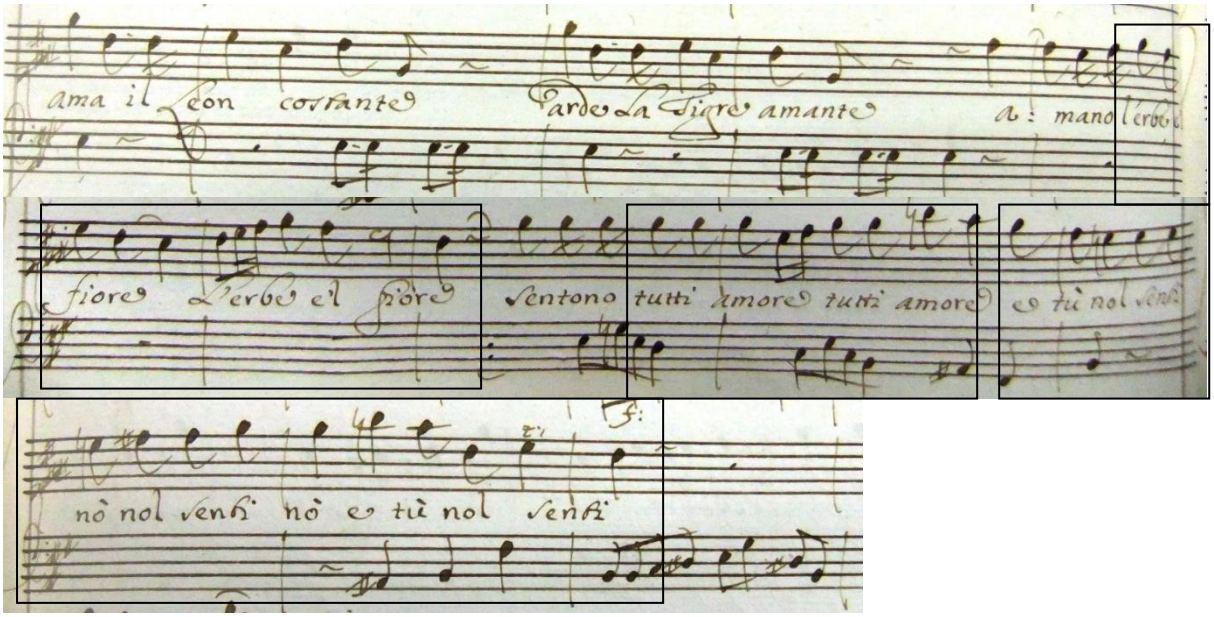
Example 30. Orestilla, 'Di rugiada il puro amore', *L'Agrippina*, II.vi, ff.99r -100v





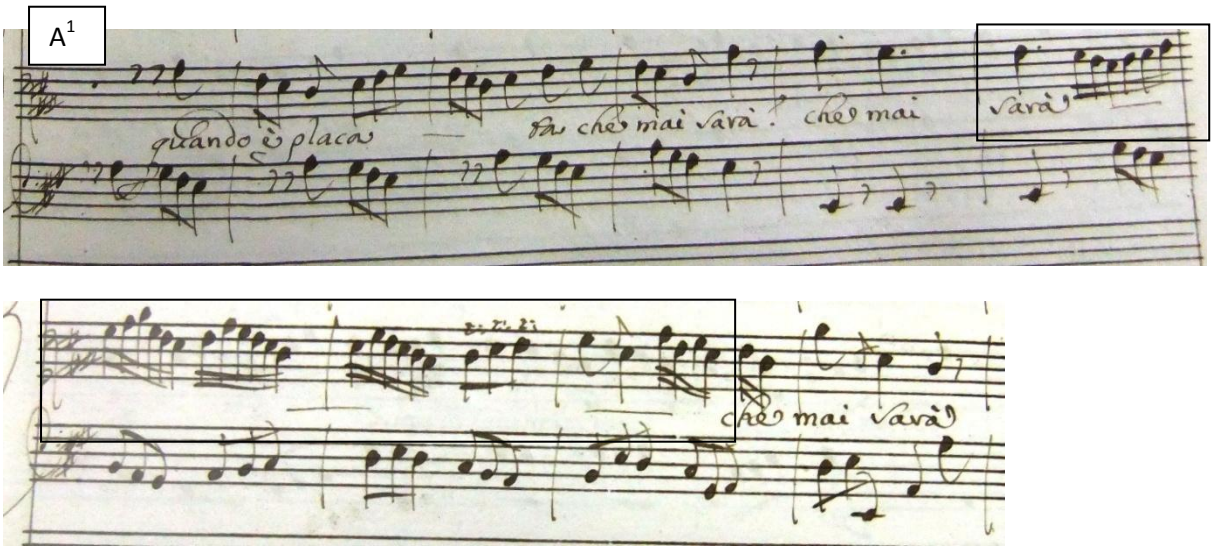
The trend for extending the A section through textual repetition remains in *Siface*. In the following example, particular phrases are repeated in the A^1 section – 'l'erbe el fiore', 'tutti amore' and 'e tù nol senti nò' (Ex.31), with extensive and further repetition of these and other phrases to lengthen A^2.

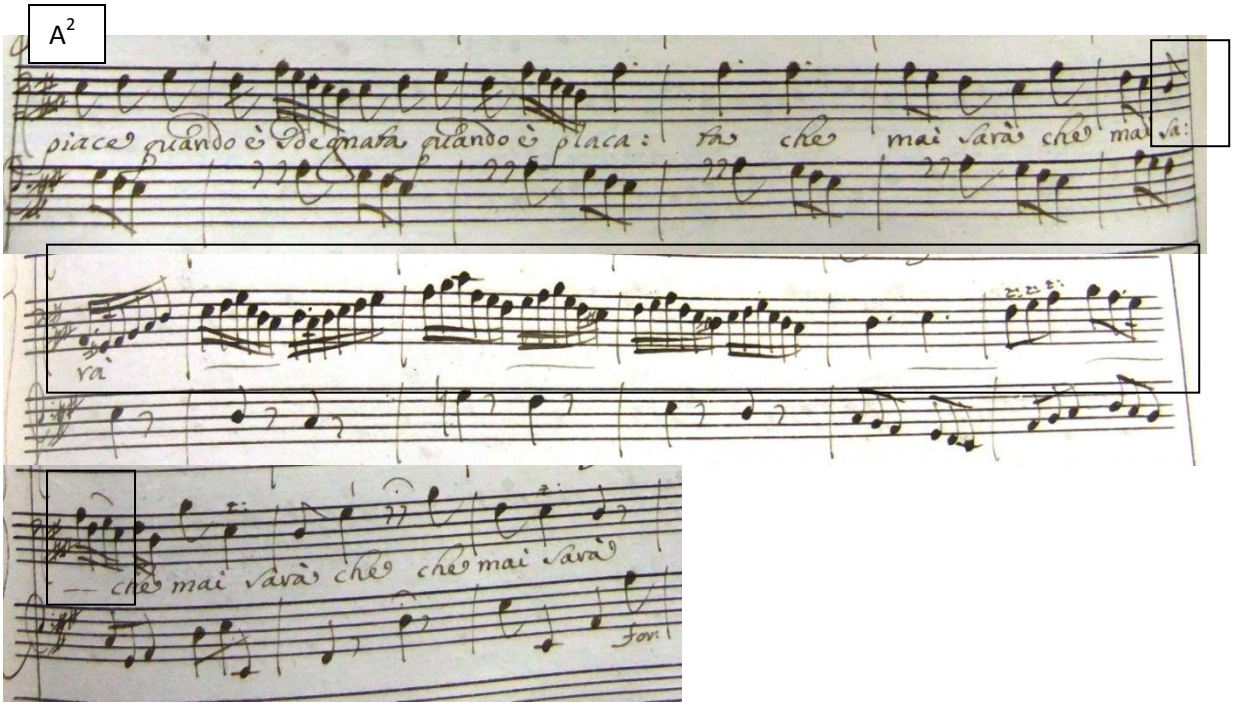
Example 31. Viriate, 'Non lascia il ben che brama', *Siface*, I.ii, ff.16v-17r



By this time it can also be seen in *Siface* that Porpora was regularly using vocalisations in the arias and these sometimes consist of several bars in length. Libanio's aria in Act I, scene x shows the treatment of 'sarà' at the end of section A^1 and then A^2 (Ex.32). Whether using a device of repetition or elongation, the A^2 section consistently elaborates and extends whatever is presented in the A^1 section throughout all of these operas.

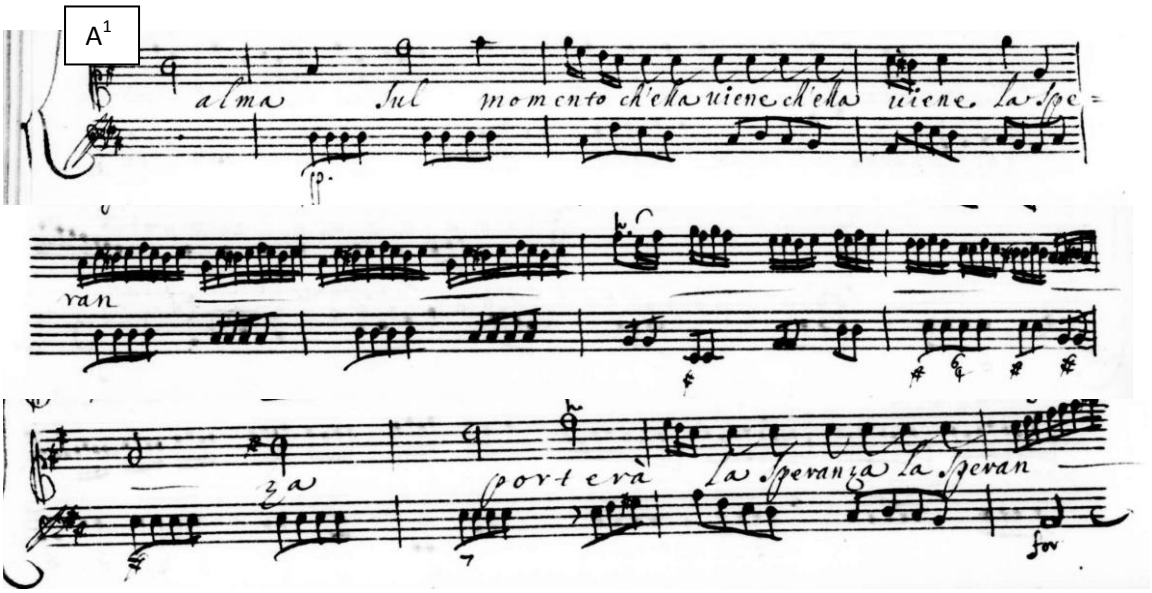
Example 32. Libanio, 'Se tanto piace', *Siface*, I.x, ff.51-52r

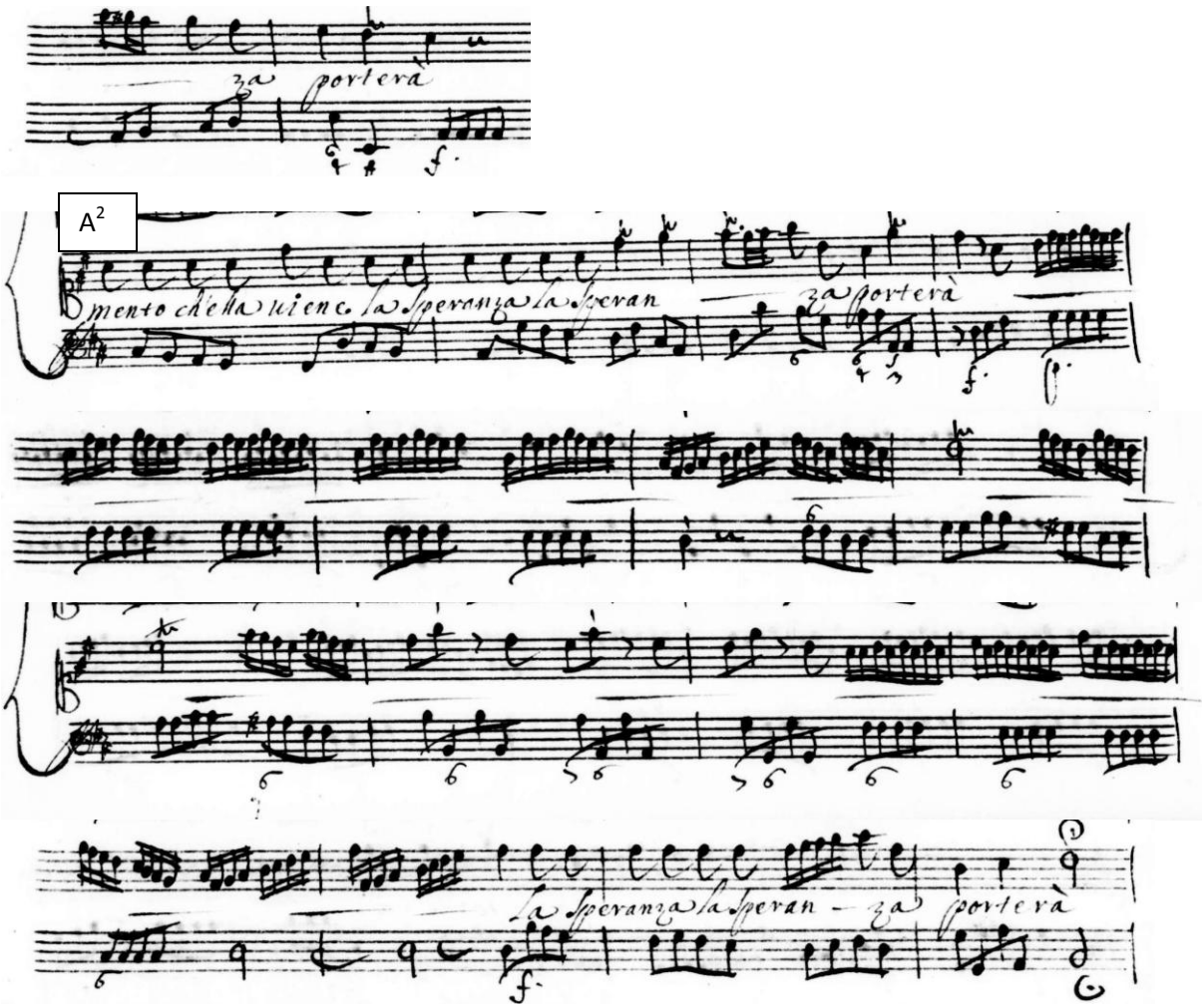




The appearance of vocalisations continues to increase with more arias than not in *Germanico in Germania* containing at least one melisma. By the time of Porpora's London operas it is unusual to find any aria without a vocalisation and these are now often long and complex. Aci's aria in Act II, scene v of *Polifemo* is an allegro aria with many vocalisations involving fast-moving semiquavers, trills, rests and leaps designed to show off the expertise of the singer, in this instance, Farinelli (Ex.33).

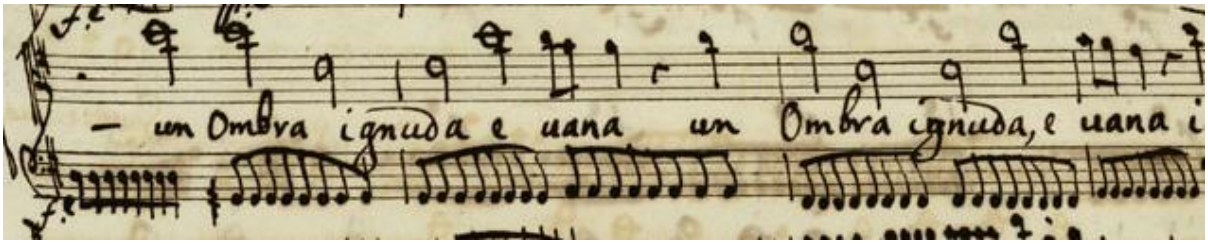
Example 33. Aci, 'Nell'attendere', *Polifemo*, II.v, ff.40v-42r



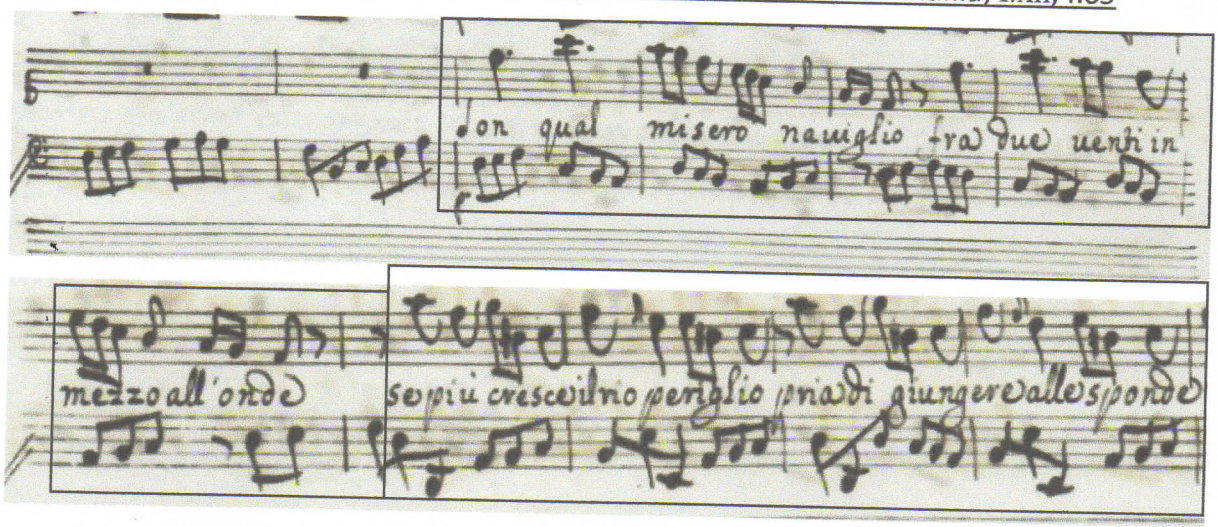


As the importance of lengthening the vocal sections of the aria took greater prominence Porpora increased his use, not only of textual repetition, but also of direct musical repetition and sequence as a means to this end. This can be seen in several arias in *Germanico in Germania* (Exs.34 & 35), continuing through the London operas (Exs.36 and 37).

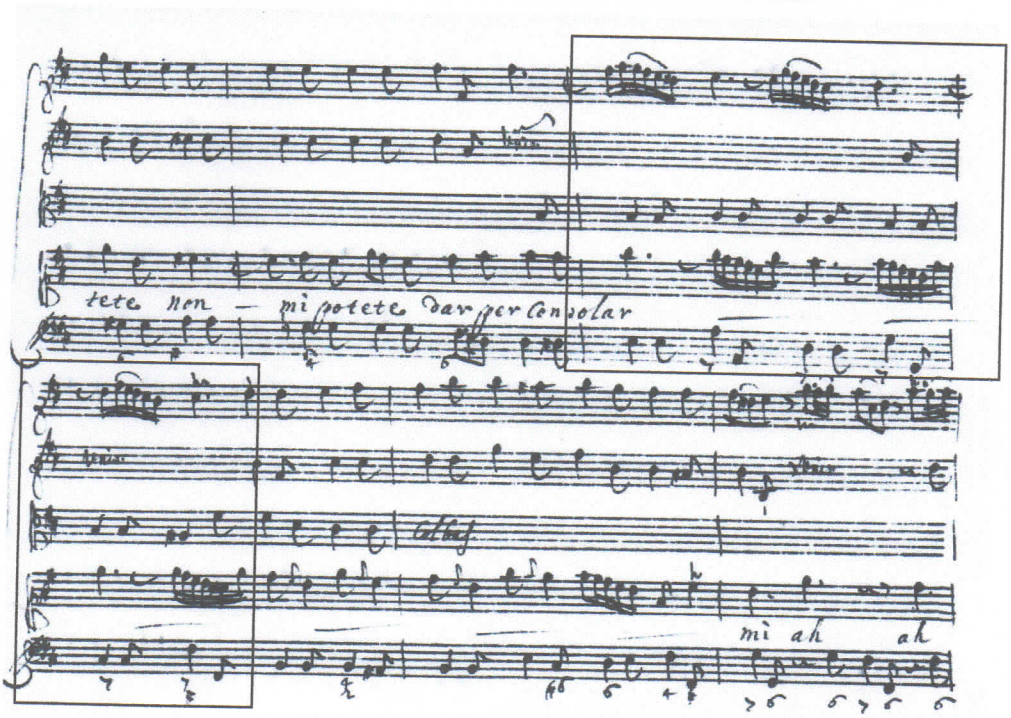
Example 34. Germanico, 'Questo è il valor Guerriero', *Germanico in Germania*, I.iii, f.26v



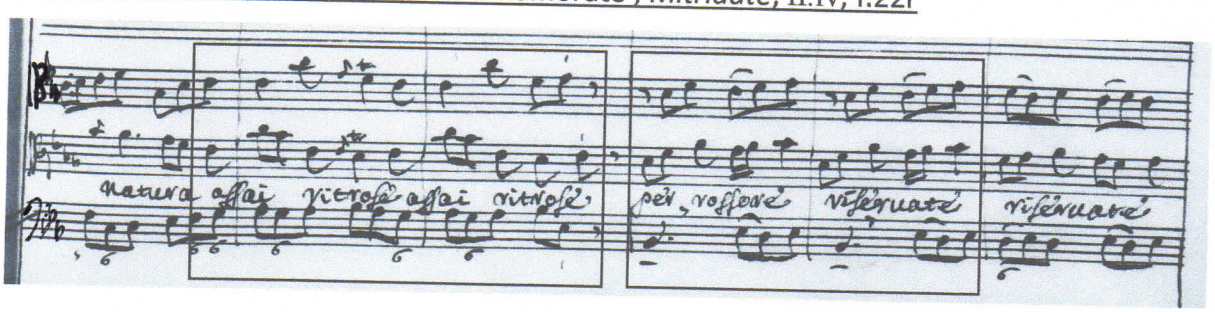
Example 35. Rosmonda, 'Son qual misero naviglio', *Germanico in Germania*, I.xii, f.65



Example 36. Galatea, 'Smanie d'affanno', *Polifemo*, III.ii, f.15v

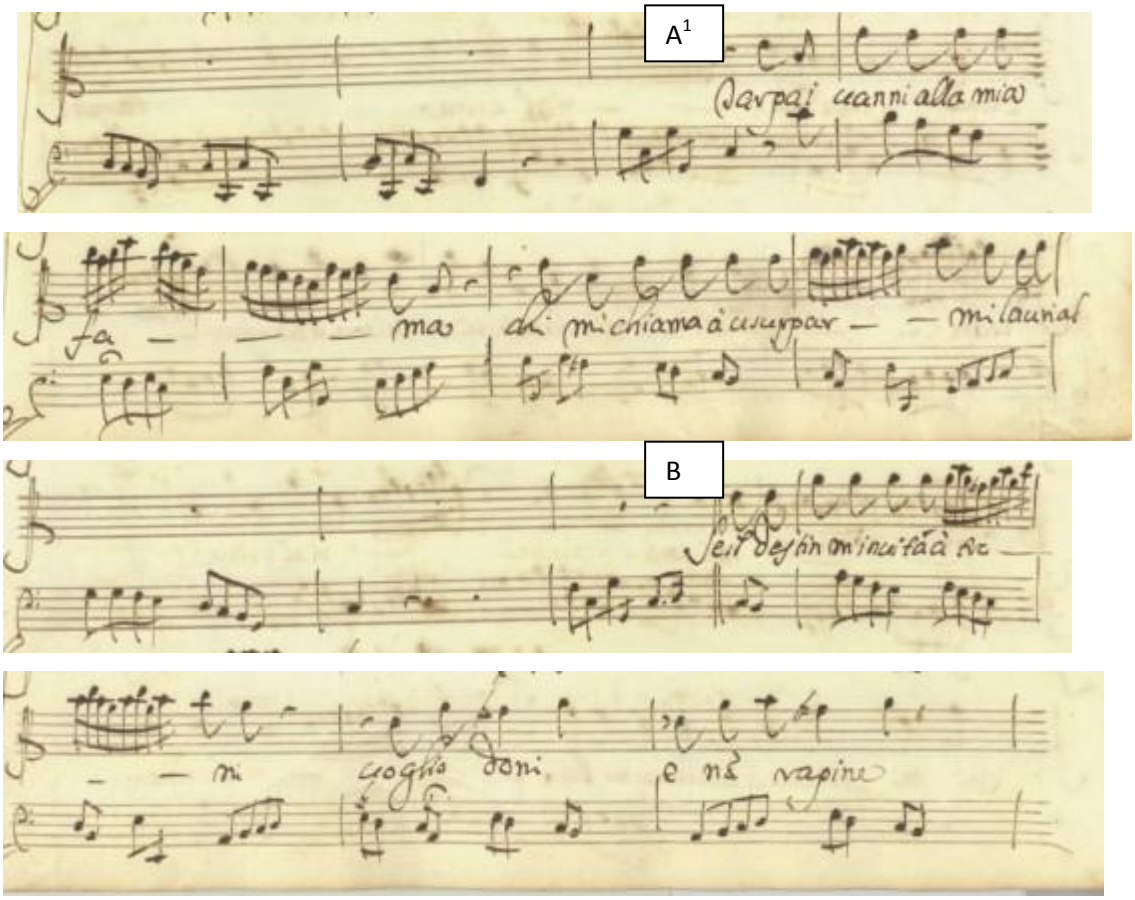


Example 37. Farnace, 'Son le donne innamorate', *Mitridate*, II.iv, f.22r

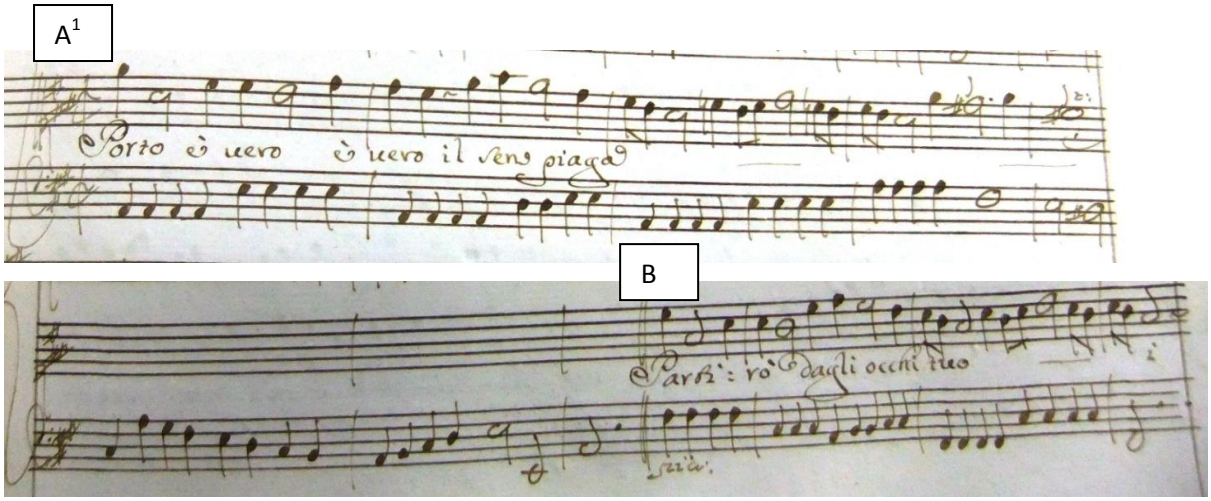


The ritornellos and both the A and B sections of the aria all lengthened in the opera seria style of the early eighteenth century, including in Porpora's operas. As has been shown, the A^2 section, by dint of repetition, sequence and then vocalisation, was usually longer than the A^1 section. This lengthening carried on throughout these operas, reaching a plateau in the London operas, but the B section of the aria did not grow proportionately to its A section. In *L'Agrippina* the B section was as often longer than the A^2 section as it was shorter, but by the time of *Arianna in Naxo,* the B section was nearly always shorter than the A^2 section. In the London operas both A^1 and A^2 had grown to such a degree that taken together they were usually over double the length of the B section. This had the effect of the B section becoming a more contrasting element of the aria and similar material in both sections of the longer arias is not always apparent in the London operas as it is in the earlier ones. In *L'Agrippina* and *Siface,* although there is the expected harmonic change to the relative minor in the B section, there is usually very similar rhythmic material in both A and B sections (Exs.38 and 39).

Example 38. Germanico, 'Tarpai vanni alla mia fama', *L'Agrippina*, I.iv, ff.15r-16v

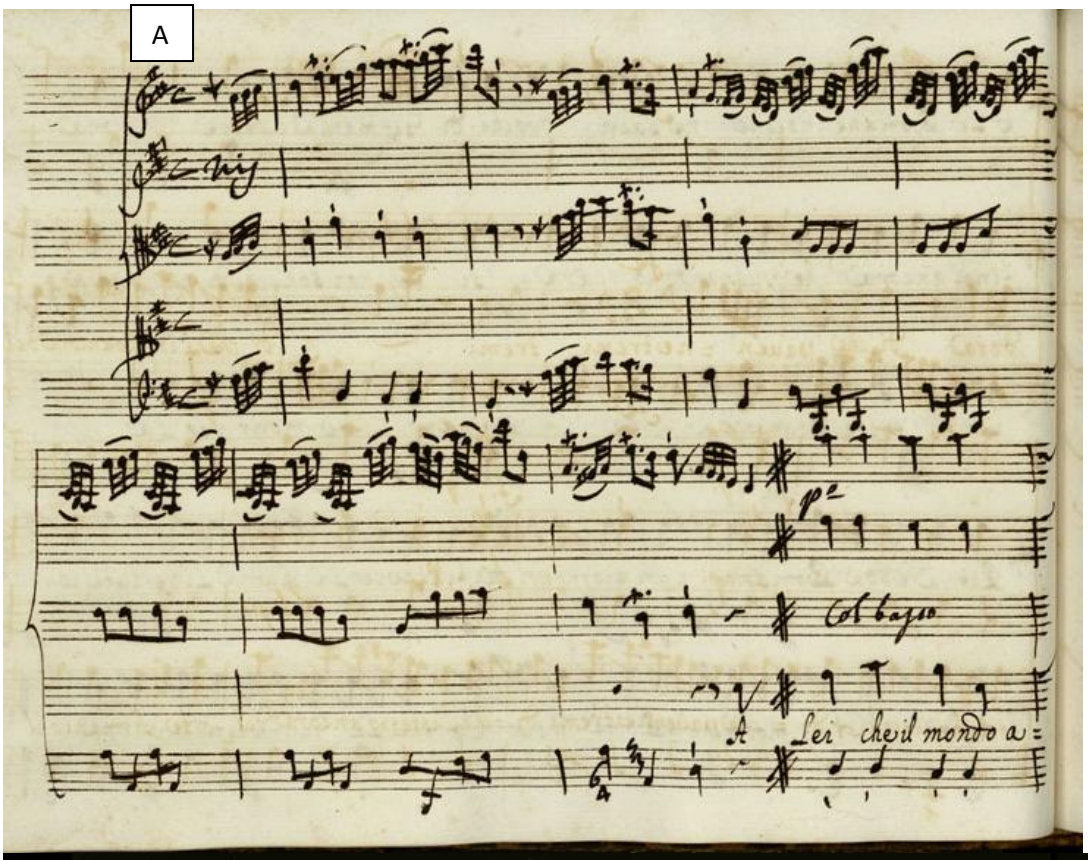


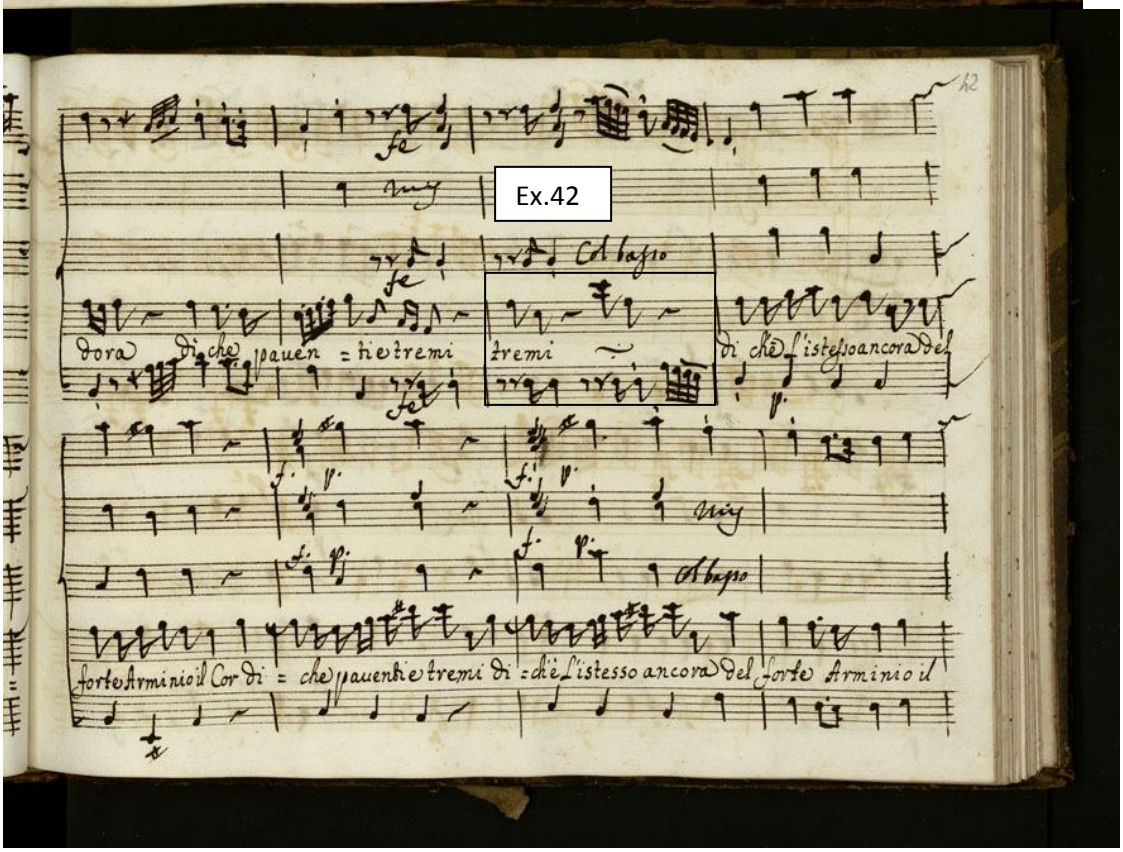
Example 39. Orcano, 'Porto è vero il sen piaga', *Siface*, II.iii, f.80r, 82r

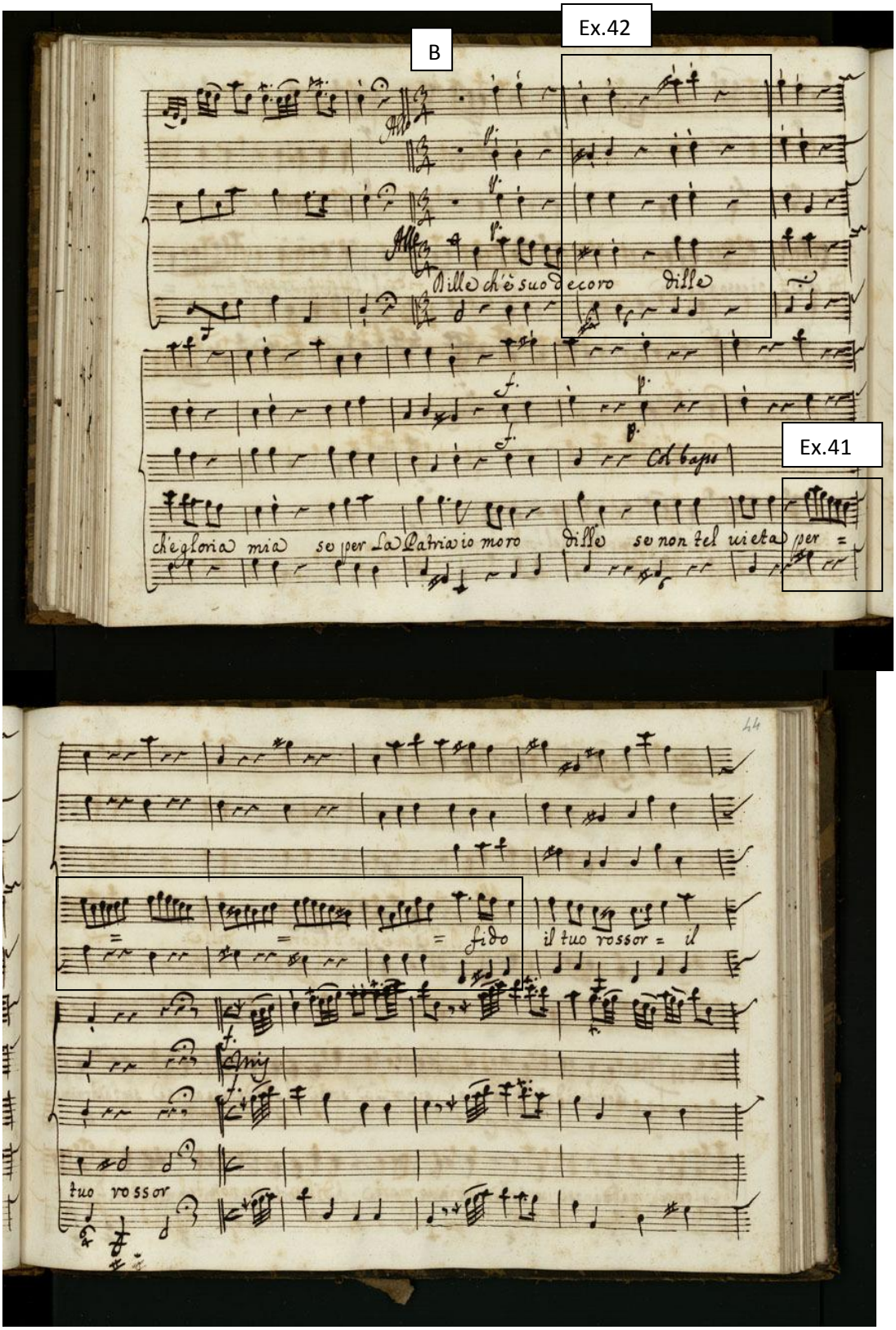


With *Germanico in Germania* came the beginning of a more contrasted B section than has been seen in the previous operas, including the first instances in these operas of a change of time signature (Ex.40). The expected key change to the relative minor is present but the change of time signature from $\mathbf{c}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ signifies a change of style. The opening statement in the A section is emphatic, beginning in firm crotchets, and the whole section is one of measured steadfastness as Arminio sings of his strength. The change to triple time, marked allegro in the B section immediately changes the style to that of a flowing lilt, further enhanced by Porpora leaving a graceful vocalisation to this section (Ex.41). The sentiment in the second verse is not wholly different as Arminio signifies his willingness to die for his country, but the change of style in the music helps to show that this is not a brutal situation but more one of honour, to be calmly embraced. The sections are still connected by the choice of key and by rhythmic similarities (Ex.42), but the contrast is obvious.

Examples 40, 41 and 42. Arminio, 'A lei che il mondo', *Germanico in Germania*, I.vi, ff41v-42r, 43v-44r



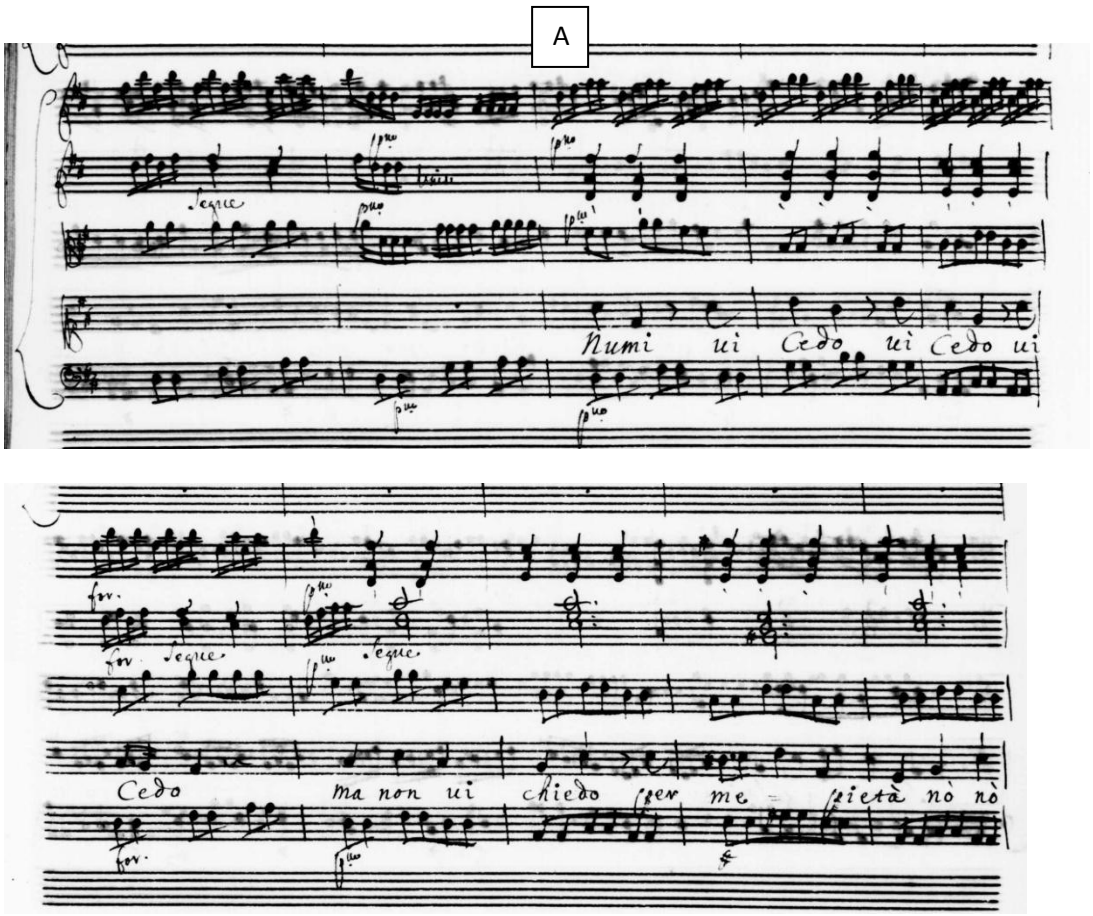




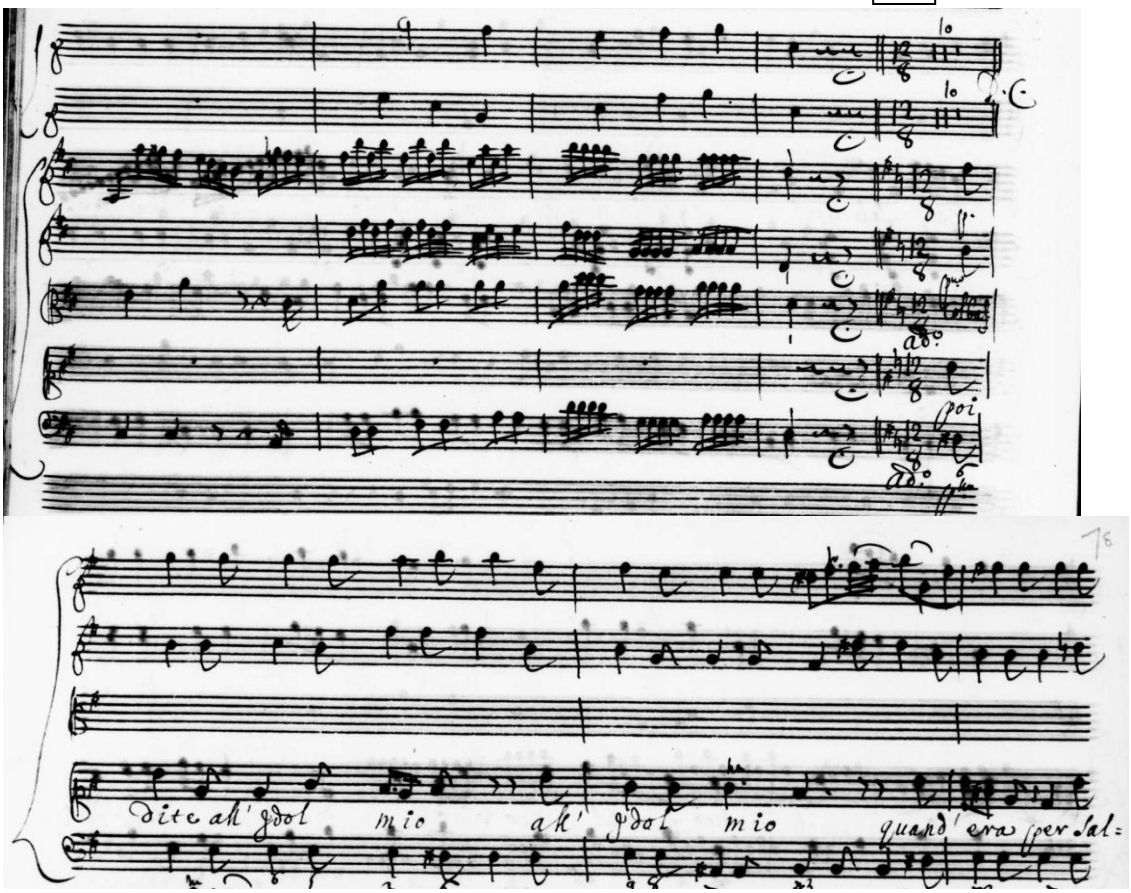
In the London operas, the contrast between the longer A section that Porpora was now writing, and its B section is sometimes more pronounced and appears more closely linked to the character's emotions or scene being portrayed than has been seen in the pre-

London operas. Teseo's aria 'Numi vi cedo' in *Arianna in Naxo* contrasts a presto A section with full string accompaniment and occasional horns in $\frac{3}{4}$, with the entirely different B section in $\frac{12}{8}$. The A section presents a despairing and angry Teseo yielding to the gods who are demanding that he gives up Arianna. The B section, marked adagio, has a much less busy accompaniment and a gentler feeling as Teseo addresses his love before the da capo when he sets off again on his rant at the gods (Ex.43).

Example 43. Teseo, 'Numi, vi cedo', *Arianna in Naxo*, II.vi, ff.70v-71r, 77v-78r

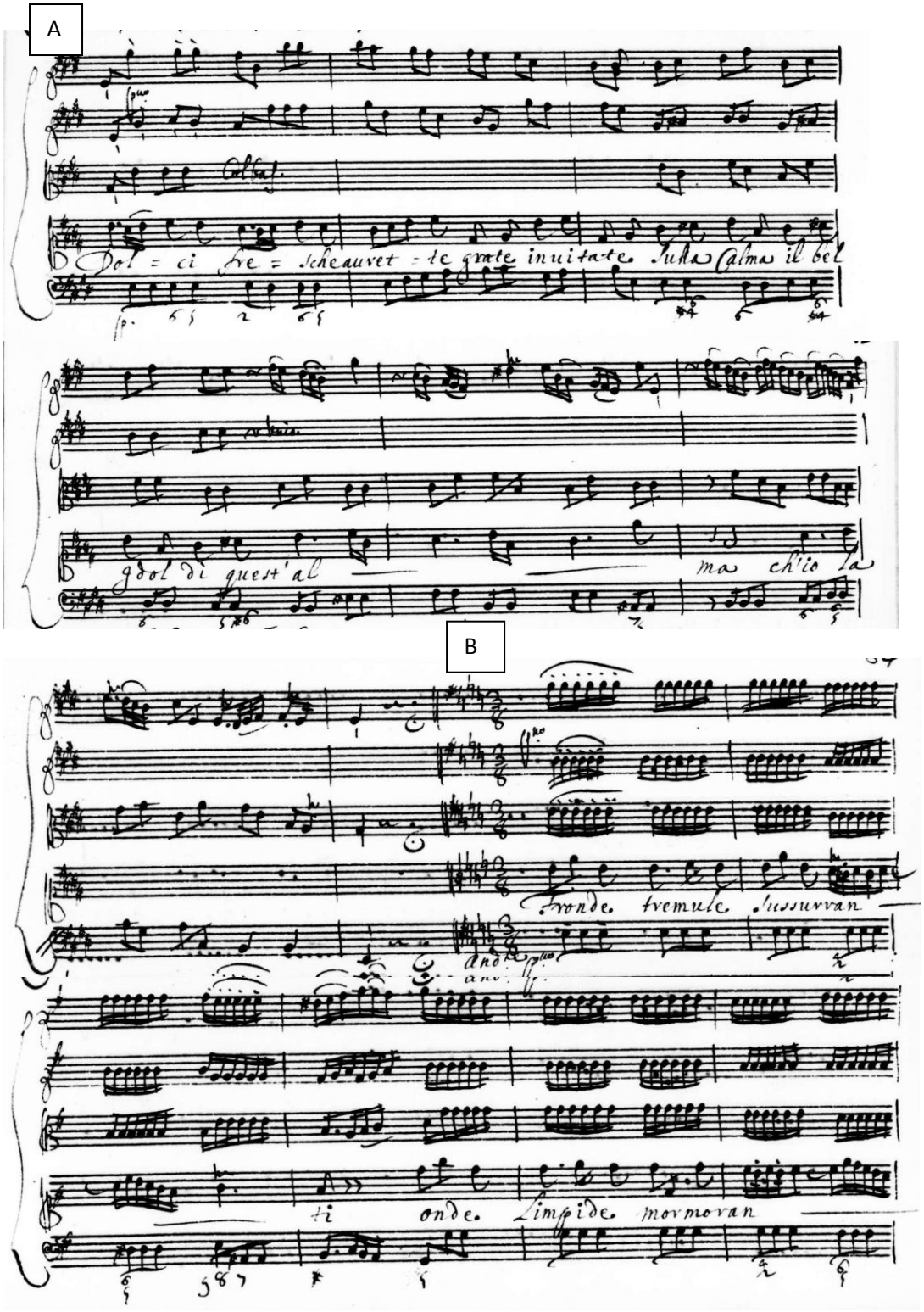


B



A further example of the more contrasted B section comes in *Polifemo,* Act I scene iii, when Aci implores the gentle winds and smooth waters to bring Galatea to him (Ex.44). The A section is marked lento with a 𝐜 time signature and a gentle and mostly pulsing accompaniment to the long vocal line with its many melismas. The B section has an altogether different feeling with a change of time to $\frac{3}{8}$, a change of key to the tonic minor (E minor), and a faster accompaniment of repeated semiquavers in the upper strings, illustrating the 'fronde tremole sussuranti' (trembling, whispering leaves) and 'onde limpid mormoranti' (clear, murmuring waters).

Example 44. Aci, 'Dolci fresche Aurette grate', *Polifemo*, I.iii, ff.51v-52r, 54r



Non Da Capo Arias

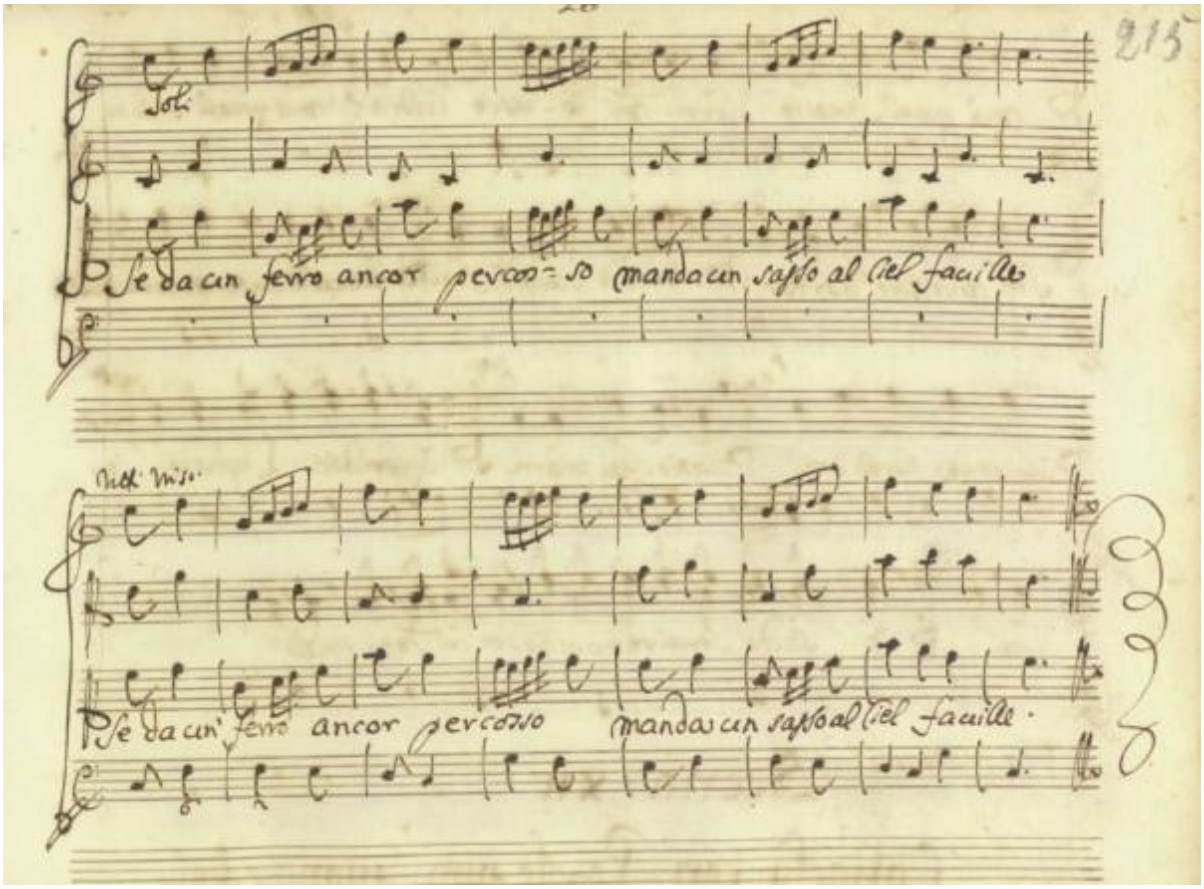
In two of the pre-London operas, *Siface* and *Germanico in Germania*, all of the lyrical items are in a fully-worked da capo form, with the exception of the final coro in the latter.

Porpora then reverted to this procedure on his return to Italy in *Semiramide riconosciuta*, albeit with four of the arias here adopting a dal segno format to shorten the opening ritornello. The da capo format would therefore seem to have been adopted by Porpora in his operas for Italy of the 1720s and 1730s but a more varied approach taken in London. As has been discussed, all of the London operas contain at least one non da capo aria, with as many as six having a different format in *Ifigenia in Aulide.* There are a variety of reasons for this departure from the standard da capo format. For example, if the aria is part of a larger structure, if the use of a strophic setting is more apt when, for example, the character falls asleep at the end of the aria, or if a fully-worked da capo aria was not warranted for a minor role.[25]

That Porpora was used to the composition of lyrical items in a different format however can be seen in his earliest opera, *L'Agrippina*, in which, although the vast majority take the da capo format, three arias in Act III do not conform to this structure. Armilla's 'E quanti felbalà' (III.x) has a modified da capo structure which necessitates the writing out of the da capo as it is not an exact repeat of the opening. The structure is A^1 – ritornello – A^2 – ritornello – B – ritornello - A^2 (extended) – ritornello. Similarly, Orestilla's aria in the following scene (III.xi), 'Se da un ferro', is also a variation on the da capo format but modified differently: A^1 – ritornello – B – ritornello – A^1 – A^1. The repeated A^1 sections at the end are differentiated by having a thicker string texture, including basso continuo accompaniment, during the second time (Ex.45).

[25] See Chapter Four for details.

Example 45. Orestilla, 'Se da un ferro', *L'Agrippina,* III.xi, f.215r



The remaining aria in *L'Agrippina* not to use the da capo format is Caligola's 'Spinto dal fiero duole', in Act III, scene i. This presto aria has a standard structure of A^1 – ritornello – A^2 – ritornello - B – ritornello but no repeat. Caligola sings of being 'spinto dal fiero duole' (driven by fierce grief) and a repeat of the opening section would dull the impetus generated here and slow the pace of the drama. These specific variations do not appear anywhere else in these nine operas although similar modifications to the da capo format can also be found in *Enea nel Lazio* and *Ifigenia in Aulide*.[26]

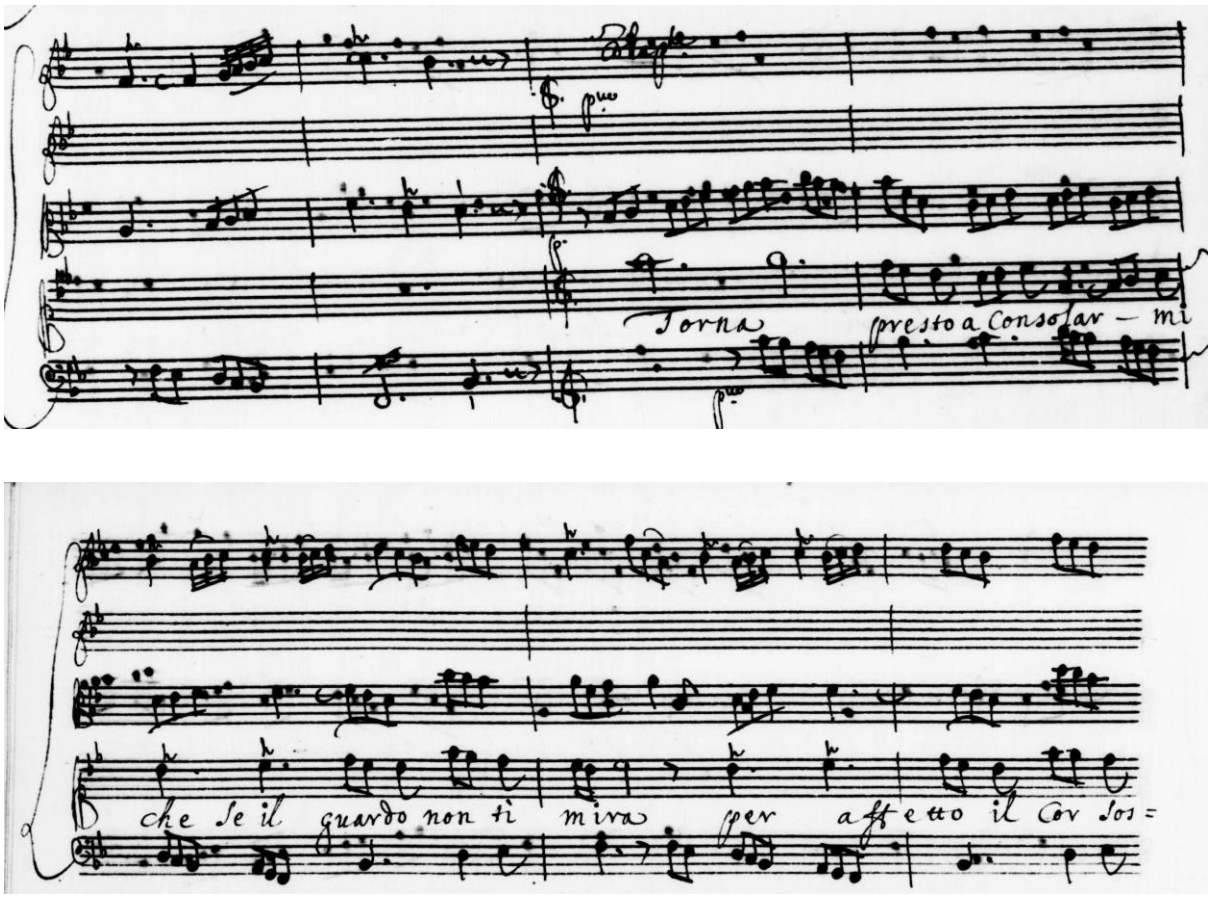
Melodic Similarities in Arias

There are certain characteristics in the arias which Porpora used throughout all of these operas without showing any significant change of use for those he wrote for London. For example, Porpora was fond of using a $\frac{12}{8}$ siciliano with a flowing and lilting melody. This can be seen throughout the London operas. One such is Arianna's andante 'Torna presto a

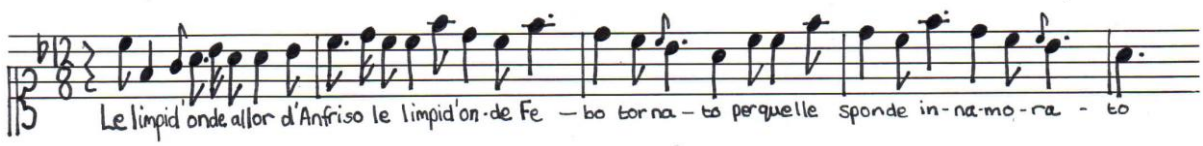
[26] See Chapter Four for details.

consolarmi' in Act I, scene v of *Arianna in Naxo* (Ex.46), or Achille's 'Le limpid'onde' in Act III, scene i of *Ifigenia in Aulide* (Ex.47). However, arias such as these can also be found in *L'Agrippina*; Orestilla's 'L'aura geme a suoi singulti' in Act I, scene vi is marked a tempo giusto with a $\frac{12}{8}$ time signature and similar fluidity of style (Ex.48).

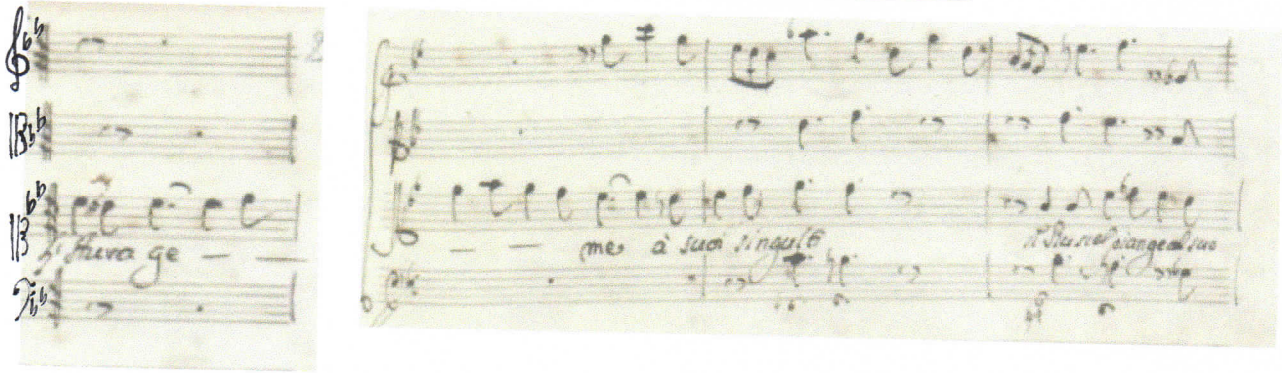
Example 46. Arianna, 'Torno presto a consolarmi', *Arianna in Naxo*, I.v, f.55



Example 47. Achille, 'Le limpid'onde', *Ifigenia in Aulide*, III.i, transcribed from ff.8v-9r (no basso continuo)

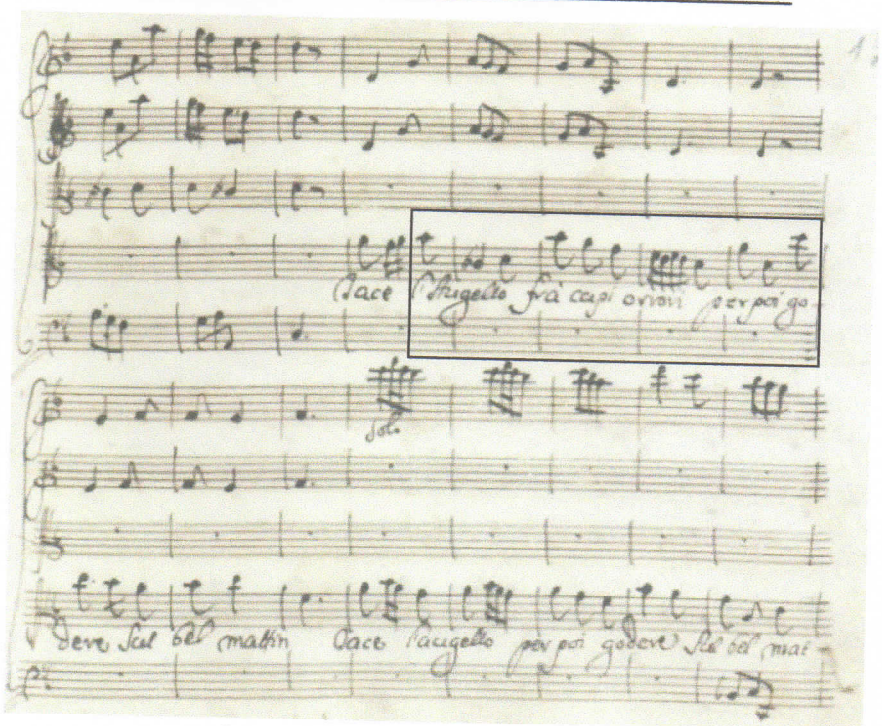


Example 48. Orestilla, 'L'aura geme a suoi singulti', *L'Agrippina*, I.vi, f.24r

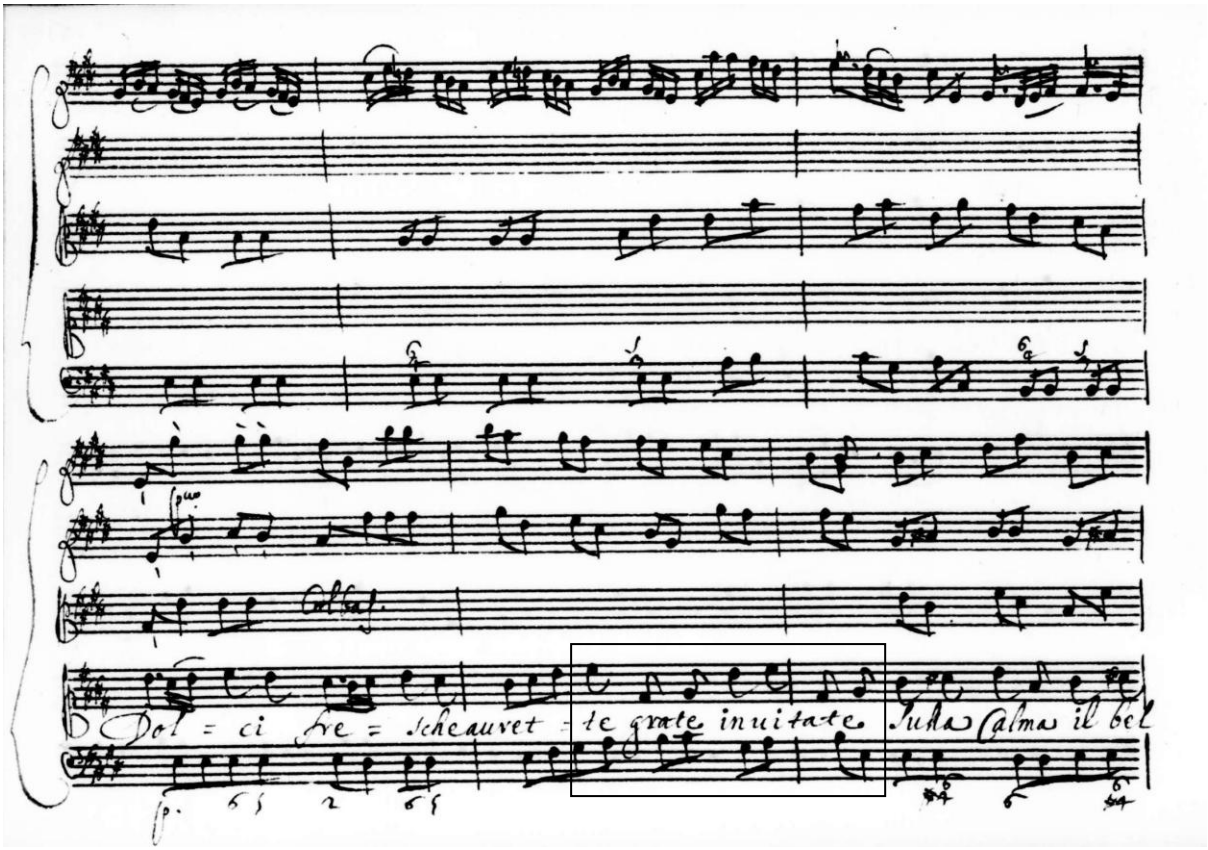


Porpora most often closed his A section melody with a three note downward step to the tonic and this is another characteristic found throughout the operas. Similarly, Porpora's melodies frequently and consistently include wide leaps for the singer, often, though not always, balanced by leaps in both directions (Exs.49 & 50).

Example 49. Giunio, 'Tace l'augello', *L'Agrippina*, II.x, f.121r



Example 50. Aci, 'Dolci fresche Aurette grate', *Polifemo*, I.iii, f.51v



Other Solo Vocal Items

i) Cavatinas and Ariettas

Table 19 shows the occurrence of vocal items other than fully-worked arias in these operas.

Table 19. Other solo lyrical vocal items in nine Porpora operas

	CAVATINAS/ARIETTAS	ARIOSO PASSAGES
L'Agrippina	1	
Siface		
Germanico in Germania		1
Arianna in Naxo	7	
Enea nel Lazio		2
Polifemo	5	1
Ifigenia in Aulide		
Mitridate[27]	4	
Semiramide riconosciuta		

[27] This includes one four-line text in Act I for which there is no extant music.

The cavatina, arietta and, to a lesser extent, arioso forms are structures that Porpora and his contemporaries used occasionally. The table suggests that their use was highly specific and these forms were not inserted arbitrarily into each opera as a matter of course. Porpora used them chiefly in his London operas suggesting a more precise utilisation of musical resources to convey the drama and character definition whilst in England. In *Arianna in Naxo* the use of the arietta is specifically to link ideas and/or characters together. In *Polifemo* four of the ariettas are for one character to show different facets of his character through the use of this one medium. The fifth instance is in a carefully constructed passage of arioso, accompanied recitative and arietta (see below). Porpora also used the briefer form when the situation logically calls for a shorter lyrical item than usual, for example in *Mitridate* when the character is dying.

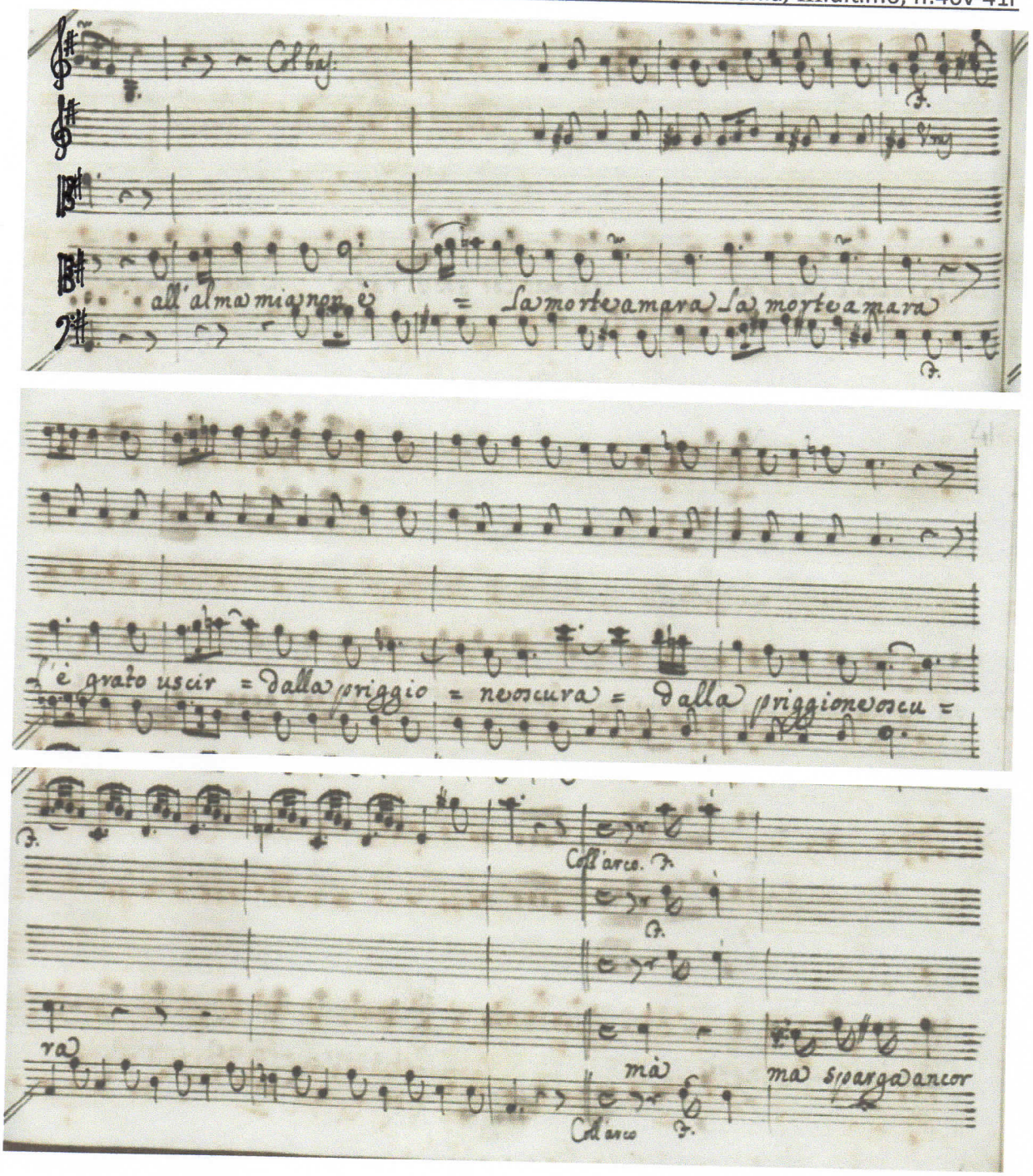
The only other occurrence of the cavatina or arietta forms is in *L'Agrippina* . It is placed for dramatic effect as it comes at the beginning of the opera and is therefore totally unexpected. After a short passage of recitative Agrippina begins what would appear to be the first standard aria of the opera, 'Se donò spirto', only to be interrupted after eight bars by Germanico rushing on with a sword in his hand. This curtails the aria, effectively turning it into a short cavatina. Presenting the audience with an unexpected opening is something that Porpora did in his first London opera, *Arianna in Naxo,* but it would seem that even from his first opera of *L'Agrippina* he liked the element of surprise to arrest the audience's attention.[28]

ii) Arioso Passages

The use of arioso is rare and even more specific. In *Germanico in Germania* Porpora inserted a passage of arioso in $\frac{12}{8}$ between two sections of accompanied recitative. This passage contrasts with its surrounding sections with a more contemplative and lyrical idiom, mirroring Arminia's thoughts as he welcomes death (Ex.51).

[28] See Chapter Six for details of the opening to *Arianna in Naxo*.

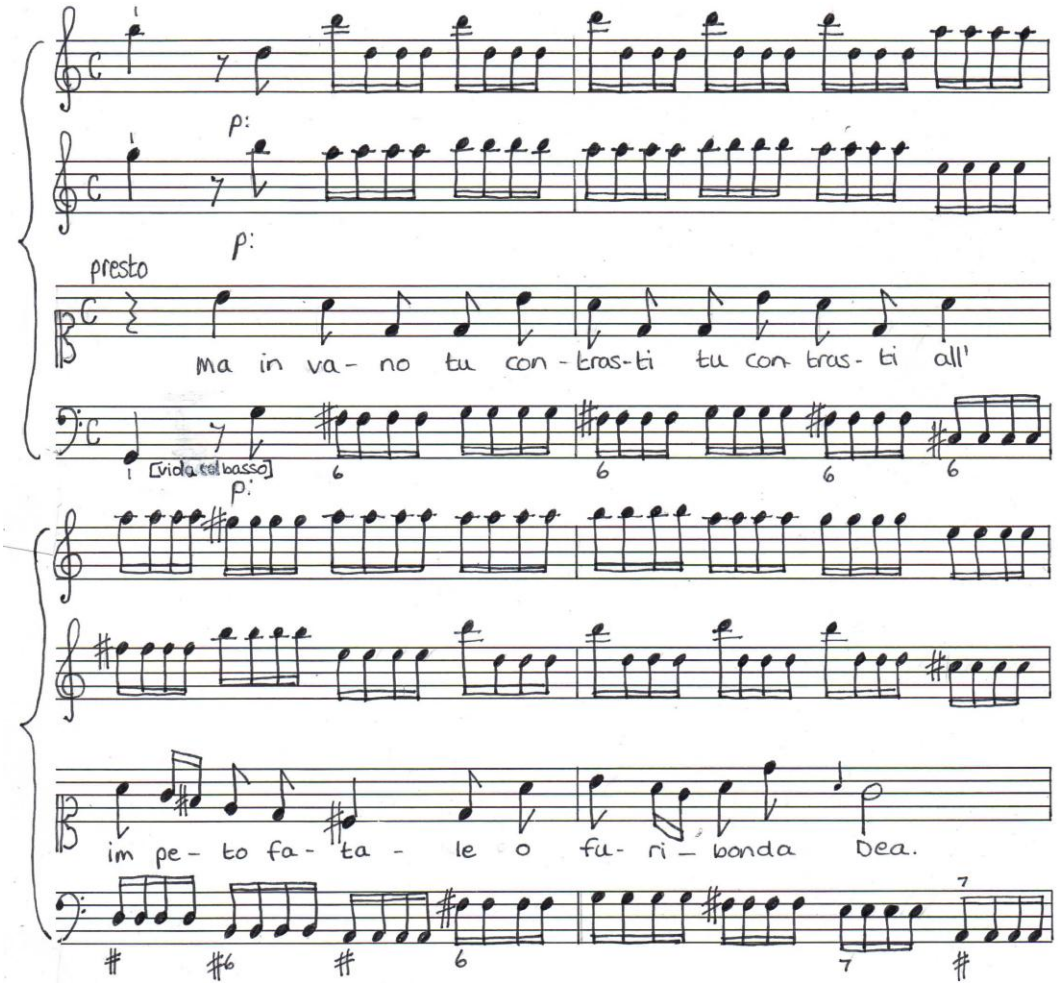
Example 51. Arioso in Arminio's 'Vindice Dea', *Germanico in Germania*, III.ultimo, ff.40v-41r



In *Enea nel Lazio* there are two sections of arioso although the first (I.v) scarcely qualifies as such as it is really where the voice enters at the end of a short opening ritornello, before the passage continues as accompanied recitative. The second occurrence is a longer passage in Act II, scene ii, framed, as in the example in *Germanico in Germania*, by accompanied recitative. Enea is fighting against Turno when a cloud descends and hides both Turno and Enea's beloved, Lavinia. Enea describes this sequence in a passage of

accompanied recitative, after which he sings that fate will decide the outcome of the battle. He then continues again with accompanied recitative to ask why his mother, the goddess Venere, does not help him. Although the middle section is laid out as an aria in the libretto Porpora set this rather as a presto arioso with a relentless semiquaver accompaniment (Ex.52). Dramatically the setting of this whole section is effective as it matches Enea's thoughts and actions as he fights Turno and then is horrified when both his opponent and love are removed by his mother, Venere, whom he then supplicates. Porpora's setting of arioso rather than a da capo aria here may also have been motivated by Enea having to remain on stage after this section as he has another aria in the scene before he can exit.

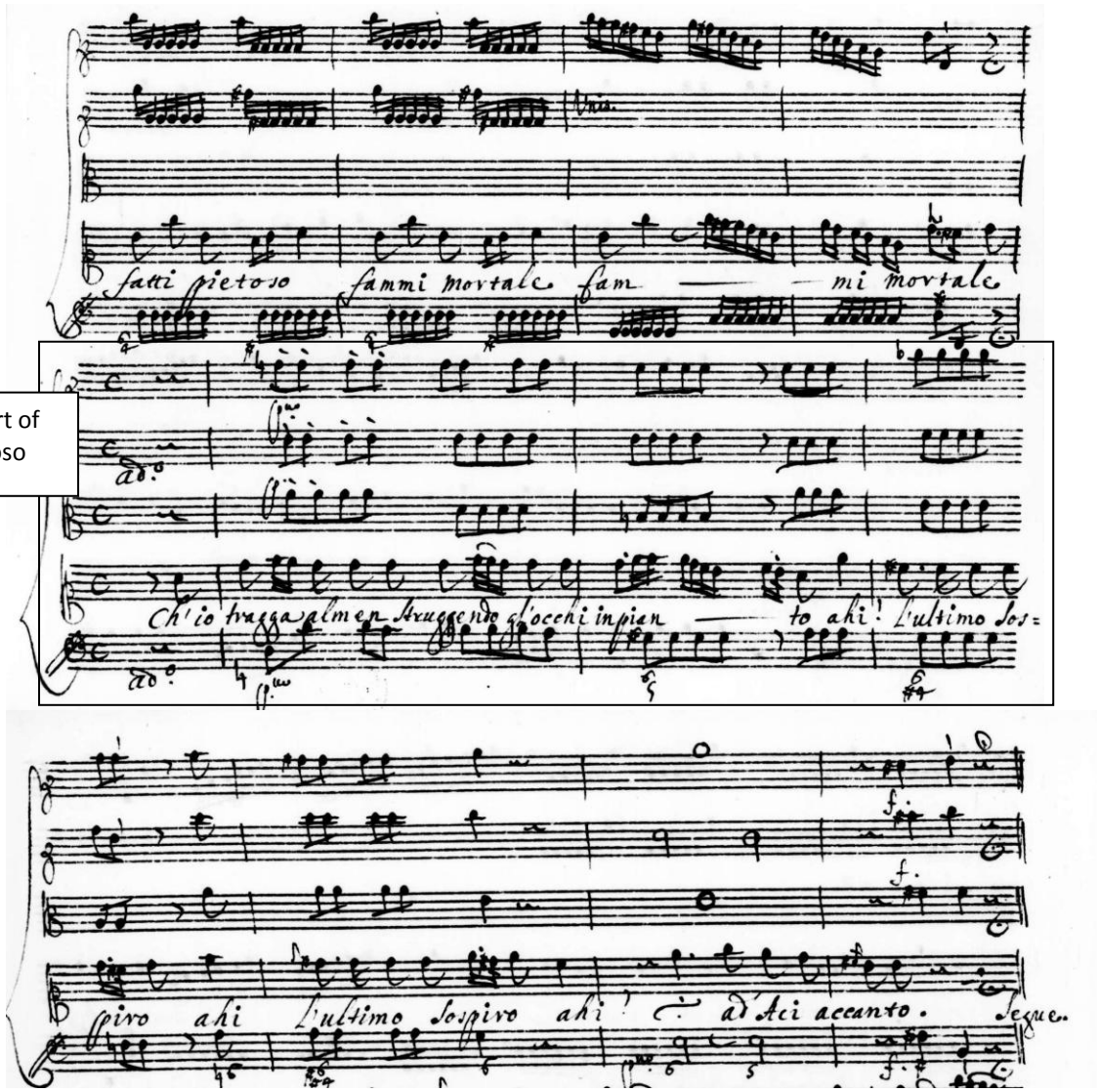
Example 52. Beginning of arioso, Enea, 'Ma in vano tu contrasti', *Enea nel Lazio,* II.ii, transcribed from f.12



The arioso section in *Polifemo* again forms part of a larger entity. In Act III, scene ii Galatea opens the scene with a long passage of 25 lines which Porpora set as 12 of

accompanied recitative, 11 as a presto arietta (‘Qual Colpa aspettano’) and the remaining two as an arioso section. Porpora used this type of setting here to highlight the emotion and characterisation. It is a climactic point in the story when Galatea realises that her beloved Aci is no longer beside her. She then sees the blood and concludes that Aci has been killed by the monstrous Polifemo. In the final two lines she calls upon Giove to make her mortal so that she may die sighing for Aci, a sentiment which she then continues in her following aria, ‘Smanie d’Affanno’. The arioso section is marked adagio and moves from D minor to B minor wholly representing Galatea’s despair and made more affecting following on as it does from the previous short but busy presto arietta (Ex.53).

Example 53. Galatea, ‘Aci, amato mio Bene’, *Polifemo,* III.ii, f.13 (extract from the end of the arietta ‘Qual colpa aspettano’)



Ensembles

Table 20 shows the number and type of ensemble items, including coros, in each act of these operas. The final opera in this study, *Semiramide riconosciuta,* is the most incongruous as it contains no ensembles other than a final coro*,* which is the concluding item in all nine of the operas. Apart from *Semiramide riconosciuta,* all of the operas have a minimum of three ensemble items, which includes at least one duet and one additional ensemble item in Act III, other than the ultimate coro. Disregarding the final coro which exists in all the operas and also disregarding *Semiramide riconosciuta* as anomalous, the ensemble items are reasonably evenly spaced throughout the acts of the operas. Five of the remaining eight operas have the items spread through either Acts I and III or Acts II and III and three have ensemble items in all three acts. It is only in *Enea nel Lazio* that the ensemble items in Acts I and II consist solely of coros - two in Act I; in the other operas the items are duets or trios in the first two acts with an additional coro in Act I of *Polifemo*. *Enea nel Lazio* is also the only one of the nine to feature quartets – two in Act III.

The placing of ensemble items was clearly very important and there are consistent features. With the exception of *L'Agrippina,* which has five duets in Act II and three in Act III, no act in any of the other operas contains more than two ensemble items. *L'Agrippina* stands out as it has the most number of ensemble items with a disproportionately high number of duets – nine in total. All of the operas except *Enea nel Lazio* and *Semiramide riconosciuta* have either a duet or trio to close Act I or Act II, or, in the case of *L'Agrippina*, to close both acts.

Table 20. Vocal ensemble items in nine Porpora operas

	ACT	DUETS	TRIOS	QUARTETS	COROS	TOTAL
L'Agrippina	I	1	1			**2**
	II	5				**5**
	III	3	1		1[29]	**5**
	TOTAL	**9**	**2**		**1**	**12**
Siface	I		1			**1**
	II					
	III	1			1	**2**
	TOTAL	**1**	**1**		**1**	**3**
Germanico in Germania	I					
	II		1			**1**
	III	1			1	**2**
	TOTAL	**1**	**1**		**1**	**3**
Arianna in Naxo	I	1				**1**
	II					
	III	1			2[30]	**3**
	TOTAL	**2**			**2**	**4**
Enea nel Lazio	I				**2**	**2**
	II					
	III	1		2	1	**4**
	TOTAL	**1**		**2**	**3**	**6**
Polifemo[31]	I	1			1	**2**
	II	2				**2**
	III		1		1	**2**
	TOTAL	**3**	**1**		**2**	**6**
Ifigenia in Aulide	I					
	II	1				**1**
	III	1	1		1	**3**
	TOTAL	**2**	**1**		**1**	**4**
Mitridate	I	2[32]				**2**
	II	2				**2**
	III	2			1[33]	**3**
	TOTAL	**6**			**1**	**7**
Semiramide riconosciuta	I					
	II					
	III				1	**1**
	TOTAL				**1**	**1**

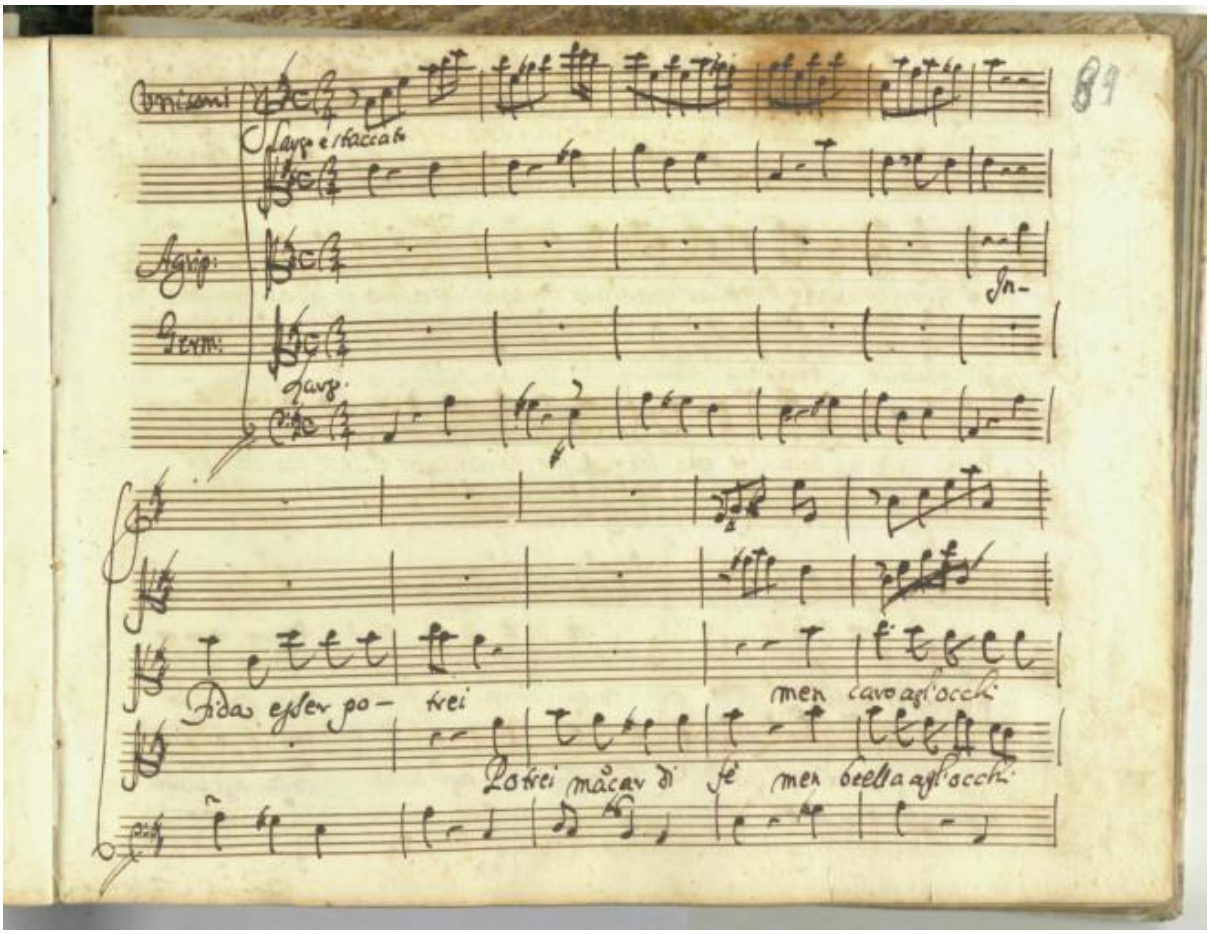
After his initial opera, *L'Agrippina*, Porpora reduced the total number of ensemble items as the solo voice in the da capo aria became the prominent lyrical form in opera seria. Their number increased again for the London operas, slightly for *Arianna in Naxo* and *Ifigenia in Aulide* but more significantly for *Enea nel Lazio, Polifemo* and *Mitridate,* as

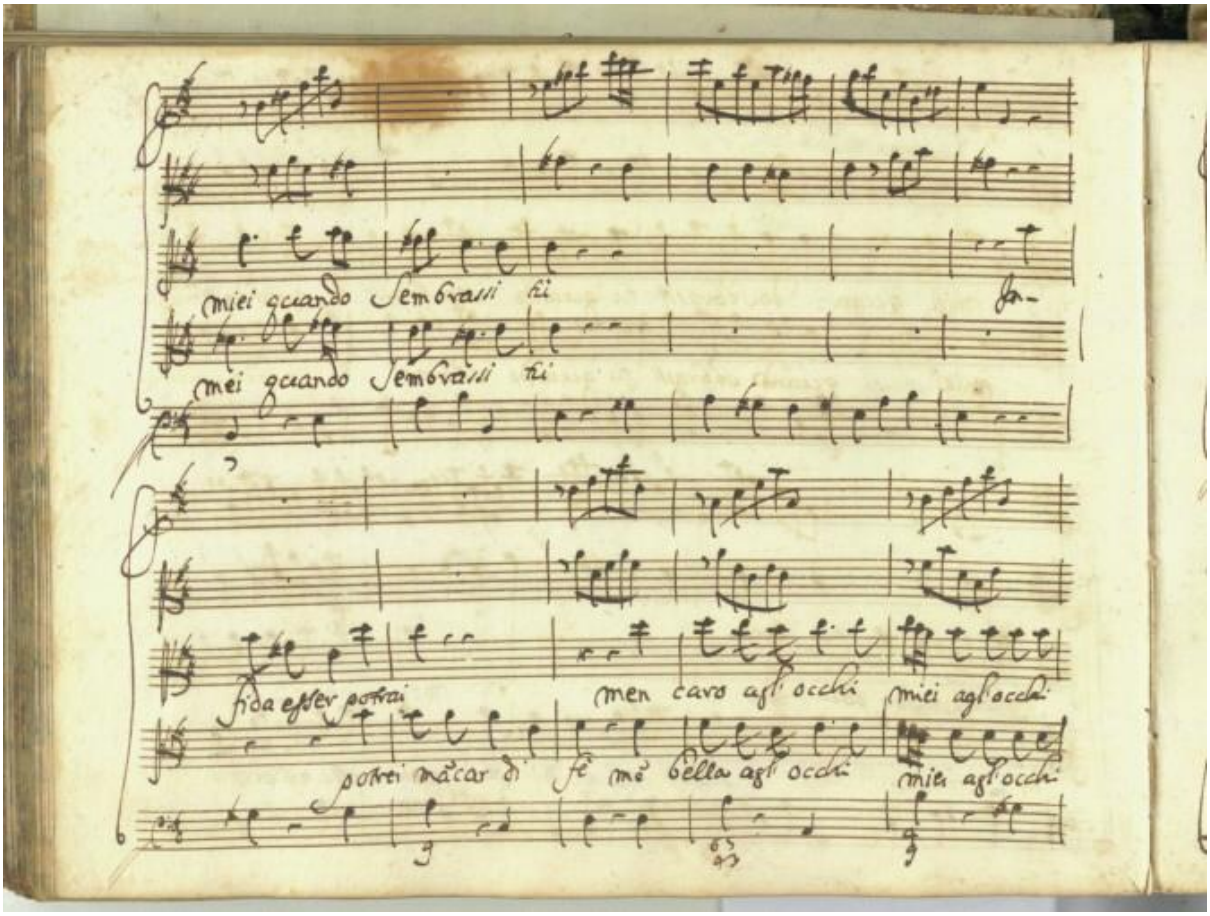
[29] Although there is no music for this it has been included as the final folio in the manuscript is marked 'siegue tutti'.
[30] The B section of the second coro is a duet for Libero and Arianna.
[31] Taken from the Royal Manuscript score (R.M.23.a.7–9).
[32] Although there is no music for these Act I duets they have been included as they are duets in the libretto.
[33] Although there is no music for this it has been included as the libretto is marked coro.

Porpora introduced more variety into these operas for the London audience. On his return to Italy there appears to have been an abrupt return to a conventional format of secco recitative alternating with da capo aria with little deviation in *Semiramide riconosciuta*.

The ensemble items in *L'Agrippina* tend to have short phrases alternately from each voice with passages where the voices sing together homophonically in thirds and sixths moving in parallel motion with little independent interest (Ex.54).

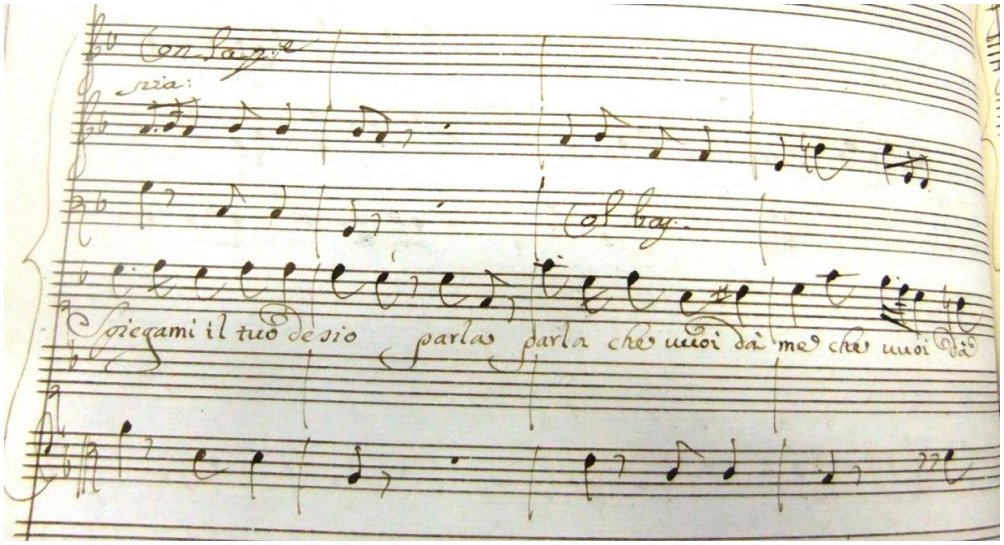
Example 54. Agrippina and Germanico, 'Infida esser potrei', *L'Agrippina,* II.ii, f.89

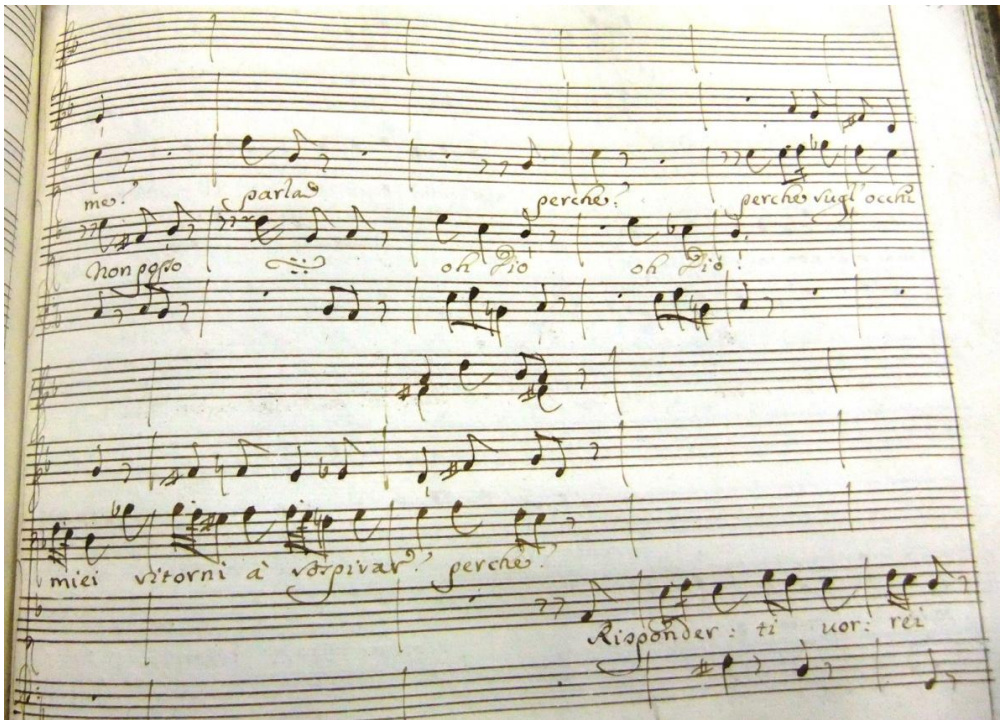


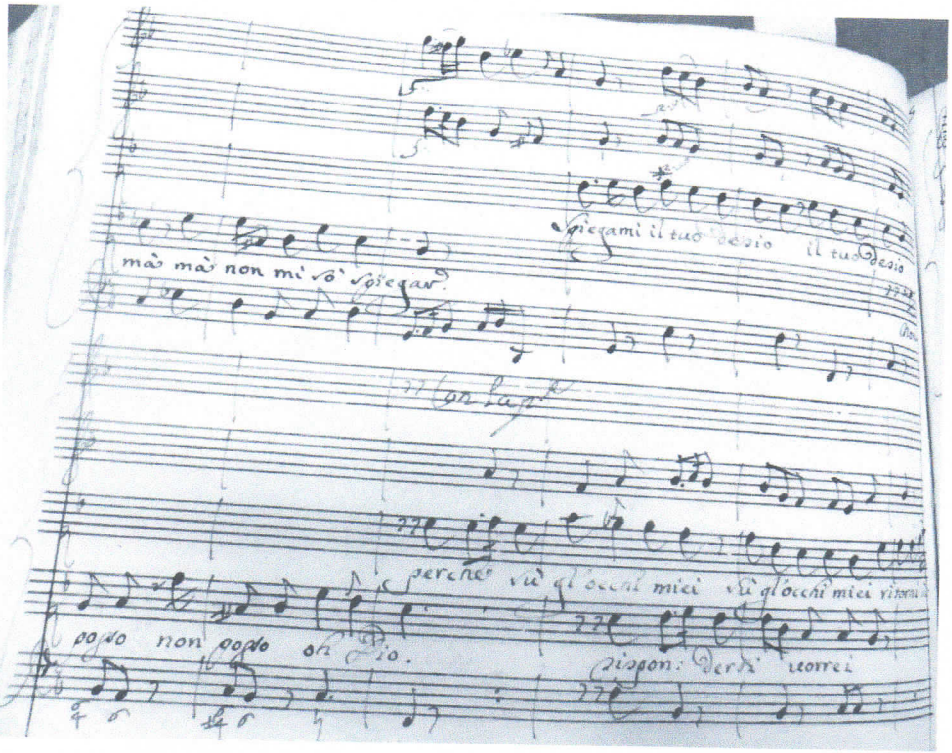


The only duet in *Siface* has longer solo entries and less singing together; in the B section the voices have no concerted passage. The trend has shifted to emphasize the solo voice by this time and this is now reflected even in the reduced number of ensemble items (Ex.55).

Example 55. Viriate and Siface, 'Spiegami il tuo desio', *Siface*, III.vi, ff.158v-159v

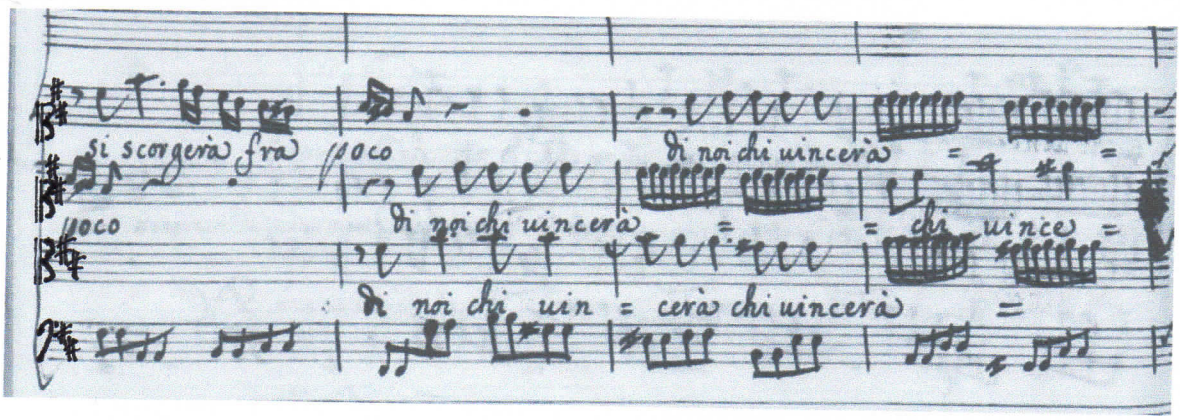


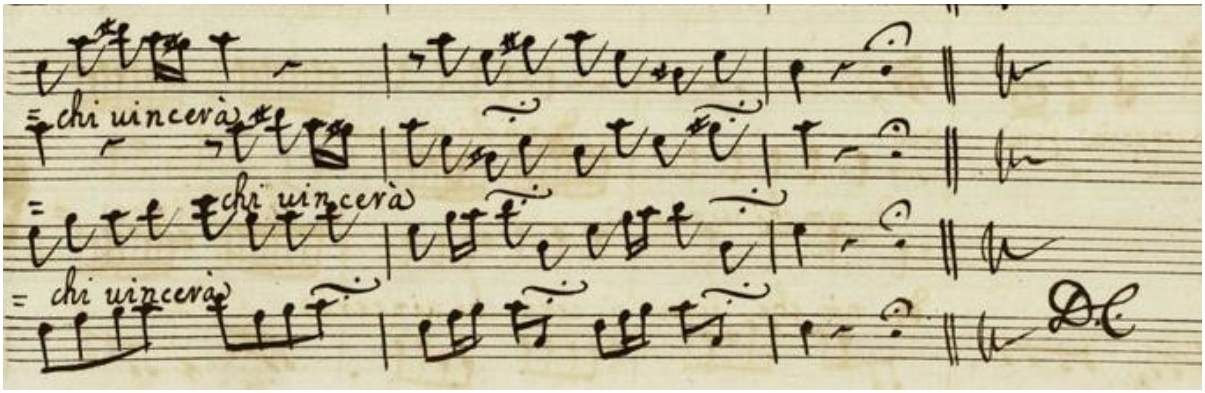




There is more concerted singing in the trios by dint of there being three voices. This is achieved by the three voices all singing the same rhythm or by two voices doing this while the third holds long notes and suspensions over. As in the duets there is still much overlapping of voices at their entries and short punctuations. *Germanico in Germania* contains a trio where there is more invention, showing short sections where two voices are united against the third before all three join together (Ex.56).

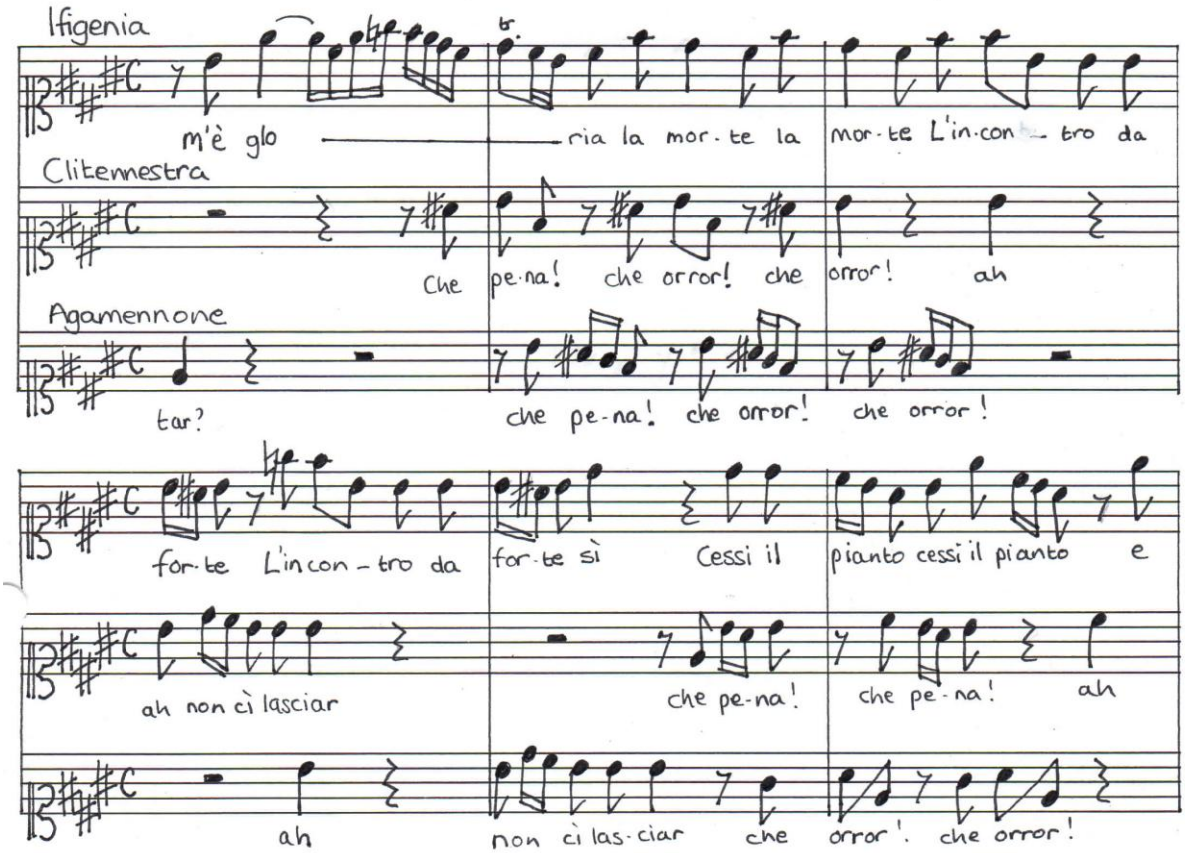
Example 56. Rosmonda, Arminio and Germanio, 'Temi lo sdegno', *Germanico in Germania*, II.xiv, ff.72v-73r





This is also seen later in the trio in Act III, scene iii in *Ifigenia in Aulide* where Ifigenia's steadfastness is shown in her resolute melody contrasted with the short impassioned pleas of her parents (Ex.57).

Example 57. Ifigenia, Clitennestra and Agamennone, 'Ah no, non piangere', *Ifigenia in Aulide*, III.iii, transcribed from f.23



A similar effect is achieved in the two quartets in *Enea nel Lazio* where three voices with analogous desires share similar material and sing together, contrasting with the one dissenting voice singing largely alone with different material.

By the time of *Arianna in Naxo,* Porpora's duets have a fairly standard format where each voice enters on its own and later combine to sing in thirds and sixths moving in parallel motion. There are few exceptions to this; one comes in the last London opera, *Mitridate.* Semandra and Siface's duet in Act II, scene iii is unusual as the two voices enter together after the opening ritornello which shows their unity from the start.

Porpora achieved variation in these ensembles more by altering the overall structure rather than changing his melodic invention and style within the form. Twice in *Polifemo* (I.i and II.v) and once each in *Ifigenia in Aulide* (III.v) and *Arianna in Naxo* (III.iv) he set duets without the expected da capo repeat. In *Arianna in Naxo* this forms part of a much larger structure containing passages of recitative between the sections.[34] There is a cleverly constructed duet in *Mitridate* (III.iii) which utilises two harpsichords alternately to accompany each duettist.[35] In *Enea nel Lazio* Porpora presents the only quartets in these operas, writing two in quick succession at the beginning of Act III. The quartet is not without precedent in Porpora's operas as one features in his *Flavio Anicio Olibrio* of 1711 (II.ii).

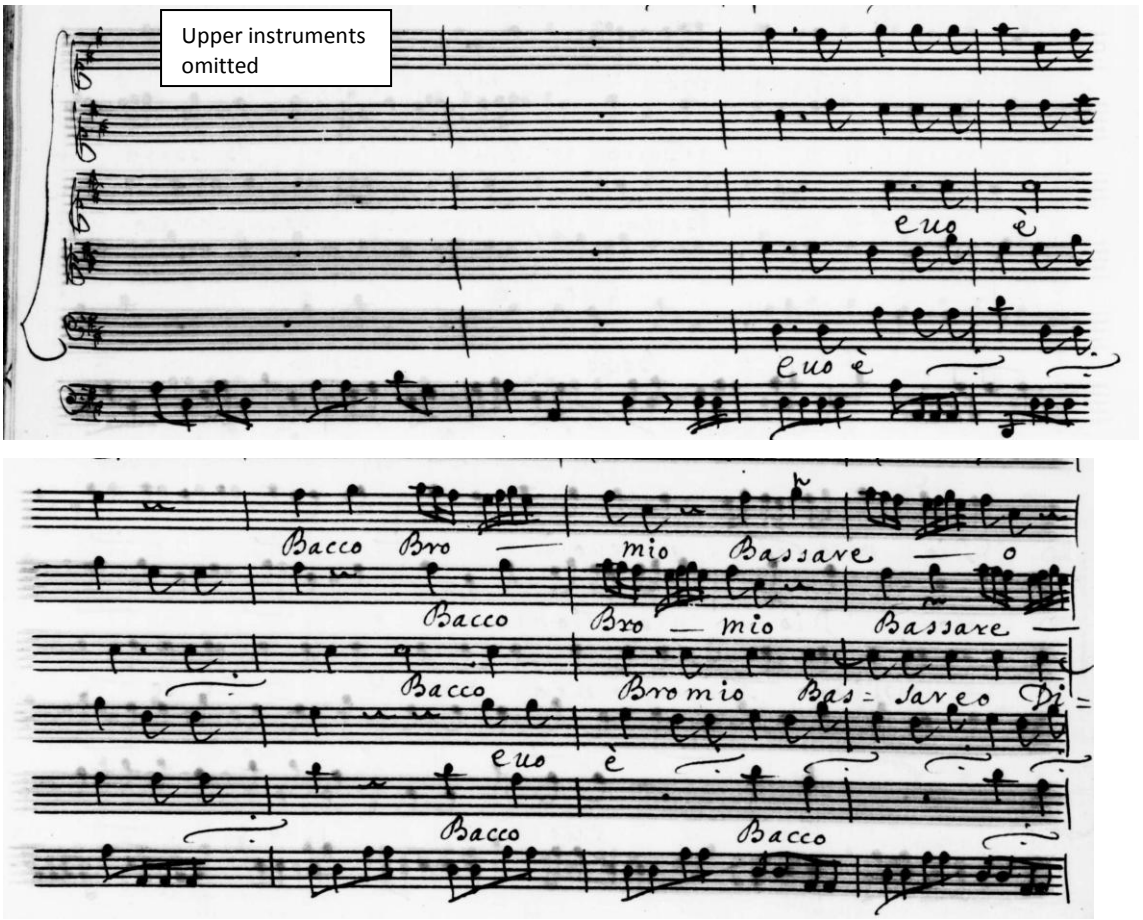
Coros

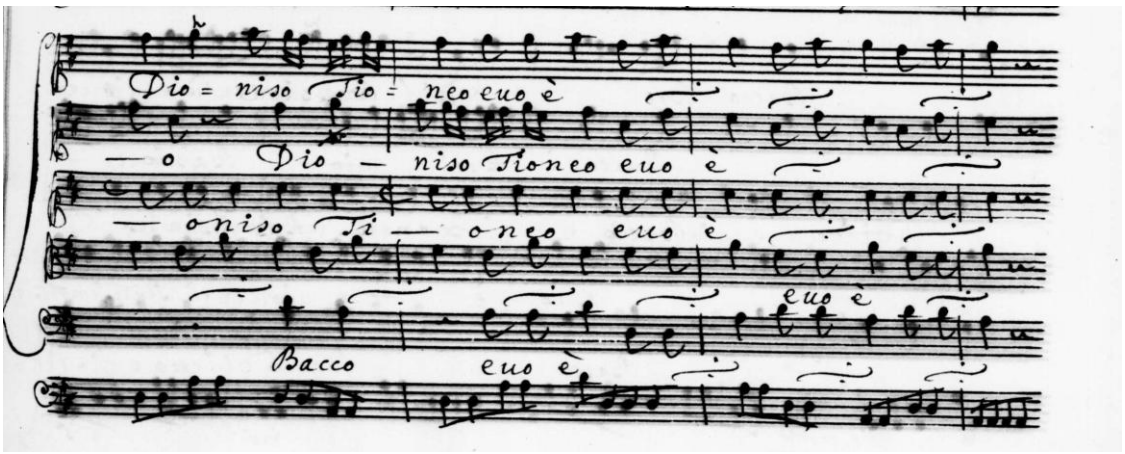
Nine of the 13 coros in these operas are the expected concluding item leaving only four additional coros throughout and two of these are in the same opera. There is no music for the final coros in *L'Agrippina* and *Mitridate*. The existing seven are all short items, generally homophonic and most often in four parts as was usual in opere serie at this time. The exceptions are in *Siface* and *Semiramide riconosciuta* which are only in three parts. These two coros also have da capo repeats to be sung after a passage of recitative. The only other da capo concluding coro is in *Arianna in Naxo* but this is altogether a different case from the others. In this opera there is another coro at the beginning of the final scene which is repeated in the libretto at the end of the scene. The score however has the first coro with no repeat and then an extra coro as the concluding item with a da capo repeat after a new duet for Arianna and Libero.[36] Both of these coros in this scene are significantly different from all the others as their texture is contrapuntal, involving much imitation

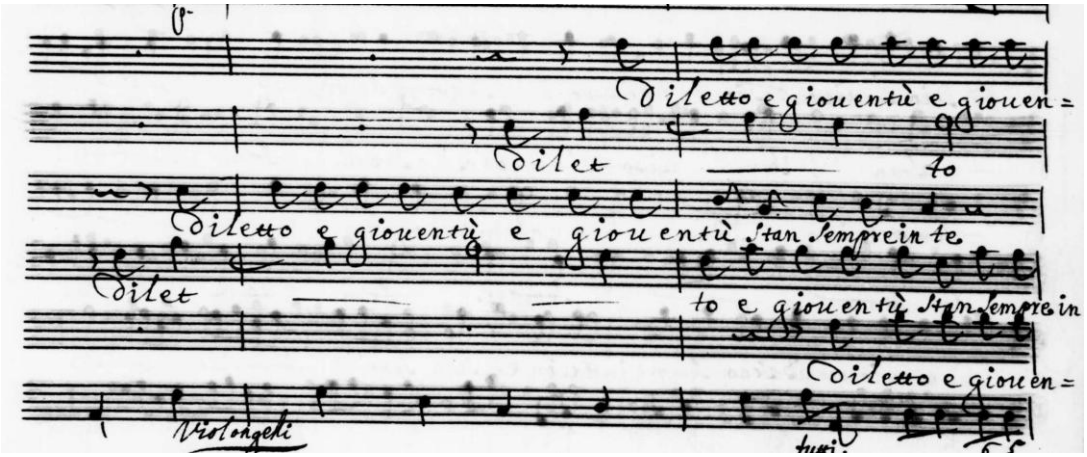
[34] See Chapter Six for details.
[35] See Chapter Four for details.
[36] See Chapter Six for details.

(Ex.58). Yorke-Long (1951, p.119) believes that Porpora 'obviously intended to produce a massive "Handelian" effect' with the first coro, but it may also have been part of Porpora's attempt to engage the London audience with, what was for him, an unexpected style.

Example 58. 'Evohe. Evohe', *Arianna in Naxo,* III.ultimo, ff.52v-54r







The remaining three coros all come in the first scene of an opera; two are in *Enea nel Lazio* and the third is in *Polifemo*. These are all in four parts and seem to be part of the attempt to create a spectacular visual and aural impact at the beginning of the opera. In *Enea nel Lazio* this is to add to the grandeur of Enea's crowning ceremony and in *Polifemo* it is to help portray the calm beautiful seaside scene immediately, contrasting with the ugliness of Polifemo that the audience knows is to come.

Accompanied Recitative

Table 21 shows the number of passages of accompanied recitative in these operas and there is a striking increase in the first three London operas. From a modest three and six in *Siface* and *Germanico in Germania* respectively, Porpora increased that to 12 in *Arianna in Naxo.*

Table 21. Passages of accompanied recitative in nine Porpora operas

	ACCOMPANIED RECITATIVE PASSAGES
L'Agrippina	0
Siface	3
Germanico in Germania	6
Arianna in Naxo	12
Enea nel Lazio	11
Polifemo	15/17[37]
Ifigenia in Aulide	5
Mitridate	6
Semiramide riconosciuta	6

[37] Fifteen in the Royal Manuscript score (R.M.23.a.7–9) and 17 in the autograph score (MUS/ADD/14115).

L'Agrippina features no passages of accompanied recitative and the other two pre-London operas have relatively few instances. Despite their rarity, the placing of such passages is imaginative and innovative. Two of the three passages of accompanied recitative in *Siface* are for the same character, Viriate, and run in consecutive scenes at the beginning of Act III. The act opens with a seven bar ritornello, followed by 26 bars of accompanied recitative. A short passage of secco recitative between Viriate and Libanio is then heard before another lengthy passage of accompanied recitative. In this extended, impassioned section Viriate is contemplating her death whilst imprisoned. Markstrom (2007, p.134, fn.24) adds that the interruption of the recitative was removed at some point during the run which would have created an even greater dramatic impact. Porpora seems to have been one of the leading exponents of using accompanied recitative in the early eighteenth century. His serenata *Angelica* (1720) contains six instances, comprising 156 bars of accompanied recitative. Another serenata, *Gli orti esperidi* (1721), contains three instances, including an extended scena comprising 123 bars of accompanied recitative and two ariettas portraying Orlando's madness. This invites interesting comparison with the extended scena from Handel's *Orlando* of 1733 as his finale of Act II is a series of passages of accompanied recitative and arioso, and a gavotte rondo measuring 205 bars, as Orlando descends into madness. Markstrom (p.77) considers that Vinci may have 'followed the lead of Nicola Porpora' in his extensive use of accompanied recitative in both his *Farnace* (1724) and *Didone abbandonata* (1726). Robinson (1972, p.82) notes that the *Didone abbandonata* productions from both Porpora (1725) and Vinci (1726) were famous because of the quality and number of passages of accompanied recitative in their final acts.

As a comparison between what Handel was writing in the decade before Porpora came to London and what a Neapolitan composer was writing for the major opera centres for Europe it is noteworthy that Vinci's 16 surviving operas of 1720-30 contain a total of 53 passages of accompanied recitative and Handel's 16 operas of the same period contain a total of 65 (Gorry, 2012, p.177).[38] It would seem then that the London audience was well acquainted with the occurrence of accompanied recitative in their operas and even though Porpora raised the stakes somewhat with a higher occurrence certainly in the first three of

[38] For full details of Vinci's accompanied recitative see Markstrom (2007).

his London operas, this was not without precedent either for this composer or for Handel's operas.

The last opera that Handel produced at the King's Theatre before the rival company was formed was *Orlando,* premièred on 27 January, 1733. From two passages of accompanied recitative in the preceding opera, *Sosarme*, Handel included 10 in *Orlando,* including the astonishing 'mad scene' concluding Act II. This extraordinary opera also includes five solo lyrical items other than da capo or dal segno arias, three duets, a trio which, uniquely in Handel's operas, ends an intermediate act and even a quintet comprising the concluding coro. This innovative and exciting opera was what Porpora was confronted with as the latest example of what the competition was producing. Although Porpora would not have been in London before the last performance of *Orlando* on 5 May, 1733, he arrived later the same year and would certainly have known about it.[39] This opera may have had a direct effect on Porpora's decision (perhaps also encouraged by Rolli) to match Handel's proliferation of accompanied recitative to help deliver the drama, with a similar number in his own first opera, *Arianna in Naxo*. On his return to Italy Porpora maintained the status quo with six passages of accompanied recitative in *Semiramide riconosciuta,* the same as in the last London opera, *Mitridate,* and also in the pre-London *Germanico in Germania*.

Table 22 shows where Porpora placed his sections of accompanied recitative and their length. He seems to have taken care to spread out the passages throughout the operas with only *Siface* containing an act with no such occurrence. Even so, that the passages of accompanied recitative were driven by the drama is apparent. In Act II of *Arianna in Naxo*, there are only two passages which seems modest compared to the other two acts in this opera. This is offset considerably, by one of the passages in this second act comprising a prodigious 100 bars. This is not the case in *Polifemo*. Again, the instances of accompanied recitative in Act II seem relatively slight but here, unlike in *Arianna in Naxo* the two passages only amount to 37 bars. The longest section of accompanied recitative in *Polifemo* comes in Act III when Porpora set 55 bars to describe the intensely dramatic blinding of the Cyclops by Ulisse (see below). Porpora therefore used the medium of accompanied recitative for moments of high drama and emotion in his operas rather than

[39] Porpora could have seen the score of *Orlando* as it was published in full score by John Walsh on 6 February, 1733. Advertised in the *Daily Journal.*

arbitrarily inserting passages to deliberately introduce variation to the da capo aria, secco recitative pattern.

The longest section of accompanied recitative in all of these operas by far is the 100 bars in *Arianna in Naxo* (II.vi) mentioned above (see Exs.107-109). Again this is entirely motivated by the drama which starts with a weary Teseo being overcome by sleep which the god Libero is inducing. The tension in this scene increases as Libero threatens death to all if Teseo does not depart with Antiope, leaving behind Arianna, whom the god himself loves. As Teseo wakes he rails at the injustice of the situation, claiming he will defy the gods. Libero reacts furiously at Teseo's audaciousness and threatens to kill Arianna. In the final section Teseo realises he must capitulate to save his beloved Arianna, leading to his aria that concludes Act II. The music through this long dramatic section vividly depicts the changing moods of the characters. It begins with a hollow and ethereal quality that illustrates both Teseo's weariness and the supernatural involvement of the gods, then moving to more urgent and emphatic interjections to match both Libero's imperiousness and Teseo's fury and then anguish.[40]

Table 22. Accompanied recitative placing and length in eight Porpora operas

	Passages				Instances with number of bars					Total number of bars
	I	II	III	TOTAL	Less than 10	10-20	20-30	30-50	Over 50	
Siface		1	2	**3**		1		2		**75**
Germanico in Germania	1	1	4	**6**	1	3		2		**126**
Arianna in Naxo	6	2	4	**12**	4	5	1	1	1	**256**
Enea nel Lazio	3	5	3	**11**	2	7	2			**158**
Polifemo	6	2	7	**15**		9	5		1	**310**
Ifigenia in Aulide	2	2	1	**5**	2	1		2		**98**
Mitridate[41]	-	3	3	**6**	1	2	1	2		**125**
Semiramide riconosciuta	1	4	1	**6**		4	2			**108**

Table 22 shows that Porpora favoured accompanied recitative passages of between 10 and 20 bars in length throughout all of these operas. It is clear that compared to the two pre-London operas he increased his use of this medium in his first three London operas. This reinforces the idea that Porpora was more careful to delineate the characters, their emotions and the inherent drama through appropriate musical settings in these operas, especially in *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo*. Again we see that *Ifigenia in Aulide* appears to

[40] See Chapter Six for full details.
[41] Acts II and III only.

be a return to previous methods and conventions with a sharp falling off of the use of accompanied recitative after the high occurrence in *Polifemo*. *Ifigenia in Aulide* is Rolli's weakest realisation of a plot and as such does not seem to have inspired Porpora; there are fewer moments of intense drama or climax that invite settings of accompanied recitatives.

In the first three London operas the passages of accompanied recitative are spread evenly across all the roles with every character being involved in at least one such passage in *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo,* and five out of the seven characters being involved in *Enea nel Lazio*. This falls to only two characters having such passages in *Ifigenia in Aulide* and three in *Mitridate.* Senesino is the only singer in all five of the London operas to have accompanied recitative set for him. This is not surprising as the castrato was much admired for his dramatic abilities which Burney (1935, p.728) attributes to his performance in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* in 1724:

> there are three accompanied recitatives superior to those of any that I have seen in his [Handel's] other operas, or in any operas by contemporary composers; there are the celebrated *Alma del gran Pompeo*, and *Dall'ondoso periglio*, which are printed, and in which Senesino gained so much repetition as an actor, as well as singer.[42]

Cuzzoni and Montagnana have passages of accompanied recitative in four of the five London operas and Farinelli in two of the three operas in which he sang. This suggests that Porpora was inclined to set such passages for any of his singers, especially Senesino, but that the initial impetus most likely came from the demands of the drama.

There are many instances of accompanied recitative in Porpora's London operas that do not fit neatly within the three categories of situations as suggested by Marvin (1978).[43] Robinson (1971/2, p.71) categorizes the occurrences specifically in Porpora's operas as being of two common and two less common types. Of the most common types, the first concerns a character revealing his/her inner fears or anxieties, especially when related to circumstances of unhappy love. The second is an invocation to the gods or a pronouncement by them. Less common, he continues, are celebrations at the thought of victory in battle or a triumphant entry after such a victory. The category with the highest number of instances of accompanied recitative in Porpora's London operas does indeed

[42] The third is for Cuzzoni.

[43] See earlier in this chapter for details, but to recap here briefly 1) supernatural or unearthly situations, 2) moments involving madness or irrational and distraught thoughts and 3) when a character is faced with an unacceptable dilemma.

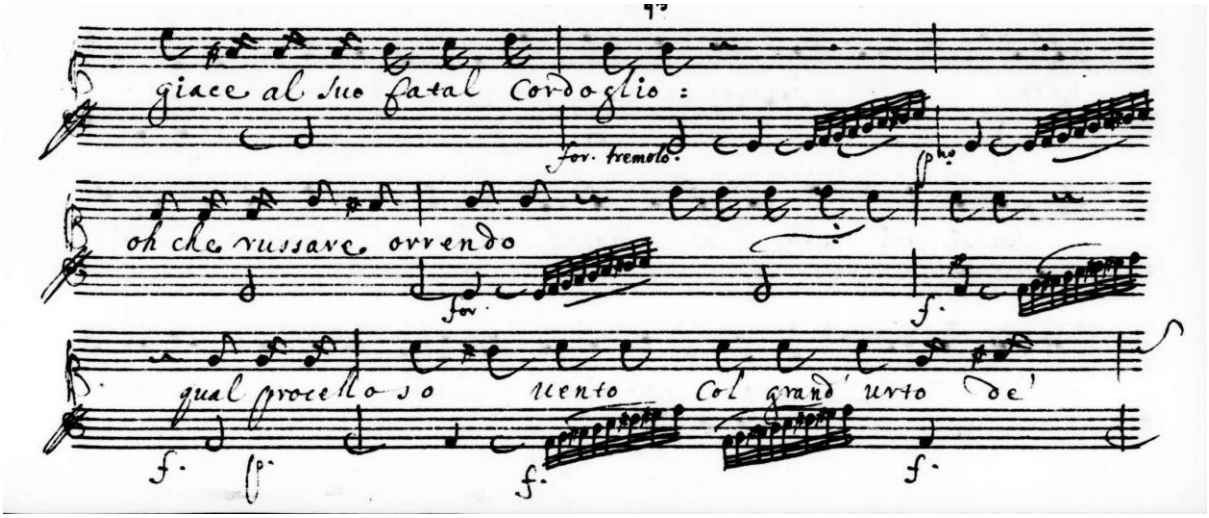
concern the gods, falling into both Marvin's first and Robinson's second category. In all of these operas except *Mitridate*, there are at least three examples of accompanied recitative passages involving the gods.[44] This often takes the form of asking the gods for safe passage, help or victory and sometimes it is the gods themselves speaking. The highest occurrence of such passages is in the first two operas; seven of the 12 passages of accompanied recitative in *Arianna in Naxo* involve the gods, as do five of the 11 in *Enea nel Lazio*.

There are also several instances, as Robinson identifies, of a character expressing his/her innermost fears which may be portrayed as anguish, desperation or anger. When combined with Marvin's second category of a character being confronted by death or overcome with emotion leading to illogicality, this type of situation accounts for many other passages of accompanied recitative. Once in *Arianna in Naxo* and twice in *Ifigenia in Aulide* are the only instances of Marvin's third category, that of a character being faced with an unacceptable choice. The two types of less common situations that Robinson identifies also only account for another few passages of accompanied recitative. This still leaves several instances that cannot be categorized under any headings so far identified, nor grouped together into another single category. Such unclassifiable instances appear in all of the London operas except *Ifigenia in Aulide* and, perhaps not surprisingly as it has the highest number of accompanied recitative passages, mostly in *Polifemo.*

Porpora used the medium of accompanied recitative to intensify moments of action and frenzy. In *Polifemo,* the blinding of the monster is first narrated by Ulisse after Polifemo's exit. With the strings accompanying 'tutti col basso' the tension is built midway through with a dramatic tremolo preceding ascending scalic runs. The effect is intensified with frequent dynamic markings of forte and piano while Ulisse describes how the Cyclops eventually falls asleep and how he will take a burning brand and plunge it in the monster's eye (Ex.59).

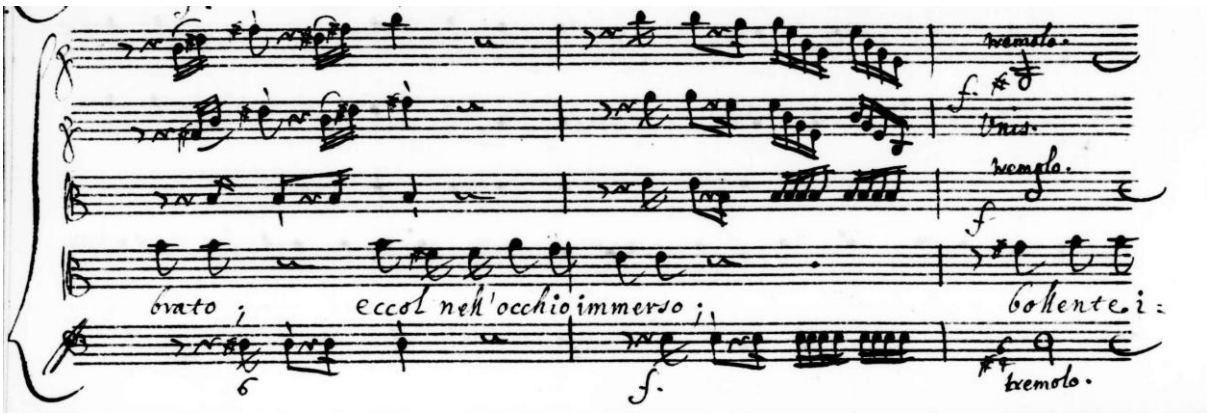
[44] Without the music for Act I of *Mitridate* no definitive conclusions about the instances of accompanied recitative settings here can be drawn.

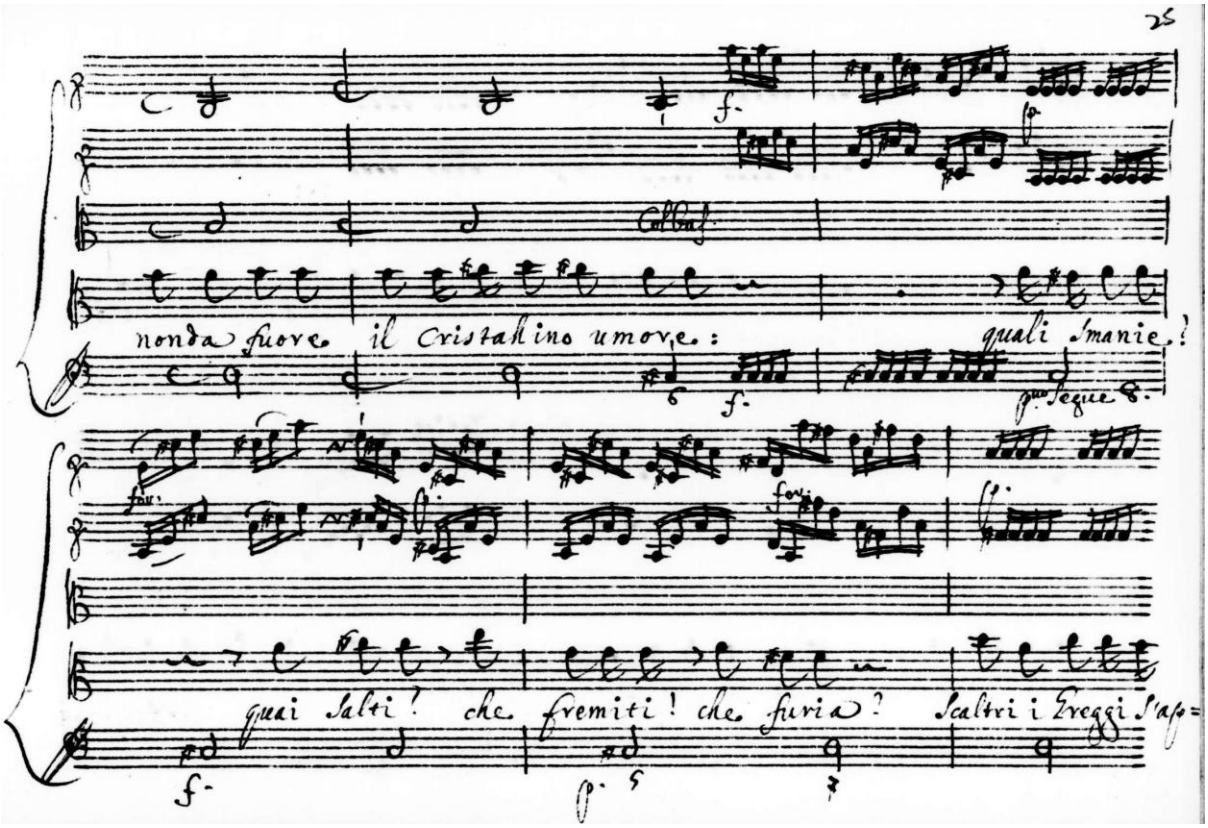
Example 59. Ulisse, 'Mira i gran passi vacillanti', *Polifemo*, III.iii, f.23r



Calipso then continues the story as Ulisse rushes offstage to attack Polifemo. She describes the blinding and Polifemo's ensuing rage and pain accompanied by increasingly agitated arpeggiaic and repeating semiquavers (Ex.60).

Example 60. Calipso, 'Arridi o sommo Giove', *Polifemo*, III.iii, ff.24v-25r





Porpora also used accompanied recitative for expressions of love, but not only unrequited, betrayed or hopeless love. There are three instances of accompanied recitative being used for a situation concerning love in *Polifemo* which are all connected. The love portrayed in all three instances is not fearful because of thoughts of betrayal or rejection but is full of hope and longing. The singers are Galatea, Aci and then Aci again. In Act I, scene ii Galatea is yearning to see Aci and believes that her strong feelings must signify a growing love for him. Aci reciprocates these emotions in the following scene when he is anxiously waiting to see Galatea appear from the sea. The third similar occurrence is in Act II, scene iii when once again Aci is waiting for Galatea to appear and sings that he has no rest until he sees her. The use of the same medium links the thoughts and emotions of the two characters, showing them united in their desire for each other.

Another instance of using accompanied recitative for hopeful love is in *Arianna in Naxo.* In the final scene, Arianna sings of her joyful realisation that she is in love with the god, Libero. Although the sentiment expressed here is simple and happy, the use of accompanied recitative reminds the audience that the *lieto fine* has been achieved not by mortal accomplishment, but by the machinations of the gods. The strong association of

accompanied recitative with a supernatural element, particularly in this opera, indicates this unearthly manipulation.

There are other instances of accompanied recitative in *Polifemo* which do not seem to fit into any category. In Act I, scene iii Porpora set a section of text in which Ulisse explains that he and his followers are landing on the island to seek rest and shelter. This seems a very strange passage to set as accompanied recitative as the poetry is necessary narrative to set the scene, and might normally be expected to be delivered by secco recitative. However this may be driven as much by the singer than the demands of the dramatic situation. This is Senesino's first appearance in *Polifemo* and his text is set as accompanied recitative, as are his opening words in *Arianna in Naxo*. Perhaps Porpora decided that the castrato's first utterance should have a weightier impact rather than a short and simple passage of secco recitative. Maybe Senesino also had some influence in this and wanted a more powerful entrance, even though the drama did not really justify such a musical setting. There is also an added sinfonia at the beginning of this scene, heralding Ulisse's arrival and adding to the grandeur of his entrance. It would appear that even with the arrival of Farinelli for this opera Senesino still warranted special attention.

Between *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo*, Porpora also produced accompanied recitative for Senesino in the first scene of *Enea nel Lazio*, albeit not as the very first item he sang. The opening scene of *Enea nel Lazio* is a very grand affair as Enea is crowned and his mother, the goddess Venere, descends from her chariot in a cloud. As Enea, Senesino first sang a short passage of secco recitative before a coro, which was accompanied by trumpets, horns and oboes. Enea then has two passages of accompanied recitative which are divided by the repeat of the coro and followed by a sinfonia. The repeat of a second coro closes the scene after Enea's bravura aria 'Chi vuol salva la patria'. Although Enea's initial utterance is not dramatic or unusual (Ex.61) the entire scene has been set by Porpora with enough interest and pomp to ensure that Senesino was introduced as an important figure.

Example 61. *Enea nel Lazio*, I.i, p.4

Æn. Æneas, ſon-in-law of Priamus ſovereign of Aſia,
Son of Anchiſes and the Cyprian Goddeſs,
Who having left the deſolated Troy,
And ſuffer'd much by ſea and land,
With a fleet mann'd with renown'd warriors,
Landed on the Latin ſhore,
That Æneas offers you his council and protection.

In *Ifigenia in Aulide* Senesino was not afforded such a grand opening as in Porpora's first three London operas but he still did not have too long to wait for his first passage of accompanied recitative in this fourth London opera. His character of Agammenone appears for the first time in Act I, scene ii to sing six lines of secco recitative and an aria. In keeping with the more conventional structure of this opera it is not until Agammenone's second appearance in scene iv that Senesino was given his first passage of accompanied recitative, rather than any contrivance for his first appearance. The setting in scene iv is wholly appropriate as Agammenone despairs at the thought of his daughter's sacrifice. It is not an arbitrary setting to give Senesino a more dramatic section, but fits completely into Marvin's third category of standard opera seria situations ripe for accompanied recitative. The king is faced with the unacceptable situation of sacrificing his daughter to appease the gods and the 13 bars of accompanied recitative, alternating between punctuating and sustained strings, highlight his anguished thoughts and distress.

Although it is not possible to tell how Porpora set Senesino's opening lines in *Mitridate* without the music, the circumstances are certainly appropriate for an accompanied recitative setting. This suggests that the new librettist for Porpora's fifth and final London opera, Colley Cibber, was aware of the trend for Senesino to be given accompanied recitative very early in his role. As the title character of Mitridate, Senesino first appeared in Act I, scene v. The scene opens to show a smoking altar in the temple surrounded by priests, with a company of courtiers and attendants alongside the principal characters. In six lines of verse Mitridate calls for sacred music to be heard as thanks to the gods for uniting himself and his betrothed, Ismene. A detailed description of a sinfonia in the libretto then follows (see Ex.13). A setting of accompanied recitative for Mitridate's words preceding this would be apt, both because he is addressing the gods, therefore

having an accustomed connection to the supernatural for such setting, but also to build momentum and the tension towards the subsequent cacophony.

There is one other passage of accompanied recitative in *Polifemo* that cannot neatly be classified as one of the identifiable categories and it appears odd if taken in isolation. This is a passage in Act III, scene v sung by Aci as he marks Polifemo's return. This seems to be a section of narrative not dramatically suitable for an accompanied recitative setting (Ex.62), but is really part of a much larger entity throughout this and the following scene.

Example 62. *Polifemo*, III.v, p.59

Ac. From Jove's high Boſom, I beheld it all;
See! how the furious Monſter ſtalks
Ruinous o'er all he paſſes——He draws near:
Let him a while be motionleſs, and think!
That Self-conviction may augment his Torment.

These two scenes (III.v and vi) underwent many changes.[45] In the Royal Manuscript R.M.23.a.9, there is no identification of scene vi coming before Polifemo's arietta as there is in the libretto.

Therefore the structure of scene v in the score is as below:

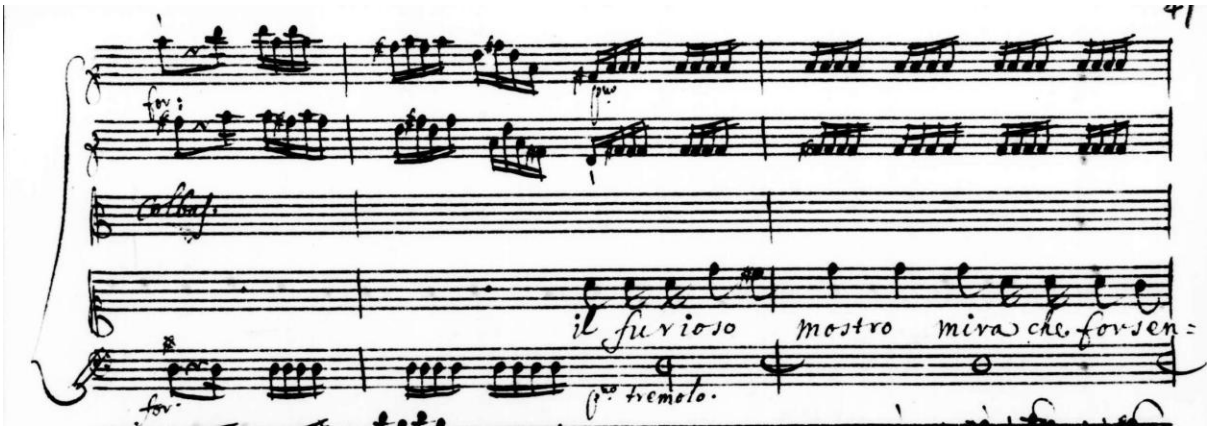
Aci	D.C. aria, 'Alto Giove'
Galatea then Aci	Secco recitative
Aci	Accompanied recitative
Polifemo	Arietta, 'Furie che mì strazjate'
Polifemo, Aci and Galatea	Accompanied recitative
Aci	Secco recitative
Aci	Aria, 'Senti 'l Fato'
Polifemo	Accompanied recitative

To end a scene with a passage of accompanied recitative was certainly unusual and in the original libretto there follows a passage of recitative and an aria, 'Fra le vicende delle Sorti umane', for the character of Nerea, whose entire role was subsequently cut from the

[45] See Chapter Seven for details.

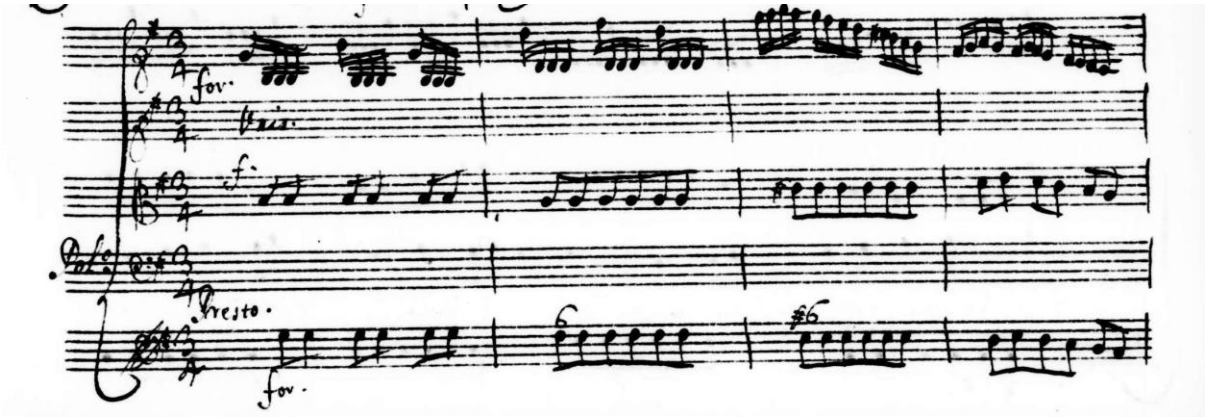
revisal in October, 1735.[46] This final section in the scene however does lend itself to a dramatic accompanied recitative setting as Polifemo sings of his torment of having been blinded in his only eye by a mortal and cries out at the gods in despair. The earlier progression of Aci's accompanied recitative, followed by Polifemo's arietta and then reverting to accompanied recitative effectively portrays the excited emotions of the characters, bringing together the involvement of all three. After his aria and Galatea's short text, Aci changes from secco recitative via a short ritornello to accompanied recitative to herald the arrival of the furious Polifemo who is looking for Ulisse (Ex.63). The presto semiquavers are taken up in the ritornello to Polifemo's two line arietta which he himself interrupts to exclaim that 'Nobody' (i.e. Ulisse) is a traitor (Ex.64). For Aci's subsequent entry the orchestra falls silent to emphasize the fact that Aci still lives (Ex.65). Sustained strings then accompany Polifemo's horrified realisation and Galatea's following mocking words (Ex.66). The choice of accompanied recitative interrupted by the short arietta here may not conform to an expected set of circumstances for the use of accompanied recitative but Porpora effectively matched the music to the drama.

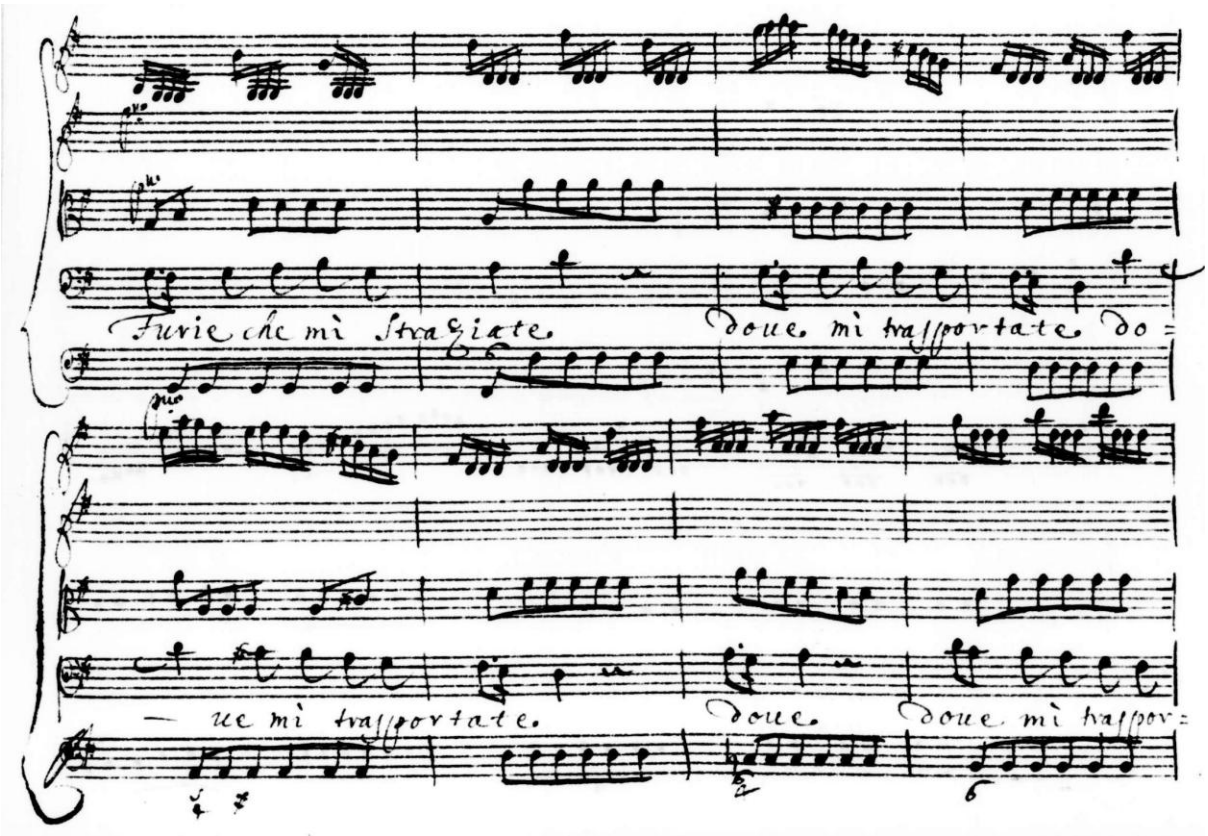
Example 63. Aci, 'Il furioso Mostro', *Polifemo*, III.v, f.47r

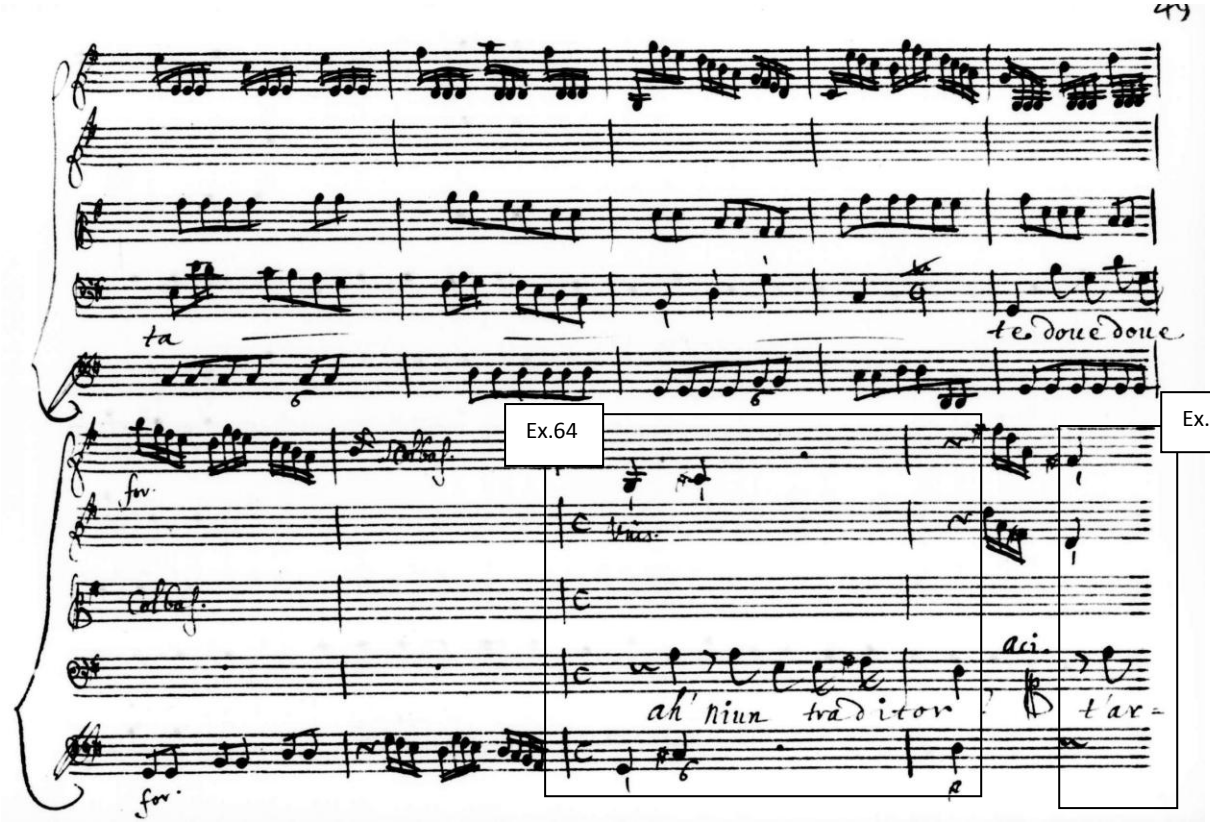


[46] In the autograph manuscript of Act III of *Polifemo,* MUS/ADD/14115, there is an additional aria for Polifemo here which is in neither libretto (original nor revised) nor the manuscript R.M.23.a.9. See Chapter Seven for more details.

Examples 64 – 66. Polifemo, ‘Furie che mi strazjate’, Aci and Polifemo, *Polifemo*, III.v, ff.48r-49v






ta
te. doue doue
Ex.64
Ex.65
for.
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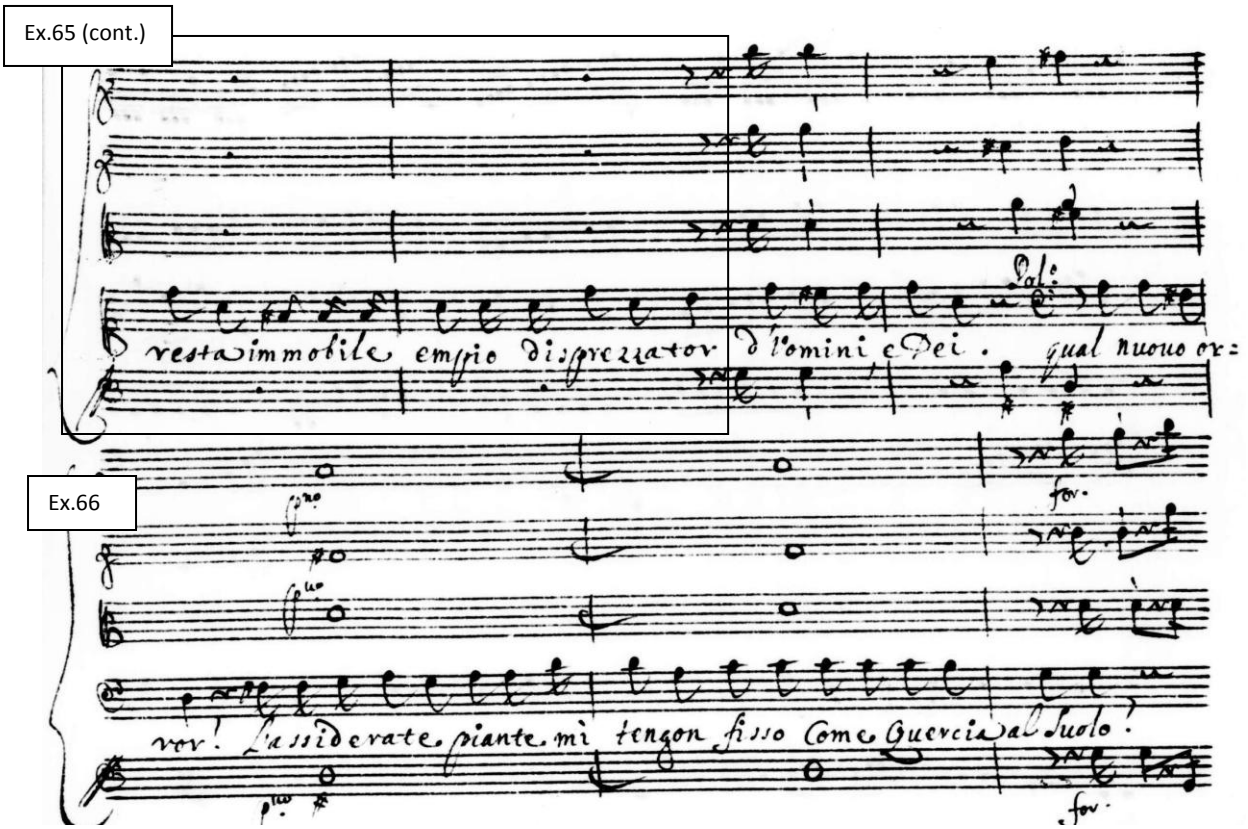

Ex.65 (cont.)
Ex.66
resta immobile empio disprezzator d'l'omini e Dei. qual nuouo or=
for.
vor! l'assiderate piante mi tengon fisso Come Quercia al Suolo!
for.

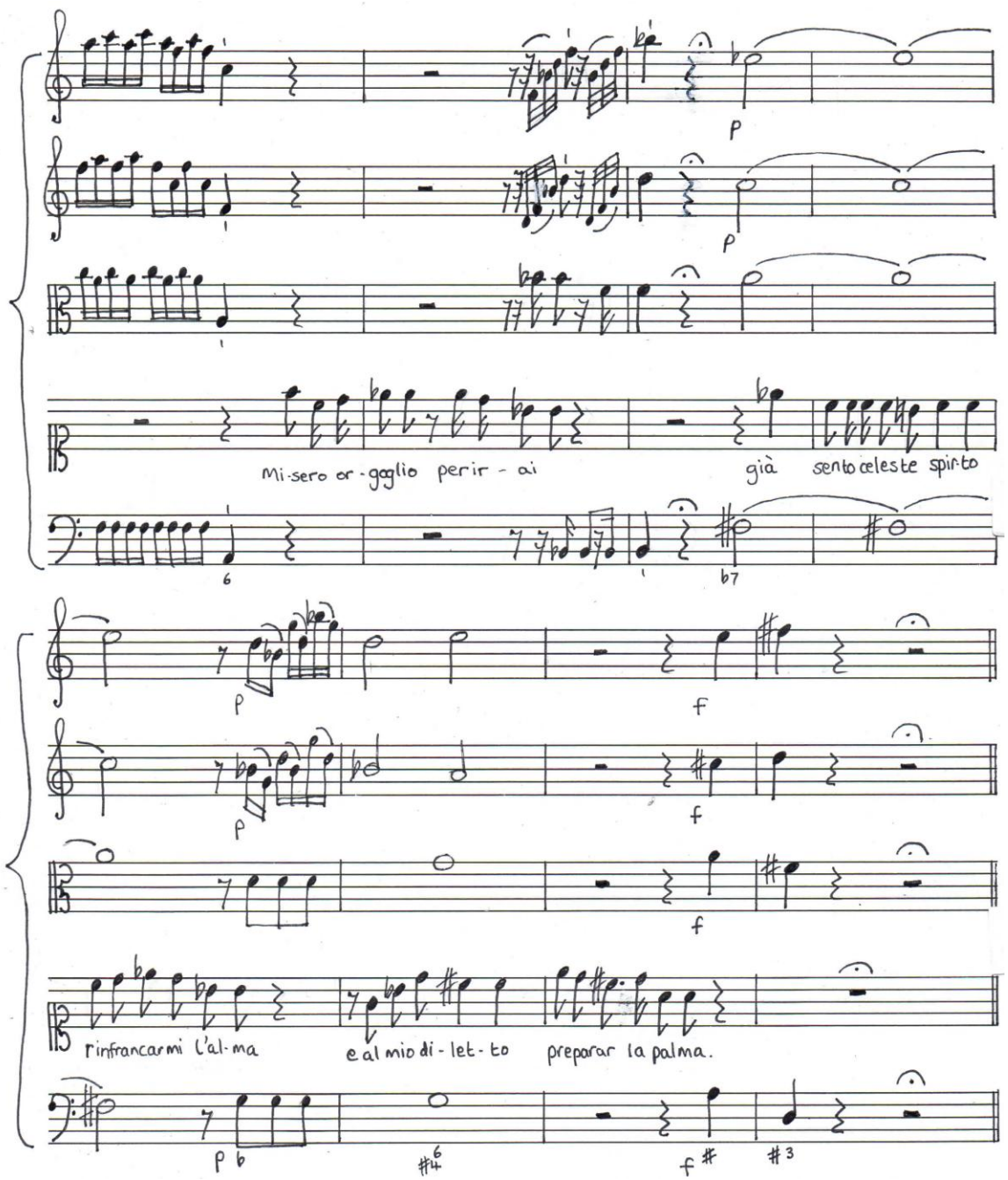
In *Enea nel Lazio* Porpora used accompanied recitative for two further situations that do not obviously fall into the identified categories. The first involves Lavinia who predicts forthcoming trouble for others, but a joyful calm for herself (Ex.67).

Example 67. *Enea nel Lazio*, I.v, p.20

Lav. I ſee a cruel ſtorm draw near,
And from the ſecure ſhore I ſhall behold it;
But the grief of others fatal danger will not
Suffer it with unmoiſten'd eyes.
The Gods have declared, it is decreed in heaven,
(If the iſſue is propitious to my father's zeal,)
That my affections hereafter will have a joyful
(calm.

Rather than illustrate the character's disturbed thoughts and fluctuating emotions, the accompanied recitative setting here serves to help carry the momentum towards Lavinia's complex coloratura aria which follows, 'Sprezzando il suolo', concluding Act I. It also highlights Lavinia's words, subtly suggesting the unrest to come in the following act with the sustained strings occasionally being unsettled by the more punctuating accompaniment. The second unusual occurrence of accompanied recitative is used in very much the same way, building the tension before the final item of Act II, which, again, is an aria for Lavinia, 'Consolata par ch'io senta'. Lavinia's thoughts are not anxious here for herself but rather for the pride of man and the arpeggiaic and punctuating string texture mirrors Lavinia's worries. There is a pause after a cadence on B♭ and the style changes, with a move to G minor via the diminished 7th on F♯, to a more sustained section as she feels her soul calmed by a celestial spirit ('già sento celeste spirto', ex.68). As at the end of Act I, this choice of musical setting hints at the turmoil to come in Act III.

Example 68. Lavinia, 'Patria di tutti', *Enea nel Lazio*, II.v, transcribed from f.52



There is one example of accompanied recitative in *Mitridate* for which the poetry falls outside of the categories; in Act II, scene vi Mitridate comes across the sleeping Semandra whom he loves. Although this love is unrequited this text does not display Mitridate's despair but rather his total delight in her beauty. It was left to Porpora to sharpen the characterisation here by suggesting Mitridate's anguish in the music as he

accompanied his words with alternating punctuating and sustained strings to show Mitridate's underlying agitation.

Although the appearance of so many passages of accompanied recitative in Porpora's London operas appears at first to be very unusual, it has been shown that this is not the case. Porpora's previous operas in Italy were renowned for their abundant use of the medium, and in London, Handel's operas often contained five and even as many as 10 passages of accompanied recitative (Gorry, 2012). The majority of such passages in Porpora's London operas are driven by the drama with Porpora seemingly keen to sharply delineate the characters with appropriate musical setting and highlight important parts of the drama. Many of the most dramatic situations in the operas involve the gods or have a supernatural setting but Porpora also used accompanied recitative for moments of action, even if not concerning the gods. He also used such settings to unite characters who have similar desires or to show they are somehow linked together. If the text did not obviously show particular characterisation or an important idea in the drama, Porpora used accompanied recitative as a pervasive intimation of underlying emotions or suggestion of unrest. The only real deviation from Porpora's careful use of accompanied recitative to match the drama is in the instances involving Senesino's early appearances in the operas. It would appear that Porpora was not immune to the castrato's influence as the only dramatically inexplicable situations all involve Senesino and are to his benefit to showcase a grand entrance in the opera.[47]

Secco Recitative

Porpora's secco recitative follows the expected pattern in operas of the early eighteenth century and his style changed little over the course of these nine operas. The music is syllabic with no melismas and follows the sense of the words in rhythm and flow. The speed is generally fast, mainly in quavers and semiquavers, punctuated by quaver rests as the sense demands. Although the time signature is always $\frac{4}{4}$ and the beat is irregular, the singer was expected to alter the speed of delivery to match the sentence construction whilst

[47] That Porpora could be influenced by singers is seen in *Ezio* (Venice 1728). All Grimaldi's arias except one are concise and declamatory with no coloratura or opening ritornellos. Markstrom (2007, p.165) remarks that this was to allow the castrato to show off his famous acting skills.

conveying the emotion and drama. Table 23 shows the number of recitative passages in each opera, both secco and accompanied, from the score. The London operas also have the number of recitative passages as indicated in the librettos.

Table 23. Passages of recitative (secco and accompanied) in librettos and scores of nine Porpora operas

	LIBRETTO	SCORE			
	Passages of recitative[48]	**Passages of secco recitative**	**Passages of accompanied recitative**	**Total passages of recitative**	**Accompanied recitative that is preceded or followed by secco recitative**
L'Agrippina	-	69	0	**69**	0
Siface	-	39	3	**42**	3
Germanico in Germania	-	36	6	**42**	5
Arianna in Naxo	36	35	12	**47**	10
Enea nel Lazio	31	22	11	**33**	3
Polifemo	33	23	15	**38**	7
Ifigenia in Aulide	28	28	5	**33**	4
Mitridate[49]	26[50]	24[51]	6	**30**	5
Semiramide riconosciuta	-	41	6	**47**	4
TOTAL	-	**317**	**64**	**381**	**41**

The total number of passages of secco and accompanied recitative added together from the score does not equal the number in the libretto in these operas. This is because in many cases Porpora chose to set some passages from the libretto as partially secco and partially accompanied recitative. For example, in Act I, scene vi of *Arianna in Naxo*, Porpora set the 30 bars of recitative that open this scene as, secco – accompanied – secco – accompanied – secco, making five passages out of one. This discrepancy between the number of recitative passages in the libretto and the score is most obvious in *Arianna in Naxo.* An experienced librettist such as Rolli would have been very aware that the London audience did not want to sit through an abundance of non-lyrical singing in a foreign language, but mostly wanted

[48] The librettos of the pre- and post-London operas fall outside the scope of this dissertation.
[49] Acts II and III only.
[50] Although the libretto for all three acts is extant only acts II and III are included in this figure to be comparable to the score. There are a further 16 passages of recitative in the libretto but it is impossible to tell which of these were set as passages of secco and which of accompanied recitative.
[51] Scenes vi to viii are missing from the score so these figures are based on the extant music plus one extra scene from the libretto (assumed to be set as secco recitative) which is integral to the plot.

to hear their favourite stars excel in dazzling arias. However, perhaps surprisingly, Rolli did not seem to have pared down the recitative for the first opera, *Arianna in Naxo.* Perhaps, having finally been given more latitude as chief poet to the 'Opera of the Nobility', he was loathe to skimp on the finer intricacies of the plot and drama inherent in the passages of recitative poetry. So although the split between lyrical and non-lyrical items was initially driven by the librettist, it was left to Porpora to deliver the secco recitative in acceptable chunks for the London audience. That Porpora was mindful of keeping the secco recitative to a minimum can be seen in that 10 of the 12 passages of accompanied recitative in *Arianna in Naxo* come either before or after a passage of secco recitative, thus breaking up any potentially long and inaccessible sections with a musically more arresting passage. This also had the benefit for Porpora of being able to highlight important or more dramatic moments in the story with the musically more striking accompanied recitative.

The fall in number of passages of secco recitative between *L'Agrippina* and *Siface* is concomitant with the lengthening of arias and consequent shortening of recitative in the latter. Perhaps, after *Arianna in Naxo* it was deemed that there was still too much secco recitative for the London audience because there is then a significant decrease in occurrences. After his return to Italy and its native audience, it can be seen in *Semiramide riconosciuta* that a return to the earlier numbers of passages of secco recitative was adopted.

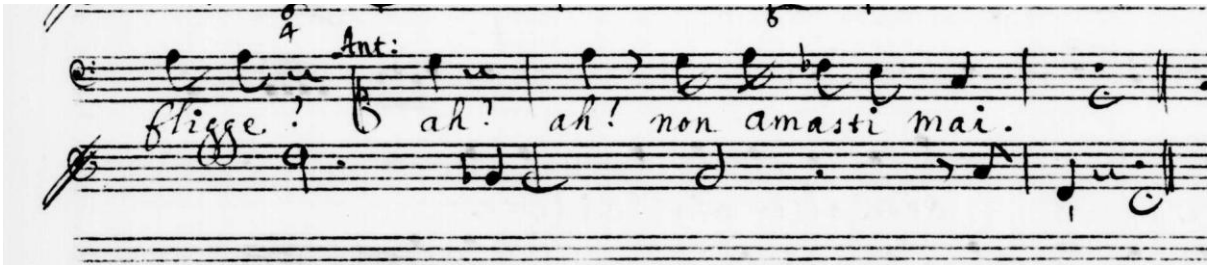
In his article 'Performance of Recitative in Late Baroque Opera', Dean (1977, p.401) states that 'it is certain that the fore-shortened cadence, the dominant bass note coinciding with the last stressed syllable of the voice, must be the rule in the dramatic recitative of Handel and his contemporaries'. The usual alternative at the end of a passage of secco recitative is the delayed cadence which has the playing of both the dominant and tonic chords after the voice has finished. By the time of Mozart this delayed cadence was certainly the type adopted (Dean, 1977, p.395). Hansell (1968, p.246) believes that the change happened around the middle of the eighteenth century. He cites two scores of Hasse's *Artaserse*, from Venice in 1730 and from Naples in 1762, which neatly illustrate this point.[52] In the first is written a foreshortened cadence which has been rewritten in the later score with a crotchet rest in the bass part under the final two quavers in the voice part to

[52] Taken from scores in the conservatory libraries of Venice (MS 10005, f.16r) and Naples (MS 27.2.10, f.12v).

effect the delayed cadence. Dean's assertion of the dominance of the foreshortened cadence is largely based on the evidence of the one example of a delayed cadence in Handel's works. In Act II of *Hercules* (1744) Handel wrote a crotchet rest in the bass part under the final word in the vocal line, effecting the delayed cadence and suggesting that if this is what he had wanted elsewhere he would have written it. This is reinforced by Telemann in 1733/34 (No.40) who stated that in operas, the final cadences should be played as soon as the voice sings the final syllables, i.e. the foreshortened cadence.

The situation for Porpora is not as straightforward as this first suggests. Monson (1986, p.92) states that 'the 1720s and 1730s provide abundant examples of notated delayed cadences in *recitativo semplice*.' He gives examples from Pergolesi's *Adriano in Siria* (Naples, 1734) and *L'Olimpiade* (Rome, 1735) and, from earlier, Vinci's *Partenope* (Venice, 1725). Most interestingly is his identification of a form of delayed cadence in Porpora's *Didone abbandonata* (Reggio, 1725). He suggests that this is a hybrid version of both the foreshortened and delayed cadence as it is displaced by only a quaver rest, not a crotchet, so that the dominant chord is sounded under the final, unstressed syllable of the voice. A similar type of cadence is found a handful of times in the London operas, for example, in *Arianna in Naxo* (Ex.69), and also once in the post-London *Semiramide riconosciuta*.

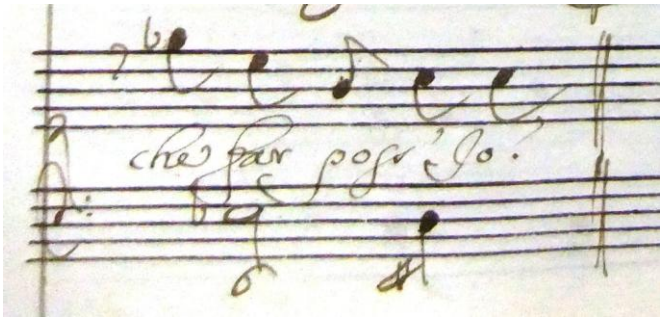
Example 69. Antiope 'Ah! Non amasti mai', *Arianna in Naxo*, I.vi, f.71v



Monson (p.93) continues that 'the notation of most cadences in these two operas from 1725 [Vinci's *Partenope* and Porpora's *Didone abbandonata*] is still simultaneous (foreshortened)'. From the following year, he cites Vinci's *Didone abbandonata* as having some cadences which are now fully delayed, that is, with the crotchet rest under the final syllable, causing both chords to play after the voice has finished.

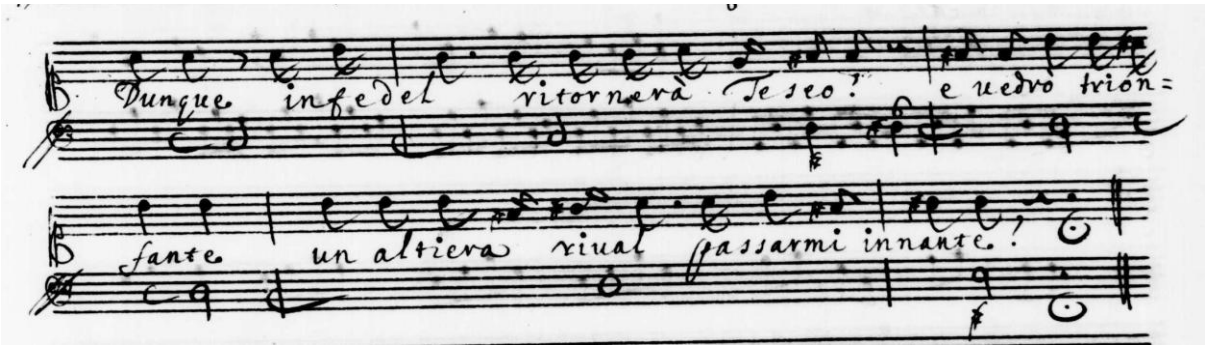
The three pre-London operas have instances of a wholly foreshortened cadence; twice in *L'Agrippina* and once in *Germanico in Germania* the penultimate, dominant chord is heard several beats before the voice has finished and the tonic is sounded with the final accented syllable of the voice. A variation of this is found in *Siface* where a passage of recitative does not close with a perfect cadence but on the half close (Ex.70) allowing an uninterrupted continuation into the following aria which begins with no introductory ritornello. These simultaneous cadences are the only alternative to the perfect foreshortened cadence that is found in these three operas.

Example 70. Ismene, 'Sento gl'affani', *Siface*, I.vi, f.33v



Although it does not appear in the post-London *Semiramide riconosciuta* Porpora occasionally made use of this ending in London; it can be found as many as five times in *Arianna in Naxo* (Ex.71), twice in *Mitridate*, but not at all in the other three operas.

Example 71. Antiope, 'Quanto è ver', *Arianna in Naxo,* I.iv, f.47r



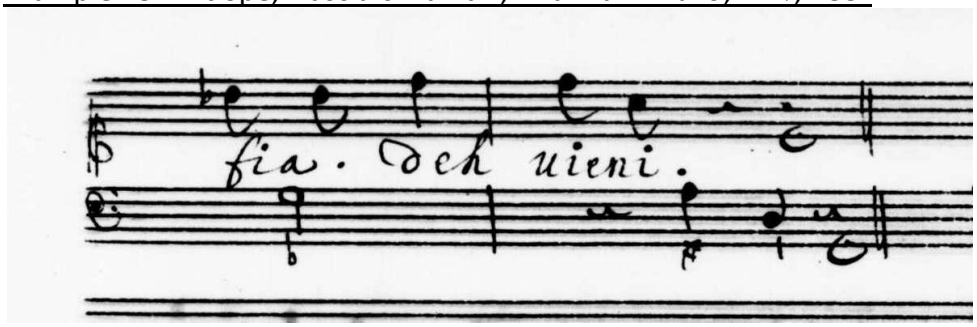
Porpora used this type of cadence to allow the music to continue seamlessly without the punctuating interruption of the closing chords. In her passage of recitative in the above example, Antiope asks if Teseo will return unfaithful, bringing with him a rival to herself.

The following aria continues this train of thought and develops it as Antiope sings of her hope, even though her heart urges revenge in her abandonment.

In the manuscripts under consideration here it is not until the first London opera, *Arianna in Naxo* in 1733, that the first example of the delayed cadence is seen. Monson (1986, p.93) believes that Feo's *Andromeca* (Rome, 1730) may provide 'one of the earliest examples of the widespread use of notated delayed cadences'. *Arianna in Naxo* would seem to fit this trend as the foreshortened cadence still predominates (Ex.72), but there also a few examples of the delayed cadence with a crotchet rest displacing the initial dominant chord (Ex.73).

Example 72. Arianna, 'Ah sì ch'è vero', *Arianna in Naxo*, II.i, f.5r

Example 73. Antiope, 'Lascia chì amar', *Arianna in Naxo*, III.v, f.35r



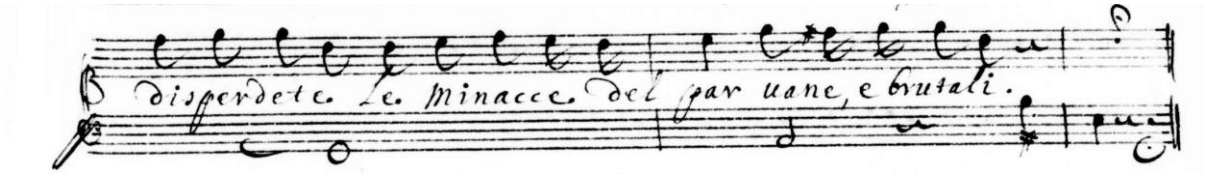
By the time of *Enea nel Lazio* this trend has reversed with there being more delayed cadences than foreshortened. *Polifemo* has a more equal division and Porpora used both types roughly evenly. The delayed cadence is once again the most common cadence concluding the secco recitative throughout the final two London operas, *Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Mitridate.*[53] On his return to Italy Porpora reverted to the foreshortened cadence being his preferred close with just a few instances of the delayed cadence in *Semiramide riconosciuta*. This suggests that the delayed cadence was still a relatively new technique in Italian opera when Porpora came to London. He increased his use of this perhaps as a

[53] In Acts II and III.

deliberate contrast to the ubiquitous use of the foreshortened cadence in Handel's operas and then reverted to a more natural inclination to use it less frequently when writing again for an Italian audience.

Porpora tended to use the delayed cadence to draw attention to particular words, leaving them unaccompanied. For example, in Act II scene iv of *Polifemo,* Galatea calls to the winds to blow away the vain menaces of the brute, Polifemo. The delayed cadence allows the emotive word 'brutali' to be emphasized (Ex.74). It also adds a dramatic contrast to the gentle calm of the ensuing duet 'Placidetti Zeffiretti' (Gentle breezes).

Example 74. Galatea, 'Al volo risciogliete', *Polifemo*, II.iv, f.34r



The use of different types of cadence endings in the London operas is in keeping with Porpora's efforts to more clearly delineate the drama in the music for the non-Italian audience. His efforts to write recitative that could be delivered in such a way as to enhance the drama rather than just narrate the plot line was appreciated by Rousseau in his dictionary of 1768. 'Il suffit meme d'exceller dans cette seule partie, fi ton mediocre dans toutes les autres, pour s'elever chez eux au rang des plus illustres Artistes; et le célèbre Porpora ne s'est immortalis.'[54]

Overtures

Porpora's overture for *L'Agrippina* is typical of an Italian opera at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is headed 'Sinfonia' and comprises three movements with no repeats. The first marked 'presto e staccato' with a 𝐜 time signature. Although it has a fugato opening it is not particularly long at 28 bars. The second movement is largo, moving into the dominant and in triple time. At only six bars long this is more of a linking passage to the presto third movement which returns to the tonic key and has two sections both in $\frac{12}{8}$ in the rhythmic style of a giga. By the time of *Siface* in 1725, a French influence is evident,

[54] 'Indeed, it is enough to excel in this part [secco recitative] alone, even if one were mediocre in all other parts, to rise to the rank of the most illustrious artists; the famous Porpora achieved immortality by this means alone'.

producing a more hybrid form of overture for this opera. The Italian three movement fast – slow – fast format has been dispensed with in favour of two sections as is found in the French overture. The first section is binary with each part repeated. A grand and homophonic dotted rhythm is apparent throughout these sections with the first ending in the dominant and the second returning to the tonic. The second section, again in keeping with the French style, is fast and lively with a fugal texture. In the third opera in this study, *Germanico in Germania*, Porpora returned to a more standard Italian type sinfonia with three movements encompassing an adagio middle movement. There are however differences from the sinfonia of *L'Agrippina* which show development of the form. The first section, although has no dotted rhythms, has majestic elements of fanfare and the second and third sections both have an initial repeated section.

When he came to London Porpora adopted a hybrid style again and, certainly in *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo* wrote these overtures in a more interesting and engaging form. That the overall influence should be perceived as French from the outset is evident by the title of 'Ouverture' in the manuscript of *Arianna in Naxo*. This influence is seen in the use of a dotted rhythm in the introductory largo and its following section, and a long fugal second section. The Italian influence is seen in the addition of a third section, marked allegro. The scoring was carefully chosen to create an air of excitement and anticipation; the opening strings are subsequently joined by oboes and then bassoons in the first section and then trumpets and horns in the second. Similarly, *Polifemo* begins with a relatively modest three-part string texture before adding woodwind and then later, brass. Porpora again mixed the two continental styles together here with the same pattern of a slow, dotted first section, followed by the fugato-style second and a third dance-style section, this time in triple time. Yorke-Long (1951, p.116) believes these were Porpora's attempt to 'rival Handel in his own forms'. However this kind of overture had already been seen in *Siface* with Porpora combining the elements of the French and Italian overtures with rich contrapuntal textures using brass instruments to good effect. These London overtures seem to be more an extension of this earlier style extending the length and building on it with inventive orchestration.

Both *Enea nel Lazio* and *Ifigenia in Aulide* are also hybrid forms of the French and Italian overture but neither are on such a grand scale as *Arianna in Naxo* or *Polifemo*. *Enea nel Lazio* has the three sections: slow – fast – dance, but the middle allegro is not a fugato

and is Italian in style with much use of sequence and semiquaver violin figurations. *Ifigenia in Aulide* is extended further in as much as it comprises four sections; a short affettuoso is inserted between the third and fourth sections which is melodically related to the previous section. Again there is no real fugato style in this overture and the closing section is a fairly standard tonic – dominant allegro. Unusually this overture contains no brass instruments and, for an overture, seems muted and somewhat insignificant as a consequence.

That Porpora developed and adapted his style of overture for his London operas can perhaps be seen in the return to a more Italianate type of sinfonia on his return to Italy in *Semiramide riconosciuta.* The fast – slow – fast pattern is re-established with the final movement having a $\frac{12}{8}$ time signature in the style of an Italian giga. Although there are fugato like elements in the first movement it has more of an imitative style with many semiquaver figurations in the strings and no sign of the opening French-type dotted rhythm.

Instrumental Scoring

Table 24 shows the instruments that Porpora used in eight of these nine operas in addition to the strings and basso continuo, and the frequency of their use. *L'Agrippina* has not been included in this table as no forces other than strings and basso continuo were employed throughout.

Table 24. Type of instruments other than strings and basso continuo and number of times used in eight Porpora operas [55]

	HORNS		TRUMPETS		OBOES		FLUTES		BASSOONS	
	INSTR'L	VOCAL	INSTR'L	VOCAL	INSTR'L	VOCAL	INSTR'L	VOCAL	INSTR'L	VOCAL
Siface		1	1	1	1	4				
Germanico in Germania	3	3			3	2				
Arianna in Naxo	1	5	1	2	1	5		1	1	2
Enea nel Lazio	1	7	1	3	1	6				
Polifemo	2	5	1	4	1	4		3	1	3
Ifigenia in Aulide	1	3	1	1	2	3		1	2	2
Mitridate[56]	1	2			1	2	1	3	1	3
Semiramide riconosciuta	3	4	3	2	2	2		1	1	
TOTAL	**12**	**30**	**8**	**13**	**12**	**28**	**1**	**9**	**6**	**10**

This table shows that Porpora favoured the more mellow sound of the horn over the brasher trumpet to accompany vocal music throughout these operas. The horn appears

[55] The instrumental (INSTR'L) columns include the opening sinfonia as well as any other instrumental passages, and the vocal columns include all solo and ensemble items.

[56] For the sake of completeness the data for *Mitridate* is included here although only Acts II and III are extant.

more frequently after *Siface* and less again in the last two London operas, *Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Mitridate*. Although this is consistent with Porpora's increased use of additional instruments in the first three London operas, Beakes (2007, p.68) points out that the more frequent use of horns in the London operas may well have been because of the arrival of a number of virtuoso horn players, such as Messing and Winch, arriving in London in the 1730s. The distinctive tone of the oboe is also featured throughout, again, particularly in the vocal music.

The flute started to become a popular instrument in the first half of the eighteenth century and appears for the first time here in *Arianna in Naxo* (Montagu, 2001). Porpora clearly regarded this instrument primarily as an accompaniment to vocal items as it appears only once in an instrumental item. This is in the second section of a March in Act III, scene xiv in *Mitridate* which leads straight into Sifare's grand and concluding aria, 'Cessa Roma superb, ed altera'. This may simply have been Porpora deciding to use all the instruments at his disposal for the triumphant arrival of Sifare after his victory over the Romans and this section of the March is scored sumptuously for horns, flutes, oboes and bassoons as well as four-part strings and basso continuo. The bassoon was not a widely-known instrument in Italy (Landgraf & Vickers, 2009, p.339) which explains why it did not feature in Porpora's operas until he came to London where it was a standard member of the orchestra, usually doubling the basso continuo line.[57] The earliest surviving lists of performers at the Queen's Theatre, Haymarket includes four bassoons in the orchestra for *Hydaspes* in 1711 (Milhous & Hume, 1982).

Table 25 shows that Porpora increased his use of additional instruments (i.e. brass and woodwind) when he came to London.

[57] It is possible that bassoons were used to double the basso continuo line even if not specifically mentioned ("Bassoon" in "Instrumentation", Landgraf & Vickers, 2009, p.339).

Table 25. Items where additional instruments were used in eight Porpora operas

	SOLO LYRICAL ITEMS	COROS	QUARTETS	TOTAL VOCAL ITEMS	INSTRUMENTAL PASSAGES[58]	GRAND TOTAL
Siface	3	1		**4**		**4**
Germanico in Germania	2	1		**3**	2	**5**
Arianna in Naxo	6	2		**8**		**8**
Enea nel Lazio	4	2	2	**8**		**8**
Polifemo	7[59]	2		**9**	1	**10**
Ifigenia in Aulide	3	1		**4**	1	**5**
Mitridate[60]	3			**3**		**3**
Semiramide riconosciuta	3	1		**4**	2	**6**

Porpora at least doubled the number of vocal items that had added brass and/or woodwind in the first three London operas. This appeared to peak with *Polifemo* and its nine additionally accompanied vocal items as it tailed off again to four in *Ifigenia in Aulide*. The coros are consistently accompanied with extra instruments; the only instance of a coro not having such accompaniment is in *Enea nel Lazio,* which, unusually, has a total of three coros. Porpora therefore set the second coro in Act I, scene i with only string accompaniment. The unique appearance of quartets in these operas is emphasised even further by the addition of horns to the usual strings and basso continuo accompaniment.

The appearances of Venere's chariot in *Enea nel Lazio* (I.i and II.ii) are accompanied by strings-only sinfonias, probably to avoid diluting the effect of additional instruments playing in other items in the scenes. The only other instance in these eight operas of an instrumental passage being scored for strings only is the sinfonia which opens Act III of *Polifemo*, portraying a calm and pensive Cyclops. After this sinfonia Polifemo sings an arietta that is scored for additional instruments, 'Fugace Galatea, perchè al mio Lido'. The rare appearance of the flutes is combined with the low and more menacing tones of the bassoons. Flutes are used once more in this opera in Ulisse's 'Fortunate Pecorelle', in Act II scene ii, where he is painting the pastoral picture of the easy and untroubled life of the sheep. To recall this now for Polifemo's arietta perhaps suggests that the Cyclops may have a simpler and gentler side to him. Another facet of Polifemo's psyche is presented by Porpora's choice of instrumentation in his arietta, 'Crudel se m'ai sprezzato' in Act III, scene

[58] Excluding the overture.
[59] This includes one passage of accompanied recitative, arietta and arioso (III.ii).
[60] Acts II and III only.

iii. This begins with a ritornello played by the bassoons, and when the voice enters, the bassoons, strings and basso continuo play mostly in unison with the singer, providing a simple and plain texture. The resulting unsophisticated quality reflects the unrefined nature of this cruel and hideous monster and the unison serves to depict his strength. It also has an association with Polyphemus's aria 'Affanno tiranno' in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* of 1732.[61] Here Handel also chose a unison accompaniment for the Cyclops with the strings and basso continuo playing largely in unison with the voice. Spitzer and Zaslaw (2004, p.447) suggest that this orchestral unison conveys a 'primitiveness and barbarism' that is germane to depicting the character of a monster. Whether Porpora was following Handel's lead, referring back to the earlier opera or simply using the same dramatic device is impossible to tell, but the effect is equally compelling.

Porpora's instrumentation became more dense for the overture to his first London opera, *Arianna in Naxo,* as he utilised both horns and trumpets together and introduced bassoons for the first time here (see Table 26).

Table 26. Instruments used in overtures in seven Porpora operas

	HORNS	TRUMPETS	OBOES	FLUTES	BASSOONS
Siface		✓	✓		
Germanico in Germania	✓		✓		
Arianna in Naxo	✓	✓	✓		✓
Enea nel Lazio	✓	✓	✓		
Polifemo	✓		✓		✓
Ifigenia in Aulide			✓		✓
Semiramide riconosciuta	✓	✓	✓		✓

Ifigenia in Aulide is the only one of these seven operas to have an overture that does not feature any brass instruments. This is in keeping with Porpora's return to a simpler format and less innovative structure in this opera. The favoured oboes feature in every overture and the flutes not at all. This cannot be because the same players were employed for both instruments as flutes and oboes (and bassoons) are used together in *Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Mitridate*. The use of the ubiquitous oboes may have been because the 'Opera

[61] This was an additional aria written for the 1732 version although it was not included in the libretto and its positioning in the masque is unclear.

of the Nobility's' orchestra boasted the virtuosic Giuseppe Sammartini (1695 – 1750) and there are oboe obbligatos in nearly every one of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' operas (Yorke-Long, 1951). That Porpora liked the thicker texture in his overtures can be seen in *Semiramide riconosciuta* which has the same scoring as that of *Arianna in Naxo.*

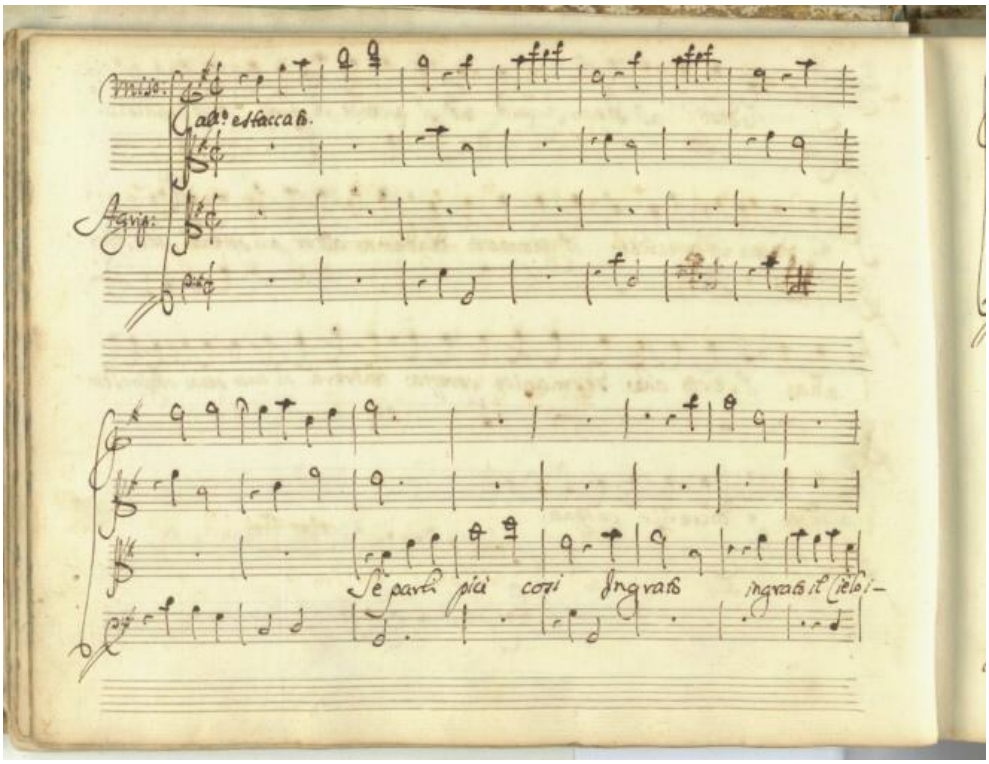
On only four occasions in these operas did Porpora choose to accompany an aria with one solo instrument in addition to the strings and basso continuo. Act I of *Germanico in Germania* is brought to a powerful close with Rosmonda's 'Son qual misero naviglio', scored additionally for solo horn. This is made more striking because of its rarity, being one of only two arias accompanied by anything other than strings and basso continuo in the entire opera. In *Arianna in Naxo* a solo obbligato bassoon accompanies Piritoo's aria 'Fra nuove imprese' in Act III, scene iii. This adds a simple dignity to the aria and the bassoons are specified only twice elsewhere, in the overture and closing coro. (The other aria accompanied additionally by bassoons only in *Polifemo* III.iii is discussed above). The fourth aria accompanied by an additional solo instrument is the beautiful 'Miseri sventurata' sung by Arianna in Act II, scene v of *Arianna in Naxo*. The long opening ritornello with the oboe's solo line captures the despair of the wretched Arianna. Again, this can be contrasted with the use of this instrument in Handel's operas of the same period. Although Handel used the oboe as a solo instrument in his earlier London operas, for example, *Teseo* (1713)*, Amadigi* (1715) and *Radamisto* (1720), there are no oboe solos in his operas after 1724 until 1737, leaving Porpora to make maximum impact with the prominent oboe solo in Arianna's aria. The scarcity of these items with the additional accompaniment of a solo instrument suggests that Porpora was very particular when and where he chose to add one. In the two London operas the choice seems closely linked to the emotions and mental states of the characters singing the arias.

In *L'Agrippina* Porpora did not have the option of augmenting the string orchestration with brass or woodwind instruments. Any orchestral variation was achieved by alternative scoring for the upper strings, or by dispensing with them entirely, as in the 10 continuo arias. With different and greater forces at his disposal, any unusual scoring for strings is very rare in the operas following *L'Agrippina*. As has been seen, in the instrumental passages there are only three instances (the sinfonia in Act III of *Polifemo* and the two sinfonias in *Enea nel Lazio),* that employ strings and basso continuo only, and these use a conventional four-part string orchestration. The only instance of unusual string

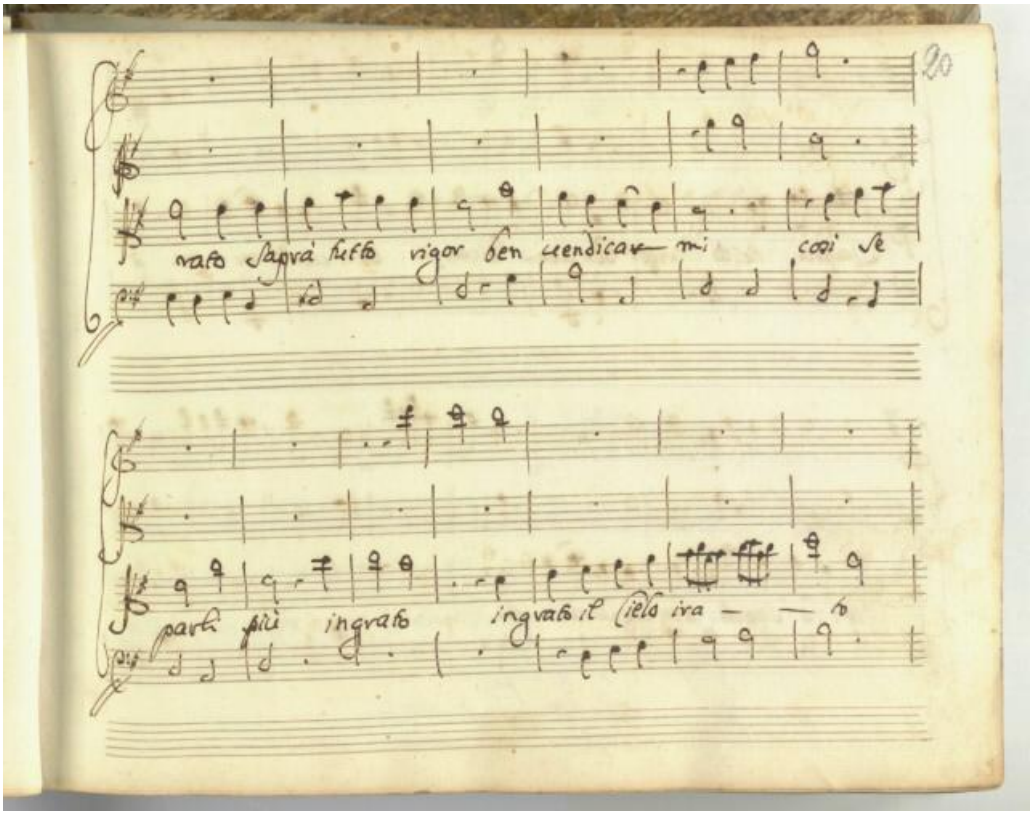
scoring to accompany a vocal item in the London operas is in Act III, scene iii of *Mitridate*. Semandra and Sifare's duet, 'O quanto accorte, o quanto' opens with the 'primo' and 'secondo cembalos' alternating with the vocal duettists. This does not last throughout the entire duet however, and a full four-part string texture with basso continuo is soon reinstated after the opening verses. Porpora was taking advantage of the two groups of continuo instruments that existed in the opera orchestra at this time to reinforce the alternating vocalists.[62] He may also have been aware of Handel making use of this effect in *Sosarme* in 1732. The duet between Elmira and Sosarme, 'Tu caro sei il dolce mio tesoro', in the final scene of the opera has the first voice (Elmira) entering after the initial ritornello with the violins and 'cembalo primo con i suoi Bassi'. When she has finished and it is Sosarme's turn to sing, the accompaniment is from four violas and 'cembalo 2do colla Teorba, e i suoi Bassi'.

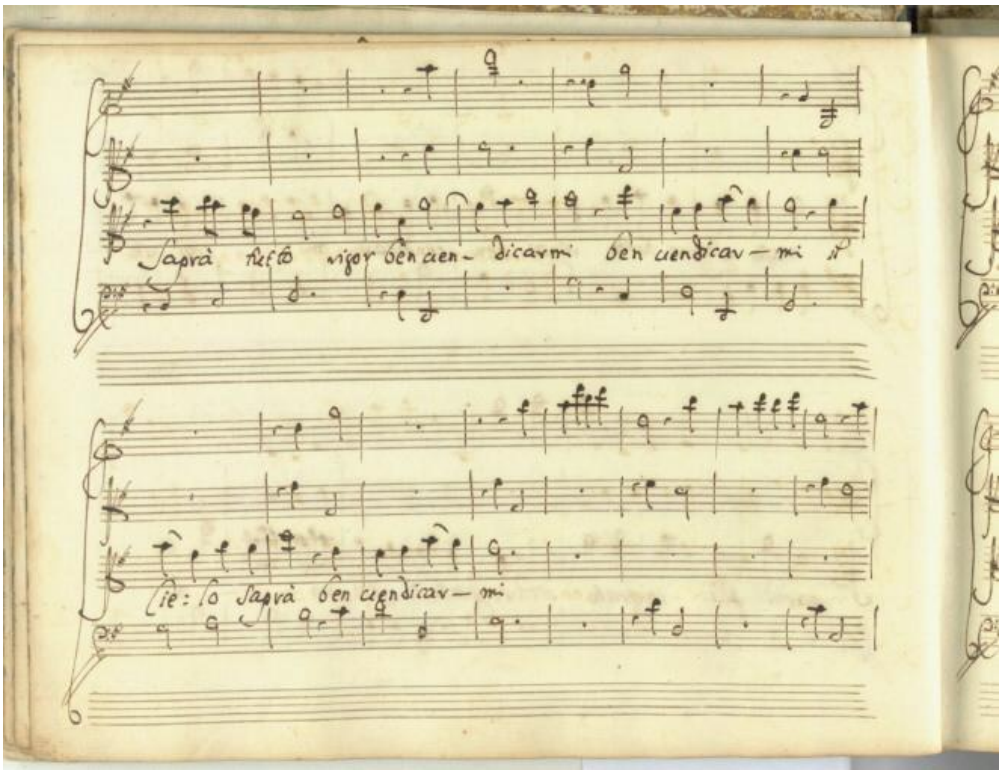
The use of the strings in their accompaniment of the arias changes over the course of these operas. In *L'Agrippina* the strings' function is most often to punctuate the vocal line at cadence points rather than to add continuous support to the voice (Ex.75).

Example 75. Agrippina, 'Se parti piu cosi ingrato', *L'Agrippina*, I.v, ff.19v-20v



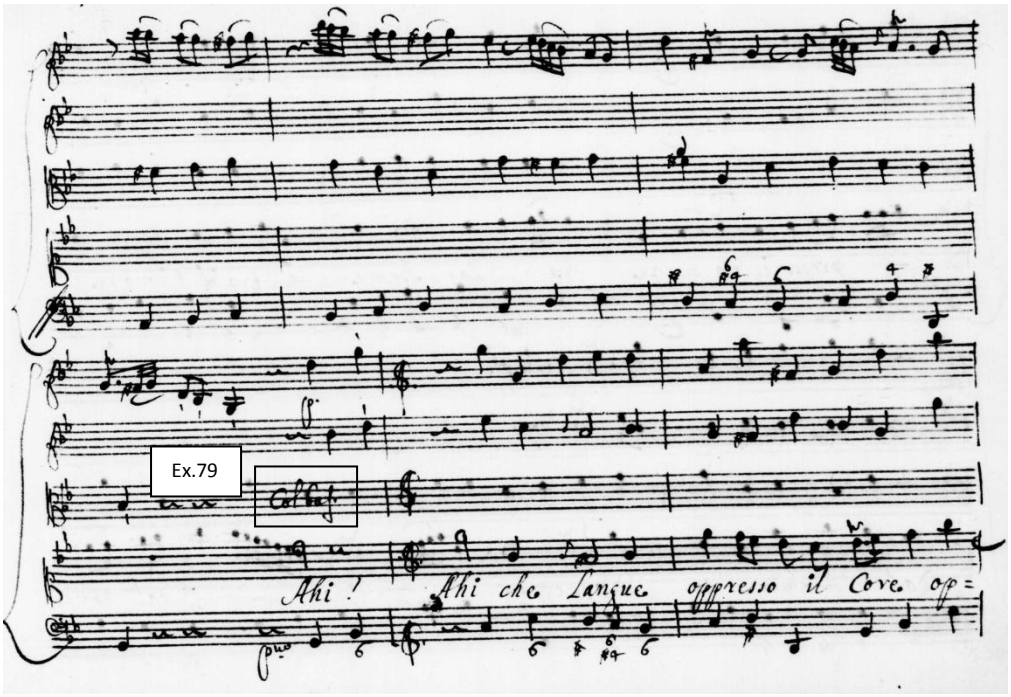
[62] The dramatic effect of this has been discussed in Chapter Four.

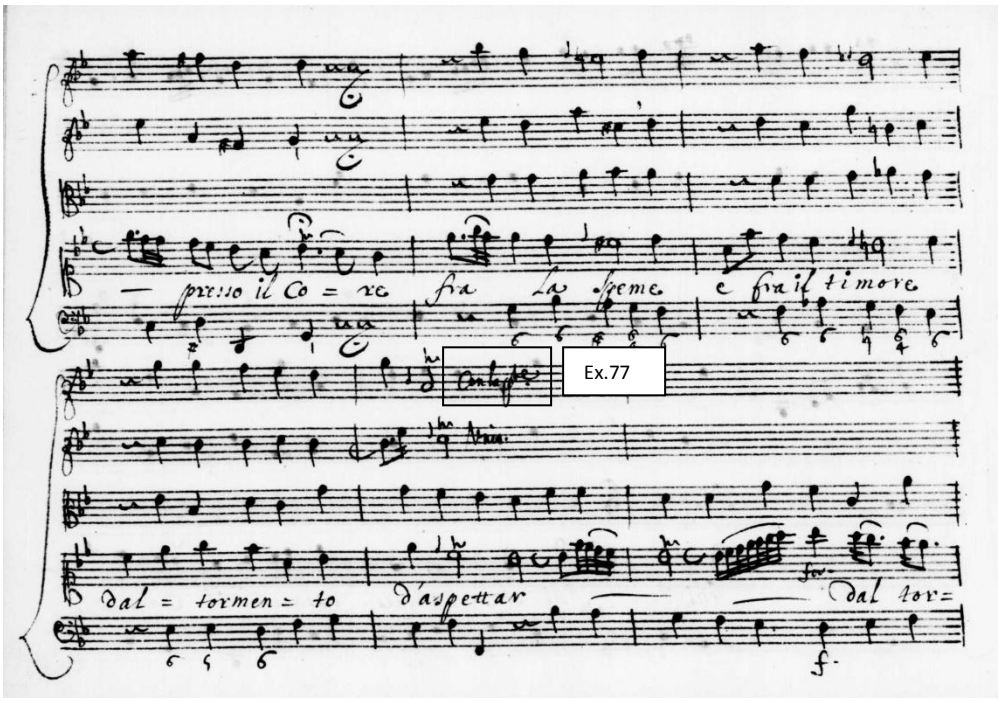


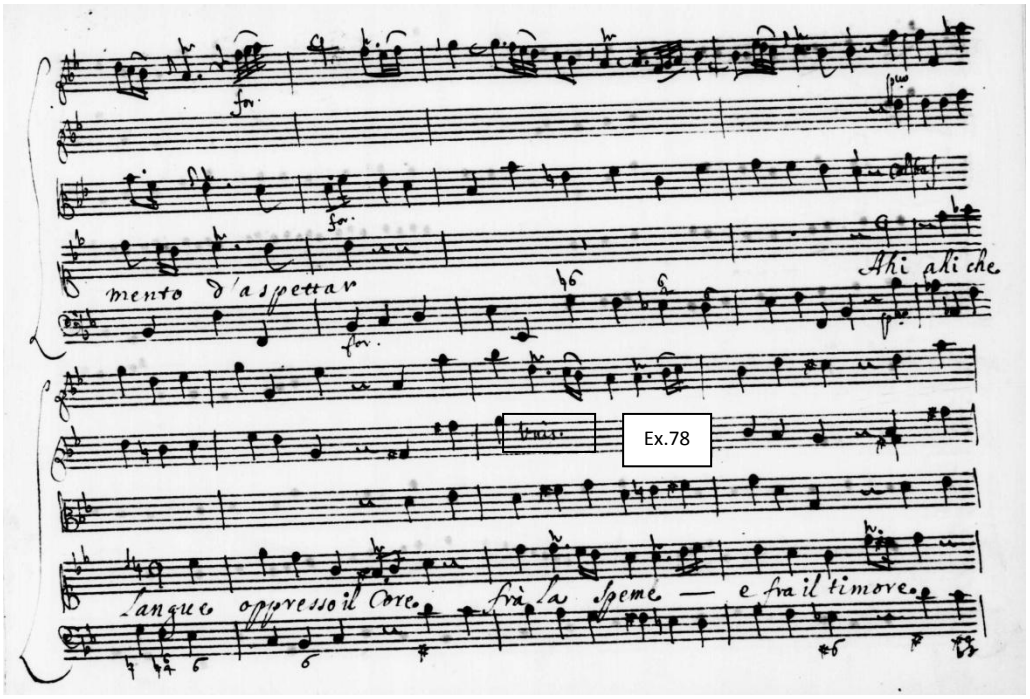


Throughout the London operas this kind of sporadic accompaniment in the upper strings is rare and it is more usual is to find continuous accompaniment during the aria (Ex.76).

Examples 76 - 79. Arianna, 'Ah, che langue', *Arianna in Naxo*, I.i, ff.20r-21r

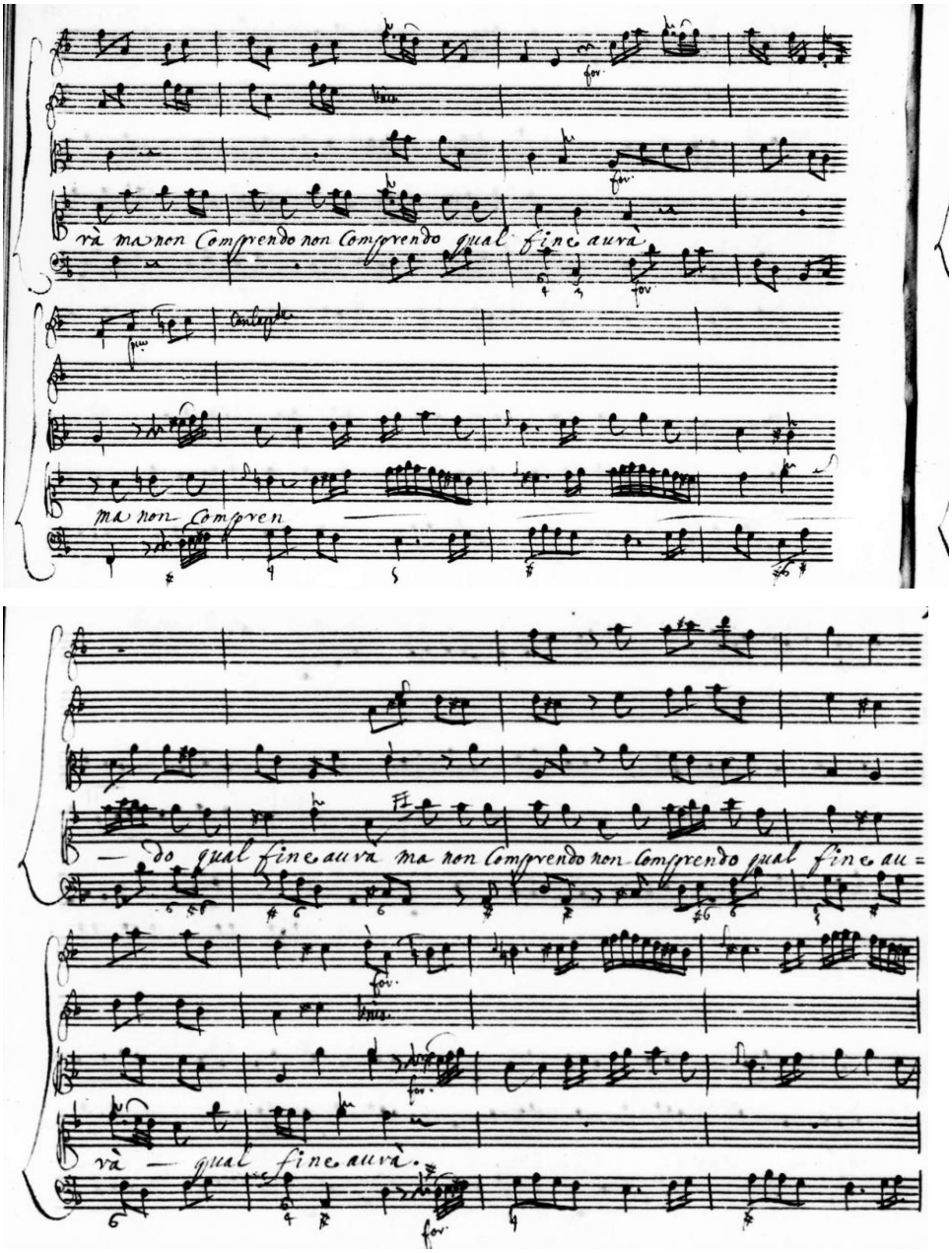






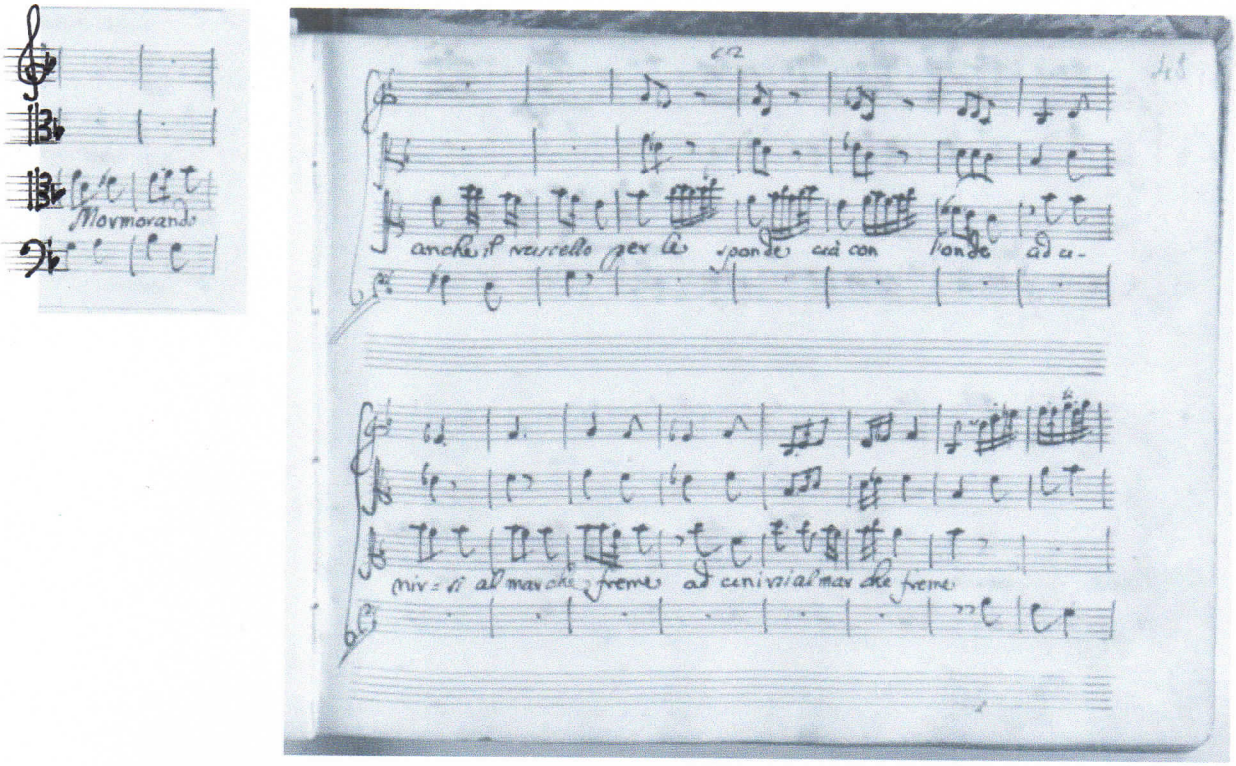
The aria in the above example also shows other features which can often be found after *L'Agrippina.* Firstly, that of the violins playing *colla* (or *con la*) *parte* (with the voice). This instruction is used most extensively in *Siface,* not so much in *Germanico in Germania* and then increases again in the London operas (Ex.77). Second is the instruction for the violins to play in unison (Ex.78) which frequently appears in all operas. The third commonly found instruction is for the violas to play 'col basso' (Ex.79). This appears originally in *Siface* and also features often in *Germanico in Germania.* The violas generally have more independence in the London operas, especially when the violins are playing in unison, *colla parte*. The increased use of the strings in vocal items after *L'Agrippina* does not give them greater prominence because Porpora did not often give them independent melodic interest outside of the instrumental ritornellos. The effect is to reinforce the vocal line both melodically and harmonically, drawing attention all the time to the singer and his/her line. Even later in the London operas, when the violas have more independence from the bass line, it is still only usually as a subsidiary function to the main interest of the melodic line in the voice (Ex.80).

Example 80. Galatea and Calipso, 'Vo presagendo, *Polifemo*, I.i, ff.19v-20r

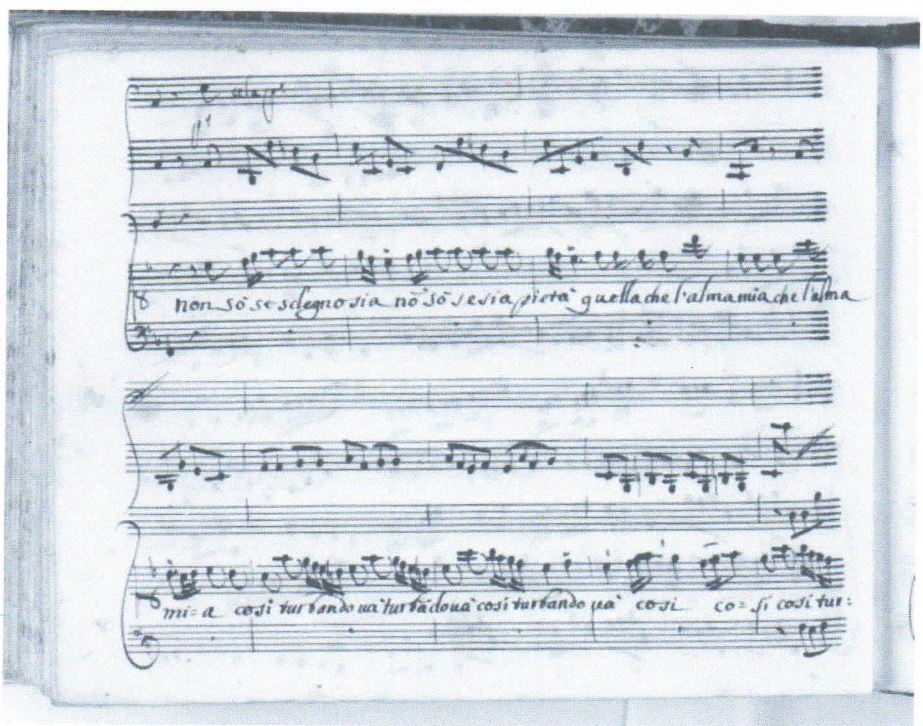


A favourite device of Porpora's, again to focus maximum attention on the voice and not allow anything to detract from it, was to have the voice enter after the opening ritornello, completely unaccompanied. This can be found throughout all the operas, as can passages where the basso continuo drops out, leaving a sparse string accompaniment which emphasizes the vocal line (Exs.81 & 82).

Example 81. Agrippina, 'Mormorando anche il ruscello', *L'Agrippina*, I.xiv, ff.47v-48r

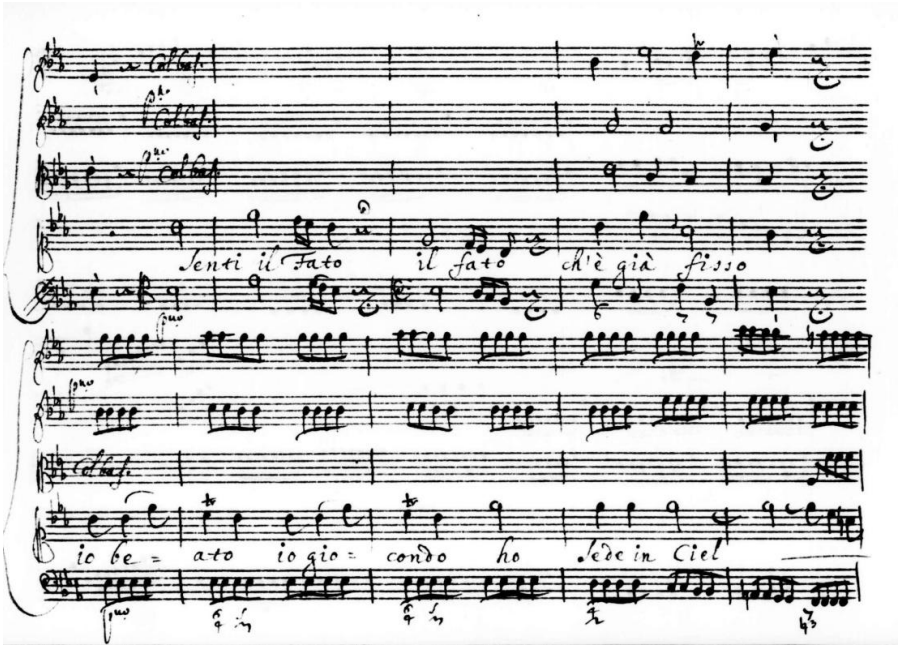


Example 82. Tamiri, 'Non so se sdegno', *Semiramide riconosciuta*, II.xi, f.133v



In keeping with the idea of the voice having dominance over all other aspects, a bass line with any kind of independence is seldom found throughout these Porpora operas. The type of 'Trommelbass' had become more common in opere serie of the period and can be frequently found in the London operas (Ex.83).

Example 83. Aci, 'Senti il Fato', *Polifemo*, III.v, f.52v



Conclusions

Although far from being an exhaustive study of the compositional traits and processes of Porpora's operas, this study of nine of his works does give some insight into how certain aspects of the operas were altered and refined to better suit a London audience. Certain fundamentals do not appear to have changed greatly, such as overall tonal structure, favoured keys and melodic practices. Developments in other areas, such as more complex vocalizations and supporting orchestral lines would appear to stem from the general move in opera seria to produce more virtuosic arias to give greater prominence to the singers. Where Porpora did make obvious efforts to adapt to a new, non-Italian audience is in the many different structures he utilised throughout the London operas. Glimpses of these innovative ideas can be seen in the earlier operas but are prominent throughout all the London works, especially in the first three operas. There is a greater

occurrence of alternative aria forms to the standard da capo structure, more ariettas, cavatinas, arioso passages and more frequent setting of passages of accompanied recitative. There are more ensembles for the principals and more coros. Other modifications include shorter passages of secco recitative with varied cadence endings, longer opening ritornellos setting out the vocal theme and a more contrasted B section in the arias. Porpora's instrumental scoring is more diverse and he increased his use of instruments in addition to strings and basso continuo. All of these refinements are specific and deliberately chosen to enhance communication and understanding of the drama. In this way, character definition was sharpened, emotions highlighted and important moments of the drama emphasized, not only in the poetry, but also through Porpora's music.

CHAPTER SIX: *ARIANNA IN NAXO*

A Study of the Music and Drama[1]

Arianna in Naxo was Porpora's first and most popular London opera with 24 performances in the 'Opera of the Nobility's' opening season. The previous chapter has shown that Porpora was able to adapt his style for the London audience and the popularity of *Arianna in Naxo* suggests that this was successful, at least initially. This chapter will investigate and describe how Porpora conveyed the drama in his inaugural London opera through his music.

R.M.22.m.29. Overture, ff.1v-19r

Section 1		Linking passage	Section 2	Section 3
Introduction - 13 bars repeated				D.S. from bar 8
Strings, b.c.	Oboes, bassoons, strings, b.c.	Horns, trumpets, oboes, strings, b.c.	Horns, trumpets, strings, b.c.	Horns, trumpets, strings, b.c.
Dm → F	F → Dm Tierce da picardie	D →	D →	D →

The overture initially adopts the French manner of a slow, dotted first section, followed by a fast section. An Italianate influence is then evident in the addition of a third allegro section. The opening has an introductory passage of 13 bars played only by the strings and basso continuo which is repeated. This firmly establishes the opera's pivotal key of D, which, in this opening section, is D minor. The wind instruments (oboes and bassoons) then continue on their own before the strings and basso continuo rejoin them. A tierce da picardie ends the section on D major.

A linking passage of four bars, which introduces the horns and trumpets, establishes the major tonality (D major) of the central key. The following second section is a fast fugato on an arpeggiaic subject, essentially in four parts with the brass occasionally joining the texture. The oboes and bassoons are now silent for the remainder of the overture. Tonally it is unadventurous straying infrequently from a tonic/dominant pattern. The third allegro section stays in D major. The texture is much simpler with the violins playing in unison and the violas with the bass, and the brass punctuating only very occasionally.

[1] See p.82 for details of Rolli's plot and the cast list.

Throughout this overture Porpora achieves variety, presumably to arrest the audience's attention, through his use of differing orchestration to alter the texture, including the unusual scoring for independent wind instruments unaccompanied by strings in the first section.

ACT I

Scene i

On the coast, by the closed door of the labyrinth. A ship is in sight. Arianna with a group of young Athenian companions of Teseo.[2]

The curtain rises on a crowd scene offering an immediate visual impact for the opening scene.

Aria: Arianna, 'Ahi! Che langue oppresso il core', ff.19v-22v[3]

G minor: lento: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

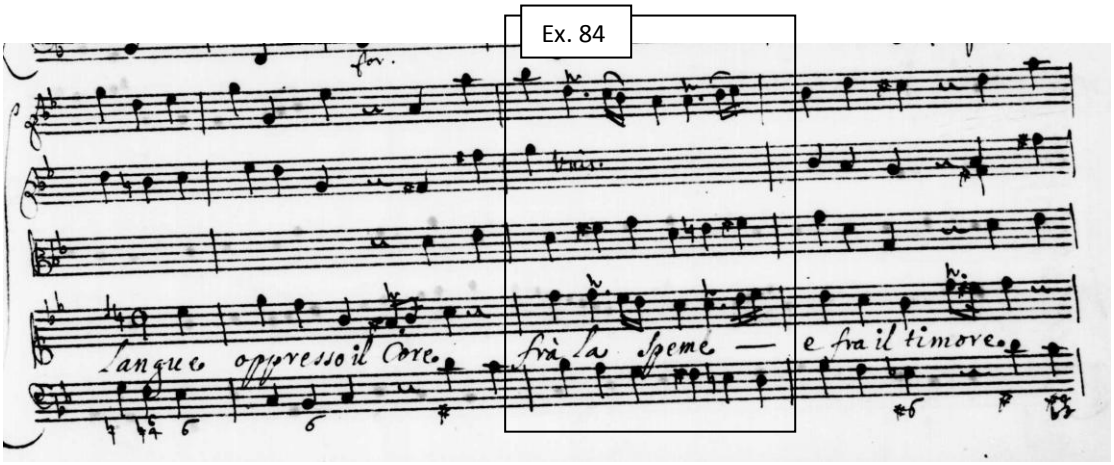
Arianna is waiting for Teseo to arrive. Porpora's first aria written for the London stage is a combination of the expected and the new. By dint of being a Neapolitan composer who had enjoyed popularity and success in the opera houses of Venice and Rome, Porpora's style was already perceived to be of the modern style with graceful, flowing melodies giving prominence to the vocal line and, in this, Porpora did not disappoint. With its $\frac{3}{4}$ metre, the rhythmic flow of Arianna's first aria is carefully balanced in several instances by emphasizing the second beat to match it to the first (Ex.84).[4]

[2] I have given English translations for all the stage directions at the beginning of each scene where supplied in the libretto.

[3] All arias are D.C. or D.S. unless otherwise indicated.

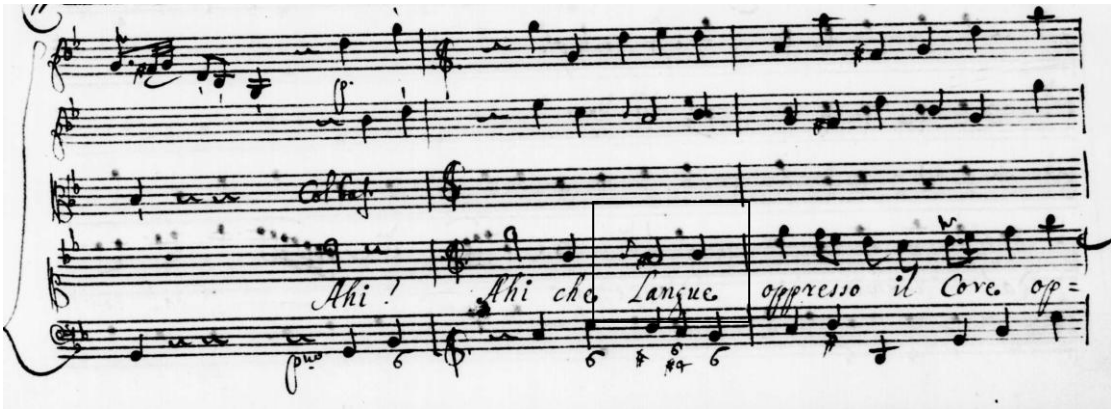
[4] Arias in $\frac{3}{4}$ often have double length bars in opera seria of this period.

Example 84. f.21r

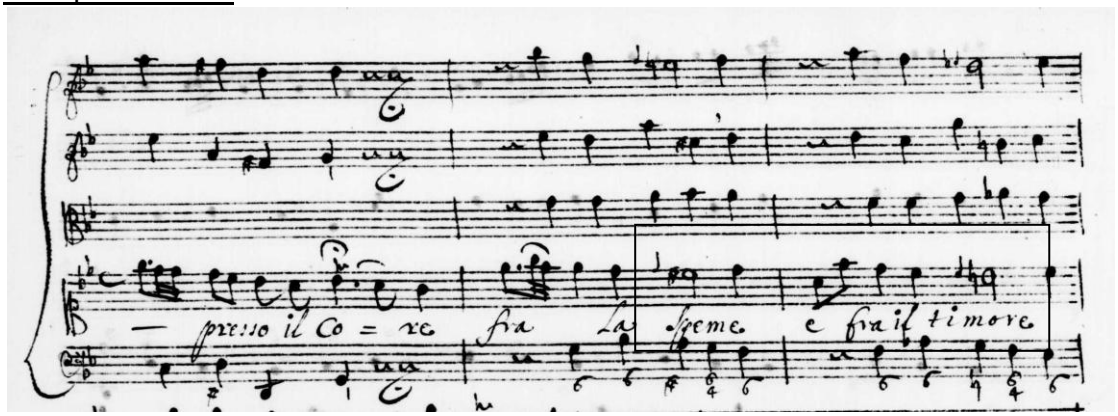


The four-part string texture with basso continuo never detracts from the vocal line and is often reduced further to a three-part texture, especially when there is a vocalization. The pathos in the aria is portrayed with a common and repeated use of appoggiaturas emphasizing the yearning quality on ‘langue’ (languishes), ‘speme’ (hope) and ‘timore’ (fear) (Exs.85 & 86).

Example 85. f.20r

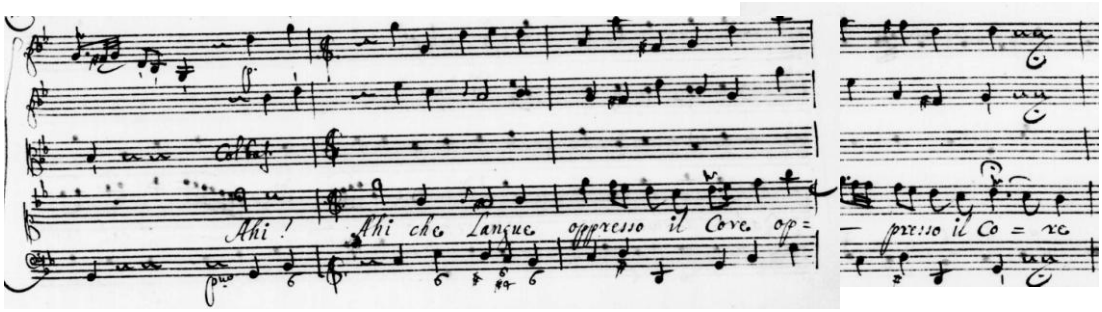


Example 86. f.20v



Although Robinson (1972, p.111) suggests that the minor key was used less than the major in the 1730s, of those used, G minor was common and here it seems utterly suited to the gentle sweetness of Arianna's hopes. After the opening ritornello in the tonic key of G minor Porpora set out his melodic material (A^1) in the first relatively short musical statement ending with a perfect cadence in the tonic key (Ex.87).

Example 87. f.20



The second musical statement is longer, introducing a vocalisation on 'd'aspettar' (expectation) and modulating to the relative major – B♭. After the ritornello the second paragraph (A^2) modulates back to the tonic by its end. The B section is considerably shorter than the A and, after beginning as expected in the relative major of B♭, finds its way to a new but related key, D minor. The final ritornello then is a shortened version of the opening ritornello, firmly reiterating G minor for the dal segno.

From the outset, however, the conventions of the da capo aria are stretched and the most obvious deviation is the introduction of a passage of recitative (f.23) between the B section and the ritornello preceding the A section repeat. In this way both librettist and

composer signalled their intention to give the audience not only the modern Italian style that they were expecting, but also to introduce unexpected elements to communicate the drama. At exactly the moment when the audience was confident of knowing what was coming, that is, the repeat of the aria's A section, a passage of recitative was introduced to advance the story within the aria (Ex.88).

Example 88. Pp.8 & 9

AHI ! che langue oppreſſo il core Fra la ſpeme e fra il timore Dal tormento d'aſpettar. L'un minnaccia, l'altra alletta ; Ma l'affanno di chi aſpetta Fa temer più che ſperar.	Aria
Se al valor di Teſeo propizio è il fato, Ecco Giovani illuſtri Rapida nave al voſtro ſcampo. I venti Già ſpirano a ſeconda Verſo l'Attica ſponda. Oh fieri inſopportabili momenti D'anima innamorata Che in periglio mortal del Ben ch' ell' ama, Teme il funeſto evento, e il lieto brama.	Recitative
Ahi che langue, &c.	Aria

AH! from the torture of expectation
How I languiſh! my heart oppreſs'd
'Twixt hope and fear:
The one flatters, the other threatens;
But the pain of expecting
Makes us fear more than hope.

If fate is propitious to the bravery of Theſeus, behold illuſtrious youths, a nimble veſſel for your eſcape. The Winds, already favourable blow for the Athenian ſhore.

Oh cruel inſupportable moments to th'enamour'd ſoul! the object of whoſe paſſion being in the utmoſt danger, fears the fatal event, yet hopes ſucceſs.

Arianna's aria is one of anguish as she waits to see if Teseo has triumphed over the Minotaur. The passage of recitative serves to underline her eagerness to escape as she draws attention to the ship ready to bear them all away from the island if Teseo is victorious. The change from soliloquy to one of addressing the youths also heightens the contrast between her personal torment and that of the youths, drawing attention to the idea that

they are all dependent on Teseo, but leaving the audience in no doubt as to Arianna's feelings for him. By addressing Teseo's companions she also validates their presence on the stage, making them part of the drama. However, Arianna cannot keep her thoughts away 'dal tormento d'aspettar' (from the torture of expectation) for long, even in the recitative, and she soon returns to this idea. The audience eventually received the expected da capo repeat, the effect intensified by its unexpected delay.

A further break with convention follows as Arianna does not then exit the stage at the end of her aria; scene ii follows immediately with the exciting entrance of Teseo, 'abbatte la gran porta' (beating down the great gate). The tension is therefore not released with Arianna's exit and the dramatic impact of Teseo's immediate and unexpected arrival is consequently increased.

Scene ii

Teseo beats down the great door with a club. Within we see a large courtyard and the Minotaur lying dead and outstretched in the entrance to the labyrinth.

Accompanied Recitative: Teseo, ff.24v-25r

Teseo's first entrance is exciting and designed for maximum impact. Four part strings play a short presto and forte ritornello with quick semiquaver figuration before Teseo sings, introducing him as a victorious man of action. Introducing accompanied recitative in an early scene is striking as it was more usually a device for a poignant or tragic moment used in the last scene of an act as used by Hasse or Jommelli (Robinson, 1972, p.84). This frenzy quickly gives way to a calmer and simpler passage.

Recitative: Teseo and Arianna, ff.25r-27r

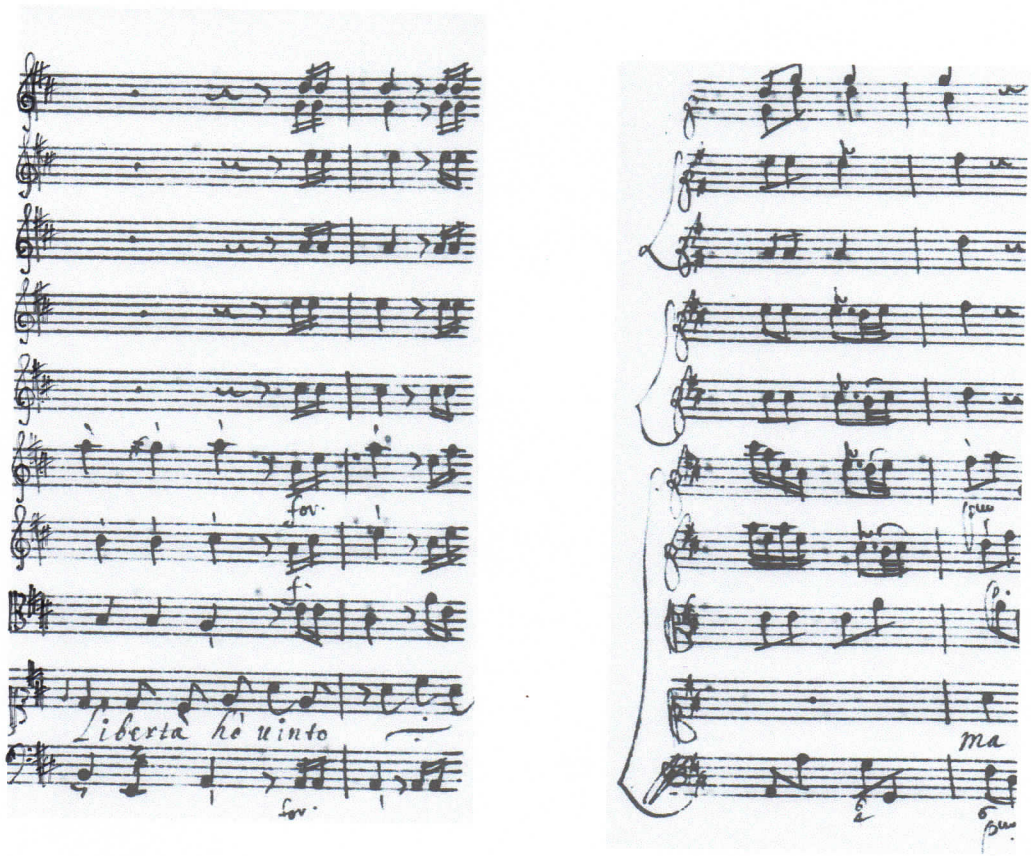
Teseo says that it is thanks to Arianna that his country is free from the Minotaur which he has just killed. He urges her to flee from the island with him.

Aria: Teseo, 'Hò vinto ma non già', ff.27r-34r

D major: allegro: 𝐜: horns, trumpets, oboes, violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

The opening ritornello begins after Teseo has proclaimed the first words of his aria – 'Hò vinto' (I have conquered). This is straight to the heart of the aria and what follows is triumphant and majestic, reinforced by the use of horns and trumpets in the warlike key of D major. The brass instruments do not detract from the voice but play in the ritornellos and interject at the end of phrases with a fanfare-like figure (Ex.89).

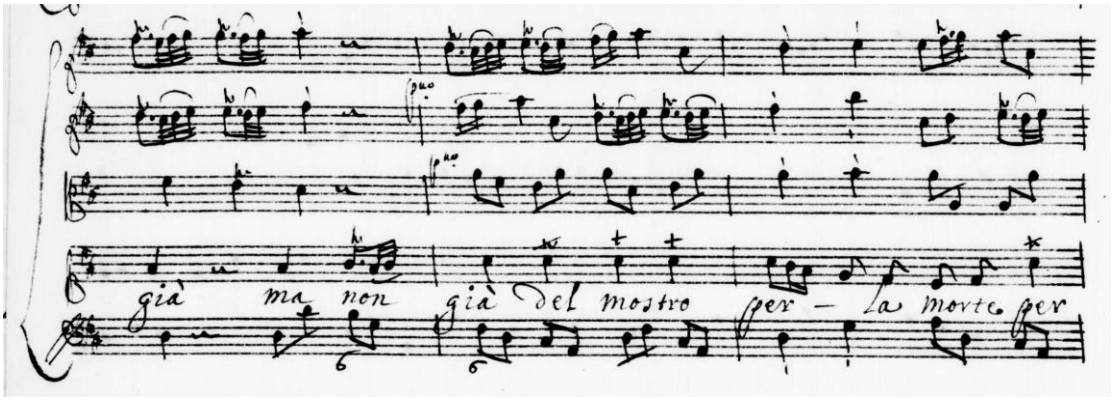
Example 89. f.29



The structure of this aria is unusual as it is in three sections, making it unique to this opera. This was surely driven by Porpora to clearly mark the change of thoughts expressed in each of the sections. There is a scant intermediate ritornello of half a bar between A^1 and A^2 and no concluding ritornello at the end of A^2 before the B section begins. This is unusual as prominent ritornellos had become more established by this time and, as the vocal lines in the arias grew longer and more demanding, the instrumental passages were useful to give sufficient rest to the singer. As a renowned singing teacher Porpora would have been well aware of his singers' capabilities – in this case Senesino – and, particularly at this early stage in the opera, he may have judged that long rests between the sections

were not necessary, being more concerned with portraying Teseo's excited emotions. The mood of the text is then successfully conveyed with the music running on and matching the quick flow of Teseo's thoughts. The first four lines (A) reflect his triumph and Teseo states what he has achieved using a repetitive crotchet figure which adds emphasis (Ex.90).

Example 90. f.28v



The next three lines (B) are where he expresses his love and there is a softening of tone. The brass instruments and oboes disappear and the metre changes to a gently pulsing $\frac{3}{4}$ time marked affettuoso and piano with a falling cantabile line. The following ritornello recalls that of the opening, reasserting the triumphant feeling. It is only now that the singer is able to show a little of his virtuosity (a foretaste of what is to come?) with vocalisations and widening leaps in the last three lines of text (C), as a reminder of his glorious victory over the Minotaur.

Scene iii

The portico of the temple of the God Libero on the island of Naxo. Piritoo and Onaro the high priest.

A scene change here signals a variation in the drama as two new characters are introduced. Rolli used this device of the scene change to help define the two characters of Arianna and Teseo as being together and set them apart from the others throughout Act I.

Recitative: Piritoo and Onaro, ff.34v-35v

This is the first scene that opens with a passage of recitative. Having immediately engaged the audience's attention at the beginning of scenes i and ii with an aria and accompanied recitative respectively, Porpora followed Rolli's text and introduced the next two characters through the more narrative medium of secco recitative. Although this was to be expected from many contemporary librettos, for example in Metastasio's texts, the London audience was used to Handel's operas beginning with an arioso or sinfonia (Dean, 1969, p.42). Piritoo's presence is explained through this passage as he sings of his search for Teseo in order to engage him in combat. This then leads into his aria.

Aria: Piritoo, 'Più l'impresa perigli n'appresta', ff.36r-39v

G major: vivace: $\frac{3}{8}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This aria has the widest tessitura in the opera stretching over two octaves and reaching down to an E. Porpora was clearly showcasing the talents of his famous bass, Montagnana, taking advantage of his wide range, astounding low notes and facility over long runs and wide leaps.

The aria has no structural or textural surprises to detract from the mellifluousness of the voice flowing along in this simile aria in triple time where Piritoo likens glory through adversity to an eagle soaring near the sun. The da capo is, unlike the preceding two arias, an exact repeat from the top of the aria and there is a conventional key structure; by the end of the A^1 section the key has modulated to the dominant, D major, and then moved back to the tonic, G major, by the end of the A^2 section. The only slight anomaly is that the B section not only starts in the relative minor, E minor, which is to be expected, but also ends in this key rather than moving to, for example, its dominant of B minor.

Scene iv

Antiope and the aforementioned [Onaro] followed by other Amazons.

Recitative: Onaro and Antiope, ff.39v-40r

Porpora again used simple recitative to introduce the fifth and last character, Antiope, who has come to Onaro to ask the fate of Teseo.

Accompanied Recitative: Onaro, ff.40v

Porpora used accompanied recitative here in an entirely different way from that of Teseo's triumphant entry in scene ii. The strings are sustained and marked piano and the dramatic effect is to create an unearthliness fitting for the god's ability to see what has happened. Onaro tells Antiope that the Minotaur has been slain and Teseo is on his way to Naxo.

Recitative: Antiope and Onaro, ff.40v-41r

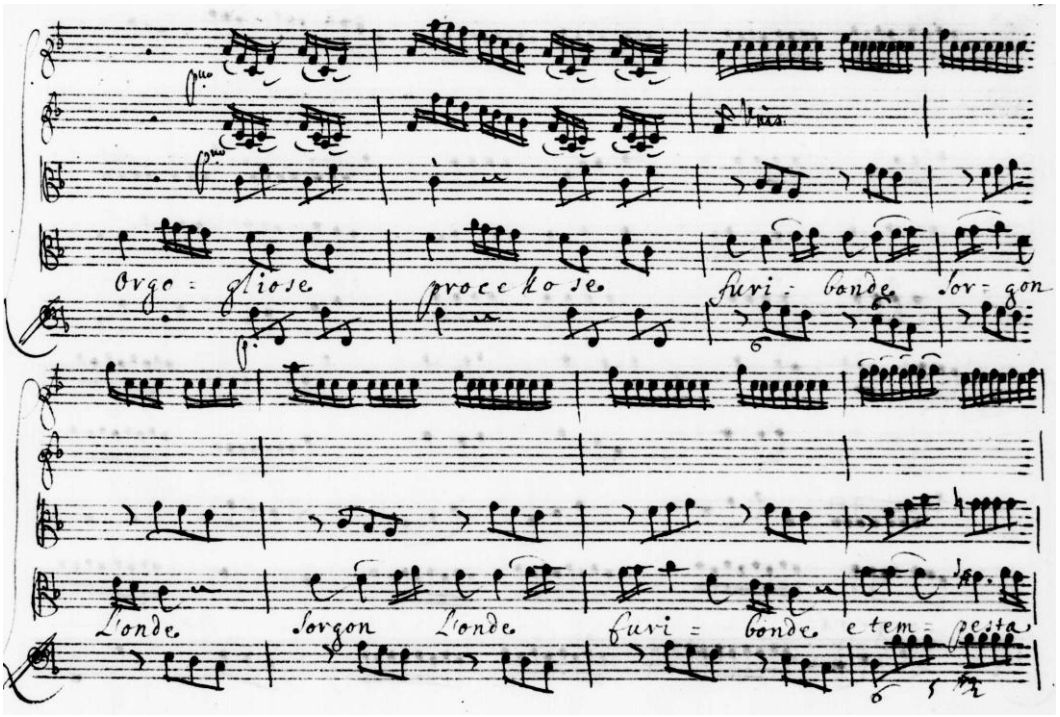
Antiope is pleased because of what Onaro has told her, but Onaro then says she is deceived.

Aria: Onaro, 'Orgogliose procellose', ff.41r-46v

F major: presto: 𝐜: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This is another simile aria to liken the tempestuous feelings in the lovers' hearts to the furious waves. Markstrom (2007, p.183) suggests that deriving the aria's materials from the imagery of the text was a favourite device of Porpora's and this can be seen here in the almost relentless semiquaver figuration, particularly in the violins, illustrating the 'furibonde sorgon l'onde' (rise on the furious waves). It is a *aria di bravura* with long vocalisations but even at the presto pace the characteristic 'modern' style is maintained in the balancing out of the stress of the beats. Example 91 shows how the natural accent is offset. There is also much repetition in the vocal line, both exact and sequential, emphasizing the confidence and status of this character from the outset.

Example 91. f.42r



Recitative: Antiope, f.47r

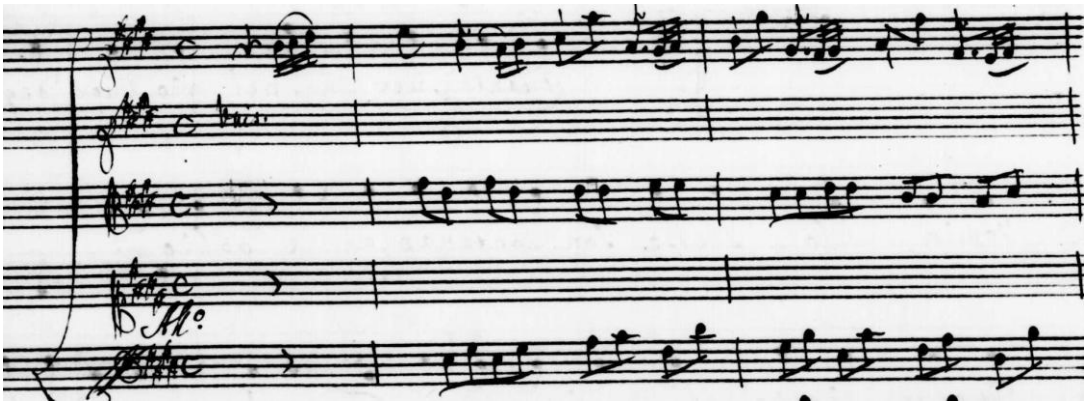
Onaro has made it abundantly clear to Antiope that there will be troubled times ahead. His aria has moved Antiope's state of mind from that of expectant hope to doubt and distrust which she explains in this passage.

Aria: Antiope, 'Pensati a vendicar', ff.47v-52v

E major: allegro: 𝐜: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This is a strangely jolly sounding aria for the affection that it initially expresses, that of revenge. Within a bar of the voice entering the focus is placed on this sentiment with a vocalisation on and repetition of 'vendicar' (revenge). However, this is tempered and balanced at the end of this first musical statement (A^1) with repetitions of and a vocalisation on 'aspetta' (wait). This emphasis is then repeated even more obviously in the subsequent A^2 section. The apparent carefree feeling of this aria in the allegro tempo and lightness portrayed by the frequent optimistic sounding upward leaps (Ex. 92), serves to illustrate the other sentiment expressed in the A section – that of 'la speranza' (hope).

Example 92. f.47v



The B section offers a contrast to the A with a move to the supertonic minor (F♯ minor), which draws attention to Antiope's feeling of `abbandonato amor' (abandoned love). Porpora's use of the supertonic minor is idiosyncratic and can be found frequently throughout his operas. It sharply contrasts with, and dilutes the effect of the major tonality and here, highlights Antiope's desperate anguish in this section.[5] With the focus on these conflicting affections throughout, Porpora consistently reduced the accompaniment to a very thin texture. The violins play frequently in unison and the violas and even the bass instruments are silent at the beginning of each vocal entry.

Scene v

A wood near the coast. Teseo and Arianna with a few followers having escaped from the storm in a rowing boat.

Another scene change allows a dramatic shift back to the two lovers – Teseo and Arianna.

Recitative: Teseo and Arianna, ff.53r-54r

After they have thanked the gods for their safety Teseo says he will leave and find where they should go while Arianna rests. She entreats him to return quickly.

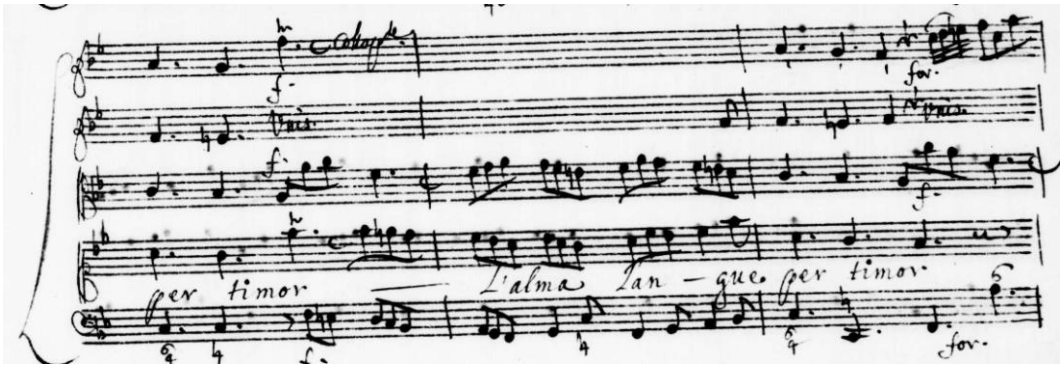
[5] Markstrom (2007, p.131) remarks that the 'modulation to the supertonic minor in major-mode arias was regularly employed by Porpora to create chiaroscuro in arias of intense emotions, as if to temper the new dominance of the major mode.'

Aria: Arianna, 'Torna presto a consolarmi', ff.54v-60v

B♭ major: andante: $\frac{12}{8}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

A flowing and cantabile melody which is calm and measured reflects Arianna's current state of mind. She is eager for Teseo to return and is sure that he will. The metre of $\frac{12}{8}$ was less common after the 1720s but when used was associated with a simple, affecting and pastoral style which is entirely apt here as Arianna calls upon nature to liken herself and her beloved to the sun and a flower (Robinson, 1972, p.134). The modern idiom is retained in the string writing with the violins playing almost entirely in unison, very often *colla parte* and in the extension of the final phrase of a statement (Ex.93).

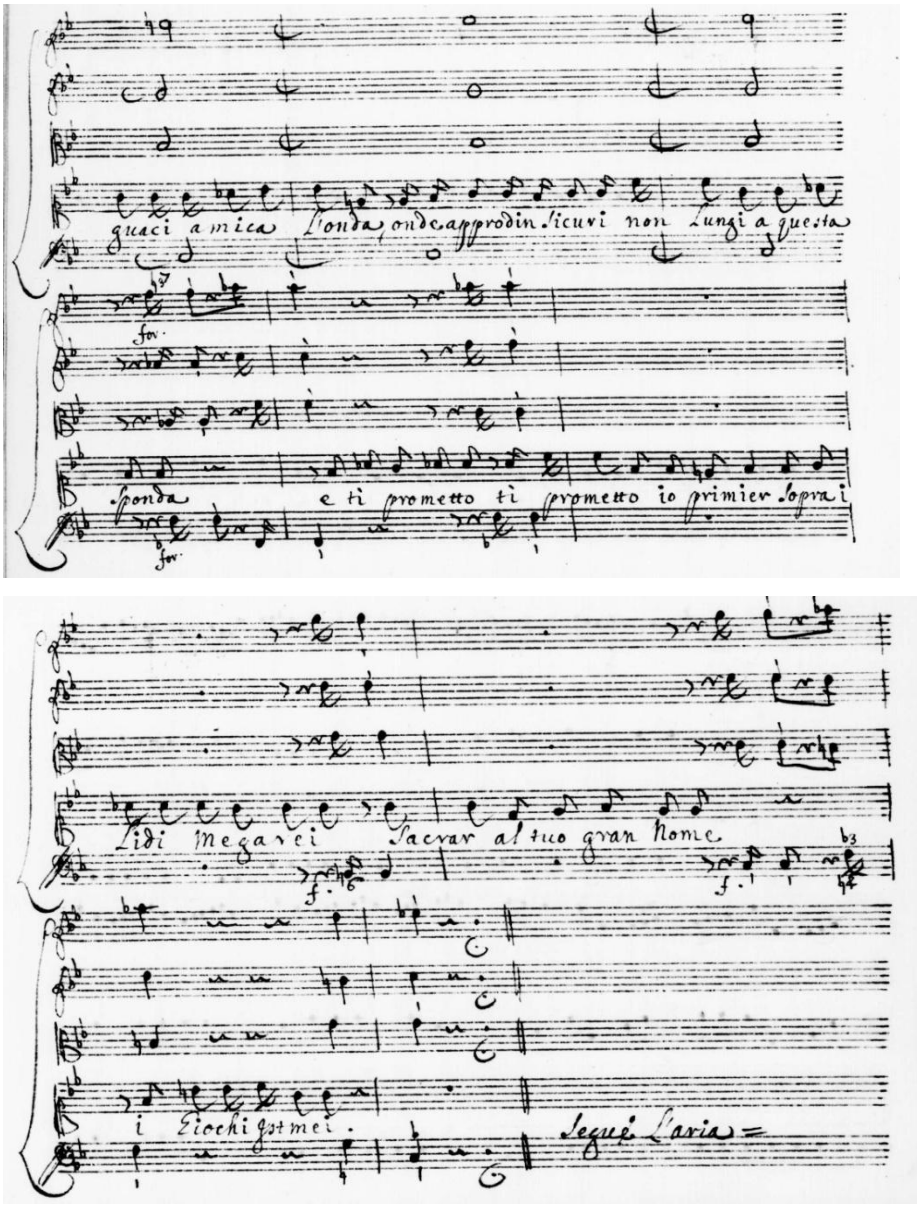
Example 93. f.56r



Accompanied Recitative: Teseo, ff.61r-62r

After three conventional passages of secco recitative followed by an aria, Porpora revisited accompanied recitative for dramatic effect as Teseo calls upon the god of the sea to keep his followers safe. Sustained strings give way to more urgent interjections emphasizing Teseo's promises to consecrate the Ithmian games to the god (Ex.94).

Example 94. ff.61v-62r

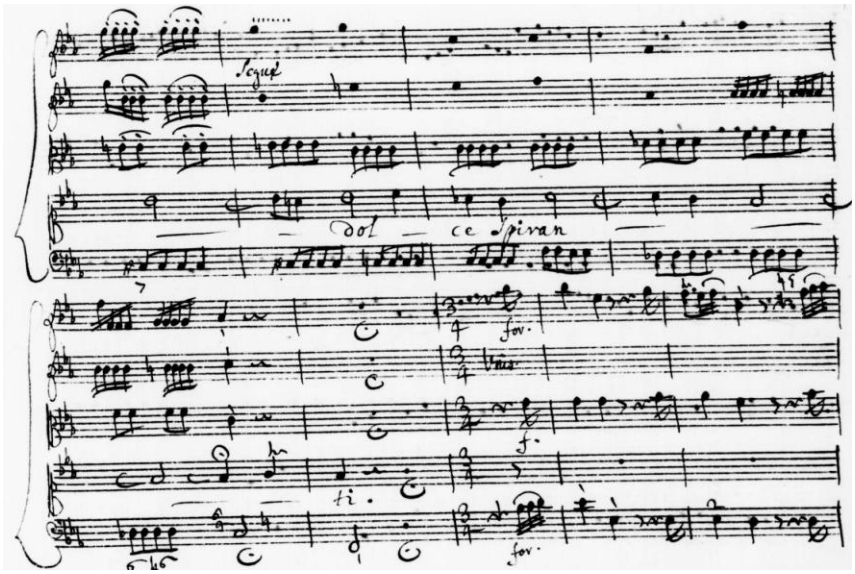


Aria: Teseo, 'Nume che reggi l'mare, ff.62v-67v

E♭ major: andante: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

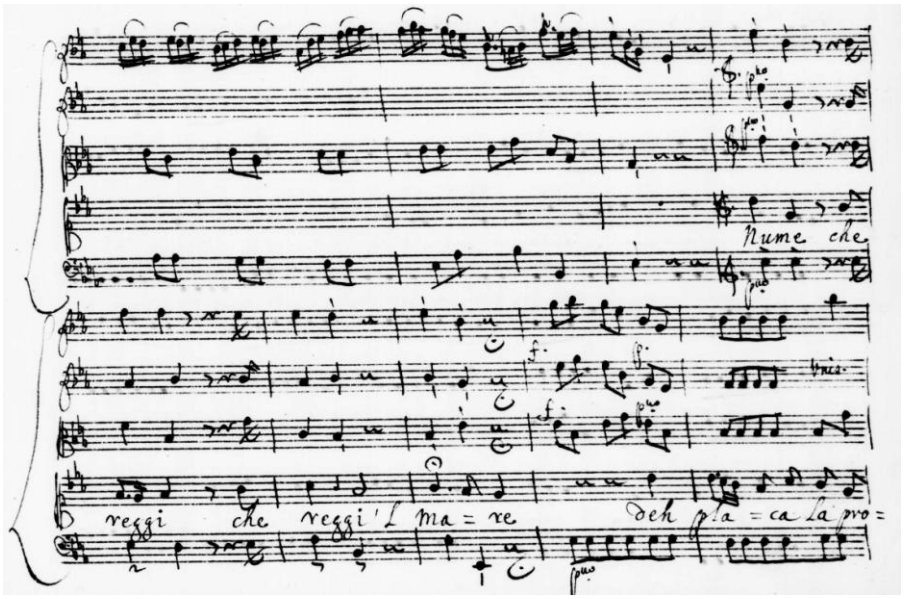
This aria gave the singer (Senesino) a chance to display his technical ability with long vocalizations requiring impeccable control and facility over the semiquaver runs. In the B section, Porpora used the imagery of the breezes, 'dolce spirante' (sweetly breathing) in the sustained vocal line (Ex.95).

Example 95. f.67r



Unusually, the opening of this aria has a hesitant beginning, with two pauses coming in the first two bars of the ritornello. Teseo matches this with his own pause after only four bars (Ex.96). This does not portray Teseo as hesitant and nervous however; with the homophonic accompaniment and short emphatic phrases he appears bold and confident.

Example 96. f.63r



Scene vi

The temple portico. Antiope, Piritoo and then Onaro.

The first scene involving three characters comes as Act I builds towards its climax. This scene alternates between passages of secco and accompanied recitative, before ending with Antiope's aria. It is a skilful intensifying and releasing of tension with the expectation of a full force *aria di bravura* from Antiope in culmination. This was not what either Rolli or Porpora provided however, as this is not the last scene of the act.

Recitative: Piritoo and Antiope, f.68

Piritoo offers to avenge Antiope and punish 'un mancator' (traitor), that is, Teseo. Antiope says she still hopes.

Accompanied Recitative: Onaro and Antiope, ff.68v-69v

Rising and falling arpeggios immediately suggest the furious movement of the waves caused by Neptune's wrath 'all' alte nubi e al baratro profondo' (to the high clouds and the deep abyss).

The change now to Recitative (ff.69v-70r) highlights Onaro's aside. He shows no compassion for Antiope's distress, suggesting to her that not only is Teseo about to perish on the sea, but also that he is faithless. Onaro then exits. Piritoo is horrified by the unfolding situation before him and Antiope's anguish mounts until her heightened emotional state is underlined by another passage of Accompanied Recitative (ff.70v-71r). She spits out her accusations punctuated by the strings and a step-wise ascending bass line which increases the tension. The final passage of Recitative (f.71) in this section sees Piritoo attempting to calm Antiope but she dismisses him as never having been in love or he would understand her pain.

Aria: Antiope, 'No, non amasti mai', ff.72r-76r

F major: allegro: $\frac{12}{8}$: violins1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

This is another allegro aria for Antiope but now in $\frac{12}{8}$ not $\mathbf{c}$, demonstrating a different facet of her love for Teseo. In her first aria Antiope sings of hope, but in this aria, that emotion has given way to fear of the unknown, as she now suspects the worst, rather than hopes for the best. The many repetitions of short phrases from the beginning reflect Antiope's agitated state of mind, reinforced by a short ritornello of two and a half bars

between A^1 and A^2. Nor are there any long vocalizations in this aria, just one short melisma near the beginning.

There is an effective switch to a minor tonality (C minor) in A^1 on the words 'dà più dolor' (gives more pain). This key change is not on the first utterance of this phrase though, but on the fourth, followed immediately by a fifth and sixth reiteration giving Antiope's grief tremendous emphasis. This is highlighted even further by a silent bass line here.

Unusually the B section begins in F minor (the tonic minor), a key, says Mattheson, (p.102, quoted in Buelow 1970), that will at times 'provoke the listener to horror or a shudder' which is apt here, as Antiope sings of 'spettro d'orrore' (the spectre of horror) and 'mostro odioso di crudeltà' (hateful monster of cruelty). Although the B section's metre changes to $\frac{3}{4}$, Porpora continues with the short phrases. The strings play almost relentless semiquavers with wide descending leaps suggesting Antiope's ceaseless plunge into constant despair – 'sempre in terrore sempre in affanno' (ever in terror ever in pain).

Scene vii

A wood near the beach. Arianna, then Teseo and then Onaro.

Cavatina: Arianna, 'Il tuo dolce mormorio', ff.76v-82r

D minor: lento: $\frac{3}{4}$: horns, flutes, oboes, violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

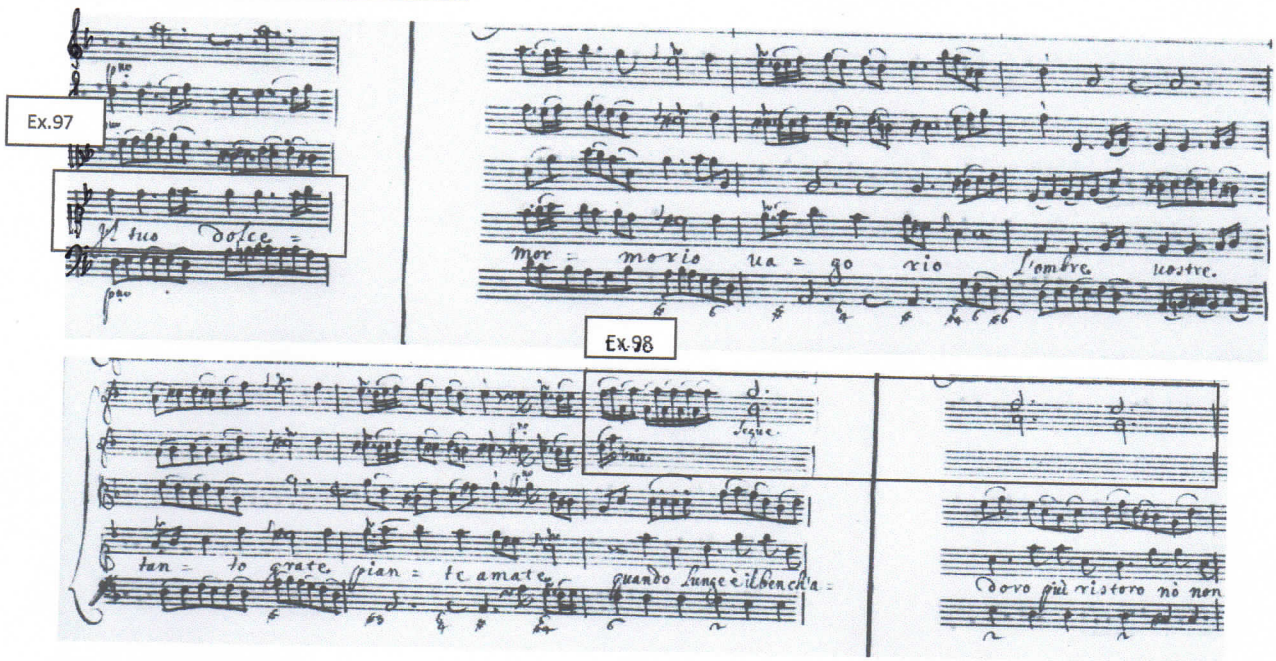
A break with convention is initially perceived at the beginning of this scene as Rolli followed the aria at the end of scene vi with another solo lyrical form here. As discussed in Chapter Four, Martello (1715, Weiss, 1980) warned against ending a scene with an exit aria and then beginning the next with an entrance aria. This, however, is exactly what Rolli wrote, as the scene change from the temple back to the wood necessitates the exit of Antiope and the entrance of Arianna.[6] Yet the contrast is maintained as this is not merely following one da capo exit aria with another. Arianna's cavatina at the beginning of scene vii (the final scene of Act I) is a short lyrical item with two-sections based on the same material and with the same text. A B section would normally follow but is interrupted by Teseo's appearance. This shorter, non da capo cavatina is less demanding technically and

[6] See also Chapter Three.

conventionally does not require Arianna to exit. Dramatically her character is required to remain on stage to provide the climax to the act which is the duet between herself and Teseo.

This affecting cavatina makes use of flutes for the first time in the opera and also horns and oboes in the ritornellos to enhance the beautiful picture of the natural world that Arianna paints at the beginning. The grace and balance is again achieved with an emphasis given to the second beat in the opening phrase (Ex.97).

Examples 97 and 98. ff.77v-79r



Porpora contrasted the soft peace of Arianna's surroundings, depicted with a mostly gentle quaver movement and sustained pedal notes in the bass, with semiquaver movement across wide intervals in the violins to show her agitation 'quando lungo è il ben che adoro' (when the love I adore is far away) (Ex.98).

Recitative: Teseo, Arianna and Onaro, ff.82v-83r

This recitative passage immediately follows Arianna's aria with no chord change as Teseo announces that the ship is safe. He and Arianna are preparing to set off when Onaro appears to warn them of a greater storm.

Accompanied Recitative: Teseo and Onaro, ff.83r-84v

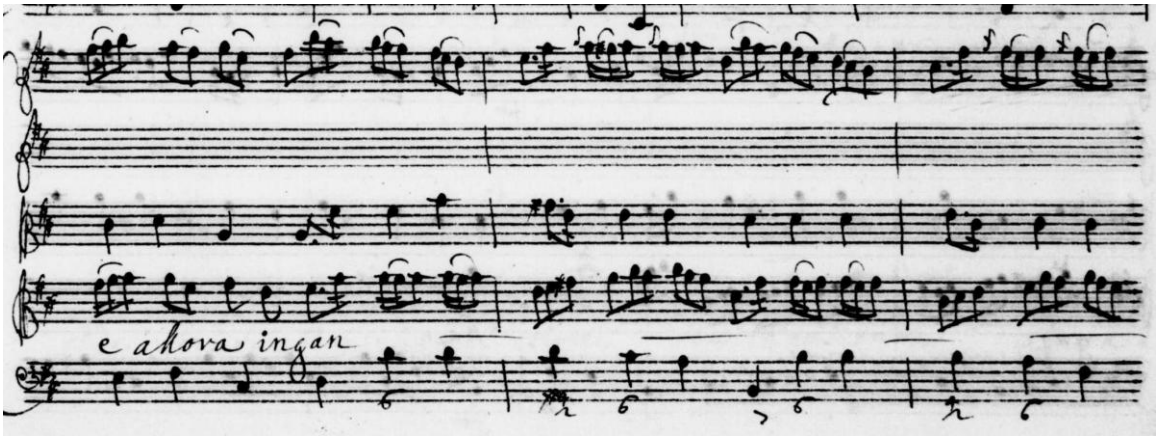
This is the sixth passage of accompanied recitative in this Act and, again, it is used at an 'unearthly' moment. As an aside Teseo sings of the horror emanating from Onaro and how it chills him. ('(Orrore insolito/Sento partir dal suo sembiante, e freddo/Scorrermi per le vene.)' '(Unusual horror darts from his aspect, and coldness spreads itself thro' all my veins.)'). This chill is depicted by all the strings playing a soft and menacing tremolo. Onaro continues with accompanied recitative but now the strings punctuate his imperious and warning words.

Aria: Onaro, 'D'aura gioconda', ff.84v-89v

D major: allegro: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

In this aria the violins have an opportunity to show a little more independence than has been seen previously. The violins usually play a supporting role for the voice, occasionally bringing out one of the figures from the melody, but these are generally fleeting moments and the main melodic and rhythmic interest quickly returns to the voice. Initially in this aria the violins play with the voice but at the melisma on 'inganna' (deceives) the unison violins and the voice swap the two phrases (Ex.99) and share the interest for 14 bars until the end of the section. This occurs again in the A^2 section. This additional instrumental interest lifts what is essentially a fairly standard aria.

Example 99. f.86r



Recitative: Arianna and Teseo, ff.90r-91r

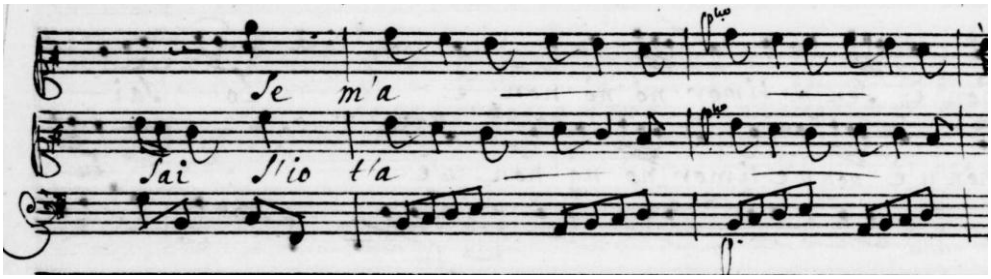
Teseo tries to reassure Arianna in a moving passage of recitative, entreating her to think only of delights ('Pensa solo di diletti.').

Duet: Arianna and Teseo, 'In amoroso petto', ff.91v-100r

G major: vivace: 𝐜 : violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

The conventional ending to Act I involves Teseo and Arianna proclaiming their love for each other. There is a suggestion of the trouble to come, however, as Arianna sings that true love is not 'senza timor' (without fear) and Teseo tells her to banish that 'van sospetto' (vain suspicion). After the A^1 section, which Arianna first sings and then Teseo, the voices alternate with their own text in the A^2 section before joining together in a favourite rhythm used by Porpora which adds to the lilt of the melody (Ex.100).

Example 100. f.96v



This final scene is a firm reminder of the opening key from the overture – that of D minor swiftly followed by D major – with Arianna's D minor cavatina, Teseo's D major aria and concluding with their duet in the subdominant key of G major.

R.M.22.m.30. ACT II

Scene i

Antiope alone and then Arianna.

In striking contrast to the beginning of Act I the second act begins with Antiope alone.

Recitative: Antiope, f.1

Antiope sings that she will carve a message on the trees to put doubt into Arianna's mind about Teseo's fidelity.

Arietta: Antiope, 'Non fidarti o core amante', ff.1v-2v

F major: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This arietta is 22 bars long, 10 of which consist of the opening ritornello and two of the closing ritornello with no modulation of key. There are only two lines of text which Antiope carves into two trees saying do not trust someone who is faithless elsewhere ('Non fidarti, o core amante,/di chi già mancò di fè'). Emphasis is given to 'manco' (broken) using this imagery for an upward leap of a sixth both times it is sung here.

Recitative: Antiope and Arianna, ff.2v-3r

On Arianna's arrival Antiope hides. Arianna is awaiting Teseo's return when she sees the carving.

Arietta: Arianna, 'Non fidarti o core amante', ff.3r-4v

G major: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

As Arianna first reads the carving the opening two lines are a sequential repetition of Antiope's arietta, a tone higher and without the opening ritornello (see below). There is a modulation to the tonic minor key (G) with new words as Arianna considers that the advice may be for her. It is the same melody but it takes on a darker quality now in the minor mode. This statement finishes in D major and subsequently leads to a repetition of the original two lines of text, again in G major. This time, however, it has taken on a new significance as Arianna applies the advice to herself and Teseo.

Recitative: Arianna, ff.4v-5r

Arianna considers whether Teseo is unfaithful and whether the carving was made by an envious woman:

'Ma farà vero ancor, che il mio Teseo	'But can it be certain, that my Theseus
A me dasse ina se mancata altrui?	has given me a faith, which has been

Qualche invidiosa Pecatrice forse Per tormentar la sua rival, ciò scrisse.'	false to another? perhaps, some envious female has wrote this, to torment her rival.'

Arietta: Arianna and Antiope, 'Non fidarti o core amante', ff.5r-6r

F major: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This is not really a duet as the two voices only sing one after the other; Arianna first and then Antiope who reveals herself to Arianna at this point. Again, there is no opening ritornello and this is an exact repeat of the first utterance of the two lines of text carved in the trees, sung originally by Antiope. The repetition of the original key of F major, now sung by Arianna, shows the idea being firmly entrenched in her mind. Immediately following Arianna's reiteration of this, Antiope reinforces the idea by affirming that the advice is indeed for Arianna, with the second half of A^1 using text from A^2. The following chart indicates this inter-related musical sequence.

Arietta	Ritornello	F major	Antiope
	A^1		
	Ritornello		
Recitative			Antiope then Arianna
Arietta	A^1	G major	Arianna
	Ritornello		
	A^2	G minor → D major	
	Ritornello	G major	
	A^1		
	Ritornello		
Recitative			Arianna
Arietta	A^1	F major	Arianna
	A^1 (A^2 text)		Antiope
	Ritornello		

Recitative: Arianna and Antiope, f.6

Arianna expresses surprise that the warning comes from Antiope who answers that she herself has been betrayed. There is a neat symmetry of structure in this scene with passages of recitative before the first, after the last, and between each appearance of the arietta. The scene is then brought to a conclusion with a full da capo aria.

Aria: Antiope, 'Già lo sò', ff.6v-11v

A major: allegro: 𝐜 : violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

Although this is the third allegro aria for Antiope it shows a new facet to her character. In this aria she is angry and vengeful and very sure that Teseo is false. Throughout the aria short bursts of syllabic text are repeated for emphasis. The first line of text is exceptionally short – 'già lo sò' – and Porpora used this to strong effect by repeating the 'lo sò' (I know) three times and then twice more after the second line. Antiope forcefully assures Arianna of Teseo's deceit at the end of A^1 with a vocalization and repetitions of 't'ingannerà' (will deceive you) and still more so at the end of A^2 with a longer vocalization and even more repetitions.[7]

Scene ii

Arianna and then Teseo.

Recitative: Arianna and Teseo, ff.12r-13r

As Arianna anguishes over her dilemma her flow of recitative is momentarily interrupted by an unusual minim on an heartfelt 'oh'. She then continues until Teseo enters, telling her that the sea is once again stormy. Teseo then notices that Arianna has turned from him and asks why.

Aria: Arianna, 'Và mancator di fe', ff.13r-16r

F major: presto: 𝐜 : violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

This angry *aria di bravura* follows immediately after Teseo's recitative. There is no opening ritornello and Arianna tells him to 'Và' (Go), with no accompaniment. The familiar characteristic in Porpora's music of the natural stress on 'parti' (begone) being offset by its placing on the second beat in A^1 and the fourth in A^2.

At the end of this A paragraph Arianna breaks into Recitative (f.16r), instructing Teseo to read what is carved on the trees and think of himself. After this there is a divergence between the Italian libretto and manuscript score, and the English libretto. The Italian text has an instruction for Arianna to 'parte' (exit), leaving Teseo to read the carving

[7] The unusually large-scale structure of this scene has been discussed in Chapter Three.

and then sing a passage of recitative. The English libretto and score, however, do not have this instruction for Arianna to exit. She stays while Teseo now sings the arietta associated with the tree carvings in scene i.

Arietta: Teseo, 'Non fidarti o core amante', ff.16r-17r

C major: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This is an explicit instance of recall where Teseo sings the same two lines which were first sung by Antiope in scene i when she carved them into the trees. The key is now C major and the opening ritornello is shortened; the audience knows what is coming. After a two-bar ritornello this arietta moves into a third section - A^3 - in D minor, Porpora's favoured supertonic minor key. Here, Teseo asks Arianna if she would rather believe the trees than him and this section ends unresolved on chord V as Arianna responds suddenly with 'Perfido' (traitor).

Continuation of:

Aria: Arianna, 'Và mancator di fe', ff.17r-18v

This text is not in the Italian version of the libretto (it is in the English version and the score).[8] The full structure of this aria, with the passage of recitative and Teseo's arietta inserted between the sections, is shown below.

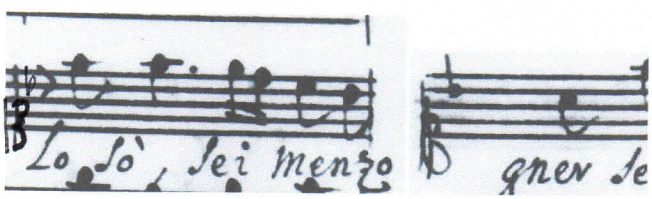
Aria	A^1	F major → C major	Arianna
	Ritornello	C major	
	A^2	F major	
	Ritornello	↓	
Recitative			Arianna
Arietta	Ritornello	C major	Teseo
	A^1	↓	
	Ritornello	↓	
	A^3	D minor	
Aria (cont.)	B	D minor	Arianna
	Ritornello	F major	
	D.S. from second 'Và' in A^1 of aria		

[8] See Chapter Three for further details of this discrepancy between the Italian and English versions of the libretto.

The tonal structure clearly links the B section in the relative minor (D minor) of the tonic key (F major) to the A section, and there is also similar rhythmic material to link the two sections (Ex.101).

Example 101. Section A^1, f.13r

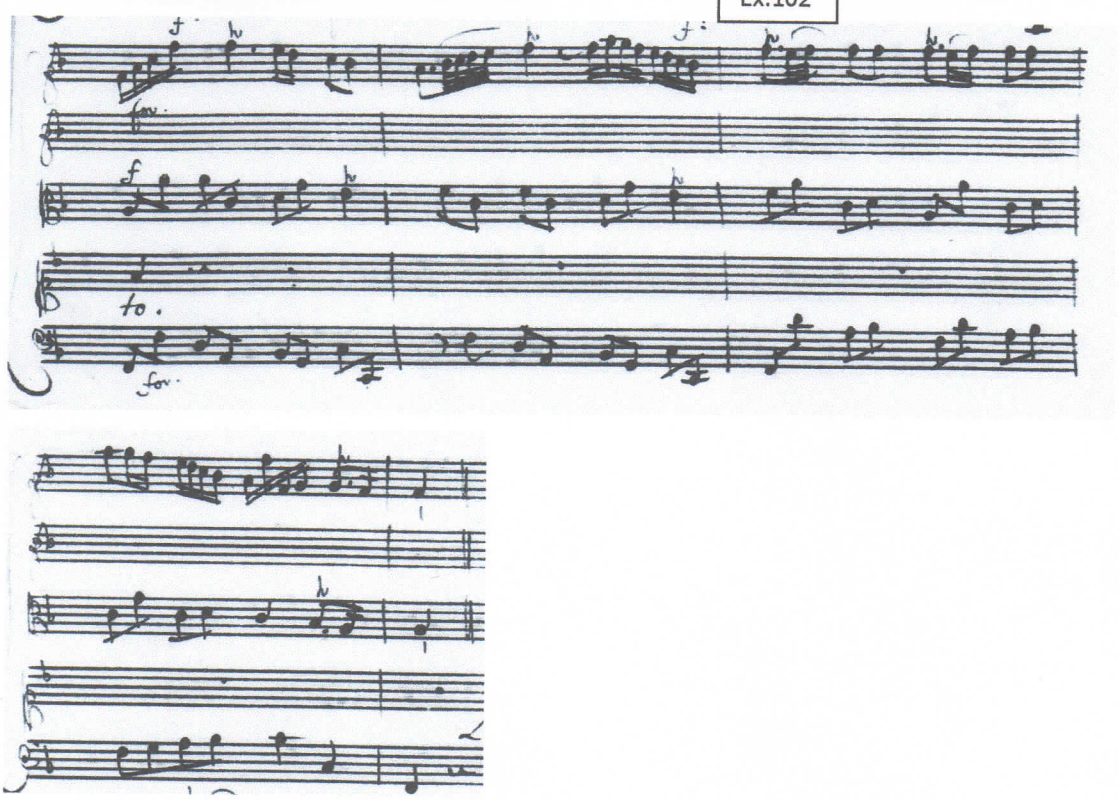
Section B, f.17r



The ritornello at the end of A^2 is also taken up at the end of the B section (Ex.102).

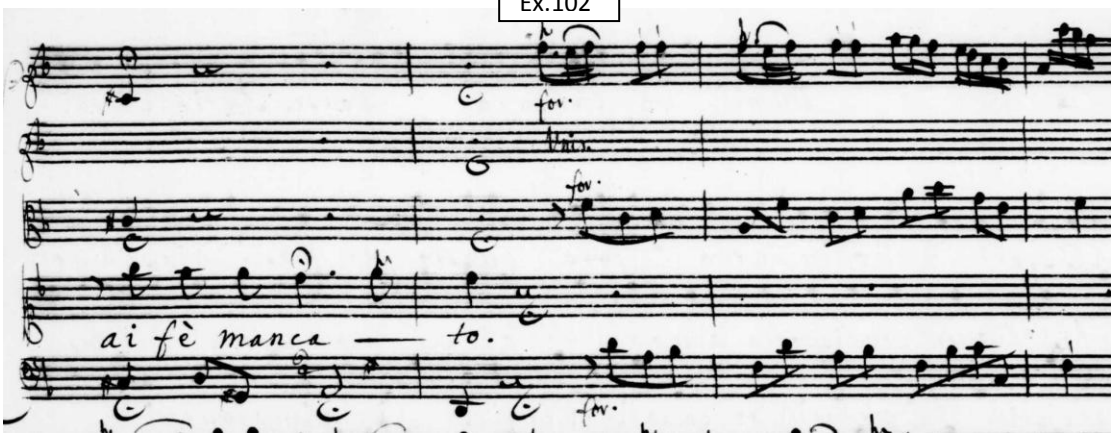
Example 102. After section A^2, ff.15v-16r

Ex.102



After section B, f.18v

Ex.102



Dramatically, the sudden continuation of Arianna's aria after the relative calm of Teseo's arietta is effective as it portrays Arianna's unrestrained fury as she rails at Teseo's infidelity. It is at this point in the English libretto that Arianna has an 'exit' direction.

Recitative: Teseo, f.19r

A passage of recitative, unusually, ends the scene. This only happens once elsewhere in the opera (Act II, scene iv), the usual scene ending being an exit aria. This draws attention to Teseo expressing his dismay that Arianna reproaches him and his alarm that Antiope is near. He plans to flee immediately but this expectation is immediately thwarted by the appearance of Piritoo who is still looking for Teseo.

Scene iii

Piritoo, Teseo and then Antiope.

Recitative: Piritoo, Teseo and Antiope, ff.19v-21r

In this relatively long passage of recitative a friendship is forged between Teseo and Piritoo. Although this relationship appears somewhat contrived here, the story has its precedent in classical literature and would not have been surprising to the audience.[9] Teseo then has to use all his wiles to placate Antiope. The words 'giurasti' (you swore) and 'giurai' (I swore) are highlighted, the former by Antiope as she ascends to her highest pitch

[9] See p.82.

in this passage and the latter by Teseo who repeats 'giurai', rather giving the effect that he is hesitant and unsure.

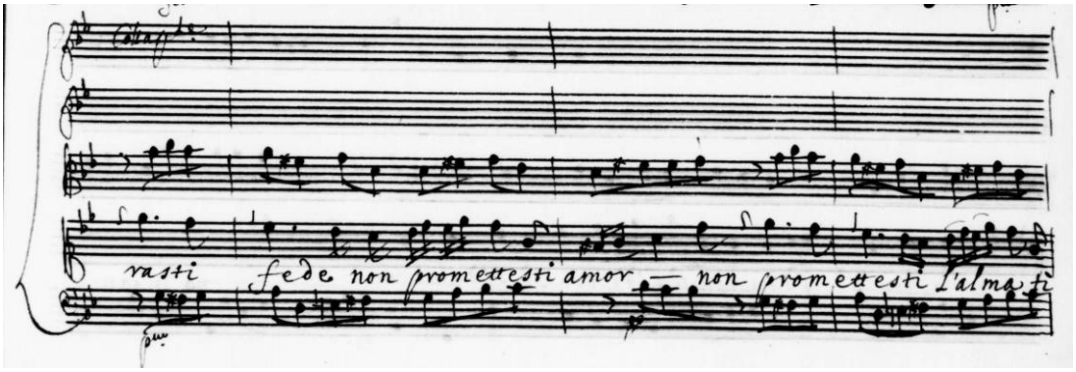
Aria: Antiope, 'Giurasti fede', ff.21v-27v

G minor: andante spiritoso: 𝐜 : violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

The second appearance of G minor for an aria key is to again express the dual agonies of hope and fear. The first occurrence was Arianna's opening aria (Act I, scene i) when she was hoping for Teseo's safe arrival, but fearful in case of tragedy. Here in this aria, Antiope she is hopeful that Teseo will remain faithful to her as he has sworn, but is fearful that he cannot be believed.

The many appoggiaturas, reflecting the pathos in this aria, resolve both upwards and downwards, preserving the all-important balance (Ex.103), but within the style Porpora closely matched the music to the text.

Example 103. f.24r



The semicolon at the end of line two is shown with a pause in the music as Antiope stops to consider that Teseo has not sworn love to her ('Giurasti fede/Non promettesti amor;' 'Thou'st sworn fidelity/But not love;'). The following rising musical sequence matches her increasing anguish as she avows that her heart believes him, culminating in dramatic leaps as she says she cannot depend on him. The bass line often has a 𝄾♩♫ rhythm that suggests hesitation but also urgency, mirroring the uncertainty of Antiope's thoughts.

Recitative: Teseo and Piritoo, ff.27v-28r

Teseo asks Piritoo to follow Antiope and detain her at the temple so that he can talk to Arianna.

Aria: Piritoo, 'A contesa di due Belle', ff.28r-33v

A major: allegro: ¢ : violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

The style of this aria is unique to *Arianna in Naxo*. It is contrapuntal with a fugato style and has a much thicker texture than any other aria, expanding to five parts when the voice enters, only changing to homophony at the cadence points. Montagnana's rich bass voice would have been able to compete with this thick texture and, as Porpora was thought to have been Montagnana's teacher (Dean, 2009), he would have been fully aware of the remarkable capabilities of this powerful voice. Although the range employed is not as wide as in his first aria (E to g^{1} in 'Più l'impresa perigli n'appresta', I.iii, and A to e^{1} here), there are many long vocalisations, repeated and sustained notes showing further facets of Montagnana's skill. There is little repetition of the text in this aria and the interest lies in the skill of the singer and the innate beauty of the music rather than the thoughts it expresses.

The contrapuntal style employed here could be seen as an attempt by Porpora to show that he could successfully compose in a variety of styles. Markstrom (2007, p.134) remarks that fugal arias can be found elsewhere in Porpora's operas, giving as an example 'Punirò quell cor' from *Didone abbandonata* (1725) which is a fully-fledged fugue.

Scene iv

Arianna and Teseo.

Recitative: Arianna and Teseo, ff.34r-35v

Arianna tells Teseo that he must take her back to Crete as she would rather face her father's fury than stay with him. Teseo explains that he is honour bound to Antiope because of the help she gave to him in defeating the Amazons, but he will soon be free of this obligation. Teseo's increasing desperation to hear Arianna's answer is shown in the

rising sequential phrase, unusual in recitative, 'che mi rispondi?' (what do you answer me?) (Ex.104).

Example 104. f.35v

Aria: Teseo, 'Un altr' ogetto può', ff.36r-40r

E major: affettuoso: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This simple and affecting aria moves along steadfastly, matching Teseo's constancy. This is depicted in a bass line that moves mostly in crotchets, occasionally joined by the violas, over a pedal. There are no long vocalizations to embellish the melody or detract from Teseo's affirmations of love. These declarations are recalled later in Arianna's ariettas in Act III, scenes iv and v (see below).

Recitative: Arianna, f.40

This is the second scene which ends with recitative. A very short passage from Arianna expresses her agitation at being parted from Teseo. This is interrupted by the arrival of Antiope and Onaro at the beginning of scene v.

Scene v

Recitative: Antiope, Onaro and Arianna, ff.40v-41v

Antiope is relying on Onaro who tells her to trust him. Arianna asks Onaro if she should go to Athens with Teseo.

Aria: Onaro, 'Quì lontano di timore', ff.41v-45v

G major: allegro: $\frac{3}{8}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas, basso continuo

In this aria Onaro tells Arianna that she will find faithful love if she remains on Naxo, but much grief if she goes elsewhere. In similar fashion to his previous two arias Onaro is again insinuating doubt and trouble into somebody's thoughts. As in his aria in Act I, scene vii, the music is conventional, presenting here a calmness and suggesting the measured helpful advice that Arianna has asked of Onaro. The text and the music together combine, therefore, to show the duplicity of Onaro's character as he is really threatening Arianna with what will happen if she leaves, and is also telling the audience of his love for her. All this is presented in a simple, gently-flowing aria that belies the threat and intention behind the words.

Recitative: Antiope and Arianna, ff.45v-46v

Arianna does not know what to do. An interesting reference to Onaro's hidden meaning is in this passage as Arianna says 'non sempre il Nume risponde co'l suo labbro' (the gods do not always speak with their lips). Antiope exits leaving Arianna in her wretched state.

Accompanied Recitative: Arianna, ff.46v-49r

Having written passages of accompanied recitative in five of the seven scenes in Act I, starting in scene ii, Porpora delayed writing such a passage in Act II until scene v. This helps to maximize its impact as it is being used here as a device to illustrate Arianna's unsettled state of mind. In Act II there have hitherto been other structural deviances from the normal pattern of recitative and aria (the repetition of the arietta in scenes i and ii and the extended aria form in scene ii) to arrest and maintain the audience's attention.

Once again Arianna cries 'misera!' (wretch that I am). This is the same exclamation that she cries at the beginning of her passage of recitative in Act II, scene ii, as she again does not know who to believe and what to do. The rhythm for 'misera' remains the same, ♪. 𝅘𝅥𝅯♩ , but her anguish has now increased and this heightened tension is reflected as this emotion is now expressed in a passage of accompanied recitative. In these 14 lines of Arianna's fluctuating thoughts she laments her fate and asks what she should do. She wants to follow her love, but he is bound to another and the gods have tried to dissuade her. The short opening adagio ritornello ends with a stark descending C minor scale in the

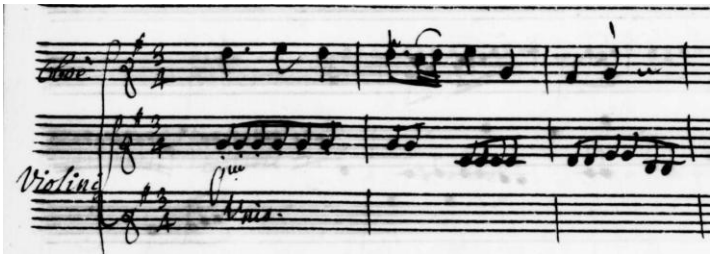
violins. Tremolo strings illustrate her fears and contrast with the sustained string chords when she thinks of her love. The final two lines are marked presto, punctuated by the strings, as she is tormented by jealousy. The passage comes full circle as she ends asking 'che faro?' (what shall I do) returning to the original key of G major which she used when asking the same question at the start of this passage. The music dramatically projects the text as Arianna's thoughts vacillate but ultimately return to where she began.

Aria: Arianna, 'Miseri sventurati', ff.49v-59v

G major: andante: $\frac{3}{4}$: solo oboe, violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

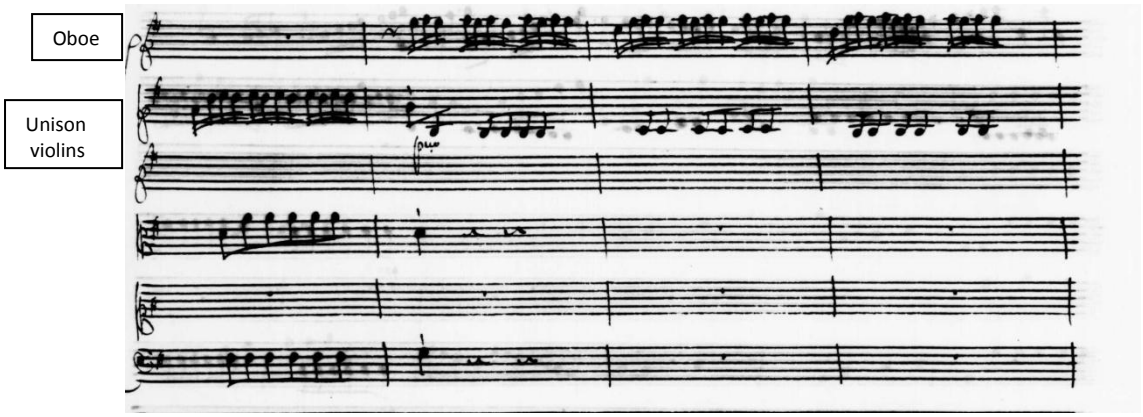
This aria contrasts with the preceding agitated accompanied recitative and portrays Arianna's sadness and feeling of helplessness through an effective use of instrumentation. The strings never detract from the cantabile vocal line, which is supported and complemented by the obbligato oboe. The rare use of a solo instrument to feature in an aria serves to highlight Arianna's solitude and the choice of oboe is utterly suited to the pathetic sentiment being portrayed. In the opening ritornello Porpora made use of the plaintive, melancholy tone of the solo oboe to play the beautiful melody against gently repeating quavers in the violins with no depth and reassurance provided by a bass line. A three-bar phrase (Ex.105) is repeated and then extended, and only then do the lower strings join in but only for a brief four bars while the oboe is silent.

Example 105. f.49v



The oboe then takes up the semiquaver figuration as played by the violins, accompanied once again only by the violins (Ex.106). This thin texture allows the solo oboe to shine through.

Example 106. f.50v



When the voice enters the oboe falls silent, highlighting the vocal line until the final word of the first section. On this long vocalisation the oboe and voice share the thematic interest and alternate two phrases between them. There is no *colla parte* playing from the strings and when Arianna sings they fulfil almost entirely an harmonic supporting role. The continuous repeated quavers throughout the aria give the impression of forward momentum despite a slow pace of harmonic change.

Scene vi

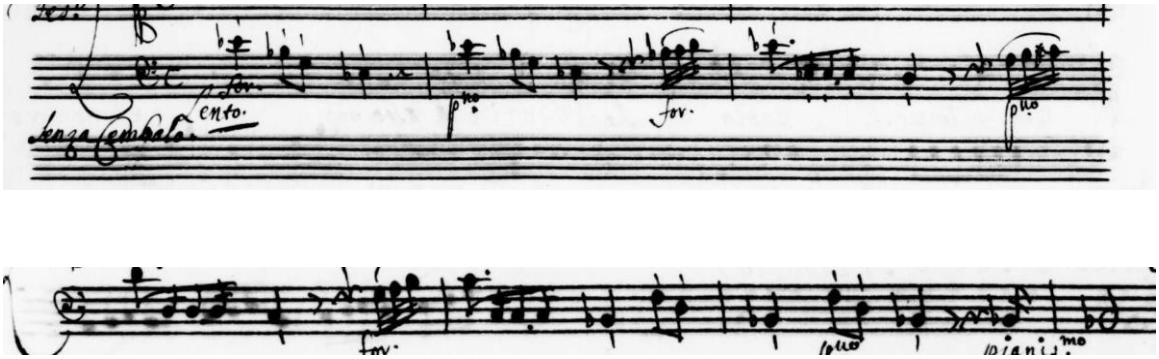
The temple of the God, Libero, his statue on a lit tripod. Teseo.

This is the final scene of Act II and, as such, is a careful building up of the drama to the crux of the opera as Teseo has to decide his future.

Accompanied Recitative: Teseo, Libero, Voce, ff.59v-69r

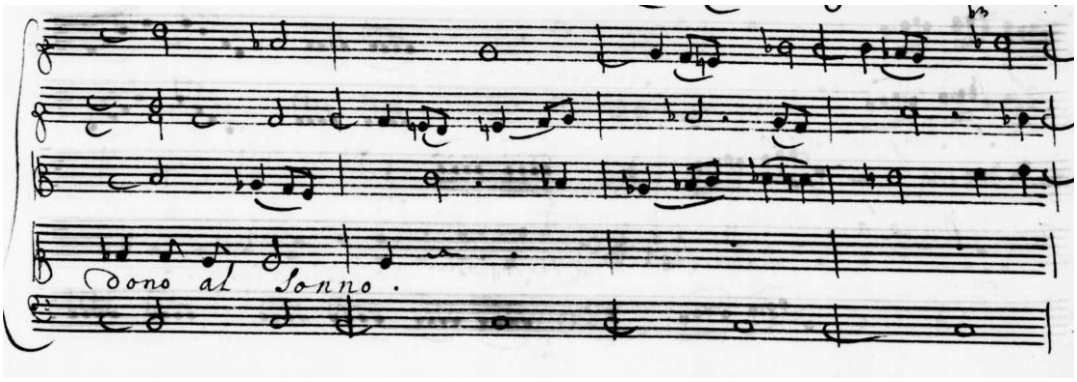
This last scene consists of 100 bars of accompanied recitative and an aria. The exceptionally long passage of accompanied recitative is sung mostly by Teseo, with a passage from the god, Libero, and two lines from 'Voce' (a voice). The opening ritornello marked lento and with clear articulation marks is played by unison strings, alternating forte and piano dynamics with two falling phrases (Ex.107).

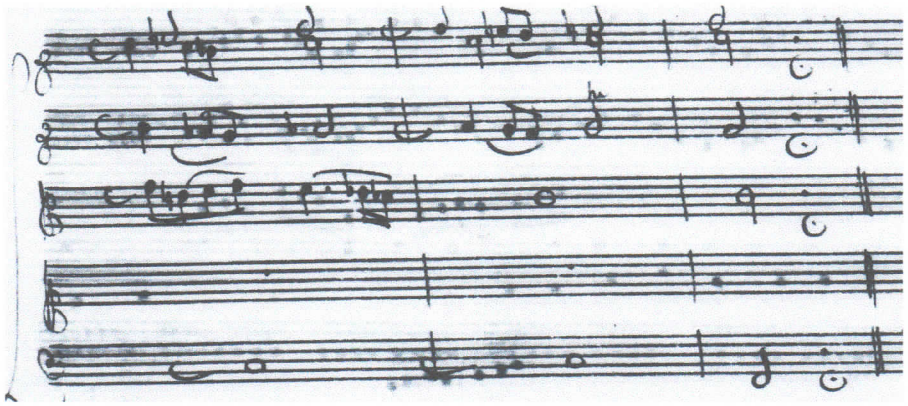
Example 107. ff.59v-60r



This creates an atmosphere unlike anything hitherto heard; stillness and mystery are also suggested by the bare reinforced unison/octave line, marked senza cembalo. Teseo does not pick up on these melodic ideas when he enters but sings his first one and a half lines unaccompanied, emphasizing that he is now alone. In the following section there is a change of tempo to adagio, and sustained strings alternate with more descending semiquaver figures. The violins are instructed to play con sordini, perhaps illustrating Teseo's weariness. When Teseo says he will go to sleep, the strings' final ritornello of this section is again different, as the upper strings play in a three-part texture over a pedal C, even briefly expanding into four parts when the first violins divide for two bars shortly before the end. The sound climbs ever higher with the dissonances between the two violin parts adding an uneasy tension before finally reaching a bare and bleak sounding F chord with no third sounded (Ex.108). This is a particularly effective section with an ethereal quality that suggests a disquieting involvement of the gods and shows the state of sleep creeping over Teseo.

Example 108. f.62



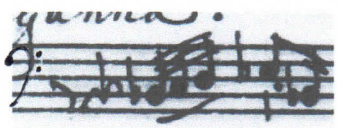


With an abrupt change of mood Libero appears within a luminous cloud and in his own form, not as his priest, Onaro, as he has been previously disguised. He instructs Teseo to sail away with Antiope, leaving Arianna behind and threatens that if Teseo opposes this they will all die. There is a new key (B♭ major), speed (a tempo giusto) and figuration which gives an immediate sense of urgency with repeated staccato semiquavers maintained in the bass and violas continuously for 12 bars, while the violins alternate between this same figuration and an ascending and descending arpeggiaic figure. After this opening ritornello the accompaniment colours Libero's words as expected with the same semiquaver figuration, sustained strings and emphatic interjections.

Teseo's next passage of accompanied recitative reflects his mounting anger at the god's threats. An increase in speed with descending demisemiquaver runs punctuates his longer unaccompanied lines, and the semiquaver figuration is extended this time to represent the thunder rumbling on under Teseo's words. A voice (Voce) is then heard – presumably Montagnana unseen – over a B♭ pedal before the bass line reiterates a rhythmic figure from the scene's opening ritornello, evoking again the unworldly feeling (Ex.109).

Example 109. f.59v

f.68r



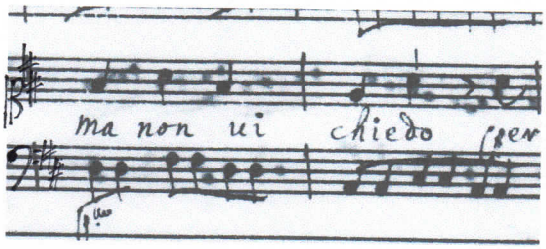
Teseo then brings this passage to a close with his anguished cries as he realizes he cannot let Arianna die. The section concludes in B minor which sets up his subsequent D major aria.

Aria: Teseo, 'Numi, vi cedo', ff.69v-79r

D major: presto: $\frac{3}{4}$: horns, violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This *aria di bravura* closes Act II at the climax of the opera as Teseo accepts that he must abandon Arianna to save her. The string texture is full and rich throughout with the occasional horns adding extra weight and support. Porpora achieved balance in the $\frac{3}{4}$ metre by often placing the second beat at a higher pitch than beat one (Ex.110).

Example 110. f.71r



Unusually, the B section of this aria is markedly different from the A. The tempo marking changes to adagio, the tonality moves to the supertonic minor (E minor) and the texture is thinner as the violas play with the bass line. This is to highlight that Teseo is now addressing his love, Arianna, 'Quand' era per salvarti/Costretto abbandonarti' ('When thy faithful lover,/Wou'd have saved thee,/He was constrained to abandon thee.'), whereas before he was railing at the gods. The metre changes to a lilting $\frac{12}{8}$ in an archetypal siciliana lament with an almost relentless ♩♪♩♪♩♪ bass rhythm, pausing briefly only on 'abbandonarti'.

R.M.22.m.31. ACT III

Scene i

Arianna, then Antiope and then Onaro. Temple.

Accompanied recitative: Arianna, ff.1r-2v

Arianna asks the gods to guide their ship safely and peaceful strings accompany this andante passage. After the tumult at the end of Act II Porpora again used accompanied recitative to highlight the gods' involvement, but this time in a calm rather than agitated manner.

Recitative: Antiope, Arianna and Onaro, ff.2v-3v

Antiope bursts in on Arianna's pleas to the gods with an angry passage of secco recitative, urging the gods not to listen to Arianna. This contrasts with the serenity of the preceding accompanied recitative. Onaro calls for silence to listen to the Oracle.

Accompanied Recitative: Oracolo, ff.3v-4r

The return to accompanied recitative signals the return to words from the gods as the Oracle (sung unseen by Montagnana) predicts that both Arianna and Antiope will be contented.

Aria: Onaro, 'Renderà l'amore all'alma', ff.4v-12v

D major: allegro: $\frac{3}{4}$: horns, violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

Having previously used horns sparingly (in the Overture, one cavatina and one aria in Act I) Porpora used them now in two consecutive arias. This is, however, in the last aria of Act II and the first of Act III and they are used for a different effect in each of these. In Teseo's aria at the end Act II they add texture and weight to provide a grand and fitting climax to the act. Here, in the first aria of Act III, they add majesty and gravitas to Onaro's words as he reassures Arianna and Antiope that they will be calm once again. Rolli's text is short – two verses each of three lines – with many reiterations of the text in Porpora's melismatic vocal setting. It marks Onaro out now as no longer threatening, but as a figure

who is able to state that love and peace shall return to them both with absolute certainty and consequent brevity of text.

Scene ii

An avenue to the temple. Teseo and then Antiope.

Recitative: Teseo and Antiope, ff.13r-14v

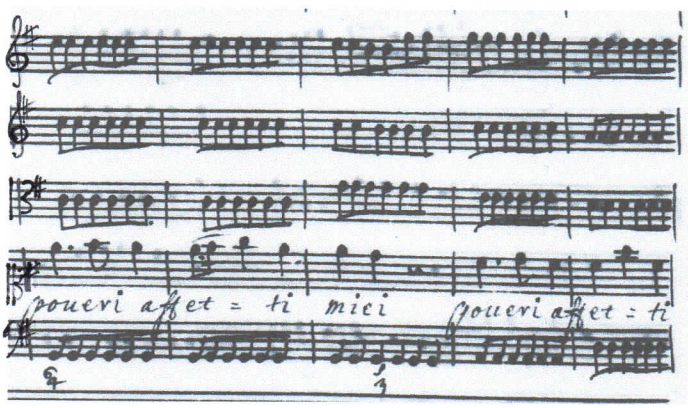
Teseo says he does not care where he goes. Antiope arrives and he entreats her to leave him, but Antiope says she cannot.

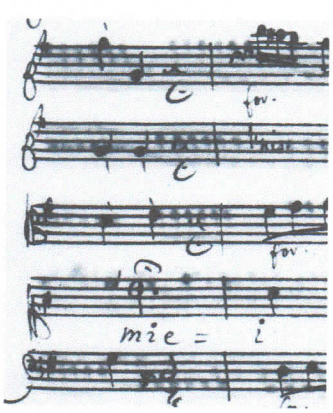
Aria: Antiope, 'Vivere senza te', ff.15r-18v

E major: affettuoso: $\frac{3}{8}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

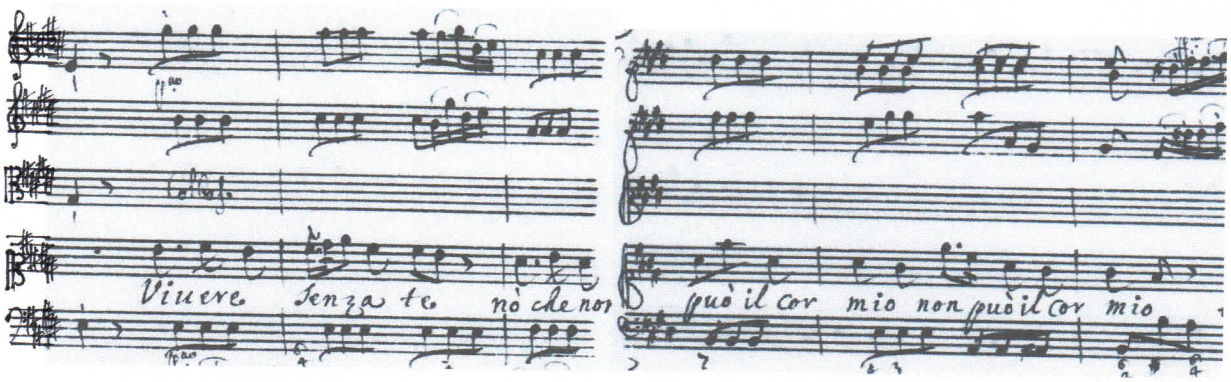
In this aria Antiope says she will always follow ('sempre ti seguirò') and love Teseo even though he deserts her. These sentiments mirror Arianna's in Act II, scene v when she says she will follow Teseo ('e pur lo seguirò') in the accompanied recitative before her aria. Porpora shows the similarity of Antiope and Arianna's emotions in a brief instance of recall in this aria. Unusually, the opening ritornello does not set out the theme that the voice will begin with at A^1. When the voice enters it is with a different melodic phrase that recalls the opening of Arianna's aria, 'Miseri sventurati'. The note values are halved here in the $\frac{3}{8}$ metre and the key is E major. (Arianna's aria is in $\frac{3}{4}$ and G major). Example 111 shows the similarity between the opening vocal phrases in the arias, in melodic line, rhythm, harmony and accompaniment before moving into different ideas. In this way Porpora portrayed that the situation in which both Arianna and Antiope found themselves is at once similar to yet different from each other.

Example 111. Arianna, 'Miseri sventurati', f.52





Antiope, 'Vivere senza te', f.15v



This affecting aria portrays Antiope's constancy. The short internal ritornellos and almost unchanging tonality from E major in the A section underpin her steadfastness as she vows to always love Teseo.

Scene iii

Piritoo and (the aforementioned) Teseo.

Recitative: Teseo and Piritoo, ff.19r-20r

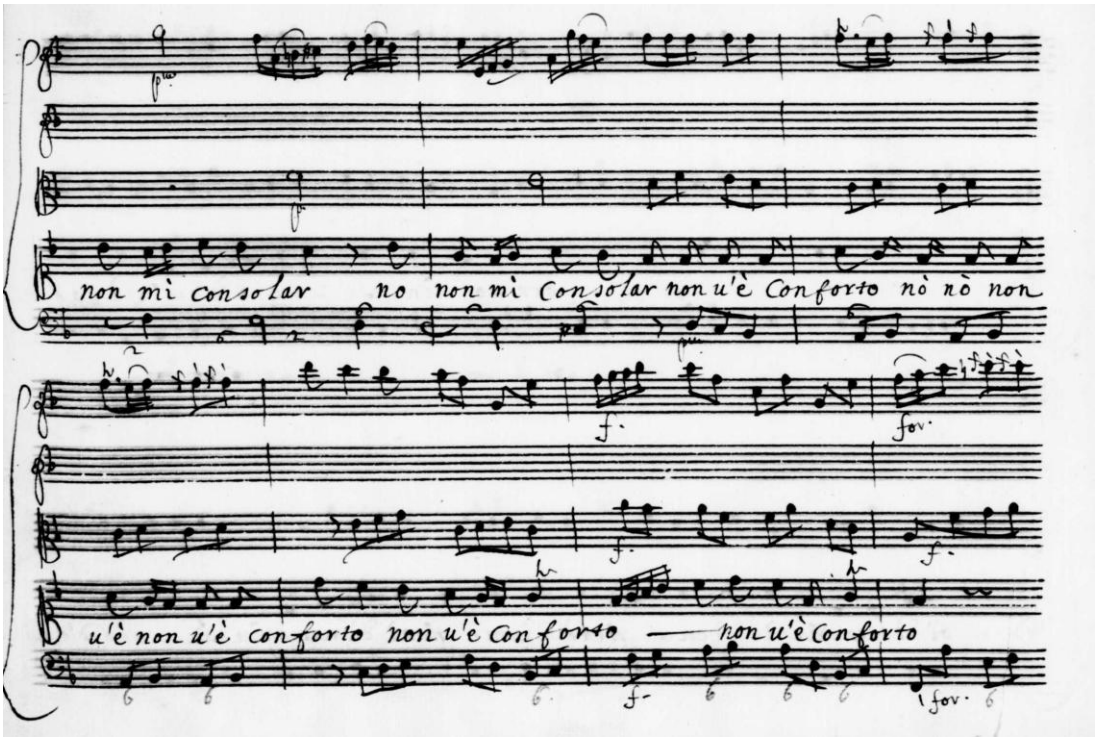
Teseo tells Piritoo of his despair at having to leave Arianna or she will perish. Piritoo tries to console him but a chromatically rising bass line accompanies and consequently belies his encouraging words, leading to Teseo's 'son disperato' (I am desperate).

Aria: Teseo, 'Altro da te non bramo', ff.20v-24v

D minor: allegro: 𝐜: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

Although there are no long vocalisations in this aria there are many repetitions of text, emphasizing Teseo's declaration that he cannot be consoled and there is no comfort (Ex.112).

Example 112. f.21v



Recitative: Piritoo, ff.24v-25r

Piritoo says that in time Teseo's present unhappiness will be forgotten.

Aria: Piritoo, 'Fra nuove imprese', ff.25v-29v

G major: allegro: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas, solo bassoon and basso continuo

The violins play in unison almost throughout this aria and the opening six bars are played in unison by all the instruments. This is the only aria in which Porpora added the solo bassoon, being all the more effective for its rarity. Its use adds a dignity to the aria in keeping with the calm and simple sentiment being portrayed. Piritoo does not express anger or frustration on behalf of his friend, but adopts a more measured attitude stating that Teseo will find joy again in time when he is occupied by new enterprises. The tonal structure is uncomplicated and the texture is uncluttered with the bassoon used sparingly, supporting the voice where there is scant accompaniment from the strings. This focuses the attention on the vocal line with its many wide leaps and virtuosic passages.

Scene iv

A tent with a bed on the beach. Arianna then Teseo and then Antiope. Arianna sleeping, speaks as she sleeps.

Arietta: Arianna, 'Io son la sola sola', ff.30r-31r

G major: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

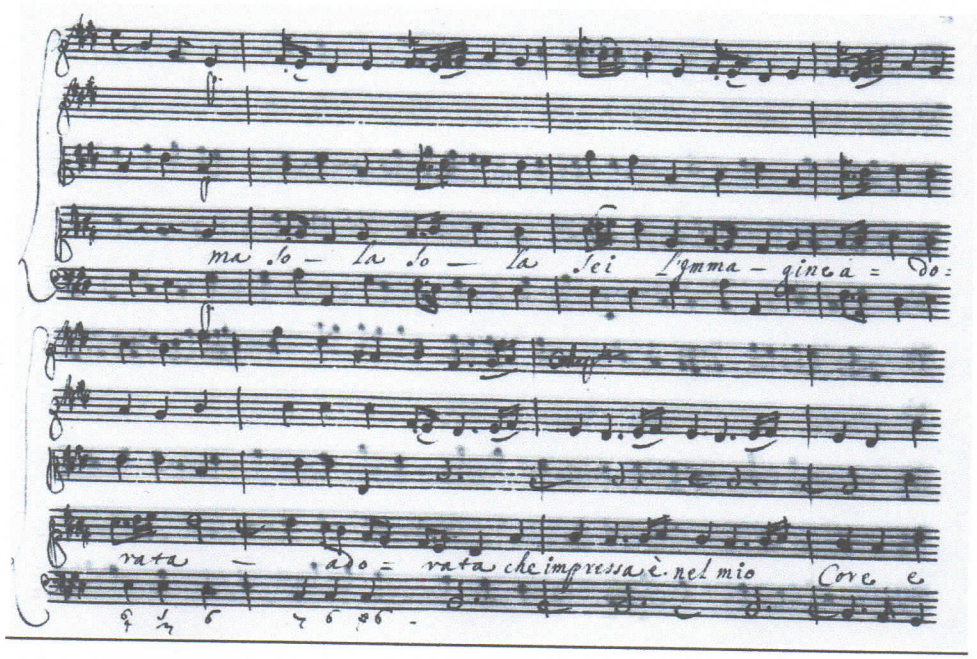
This short text consists of four lines:

'Io son la sola sola	'I am the only, only
Immagine adorata	Ador'd image,
Che impressa è nel tuo core,	Which on thy heart's impres'd,
E mai non partira.'	And ne'er shall be effaced.'

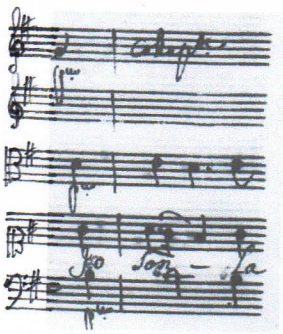
A 10-bar opening ritornello is followed by an A section and a concluding three-bar ritornello, in G major throughout. Arianna is remembering Teseo's loving words to her and sings of this while she sleeps. This is another instance of recall but here it is highly specific as it is not just expressing similarity of situation and affection, but recalling a specific memory. Example 113 shows the similarity with Teseo's aria from Act II, scene iv. The recall is almost identical, sung at a third higher with an added opening ritornello. This highlights the unity between the pair, not just in the text but also in the musical setting.[10]

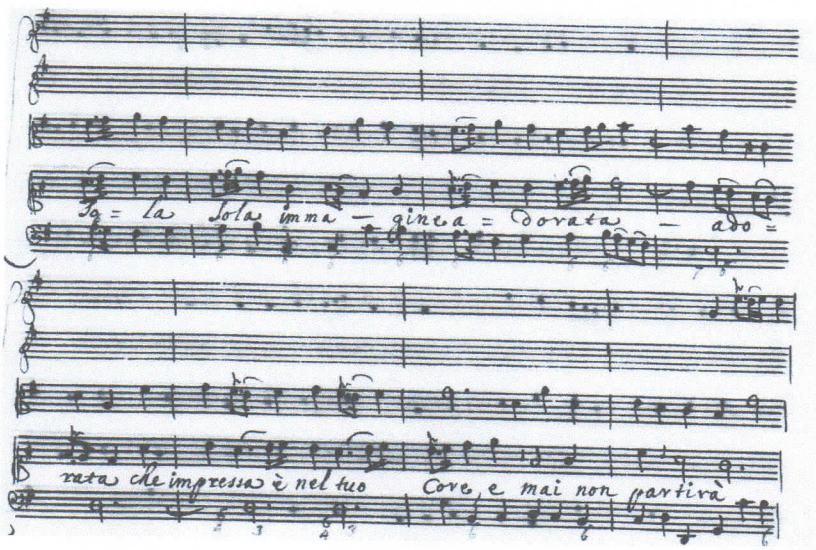
[10] See Chapter Three for details of the textual repetition.

Example 113. Teseo, 'Un altr' ogetto può', f.38r (II.iv)



Arianna, 'Io son la sola sola', f.30 (III.iv)





Recitative: Teseo and Antiope, ff.31v-32v

Teseo overhears Arianna's words and, although he announces that his affection for her will never be effaced, resigns himself to the necessity of leaving her, encouraged to do so by Antiope.

Duet: Teseo and Antiope, 'Vieni, parti, fuggi l'incanto', ff.33r-45r

F major: vivace: 𝐜 : violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

The urgency of the situation and anguish felt by both Antiope and Teseo is highlighted in the lack of ritornellos throughout this passage, initially switching immediately from recitative to duet before the pattern is interrupted by Teseo's aria (see structure below). This aria begins with no opening ritornello as a direct response to Antiope's entreaty to Teseo for him to come with her. There are no intermediate ritornellos and the closing ritornello to the aria is very short, lasting no longer than two bars, before the pattern of recitative followed by duet is resumed. The duet passages up to this point have consisted largely of alternating phrases, often short and agitated, with some overlapping. The contrast between the characters is clear in the music, countering Teseo's longer more melancholic phrases with Antiope's insistent and short interjections. Within this final section of duet is the first real passage of sustained duet singing. This signals that a consensus has been reached as Teseo reluctantly agrees to leave with Antiope and a brief respite from the vocal line is introduced in the ritornello between A^3 and A^4, reinforcing this change of emotion. The structure of this part of the scene appears to be an application of the familiar da capo format over a wider section. The recitatives replace or perhaps fulfil the function of the ritornellos and Teseo's aria, 'Vengo, ma oh Dio!', forms the B section of the duet, albeit with an A and B section of its own. The da capo repeat element of the duet is achieved at A^3 with a return to F major, exactly restating the opening of the duet (A^1) before it quickly develops into the more fully worked duet passage. The music is then expanded and extended in A^4 before closing with a final ritornello. This creates a satisfying conclusion to the duet as Porpora reiterates Antiope's opening line from the duet, 'Vieni, parti, fuggi l'incanto', to begin this final section.

Recitative			Antiope and Teseo
Duet	A^1	F major to C major	Antiope and Teseo
Recitative			Antiope and Teseo
Duet	A^2	D minor	Antiope and Teseo
Recitative			Antiope
Aria	A	A minor to C major	Teseo
	A	A minor to C major	
	B	C major to A minor	
	Ritornello	A minor	
Recitative			Antiope and Teseo
Duet	A^3	F major to G minor	Antiope and Teseo
	Ritornello	G minor	
	A^4	G minor to F major	
	Ritornello	F major	

Aria: Teseo, 'Vengo, ma oh Dio!', ff.37v-38v

A minor: adagio: 𝐜: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

In contrast to the vivace duet, Teseo's solo passage contained within the ensemble is marked adagio. His acceptance of his fate is announced with an unaccompanied 'Vengo' (I come), addressed to Antiope. The only difference between the A section of his aria and its repeat is the slightly redistributed string accompaniment. This is the climax to the act where Teseo's actions enable the *lieto fine*. Porpora highlighted the importance of this moment by a simple and unusual reiteration of the three lines of text immediately after it first utterance. There is no opening ritornello nor any intermediate ritornellos, suggesting that Teseo does not dare to stop and consider what he must do or he may not have the courage to see it through.

Scene v

Arianna speaking in her sleep.

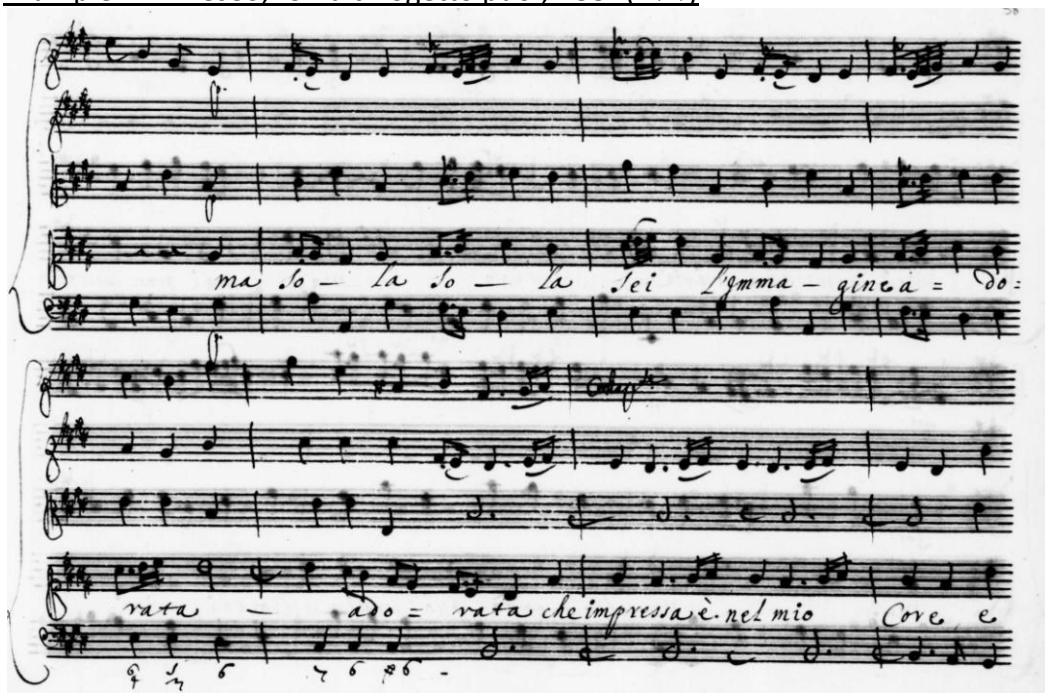
Arianna has remained asleep on stage since her arietta at the beginning of scene iv, unaware of the exchange between Teseo and Antiope. Scene v is a short scena but does not lead to an aria as its climax; Porpora set a one-verse arietta here, followed by five lines of secco recitative and concluded with a long passage of accompanied recitative to vividly convey Arianna's distracted emotions, fluctuating from anger to misery.

Arietta: Arianna, 'Si caro ti consola', ff.45r-46v

G major: $\frac{3}{4}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

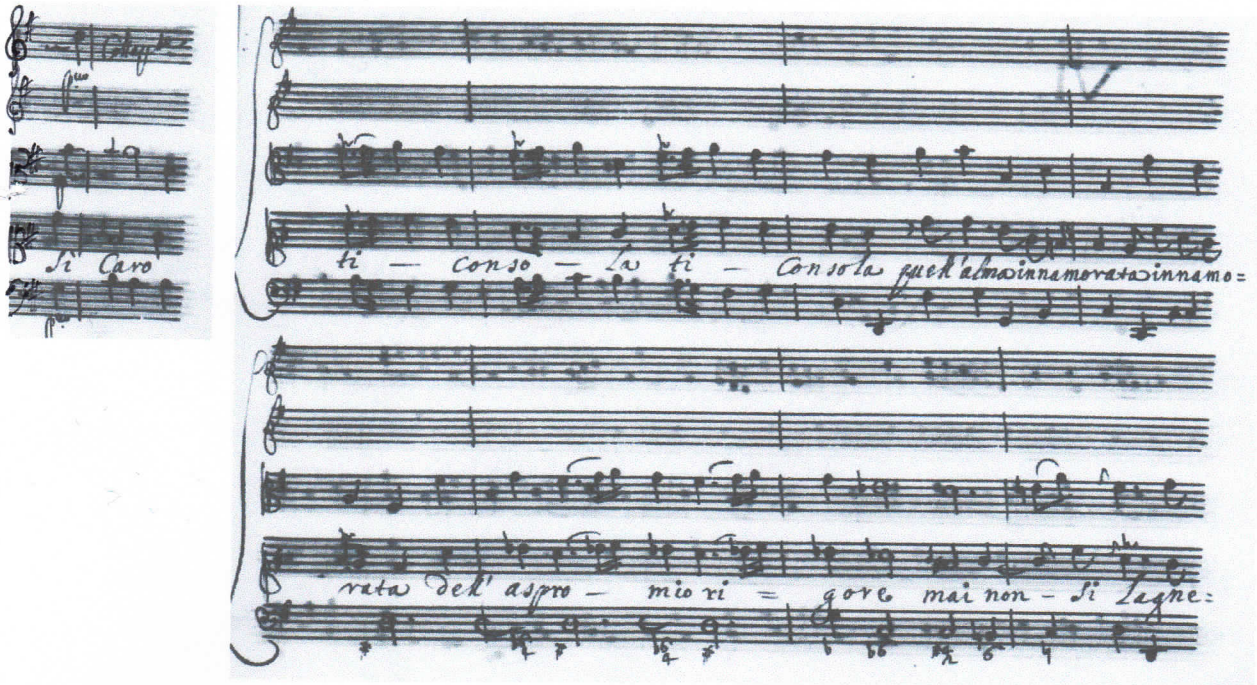
In this arietta, as in that of the previous scene, Arianna is recalling Teseo's aria from Act II, scene iv as she sleeps. The musical recall however is with a different text, so that rather than repeating Teseo's words she is expressing her own love for Teseo. By recalling the rhythmic and melodic figures from his aria she is echoing his sentiments (Ex.114).[11]

Example 114. Teseo, 'Un altr' ogetto può', f.38r (II.iv)



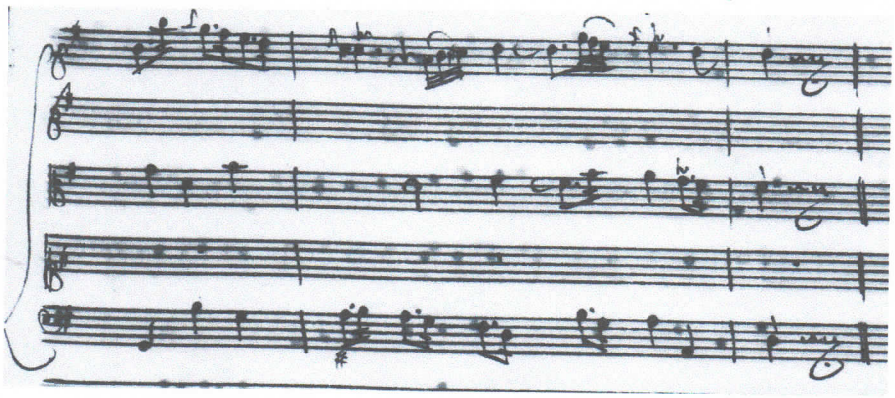
[11] See Chapter Three for details of the textual repetition.

Arianna, 'Si caro ti consola', f.45 (III.v)



There is no happy conclusion to her dreaming and Arianna's arietta ends unsatisfactorily on an imperfect cadence as she awakens, foretelling of the similar conclusion to her relationship with Teseo (Ex.115).

Example 115. f.46v



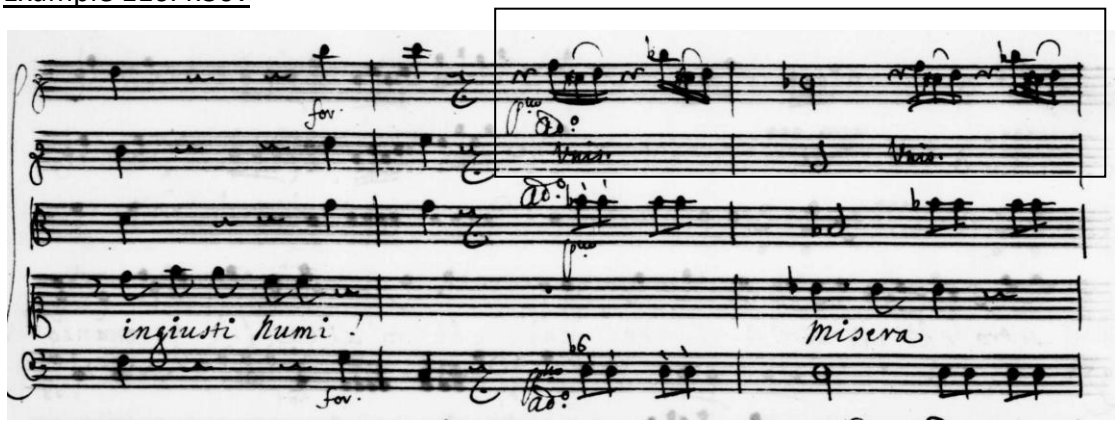
Recitative: Arianna, ff.46v-47r

As she awakens Arianna wonders how she could have slept and looks around for Teseo.

Accompanied Recitative: Arianna, ff.47r-51r

As Arianna's anguish mounts the strings enter eerily with a sustained B minor chord, adding to the sense of foreboding as Arianna realises that the shore is deserted and Teseo's ship is sailing away. The strings then match her growing agitation with semiquaver figures until she collapses, her anger spent. The pace slows with a new pathetic falling figure in the violins, (Ex.116), ending the passage in D minor.

Example 116. f.50v



Arianna asks who will give her comfort ('Ristoro/Chi mi da? chi mi aita?') and remains on stage, her wretched isolation offering a powerful contrast to the vivid spectacle that arrives to answer her question and conclude the opera.

Final scene (vi)

The God, Libero [hitherto disguised as the high priest, Onaro], on a chariot pulled by two tigers, preceded by a chorus of Coribanti and Baccanti.

Coro, 'Evohe. Evohe', ff.51v-56r

D major: spiritoso: 𝐜: oboe, violins 1, violins 2, violas, bassoons and basso continuo

This D major coro is a triumphant and joyful song to Bacchus, contrasting acutely with the misery of the previous scene. The voices in five parts sing mostly contrapuntally with much imitation, coming together after a long dominant pedal in the final three bars. Apart from Piritoo's aria, 'A contesa di due Belle', in Act II scene iii, this and the second coro in this scene are the only other examples of Porpora's writing in a contrapuntal style

in this opera. The effect is of a thick and busy texture to signal the grand happy ending about to unfold.

This coro is the item that concludes the opera in the libretto as it is repeated at the end of the scene. However, Porpora expanded the scene to include another, different da capo coro at the end, with a duet as the B section. Below is shown the different textual structures of the final scene between the libretto and score. The opening coro and section of recitative are the same but then the following material is different.

Final scene – libretto

Coro	Recitative	Aria – two verse	Recitative	D.C. – from coro at start of scene
Chorus	Libero and Arianna	Arianna	Libero	

Final scene – score

Coro 1	Recitative	Accompanied recitative	D.C. aria	Coro 2	Duet	D.C. – from start of coro 2
Chorus	Libero and Arianna	Arianna	Arianna	Chorus	Libero and Arianna	

<u>Recitative: Libero and Arianna, ff.56v-57r</u>

Libero explains to Arianna that he loves her.

<u>Accompanied recitative: Arianna, f.57</u>

A slow passage of accompanied recitative which is once again used at a moment of heightened emotion signifies the strength of Arianna's feelings for Libero in her complete capitulation to the god. The slow pace matches Arianna's gradual realization that she now loves Libero.

<u>Aria: Arianna, 'Celeste forza', ff.58r-62r</u>

D minor: $\frac{3}{8}$: violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This new aria replaces the one in the libretto. The original text tells of how Arianna has a new passion and love, whereas this replacement speaks of moving from earthly to celestial thoughts. Cuzzoni was renowned for her touching and expressive delivery; the castrato singing teacher Tosi (1723, p.109) commented on her 'soothing

Cantabile...Sweetness of a fine Voice, [and] a perfect Intonation'. The easy-flowing triple time of this aria with its cantabile line and long unhurried vocalisations was eminently suited to Cuzzoni's pathetic and tender delivery. Perhaps it was changed when Cuzzoni took over the role from Segatti in April 1734.

(Recitative: Libero

This text is only in the libretto; Libero invites Arianna to join him on the golden chariot.

Coro, 'Evohe. Evohe'

A repeat of this opening coro concludes the opera in the libretto).

Coro, 'Ricolma il nappo', ff.62v-65v

D major: allegro: $\frac{3}{8}$: trumpets, horns, oboes, violins 1, violins 2, violas and basso continuo

This relatively short da capo coro is a joyful drinking song sung by the chorus with a simple duet for Arianna and Libero as the B section. There is no opening ritornello and only two bars of intermediate ritornello before the B section (and subsequently the end). The coro is in a fugato style until the four parts join together homophonically for the final cadence point. The use of brass instruments adds to the grandeur of the expected triumphant and happy ending (*lieto fine*) and the use of D major and D minor without modulations finally establishes these keys as the tonal pivots for the entire opera.

Once again Porpora used a favourite device of balancing out the stress of the beats with an emphasis on the second beat of the bar from the opening vocal entry. The D major tonality then moves to the tonic minor for the duet, sung almost entirely by both characters moving in parallel thirds. This now expresses the unity between Arianna and Libero, emphasized by the violins doubling the voices and the violas playing with the bass, leaving a simple and uncluttered texture.

Conclusions

The music of *Arianna in Naxo* shows how Porpora used many different musical means to comprehensibly portray Rolli's drama in the eagerly anticipated new 'Neapolitan' style. Unexpected elements are introduced throughout the opera to arrest the audience's attention; recitative is inserted into lyrical forms, solo lyrical forms other than the ubiquitous da capo exit aria are used and larger structures involving additional elements are constructed. Specific words and lines of the poetry to highlight emotions are depicted in musical imagery, several instances of musical recall, and the many occurrences of evocative accompanied recitative. Instrumentation is chosen to support the vocal line and thereby emphasize the pervading emotions of the text. Melodies are constructed to reflect the mood of the character singing and choice of key and modality similarly chosen. Porpora also wrote skilfully for his singers to delight the audience who wanted to hear and see the operatic stars perform, for example giving Senesino virtuosic arias and passages of accompanied recitative to display his admired acting ability, Cuzzoni (initially Segatti) tender and moving arias, and Montagnana dazzling arias to show his technical skill and vocal facility over a wide range. The details in this chapter confirm that Porpora's music for *Arianna in Naxo* was contrived to convey and enhance the meaning of the text as well as delight the London audience with beautiful music.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SOURCE STUDIES

Introduction

In this final chapter it remains for me to describe and explain the various sources I have consulted in the preparation of this study. This has involved detailed investigation of manuscript copies and also required an exploration into the authenticity of alleged autograph scores of Porpora's works held at the British Library. There are several sources for the music of the third opera of *Polifemo*, mainly due to its being the only one of the five operas that was revised and given in a second season. The final section of this chapter considers these sources with a view to a greater understanding of Porpora's compositional processes.

Physical Description of Porpora's London Operas in the Royal Music Library

There are 27 volumes wholly or partially containing works by Porpora in the British Library (GB-Lbl) which form part of the Royal Music Library collection. This collection, established in 1919 and on loan to the British Museum from George V, was permanently gifted to the Trustees of the British Museum by Queen Elizabeth II in 1957. Of the five operas Porpora wrote for London, four survive in their entirety in 12 of the beautifully bound eighteenth-century copies held as part of this collection. Each of the four operas comprises three volumes containing one act in each with the following shelf marks:

Arianna in Naxo	R.M.22.m.29–31
Enea nel Lazio	R.M.23.a.1–3
Polifemo	R.M.23.a.7–9
Ifigenia nel Aulide	R.M.23.a.4–6

These four operas appear to have been bound at the same time for Frederick, Prince of Wales as there are warrants for payment for their binding in the British Library manuscript Register of Warrants for Payments of Tradesmen, London.[1] The payment is

[1] GB-Lbl Add MS 24403, f.162r.

identified on folio 162r headed 'Frederick P' as being for John Brindley, Bookbinder's Bill and is for several items totalling £22 4s 6d. The folio in the Register of Warrants is dated 10 June, 1736 although the binding of the operas was evidently completed some six months earlier as each item is dated as follows:

1735			
	£	*s*	*d*
September 10			
Efiginia Opera. Royal Quarto. b.d ditto [Morocco Neat] 3 vol.	*2*	*6*	*0*
September 17			
Polifino Opera. Royal Quarto b.d in 3 vol. Morocco	*2*	*6*	*0*
October 14			
Arriane Otto. 1.2.3. Royal Quarto. 3 vol. Morocco	*2*	*6*	*0*
November 1			
Enea Opera Royal Quarto. 3 vol. Morocco	*2*	*6*	*0*

Of the three other stage works Porpora wrote for London there is no such known copy of the fifth opera, *Mitridate,* nor the oratorio *David e Bersabea.* There is a three-volume copy of his serenata *Festa d'Imeneo* in the Royal Music collection, written for the marriage of the Prince of Wales in 1736 (R.M.23.a.10–12).[2]

The remaining 12 volumes in the Royal Music Library containing music by Porpora comprise three of the pasticcio *Orfeo*, first performed 2 March, 1736 with music by Porpora, Hasse, Vinci and Araja (Burney, 1789, p.798. R.M.22.i.11–13), three of the instrumental *Sinfonie da camera* op.2, published in London in 1736 (R.M.21.b.4-6), one other instrumental volume containing works by four composers which includes one sonata by Porpora (R.M.24.i.13.1-7) and five volumes of opera arias, duets and ensembles written by various eighteenth-century composers which include 26 items by Porpora.[3]

[2] The Selvaggi Collection in the British Library (GB-Lbl) holds a score of Acts II and III of *Mitridate* (MUS/ADD/14115), and of *Festa d'Imeneo* (MUS/ADD/14122). See the following section, for details of the Selvaggi Collection.

[3] R.M.23.d.4.1-10, R.M.23.d.8.1-28, R.M.23.d.10.1-18, R.M.23.e.2.1-31, R.M.23.f.2.1-21.

Binding

The manuscripts bound by John Brindley measure 296mm by 232mm, within a tolerance of 6mm in either direction, and are in oblong quarto format. They are wholly bound hardback volumes with outer plain boards of red Morocco (goatskin). There is a gold leaf line impressed on the front cover that runs around the outer edge approximately 2mm from the edge and a small black rectangle in the centre of the front board with gold leaf edging and lettering giving the name of the opera and the act. The spine is divided into six sections by small raised bands with a gold leaf armorial stamp in each of the six sections. McGeary (2009, p.233) identifies this stamp as a crowned FP cipher. The spines are similar on all volumes with slight variations. *Arianna in Naxo, Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Enea nel Lazio* all have a six-pointed star around the cipher. These are randomly spaced and are inconsistent in number with there being many more on the *Enea nel Lazio* volumes than on the others. The *Polifemo* volumes have not had any of these stars added. In every corner of each section on the spine are four circles although it seems that a slightly larger tool was used to make the circles on the *Arianna in Naxo* volumes than on the others. The edges of all of the boards have a continuous gold leaf design impressed upon them and all of the sheets have a gilded finish. The insides of both front and back boards of all volumes are marbled.

Three of the operas (*Arianna in Naxo, Enea nel Lazio* and *Polifemo*) are dated '1735' at the end of Act III. Table 27 lists the first and last performances of Porpora's London operas, showing that both *Arianna in Naxo* and *Enea nel Lazio* had final performances in 1734. It seems likely that the four operas were all copied at roughly the same time and then sent as a unit to the bookbinder's, perhaps shortly after the last performance of *Ifigenia in Aulide* on 20 May, 1735. This may be why the last opera of these four has no end date inscribed as it was copied contemporaneously with its performance season and was not deemed necessary. In any event the operas must have been copied before September 1735 as the invoice date for the binding of the first opera – *Ifigenia in Aulide* is 10 September, 1735. It appears that the Prince of Wales wanted a library copy of the four new operas written by Porpora immediately after the end of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' second season in June 1735.

Table 27. First and last performance dates of Porpora's London operas

	First Performance	Last Performance
Arianna in Naxo	29 December 1733	11 June 1734
Enea nel Lazio	11 May 1734	15 June 1734
Polifemo	1 February 1735	4 November 1735
Ifigenia in Aulide	3 May 1735	20 May 1735
Mitridate	24 January 1736	3 February 1736

Endleaves and Title Folios

There are three endleaves at the front and back of each volume. The endleaves facing the outer boards are marbled and the following two folios are blank other than a library pencil marking on the reverse of the first endleaf identifying the shelf mark.

The title of each opera is written on the first folio of Act I which is ruled with staves. The name of the opera and the act number are given at the top of the folio. This is followed by the cast list and attribution for the poetry to Rolli and music to Porpora. The place of performance ('Londra') and a year is then given. The year corresponds to that of the first performance date apart from that of *Arianna in Naxo* which is dated 1734. Although the first performance of this opera was on 29 December **1733** the cast list gives Cuzzoni for the title role of Arianna, a part which she only took over from Segatti in April 1734 on her arrival from Italy, which is probably why the title page is marked with the later date.

The title of Porpora's first London opera is given on the first folio of the score, R.M.22.m.29, as *La clava di Teseo*, (Teseo's Club) rather than *Arianna in Naxo*. This alternative title is not found elsewhere; the libretto, clearly produced for the initial run of performances as it lists 'La Sig. Segatti' singing the role of Arianna, is entitled *Arianna in Naxo*. Newspaper advertisements appearing on 22 and 25 December, 1733, prior to the opening performance, publicized the opera with its anglicized title of *Ariadne*.[4] Rolli also referred to the opera as *Arianna in Naxo* in a letter written in December 1733 to his friend in Florence, the doctor Antonio Cocchi - 'Next Saturday [Dec 29] the opera of the Nob (l'Opera de' Signori) will begin with one of my dramas, entitled *Arianna in Naxo*' (as cited in Lindgren, 1991, p.155). It may have been that Porpora used *La clava di Teseo* as a working title, to distinguish it from his earlier opera, *Arianna e Teseo,* first performed in Venice in 1727. Alternatively, Senesino, who was an influential figure at the inception of

[4] *Daily Post Boy,* 22 & 25 December.

the 'Opera of the Nobility', may have wanted to claim the title role of the inaugural opera for himself on the Prince's copy, and Aspden (2001, p.748) suggests that Teseo rather than Arianna is the central character of the plot, making the title of *La clava di Teseo* dramatically plausible. However, the choice and title of Porpora's Arianna setting, particularly as this was the first offering from the rival opera company, appears to have been a deliberate attempt to undermine and pre-empt Handel's *Arianna in Creta.* Handel was known to have finished his new Arianna opera for the forthcoming season on 5 October, 1733 but it did not have its first performance until 26 January 1734 (Dean, 2006, p.265).[5]

Music Folios

The folios measure 295mm by 235mm within a tolerance of 10mm in either direction and are individually numbered. Table 28 shows the number of music folios per volume and the relative length of the operas.

Table 28. Number of folios in four of Porpora's London operas

OPERA	ACT	FOLIO NUMBERS	TOTAL NUMBER OF SIDES WRITTEN ON
Arianna in Naxo	I	1v – 100r	198
	II	1r – 79r	157
	III	1r – 65v	130
TOTAL			**485**
Enea nel Lazio	I	1v – 76r	150
	II	1r – 57r	113
	III	1r – 46r	91
TOTAL			**354**
Polifemo	I	1v – 80r	158
	II	1r – 69v	138
	III	1r – 78r	155
TOTAL			**451**
Ifigenia in Aulide	I	1v – 79v	157
	II	1r – 62r	123
	III	1r – 58r	115
TOTAL			**395**

[5] Aspden (2001) also suggests that *Arianna in Naxo* was a public title that people could associate with the impending marriage between the Princess Royal and the Prince of Orange, and the private title, *La clava di Teseo*, was for Prince Frederick. McGeary (2013, p.169) refutes this saying 'there are, though, no hints at all from prefaces, dedications, texts, or contemporary sources that in any way connect the opera to the royal couple or wedding'.

i) Staves

There are 10 staves ruled on each page and although the distance between the top edge of the page and the first stave, and the bottom edge of the page and the last stave varies, the distance between each stave is consistently 10mm suggesting similar fixed rastrum equipment designed to draw 10 staves at a time was used. The stave lengths are between 247mm and 257mm long.

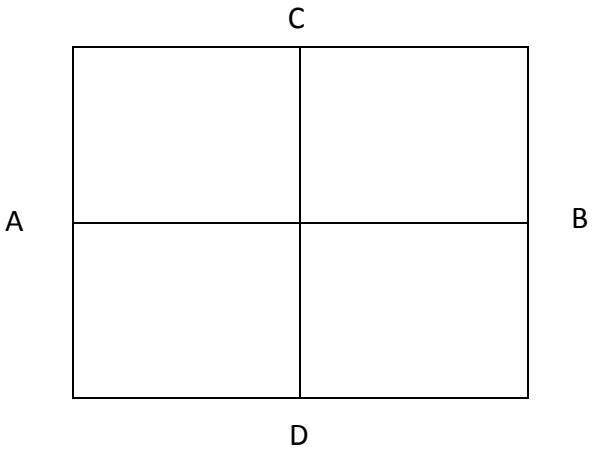
ii) Ink

The ink colour is quite a dark black throughout the manuscripts on both music and text.

iii) Collation

Although it is not possible to see all of the binder's markings, enough are visible across all the manuscripts to assume that the folios were gathered after every four. To achieve the oblong quarto format it is likely therefore that one sheet of paper measuring approximately 590mm by 470mm (twice the length and width of a folio) was folded and cut as follows (see Fig.1).

Figure 1



The sheet was first folded horizontally along line A – B and then vertically along line C – D leaving the folded edges at either the top or bottom which were then cut to give four folios and gathered together. The binder has put his marks on the top left hand corner of the folio

and often some or all of these marks have been trimmed off the top suggesting that when the sheet was folded into its oblong quarto size it was folded at the top, rather than the bottom, then numbered, before the edges were trimmed for neatness.

iv) Watermarks

The watermarks that are visible throughout the four manuscripts are of a fleur-de-lys and a shield with the letters L V G underneath (Fig.2):

Figure 2[6]

England was still importing much paper from abroad in the first half of the eighteenth century and the paper for these manuscript copies came from Holland. This can be deduced from the letters L V G under the Shield, which are an abbreviation for the Dutch

[6] Heawood, 1950, p.66, figure 98.

manufacturer, L. V. Gerrevink. Paper with this watermark was being used in London throughout the 1730s.[7]

v) Copyists

One main copyist (hand 1) appears to have done the bulk of the writing in these manuscripts with help from one other in *Ifigenia in Aulide* (hand 2) and two others in *Enea nel Lazio* (hands 2 and 3. See Table 29).

Table 29. Identification of end signature and 'hands' in four of Porpora's London operas

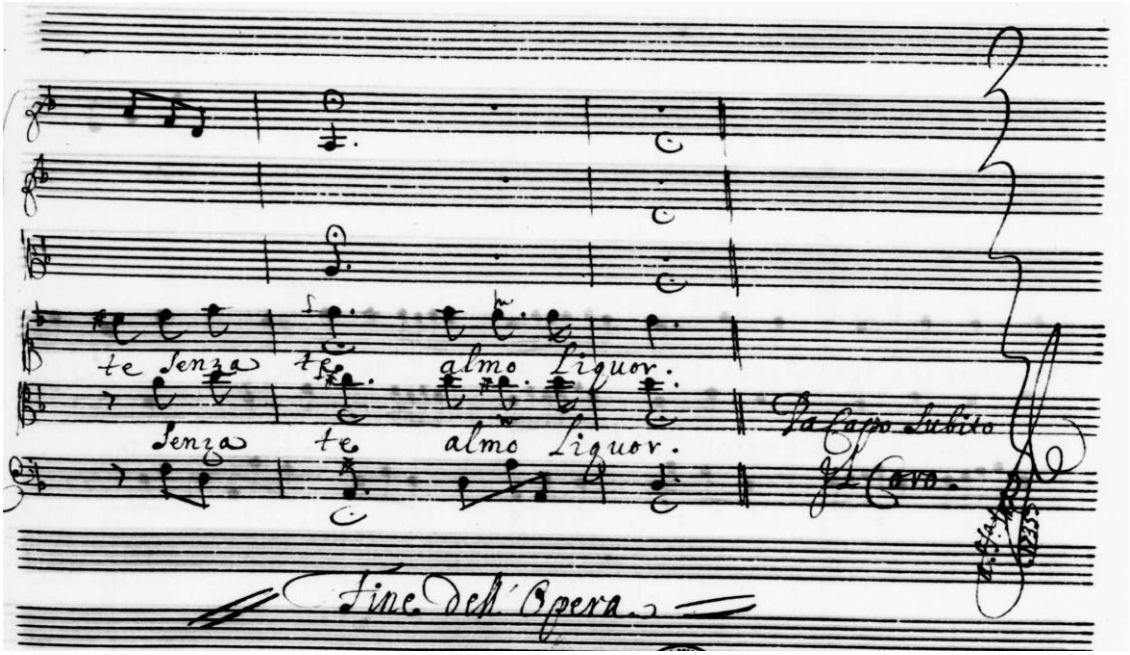
OPERA	LOCATION	'USUAL' SIGNATURE AT END	MUSIC HAND	TEXT HAND
Arianna in Naxo	Title Page			1
	Act I	✓	1	1
	Act II	✓	1	1
	Act III	✓	1	1
Enea nel Lazio	Title Page			2
	Act I	x	3	3
	Act II	x	2	2
	Act III	✓	1	2
Polifemo	Title Page			1
	Act I	✓	1	1
	Act II	✓	1	1
	Act III	✓	1	1
Ifigenia in Aulide	Title Page			2
	Act I	✓	1	2
	Act II	✓	1	2
	Act III	✓	1	2

Example 117 shows that the main copyist (hand 1) wrote his signature vertically from the bottom to the top of the page with an ornate flourish ('usual' signature) which helps identify his hand (see Table 29). When this main copyist wrote the music he signed the end of the act with his signature which begins A^{o}. S^{a}. It is not possible to decipher the remaining letters or words, although possibly it ends Sm. Act III of *Polifemo* is the only instance where the signature differs but that is due to lack of space at the end of the folio to allow his usual

[7] For details of paper types and watermarks in England at this time see Heawood (1950, pp.27 & 66) and Burrows & Ronish (1994, pp.329-332).

sprawling flourish up the page. The signature here is truncated and horizontal rather than vertical, but still shows the same letters and ends with a flourish, albeit shorter.

Example 117. *Arianna in Naxo,* Act III, f.65v



Each of the three scribes had distinctive clefs making the identification of two different hands (hands 2 and 3) for Acts I and II of *Enea nel Lazio* straightforward (see Table 30).

Table 30. Clefs written in scores of four of Porpora's London operas

	CLEF		
HAND	**TREBLE**	**ALTO**	**BASS**
1			
2			
3			

The evidence strongly suggests that these four manuscripts were copied and bound together as a complete unit. The year 1735, presumably the year of copying, has been written at the end of three of the operas (*Arianna in Naxo, Enea nel Lazio* and *Polifemo*) together with the copyist's signature. The five performances of the fourth opera, *Ifigenia in Aulide*, were all in May 1735, so would not have been copied before then. The fifth opera, *Mitridate,* could not have been included because its first performance was not until the following year on 24 January, 1736.

The dates of binding within the two months from 10 September to 1 November, 1735 are clearly shown for each opera on the invoice in the Register of Warrants for Payment. That the operas were not bound in chronological order of performance also suggests that they were delivered to the binder's together; despite being the last opera performed of the four, *Ifigenia in Aulide* was apparently the first opera to be bound. Similar boards, endleaves, music paper and gatherings also point to the job being undertaken as a whole, especially when compared to other volumes bound at a similar time and also held in the Royal Music Library. For example, the copy of the pasticcio *Orfeo* has some similarities to these four manuscripts as it is bound in similar red Morocco and appears to have been written by the main copyist (hand 1). However, it has an entirely different and more ornate pattern of gilding on the front board and an extra fleur-de-lys design on the spine.

The complete absence of alterations or corrections in these manuscripts emphasises that they were prepared extremely carefully for someone of great importance to be a fitting addition to their collection – in this case for Frederick, Prince of Wales in 1735 for his Royal Music Library.

The Evidence of the Autographs

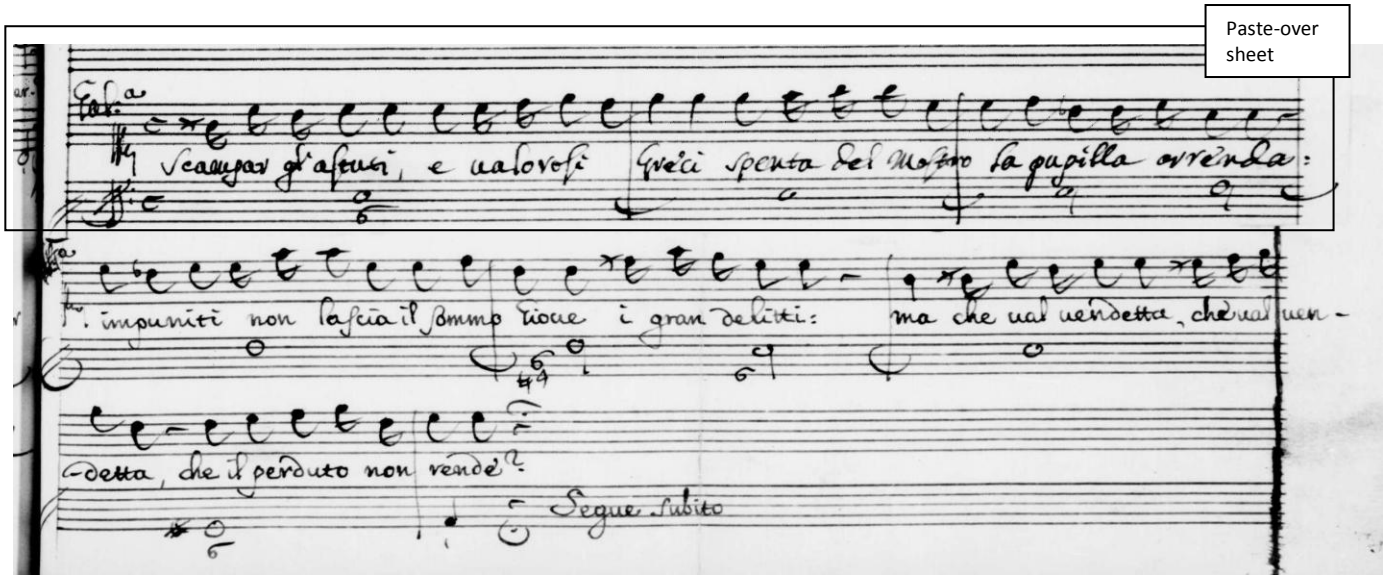
The study of the much altered Act III of *Polifemo* found in the manuscript GB-Lbl MUS/ADD/14115 raises the complicated question of whether this is an autograph score. Although listed as such in the British Library catalogue, Robinson's (1971/2, p.58) article suggests that this claim should be qualified as the manuscript has been written out in 'two different hands', further remarking that 'the bolder and untidier of the two, in which various corrections/additions have been made, may be the composer's.' MUS/ADD/14115 contains

Acts II and III of *Mitridate* (ff.1-83) and Act III of *Polifemo* (ff. 84-143). At first glance it does indeed appear that two different hands have written out the *Polifemo* act. Folios 97v, 99, 114r, 117 and 118 all seem to have a larger, untidier and more sloping hand than elsewhere in the act. Folios 99, 117 and 118 are insertions, folio 97v is a paste-over of the entire sheet and folio 114r is a paste-over of half of the sheet. All instances can be identified as alterations probably made for the second run of *Polifemo* (28 October – 4 November, 1735) which marks them out as being written at a different time from the rest of the act.[8] However, on closer examination of the handwriting it becomes more feasible that it is the same hand throughout and perhaps the difference is one of speed and/or care of writing rather than of the writer himself.

Folio 114r (Ex.118) shows an example of both types of handwriting as the first line of text and music (two staves for voice and continuo respectively) consists of two new lines of recitative for Galatea in Act III, scene iv . These were added to the second libretto (October, 1735) after the removal of Nerea's part. This new text and music is on a paste-over sheet. The next two lines of text and music are on the original folio, continuing with Galatea's recitative as it was in the first libretto and kept for the second. Although appearing very different at first glance, comparison of the formation of the letters reveals their similarity. For example, the 'p' of 'Scampar' and 'impuniti'; the 'val' of 'valorosi' and the 'val' before 'vendetta'; the capital 'G' of 'Greci' and 'Giove'. The soprano clef, semiquaver rest, number 6 and notes (minims with downward stems on the right) are all also formed similarly.

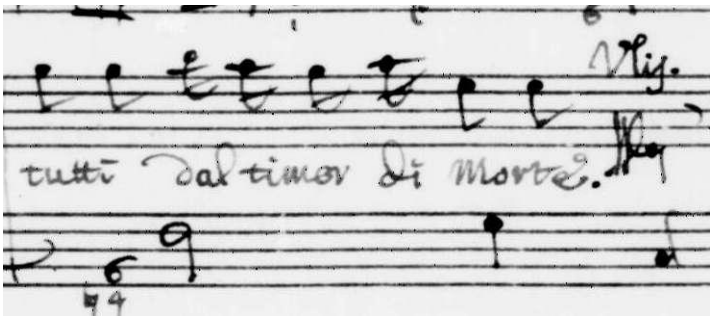
[8] See following section for details on the cuts made to *Polifemo*.

Example 118. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.114r

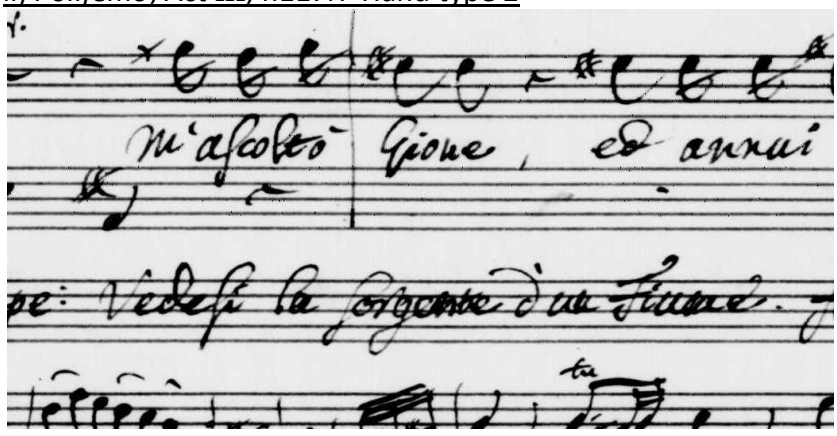


One letter which appears different in this example is the 'd'. However, both types can be seen throughout the manuscript in both types of writing (Ex.119).

Example 119. i) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.98v. Hand type 1[9]



ii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.117r. Hand type 2

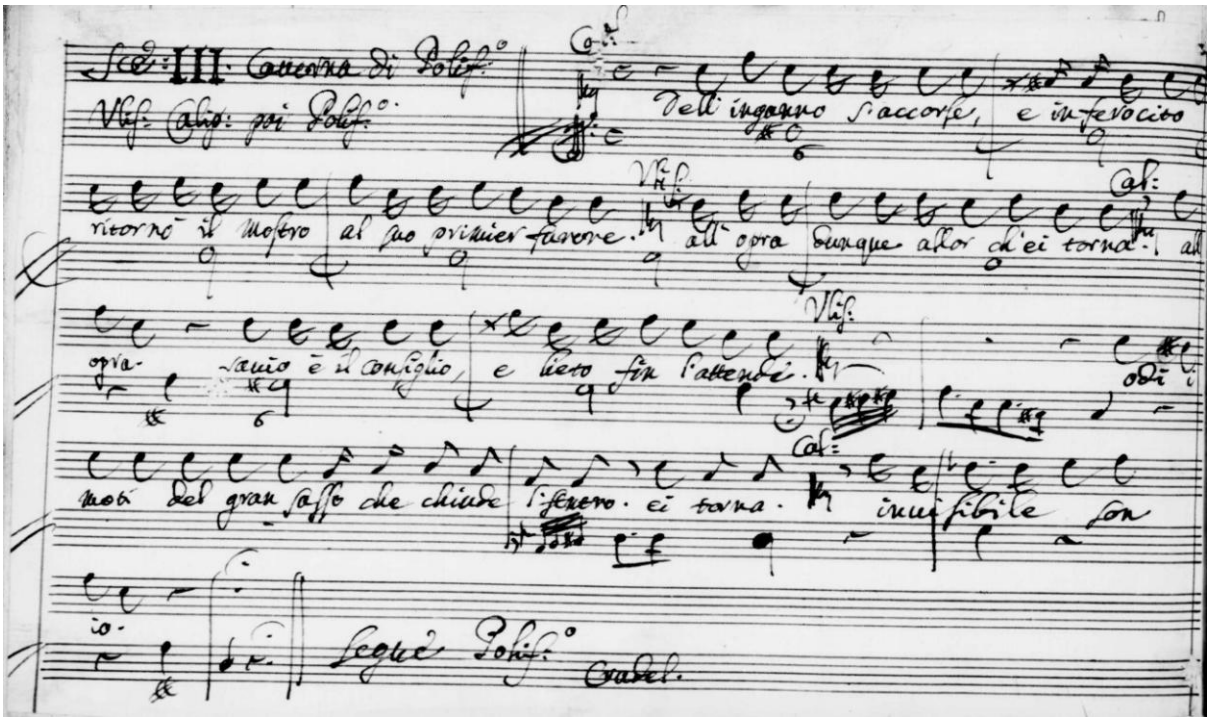


[9] The original writing in this manuscript will be referred to as Hand type 1, and writing that is on the paste-over and inserted sheets and therefore dates from later, will be referred to as Hand type 2.

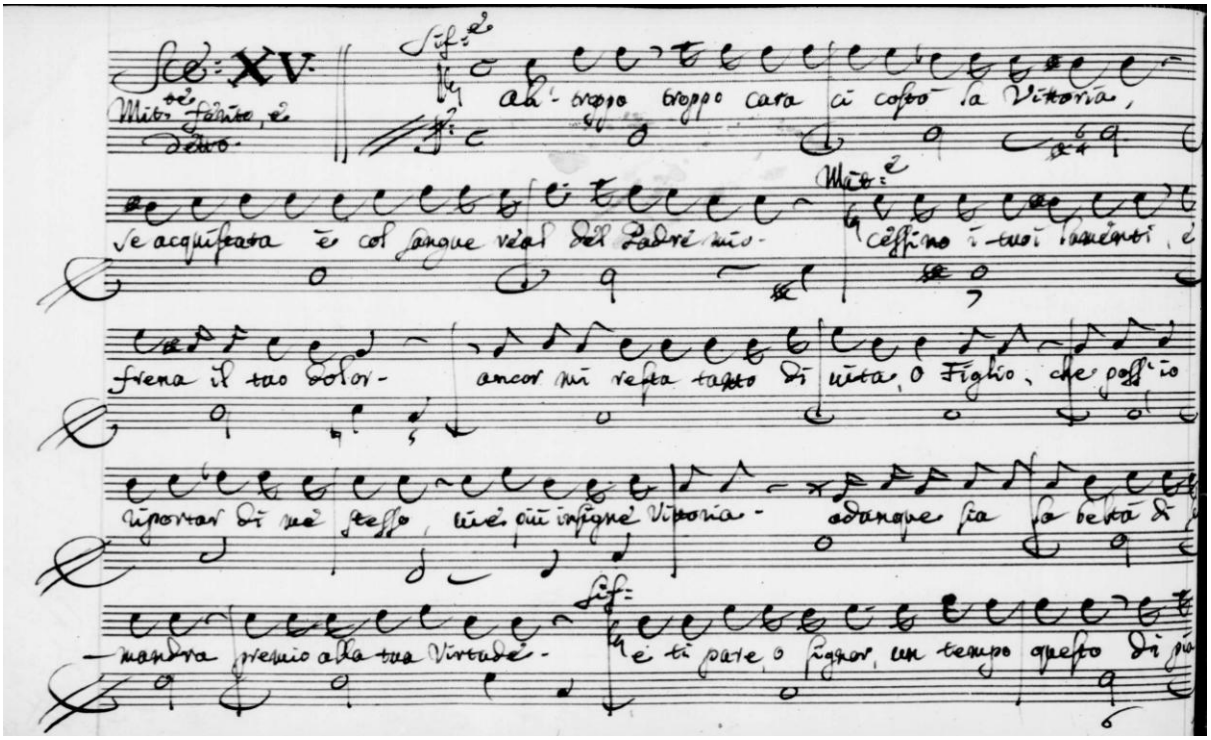
The ‘d’ with a continuous loop appears more frequently in the later type of writing as it is quicker to join this up than stop to take the pen from the page before forming the next letter. This would seem consistent with the second style looking more untidy and therefore written more hastily than the first.

The manuscript of Act III of *Polifemo* in MUS/ADD/14115 splits reasonably clearly into the two types of handwriting that contributed to this score at different times – the second type exclusively showing alterations for the second libretto and revisal. If these two different types are compared to the handwriting in the two acts of *Mitridate* (II and III) that are also contained in this volume, it seems that it is the second type of writing in *Polifemo* that is the more closely aligned with that in *Mitridate* (Ex.120). The similar writing style between the two may be because the alterations written for *Polifemo* and the writing out of *Mitridate* occurred at the same fast, perhaps less measured pace. The alterations for *Polifemo* may have been scrawled without too much attention to neatness on a working copy that was already full of corrections and the two acts of *Mitridate* may have been written less carefully than normally simply due to time pressure.

Example 120. i) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.97v. Hand type 2



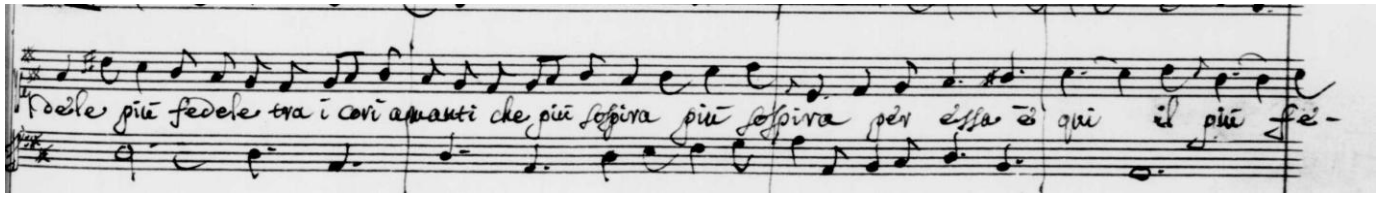
ii) *Mitridate*, Act III, f.77v



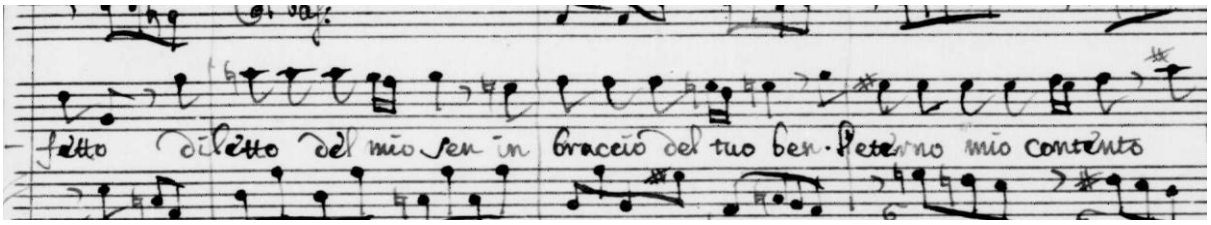
The revisal of *Polifemo* opened the 'Opera of the Nobility's' third season on Tuesday, 28 October at the King's Theatre but only ran for three performances before Farinelli fell ill which necessitated suspending further performances for two and a half weeks. On resumption, nine performances of Veracini's *Adriano in Siria* were presented before the popular *Artaserse* was again produced for four performances. Porpora's new opera, *Mitridate,* was then premièred on Saturday, 24 January 1736. Perhaps this was earlier than Porpora had intended, having anticipated a longer run of *Polifemo* and a later start date for *Adriano in Siria*. The appearance of another four performances of *Artaserse* (it had already been performed a remarkable 33 times in the previous 1734/35 season) has the feel of a reliable stop-gap, which may explain why some of the writing in *Mitridate* in this manuscript appears to have been produced at great speed.

There are several particular idiosyncratic characters throughout the manuscript that reinforce the suggestion of the entire volume being written in one hand; for example, the small letter 'e', sometimes, but not always, written with a flick (Ex.121), the distinctive capital letter 'N' on the first folio of each act as part of the signature 'N.[a] Porpora' (Ex.122) and the peculiar bass clef (Ex.123).

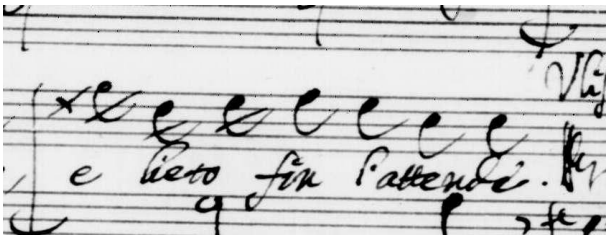
Example 121. i) *Mitridate*, Act III, f.54r



ii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.125r. Hand type 1



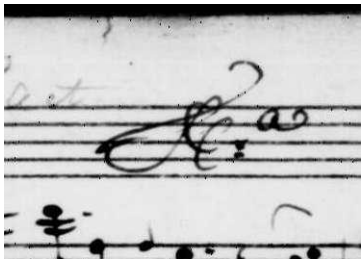
iii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.97v. Hand type 2



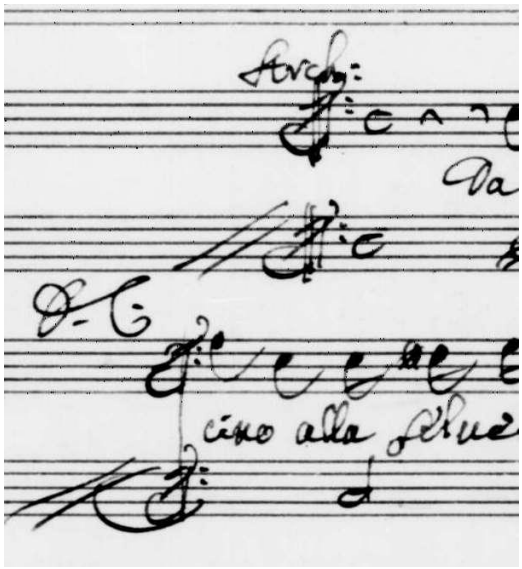
Example 122. i) *Mitridate*, Act II, f.2r

ii) *Mitridate*, Act III, f.41r

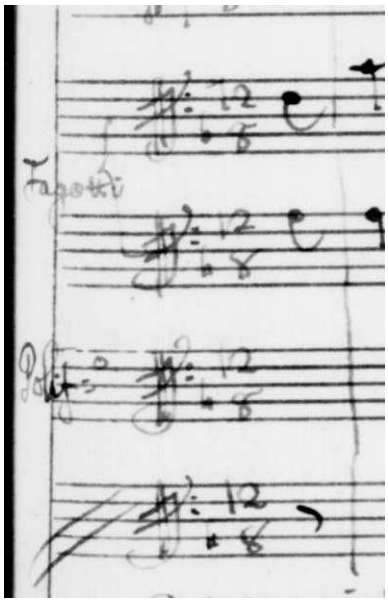
iii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.85r



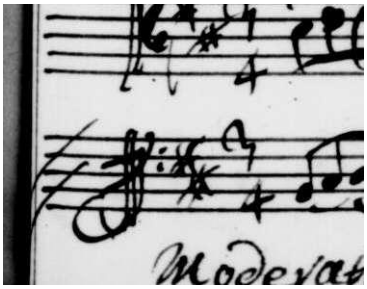
Example 123. i) *Mitridate*, Act III, f.44v



ii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.87r. Hand type 1



iii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.117r. Hand type 2



Having established that the manuscript was written in one hand, albeit at two different times, comparison with other alleged autographs reveal enough similarities and discrepancies to enable me to form a theory, in the following section, on the authenticity of this and other volumes purportedly in Porpora's hand.

Porpora's works are listed as follows (Robinson, 1992):

Vocal		
	Secular	
	Operas	44 (plus another 9 doubtful or spurious)
	Pasticcios	4
	Serenatas	12
	Cantatas	134
	Sacred	
	Mass and mass sections	7
	Operas, cantatas & oratorios	14
	Choral psalms & motets	37
	Other liturgical works	44 (plus texts to another 44 motets)
Instrumental		
	Sinfonie da camera	6
	Sonatas	19
	Overtures	1
	Concertos	2
	Fugues	2

Of these 335 works only 72 are listed as being wholly or partially extant in the composer's hand and 56 of these are in the British Library, giving the largest body of Porpora's works to investigate when considering the question of autograph manuscripts. The remaining 16 works are split between six countries with, perhaps surprisingly, only five of these being in Italy.[10] Apart from one act (III) of the second version of *Siface* (1730) which is in Belgium, the only apparent autograph manuscripts of Porpora's operas (14 acts from nine operas) are part of the Selvaggi collection held in the British Library.[11] This collection comprises 149 items (GB-Lbl MUS/ADD/14101 – 249) originally owned by Gaspare Selvaggi of Naples (1763 – 1847) and acquired by Spencer Compton, second Marquess of Northampton (1790 – 1851), who gave the collection to the British Museum in 1843. It comprises mainly Italian music from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, mostly, but not exclusively, vocal, and by different composers.

[10] Belgium, 2; Italy, 5; Austria, 6; France, 1; USA, 1; Germany, 1.
[11] *Siface* is in Brussels, Conservatoire Royal, Bibliothèque, Koninklijk Conservatorium, Bibliotheek.

Selvaggi lived in Paris from 1796 to 1810 earning a living from teaching music. This income also enabled him to build his collection, particularly of Italian literature and also of Italian music (Croce, 1947, p.81). On his return to Naples in 1810 Selvaggi wrote letters to Nicola Basti, a Neapolitan exile living in Paris, complaining that he was experiencing financial difficulties and would need to sell his collection (9 July 1838, as cited in Croce, 1947, p.83 fn.).

Spencer Compton was educated privately and at Cambridge where he 'acquired and cultivated wide intellectual tastes in science, literature, and the fine arts' (Morrell, 2004). After he lost his seat as MP for Northampton in the general election of 1820 he lived in Italy until 1830 and it is possible, therefore, that the Marquess acquired the collection from Selvaggi during this time. The manuscripts were presented with a catalogue drawn up by the Marquess's sister-in-law, Mrs Maclean Clephane, who listed six separate Porpora parcels with contents and identified which are autographs although it is not possible to ascertain on what basis she asserted their authenticity.[12] When writing about *Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Polifemo*, Yorke-Long (1951, p.156 & p.164) accepts these as autograph manuscripts as does Robinson (1971/2, p.58-9), with the one qualification with regard to the *Polifemo* manuscript. There are six 'autograph' volumes held at the British Library as part of this Selvaggi collection that contain one or more acts of one or more Porpora operas. Table 31 lists these chronologically as identified in the Clephane catalogue.

Table 31. 'Autograph' scores of Porpora's operas held at the British Library

YEAR	OPERA	PREMIÈRE	ACTS	SHELFMARK
1711	*Flavio Anicio Olibrio*	Naples	I and II	MUS/ADD/14121
1725	*Didone abbandonata*	Reggio nell'Emilia	II and III	MUS/ADD/14119
1725	*Siface*	Venice	I and III	MUS/ADD/14116
1727	*Arianna e Teseo*	Venice	II	MUS/ADD/14114
1735	*Polifemo*	London	III	MUS/ADD/14115
1735	*Ifigenia in Aulide*	London	II	MUS/ADD/14114
1736	*Mitridate*	London	II and III	MUS/ADD/14115
1737	*Rosbale*	Venice	III	MUS/ADD/14114
1760	*Il trionfo di Camilla*	Naples	I and III	MUS/ADD/14117

[12] MUS/ADD/14249

An investigation into the authenticity of these 'autographs' reveals, as might be expected over such a wide time period, a number of complications with various hands evident in addition to Porpora's, and the possibility of Porpora's own hand changing over the years. For the purposes of this study the earliest of these 'autograph' manuscripts, *Flavio Anicio Olibrio,* has not been included. Identification of the writing in this volume is complex because the manuscript contains many different hands and three of the most idiosyncratic characteristics found in the other volumes - the capital 'N', flick on the small 'e' and the peculiar bass clef are nowhere to be found in this manuscript. A comparison of the remaining eight scores however, ranging over their 35 year period, has revealed several similar idiosyncratic characteristics and it is reasonable to assume that these manuscripts were written by the same hand – that of Porpora. Below are listed various characters within the manuscripts and how they appear, together with variations where they occur. All the scanned examples come from MUS/ADD/14115.

Clefs (See Table 32)

The treble clef appears conventionally written although perhaps smaller than elsewhere in handwritten music. It appears with the same formation, although is slightly larger occasionally in the first manuscript, *Didone abbandonata.* The ink is quite faded in the *Il trionfo di Camilla* manuscript and it is often difficult to distinguish the clefs at the beginning of lines. The treble clef in this last manuscript is almost indecipherable at times but still has the vague shape of the earlier clefs.

Table 32. Treble, alto and soprano clefs written in Porpora's 'autograph' scores

CLEFS	TREBLE	ALTO	SOPRANO
Most often found			

The alto and soprano clefs remain remarkably consistent throughout the manuscripts with slight variations in *Il trionfo di Camilla* although, again, it is very difficult to distinguish clefs clearly in this manuscript.

The bass clef also has a less conventional appearance than the treble, making this clef peculiar to Porpora (see Table 33). The unusual formation of this clef can be seen throughout all the manuscripts and is elaborated upon to a greater or lesser degree. By the time of *Polifemo* (see Example 123, ii above) it appears to have evolved into the fully worked example, remaining similar throughout *Ifigenia in Aulide* before reverting to a simpler style for the remaining manuscripts.

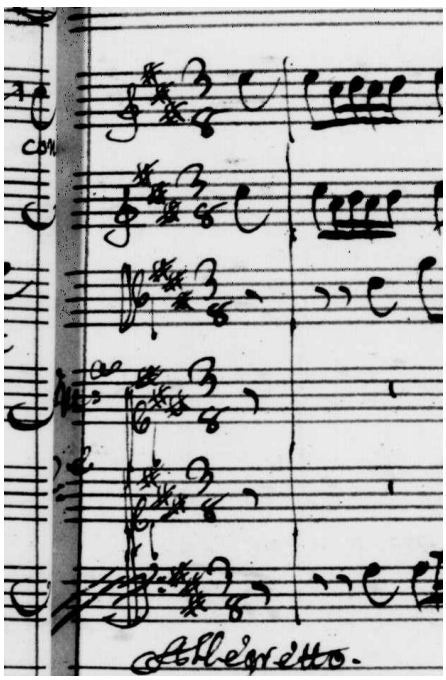
Table 33. Bass clefs written in Porpora's 'autograph' scores

Didone abbandonata	*Siface*	*Arianna e Teseo*	*Polifemo* & *Ifigenia in Aulide*	*Mitridate* & *Rosbale*	*Il trionfo di Camilla*
					

Key Signatures

Both sharp and flat key signatures are written from the top down. For example, the key of A major in the treble clef shows F♯, C♯, G♯ in this order and in the bass clef shows G♯, F♯, C♯ (Ex.124).

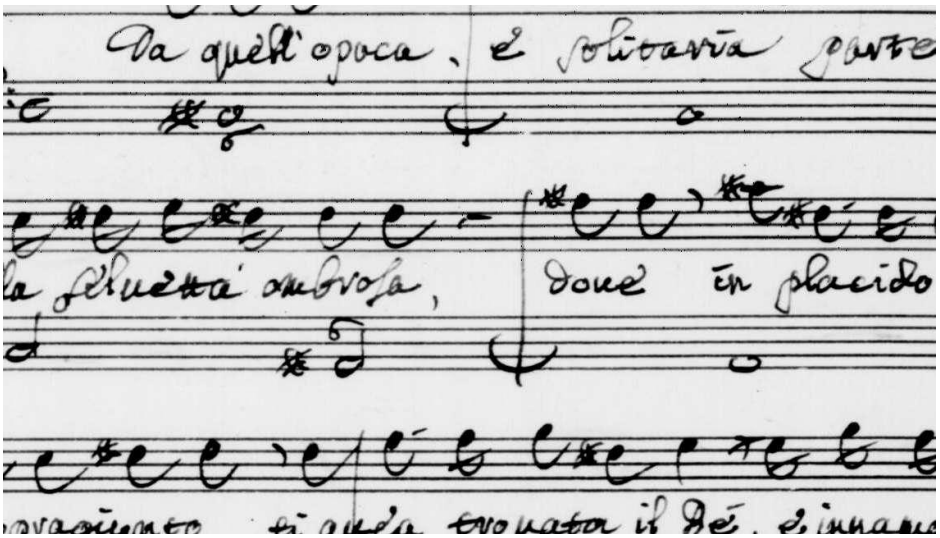
Example 124. *Mitridate*, Act II, f.13r



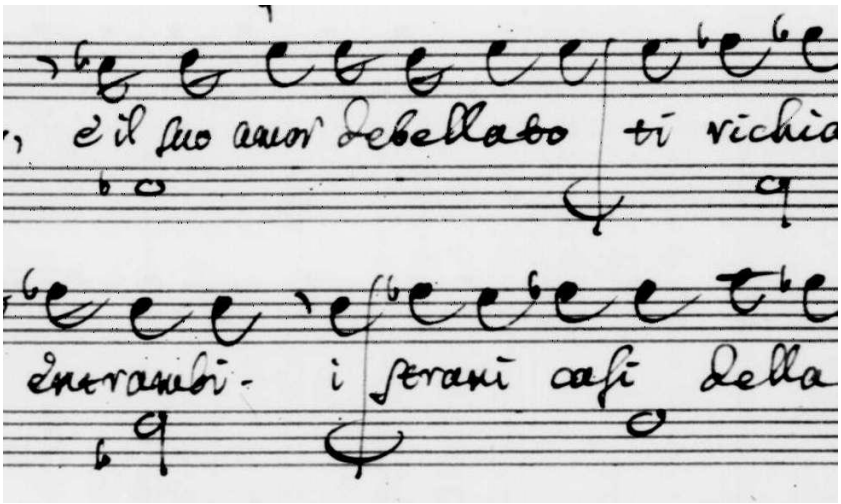
Accidentals

The sharp is a curved sign (Ex.125) and the flat is most usually formed in a single stroke (Ex.126).

Example 125. *Mitridate*, Act III, f.45v



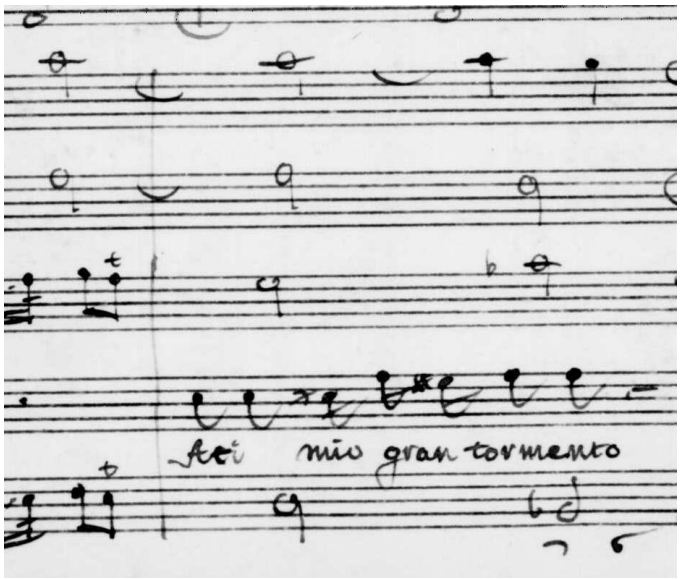
Example 126. *Mitridate*, Act III, f.69v



Notes

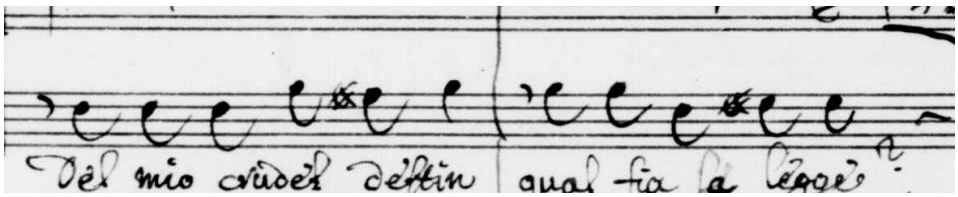
Consistently, minim or dotted minim notes with downward stems appear on the right (Ex.127).

Example 127. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.92r



The stem and tail of single quavers with a downward stem are often formed in one stroke with a curved stem (Ex.128).

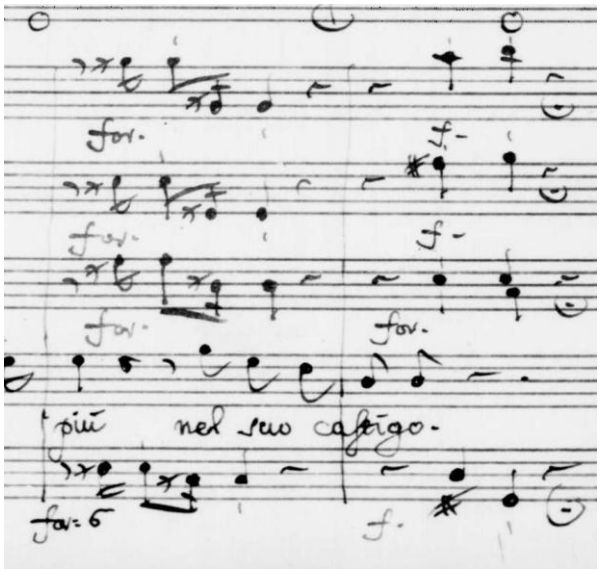
Example 128. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.62v



Rests

Rests are small and consistently formed (Ex.129).

Example 129. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.120v

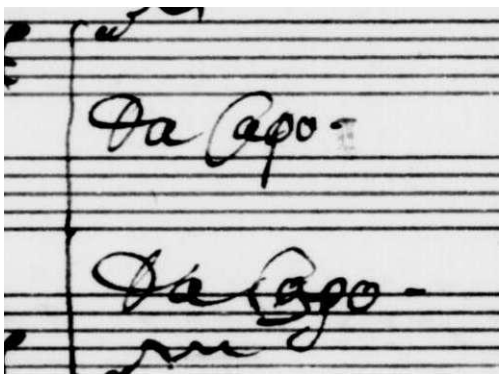


Letters and Words

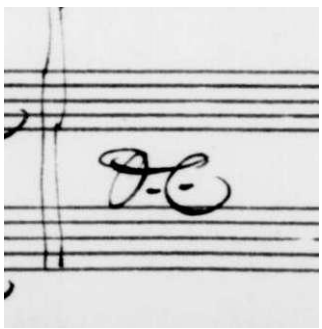
The letter e is found with a peculiar flick on it in all of the manuscripts (Ex.121). In the two earliest this only occurs on the capital e but subsequently the small e with and without a flick are found throughout the remaining manuscripts.

'Da Capo' is written out in full in the first three operas and once in Act II of *Mitridate* (Ex.130). Elsewhere this is abbreviated to 'D.C.' and the letters are consistently formed in both cases (Ex.131).

Example 130. *Mitridate*, Act II, f.7v

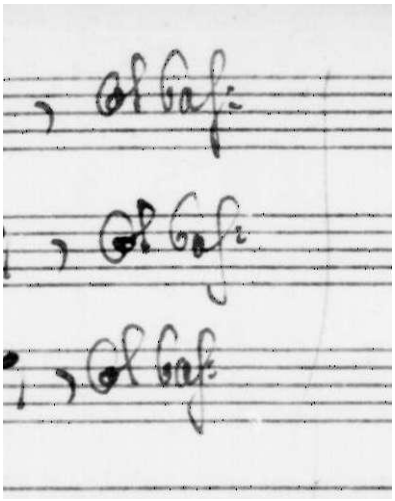


Example 131. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.61r

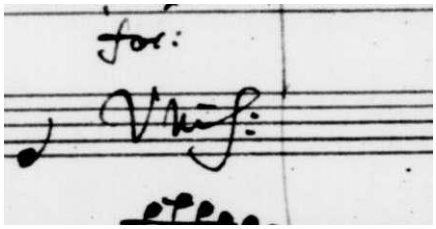


Other often repeated words are similarly formed throughout all manuscripts: 'Col bas' (Ex.132), 'Unis.' (Ex.133), 'Scena P.^{ma}' (Ex.134).

Example 132. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.131v



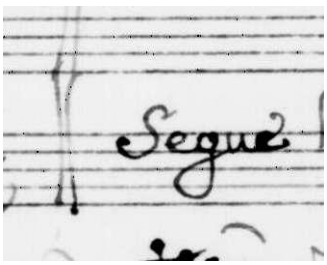
Example 133. *Mitridate*, Act III, f.48v



Example 134. *Mitridate*, Act II, f.2r

Oddly, both 'segue' and 'siegue' are found throughout the manuscripts with both spellings appearing in *Didone abbandonata, Polifemo, Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Rosbale* (Ex.135).

Example 135. i) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.94v



ii) *Polifemo*, Act III, f.89r

Numbers

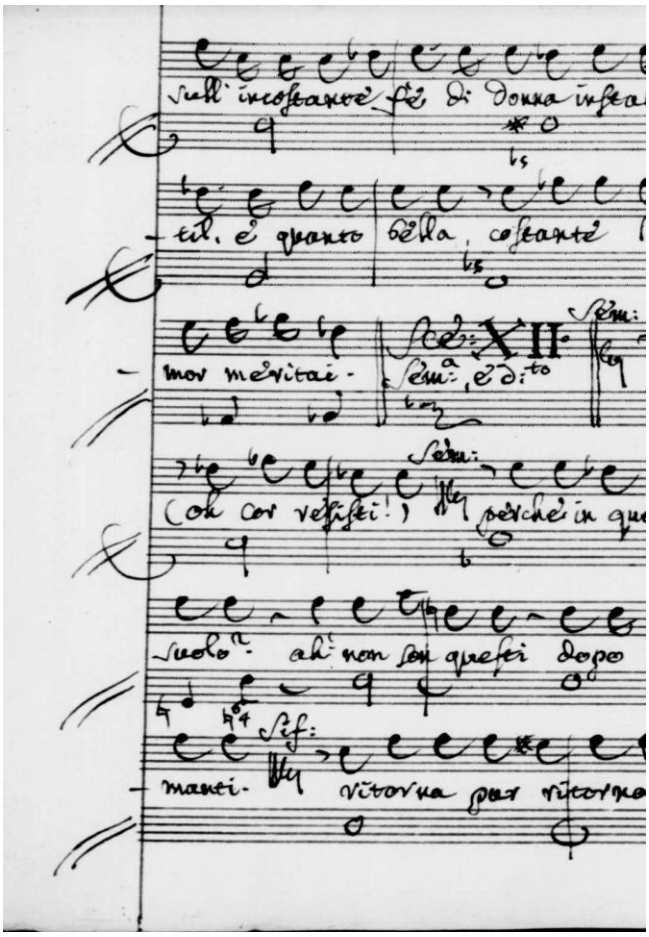
These appear to be similar throughout, for example 6 and 2 (Ex.136).

Example 136. *Mitridate*, Act III, f.50r

Other Marks

Staves are often bracketed together in manuscript scores to indicate that they are to be read and played/sung simultaneously. In all the Porpora opera scores I have looked at this is not the case. The cut off between one group of associated staves and another is shown by two slanting lines, occasionally bisected approximately by an arc (Ex.137).

Example 137. *Mitridate*, Act II, f.35v



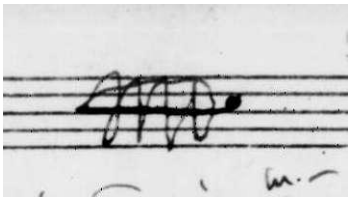
Signature

There are two different signatures which may be Porpora's. The first is easy to read as 'N[a]. Porpora' (Ex.138).

Example 138. *Mitridate*, Act II, f.2r

This is found on the first folio of the *Polifemo*, *Ifigenia in Aulide*, and *Rosbale* manuscripts and on the first folio of both Acts (II and III) of the *Mitridate* manuscript. The capital N here, as has already been noted, is elaborate and similarly formed in each case, as is the remainder of the signature. The second 'signature' is an illegible squiggle (Ex.139).

Example 139. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.85r



This appears on the first folios of Act I of *Siface, Arianna e Teseo* and *Polifemo*. Unusually *Polifemo* has both the squiggle and the legible signature while *Didone abbandonata* and *Il trionfo di Camilla* have neither. Unlike the other manuscripts studied here which continue immediately with the first scene of the act after the titles, the title page for *Il trionfo di Camilla* is a separate folio on which only the titles are written and these are in a different hand. Rather than the composer's signature there is an attribution which reads *Del Sig Nicolò Porpora,* the letters being formed markedly differently from the N[a]. Porpora already discussed.

If either the squiggle or the elaborate signature appeared on all manuscripts it would be a simpler task to assign autograph authenticity to those manuscripts. Unfortunately this is not the case. Table 34 shows where each is to be found.

Table 34. Squiggle and signature written in Porpora's 'autograph' scores

	Didone abbandonata	***Siface***	***Arianna e Teseo***	***Polifemo***	***Ifigenia in Aulide***	***Mitridate***	***Rosbale***	***Il trionfo di Camilla***
Squiggle	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	x
Signature	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x

There is an overlap and crossover from the squiggle to the legible signature. Whilst in Italy, Porpora may have been confident that his squiggle, which possibly he signed on all his autographs, was sufficiently well-known to satisfy him that the score required no further identification. The first instance of his legible signature is on the *Polifemo* manuscript, the earliest 'autograph' of the London operas. Perhaps Porpora was not confident of his former usual squiggle being recognised, and wanted to firmly stake his proprietorial claim to the manuscript. The same clear signature is also on the other two London 'autographs' (*Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Mitridate*) and is found, after his return to Venice, on the 1737 manuscript of *Rosbale*. Perhaps this 'new' signature had become a habit which he continued after he left London or perhaps *Rosbale* was written in London intended for performance there.

Although the paper on which the *Rosbale* manuscript has been written appears to be Venetian with the presence of a watermark of three crescents, it seems likely that Porpora brought Italian paper with him to London because the *Mitridate, Ifigenia in Aulide* and *Polifemo* manuscripts are all written on similar Italian paper.[13] It is therefore possible that *Rosbale* was written on this same paper whilst he was in England, prompting Porpora to write his full signature and 'Fog^{o} P^{mo} Origle' (Foglio Primo Originale – first original folio) as he had on the other manuscripts (see below). There is another opera between the last London opera – *Mitridate* – and *Rosbale,* which is *Lucio Papirio*, first performed in Venice in 1737, but there is no autograph manuscript or extant full score remaining of this to examine. By 1760 the full signature had disappeared again and there is no sign of either squiggle or signature on *Il trionfo di Camilla*.

[13] Paper with three crescents was produced in Lombardy and Venetia as early as 1610 and continued in use through to the nineteenth century (Heawood, 1950, tracings 863-7, 869-72).

The words 'Fog^{o} P^{mo} Origle' (Ex.140) can be found on the title folios of five of the operas as shown on Table 35 .

Example 140. *Mitridate*, Act II, f.2r

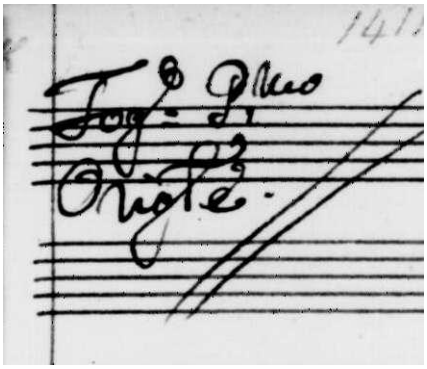


Table 35. 'Foglio Primo Originale' written in Porpora's 'autograph' scores

	Didone abbandonata	***Siface***	***Arianna e Teseo***	***Polifemo***	***Ifigenia in Aulide***	***Mitridate***	***Rosbale***	***Il trionfo di Camilla***
Fog^{o} P^{mo} Origle	✓[14]	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓[15]

On all of the *Polifemo*, *Ifigenia in Aulide*, *Mitridate* and *Rosbale* acts this ascription is in the same hand as the rest of the manuscript. This again suggests that Porpora was keen to establish autograph authenticity and therefore ownership of his London work, carrying it through again to *Rosbale*. The phrase is shortened significantly to just 'p^{mo}' on *Didone abbandonata* and another shortened version, *Originale*, is found on the *Trionfo di Camilla* manuscript, this time in a different hand. It suggests that Porpora scarcely considered it necessary for himself to further identify manuscripts of his operas produced in Italy as being autographs, largely contenting himself with either his idiosyncratic squiggle or nothing at all.

Manuscript MUS/ADD/14114 offers additional data to further suggest authenticity of the hand being Porpora's. The first score in this volume of three disparate opera acts bound together is Act II of *Ifigenia in Aulide*, which is dated at the beginning and end of the act in the same hand as the rest of the text in the volume. This opera was written for London and first performed on Saturday, 3 May 1735. Folio 1r is dated '18 Aple [April] 1735' and folio 39r '22 Aple 1735'. It is likely that Porpora himself wrote the dates, perhaps even adding

[14] Shortened to 'p^{mo}'.
[15] Shortened to 'Originale' and in a different hand to Porpora's, as is all of the title page.

them after writing the act, impressed with and wanting to record his speed of composition; four days to complete the act of an opera which was performed 11 days later.

There are other examples of dates being written at the beginning and end of scores to corroborate this assumption. Manuscript MUS/ADD/14120 contains the two parts of Porpora's Serenata, *Angelica* (Naples, 4 September, 1720) and the two parts of another Serenata, entitled *Cantata à 4* (Rome?, 4 November, 1712). Folio 1r gives the Serenata's title, *Angelica,* and also 'P.^{E} I.^{A}' (Parte Prima – First Part). Folio 2r gives the date '7 Agosto [August] 1720' and 'Parte Prima', written in a different hand from f.1. This new hand appears to be Porpora's. A date of '19. Agosto 1720' and '^{pte} 2.^{a}' (Parte Seconda - Second Part) is written on f.77r, again in Porpora's hand. With only 12 days between writing the First and Second Parts of *Angelica*, Porpora seems to have wanted to record this speedy execution.

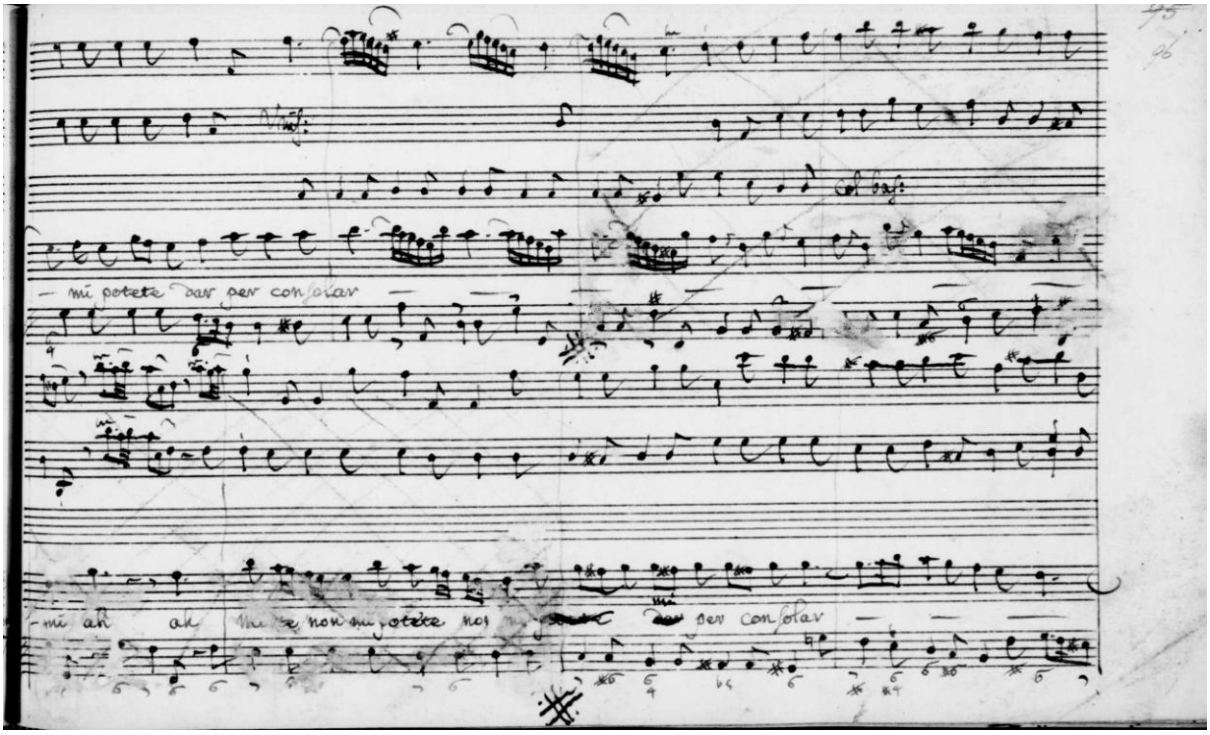
The same volume has '2^{a} p^{te}' (Seconda Parte) and a date of '29 Ott^{re} [October] 1712' on f.158r and what appears to be the finishing date for this Part of 'Fine 2 bre [assumed to be November] 1712 In Roma' on f.193v. This is the Second Part of the *Cantata à 4*, written in honour of Charles VI, who had been crowned Emperor the previous year. Again these dates appear to be in Porpora's hand and this is another example of his wishing to record a quick composition time of only four days.

There are a few corrections and alterations throughout the MUS/ADD/14114 manuscript to further suggest that this was an original autograph rather than a copy. A fairly clean autograph working manuscript is not unusual as the other 'autographs' similarly have few corrections. The only exception is the manuscript of Act III of *Polifemo*, but as this opera was revised in a later season the alterations are perhaps understandable in this score.

In the *Polifemo* manuscript, two similar signs, one with and one without dots, are used interchangeably for passages to be cut and for da capo and dal segno instructions. Whether the sign is with or without dots, they match one another at the beginning and end of each individual repeat or cut. When it is a simple da capo instruction for the aria to be repeated from the beginning, only the letters D.C. are used, but when it is a truncated version – usually by a shortening of the opening ritornello – D.C. and the sign is used, sometimes with additional instruction. The lack of use of the term dal segno (or its initials) where it might be expected is peculiar throughout these manuscripts, indicating one hand.

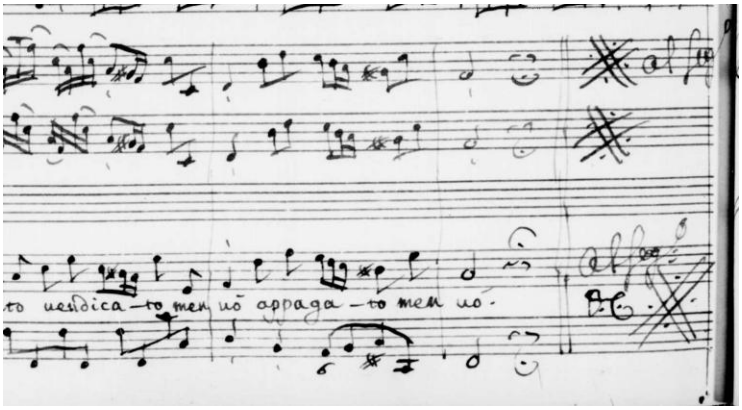
Example 141 shows the sign with dots  being used to indicate the beginning and end of a cut.

Example 141. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.96r



Example 142 shows the same sign being used with 'D.C.' and 'al segno' to go back, not quite to the beginning of the aria but, to the matching sign on f.105v after six bars of the opening ritornello.

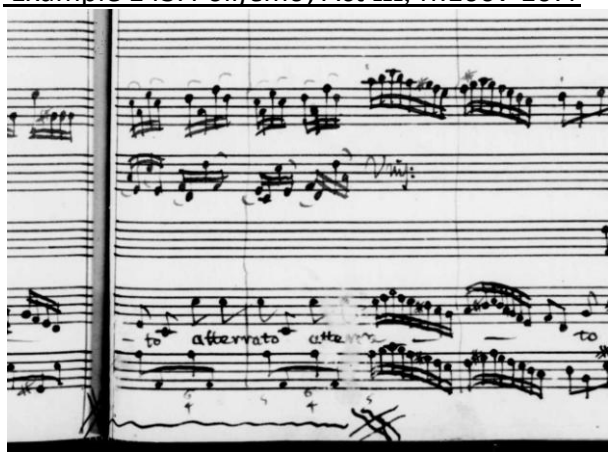
Example 142. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.109v



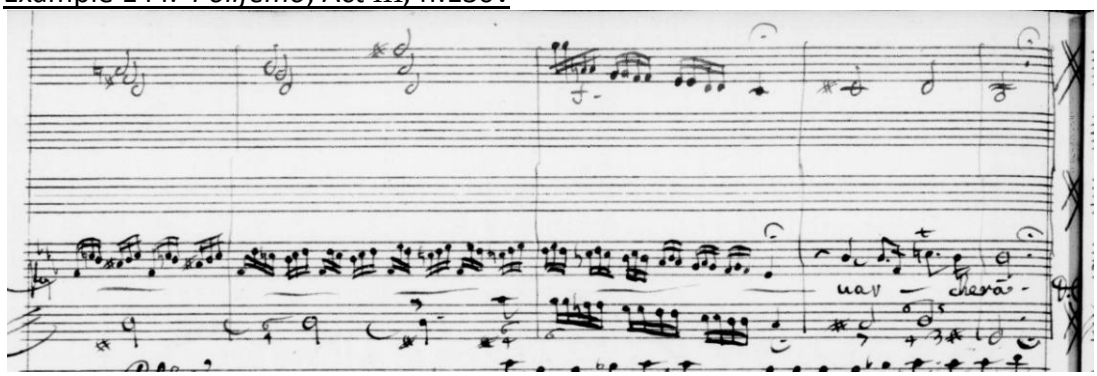
This same sign but without dots is used elsewhere in this manuscript to give the same two instructions. Example 143 shows a cut and example 144 shows the same sign with a da

capo instruction, in reality indicating a return to two bars into the opening ritornello of the aria on f.126r.

Example 143. *Polifemo*, Act III, ff.106v-107r

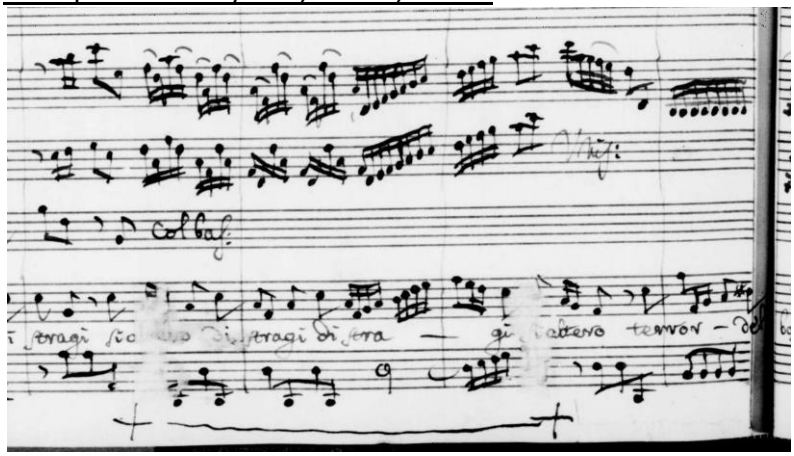


Example 144. *Polifemo*, Act III, ff.130v



A simplified version of this sign is also seen in several instances to signify cuts (Ex.145).

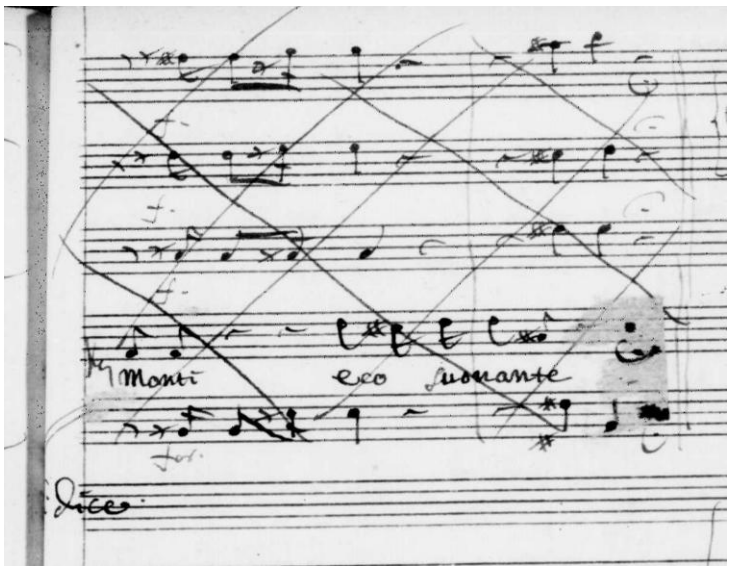
Example 145. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.108v



This lack of consistency when using the signs is seen in other manuscripts also suggesting the same author. In the *Ifigenia in Aulide*, *Arianna e Teseo* and *Mitridate* manuscripts, a similar sign as the one seen in example 144 above (without dots) is used at the end of an aria to direct a return to where there is the similar sign, effectively shortening the opening ritornello. In *Mitridate* the same instruction is indicated by the sign with dots (as in Ex.142). In the *Arianna e Teseo* and *Didone abbandonata* manuscripts the sign without dots is used as in example 143 at the beginning and end of a cut.

In the *Siface*, *Arianna e Teseo*, and *Polifemo* manuscripts the instruction 'si dice' occurs. It appears once in *Polifemo* and twice each in *Siface* and *Arianna e Teseo.* In *Polifemo* it is written under two bars at the end of a passage of accompanied recitative which have been crossed through (Ex.146). The rest of the accompanied recitative on the previous sheets has not been crossed through so it would appear that the crossing through is an error and 'si dice' should be taken to mean 'it is said', rather like the use of 'stet' ('let it stand'). Similarly, in the *Siface* and *Arianna e Teseo* manuscripts, the 'si dice' instruction occurs next to bars that have been crossed through and, it would seem, reinstated. A copyist was unlikely to write out bars, decide they are incorrect and then subsequently decide they are actually correct and use 'si dice' to reinstate them, especially in the case of an English copyist working on *Polifemo*. It seems more likely that this was Porpora changing his mind back and forth.

Example 146. *Polifemo*, Act III, f.140r



All the above evidence suggests that the collection of Porpora's operas held in the British Library and certified as autograph manuscripts are indeed the work of Porpora's own hand. Many examples of similar handwriting and usage of terms and symbols have been highlighted across three and a half decades to facilitate this assumption.

Polifemo: A Compositional Chronology

Polifemo is the only one of Porpora's five London operas which was revised and performed in a second season.[16] There are several differences between the two librettos that were produced for the two seasons and also between the two extant *Polifemo* music manuscripts, one of which is an autograph score. The popularity of this opera is seen in the existence of two other sources of music, one hand-written and one printed, containing a selection of the opera's arias. This section investigates the differences between these sources, their chronology and hypothesizes as to the reasons for the alterations.

Sources

All of the following sources are held in the British Library (GB-Lbl) and are listed here with their shelf marks.

i) Printed Librettos

a) 11714.aa.21.(11.). Printed by Charles Bennet. The date printed on this libretto is 1734 but as the first performance was on 1 February, 1735 this must be the date in the old style. Until 1752, the calendar in England gave 25 March as the first day of the New Year. There is a hand written note on the title page of the libretto next to the year stating 'old style'. The same hand has also written 'First performed Feb^{y} 1st 1735.' and '(Original libretto)'. This libretto was therefore printed for the first run of performances in the 1734/35 season.

b) 907.i.11.(1.). Also printed by Charles Bennet. The printed date has been changed to 1735, post dating the previous libretto and it is therefore very likely that this libretto was printed for the revisal in the 1735/36 season.

[16] Porpora's one oratorio for London, *David e Bersabea,* was performed in both the 1733/34 and 1734/35 seasons. See Appendix 1.

ii) Manuscript Scores

a) MUS/ADD/14115. One volume containing Acts II and III of *Mitridate* and Act III of *Polifemo*. Autograph.

b) R.M.23.a.7 – R.M.23.a.9. Three separately bound volumes held as part of the Royal Music Library each containing one act.

c) MUS/ADD/31504. One volume of various compositions for solo voice with figured bass by mainly Italian composers. There are 19 works attributed to Porpora in this volume, including five of Farinelli's arias from *Polifemo* (see below). The volume is part of a collection (MUS/ADD/31,384 – 31,823) formed by Mr. Julian Marshall. The instructions to 'turn quick' at the bottom of several folios suggest that this volume was prepared in England.

iii) Printed Scores

a) G.193.(3.)G. *The Favourite Songs in the Opera call'd Polypheme*. This is a printed volume published in London, March 1735 by J. Walsh.[17] It contains five arias for Farinelli, one for Montagnana and one for Senesino (see below).

[17] Advertised in the *London Evening Post,* 13-15 March.

Textual Differences: A Comparison of the Two Librettos

Table 36. Differences between the two *Polifemo* librettos

ACT/SCENE	CHANGES BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND LIBRETTO
Act I, scene i	None
ii	None
iii	None
iv	Nerea's recitative is cut (and consequently also two lines of Calipso's recitative) Calipso's aria has new text
v	None
vi	None
Act II, scene i	Nerea's recitative and aria are cut (and consequently also 11 lines of Calipso's recitative)
ii	Calipso's aria has new text
iii	Aci's aria has new text
iv	None
v	Aci's aria has new text
vi	Calipso has an additional aria
vii	Final six lines of Aci & Galatea's duet are cut
Act III, scene i	None
ii	None
iii	Calipso's aria has new text
iv	Nerea's recitative is cut
v	Aci's aria is replaced by a duet for him and Galatea and subsequently three lines of Galatea's recitative is cut
vi	Two lines of Polifemo's recitative are cut and subsequently Galatea's aria is cut Nerea's recitative and aria are cut
ultima	Trio (Aci, Galatea & Ulisse) and final coro are cut

Table 36 shows two main character changes between the first and second run; the part of Nerea was cut entirely from the opera and the part of Calipso was altered. The advertisements for the revisal of *Polifemo* in October 1735 claimed there would be 'alterations and additions' to encourage the audience to revisit a production already seen in the previous season with the promise of new arias.[18] The notice in the paper announcing the arrival of a new singer – Santa Tasca – and the composition of a new part for her in *Polifemo* was, in practice, the replacing of Calipso's aria texts with new ones, without

[18] *London Daily Post,* 21 October.

altering the sentiment of those moments in the opera, and the addition of one new text, increasing the character's aria count from three to four.[19]

As Santa Tasca was a soprano this now increased the number of soprano roles to three (Cuzzoni as Galatea, Santa Tasca as Calipso and Segatti as Nerea) and left no role for a contralto; the original Calipso, the contralto Francesca Bertolli, now giving way to Santa Tasca. This may have been one of the reasons that the part of Nerea was cut, to avoid having three soprano roles in one opera. Although this would have been unusual, Porpora was not averse to the idea of three soprano roles in his operas as Cuzzoni, Hempson and Segatti (as fourth lady) all had roles in *Enea nel Lazio* (May 1734), but this is balanced by the inclusion of a contralto part for Bertolli which it is not in *Polifemo*, once Bertolli was replaced by Santa Tasca. The loss of Nerea was negligible from a dramatic point of view as she did not contribute to the action and was only a companion to Calipso. She had the lowest number of arias to begin with and it is probable that one of her arias (III.vi) was cut even before the first run (see below).

The part of Nerea was played by Maria Segatti, a stalwart of the 'Opera of the Nobility' from its inception. She was sufficiently rated by Porpora to be given the title role in *Arianna in Naxo* in the inaugural performance of the 'Opera of the Nobility's' first season, but this was only until the much anticipated arrival of Cuzzoni in April 1734, who took over the role. Segatti was then no longer required for this opera and only reappeared as fourth lady (Pallas) in the following production of Porpora's *Enea nel Lazio.* After the initial run of *Polifemo* Segatti took the role of third lady in the following productions of *Issipile* (Rodope, April 1735) and *Ifigenia in Aulide* (Ulisse, May 1735). However, with the arrival of Santa Tasca for the *Polifemo* revival Segatti was again cast aside as her part of Nerea was wholly cut and there was no role for her in the 'Opera of the Nobility's' next three productions of Veracini's *Adriano* (November 1735), Porpora's *Mitridate* (January 1736) and the pasticcio *Orfeo* (March 1736). Segatti appears to have been a utility soprano; used as and when required but just as easily dispensed with if not needed. She often took the part of third or even fourth lady but was also capable of taking the prima donna role if necessary until a star of greater attraction was able to fulfil the role. This apparent indifference to Segatti's

[19] 'Sorte un'umile Capanna' changed for 'Vedrai che veglia il Cielo' (I.iv); 'Lascia frat anti Mali' changed for 'Nel rigor d'avversa stella' (II.ii); 'Il gioir qualor s'aspetta' changed for 'Ad altri sia più grato' (III.iii). 'Trar non suol l'Ape ingegnosa' added (II.vi).

inclusion or status within an opera may have made it easy for Porpora to simply cut the part of Nerea in an attempt to tighten up the pace of the action by removing this dramatically superfluous character.

As with the new aria texts for Calipso, the two new texts for Aci (II.iii and II.v) did not alter the drama or express fundamentally different sentiments from those in the original libretto.[20] The changes served to give the audience fresh material that they did not hear during the first run and it would have been particularly appealing to hear new arias from Farinelli. Perhaps also it was the opportunity to replace the least popular of Farinelli's arias in *Polifemo* that singled them out for replacement. Burney (1789, p.797) commented on these arias when he studied them in the printed volume '*The Favourite Songs in the Opera call'd Polypheme*' which was published by Walsh in March 1735. He praised 'Senti 'l Fato' (III.vi) for its 'long notes in distant intervals, and brilliant divisions, to display the voice and execution of the performer' and 'Dolci fresche Aurette grate' (I.iii) for its 'elegant passages...well calculated to show the taste and expression of a superior singer'. However, Burney criticised the two that were replaced for the second run. 'Lusingato dalla Speme' (II.iii) was considered 'poor and the passages light and frivolous' and 'Nell' attendere il mio Bene' (II.v) had 'innumerable unmeaning shakes and divisions that are now become common and insipid.' Burney also disliked the fifth of Farinelli's arias printed in this volume, 'Morirei del partir nel momento' (I.vi) pronouncing it 'languid, common and uninteresting on paper.' He did however concede that such a great singer as Farinelli may have delighted the audience with his embellishments and 'pathetic powers' which is perhaps why it remained for the second run.

The cutting of Aci and Galatea's six lines of duet at the end of Act II served to bring the act to a swifter conclusion as the lovers sing of their mutual secret love. The duet is already 14 lines long and the extra six do not express any new sentiment. The trio for Aci, Galatea and Ulisse at the end of Act III was similarly cut, albeit more savagely here as the ensemble was cut in its entirety. In the original libretto the structure of the last scene is:

[20] 'Lusingato dalla Speme' changed for 'Zeffiro Lusinghier' (II.iii); 'Nell'attendere il mio Bene' changed for 'Dal guardo che incatena' (II.v).

Recitative	Ulisse, 12 lines
Coro	3 lines
Solo verse	Aci, 3 lines
Solo verse	Galatea, 5 lines
Solo verse	Aci, 5 lines
Solo verse	Ulisse, 3 lines
Duet verse	Galatea and Aci, 3 lines
Trio verses	Ulisse, Aci and Galatea, 3 and 5 lines
Coro	3 lines (as before)

For the revised production all was excised apart from Ulisse's opening recitative and the final three line coro. Again this seems to have been an attempt to conclude the act and also here, the opera, more swiftly. The drama is resolved; Ulisse has freed himself and his followers from the monstrous Polifemo by blinding him. He has departed leaving Calipso hopeful in her love for him.[21] Aci has eluded death, being granted immortality by the gods at Galatea's request after Polifemo tried to kill him with a rock. Aci taunts Polifemo with his new immortality and his union with Galatea, and Polifemo departs in a despairing rage. With Polifemo's exit Ulisse returns for the final scene to sing of everybody's joy. Although the nymph Calipso is not mentioned specifically in the list of characters in this scene's heading – 'Ulisse, Aci, e Galatea, &c.' - it can be assumed that she too reappears as part of the 'etc.' as Ulisse exhorts the nymphs to sing. The *lieto fine* having then been achieved, the final three lines of text are sufficient for all the principal players, except for the wretched Polifemo, and chorus to express their joy which is perhaps why the rest of the text was cut for the second run. The happy conclusion to this opera is the victory over Polifemo for both Ulisse, in his escape from the monster, and for Aci in his avoiding being killed by him. The final solo, duet and trio celebrating love feel contrived and unnecessary, particularly for Ulisse who was last seen professing love for Calipso as long ago as Act II, scene vi.

Act III, scene v is a very short scene between Aci and Galatea and underwent many musical changes. It is a dramatic climax as Aci's fate is revealed which shows whether Polifemo has achieved his aim of killing his rival, or whether Galatea has persuaded the gods

[21] In Homer's *Odyssey* Calipso enchants Ulisse and holds him captive for seven years.

to spare him death and make him immortal. As the scene opens Aci appears in his now immortal state as the god of a river spring and, in the original libretto, he is given a text of only three lines to express his thanks to Giove. In the revised libretto this initial focus on Aci alone is immediately altered to include Galatea. Aci says he comes straight from the immortal breast above to the bosom of his love and they then offer thanks to Giove together ('Immortale dal tuo sen,/Scendo in braccio del mio Ben:/Grazie o Giove a tua Pieta.'). Still keeping the focus on both characters Aci then acknowledges Galatea's part in his achieving his immortality and they both again thank Giove. This neat duet between the principal pair concludes this part of the drama, showing the unity between the lovers and contrasting effectively with the following rage of the outmanoeuvred Polifemo.

In the original libretto Act III scene vi opens with recitative passages from Polifemo, Aci and Galatea which reveal to Polifemo that Aci has not died and Galatea rails at the monster telling him that Aci has been immortalised. Galatea's following cavatina text, 'Sì che son quella sì', reiterates this point and also reaffirms her and Aci's love for each other. Aci then taunts Polifemo, boasting of his immortality and Giove's approval of his and Galatea's love. The news that Aci has been immortalised has now been made three times and rather dilutes the effect of Aci's following recitative and aria, 'Senti 'l Fato', which convey the same sentiments as Galatea has just expressed. This suggests why Galatea's cavatina was cut, leaving Aci to drive home the contrast between his own new elevated status to the gods, and the wretched fate of the blinded Polifemo.

A Comparison of the Librettos and the Royal Manuscript, R.M.23.a.7-9

Not all of the alterations made to the libretto in Acts I and II for the second run are reflected in the two volumes of *Polifemo* prepared for the Royal Library, R.M.23.a.7 and 8. Nerea's part has not been cut and Calipso's aria texts appear as in the original libretto. The opening page of the score of Act I lists the characters and includes 'Signora Bertolli' as Calipso and 'Signora Segatti' as Nerea as they are listed in the first libretto. Aci's aria texts in Act II, scenes iii and v are also as in the original. It is therefore likely that this manuscript was prepared between the two runs, sometime in 1735 as dated at the end of the third act.

In Act III there are discrepancies between the manuscript R.M.23.a.9 and the original libretto which suggests changes were made after the printing of the first libretto but before or even during the first run.

i) Act III, scene v

In the original libretto Aci has a three line cavatina text expressing his thanks to Giove, as discussed above. In the manuscript, R.M.23.a.9, these three lines make up the A section of the aria, 'Alto Giove'. This was then extended with another three lines to give the B section to this da capo aria, the additional three lines not appearing in either libretto. That this aria, either in its short or longer form, was removed entirely by the time of the second libretto to make way for a duet, perhaps shows that Porpora was not happy with this scene from the outset and continued to make modifications throughout both runs. Possibly the aria was expanded after the break in *Polifemo* performances for Farinelli's benefit performance of *Artaserse* on Saturday, 15 March and Porpora saw an opportunity to capitalize on the success surrounding the castrato's benefit, enticing the audience back to *Polifemo* with a new aria for him.

ii) Act III, scene vi

Galatea's cavatina, 'Sì che son quella sì', sung to Polifemo and telling him of Aci's immortality and the gods' approval of her and Aci's love was not included in the manuscript R.M.23.a.9, and did not appear again in the second libretto as discussed above. That the emphasis was shifted to the new contrast between Aci and Polifemo is underlined by the additional removal of Nerea's recitative and aria from the end of this scene. In the Royal Manuscript, therefore, the scene only contains the one furious aria for Aci, 'Senti 'l Fato', and concludes with an impassioned passage of accompanied recitative from Polifemo despairing of his fate as blinded and scorned by mortals. The removal of both Galatea's and Nerea's lyrical items in this scene effectively focuses the attention on the ascendancy of the heroic Aci and the downfall of the hideous Polifemo. This extraordinary elevation to the gods could be seen to neatly reflect the spectacular rise of Farinelli's popularity at this time.

iii) Act III, final scene

The original libretto has the same three line coro, 'Accendi nuova Face', to frame solo, duet and trio verses for Aci, Galatea and Ulisse. By the time of the second libretto this entire structure had been removed other than one of the coro verses. (See p.326 for complete structure). Perhaps Porpora considered the conclusion of the opera too long-winded and dramatically turgid which is reflected in the Royal Manuscript where the

significant cutting achieved by the second run had already started with the removal of the first coro.

There are five passages that are in both librettos which are not included in the Royal Manuscript. The first is in scene i which sets a scene of calm and tranquillity with the arrival of Galatea and Calypso and their accompanying nymphs. This opening, though visually appealing, is not dramatically arresting, which may be why Porpora, ever mindful of the need to retain his audience's interest, decided to cut the seven-line gentle and lyrical return of the coro and move more swiftly to the more exciting appearance of the frightening Polifemo.

The other four instances are all recitative passages, none of which affects the impetus of the action so perhaps were regarded as unnecessary:

II.v.	Galatea, 14 lines cut from 19.
III.i.	Polifemo, 9 lines cut from 27.
III.iii.	Calipso and Ulisse, 12 lines cut from 18.
III.ultima.	Ulisse, 8 lines cut from 12.

Description of manuscript MUS/ADD/14115

This manuscript contains many alterations, crossings out, paste-overs and insertions from which it is possible to see the changes made to Act III that were probably incorporated in both the first and second runs of performances.

i) Act III, scene i, ff. 86r-91r

The opening scene in Act III begins with Aci, Galatea and Polifemo on stage but only Polifemo sings as the lovers are asleep. Polifemo has 27 lines of recitative in which he laments that Galatea only ever comes to his island when he is asleep. When he then comes across her lying with Aci, Polifemo is furious and vows to be avenged. He hurls a rock at the sleeping Aci. In the manuscript MUS/ADD/14115 the first 13 and a half lines of this recitative are written out as accompanied recitative on two staves with the instruction 'Violini e Viol^{ta} col basso'. These were then crossed through and the same lines are rewritten. This time an opening ritornello is scored for flutes ('Traversi'), strings, bassoons

and continuo. After 10 bars Polifemo enters with an attractive and pastoral $\frac{12}{8}$ melody singing the first three lines of the scene as a very short arietta, 'Fugace Galatea, perchè al mio Lido', in which the monster evokes sympathy with his gentle question and plaintive 'perchè'? Upon spying Aci and Galatea together, however, the mood is immediately broken and the following 10 and a half lines are written out again, as they were originally, as accompanied recitative with the strings and bass accompanying in unison and with tremolo strings adding a touch of menace. This continues for another nine and a half lines and the last four lines of the passage open out into a fuller texture with four part strings and continuo punctuating Polifemo's words with arpeggios as he throws the rock at Aci. The passage of accompanied recitative was cut again and lines 10 to 18 were crossed through (this was the second time lines 10 to 13 and a half had been crossed through in this manuscript), leaving the scene as in Table 37.

Table 37. Structure of *Polifemo*, Act III, scene i

LINE NUMBERS IN LIBRETTOS	SETTING IN R.M.23.a.9 and MUS/ADD/14115
1–3 'Fugace Galatea, perche al mio Lido'	Arietta
4–9 'Giove non sprezzeresti, e me disprezzi'	Accompanied recitative with strings and bass in unison
10-18 'Stan presso all'Antro mio Lauri e Cipressi'	Cut
19-23 'Ma che veggio! spietata'	Accompanied recitative with strings and bass in unison
24-27 'Svelliti alpestre Masso, e dirupato'	Accompanied recitative with four-part strings

Rewriting the first three lines as a lyrical arietta made a stark and effective contrast with the remainder of Polifemo's text as dramatic accompanied recitative. Until this point in the opera Polifemo has evoked no sympathy and it is only now that there is a brief glimpse of Polifemo's sadness. It is, however, short lived and he soon reverts to type with his violent actions. Cutting lines 10 to 18 speeds up the pace of this change and strengthens its impact as Polifemo's mood moves from melancholy to fury. The cut lines of recitative were included in both librettos, crossed through in the manuscript MUS/ADD/14115 and absent from R.M.23.a.9, which suggests that the cut was made during or soon after the first run as the Royal Manuscript reflects the cut.

ii) Act III, scene iii, ff.97r-98r

This scene, set in Polifemo's cave, begins with 18 lines of recitative between Calipso and Ulisse as they await Polifemo's return. Ulisse hopes that, with Calipso's support, he can avenge the death of his companions at Polifemo's hand. All but the first four and the last two lines of this dialogue were cut in the manuscript MUS/ADD/14115. This is shown by the crossing through of the first four lines (f.97r), the pasting on of a new sheet, which presumably covers over the next 12 (f.97v) and the crossing out of the last two lines on the next sheet (f.98r) The 12 covered over lines were probably cut (it is impossible to see whether they are crossed through or not but it is most likely that they are) during or soon after the first run as the Royal Manuscript reflects this cut. In keeping with other cuts shown in R.M.23.a.9 (see below) it speeds up the pace of the drama by allowing Polifemo to re-enter more quickly.

On the new pasted-on sheet are the six uncut lines of recitative (first four and last two of the passage) written out again which start similarly to the first setting (as it is in the Royal Manuscript and on ff.97r and 98r of MUS/ADD/14115) but with the notes and harmony soon being altered after four bars. Also on the pasted-on folio is Calipso's part rewritten in the soprano clef which makes it probable that this was a further alteration to the start of this scene which took place for the second run when the part of Calipso, originally sung by the contralto Francesca Bertolli was taken over by the soprano Santa Tasca.

iii) Act III, scene iii, ff.98v-100r

In this part of the scene Polifemo has now returned to his cave where Ulisse and Calipso await him. Although written in the libretto as recitative, Porpora set Polifemo's first two lines as a very short arietta, 'Crudel se m'ai sprezzato', accompanied by solo bassoon. Polifemo is enjoying his revenge on Aci as he sings this jaunty melody to himself before the passage continues with 12 lines of recitative for Polifemo and Ulisse. MUS/ADD/14115 shows that these 12 lines were initially set as secco recitative but were subsequently altered with the rewriting of the final three and a half lines as accompanied recitative. These lines come immediately after Polifemo takes his first sip of the wine that Ulisse has presented to him as a gift and which, unbeknown to the monster, contains a sleeping potion. This change to accompagnato with tremolo strings is dramatically far more effective than the previous

secco setting; it alerts the audience to the deception which will allow Ulisse to ultimately bring about Polifemo's downfall who continues unaware, singing and drinking the wine. The lines set as secco recitative are crossed through on ff.98v and 100r and an extra folio has been inserted with the new accompanied recitative lines (f.99). At first glance this alteration appears to have been written in a different hand to the majority of the rest of this manuscript but it is probably the same hand, perhaps written with greater haste.[22] It was most likely altered for the second run because the original version of the recitative appears in the Royal Manuscript.

iv) Act III, scene iv, ff.113v-115r

As has been seen in the comparison between the two librettos, the part of Nerea was entirely cut from the revised performances of *Polifemo* for its second run. One place where this cut is clearly shown is in this manuscript, Act III, scene iv. Folio 113v shows the beginning of scene iv which originally opened with Nerea and Galatea. The first four and a half lines of Nerea's recitative are crossed through and the remaining seven and a half lines of this passage are on folio 114r, over which a new sheet has been stuck, covering up half of the original folio. On this new sheet is the heading 'Sce: 4:[a]', indicating a new start for scene iv, and two new lines of recitative for Galatea as in the second libretto. The original folio is then again visible and Galatea's recitative continues. In the original libretto Nerea has a final line of recitative after Galatea's – 'T'ascoltò Giove, ed annuì co'l Ciglio.' It is possible to see on folio 115r where Nerea's name has been removed, leaving wobbly, free-hand-drawn stave lines, and 't'ascoltò' has been changed to 'm'ascoltò' to allow Galatea to continue with this line after her own passage of recitative.

Nerea's part as written in the original libretto is included in R.M.23.a.7-9, with the exception of her recitative and aria from Act III.vi, but completely removed from the second libretto. Therefore this cut was made after the first run for the second.

v) Act III, scene v, ff 115r-120v

As has already been shown in the differences between the two librettos and the manuscript R.M.23.a.9, the short scene that is Act III scene v is clearly an important

[22] This has been discussed earlier in the chapter.

moment in the drama that was revised more than once. After the attempt on his life by Polifemo it is shown that Aci, thanks to Galatea's intervention, has been spared death and has instead been immortalised. The scene opens to reveal Aci in his new godly status and in the manuscript MUS/ADD/14115 he sings an aria giving thanks to Giove, 'Alto Giove'. This was at first written out here as in the Royal Manuscript with the A section set from the three aria text lines as printed in the original libretto. The B section is also here as in the Royal Manuscript, although this extra text appears in neither libretto. MUS/ADD/14115 would seem to predate R.M.23.a.9 as it contains two passages crossed out and consequently omitted from the latter; two and a half bars of melisma at the end of A^1 (f.116r) and a similar three bars at the end of A^2 (f.119r). This aria in MUS/ADD/14115 appears to have been superseded by the insertion of two extra sheets – ff.117 and 118. These sheets are clearly later additions as they use the text from the second libretto which replaces Aci's three-line aria text with seven lines of aria text split for both Aci and Galatea as follows:

Lines 1 and 2:	Aci
Line 3:	Aci and Galatea together
Lines 4 to 6:	Aci
Line 7:	Aci and Galatea together

There is no da capo instruction after the final line, but 'Segue Gal^a Sai la giusta vendetta' showing clearly the line of Galatea's recitative from which to continue, cutting three lines of her recitative and tightening up this scene further.

As a stand alone aria the longer da capo 'Alto Giove' is a beautiful cantabile aria but its slow tempo halts the action at a time when perhaps it is more dramatically expedient to see the effect of Aci's survival and immortality on Polifemo, rather than dwell on his thanks to Giove. As discussed above, the new text in the second libretto focuses the attention on Aci and Galatea as a couple, showing the happy outcome to this part of the drama. The revised libretto expresses this unity as a duet which Porpora set without repeat before soon turning to the more dramatic and visually arresting appearance of the now blinded Polifemo and the opportunity for Aci to deliver an aria bravura, 'Senti 'l Fato', marking out Polifemo's doom.

vi) Act III, scene vi, ff.122v-125v

Scene vi begins with a short two-line arietta, 'Furie che mi strazjate', for Polifemo, continuing with accompanied recitative for Aci, Polifemo and Galatea. On f.122v the final two lines of this accompagnato are cut, along with Galatea's aria 'Sì che son quella sì'. In the original libretto this aria is shown as a six-line, one-verse text. In the MUS/ADD/14115 this has been extended into a full da capo aria with an additional B section, only for the entire aria to be removed before or during the first run as it is not included in the Royal Manuscript. The removal of this aria condenses and speeds up the pace of the drama here, as discussed above.

vii) Act III, scene vi, ff.132r-135v

In the MUS/ADD/14115 Polifemo has an additional aria, 'Ah si vien morte', that is in neither libretto nor in the Royal Manuscript. The exclusion of this aria, apparently not even making it as far as the first printed libretto, is one of a number of cuts near the end of *Polifemo* probably made before, during, or shortly after the first run. Also in this manuscript, the final recitative and aria, 'V'ingannate', from Nerea are cut from this penultimate scene, as is Galatea's earlier aria, 'Si che son quella sì'. There is a sense of hurrying towards the end here as all matters have been resolved; Aci has survived Polifemo's murderous attack and been elevated to the state of immortality, he and Galatea are happily united and Ulisse and his companions have escaped from Polifemo, leaving the wretched monster in despair. Porpora set Polifemo's final 16 lines of recitative, when he rails against the gods at his fate, as accompagnato and it became the final item of this scene. As Polifemo's subsequent text expresses a similar sentiment, it delayed the conclusion unnecessarily which may be why Porpora swiftly dispensed with this aria.

viii) Act III, final scene, ff.138v-143v

This final scene also underwent change perhaps in the continuing attempt to provide a neat and swift conclusion. Compared to the original libretto (see p.326), the Royal Manuscript has a cut of eight lines from Ulisse's opening recitative and also one of the coro verses. By the time of the second libretto this had been reduced further so that all that remained of the scene is Ulisse's recitative and one of the coro verses. In MUS/ADD/14115 Ulisse's 12-line recitative is set with accompaniment. The last half line is crossed through

although there is an instruction 'si dice' written below which may be to reinstate this ('si dice' translating literally as 'is said' and meaning 'let it stand'). The coro then follows and an instruction 'Siegue Aci' at the end has been scribbled over. The following folio, 143, has the horn and trumpet parts written out and at the end is the instruction 'Segue Terzette, e poi D.C. Il Coro'. It appears that this manuscript at least partly matches the original libretto although the music for the trio has not been attached to the end. Perhaps it was subsequently removed when the trio was cut for the second run as is seen in the second libretto, which is when the instruction 'Siegue Aci' was also scribbled out and the opera ended after Ulisse's recitative and the one short happy coro.

Throughout this autograph manuscript of Act III are instances of Porpora making small cuts to slightly shorten an item. Some of these alterations are reflected in the Royal Manuscript, suggesting they were changes made during the first run; however some are not, which suggests that Porpora was still trying to tighten up the drama for the second run. For example, Galatea's aria 'Smanie d'Affanno, ah perchè mai,' in III.ii. Folio 94v has one bar of the opening ritornello crossed through which is not written out in the Royal Manuscript. However, four bars of a melisma in the A^2 section on f.96r which are in the Royal Manuscript are crossed through in MUS/ADD/14115, suggesting a later modification.

The many alterations consisting of crossings out, insertions and paste-overs in the autograph manuscript MUS/ADD/14115 clearly identify this score of Act III of *Polifemo* as a working copy. It was written for the initial run of performances in February 1735, altered before, during or shortly after this run, as can be seen reflected in the Royal Manuscript, R.M.23.a.9, and further altered for the second run at the beginning of the 1735/36 season, as is reflected in the libretto produced for that later run.

<u>*Polifemo* Selections: MUS/ADD/31504 and G.193.(3.)G</u>

The five arias from *Polifemo* that are included in the manuscript MUS/ADD/31504 are all for Farinelli and appear in this order:

1. Act III, scene vi 'Senti 'l Fato'
2. Act III, scene v 'Alto Giove'
3. Act I, scene iii 'Dolci fresche Aurette grate'
4. Act II, scene v 'Nell' attendere il mio Bene'
5. Act II, scene iii 'Lusingato dalla Speme'

These five arias form part of a collection of 20 arias in one section of this manuscript, with a title page of 'Favourate Songs By Porpora: & Handel'. These arias are numbers 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 in this section and are all headed as being 'Sung by Sig^{r} Farinelli in Polypheme' by 'Sr. Porpora'. This collection was probably prepared during the early stages of the first run in 1735 because 'Alto Giove'(III.v) appears here with only one verse as it does in the original libretto, and not with the added B section which appeared in R.M.23.a.9, having possibly been added later in the first run. Three of the five arias (Nos. 2, 3, and 4) do not appear in the second run. Only one of Farinelli's full-length arias does not make it to this volume – 'Morirei del partir nel momento' from Act I, scene vi. Perhaps the recipient of this manuscript shared Burney's (1789, p.797) unfavourable opinion.

The first advertisement for J. Walsh's printed volume *The Favourite Songs in the Opera call'd Polypheme* appeared in the *London Evening Post*, March 13-15, 1735, with a note that 'This Collection contains the Songs sung by the Celebrated Farinello.' This volume (G.193.(3.)G.) contains five arias for Farinelli, one for Montagnana and one for Senesino in the following order:

1.	Act II, scene iii	Farinelli	'Lusingato dalla Speme'
5.	Act III, scene vi	Farinelli	'Senti 'l Fato'
3.	Act III, scene iii	Montagnana	'D'un disprezzato Amor'
4.	Act II, scene ii	Senesino	'Fortunate Pecorelle!'
5.	Act I, scene iii	Farinelli	'Dolci fresche Aurette grate'
6.	Act I, scene vi	Farinelli	'Morirei del partir nel momento'
7.	Act II, scene v	Farinelli	'Nell' attendere il mio Bene'

The advertisement for this volume coincided with Farinelli's benefit performance of *Artaserse* on 15 March, presumably to take advantage of the castrato's high profile at the time. 'Alto Giove' was not included – perhaps not deemed worthy enough in its current short three line version.

There were only two more performances of *Polifemo* on 25 and 29 March, coming immediately after the three performances of *Artaserse* on 15, 18 and 22 March. Then there was a break of over two months before the solitary final *Polifemo* on Saturday, 7 June. Perhaps some of the alterations that occur in the Royal Manuscript were made in this break

during the run, and this last performance of the season was used as an opportunity to determine the success of these modifications and consider other adaptations for a new, revised Polifemo to open the following season.

CONCLUSIONS

This study is a detailed investigation into Porpora's contribution to London opera seria during his three year period in England from 1733 – 1736. I have considered the environment into which Porpora came and subsequently worked, and evaluated the amount and type of influence other leading figures in the delivery of Italian opera in London had on him. I have also conducted an extensive analysis of Porpora's style in all available sources of the London operas, and of four other Porpora operas, to determine the effectiveness of conveying drama through his music and how this was adapted for the English audience.

Before Porpora arrived in London in 1733 he had already written 26 operas, with librettos by at least 13 different writers. A review of his life has shown that his works had been popular in the important Italian operatic centres, beginning in his home city of Naples and spreading to Venice and Rome, and that he had been an active composer in this genre for 25 years since his first opera, *L'Agrippina*, in 1708. This wealth of experience meant that Porpora was not a young man, nor a novice in his art when appointed by the 'Opera of the Nobility'; he turned 47 in the summer of his arrival, just 18 months younger than his rival in England, Handel.

Porpora was well-used to dealing with the vagaries and demands of librettists, singers and impresarios and clearly astute at judging what was appealing to an Italian audience. He was also certainly used to being embroiled in the kind of rivalry that was familiar to him from constant competition with his fellow composers, particularly Vinci and Hasse, in the major centres of Italy, and he seemed to have been dogged by bad luck that made him the 'nearly' man on several occasions, missing out on posts to others. How much of this was due to his irascible temperament can only be speculated upon and both Metastasio and Haydn attested to his prickly nature. How much was due to Porpora's music being judged inferior to his rivals for a post is also worth considering, but the evidence shows a career which earned him fame, if not fortune, and one where he was never unemployed. Indeed it seems that Porpora and his music were held in sufficient esteem to warrant his being awarded several important posts. During his career he was employed by the Prince of Darmstadt, the royal courts of Vienna and Dresden, and was invited to the Russian court. He was *Maestro* at the leading musical institutions in Naples

and Venice and enjoyed significant success at the major operatic centres of Italy in Naples, Venice and Rome, leading to his invitation to join the 'Opera of the Nobility' in London.

When Porpora arrived in England he must surely have thought he had finally landed a post that would give him recognition and reward in equal measure. He arrived to join the assembled 'dream team' of Italian singing superstars and an experienced and respected librettist, Rolli, in a city that had already been won over to the foreign art-form of opera seria, largely thanks to Handel. Despite his knowledge and experience, producing opera seria for a London audience was an entirely new challenge for Porpora, dominated as it was by one composer, Handel, and being delivered to an audience for whom Italian was not its principal tongue.

The cynosure of the 'Opera of the Nobility', Senesino, was very much at the forefront of establishing the rival company after his relations with Handel had irrevocably soured. I have shown that repertoire choice and performance nights were part of the aggressive competition between the two companies as they constantly sought for new ways to increase their audience. The 'Opera of the Nobility' initially relied upon Porpora and the inherent attraction of a Neapolitan composer, fresh from Italy and perceived deliverer of the 'new style', contrary to the 'old-fashioned style' of Handel. Though bolstered by the arrival of Farinelli in 1734, arguably the greatest castrato ever, the fortunes of the new company, and with them those of Porpora, quickly waned. Patronage of the two companies by the King, Queen and Prince of Wales also decreased notably after the first season; new information gathered about the attendance of the Royal Family and presented here indicates considerably less partisanship than some have previously believed. When Porpora realised that the appeal of his operas was fading, and, perhaps having adapted his style as much as he was willing or able, he capitulated at the end of the 1735/36 season, 'bailing out' a year before the 'Opera of the Nobility' crumbled in 1737.

The influence of the librettist is an area which has not received much coverage in the consideration of Handel's operas. Rolli has however, been shown to have been a major factor in determining not just the subject matter of Porpora's London operas, but also influential in formulating the structure and consequent perception of these works. Rolli was free from former restraints imposed by the Royal Academy and Handel, and was also, at least initially, supplying librettos to a compliant composer.

Porpora took a little time to adjust to his new environment and impose his authority on Rolli's librettos after he arrived in England. That he was dependent upon the quality of the libretto supplied to him is evident as Porpora produced his finest music for the most successful of the London librettos, *Arianna in Naxo* and *Polifemo*. Of his five London operas these are the works that stretch, rather than flout conventional boundaries. In keeping with the librettos, the music of *Enea nel Lazio* and, especially, *Ifigenia in Aulide* is relatively uninspired. *Mitridate,* with its libretto by the English Cibber suffers from too much deviation from convention even when it can, and sometimes barely, be dramatically justified. *Arianna in Naxo* stood a very good chance of being popular before a note was written, being the inaugural production from the new opera company to rival Handel. All Porpora had to do was supply his usual lilting and attractive prominent vocal melodies, combined with carefully judged technical writing for his singers and some expressive scoring in the 'new' Neapolitan style that the audience eagerly anticipated, and surely he would be successful. That does not mean that *Arianna in Naxo* does not contain some glorious and inspired music; the cantabile and lovely 'Miseri sventurati' (Arianna, II.iv) with obbligato oboe is effective and deeply moving and Piritoo's 'A contesa di due Belle' (II.iii) is a dynamic and ingenious contrapuntal aria that gave Montagnana a chance to shine.

A major study of the available sources of Porpora's London operas has been undertaken providing the evidence to conclude that the so-called autographs held in the British Library are indeed by Porpora's hand. This in turn has allowed conclusions to be drawn from an examination of the autograph of his third London opera, *Polifemo*. This manuscript (MUS/ADD/14115) was modified and refined rather than substantially altered, probably from as early as its first run in 1735. The modifications were to improve the communication of the drama, by sharpening character definition, and maintain engagement, by speeding up the pace of delivery of the action.

It is therefore in *Polifemo* that Porpora really came into his own and where his music is most varied and appropriate to character and situation. The combination of exciting plot and interesting characters, particularly in the highly developed character of the monster Polifemo, inspired Porpora to write some of his most beautiful and engaging music in all of these five operas. The sublime cantabile aria 'Alto Giove' (III.v) compares well with the virtuosic 'Senti 'l Fato' (III.vi), demonstrating Porpora's consummate skill in writing for the voice, in this case, Farinelli's. But it is not just in the ravishing arias in this opera that

Porpora shows his skill. It is also where he makes the biggest imposition of his own ideas on the libretto – the setting of recitative text as lyrical items, the linking of characters through innovative use of structure, the addition of a string sinfonia and the cutting of a coro.

This is not to say that the other three operas are totally without innovation. The ensemble items in particular are set carefully, from the thoughtful quartets in *Enea nel Lazio* (III.i) to the cleverly constructed duet 'O quanto accorte, o quanto' (III.iii) in *Mitridate*. This all reveals that Porpora was acutely aware that he was delivering his opera in a foreign language to a new audience. The investigation in Chapter Five of the evolution of Porpora's style shows not only his concomitant development within the opera seria genre of the emerging galant style, but also that this was a deliberate rather than unconscious attempt to enhance the dramatic meaning through the music. Investigation of the nine operas has proven this to be the case with increasingly greater and more varied use of the different lyrical forms and structures when in London and delivering his works to the English audience.

This thesis has explored the significance of Porpora's operas for the 'Opera of the Nobility' and not just analysed the music of these works in isolation. The scope of this study has therefore been necessarily wide but has required strict focus to ascertain Porpora's place in London in the 1730s. That focus has limited the investigation of Porpora's operas to only nine. The obvious progression is to now move on to a full analysis of Porpora's remaining 35 operas and indeed other works. Also, notwithstanding Dorris's excellent *Paolo Rolli and the Italian circle in London 1715 – 1744,* there is still much detailed analysis of Rolli's librettos to be done, and there needs to be a continuation of the investigation into this period of operatic rivalry in London, an area in which Cummings and Taylor are currently researching, and to which this thesis contributes.

Burney's opinion (1789, Vol.II, p.781) that 'Porpora was more a man of judgement and experience, than genius' is a little harsh but perhaps not without foundation. A look at Porpora's career suggests that he was always looking for the next opportunity to advance his career, and he followed this judicious approach through to his music. That he did not perhaps have the same invention of melody and measured emotional restraint as Hasse, or the simple, transparent style of Vinci, meant that he relied upon other skills to bring him glory. Porpora's expertise as a singing teacher was unquestioned and he wrote arias

carefully tailored to his singers that showed them off to their best abilities.[1] He was astute enough to realise that he had to sharpen his powers of characterization and deliver exciting varied opera rather than being able to rely upon his own melodic style, the abilities of his singers and elegant and expressive Italian poetry in London. However, without the inspiration of a taut and well-conceived plot, the music that Porpora supplied, although pleasing, is often tonally unadventurous and can sometimes seem insipid, perhaps too often reliant upon the virtuosic abilities of the singers to present a flourishing display of ornamented brilliance. Certainly amongst the more standard items are some flashes of beauty, but Porpora's real skill in London was his ability to adapt the structure and forms comprising opera seria to enhance dramatic portrayal whilst remaining within the rigid bounds of the convention. In this way Porpora produced two operas that contain much attractive melody, effective characterization and strongly conveyed moments of drama. For at least one season in London, 1733 – 1734, Porpora was the composer who reigned supreme. It is unfortunate for him that when he really found his métier with *Polifemo,* the appetite for Italian opera seria in London was decreasing and once again Porpora was looking for another post.

[1] An investigation into how Porpora tailored his music for individual singers both in Italy and in London, would be worthy of further research.

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1733/34	
LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS		**KING'S THEATRE**
	OCT	
	TUE 30	*Semiramide*
	NOV	
	SAT 3	*Semiramide*
	TUE 6	*Semiramide*
	SAT 10	*Semiramide*
	TUE 13	*Ottone*
	SAT 17	*Ottone*
	TUE 20	*Ottone*
	SAT 24	*Ottone*
	TUE 27	
	DEC	
	SAT 1	
	TUE 4	*Cajo Fabricio*
	SAT 8	*Cajo Fabricio*
	TUE 11	
	SAT 15	*Cajo Fabricio*
	TUE 18	
	SAT 22	*Cajo Fabricio*
	TUE 25	
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 29	
	JAN	
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 1	
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 5	*Arbace*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 8	*Arbace*
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 12	*Arbace*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 15	*Arbace*
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 19	*Arbace*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 22	*Arbace*
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 26	*Arianna in Creta*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 29	*Arianna in Creta*
	FEB	
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 2	*Arianna in Creta*
Fernando	TUE 5	*Arianna in Creta*
Fernando	SAT 9	*Arianna in Creta*
Fernando	TUE 12	*Arianna in Creta*
	THUR 14	
Fernando	SAT 16	*Arianna in Creta*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 19	*Arianna in Creta*
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 23	*Arianna in Creta*
Astarto	TUE 26	*Arianna in Creta*
Fernando	THUR 28	
	MAR	
Astarto	SAT 2	*Arianna in Creta*
Astarto	TUE 5	*Arianna in Creta*
Astarto	SAT 9	*Arianna in Creta*
David e Bersabea	TUE 12	*Arianna in Creta*

APPENDIX ONE

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1733/34	
LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS		**KING'S THEATRE**
	(MAR)	
	WED 13	*Parnasso in Festa*
David e Bersabea	SAT 16	*Parnasso in Festa*
	TUE 19	*Parnasso in Festa*
David e Bersabea	WED 20	
Belmira	SAT 23	*Parnasso in Festa*
Belmira	TUE 26	*Arbace*
David e Bersabea	WED 27	
	THUR 28	*Arbace*
Belmira	SAT 30	*Arbace*
	APR	
Belmira	TUE 2	*Deborah*
David e Bersabea	WED 3	
Astarto	SAT 6	*Deborah*
David e Bersabea	MON 8	
	TUE 9	*Deborah*
David e Bersabea	WED 10	
	SAT 13	
Astarto	TUE 16	*Arianna in Creta*
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 20	*Arianna in Creta*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 23	
Arianna in Naxo	THUR 25	
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 27	*Sosarme*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 30	*Sosarme*
	MAY	
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 4	*Sosarme*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 7	*Acis and Galatea*
Enea nel Lazio	SAT 11	
Enea nel Lazio	TUE 14	
Enea nel Lazio	SAT 18	*Il pastor fido*
Enea nel Lazio	TUE 21	*Il pastor fido*
Enea nel Lazio	SAT 25	*Il pastor fido*
Enea nel Lazio	TUE 28	*Il pastor fido*
Arianna in Naxo	FRI 31	
	JUN	
	SAT 1	
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 4	*Il pastor fido*
Arianna in Naxo	SAT 8	*Il pastor fido*
Arianna in Naxo	TUE 11	*Il pastor fido*
Enea nel Lazio	SAT 15	
	TUE 18	*Il pastor fido*
	SAT 22	*Il pastor fido*
	TUE 25	*Il pastor fido*
	SAT 29	*Il pastor fido*
	JUL	
	TUE 2	
	WED 3	*Il pastor fido*
	SAT 6	*Il pastor fido*

APPENDIX ONE

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1734/35	
KING'S THEATRE		**COVENT GARDEN**
	OCT	
Artaserse	TUE 29	
	NOV	
Artaserse	SAT 2	
Artaserse	TUE 5	
Artaserse	SAT 9	*Il pastor fido*
Artaserse	TUE 12	
	WED 13	*Il pastor fido*
Artaserse	SAT 16	*Il pastor fido*
Artaserse	TUE 19	
	WED 20	*Il pastor fido*
Artaserse	SAT 23	*Il pastor fido*
Artaserse	TUE 26	
	WED 27	*Arianna in Creta*
Artaserse	SAT 30	*Arianna in Creta*
	DEC	
Artaserse	TUE 3	
	WED 4	*Arianna in Creta*
Artaserse	SAT 7	*Arianna in Creta*
Ottone	TUE 10	
	WED 11	*Arianna in Creta*
Ottone	SAT 14	
Ottone	TUE 17	
	WED 18	*Oreste*
Ottone	SAT 21	*Oreste*
Ottone	MON 23	
	TUE 24	
	WED 25	
Artaserse	SAT 28	*Oreste*
Artaserse	TUE 31	
	JAN	
	WED 1	
Artaserse	SAT 4	
Artaserse	TUE 7	
	WED 8	*Ariodante*
Artaserse	SAT 11	*Ariodante*
Artaserse	TUE 14	
	WED 15	*Ariodante*
Artaserse	SAT 18	*Ariodante*
Artaserse	TUE 21	
	WED 22	*Ariodante*
Artaserse	SAT 25	
Artaserse	TUE 28	
	WED 29	*Ariodante*
	FEB	
Polifemo	SAT 1	
Polifemo	TUE 4	
	WED 5	*Ariodante*
Polifemo	SAT 8	
Polifemo	TUE 11	
	WED 12	*Ariodante*

APPENDIX ONE

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1734/35	
KING'S THEATRE		**COVENT GARDEN**
	(FEB)	
Polifemo	SAT 15	
Polifemo	TUE 18	
	WED 19	
	THU 20	*Ariodante*
Polifemo	SAT 22	
	MON 24	*Ariodante*
Polifemo	TUE 25	
	WED 26	
David e Bersabea	FRI 28	
	MAR	
	SAT 1	
	MON 3	*Ariodante*
Polifemo	TUE 4	
	WED 5	*Esther*
	FRI 7	*Esther*
Polifemo	SAT 8	
Polifemo	TUE 11	
	WED 12	*Esther*
	FRI 14	*Esther*
Artaserse	SAT 15	
Artaserse	TUE 18	
	WED 19	*Esther*
	FRI 21	*Esther*
Artaserse	SAT 22	
Polifemo	TUE 25	
	WED 26	*Deborah*
	FRI 28	*Deborah*
Polifemo	SAT 29	
	MON 31	*Deborah*
	APR	
David e Bersabea	TUE 1	*Athalia*
	WED 2	*Athalia*
David e Bersabea	THU 3	*Athalia*
	SAT 5	
Issipile	TUE 8	
	WED 9	*Athalia*
Issipile	SAT 12	*Athalia*
Issipile	TUE 15	
	WED 16	*Alcina*
Issipile	SAT 19	*Alcina*
Artaserse	TUE 22	
	WED 23	*Alcina*
Artaserse	SAT 26	*Alcina*
Artaserse	TUE 29	
	WED 30	*Alcina*
	MAY	
Ifigenia in Aulide	SAT 3	*Alcina*
Ifigenia in Aulide	TUE 6	
	WED 7	*Alcina*
Ifigenia in Aulide	SAT 10	*Alcina*
Ifigenia in Aulide	TUE 13	

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1734/35	
KING'S THEATRE		**COVENT GARDEN**
	(MAY)	
	WED 14	*Alcina*
Artaserse	SAT 17	*Alcina*
Ifigenia in Aulide	TUE 20	
	WED 21	*Alcina*
Artaserse	FRI 23	
	SAT 24	
Artaserse	TUE 27	
	WED 28	*Alcina*
Artaserse	SAT 31	
	JUN	
Artaserse	TUE 3	
	WED 4	*Alcina*
Polifemo	SAT 7	
	TUE 10	
	WED 11	
	THU 12	*Alcina*
	SAT 14	
	TUE 17	
	WED 18	*Alcina*
	SAT 21	
	TUE 24	
	WED 25	*Alcina*
	SAT 28	*Alcina*
	JUL	
	TUE 1	
	WED 2	*Alcina*

APPENDIX ONE

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1735/36	
KING'S THEATRE		**COVENT GARDEN**
	OCT	
Polifemo	TUE 28	
	NOV	
Polifemo	SAT 1	
Polifemo	TUE 4	
	SAT 8	
	TUE 11	
	SAT 16	
	TUE 18	
	SAT 22	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 25	
Adriano in Siria	SAT 29	
	DEC	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 2	
Adriano in Siria	SAT 6	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 9	
Adriano in Siria	SAT 13	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 16	
	SAT 20	
	TUE 23	
Adriano in Siria	SAT 27	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 30	
	JAN	
Artaserse	SAT 3	
	TUE 6	
Artaserse	SAT 10	
Artaserse	TUE 13	
Artaserse	SAT 17	
	TUE 20	
Mitridate	SAT 24	
Mitridate	TUE 27	
Mitridate	SAT 31	
	FEB	
Mitridate	TUE 3	
Adriano in Siria	SAT 7	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 10	
Adriano in Siria	SAT 14	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 17	
	THUR 19	*Alexander's Feast*
Adriano in Siria	SAT 21	
Adriano in Siria	TUE 24	
	WED 25	*Alexander's Feast*
Adriano in Siria	SAT 28	
	MAR	
Orfeo	TUE 2	
	WED 3	*Alexander's Feast*
Orfeo	SAT 6	
Orfeo	TUE 9	
	WED 10	
	FRI 12	*Alexander's Feast*

APPENDIX ONE

Performance Days/Dates During the 1733 - 1736 Seasons

	1735/36	
KING'S THEATRE		**COVENT GARDEN**
	(MAR)	
Orfeo	SAT 13	
Orfeo	TUE 16	
	WED 17	*Alexander's Feast*
	FRI 19	
Orfeo	SAT 20	
Orfeo	TUE 23	
	WED 24	*Acis and Galatea*
	FRI 26	
Artaserse	SAT 27	
Artaserse	TUE 30	
	WED 31	*Acis and Galatea*
	APR	
Artaserse	SAT 3	
Orfeo	TUE 6	
	WED 7	*Esther*
Orfeo	SAT 10	
Onorio	TUE 13	
	WED 14	*Esther*
Orfeo	SAT 17	
	TUE 27	
	WED 28	
Orfeo	THUR 29	
	MAY	
Orfeo	SAT 1	
Festa d'Imeneo	TUE 4	
	WED 5	*Ariodante*
	FRI 7	*Ariodante*
Festa d'Imeneo	SAT 8	
Festa d'Imeneo	TUE 11	
	WED 12	*Atalanta*
Festa d'Imeneo	SAT 15	*Atalanta*
Adriano in Siria	TUE 18	
	WED 19	*Atalanta*
Adriano in Siria	SAT 22	*Atalanta*
Adriano in Siria	TUE 25	
	WED 26	*Atalanta*
Adriano in Siria	SAT 29	*Atalanta*
	JUN	
Artaserse	TUE 1	
	WED 2	*Atalanta*
Artaserse	SAT 5	
Orfeo	TUE 8	
	WED 9	*Atalanta*
	SAT 12	
Orfeo	TUE 15	
	SAT 19	
Orfeo	TUE 22	

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